

Interview with Prof. Arie Y. Lewin, Editor-in-Chief of Journal of International Business Studies (JIBS) during AIB 2005 conference July 9-11, 2005

Prof. Hoshino: Today we have Professor Arie Y. Lewin from the Fuqua School of Business, Duke University. He has been the editor of JIBS (Journal of International Business Studies) for past five years. This is his second term as editor-in-chief of JIBS. We will like to ask him different questions about the editorial policies and other topics.

Prof. Hoshino: So this is your second term as editor-in-chief of JIBS. Will you go for the third term?

Prof. Arie: No...I am going to step down.

Prof. Hoshino: How many years you have served as editor-in-chief until now?

Prof. Arie: Six years.

Prof. Hoshino: So if you go for the second term it will be 10 years in total, other editors use to stay longer. How you are accessing your dreams?

Prof. Arie: I am sure if I want to, I am sure if I want to have a third term I can get it but I don't want to have the third term.

Prof. Hoshino: How do you decide for editor-in-chief?

Prof. Arie: Journal of International Business was looking for new editor when I became editor. They wanted a person who can transform the whole journal and because they realized that international business research was changing but the older model was not good enough, so when they asked me, I was just coming from the edge of the organization science. And it was a difficult decision, my research as I am also interested in the question of renewal, strategic renewal, and thought here it was a laboratory, in which we can do strategic renewal, and so I took it as a challenge. So I take a journal which was once terrific and going down, and can you just think of

renewing it? So I took it, sort of a personal challenge. And so far it is pretty good.

Prof. Hoshino: So, you decide to change?

Prof. Arie: Yes everybody looking for this change ...

Prof. Hoshino: Very interesting ... and according to this sample copy, some of the names of the editorial board members before me, and I found there are five associate editors-in-chief.

Prof. Arie: Right.

Prof. Hoshino: And two managing editors,

Prof. Arie: Right.

Prof. Hoshino: And twenty-four editors from ten departments.

Prof. Arie: Correct.

Prof. Hoshino: So how do you arrange the job of editorship?

Prof. Arie: Well! When they asked me to become editor-in-chief, they also want me...let me clear about one thing, I arrived on AIB interest...I am new to international business, so I was basically an outsider to the established community of AIB, when I became editor. So they were worried, that I would only have an outside editorship instead of associate editor-in-chief, So they decide to bring in people who have some traditional skills in AIB, that is one thing. Secondly, my analysis was that JIBS was viewed as a very American-centered journal, so the question is that how do you soften the America-centrism. To soften I have two ideas, one is to go through the associate editors-in-chief, they have an associate editor-in chief in Hong Kong, in Spain, in Europe and in US. But the other one was to also create a second office in a small country like in Netherlands. And so all new submissions are managed in Netherlands. So, when you submit the paper for the first time the office at Rotterdam. Erasmus University manages the process. But once you have revised, to re-submit for a positive

feedback then the Duke office will manage it. So the idea was how can I take the America-centered journal and soften it so that it's more international. So that's why the second office in Erasmus, in a small country. People corresponds with that office, this office, and sometimes with there is the associate editors-in-chief structure. But the associate editors-in-chief structure was mainly political, in fact I will change it starting in the next volume.

Prof. Hoshino: How will you change it?

Prof. Arie: There will not be associate editors-in-chiefs.

Prof. Hoshino: Oh, this is the last issue?

Prof. Arie: No, two more.

Prof. Hoshino: Ok two more, so you have issue one, two to six

Prof. Arie: Which one is this ?

Prof. Hoshino: So five and six and then you will change?

Prof. Arie: In 2006, we are going to make the change.

Prof. Hoshino: Is there any specific reason why you pick up the Netherlands?

Prof. Arie: Small country, a small, non-US, a typical European country, a small country in Europe.

Prof. Hoshino: Ok, small. But Greece is also small?

Prof. Arie: Yes, but then of course we have to see the social network conditions also I know people will also ask me about that.

Prof. Hoshino: And also two managing editors one from Duke that is in United states, and the other from Rotterdam Erasmus Netherlands?

Prof. Arie: So, we call the person who is managing the new submissions, the managing editor. But Daniel Trojan is the managing editor of the JIBS.

Prof. Hoshino: Not Joy Kearny?

Prof. Arie: Joy manages the new submissions.

Prof. Hoshino: O, the new submissions.

Prof. Arie: She really works for Daniel, Daniel Trojan. So for the outside world it attempt to create a softer US-centered image.

Prof. Hoshino: And you have ten departments over here. But why did you make these ten departments for editing process?

Prof. Arie: There is no magic formula, but basically the unit analysis of the journals that have been very successful over the years. So if you look at the journals from the areas of managing science, management science. You know and if you look at the relation science. They all have a decentralized editorial structure, meaning multiple editorial areas, and when I created tmanagement science, I did the same thing.

Why should I being an editor in-chief, know all across fields from economy to sociology and political science. In fact I believe that we make it a very strong case that if you want to have a variety, if you open this up to many possibilities, then you have to have many case differences.

So, we decided that, we take a look at what could be the fields of IB. Each part creates a separate editorial area, and each editorial area has an independent departmental editor.

Prof. Hoshino: Independent only in the area or among the departments?

Prof. Arie: Even in the area, they are independent from one another.

So if you look at the strategy. How many they have?

Prof. Hoshino: Five members for "business dynamics and strategy".

Prof. Arie: They are not called members. They are independent.

Prof. Hoshino: Five are independent?

Prof. Arie: Yes. Why we are doing it, is because when the author submit the paper to JIBS, they also choose the editor that would be in charge of their paper. So if I am doing a paper in strategy I can look at my five permanent editors, and among my five departmental editors, I might choose, ok, Myles Shaver, he is not interested in what I am doing, then Yadong Luo is in this area so I can select Yadong Luo to be the editor.

Prof. Hoshino: Author selects?

Prof. Arie: Yes. The author selects the editor.

Prof. Hoshino: So, if I submit the paper in the area of finance just two editors?

Prof. Arie: Just two. Because finance is not a very strong area for JIBS, because most of the finance people are not going to publish in JIBS rather publishing in proper finance journal.

Prof. Hoshino: Yes there are many finance autonomous journals. Still you have this area. And you also have book review editor and coordinator, so the coordinator used to select.

Prof. Arie: Let me see it...ok... the coordinator of JIBS paper development workshop. What JIBS does is, every year at the AIB, we have pre-conference day, this year Saturday. It's a service, its service to scholars who want to publish international business papers but need help and guidance and feed back, in an empathetic, developmental environment. So the Tatiana Kostova is the coordinator of this workshop. 91 papers were discussed, in 11 separate sessions, every session not more than 30 people, and lots of time one or more editors of JIBS were managing the session, facilitator. So its a service. The idea is, how can I help you to improve your paper before you submit it to the journal.

Prof. Hoshino: Before submitting?

Prof. Arie: Yes. Its a service JIBS editors are helping IB scholars to improve the papers before they are

submitting it to a journal, and if they are not going to submit to JIBS they can submit to any journal. But JIBS is doing this. It's a pure service function.

Prof. Hoshino: You are providing service to authors, only JIBS has such kind of services?

Prof. Arie: Yes. JIBS is the only journal doing this service.

Prof. Hoshino: Very interesting and I talked with Japanese scholars in the conference, and I found out that JIBS is very difficult journal to be accepted and it takes nearly three to four years to get published, so if a doctoral student like Hamid submit a paper, he has to finish in three years that means he cannot submit.

Prof. Arie: That is not the case now; this was special problem in the first two years after I took over, because AIB has a big backlog from the previous editor, which tied up the systems.

Secondly, we had built a new online submission manuscript system, there were many problems with getting a reliable system. So the process was far behind. Third is, we have got more papers than we were expecting, so the capacity of the editorial review board was less than the number of the papers but I think today it is fit to say that 87% of the all submissions gets a first decision in after three months. 87%. Still now there are some problems.

But, we also had a large number of submitted papers. In 2005 we have almost 500 papers, this is more than many other journals.

Prof. Hoshino: How about the acceptance ratio, the number of papers submitted and accepted?

Prof. Arie: All of the top journals in organization sciences MJ, SMJ, MR and some of the top social physiological journals, they all have the acceptance rate of 10 percent or less. It moves, not fixed and JIBS have also the same rate. So we have 10 percent or less.

Prof. Hoshino: So 90 percent rejection, but those are bound to pay any submission fees?

Prof. Arie: No submission fees.

Prof. Hoshino: Like many finance journals and economic journals?

Prof. Arie: We do not have any submission fee. In fact JIBS is a bargain.

Prof. Hoshino: What do you mean by bargain?

Prof. Arie: Compare to other journals you are liable to pay expensive, next year it will be \$217 dollars. While the most journals you have to pay 500 or 600 dollars or more than that. It is difficult to convince the AIB board to raise the subscription fees. But we also don't sell JIBS to agents. So you can only get JIBS if you are the member of AIB, and we are working on a proposal, that we allow people to buy a single issue, so a very special issue on which all the issues bind together. Right now, you have to be the AIB member to get JIBS and for the libraries it is the lowest cost top journal.

Prof. Hoshino: I found out that those people who don't need journal by paper you have a special discount 10 percent? It is very good especially for doctoral students or students. And I know that number of AIB members are roughly three thousands and Japanese members are about hundred.

Prof. Arie: Koreans are more.

Prof. Hoshino: Koreans are more. But I don't see too many journal papers written by Japanese scholars except some special cases, how you see about the number of submissions by Japanese not so many?

Prof. Arie: It is difficult for international scholars, especially in countries where English is difficult, to sent to other than Japanese journals, Japanese scholars are not as frequently sending papers to best journals in US as Korean scholars. I see more Korean papers than I see Japanese papers.

Prof. Hoshino: Chinese, how about Chinese ?

Prof. Arie: Chinese rate is high, and Singapore I see

many. But I see Koreans to compare with Japan as I think Koreans should be just like Japan, and I think Koreans increases more pressure on the faculty to publish in the best journals.

Prof. Hoshino: Yes, it seems to be like that, you have Koreans based in Korean universities as members in the editorial review board?

Prof. Arie: Yes two are in Korea.

Prof. Hoshino: Two in Korea,?

Prof. Arie: Yes from Korea University, Seoul National University.

Prof. Hoshino: That means those faculty members got their doctoral degree from United States?

Prof. Arie: Some of them.

Prof. Hoshino: Some of them?

Prof. Arie: Perhaps mostly, I mean approximately, in Korean universities on average 60 percent of the faculty whatever the area, they have got their degree in United States.

Prof. Hoshino: Oh, they have 60 percent from United States. In Japan, in University of Tsukuba, which is very international university and have 100% PhD faculty members, maybe 30% have got from United States.

Prof. Arie: I think Japanese universities are not putting emphasis on the research to be published in world class journals. You know some one like France or Germany, the emphasis in Germany is on internal journals then on international journal, and in France peer reviewed journals are not important enough, book is more important than the peer reviewed journals. So I think in Japan is similar case.

But, I remember when I was in Japan, some professors were trying to emphasis that Japanese scholars should publish in American journals, top journals.

Prof. Hoshino: In Japanese universities they have their

own Japanese internal journals and they emphasis on publishing in their own journals not outside journals. That is the reason I think.

Prof. Arie: Yes, but there are some Professors who use to publish in American Journals, international journals, but those are still very few.

Prof. Hoshino: I want to be one of them, last year one of my paper presented in Stockholm and that paper come up in Japan and the World Economy, then another paper was published in International Business Review. About editorial review board members of JIBS, there are also editorial review board members for JIBS, may be 150 or more than that, how you need these different editorial review board members?

Prof. Arie: The editorial review board was an interesting change, because in the past the editor-in-chief selected and invited the people to be in the review board before I became the editor in chief, it was in public domain, and I got hundreds of e-mails from the people telling me that they will like to be the members of editorial review board, and I have no idea how to select them. So, now, instead of me to select the members of editorial review board, every departmental editor nominates four or six people because they work for the departmental editors. So, this structure is made up from the nominations of the individual departmental editors. Now for example if initially all of them nominated four, so, but now different editorial area have more papers or less papers. So, as the demands of the certain editorial area get more papers then we have to increase the number of people in the editorial review board in that area. So, the second change was that every paper must be reviewed by the two members of the editorial review board. So, if you think about the 500 submissions, and editorial review board members reviewing at least 20 papers a year on average. You can see that there will be too many papers. But I will not select the persons, the departmental editor nominate the persons, I do review their nominations, some time I don't agree, but most of the time I accept their nominations.

Prof. Hoshino: I am also the editor-in-chief of the Japanese Journal of Administrative Sciences, the biggest

problem is, that when I send the papers to the reviewers, reviewers do not respond, sometimes many months. I say them to do it in six weeks, but they take more time and some time does not response many months. Then I send email to make reminder but still some time they does not send any response. Is it same with JIBS? How you manage this?

Prof. Arie: So, we also had the same problem, but we slowly came up with two solutions. First when you agree to be the member of editorial review board, you commit yourself to complete reviews in 30 days from the time you accepted to review. So the author submits the paper. Let's take the easiest case. You submit the paper to JIBS you selected the editors, and the managing editor the next day informs us to choose the reviewers, that's Mr. Joy, in the office at Erasmus. The next day since five names of the reviewers, the office one day later send the invitations to the five reviewers, to say will they willing to review this paper, and the reviewer immediately says yes or no. So, even if every thing is perfect it takes almost one week to know whether reviewers will accept this paper for review or not. Then of course, the editor takes more time, then one day. Sometimes they take many weeks because of traveling or, busy, out of office. The reviewers of course must take some time to decide weather, I will review it or not to review it. So, we have to manage it very carefully. In our system it's all online. When the editor receives the manuscript, it receives an email, it says Mr. Editor there is a manuscript waiting for you. And then if we don't take the assignment of reviewers within one week, the system generates automatic reminder. And if you does not do it in two weeks, then we get an exceptional report, in my office. We will get the list of editors who took two weeks and have not yet assigned the reviewers. Then they will send it to me. So, usually, I will say, in 90 percent of the cases, the editors assign the reviewers in two weeks. So, now we send the e-mail to the reviewers, saying that you have been invited to review this paper, will you do it or not? and we have the similar system again, we wait for a week if we don't get the response we will send a reminder. In two weeks, we write again and if the members of the editorial review board say yes, we say fine. So, finally we get the results. But, still again it's another two weeks, its two weeks maximum for the editors, two weeks to get

acceptance from the editorial review board members, and from the time they accept we then count thirty days. So, after thirty days we will remind them again. So, you can see that from beginning to the end, its actually three months for the process.

Prof. Hoshino: So how to make sure whether reviewers should have sent the acceptance or not?

Prof. Arie: We now have the capability to keep very accurate record of whether reviewer have responded within one or two weeks to say yes or no, I will review or not. So, in fact after I will come back from this conference we are setting a session between me and the editors, for their reviewers. How timely they are? How good the reviews are? Should we change them? Should we give them another chance? So that, slowly we get reviewers to understand, when they are reviewers for JIBS their first commitment is JIBS.

Prof. Hoshino: To be the reviewer for JIBS what is the advantage for them?

Prof. Arie: Professional recognition.

Prof. Hoshino: Professional recognition, yes, their names appear in JIBS.

Prof. Arie: Yes, and in many schools, to be an editorial board member of JIBS is considered as recognition. Because, there are only few thousand editorial review members. And many people want to be member of our review board.

Prof. Hoshino: Yes. Getting name here is good recognition, but after getting name here if the reviewer does not response within specified time, do you fire them?

Prof. Arie: Yes, absolutely.

Prof. Hoshino: That is very good. That's very important in my view.

Prof. Arie: Yes because of some reviewers who don't response within time. In volume 2006 you will see editorial review board a bit changed .

Prof. Hoshino: I have never seen firing editorial review board member, but that is very good. A punishment and reward system.

Prof. Arie: Yes, its a punishment, it is a system, two reasons that you might know, that you might not be the member next time, the editor changes he don't use you any more, so I don't need you, but the other reason is that you have not lived up to your commitment. So, we want to change you, so its in the system.

Prof. Hoshino: I have never used that, so may be that's why I have a very loose control over them.

Prof. Arie: But you have to have a very good case, you have to be able to say: look we have sent you so many papers, and we keep waiting for two weeks, you did not do it, you did not do it. We have very good records now. Because of the online system, we have very good data. I know about them, I know how long you took to respond.

Prof. Hoshino: So, you have some secretary for doing all this for you?

Prof. Arie: No. Online it's an automatic system its web-based system.

Prof. Hoshino: When did you introduce this system?

Prof. Arie: First phase was completed two years ago, and this statistical tracking system is just being implemented.

Prof. Hoshino: Still you have to type e-mails on the computer?

Prof. Arie: No. No, in the menu, you can choose the report that you want. Give all of the ERB members who are two weeks or more late in response to the last invitation, and it will just give you, the results.

Prof. Hoshino: So, you don't have a secretary?

Prof. Arie: No. We have full time managing editor. She is full time.

Prof. Hoshino: Where is her name here in this sample issue?

Prof. Arie: Here it is.

Prof. Hoshino: Oh yes.

Prof. Arie: She has very sophisticated reporting tools.

Prof. Hoshino: So, she works as a secretary not as a faculty member?

Prof. Arie: Yes. She is on a very high level administrative position.

Prof. Hoshino: So, she doesn't teach. Not a faculty member?

Prof. Arie: No. She is a professional administrator.

Prof. Hoshino: O, professional administrator, that's good.

Prof. Arie: She works for me in the organization, and she is perfect in administrative matters.

Prof. Hoshino: That means AIB administration hire her? Or, who pays?

Prof. Arie: University pays.

Prof. Hoshino: Oh, your university?

Prof. Arie: Yes.

Prof. Hoshino: You mean Duke university subscribed for this function for?

Prof. Arie: In the future AIB will take over this function. So in four years we use to have new editors, or three years we use to have new editors. So, there will be a permanent managing editor for JIBS in the AIB office. So, no matter who the editors are, the managing editor will be in the AIB office.

Prof. Hoshino: Where is it?

Prof. Arie: Well, in Michigan State University.

Prof. Hoshino: Oh, yes. Michigan State University. There will be a permanent managing editor.

Prof. Arie: Yes. We are working on implementing this. That can make it very easy to find new editors because very few schools who can afford the investment in focusing on the management of JJIBS.

Prof. Hoshino: Why in the Michigan State University? What's the reason?

Prof. Arie: Michigan University took over from Hawaii, the AIB office. And it was a big change very good change, and it will be very logical, to put the managing editor of JIBS there. As in case of editors we are changing, so she can provide the continuity of systems, of processes.

Prof. Hoshino: So you are the editor-in-chief, so as compare to other professors you don't teach?

Prof. Arie: I teach only one course.

Prof. Hoshino: One course. How about average professors?

Prof. Arie: Four.

Prof. Hoshino: So you just teach one course, for three you spend time for editorial responsibilities?

Prof. Arie: One course I teach , and I am also the director for the Center for International Business Education and Research. So, I got time for that, and for JIBS.

Prof. Hoshino: That is CIBERs something like that?

Prof. Arie: Yes, So there are 28 universities, who have Center for International Business Education and Research, and 28 of the CIBERs centers are sponsoring JIBS.

Prof. Hoshino: From all those universities .

Prof. Arie: Yes

Prof. Hoshino: How much does it support for JIBS?

Prof. Arie: Three thousand dollars a year.

Prof. Hoshino: Three thousand dollars ?

Prof. Arie: Yes, but it does not go to me, it does not go to Duke university. This money is used to sponsor the annual JIBS conference, that's Conference for Emerging Research Frontiers in International Business. So, when we run this conference once a year, then money that these centers provide support this conference.

Prof. Hoshino: I also saw some of these organizations, they support also. Some universities and some institutions, and companies.

Prof. Arie: Yes some time, for each conference, for each AIB conference you got different groups that support. So this year it is Laval University, Palgrave Publishers, Microsoft, Indiana State University. It could be some publishers, or university or a company, and here we have CIBER center at University of South Carolina they have supported the paper development workshop that we had yesterday.

Prof. Hoshino: So, how much they donated?

Prof. Arie: I don't know.

Prof. Hoshino: You don't know, who knows?

Prof. Arie: The AIB office may know. Mr. Tunga may know.

Prof. Hoshino: Oh, Mr. Tunga. So, the names of sponsors appear in the journal or in this kind of pamphlet.

Prof. Arie: It's the job of the AIB office, and Tunga is the executive director of AIB, so I don't worry about that.

Prof. Hoshino: And also there are many awards , do you sponsor some awards?

Prof. Arie: I sponsored the JIBS Decade Award.

Prof. Hoshino: JIBS Decade Award. So would you explain about the Decade Award.

Prof. Arie: So, the idea is to find an influential paper that was published ten years ago.

Prof. Hoshino: Oh, ten years ago?

Prof. Arie: Yes, so, every year we recognize an influential paper that was published in JIBS ten year ago.

Prof. Hoshino: How do you measure the difference for such papers?

Prof. Arie: Well we have the process of first acknowledging the citations. Then, we determine the importance of the citation, and committee decides about it.

Prof. Hoshino: And also there are other awards.

Prof. Arie: Yes there are AIB Best Paper Award, Haynes Prize for the most promising scholar, Dissertation Award.

Prof. Hoshino: So you are not sponsoring any other award?

Prof. Arie: No. I just worry about the JIBS Decade Award.

Prof. Hoshino: Oh, JIBS Decade Award.

Prof. Arie: Yes, that's my responsibility.

Prof. Hoshino: Not Best Paper Award?

Prof. Arie: No.

Prof. Hoshino: My doctoral student Hamid may have some question for you.

Hamid: My question is that what will you suggest for the students and new researchers, on what guidelines they should work if they want their paper to be published in some good international journal?

Prof. Arie: Well, you have long time to go, and you just do research in the areas in which you are in-touch and you are excited about that, and don't worry about whether it is popular or not. But, when you are getting ready to write up your research, you have to think about the journal, because the journals are different from one another. Each journal has its personality. I would say, its very important for you to read the papers of the journal in which you are thinking to publish. You should understand the process and editorial policies, then for example, if you think about JIBS, I have 24 editors, if you are going to pick one of the editors, you should be clear about, what research they are doing, what papers, what papers they have accepted in JIBS. In the end of each article, we say who the editor was accepted the paper, so you have good information about the editors and what papers they published. You can see what they have accepted and published in JIBS, and it will give you some idea that your research or your questions fits the interests of the editor or not, and you can make a better decision. But, you know IB, international business is going to have very big change like that, and become much more popular and relevant to do international research. So we are going to see the researchers who are not IB scholars moving into, doing the IB research. Whether it is entrepreneurship, or the influence of institutional structure, like institutional structure of Japan as compare to US is just becoming its principle to international business, or my own interest now is, I am looking for the offshore, white collar administrative and technical work from America to other countries and how it is changing the structure of multinational corporations, and how, they are creating an opportunity for the small and medium enterprises to participate in the international business. So, now there are these kind of issues. I think if you look at the editorial structure of JIBS, you will see this is the picture of more or less how the picture of the world opportunities are in the international business research.

Hamid: Thank you.

Prof. Hoshino: Thank you very much Professor Arie.

Prof. Arie: Thank you very much.

