

# The Language and thinking in Organization Studies: the visibility of French OS production in the Anglo-Saxon OS field

## The Author

Jean-François Chanlat, *GFR Management et organisation, DRM, UMR-CNRS 7088, Université Paris-Dauphine, France*

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## Abstract

**Purpose** -The purpose of this paper is to clarify the relationship between language, thinking and Society for explaining the degree of visibility of the French Organizational Studies production.

**Design/Methodology/Approach** - It proposes a sociological analysis based on Bourdieu field to understand the variation of reception the French OS production have had among the Anglo-Saxon field. The paper aims to underline some key elements, which can explain the differences of reception experienced by the French OS Scientists. The paper opted for a general review using historical datas, reviews of OS literature, and Google scholar, Web of Science and major OS Journal datas.

**Findings** - The paper provides some evidence about how the degree of visibility of the French OS production is related to translation, cognitive and social resonances, producer place in the scientific network and relationship between the fields. It suggests that degree of visibility is the result of a complex set of socio-cognitive schemes, social issues raised by the scholar, and the place occupied by the researcher in the field.

**Originality and value** -The paper brings interesting ideas concerning the international development of the OS field, the degree of visibility of diverse contributions coming from non-English speaking researchers, notably the French ones, and how the dialogue between different linguistic and social universes can be ameliorated.

**Keywords** - Organization Studies field, French OS visibility, language, cultures and society.

**Article Type** - General Review

## Introduction

Despite interesting and original contributions from across the globe, the field of organization studies (OS) has historically (notably over the last twenty years) been dominated by Anglo-American production and Anglo-American journals. This social reality has provoked a number of publications focusing on the issue of OS production diversity. In light of this, the purpose of this article will be to provide insight into the relationship between language, thought and society. Subsequently, the article will consider the impact of French OS field production on the Anglo-Saxon OS field.

After recalling a number of key elements concerning the relationship between language and thought, and the notion of “field” (Bourdieu), the article will investigate the relationship between French production and the Anglo-Saxon field of OS research. We will then demonstrate how the diffusion process and reception via social cognitive frameworks both play a fundamental role in the degree of visibility enjoyed by French OS production within the Anglo-Saxon OS field.

Next, in order to bring further depth to this process of visibility, we will illustrate the Anglo-Saxon systems related to the production, diffusion and reception of ideas via four interesting examples: 1) the relative invisibility of interesting and influential French OS work in the Anglo-Saxon field because of a lack of translation of these works, 2) how translation can help to render work visible, 3) the situation of relative invisibility despite available translations and 4) the comparative use of Bourdieu and Foucault’s work among OS researchers, notably Anglo-Saxon and French ones.

We will conclude in stressing the importance of social and intellectual specificities linked to language and to the social field, as well as in insisting to what extent the social fabric of reception for different linguistic fields can explain the degree of visibility and influence of French production in the OS field.

### **Language and thinking in the field of organization theory: history lessons**

In the wake of the first reflections on organization and management nearly two decades ago, the majority of subsequent intellectual production has been created in a mother tongue and in some cases translated. In the mid-90s, however, one can note a change in this model related to the growing importance attached to the use of the English language and to Anglo-Saxon publications in a number of different fields (Hagège, 2012; Van Parijs, 2012). This movement is

particularly stark in management and organization studies, and has been described as a hegemony by a great number of analysts (Ibarra-Colorado, 2006; Chanlat, 2011; Tietze and Dick, 2012, Aquino-Alves and Pozzebon, 2013). Moreover, this social fact has had many consequences, particularly on non-English speaking institutions and researchers (Alcadapani and Rosa, 2011; Tsuda, 2013), including French ones (Berry, 2003; Chanlat, 2014a; Chevrier, 2014). As Tietze and Dick (2012) write,

“The English language, through complex historical and political processes has emerged as the dominant and legitimate language in the 21st century—it has been “victorious” insofar as its use, and the development of English-based institutional practices, particularly those originating in the United States, are taken for granted in the academy and particularly so in the field of management and business studies”.

In the OS field, one can easily observe the dominance of the English language, which has been considered as “natural” despite its impact on other linguistic and cultural fields. As Tietze and Dick (2012) go on to claim,

“These academics ... do not appear to be particularly aware of the historical–political processes they are part of and subjected to. Success and failure were mainly attributed to individual circumstance and contextual factors downplayed as ‘a given fact’.”

In other words, this dominance is based on the social practices that guarantee it (Meriläinen, Tienari, Thomas and Davies, 2008). A number of sociolinguists have investigated this form of linguistic domination (Phillipson, 1992), which has been largely debated since its emergence, both in the Anglo-Saxon world and elsewhere (Block and Cameron, 2002; Hall and Eggington, 2000; Berry and Hatchuel, 2002; Ibarra-Colorado, 2006; Hagège, 2012; van Parijs, 2012; Aquino Alves & Pozzebon, 2013; Tsuda, 2013).

Behind this dominance, numerous (more or less hidden) consequences ensue, notably those related to the political, economical, social and cultural issues associated with this hegemony, particularly in its American incarnation (Berry, 2003; Hassan, 2003; Halliday, 2003; Holland, 2002; Grey, 2010; Organization Studies, 2010; Tietze, 2004; Hagège, 2012; Chanlat, 2014a). In effect, what we describe as the Anglo-Saxon field is a diverse group that includes not only the United States, but also the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and all other commonwealth-member countries. As such, this dominance is not only linguistic, but also cultural, as many non-American, English-speaking scholars often share the same sentiments (Grey, 2010; Tietze and Dick,

2012).

These debates have been particularly vigorous in management and OS studies (notably in Europe), where they have dealt with the consequences as well as the progressive adoption of the ranking systems used by schools and journals that are rooted in American standards associated with this dominance (Berry, 2003; Wedlin, 2006; Grey, 2010; Alcadipani and Rosa, 2011; Chanlat, 2014a; Chevrier, 2014). One can easily see the extent to which these important and existential (hidden) stakes weigh on how we see the social world and produce knowledge in our respective fields. It is in this specific historical context that we see French OS production as being embedded and more or less visible within the Anglo-Saxon OS field. But here we must beg the question: What is a field?

### **The OS field: a scientific field in itself**

If we accept Bourdieu's classical concept of field (1980), we can declare without a doubt that the OS field is a social field (Audet, 1986), i.e. a structured hierarchy of actors and positions space that defines itself through specific stakes and interests, which themselves mobilize diverse forms of capital (economical, cultural, social and symbolic).<sup>1</sup>

Bourdieu's analysis also requires a system of dispositions (called "habitus" by Bourdieu) that actors (social agents) can appropriate in order to face the rules of the social "game" and to occupy a place within their field. In other words, such a social field is characterized by its power relationships between its social agents, which are dynamic and consequently subject to change according to the social agents' varying movements and strategies.

Consequently, Michel Audet defines the concept of a "field" in one of the first books to consider administrative sociology and epistemology published in French (1986):

"A field is both a space and a system; it is the space containing the human actors (and their relationships) that produce specific knowledge (or that are recognized as doing so) and that are in competition to obtain control of the definition of the production and validation conditions of this knowledge...the definition of this knowledge and of the production and validation rules are at the origin of the field's

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<sup>1</sup> While economic capital measures an individual's economic resources of (revenues, etc.), cultural capital measures the set of cultural resources, which can take three forms: incorporated (knowledge, "how-to" knowledge, competencies, forms of elocution, etc.), objectified (possession of cultural objects) and institutionalized (titles and diplomas) resources. Social capital measures the set of resources linked to a durable network of social relationships, and finally, symbolic capital defines all kinds of capital (cultural, social or economical) that have a specific signification among the society.

structuration and constitute the central stake of the relationships between the field's members" (p42).

As a social field, OS is the theater of such movements. Since the inception of the field, the American production therein has historically been very influential despite the fact that incredibly interesting work has also been conducted elsewhere (Engwall, 1996, 1998; Czarniawska and Sevón, 2003; Courpasson and alii, 2008; Pesqueux and Tyberghein, 2009; Chanlat, 1994; 2012; Chanlat, Fachin and Fischer, 2006; Meyer, 2010), a historical constatation that is widely recognized and documented (Djelic, 2000; Chessel and Pavis, 2001; Dameron and Durand, 2010). As such, we will briefly describe the main characteristics of the contemporary OS field.

### **The OS field: a scientific field with tensions**

As authors today have insisted on, the OS field faces two key challenges: the first one is a consequence of its positioning in the field of social sciences. This position obliges it to struggle and compete to be recognized as a scientific field in itself (Pfeiffer, 1993). It is a field that has been characterized by a low consensus concerning the validity of its theories (Donaldson, 2009, Kieser, 2007; Pfeiffer, 1993; Van Maanen, 1995; Webster and Starbuck, 1988), a struggle that in France is first and foremost due to the field's historical relationships with economists (Martinet, 1990; David, Hatchuel et Laufer, 2004).

The second challenge is that as a specific field, it is characterized by the impact and domination of American field production, as well as the resulting norms imposed on the field's intellectual diversity. As many analysts have observed, a researcher's production will be more or less taken into account by the dominant American field according to the location where this production takes place (Battilana, Anteby and Sengul, 2010).

In a recent article, Üsdiken (2010) defends the idea that our Western OS field is divided into three spaces: the first one is constituted by a central core located in the USA which since the end of the Second World War has been the most influential source of ideas with a field's second "center": the United Kingdom, a second semi-peripheral space constituted by Northern and Western Europe, and the third one is a peripheral space constituted by Southern Europe, to which we can add emerging and developing countries. However, Üsdiken has not considered this final point, as his article's object is the Western OS universe. Moreover, while Üsdiken's discussion overshadows the relatively autonomous character of the French OS field, (Chanlat, 1994, 2007), he nevertheless stresses the idea that numerous Europeans

fields are distinct from the American field due to their social and epistemological particularities.

In effect, the degree of resistance to the American roller-coaster-like production varies depending on each society in question. This can easily be observed via the degree of uniformity within the adoption of rules of ranking/evaluation systems. In effect, varying degrees of mimesis and conformity to such largely American-inspired rules can be observed in different social settings (Berry et Hatchuel, 2003; Wedlin, 2006; Grey, 2010; Dameron et Durand, 2010). This trend is particularly sensitive in countries in which English is not the mother tongue or dominant language. In many of these countries, any production in the national language and journals dedicated to that language is very often downgraded in comparison with that in English/found in Anglophone journals. It is undeniable that it has become quasi-impossible to participate in the international debate without a mastery of the English language (Nickerson, 2005; Tietze, 2004).

From this point of view, and as Audet has alluded to, the establishment of these ranking systems is a key stake for the actors that are implicated in the system, notably those who are not native English speakers (Berry, 2003; Tsuda, 2013; Aquino-Alves and Pozzebon, 2013; Chanlat, 2014a). However, such systems are also a key stake for English-speaking researchers attached to a certain distinctive vision of their OS field and its intellectual and social traditions (Ljosland, 2007; Maintz, 2010; Grey, 2010). With these trends and effects in mind, one can claim that mental colonization (Ljosland, 2007) and symbolic closure are direct effects of this domination (Meriläinen and al, 2008; Thomas, Tienari, Davies, and Meriläinen, 2009).

For example, as Tietze and Ditz (2012) remind us, Lilis and Curry's work comparing Portugal, Spain, Hungary and Slovakia data (2007) demonstrates that

“The English language is the normalized means to express knowledge and that scholars are aware (and worried) about its expanding use and personal and collective consequences. This normalized and exclusive use of the English language is a further illustration of hegemonic practices, through which meanings that “fall outside the dominant ideology” (Meriläinen et al., 2008, p. 587) become considerably harder (and riskier for individual careers) to express. English is, therefore, not an “innocent” system of syntax through which words and sentences are generated, rather it is a shaping influence on the very meaning of the texts produced” (Tietze, 2004, pp. 9-10).

This hegemonic process has of course been met with varying levels of

resistance in several countries and regional spheres (Aquino Alves & Pozzebon, 2013; Ibarra-Colorado, 2006; Alcadapani and Rosa, 2011; Tsuda, 2013;). In this context, the Francophone OS field continues to defend itself against this hegemony due to its specificities despite pressure to standardize itself according to the Anglo-Saxon criteria presented as international ones (Berry, 1992; 1995, 2003; Hatchuel, 2004; Chanlat, 1992; 1994, 1996, 2007, 2013, 2014a; Hagège, 2012).

### **The structure of the Francophone OS field**

If we agree with Michel Audet's claim above, we can more easily understand that specific rules are rooted in the structure of the Francophone OS field, notably the field's norms regarding language of production and journal rankings. Moreover, these notions have become key issues within the field's intellectual dynamics.

These questions are particularly important due to the rich Francophone intellectual tradition within the social sciences (including management and OS studies), which has privileged historically books and books chapters over journal articles, and the specificities of the historical experience in which these works are embedded (Berry, 2003; Chanlat, 1994, 2007, 2014a; Chevrier, 2014).

This issue takes on an additional dimension, not only when we remember the influence that a number of French intellectual figures have had on contemporary social sciences and the OS field, but also the ignorance or the amnesia inherent in many Anglophone readings of important French works (Chanlat, 2014b).

In the OS field, the contribution of the French researchers has been particularly strong in organizational sociology and psycho-sociology. Based mainly on clinical and historical approach, these works have shown the importance of power relationships, of institutional construction, of symbolic order and of the psychic life a long time ago. Methodologically, they have helped to give case studies, clinical research and qualitative methods a great legitimacy too (Chanlat, 1994; 2007).

It is clearly in this socio-historical context that we can position all these French contributions through this paper's key questions:

1. What is the link between language and thinking?
2. What is the historical relationship between the Francophone and the English-speaking OS fields?
3. What is the visibility of Francophone OS production in the Anglo-Saxon field?

4. What are the key elements of the social fabric of reception that can explain the visibility or invisibility of French OS production?

### **Language and thinking: a brief reminder**

Ever since Ferdinand de Saussure's first reflections on language, numerous researchers and thinkers have seen language as a social product that results from the faculty of language used by a human community. It is "a set of necessary conventions adopted by the social body to permit the exercise of this faculty by the individuals" (Saussure, 19, p.25). If we agree with this idea that language gives form to thinking, we can deduce that speakers belonging to the same linguistic community must have similar thoughts and that conversely, speakers of different linguistic systems must have different thoughts.

The question of the relationships between words and concepts is not a modern one; in Ancient Greece, for example, one finds similar reflections. In the XIX century, Humboldt was the first to defend this idea. But we can also note such ideas in Wittgenstein 'Tractatus logico-philosophicus': "The limits of my language means the limits of my own world" (1918). This idea was later strongly defended by the ethno-linguists, Whorf and Sapir. From their research on the Hopi Indians, they have demonstrated that the Hopi did not have the same vision of time because they have no words in their language for expressing what we mean in the Western world by "time" (1956). Similarly, Sapir underlines that thinking has no autonomous existence beyond the language being used (1929, p214).

The French linguist Claude Hagège recently defended such an idea, reminding us that French contains two words for language, "langue" and "langage" while English has only one, "language", as well as that certain singular concepts of speech can be translated into German, e.g. "mot" (Wort), "langue" (Sprache) or "conversation/propos" (Rede) (Hagège, 2012). While this so-called Sapir/Whorf hypothesis has since been discussed and criticized, it remains that language as a mother tongue is embedded in a socio-cultural universe. In a recent article, Usunier has for example shown how three main elements can help to evaluate the degree of conceptual equivalence between different linguistic systems in international management:

"1. The words and their specific meanings (in the literal or figurative meaning); 2. The words once organized in phrases and in a text, mother tongues operating as code, which must be translated into another linguistic codes when the original language is different from the target language; 3. The specific world visions expressed by the speakers of the mother tongue " (Usunier, 2011, p15).

Examples of these situations in cross-cultural management are both numerous and well known, and the conception of cultures as universes of meaning are shaping our socio-cognitive frames (Hall, 1976; Hofstede, 1980, 2005; d'Iribarne, 1989, 2006; Davel, Dupuis and Chanlat, 2009; Chanlat, Davel and Dupuis, 2013). Consequently, as Usunier (2011) underlines, the cultural presupposed by one's mother tongue, such as orientation toward action, orientation towards future, individualism, rational behavior, etc., are reproduced and transmitted by researcher's instruments.

As Tietze states, the English language is therefore not an "innocent" system of syntax through which words and sentences are generated, but rather a conduit that shapes the very meaning of the texts produced (Tietze, 2004, pp. 9-10). As Hagège underlines, "one must understand that language structures the thought of an individual. Some think that we can promote a French way of thinking in English: they are wrong. Imposing one's language is to impose one's way of thinking" (2012). Here, one can see how the translation of a particular way of thinking is indeed a difficult task, and in some cases impossible due to the fact that "fidelity" to a language implies a translation of cultures, not simply of words (Eco, 2007). For this reason, a number of French works have encountered specific barriers in attempting to make themselves accessible to English-speaker audiences. It is to this issue that we now turn.

As Bourdieu tells us, linguistic form and content are dialectically interrelated (1993). Such a claim has great consequences for our discussion of the relationship between French OS production and the English-speaking field of OS research. Bourdieu's proclamation also gives way to the fact that our French field features its own epistemological and methodological postures and issues, which themselves are quite different from those found in the Anglo-Saxon mainstream (Berry, 2006). Such reflections are shared by many other OS analysts (Hofstede, 1996; Ibarra-Colorado, 2006; Grey, 2010; Meyer, 2010; Tsui, 2007) and Tietze and Dicks, for example, claim it in a recent paper :

"The consequences of hegemony for the production of text based knowledge are also clear: certain meaning systems gain advantage over others; certain epistemological and methodological positions are favored as "messy" epistemologies and approaches are to be avoided. We see these as instances of a "closure of meaning." Here, the concurrent existence of English as the "medium" of communication, together with the vocabulary of management/business discourses originating from the U.S. core, further the use of positivist–realist

epistemologies. Such epistemologies are less concerned with the nuances of context and situation; more concerned with generating generalizable truths. They result in articles that are easier to publish in “the journals that matter.” In turn, this leads to greater conservatism and parochialism in management research and knowledge.”

This comment provides us with an important means of reflection. In effect, while certain non-English speaking researchers, notably a number of French ones believe that in adhering to the norms of the dominant system they will succeed, they fail to take in account the difficulties and the contradictions that they are sure to meet. How can a foreigner entrenched in his/her own local context re-localize him/herself in relationship to the English-speaking field (notably the American one) – whose subtleties are unknown – in order to produce research articles that are perfectly in line with the spirit of the Anglophone OS field dominated mainly by the American agenda?

In regards to this particular issue, we wish to recall several anecdotes of well-known British colleagues told whose papers were rejected by American journals because in one case, his article’s theoretical posture was based on “an unknown French philosopher” (Michel Foucault – this was before the watershed of French theory in the 1990s), another one, because his English was too sophisticated (at the time he was the Editor-in-Chief of a very famous British journal) and another more recent article due to the fact that one of the reviewers was not familiar with Bourdieu’s work, stating his surprise at the fact that such a “so-called important thinker” had not yet published in his own “famous” American management journal.

A great number of our French colleagues have also experienced similar comments, the most common of which demands the worth of French data in the context of the American OS field. From this, we can understand why several important French thinkers have decided not to play the game up until now. This leads us directly to another question: What were and are the relationships between French OS production and Anglophone OS production?

### **The relationships between the French and Anglophone OS production: a brief review**

Interest in organizations first appeared between World War I and World War II with the American studies led by Mayo and the human relations movement. Since then, interest has grown and spread to the majority of industrialized and emergent countries. During the 1960s, in the Anglo-Saxon countries (especially in United States) in which this research was

first conducted, organizational analysis became an independent field of investigation (Blau and Scott, 1962; Etzioni, 1962).

Economic growth, the proliferation of organizations and a marked tendency to rationalize the world have compelled an increasing number of Western and non-Western researchers to question the social dynamics of organized groups. This interest has been reinforced over the years by the failure of collectivist solutions, the growing popularity of private enterprise as well as by the type of management thinking that presently predominates the world, influenced largely by Anglo-Saxon contributions, and more generally by the tendency to conceive of the world through terms related to organization(s) and market-driven forces (Morin, 1973; March, 1974; Presthus, 1978; Crozier and Friedberg, 1980; Bernoux, 1984; Chanlat, 1990; Clegg, Hardy and Nord , 1996; Clegg and Bayley, 2007; Saussois, 2011).

According to this general tendency, which can be observed in most industrialized and emergent countries, Francophone OS analysis itself emerged in the 1960s and has since kept a certain ideological distance from the Anglo-Saxon OS field, particularly from mainstream American analysis (Berry, 2003; Chanlat, 1994, 2007, 2014a; Davoine and Gmür, 2012; Chevrier, 2014). If this singularity is in fact plural (theoretical, methodological and social issues), does it not follow that during this initial period, no relationships existed between the two fields? To answer this question, one must examine the shared history of these two fields.

Since the emergence of American and British studies, there has been contact between the two fields (Anglophone/Francophone). We can refer here to the strong influence of Taylorism on French engineers at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Chanlat and Séguin, 1983; Hatchuel, 1994), the discovery of the Hawthorne effect and the human relation current in the 1930s headed by Georges Friedmann, the founder of the French work sociology (Rot and Vatin, 2004)), the impact of the numerous productivity missions to the USA after the World War II, notably in regards to Michel Crozier's thinking (Boltanski, 1982). It was during a stay supported by such a French mission that Michel Crozier and others discovered the American sociological studies on bureaucracy (Gouldner, Selznick, Merton, Blau) and the Carnegie School's research on decision-making and rationality (Simon, March, Cyert). In the 1950s, a number of French organizational psycho-sociologists such as Pagès, Lévy, Palmade, Enriquez and Dubost discovered the work of Lewin, Moreno, Rogers and others, as well as the research done at the Tavistock by Jaques, Bion, Trist and Bridger (Chanlat, 1994; Barus-Michel, Enriquez and Lévy, 2002).

During the 1960s and 1970s, a large number of French students travelled to the USA and attended PhD management courses. This program was created by the FNEGE (French Foundation for Management Teaching) in order to educate promising French students about management and OS issues, hoping that they would return to France with a wealth of new knowledge. During this same period in France, there was a movement to create new institutions dedicated to these questions: IAE (Institute of Business Administration among universities) and the University of Paris-Dauphine, both of which were aimed at closing the gap in managerial thinking between France and the USA. The FNEGE grants were closely linked to this political agenda (Boltanski, 1982, Djelic, 2000; Chanlat, 1994; Chessel and Parvis, 2001). Also during this period, the first journals in management and OS emerged, for example *la Revue Française de Gestion*, founded in 1974 in partnership with *Gestion* in Montréal.

In the 1980s and 1990s, this institutionalization in Francophone countries and France itself gained momentum through the development of research, the creation of French-speaking international scientific associations (AIMS, AGRH), the growing popularity of management programs among the students, the acceptance of organizations as legitimate scientific objects, and an increasing desire to partake in English-speaking conferences (mid-1990s) in both European and North America (EGOS, EURAM, AOM).

The beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will certainly continue to reinforce the relationships with the English-speaking OS field, notably the European one (EGOS and EURAM). Today, some French PhD candidate can know the English-language OS production better than the French literature due to the fact that these more frequent encounters with the English-speaking field as well as the more-or-less compulsory requisite of reading and publishing in English, a model that is at once recognized, respected and promoted (Musselin, 2009; Dameron and Durand, 2010). At times, this tendency has strange side-effects: frequently, some French students can be entirely ignorant in regards to French OS production and the history of the French OS field (Chanlat, 2013; 2014a). We have replaced the ignorance among the French researchers of English OS production – which was very common in the 1960s-1980s (Chanlat, 1989) – with a new ignorance of Francophone production itself.

While bibliographic amnesia is not only a French problem (Hassard, Cox and Rowlinson, 2013), it is an element that can indeed explain why certain works are known and others are simply ignored. The adoption of the experimental scientific article model in the OS field is clearly responsible of this amnesia. In some areas, and for some colleagues, a

PhD thesis could not have a bibliography with references over five years old (a comment we have recently heard).

To sum up, this brief historical review demonstrates that there have been relationships between the French and Anglo-Saxon OS researchers since the beginning; however, while during the first decades of the OS field this relationship was limited, today it no longer is. Conversely, in some situations, English OS production is privileged where as French OS production is more or less ignored. As we can see, this socio-historical background is important in considering study the degree of visibility and the place occupied by French OS production in the Anglo-Saxon OS field.

### **The visibility or invisibility of French OS production in the English-speaking OS field: some illustrative cases**

Based on our familiarity with both the French (Chanlat, 1992; 1994; 1996; 2007) and English-speaking OS fields (Séguin and Chanlat, 1983; Chanlat and Séguin, 1987; Chanlat, 1989; 2006; 2011), we can highlight four situations concerning the degree of visibility of French OS production:

- 1) Invisibility due to the lack of English translation;
- 2) Visibility resulting from an English translation and its impact on the Anglo-Saxon OS field;
- 3) A relative invisibility despite the availability of an English translation;
- 4) The differentiated use of well-known French works (notably Bourdieu and Foucault) by English speaking researchers in comparison with their French colleagues. Each of these four situations illustrates what it is at stake for the OS field in regards to the relationship between language, thinking and society.

#### **Invisibility due to the lack of translation: a common situation**

The first most common situation is that of invisibility, which occurs when a work has not been translated and is therefore not available in the English language. Numerous scholars in social sciences regularly regret that certain important works have not been translated into their mother tongues. In the OS field, we can note a number of seminal texts, such as those written by Selznick and Gouldner, which are not yet translated and Follett and Barnard, which have been only translated at the end of the nineties<sup>2</sup>. Such a statement can also be made for the Anglo-Saxon OS field: a great number of important French works have never been translated and are not available to English-speaking researchers. For

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<sup>2</sup> Along with my colleague Francine Séguin, I have personally worked to translate numerous classic Anglo-Saxon OS publications (Séguin et Chanlat, 1983; Chanlat et Séguin, 1987).

example, we can refer here to the rich French studies and reflections regarding the psycho-sociology of organizations. While these works have been regularly translated into the Latin languages (Spanish, Portuguese, Italian) and have been influential in these respective linguistic arenas (Chanlat, 1992, 1994, 2007; Montano-Hirose, 2005; Vergara, 2006; Alcadanpani and Rosa, 2011), they have been all but invisible on in the Anglo-Saxon OS landscape.

Among others, and according to Google Scholar datas, we are referring here to the likes of Enriquez (GS : 4950), Pagès (GS : 5450), Lapassade (2580), Lourau, (GS: 2210), Anzieu (GS : 6210), Lévy (GS: 1350), Gauléjac (GS : 2550) and whose work has dealt with the sociology of organizations : Sainsaulieu (GS: 1770), Reynaud (GS : 2470), d'Iribarne (GS :1760),Thoenig (GS: 2380), Alter (GS : 3140), as well as the pioneering studies conducted in psychological clinics, notably the seminal psychodynamic work of Dejours (GS : 5060) and his team (1980, 1993; 2000; 2012) or in management : Hatchuel (GS: 1710), Laufer (GS : 2020), Alain-Charles Martinet (GS : 495). With a small number of exceptions, these classic works rarely appear in the bibliographies of our Anglo-Saxon colleagues.

The lack of translation is clearly a first explanation for this invisibility. Moreover, it is the first element of the social fabric of reception in a specific field, even if certain books are read in their original language forming a small group of elites: only translation can give potential visibility for a selected work throughout an entire field.

### **Availability in English as well as its impact on the OS field**

Translating a book is a crucial element for any researcher's potential visibility. Consider the importance of Giddens' Constitution of Society when it appeared for the first time in French thanks to Michel Audet's translation (Giddens, 1987). Before this French edition, Giddens was only known by a small group of researchers in Quebec (Audet, 1986) and Belgium (Eraly, 1988). As such, it is not by chance that the translator is a French-Canadian.<sup>3</sup> After this translation was published, one could immediately observe a growing interest in Giddens' structuration theory within the French OS community (Audet and Bouchiki, 1993; Bouchiki, 1994; Wacheux and Autissier, 2000), and today, Giddens is a classic theoretical reference in the French OS field (Rojot, 2005).

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<sup>3</sup> It is regrettable that in many cases, people forget the importance of the translator. This is a true intellectual injustice given the quality of the French version, which in that case is in many ways superior to the original (with the translator's notes). This translation is in effect an excellent example of what Eco might have written on the issue (2007)

In both the social sciences and philosophy, other examples can be mentioned, including Foucault, Derrida, Bourdieu, Deleuze, Kristeva, Lyotard and Baudrillard. Interestingly, many of these works deal with the importance of translation in the social sciences and philosophy (Cusset, 2004). We will consider two specific examples of this: Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu.

In Google Scholar (accessed May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013), the number of citations of Michel Foucault number is 367,381. The table below illustrates these citations according to each of his works.

	All	Since 2008
<u>Citations</u>	367	381
<u>indice h</u>	194	150
<u>indice i10</u>	961	650

Using the same resource, citations of Pierre Bourdieu number is 286,757.

	All	Since 2008
<u>Citations</u>	286 757	139 614
<u>indice h</u>	192	142
<u>indice i10</u>	606	500

We can easily see that Foucault and Bourdieu are in fact two of the most quoted thinkers in the world.

In comparison, it is interesting to note for example the situations of great intellectual figures such as Jacques Derrida (total: 119,782 – Of Grammatology: 10,444; Writing and différence: 5,394), Alain Touraine (total: 26,600), Jurgen Habermas (total: 64,200 – The Structural Transformation of the public sphere: 9,996, Knowledge and Human interest, 7,921), Anthony Giddens (total: 73,100) Sartre (total: 76,000 – Being and nothingness: 5505), Aron (total: 33,100), Merleau-Ponty (total: 33,900 Phenomenology of perception: 16,708), Cornelius Castoriadis (total: 14,000 – The imaginary of Institution of Society: 1,184).

As for the French OS field itself, there is no doubt that Henri Fayol and Michel Crozier are the most famous recognized authors, Fayol for his book "General and Industrial Management" (translated into English in 1949) and Crozier for the "Bureaucratic phenomenon" (1967).

On Google Scholar, Fayol holds 13,900 citations and Crozier 17,700. For their respective texts, Fayol has 2,445 citations and Crozier 3,549. As Donald Shon once said, "French thinking has something very specific and strong but it does not add up to much the American world today with the notable exception of Michel Crozier. "The bureaucratic phenomenon" is a great book, as it articulates both living descriptions and theoretical ideas" (quoted by Berry, 1992). It is interesting to compare these authors with the likes of Bruno Latour (total: 57,800 – Laboratory Life: 8,048; We have never been modern: 6,891) or Michel Callon (total: 22,700), two influential French sociologists in the contemporary Anglo-Saxon field of social sciences and related to the Actor-Network theory.

If we seek out now which authors are being cited by two leading OS journals – one American, Academy of Management Review, and the other European, Organization Studies, we can observe the following results (from a selection of both American and foreign scholars):

Academy of Management Review number of citations (May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013):

John Van Maanen, 1,472, John Child, 1,297, James March: 1,202, Richard Scott, 1,164, Michael Porter, 958, Herbert Simon, 792, David Selznick, 688, Danny Miller, 610, W F Whyte, 609, Karl Weick, 591, Oliver Williamson, 403, Mary Parker Follett, 511, Frederic W Taylor, 501, Henry Mintzberg, 466, William Starbuck, 394, Andrew Pettigrew, 318, Dennis Gioa, 295, Stewart Clegg, 277, Ana Grandori, 221, Gibson Burrell, 219, Denise Rousseau, 201, Chester Barnard, 187, Jane Bartunek 194, Jeffrey Pfeffer, 185, Steve Barley, 188, Anthony Giddens, 185, Rosabeth Moss Kanter, 184, Cynthia Hardy, 176, Barbara C Joerges, 142, Alfred Kieser, 142, Amitai Etzioni, 123, Geert Hofstede, 120, Matts Alvesson, 104, Alwin Gouldner 102, **Michel Crozier: 94, Michel Foucault, 99**, Hugh Willmott, 85, **Jacques Derrida, 74**, Jan Trompenaars, 71, **Henri Fayol: 69, Pierre Bourdieu, 59**, Abraham Zaleznick: 58, Elton Mayo, 57, Marta Calas, 52, Roethlisberger et Dickson, 88, **Bruno Latour, 37**, John Hassard, 34, Orlikowski, 34, Nils Brunsson, 32, Arndt Sorge, 16, Dvora Yanow, 11, Alvesson, **R-A Thiétard, 10, J-C Thoenig, 3, Courpasson, 1, Chanlat, 1, Hatchuel, 1.**

Organization Studies:

John Child, 436, James March, 396, Karl Weick, 276, Stewart Clegg, 229, David Knight, 207, Herbert Simon, 198, **Michel Foucault, 196**, Henry Mintzberg, 177, Richard Whitley, 179, Hugh Willmott, 163, Gibson Burrell, 152, Geert Hofstede, 142, Arndt Sorge, 112, John Haasard, 107, Alfred Kieser, 95, **David Courpasson, 88, Michel Crozier: 82, Pierre Bourdieu, 88**, David Silverman, 86, **Bruno Latour, 72**, Nils Brunsson, 72, Barbara C Joerges, 65, Danny Miller, 62, **J-C Thoenig, 67**, Michel Callon, 49, **Jacques Derrida, 47**, Ken Starkey, 48, **Erhard Friedberg, 23, Philippe d'Iribarne, 19, Henri Fayol, 13, Armand Hatchuel, 13, Jean-François Chanlat, 9.**

As we can see, French authors are more heavily quoted by researchers in Organization Studies than by those in Academy of Management Review. Among these, the most quoted thinkers are Michel Crozier, Michel Foucault, Henri Fayol, Pierre Bourdieu, Jacques Derrida and Bruno Latour for AMR, and Michel Foucault, David Courpasson, Michel Crozier, Pierre Bourdieu, Bruno Latour and Jean-Claude Thoenig for Organization Studies.

But the translation itself is not enough. We know from history and the sociology of sciences that certain translated and published books have difficulties meeting their intended public, be it immediately following translation or later. Other elements of this social fabric of reception (dissemination process, mobilized capitals, cognitive reception frames) play a role in degree of influence of the translated publication (Bouilloud, 1997). We will now illustrate examples of such situations.

### **A relative invisibility despite the existence of an English translation**

While it is common that certain translated books remain relatively unknown, it is also true that certain books that at first go unnoticed can go on to acquire notability new interest and actuality in other historical contexts. Some also can have a great influence during years and declines after, as Marcel Mauss' example in American OS shows (Chanlat, 2014b). These two generic examples show again that a text being translated and published is not synonymous with being read and well received, a condition that depends on a number of factors (intellectual, cultural and social). It is to these factors that we now turn.

In the OS field, consider the well-known example of Crozier and Friedberg's work "L'acteur et le système" (1977; 1980). While Crozier's "Le phénomène bureaucratique" is a key reference in the OS field and largely quoted in the English-speaking field (Pugh and Hickson, 2007; Rouillard, 2008), "L'acteur et le système" has not seen the same

success. While the French version of Crozier and Friedberg is considered as a classic work in the Francophone field (4,803 citations in Google Scholar), and more generally in the Latin countries (Bernoux, 1987; Chanlat, 1992; 2007; Davoine and Gmür, 2012), the English version, entitled “Actors and systems: the politics of collective action” (1980), is at best lightly quoted in English when compared with “the Bureaucratic phenomenon” (515 versus 3,549 according to Google Scholar (May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013)). On the Academy Of Management Review’s website, a search conducted on Michel Crozier and Erhrard Friedberg’s book results in only 10 references out of 2,820, which is indeed quite low.

From this example, it is clear that the reception of two books by the same author can vary in the OS field. We will now analyze the main reasons of this difference in reception. In order to do so, we will mobilize three elements that Usunier (2011) has recently suggested, as well as a number of issues highlighted by Tietze and Berry previously discussed in this article.

According to specific information and the data that we have collected, this difference in reception is due first to the text’s words and their specific meanings, the organization of the text, the specific world vision expressed by the mother tongue and intellectual traditions. If we read book reviews in various journals, we see a number of important contrasts. Arthur Stinchcombe’s (1979) opinion as expressed in the *American Journal of Sociology* is clearly negative. He strongly criticizes the book as being unoriginal (Goffman, Hughes and Howard Becker have had similar reflections), pompous and pedantic in its style (the use of “we”), and lacking a discussion of more general social games in the text’s discussion of social relationships. According to his view within organizational settings, incentive pay cannot not be detached from the logic of the capitalist system. This point of view is shared by other researchers, among them Doerrenbächer and Geppert (2004), who underline the under-conceptualization of the structural embeddedness of agency, which remains a weakness in micro-political approaches such as those of Crozier/Friedberg’s: “In summary: Micro-political approaches have ignored that wide areas of social reality and organizational reality – as a part of that – do not rise to being the object of micro-politics because of high degrees of institutionalization and unquestioned social consensus. While the dimension of power and politics is overstressed, the limitations of what is politicised and politicise-able remain unexplored (Ortmann 1992: 21)” (Doerrenbächer and Geppert, 2004). Other reviews are very positive; for example, Christian Rouillard (2005) commented on the immediate relevance of the text.

This is a typical experience for foreign researchers, notably French-speaking researchers, when they attempt to publish in English. Even if success stories for such cases are more numerous today than in the past, Latour and Callon, for example, it is clear that these researchers face a socio-cognitive challenge. Interestingly, it is for this reason that many choose other publication alternatives. While translation is largely encouraged as a means of more expansive diffusion, the resulting disillusion can ultimately be overbearing, as can be the numerous obstacles (problems concerning the meaning of words, intellectual frameworks, field position, publication channels, congress attendance, association belonging and involvement). In order to shed light on these issues, we will consider the cases of Bourdieu and Foucault, whose reception is particularly interesting in illustrating how this social process works.

### **Large visibility for French translated works in the Anglo-Saxon OS field: Bourdieu and Foucault examples**

As we have seen before, Bourdieu and Foucault are particularly well known in the social sciences and are to day among the most quoted thinkers in the world. Bourdieu, and more notably Foucault, are associated with what the Anglo-Saxons call the “French Theory”. This expression refers to a set of very diverse French thinkers who were and are popular in English-speaking countries and beyond (Cusset, 2005).

What is immediately interesting to observe is the reception of these authors’ works in two comparative universes: that of Anglo-Saxon OS production and the other of French OS production. The first striking observation is that the interest in their work has been stronger in the Anglo-Saxon OS field than in the French OS field (Mc Kinlay and Starkey, 1997; Hatchuel, Pezet, Starkey and Lenay, 2005; Goldsorkhi and Huault, 2006; Goldsorkhi, Huault and Leca, 2009; Sieweke, 2011).

While Bourdieu and Foucault were and are without any doubt key intellectual figures in France within the fields of sociology and philosophy, they began to interest French OS researchers only at the turning point of the 20th century. On the contrary, such interest in both Foucault (Burrell and Cooper, 1988) and Bourdieu (Di Maggio, 1983; Di Maggio and Powell, 1983) began to mount in the Anglo-Saxon OS world during the 1980s and in certain cases for Foucault at the end of the 1970s for some Australian philosophers (Clegg, 1998). Why is it that the Anglo-Saxon world was interested by these two thinkers well before French researchers were? And did they receive content from these two authors? We are going to answer now to these questions.

## The Bourdieu example

Many researchers have undertaken studies of Dissemination theory in the sciences (Kuhn, 1962; Dogan and Pahré, 1991; Davis, 1986; Bouilloud, 2004). In the OS field, which is characterized by a low consensus on theory (Pfeiffer, 1994), some scholars have attempted to study the elements related to the success of specific theories. McKinley, Mone and Moon (1999) demonstrate that factors such as the novelty of a theory as well as its continuity and scope have great influenced its ultimate level of visibility. Other researchers show that the reputations of journals and theoreticians also play an important role in this process (Ofori-Dankwa and Julian, 2005 ; Peter and Olson, 1983). Still others have argued that in the case of a field in which any theory can be valid, the rhetoric of theories (Davis, 1986) or the stories that they tell (Daft, 1983), are more important than the theory's scientific value itself. Hofstede adds another element to this equation by emphasizing the cultural framework(s) shared by the researcher and the theory (1996).

This cultural dimension is particularly important. Numerous OS publications argue and demonstrate that production seems to hold a number of specificities according to scholars' societal origin; that scholars do not quote the same authors and articles (Chanlat, 1994; Battilana, Anteby and Sengul, 2010, Meyer and Boxenbaum, 2010; Usdiken and Pasadeos, 1995, Meyer, 2010; Davoine and Gmür, 2012), use different research methods and practices (Collin and al, 1996; Koza and Thoenig, 1995; Chanlat, 1994) and historically publish more heavily in book or book-chapter formats (Berry, 1992; 2003; Chanlat, 1994; 2014a;Chavrier, 2014).

However, Baum has recently been challenged this idea, arguing through his analysis of three recent handbooks that while this "Atlantic divide" is "supported" by many scholars, it is not strongly founded (2011). Baum concludes that: "current associations of these traditions with North American and European scholarship thus seem driven more by academic rhetoric than authentic continental distinctions."(2011: 1679).

This does not mean that the studies are invalid due to the type of publications being analyzed. In effect, handbooks are by nature (their main goal is to give the largest possible overview of a field) more open to varying positions than are journals, which themselves defend a clear editorial line. This might explain why Baum's study does not highlight such a division. It is clear that numerous North American scholars share a number of positions with European researchers, but their inscription in the American field can be more difficult due to the editorial lines of American journals and the existence of so-called mainstream debates. In such cases, European journals such as Organization Studies can

play an important role in publishing more contested and innovative American works that are based on the work of European intellectual figures, who in turn will later be re-imported to America. This point has been argued and reinforced by recent OS studies dealing with the circulation of ideas between academic communities (Battilana, Anteby and Sengul, 2010).

By again considering Bourdieu's work, we can contest that this is not abnormal, as "the meaning of any work (artistic, literary, philosophical, etc.) changes automatically with each move in the field within which it is situated for the spectator or reader" (1983: 313). According to Bourdieu, in any social field a text always depends on three main pillars: the author's habitus, the field's structuration and his position occupied in that field (Bourdieu, 1988).

In a very interesting recent paper (2011) inspired by Bourdieu work on the concept of the "field", Jost Sieweke has studied the dissemination of his work within the OS fields of Western Europe and North America. In doing so, he has considered five management journals: two American (Academy of Management Journal and Academy of Management Review) and three European (British Journal of Management, Journal of Management Studies, Journal of Management). He has also considered four OS journals: two European (Organization Studies, Organization) and two American (Administrative Science Quarterly, Organization Science). All of these journals were analyzed for a thirty-year period ranging from 1980-2009.

This analysis gives way to a number of interesting points. First, Sieweke reminds us that Bourdieu developed his own ideas within the French scientific and intellectual context, and was influenced by his own social trajectory and by great intellectual figures such as Marcel Mauss, Claude Lévi-Strauss and Jean-Paul Sartre (Bourdieu, 2000; Wacquant, 1993). According to Wacquant, who was one of his disciples working in the USA, the transfer of his ideas was difficult due to the characteristics of the US field (1993), notably their classification of Bourdieu theory according to their dominant duality cognitive frameworks: micro-macro and structure-agency.

One of the elements that play a role in this reception process concerns the links between established intellectual frameworks. Based on Davis' contribution (1971), we see that the popularity of a theory is found in its content and novelty as opposed to its taken-for-granted ideas; however, a theory must also connect with existing theoretical elements. If the theory is too radical and rejects everything within the established paradigm, the community will strongly reject the theory. McKinley et al (1999) have emphasized on both the novelty and continuity of a theory.

As such, the cognitive distance that Sieweke mentions, “which is defined here as the differences in the taken-for granted assumptions in social field” (2011: 8), plays a large role in the theory’s reception. If the dissonance is small, the new theory will enjoy a better reception than if it were large. This focus on dissonance is particularly interesting when one understands the assumed differences between Western European and North American scholars. While the latter develop more micro-oriented, universalistic and prescriptive approaches, the former are rooted in more macro-oriented, critical, processual and voluntary approaches (Hofstede, 1996, Kassem, 1976, Üsdiken and Pasadeos, 1995, Chanlat, 1994, 2007). For this reason, Bourdieu work has received a larger reception in Western Europe, including UK, than it has in the OS field found in the USA (Carter, 2008) and despite the initial paper of Di Maggio and Powell (1983).

Sieweke’s study was carried out following the collection and analysis of 268 articles citing Bourdieu in the previously mentioned nine journals. The quotes were classified as ceremonious (formal) or substantive (including a discussion). The main results show that during the 30-year period, Bourdieu was more frequently quoted in European OS journals (7.3%) than in American ones (2.9%), as well as more heavily in European management journals (2.3%) than in American ones (1.0%). In another analysis, Sieweke demonstrates that the total share of US authors quoting Bourdieu is lower than British and Western European authors, the British being the highest. In North America, Canadian scholars seemed to be more interested by Bourdieu than their American counterparts, and as such, closer to their British and Western European colleagues.

Among the three Bourdieu main concepts (capital, field and habitus), capital is the most frequently cited, but is oddly the least discussed. American scholars tend to discuss the “field” concept (50.6%) more so than that of “habitus” (29.7%) or “capital” (23.8%). “Habitus” is also more frequently discussed in Canada (87.2%) and Western Europe (55.6%) – notably by the British (64.2%) – than “field” (33.1%) or “capital” (30.9%). The popularity of the new institutionalism of North American OS can explain the popularity of the concept of “field”, as the notion of organizational field is closely associated with Bourdieu concept (Di Maggio, 1983; Di Maggio and Powell, 1983; Greenwood and Meyer, 2008). Finally, Sieweke shows that over the last decade, there has been a growing interest among Anglo-Saxon OS field in Bourdieu work. This is also true in the French OS field, notably among the French critical management studies movement (Golsorkhi, Huault and Leca, 2009; Allard-Poesi, 20).

What is striking within the different receptions of Bourdieu is the way

that his concepts have been used, notably in the US. As Emirbayer and Johnson states,

“Certain concepts associated with his thought, such as field or capital, two of the cornerstones of his sociology, are already widely known in the organizational literature. However, the specific ways in which these terms are being used provide ample evidence that the full significance of his relational mode of thought has yet to be apprehended. Moreover, the almost total inattention to habitus, the third of Bourdieu’s major concepts, without which the concepts of field and capital make no sense, further attests to the misappropriation of his ideas and to the lack of their potential usefulness” (2005: 2). Emirbayer and Johnson also underline the fact that not one of the 38 articles in the encyclopedic Blackwell companion to organizations (Baum, 2002) mentions Bourdieu (2005: 2), which they suggest is perhaps due to the late translation of *The Social Structures of the Economy* (2005).

American OS scholars use of the concept of “field” is even stranger if one considers that Bourdieu himself insisted that “capital does not exist and function except in relation to a field” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 101). Moreover, few North American scholars acknowledge the original connection (as Di Maggio has) between Bourdieu’s field concept and that of organizational field (Emirbayer and Johnson, 2005). This is also the case regarding the concept of habitus, which has itself been employed less by scholars as we have previously seen (Sieweke, 2011).

For many Anglo-Saxon OS scholars, the interest of Bourdieu’s thinking is based on its usefulness in answered key questions regarding organizational analysis, notably the process by which organizational change or reproduction emerges from individual actions. His intellectual framework is larger than Giddens’ structuration theory, even if both attempts are very similar, e.g. their instance on overcoming dualities, actor-structure, objectivity-subjectivity and history-structure. Bourdieu puts greater theoretical emphasis on the field as a space of power and struggle and positions habitus as the set of generative principles for strategies of action in relation to such a field (Emirbayer and Johnson, 2005). Furthermore, his thinking, contrasting with Giddens work, is more heavily grounded in a large number of empirical researches and data that he and his team collected. For example, his emphasis on symbolic violence and his criticism of the doxa give way to organizational researchers’ attempts to understand how any social order perpetuates itself in presenting itself as natural rather than as a social construct.

Another element that is also potentially interesting for OS researchers is Bourdieu’s analysis of intra-organizational relation:

“ It allows one to reconceptualize each individual organization as more

or less temporarily stable structure of power; to examine the positions or stances assumed by individual organizational members and the effects thereof on organizational structure; and to analyze systematically the complex relationship between the individual organization and its larger social context” (Emirbayer and Johnson, 2005: 36).

When American scholars are debating the relationship between organizations and society (Stern and Barley, 1996; Scott, 1996; Clegg and Bayley, 2007; Scott, 2004), Bourdieu’s intellectual framework is an excellent tool for analyzing it (Emirbayer and Johnson, 2005, Tatli, Özbilgin and Karatas-Özkan, forthcoming).

At last, beyond the fecundity of his main concepts of field, capital and habitus, there is another aspect of Bourdieu’s thinking that is important for Anglo-Saxon scholars: his reflections on reflexivity. As stated by colleagues from the UK,

“Bourdieu’s sociology provides management and organization scholars with much more than the narrow concept of reflexivity currently offers the discipline, which itself mainly focuses on the relationship between the researcher and the researched. For management and organization studies, Bourdieuan reflexive turn suggest a recognition of the embeddedness of the researchers themselves as well as the promotion of openness and reflexive rigor in research” (Tatli, Özbilgin and Karatas-Özkan, forthcoming).

As we can see, while Bourdieu’s work is increasingly influential in the Anglo-Saxon OS field, it has been met with varying degrees of openness in different countries. In France, Bourdieu’s thinking is also more popular than ever before, notably among the French CMS community (Golsorkhi, Huault and Leca, 2009). With the Bourdieu example in mind, we will now turn to Foucault’s reception in the OS field.

### **Foucault example**

Already very influential in the social sciences and philosophy, Michel Foucault’s thinking was first introduced to the OS field first by Anglo-Saxon scholars, notably through a network of Australian and British researchers (Burrell and Cooper, 1988; Clegg, 1989; Parker, 1992; Hassard and Parker, 1995; McKinlay and Starkey, 1997). Some of these scholars have based their postmodern positions on Foucault’s work (Burrell and Copper, 1988), while others have attempted to adapt it differently (Starkey, 2005).

In a book published in French that considers Foucault’s reception in

these two universes, we can see how the each OS field has used the Foucault's intellectual framework differently, as well as how in some cases Anglo-Saxon interpretations of his work differ greatly from those of French OS researchers (Hatchuel, Pezet, Starkey, Lenay, 2005).

In the last two decades, we have observed a growing interest in the contribution of the work of Michel Foucault to our understanding of organizations, notably around the issue of the internalization of imperatives of power by the modern subject (Townley, 2005). For certain OS scholars, Foucault is a "postmodern" thinker whose work reveals that contemporary organizational life is not necessarily oriented towards the "better", thereby positioning Foucault within the tradition of the critique of organizational rationalization that began with Weber. In this context, Foucault's contribution is often used to underline the development of disciplines of knowledge within modern organizations and to analyze particular historical social experiences, such as the study of Britain's Great Western Railway from 1833 to 1914 (Savage, 1997). This particular analysis demonstrates that the discovery of career incentives was a more efficient technique for shoring up company discipline than traditional threats of negative sanctions. Other studies have analyzed how internal management accounting creates the visible and measurable responsibility centers that structure contemporary corporations, while others have dealt with the techniques through which contemporary enterprises affect their employees' internalization of management imperatives. Another has detailed the process through which a company handpicked its job applicants for their docility and then set up a system of "team-working" and intense "peer review", that delegated management surveillance to all employees and provoke resistance in the employee group (McKinlay and Starkey, 1997).

According to some scholars, the criticism of such work inspired by Foucault is that it fails to appreciate the wider significance of his work. Given that Foucault clearly emphasized the wider societal significance of the local technologies of social organization that emerged in early modernity, one can claim, that "a Foucauldian study of contemporary corporate practices must resolutely consider our global political and economic situation" (Thompson, 2004).

The use of Foucault's thinking has been fueled by his so-called archeological position and have been seen by many as a good substitute for either the Marx-inspired current (the Labor process) or for some disillusioned contingency researchers (Rowlinson and Carter, 2002). As McKinlay and Starkey state, these Foucauldian categories and procedures shed "a fresh light on the history of the factory, management and the modern corporation" (1998: 8). However, as

mentioned by Rowlinson and Carter (2002), the majority of OS researchers using Foucault do not fully grasp the main criticisms of his work leveled by historians. As we can see, Foucault's influence is important to the Anglo-Saxon OS field, but there are still debates concerning his relevancy and the manner by which his works should be used (Starkey, 2005). As Starkey states:

"The 'critical' Anglo-Saxons management researchers have appropriated Foucault's work, not only because of the philosopher's thesis, but also for its honorific, identity and totemic effects. One can suggest that Foucault's thinking has been adopted not only for the intellectual substance of his work, but also as a totem used to define and distinguish an intellectual territory and as a community mark of recognition. As Foucault is a difficult author to understand, without disciplinary frame one can solicit Foucault or project on him the tribe anxieties. Above all, Foucault has himself given a powerful totemic symbol, the Panopticon, which disciples love" (2005: 44).

Unsurprisingly, the Panopticon would go on to be used as a major critical tool against the management techniques that "imprison" personnel (Burrell, 1988; Starkey, 2005). But, as Starkey states again, this vision of Foucault's Panopticon is too simplistic and in many ways deeply un-Foucauldian. In his last reflections, Foucault defended a critical position privileging the creative imagination, which in fact gave way to new social possibilities (1985,1986).

In the French OS field, it is also interesting to note how Foucault's thought has been mobilized. As we have said before, Foucault was not used in the French OS field until the end of the 1990s and beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century (Hatchuel, Pezet, Starkey and Lenay, 2005). As Hatchuel, Pezet, Starkey and Lenay state: "Today, we can insist that Foucault's production affirms the unsuspected importance of management and governance issues for the history of the modern conscience" (2). Foucault has also shown that organization, management and governance form "the exact regime of conception and production of Power-Knowledge relationships" (2).

Contrary to their Anglo-Saxon colleagues, French OS scholars do not take Foucault's intellectual heritage into account. In fact, Hatchuel, Pezet, Starkey and Lenay's (2005) book is the first time in the French OS field that Foucault is positioned as an organization theoretician. Hatchuel demonstrates that Foucault is participating to a new epistemology: an epistemology of action. This epistemology acknowledges the genealogical character of certain universals (truth, power and the subject) in modern societies. As we can see, this Foucauldian "détour" can be very fruitful for OS scholars if they exploit the richness of his thinking, notably in studying what people concretely

do and how they do it. But they have to be aware of his last reflections closer to Hayek Liberalism too, a fact which came very recently (Deranty, 2013).

## **Conclusion**

This article has attempted to demonstrate how the diffusion process and the reception via social cognitive frameworks both play a fundamental role in the degree of visibility for French OS production within the Anglo-Saxon OS field.

After recalling the link between language and thinking, we relied on Bourdieu concept of “field” in order to describe the contemporary context of OS. Before analyzing the degree of visibility enjoyed by French OS production in the Anglo-Saxon field, we outlined a brief history of the relationships between the French OS field and the Anglo-Saxon one, as it is within this socio-historical framework in which one must study this issue of French OS production’s visibility.

We have illustrated the Anglo-Saxon systems related to the production, diffusion and reception of ideas via four illuminating examples of French publications. In doing so, we have seen how the absence of translation is a key reason behind the lack of visibility for French OS production, how the reception of two of Crozier’s translated books, for example, were welcomed differently, and how both Bourdieu and Foucault’s work has been used differently in the Anglo-Saxon world in comparison with the French world.

We conclude by stressing the importance of the social and intellectual specificities linked to language and to sociolinguistic fields, as the social fabric of reception of each linguistic field can more or less explain the degree of visibility and influence of a specific form of production within the OS field. As Hofstede once stated:

“The General Hierarchy of Systems shows why a universal consensus about any theory of organization is basically impossible. People from different countries, including authors of theories, have different paradigms in mind as to 'in the beginning was', like the market in the U.S.A., and power in France.” (1996).

This brief study of the degree of visibility of French OS production in the Anglo-Saxon OS field proves that Hofstede was right. More specifically, this degree of visibility is influenced by a number of different factors: 1) the availability of an English translation, 2) the quality of the diffusion,

the diffuser and of the supportive scholars' networks, notably the seniority and the position of the endorser within the field, 3) the novelty of the ideas being proposed, 4) the resonance of these ideas according to Anglo-Saxon intellectual frames and social issues, and 5) the distinctive potential character of these ideas in the Anglo-Saxon field.

As we can see, there exists a dialogue between these two fields, a conversation that has been historically contextualized in this article. In doing so, we have stressed that in today's OS field, Bourdieu and Foucault enjoy the same popularity in theoretical and methodological framework, much like Latour and Callon, who we have not discussed here. Moreover, if we have seen that Fayol and Crozier are always presented as classic, we have also pointed out that a great number of original and influential French works remain relatively unknown to many Anglo-Saxon OS scholars. As such, it would be interesting to close this gap by undertaking translations of these classic French OS works. Such a project is perfectly in relationship with the European experience as stressed by Umberto Eco, for who the language of Europe is translation (2007). We hope that in the future, this idea will be taken more seriously and in turn acted upon. As Immanuel Wallerstein, the former President of the ISA (International Sociological Association), has stated: "I think that intellectuals can play a role in creating scientific journals, newspapers which can be clearly multilingual, These are the kind of little gestures which can be done, as Pierre Bourdieu states it, to reinforce the existing tendencies " (in Bourdieu, 2001, p78).

We are all actors in this process. We hope that this paper has demonstrated what can be done in the OS field to facilitate the circulation of ideas across various linguistic and social borders, and notably maintain an intellectual and linguistic diversity. Why should non-Anglophone researchers, and notably the French, would conform themselves to the American system when many Anglo-Saxons researchers have heavily criticized the effects of the system of knowledge/ publications within the Anglophone OS field itself?(Van Maanen, 1996; Grey, 2010)

From this point of view, OS scholars have a role to play. The specific issue of French OS production is a strong example of such an effort: we must close the knowledge gap between the French and Anglo-Saxon OS fields and fight in some cases the existing bibliographic amnesia (Chanlat, 2013; 2014ab) so that they both may prosper and maintain a diversity of point of views essential to the vitality of our field and our intellectual and social debates.

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