

Preface.

Internationalisation and language: medium or purpose?

This volume by Edoardo Mollona is the first one published entirely in English within the *punto org* book series.

The decision to publish in English, in a book series that has so far always published in Italian, is not fortuitous nor does it reflect the widespread fashion of *anglophilia*. This choice is rather in line with the main objectives of the puntOorg cultural project, tenaciously pursued in recent years. We believe that internationalising research is both an aim and a method. More precisely, internationalising research is, according to us, at the same time a *medium* and a purpose.

The relationship between *medium* and purpose is a key relationship in the evolution of knowledge. In the puntOorg context, we develop this relationship thanks to our research activities, with reference to the organisation studies and management studies, which are increasingly confronting themselves with related disciplines.

* * *

The dominance of the English language in many fields of research, which can be traced back to the period after World War II, probably depends on the role of the American Business School in the dissemination of management as an academic discipline.

The type of language chosen is closely related to the way researchers conduct their research. Nevertheless, this choice also affects the way researchers express their thought.

puntOorg is aware that using a given language means adopting a non-neutral *medium* of communication, which has its own history of meanings and its particular *Weltanschauung*. In other words, any research instrument is not neutral in relation to the ways in which research moves forward and the ways in which results are expressed.

For these reasons, management research cannot neglect the interaction between *language* as a theoretical and social construct and the choice of a specific *language* in which to publish. This book is indeed the spearhead of a collection of books that will be written in English to nurture a process of internationalisation.

* * *

Together with Edoardo Mollona, we share this view on language and how crucial and challenging it is for the development of knowledge and management practices, especially in times of structural crisis of the western economy.

With the invaluable support of other colleagues¹, we are carrying out a wide variety of research projects in prestigious international contexts. Amongst them, we are proud to mention our contribution to the EURAM conference, with a Track that, after the success at the 2015 EURAM conference in Warsaw², became Standing Track and, as such, it will be developed for the 2016 EURAM conference in Paris³. Additionally, we are working on the SCOS 2017⁴ to be held in Italy.

¹ Ilaria Boncori, University of Essex; Jean-Francois Chanlat, Paris Dauphine; Stewart Clegg, University of Technology, Sydney; Alessia Contu, UMass Boston; Xavier Deroy, NEOMA Business School Reims Campus; Andrea Fumagalli, University of Pavia; David Levy, UMass Boston; Mariella Pandolfi, Université du Québec à Montréal; Luca Solari, University of Milan.

² Topic 03: Institutional resistance, war of positions and power maintenance.

³ ST 01-03: Institutional change, Power, Resistance and Critical Management - SIG Business for Society

⁴ With Ilaria Boncori, University of Essex.

* * *

In conclusion, it is not an easy thing to be Italian players in the process of internationalisation of research in management studies. It is not easy for many reasons, linked, for instance, to the structure of the Italian capitalism and to the Italian peculiar academic context.

Nevertheless, this represents an exciting challenge for all the researchers who believe in the circulation of ideas: we are accepting this challenge and we are raising it.

We do believe that internationalisation does not necessarily mean speaking a language spoken throughout the world. The process of internationalisation may be, in fact, a methodological issue. And this may be confirmed by the fact that the reader may pronounce the word *puntOorg* by using his/her language's system of sounds. And we will succeed if each of us, as Italian researchers, commit ourselves to being in charge of this process and not just followers.

* * *

In this book, Edoardo reports the results of his decades-long work in integrating computer simulation in the social sciences. The endeavour of Edoardo is line with *PuntOorg*'s aim of promoting new and multidisciplinary research. As it is customary in *puntOorg* researches, this publication is also the tip of the iceberg of a submerged and choral dialogue. It is in this light that the volume also includes a foreword by Gianluca Colombo and an afterword by Davide Secchi. Both scholars are deeply involved in research agendas in which the aim is to address the meaning of doing research and to explore the advantages of using computer simulation in social sciences. We would like to express our great appreciation for their contributions.

We would also like to express our gratitude to Matteo Graziani, the author of the drawing on the cover of this book, which portrays the simple and minimalist gesture that charac-

terises puntOorg's style. Finally, we thank two reviewers for their valuable comments.

Naples, October 5th, 2015

Luigi Maria Sicca
University of Naples Federico II