

'Going international' in Higher Education: a
corpus-driven analysis of strategic plans in a
Spanish university

Rosana Villares
University of Zaragoza, Spain

DN19 conference. 7-8 June 2017. Bucharest.

1. Purpose of the study

What does it mean to become **international**?

“it is not helpful for internationalization to become a **catchall phrase** for everything and anything international [...] Even if there is not agreement on a precise definition, internationalization needs to have **parameters if it is to be assessed** and to advance higher education. This is why the use of a working definition in combination with a conceptual framework for internationalization of higher education is relevant.”

(de Wit, 2002, p. 114)

1. Purpose of the study

- On-going PhD research
- Internationalisation process of a Spanish university
 - Medium-sized university
 - Primarily monolingual
 - Internationally engaged university

(Jenkins, 2014; Maringe and Foskett, 2010)

2. Internationalisation

- Responsive nature to globalisation
- Effects on Higher Education

(Altbach and Knight, 2007;
Childress, 2010; Knight, 2004)



2. Internationalisation

"The process of **integrating** an international, intercultural or global dimension into the **purpose, functions or delivery** of post-secondary education"

(Knight, 2003, p. 2)



3. Case study: University of Zaragoza (UZ)

Internationalisation is not only about ERASMUS mobility or participation in international forums. It consists on integrating an international dimension in the areas of research, teaching and services, i.e. internationalization of the curriculum and research activity, new perspectives on the contents of modules, let the outside world enter the classrooms, labs, and offices, collaboration and mobility with other academic and working environments, and to be able to communicate in English, the new lingua franca.



UZ. *Strategic plan*, 2001

UZ. Internationalization web, 2008

UZ. *Promotional leaflet*, 2015

UZ. *Governance's speech*, 2016

3. Case study: University of Zaragoza (UZ)

- 1- UZ considers itself an internationalised university but **NO updated internationalisation plan** (2001)
- 2- UZ recognises the importance of languages but **NO clear language intervention, planning or management** (2001)

4. Methodology

Corpus linguistics (McEnery and Hardie, 2012) & Content Analysis

Corpus of 39 institutional documents (2001-2017):

- Institution's **strategic plans** and annual reports
- Faculty's strategic plans and **annual reports**
- **Centre of Modern Languages'** annual report and regulations for accreditation of languages
- **International relations'** regulation and reports on quality, internationalisation actions and mobility
- **Internationalisation programme**

5. Findings: frequency lists

Nº	WORD	FREQUENCY	Type-token ratio
16	international	594	0.3027693
64	mobility	311	0.1585206
102	English	225	0.1146853
141	internationalisation	185	0.0942968
307	language (“lengua”)	107	0.0545392
351	Spanish	97	0.0494421
390	language (“idioma”)	90	0.0458741

5. Findings: 'internationalisation' collocates

Teaching &
studies

Research

Administration

Discourse

5. Discussion: teaching and studies

- Joint programs
- Student mobility: academic and internships
- Academic offer: **B1 requirement** in bachelor's degrees
- Internationalization of the curriculum: curricular and extracurricular
- **ELF subjects & EMI courses**: language attitudes & linguistic support
- **Spanish as a Foreign Language**
- Cooperation: local and international

5. Discussion: research

- International collaboration: research projects, international agreements, research networks
- Scholars mobility
- National and international conferences
- Dissemination of knowledge: articles and papers
 - Most cited articles from UZ's scholars are all written in **English**

5. Discussion: administration

- Autonomy of faculties & centres: International Relations Offices
- Indicator of quality: promotion of Spanish Higher Education
- Internationalization and Cooperation Office (2016)
- Funded internationalization projects (2008-2017)
 - From language-focused approach
 - To International agreements with (South) America and China
 - Seminars
- Administrative staff mobility and language training

5. Discussion: institutional discourse

- Steps: awareness, reinforcement (Knight, 2004), middle?
- Evolving mind-set "growing, essential, progressive, strategic"
 - Comprehensive approach central to the university's (Knight, 2004)
- International competences and education the
 - Global environment and social demands.
- Internationalization abroad or internationalization at home
 - Documents: programmes, projects, mobility, research, international presence, information and image.

6. Conclusions: summary

Knight (2004)

- Academic programmes
- Research and scholarly collaboration
- External relations
- Extracurricular programmes
- Internationalization at home

Maringe and Foskett (2010)

- International student recruitment
- Student and staff mobility programmes
- Collaborative teaching, overseas campuses and distance learning programmes
- Collaborative research and enterprise programmes
- Curriculum reform programmes

Spanish Strategy (2014)

- International university system (regulation, programmes, mobility, internationalization at home)
- International visibility and recognition (Spanish and English programmes, joint degrees, networks and projects)
- International and regional relations partnerships
- Cooperation in other countries

➤ International strategic purpose & internationally engaged university

6. Conclusions: challenge 1

NO updated internationalization plan

Why? Institutional policy would deny a flexible approach to internationalization and freedom regarding faculties and schools' decisions.

internationalization plans

written commitments to internationalization institutions use to inform and stimulate internal and external stakeholders' participation in international initiatives because they provide direction (explicit rationales and goals), express institutional commitment, and may define the particular goals and meanings of internationalization for an institution (Childress, 2010).

Improvement: the International Relations' *Quality Report* (2010) mentions the necessity of creating an internationalization policy document.

6. Conclusions: challenge 2

NO clear language policy

- Required B1 to graduate → no institutional means (students' own initiatives)
- Many students and staff face problems when they communicate in English.
- Linguistic support and English for Specific Purposes courses.

Governance's promotion of English (EIL) **vs.** the lack of resources and support = creates **tensions** in a world moving towards bilingualism/multilingualism.

Improvement: identify the linguistic diversity, language practices and attitudes to create suitable policy documents.

6. Conclusions: future research

- National comparison: internationalisation and language policy
- Combination of Quantitative & qualitative methodologies
- Language policy documents: ideology, practices and attitudes

References

- Altbach P. G., & Knight, J. (2007). The internationalization of higher education: Motivations and realities. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 11(3-4), 290-305.
- Childress, L. K. (2010). *The Twenty-first Century University: Developing Faculty Engagement in Internationalization*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.
- de Wit, H. (2002). *Internationalization of higher education in the United States of America and Europe: A historical, comparative and conceptual analysis*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- Grupo de trabajo de internacionalización de universidades. (2014). *Estrategia para la internacionalización de las universidades españolas 2015-20120*. Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, Gobierno de España.
- Jenkins, J. (2014). *English as a lingua franca in the international university: the politics of academic English Language Policy*. London: Routledge.
- Knight, J. (2003). Updated internationalization definition. *International Higher Education*, 33, 2-3.
- Knight, J. (2004). Internationalization remodelled: definition, approaches, and rationales. *Journal of Studies in International*
- Maringe, F. and Foskett, N. (2010). *Globalization and internationalization in Higher Education: theoretical, strategic, and management perspectives*. London: Continuum International Publishing.
- McEnery, T. and Hardie, A. (2012). *Corpus Linguistics: Method, Theory and Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Universidad de Zaragoza. (2001). *Plan estratégico. Segunda parte*. Retrieved from http://www.unizar.es/plan_estrategico/pdf/internacionalizacion.pdf
- Universidad de Zaragoza. (2010). Informe Autoevaluación de los Servicios de RR.II. en la Universidad de Zaragoza. Retrieved from <http://wzar.unizar.es/servicios/inter/calidad/calidad.htm>
- Universidad de Zaragoza. (2015). *University of Zaragoza leaflet*. Retrived from http://www.unizar.es/sites/default/files/institucion/gic/folleto_informativo_ingles.pdf
- Universidad de Zaragoza. (2016). *Programa de gobierno*. Retrieved from <https://portaltransparencia.unizar.es/sites/portaltransparencia.unizar.es/files/users/peiroa/programa.pdf>

Thank you for your attention!

Acknowledgments: This presentation is a contribution to the project “Ecologies of genres & ecologies of languages: academics' literacy practices in today's multilingual universities” (FFI2015-68638-R (MINECO/FEDER, EU). For more information about the project you can visit

<https://genresandlanguages.org>



Unión Europea

Fondo Social Europeo
“El FSE invierte en tu futuro”

rosanavillares92@gmail.com

