

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Interdisciplinary Exchanges as the Object of Philosophical Inquiry

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Scientific disciplines exhibit varying practices or styles of theorising. However, it is often difficult to ascertain their differences, as the respective disciplines vary both in style *and* in substance. As a consequence, divergence between scientific disciplines is often explicated solely as variation in the substantial theoretical assumptions made. For example, the notion of ‘economic imperialism’ commonly focuses on substantial parts of economic theory, like rationality and efficiency, but neglects the particular style of economic modelling as a separate influence on other disciplines.

This is where the study of *interdisciplinary exchange* acquires an important role. During such exchanges, the substantial aspects of different disciplines converge: scientists pursue a shared interest in theory or phenomena. But this shared interest is often impeded and shaped by differences in theorising practice. In order to *facilitate* interdisciplinary exchange, scientists have to both reflect on their own practices and objectives, as well as to negotiate the meaning and purpose of their practices with members of other disciplines. Thus, during exchange episodes, disciplinary practices become more observable than usual. Further, even when sharing an interest in substantial issues, scientists from disciplines often come away from interdisciplinary exchanges with different results. That is, the differences in theorising practices often significantly *shape* the exchange results. Thus, in the diverging consequences of exchange episodes, disciplinary practices become more observable than usual.

Both the way in which facilitation takes place, as well as the results of these interdisciplinary exchanges reveal important insights into the disciplines’ respective theorising practices. This symposium will offer conceptual and methodological reflections on case studies of different interdisciplinary exchange episodes. The case studies investigate how scientists interrelate, what they import from other disciplines, how they incorporate it into their own disciplines, and how this affects their own practices. The objective of these case-based reflections is to highlight the differences and similarities between disciplinary practices of theorising, as revealed in the context of interdisciplinary exchange episodes.

Because this is a new field of philosophical research, it requires the development of novel conceptual and methodological tools. In particular, clarification is needed with respect to the dimensions along which interdisciplinary exchange takes place, and with regard to the notions of style and practice. This symposium will give an account how interdisciplinary exchange can be fruitfully studied, and it will establish the study of such exchanges as an important contribution to philosophy of science.