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Cross-Cultural Pedagogical Research and Diversity in Global Business Communication

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This issue of the *GABC Journal* emphasizes two subjects: applied pedagogical research and diversity in terms of global business communication.

All four articles here provide case studies with a focus on application to the classroom, to consulting in the workplace or both.

This issue of the *GABC Journal* addresses diversity and inclusion in several manifestations: diverse workgroup dynamics, leadership in harnessing globally diverse work forces, diversity in linguistic competency within a single workplace, and inclusion of professional fields beyond business alone (in this case STEM fields).

Renata Kolodziej-Smith's "Diverse workgroup dynamics: Is it possible to improve intercultural workgroup communication?" opens this issue with original research on application of relational models taking into account the complexity of diverse work groups. Using empirical research to develop support for actual behavior (as opposed to presumed "self-construals and face concerns"), Kolodziej-Smith established a relational model with pragmatic use, that is immediately applicable to several cultural dimensions in market pricing.

Steven Sacco's "A Case Study of Workplace Language Use Within Micro, Small, Midsize, and Large Companies: Insights from Language School Students in Abidjan, Ivory Coast" provides insight into the diversity of linguistic competency within a single workplace in the Côte d'Ivoire. With so few case studies on linguistic diversity in the workplace, this article already is significant simply for tackling the subject. Few case studies and research on linguistic diversity that do exist (as Sacco notes) tend to focus on Business English as a Lingua Franca (BELF). This includes articles covering BELF are several previous articles in the *GABC Journal* (see Kameda, 2013, and Fujio, 2014). Moreover, even fewer business cases focus on West Africa, despite its importance as an economic region, West Africa has very business cases as their subject (especially in English). Filling the vacuum here would in itself make Sacco's case study an important contribution. That Sacco adds to this by challenging the assumption that English serves as the main business lingua franca regardless of setting. That Ivorian companies can provide a microcosm of linguistic diversity both in levels of fluency in French as well as in English puts this article in a category of its own.

On a pedagogical level, the collection of short "micro-applications" assembled here as "Diversity and Inclusion in International Communications: Applications for Today's Work World" provide an eminently useful set of vignettes for use in both the consulting workplace and the student classroom. Kimberley Barker, Christine Day, Stephanie Coleman, Emily Boerman, Joshua Burd, Heidi Philippsen-Meisner, Ciara Grantham, Paul Katokwe, Redhwan Almutaser,

and Scott Burns have put together a broad range of actual situations (with names changed) that show success stories and raise questions that highlight both the theory and application of cross-cultural values in ways “that show how leaders and communicators harnessed diversity and inclusion in international communication.”

Michel R. Gueldry, in “Developing Linguistic and Intercultural Competence through an International Engineering Program: Rationale, Procedures, Lessons Learned,” extends the scope of this journal beyond general business to include the STEM fields in general and engineering in particular. Cross-cultural and language competency remains just as relevant in all professional fields. Arbitrary divisions are made between business on one hand and engineering and technology on the other. These divisions have more to do with academic organizational structures within universities that separate Business Schools from Engineering Schools rather than any clear distinctions among applied, professional fields. To that end, the *GABC Journal*’s commitment to breaking down silos separating fields seems a suitable place to highlight the recognition of the needs with Engineering programming to include linguistic and cross-cultural preparation. The accrediting boards of these programs in one way reinforce these subjective divisions with the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) accrediting its member schools and the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) doing the same for its member schools. Yet both accreditation groups emphasize the same need for global and multicultural competencies. In a previous *GABC Journal* issue, Gonglewski and Helm (2017 <http://commons.emich.edu/gabc/vol6/iss1/4;>) discussed the AACSB’s call for business schools to provide cross-cultural competencies. In a similar vein, in this current *GABC Journal* issue, Gueldry describes ABET’s very similar call for “engineering programs develop student learning outcomes / competencies that vary by country and sub-specialization.”

NOTE: We wish to welcome you back to the *GABC Journal* which has returned after a hiatus. We were severely affected by the effects of the pandemic and other issues. It is our intention to publish on a regular basis again beginning with this issue.