Practices and perceptions towards English as a Lingua Franca in an internationally-engaged university

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Internationalization in HE

Definition of 'internationalization'

"integrat[ing] an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education" (Knight 2004, p. 11)

Increasingly significant educational priority (Dewey & Duff 2009)

Impact on language-related aspects

language awareness
language attitudes & beliefs
language practices & policies
language diversity
language tensions
language and identity

integrating an 'international, intercultural or global dimension' in HE

ENGLISH IN THE WORLD

Beneficial for modernisation, opportunity and economic competitiveness

(Pennycook 1994, Blommaert 2010)

A "hypercentral and hypercollective language, with a high Q-value" (communicative value)

(de Swaan 1998, 2001)

ENGLISH IN ACADEMIA

A shared international language

threat to other languages / linguistic imperialism

(Coulmas 1992, Phillipson 2010

facilitating international exchange and recognition

(Ferguson et al 2011)

'Globalish' (Ammon 2006), ELF users as "language users in their own right"

(Seidlhofer 2011)

Internat. & language(s) dynamics

ENGLISH-DOMINANT INSTITUTIONS (US- ,UK-based &Canadian universities)	Issues of language and identity in minority language (immigrant) populations (Fuentes 2016) Indigenous languages & measures to address lang conflicts (Sterzuk & Fayant 2016)
NORDIC UNIVERSITIES (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden)	Parallel language use Declaration on a Nordic Language Policy to preserve the national languages (Borjman 2011, Ljosland 2011, Siiner 2016)
EXPANDING-CIRCLE UNIVERSITIES WORLDWIDE (e.g. Europe, Latin America, China, Thailand, Turkey)	Pressures and challenges produced by language policies favouring English (Lo Bianco 2009, Philipson 2010, Uzuner 2010, Englander & Uzuner 2013, Muresan & Pérez-Llantada 2014, Kuteeva & Mauranen 2014, Hamel et al 2016, Miranda, Berdugo & Tejada 2016)

Universidad Zaragoza 1542

Cambridge is here

Zaragoza is here

Context of the study

33,498 students (93% domestic) & 4,004 staff (97% Spanish)

Campus-wide strategic priority

Administrative components of internationalization
    Vicerrectorate for Internationalization and Cooperation
    International Student office to support mobility of international students
    Office for International Research Projects

Academic curriculum (5% taught in foreign languages)

Study abroad programmes
    Erasmus (900 outgoing students / over 700 incoming students in 2015-2016)
    US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South America

Academic staff
    international professional networks and bi-/multilateral international collaboration
    Erasmus Training Programme (35 applications in the past 7 years)
    Erasmus staff mobility programme (109 applications -2014-2015)

Languages of internationalization

Aim:

Examine staff's attitudes and perceptions of statuses/roles of academic languages

RQ1 *What languages do the scholars use in their everyday communication practices?*

RQ2 *What do the scholars perceive as the main language-related challenges in those practices?*

RQ3 *What are the statuses and roles of academic languages in/for campus-wide internationalization?*

RQ4 *How do the scholars perceive communicative exchanges with other international scholars whose first language is not English?*

Languages of internationalization

Aims:

Examine staff's attitudes and perceptions of statuses/roles of academic languages

Identify language-related priorities for advancing campus-wide internationalization

Propose language planning and language instructional intervention

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Interview protocol

Selected dataset

- Informants (n=15)
- "the importance of localized community practices" (King 2015)
- disciplinary idiosyncrasies
- semi-structured interviews (Talmy & Richards 2011)

Deciding and defining prior codes/ categories

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) & English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)

Ex. of categories (codes) & subcategories:

Genre repertoires
- ◦ Written genres
- ◦ Spoken genres
- ◦ Genre knowledge
- ◦ Learning needs
- ◦ Genre instruction
- ◦ Academic literacy skills

Language awareness
- ◦ Language practices
- ◦ Language policy
- ◦ Language challenges
- ◦ Language role/status
- ◦ Nature of language
- ◦ Language and culture

Analytical procedures

Data recorded and interviews transcribed

Design of coding scheme (categories/subcategories)

Qualitative content analysis (Schreier, 2012, Talmy 2010)

Comparison of categories across cases

Analytical frameworks

EAP & GENRE ANALYSIS

configurations of genre-based communication

texts in context

discipline-specific practices

orientations for pedagogical practice

(Swales, 1990, 1998, 2004, Yakontova 2008)

ENGLISH LINGUA FRANCA

English in the international university

features of ELF

academic language use of speakers from different language backgrounds

(Mauranen 2010, Seidlhofer 2011, Jenkins 2014)

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ACADEMIC LITERACIES

textually-mediated interactions

academic literacy development

(Lillis & Scott 2008, Lillis & Curry 2010, Maybin & Tusting 2011)

LANGUAGE POLICY

language management & language planning

effects of language policies

(Spolsky 2004, 2010, Ferguson 2010, Englander & Uzuner 2013)

Language practices (i)

(Mostly) English-only research activities

editorial board meetings, research papers, research project proposals, research grants, conference presentations

reading the scientific literature, internet genres, esp. electronic correspondence with research partners and funding bodies/organizations

Opportunity for networking, intellectual exchange, mobility, international visibility & recognition (Muresan & Carciu 2016)

Value of English (Bocanegra-Valle 2014)

No feeling of linguistic disadvantage (Ferguson et al 2011)

Lang. competence limitations (e.g. fluency, lang. for socialization) (cf. Thai 2016)

Language practices (ii)

(Mostly) Spanish-only teaching activities

lectures, seminars, office hours
coursework and assessment, reading the course literature

Students' lang. competence limitations

"domestic students would not follow lectures delivered in English" / "would not participate in class"
"Spanish undergrads demand course readings in Spanish"
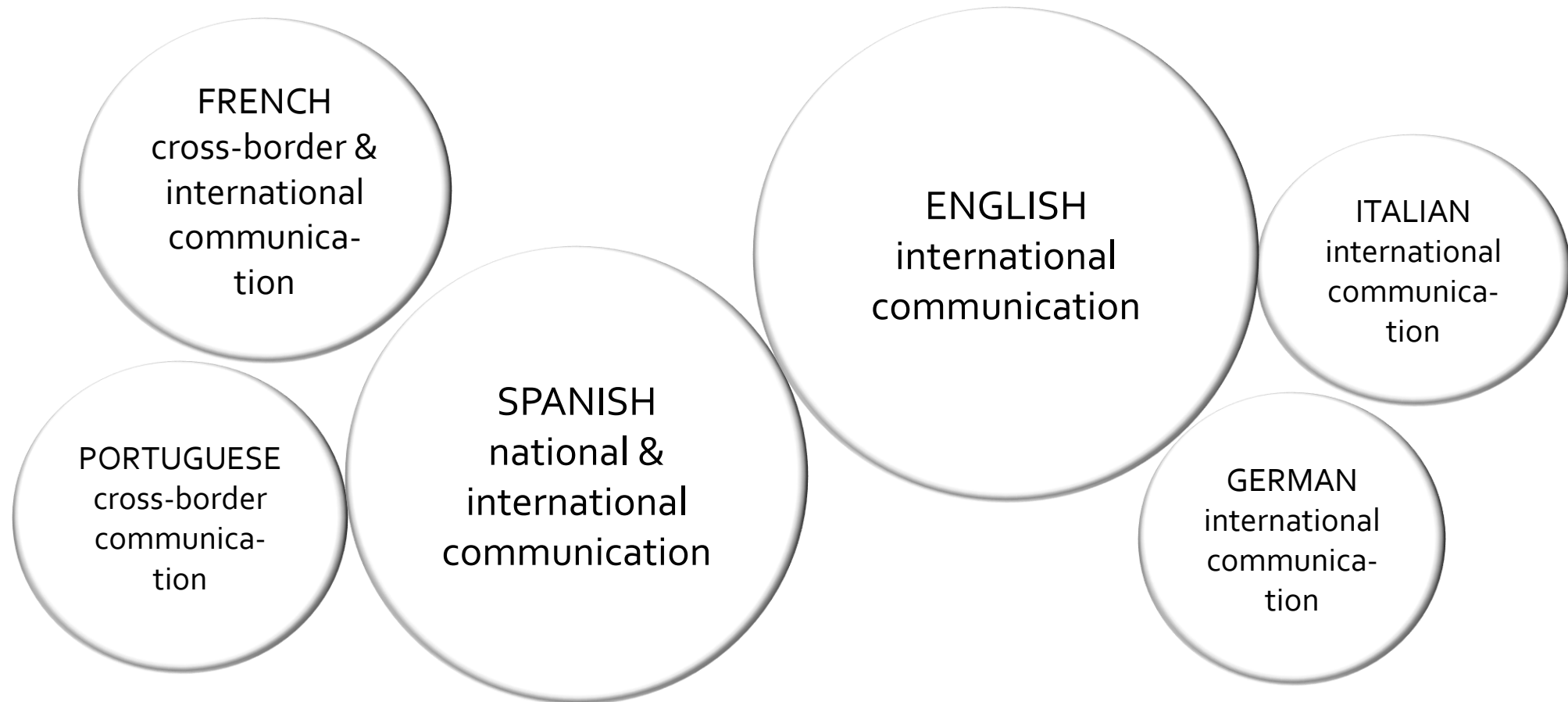*"English-Language-Friendly modules to support Erasmus students"*
office hours held in English upon request, course materials and assessment in English

Administrative activities

Spanish medium, except Erasmus programme coordination
English-medium > international research projects (Horizon 2020) and funding bids

An ecology of research languages

FRENCH cross-border & international communica-tion

PORTUGUESE cross-border communica-tion

SPANISH national & international communication

ENGLISH international communication

ITALIAN international communica-tion

GERMAN international communica-tion

Language needs (i)

Need for institutional language support services

General English courses (University Language Centre)

20h-course on academic English skills (Professional Development Centre)

Concerns regarding lack of research-related lang support

English-language revision services on campus

language revision and advising services for projects/funding bids

English language weaknesses

paucity of expression, limited vocabulary range, lack of/insufficient knowledge of interpersonal resources, discourse pragmatic aspects

lack of confidence in classroom management discourse skills

"the need for greater tolerance on the part of editors and reviewers towards intelligible deviations from US/British standard English" (S2) (cf. Ammon 2007: 131)

Language needs (ii)

EMI not worth the effort

"preparing a class in English takes five times longer than preparing it in Spanish" (S9)

domestic students' poor E language proficiency

lack of preparation of academic genres in schooling

Concerns regarding …

how foreign languages in pre-university education (focused on grammar /use of English), disregarding practice in oral skills

need to strengthen foreign language education at the uni level

class stratification on student population

"the thing is that they need to do the [course] readings, and as there are two populations of students, for some of them doing the readings in English is not a problem, but for other students, it is a problem and will always be a problem" (S8)

Shared perceptions (of languages of internationalization)

Linguistic diversity & cultural understanding

An English-medium website and, "if possible", a multilingual website

Idealized plurilingual European / global citizenship

Multilingual pedagogies & multilingual literacies

　　　　no lang entry requirements / CEFR B1 insufficient

No well-defined/non-existing language planning

Administrative constraints
　　　　not possible to recruit overseas teaching/administrative staff

Individual agency
　　　　staff with strong international research publication records
　　　　colleagues who received French language instruction

Prestige languages

ENGLISH

"world international language"

Reasons: fundamental to ...

enhance institutional visibility

make teaching programmes global

prepare students for global challenges

"prevent the loss of highly skilled faculty with full competence in English" (S5)

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SPANISH

"world lingua franca"

"prestige language"

Reasons:

   international attractor of foreign students
   value of Spanish language & culture
   status of Spanish in the Hispanic culture
   higher Q-value in world's academia (compared to e.g. Swedish, Flemish)

Intercultural encounters

Utility of ELF for socialization

English-medium, not other languages

face-to-face (not virtual e.g. skype, email, etc.) encounters

Settings: international conferences, courses/workshops & research stays abroad

Role of English: A 'language for communication', not for identification (cf. House 2003)

> *"From this experience I learnt that all languages are means of communication and do not involve social exclusion, or that's how it should be. It should be that way and we have to give importance to communication and not to the language per se"* (S8)

ELF as a functional variety

It calls my attention that I usually understand much better a speaker who is not British or American speaking in English. That is, I attend a conference presentation by a Chinese, or a German or a French scholar and I understand their English much better. (S10)

Those who came from India and those countries they also use English, a very peculiar English, a very special accent, a very funny accent, and this may make it a bit difficult to understand, there was another guy who spoke French, he came from an African country, and another coming from Greece and you could notice the different accents (S1)

not fully English-native like interactions

syntactic & phonological levels

"hybrid features that characterize ELF" (Jenkins 2011)

relaxation of linguistic norms

(cf. 'Globalish' Ammon 2001)

ELF dissociated from "its primary lingua-cultural roots" (Seidlhofer 2011: 25)

The dynamic of ELF interaction

seeking 'intelligibility' (Pickering 2006)

constructing "a particular *modus operandi* to achieve a communicative goal" (Seidlhofer 2011)

communication strategies, negotiation and repetition (Mauranen 2007)

slow speech rate, non-linguistic resources (gestures)

"their focus often shifts to communicative effectiveness and economy" (Breiteneder 2009)

[in a poster session]

There was a word I could not understand, he [a Japanese scholar] said something like 'role', he wanted to ask the role of something but I kept on understanding something like 'go' 'go', he kept on asking me, and I told him, Can you repeat it, please?

And it turned out that, at the end, I don't know if he used a different word, but at the end we managed to understand one another. The typical situation. (S3)

Language and culture

high level of awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity

respect towards cultural diversity

'non-essentialist view of culture' (Holliday et al 2006)

awareness of social inclusion (and not exclusion) / sense of in-group community

We shared the same room. I was with a Moroccan and a scholar from Yakarta, and both were Muslims and one of them was a practitioner and woke up at six o clock in the morning for his ablutions and prayers

He was one of the nicest persons I've ever met. We became friends, well we Latins always make friends, there were many Italians and Greeks, we got on very well with the Greeks and the Moroccan always came along with us and said 'I dont drink wine but you can drink it, I do not eat meat but you can eat it'. (S2)

Situated nature of lang attitudes

Context-dependency

> Need to match language planning to institutional idiosyncrasies

The case of the UZ:

> a firm and overt commitment to strategic language planning
>
> publicizing existing multilingual practices
>
> promoting plurilingualism
>
> catering for multilingual instructional & lang advising support

Perceived language tensions

Expansion of English in the local context

> Not at the cost of other academic languages

> No fear over the potential loss of academic and cultural domains to English

Spanish as international lingua franca

> hypercentral & high Q-value

> "second tier world language" (Hamel 2006, p. 2243)

> "entering a period of expanding its third circle given increasing spread as a foreign language in several countries" (ibid, p. 2248)

Implications of findings

To support the small disciplinary community of practice ....

A proposed pedagogy

genre- & task-based approach (Swales 1990, Feak, 2010)

noticing (i.e. rhetorical consciousness raising) (Pérez-Llantada & Swales 2017)

rich input and practice of
- research writing (e.g. journal articles, abstracts, proposals)
- skills in formal speech (e.g. lecturing and classroom management skills)

exposure to ELF & awareness of "pluralism of English" (Björkman 2011)

instruction in intercult. communication (Mauranen 2003)

multiliteracy learning approach (Gentil 2010, Salö & Hanell 2014)

THANK YOU!

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https://genresandlanguages.org/