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## Introduction to special *EJIM* section: insights from recent non-English publications

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**Biographical notes:** Charles M. Vance is a Professor of human resources at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, and has served as a Guest Lecturer in Europe and Asia. He has had considerable experience as a consultant in training and curriculum development and broader human resource applications for corporations and non-profit organisations in Asia, North and South America, and Europe. In 2005 and 2006, he held double Fulbright teaching and research appointments in Austria and China. He is the author of numerous scholarly publications and author/editor of three books, most recently *Smart Talent Management: Building Knowledge Assets for Competitive Advantage*.

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From my recent teaching of a course about the European Union I was pleased that the *European Journal of International Management*, in its precocious infancy, has gotten away with being published in only one language rather than 14 or more. Of course, unlike the national and regional political scenes, the competitive global business environment is driven by efficiency, which typically dictates one common language. And this efficiency drive is reinforced by an incredibly powerful force of convergence to one language – some evolving form of global English – coming from the increasing development and wide diffusion of information technologies and telecommunications linking us across national and cultural borders. Many countries are recognising the importance of English competency for a globally competitive labour force, and require the study of this particular language from early school years through college.

The fact that my native language is American English (or an Arizona version thereof) rather than Russian or Navajo is due to the relentless competitive success of the past age of British imperialism, which spread colonies around the globe to the extent that “the sun never set on the British Empire”. Of course, several other European states and empires were active in exploring the world to extend hegemony and wealth, impose values and beliefs, and especially to find natural resources in short supply back home. Like it or not, in the course of this historical playing out of European imperialism on the world stage, now transforming into generally open markets across the globe, English has become our single common language of business. And hence, we have *EJIM* in English.

Although the powerful and oppressive visage of European imperialism presents the image of closed cultures intent on changing others into their foreign clones, this unidirectional aspect of knowledge flow never really was the case, at least not completely. I still am somehow amazed at the vast fields of Native American corn that I encounter when travelling in Europe and Asia. The exploits and adventures in China of Italy’s legendary hero, Marco Polo, resulting in the introduction to the West of new

treasures of ice cream and gun powder, demonstrate how we, historically, have benefited by being open to new ideas and innovations in our interactions with other cultures. Despite the dark and very offensive aspects from the history of European exploration and imperialism, one potentially redeeming quality has been the relative openness of European travellers abroad to new ideas encountered in these exploits – and even significant curiosity and pleasure in seeking, finding, and often embracing novelty.

In our early discussions about how *EJIM* can contribute in new ways that might distinguish it from other journals, it struck many of us that an important legacy from our European past is the inclination to reach out, investigate, and learn from the unfamiliar. And with English now serving as our single common language, we feel that a particularly distinct aspect following from our European tradition would be to reach out and learn from works published in other languages. We refuse to accept the notion that all knowledge and information worthy of our consideration, particularly in the domain of international business and management, is now printed only in English. Instead, we believe that an important contribution that *EJIM* can make is to encourage the identification and dissemination of insights that can be found in non-English journals and other professional publications.

We therefore are now pleased to introduce a new section for the *European Journal of International Management*, “Insights from Recent Non-English Publications: The (insert language) Voice”. This regular section will highlight insights gained from between four to six recently-published papers that have appeared in another language besides English (from academic or more practitioner-oriented publications and typically related to a unifying theme). In some cases all papers might come from the same journal or publication source, or might feature insights from an author’s own recent publication as well as others from the same language and covering a related topic. We realise that, for persistent online database sleuths, there presently are abstracts available in English from non-English business publications. But we would like to make these non-English insightful works more accessible, and also to ask authors to find these gems, translate them and present them to us in more detail and in a more compelling fashion than one would find in abstracts.

For our first appearance of this section we are pleased to feature insights from the Russian voice, prepared for us by Anatoly Zhuplev and Vladimir Shein. This presentation of recent practitioner-oriented publications provides a fascinating glimpse, up close, of forces, processes, and approaches that influence the development of managerial and executive talent supporting the transformation of Russia from a centrally-controlled to a more open market-driven economy. We hope you enjoy this first instalment, and encourage you to consider finding and sharing with us useful insights gained from other non-English speaking journals and publications.