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Language policy and planning: challenges for Latin American universities

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This article starts with an overview of the sociolinguistic situation in Latin America as a context for language policy and planning (LPP) decisions in the academic field. Then it gives a brief overview of the language policy challenges faced by universities to cope with neoliberal internationalisation. A conceptualisation of the domain as a sociological (Bourdieu) and communicational (Gumperz) field is sketched to interpret LPP activities in a comprehensive framework. Next the text turns to the micro-level to give a more detailed account of two specific universities, *Unidad Profesional Interdisciplinaria en Ingeniería y Tecnologías Avanzadas* (UPIITA), a technology unit in the National Polytechnic Institute (IPN) in Mexico City, and the University of Latin American Integration (UNILA) in southern Brazil. The analysis of both universities reveals the emergence of exceptional plurilingual LPP frameworks: The Mexican UPIITA fosters the learning of more than one foreign language to cope with research and study abroad activities. The Brazilian UNILA integrates students from all over South American through teaching in Portuguese and Spanish as equal languages of instruction. English and other international languages come third as access languages to the international academia. Finally, the article relates its findings to the more general picture of university LPP in Latin America.

Keywords: Language policy; plurilingual universities; science; higher education; Latin America

Introduction

At the *6th Nitobe Symposium on Languages and Internationalization in Higher Education* held in Reykjavik, Iceland, in 2013, I (first author) presented a challenge to a highly specialised audience of some 50 international experts during my opening talk: How many academic journals do you think are being published in Brazil? Members of the audience – no expert from Latin America – politely entered the game and started guessing: 40, first voice; no, maybe 60, second voice; should be more, argued a third voice, boldly raising the stakes to 200. At that moment, I stopped the game and gave them the real number on my Power Point presentation: 5986 academic journals registered by the Brazilian Ministry of Science and Technology in 2004. About 2800 of them

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belonged to the natural sciences (Café, 2005). The audience was puzzled and deeply concerned about their wrong guessing and their completely distorted image of science in Brazil and probably the rest of Latin America. This slanted image, however, is solidly grounded in the dominant management of scientific literature and science at large. The ISI's Science Citation Index registered only 17 out of 2800 Brazilian journals in natural science at that time, 15 of which – surprise – were published in English or in multilingual versions including English (Café, 2005).

What is at stake when such skewed images coagulate into rock-solid beliefs within prevailing international knowledge systems? It means that very powerful dominant ideologies are at work that are able to completely wipe out whole continents as being irrelevant in science and in higher education, or in many other fields.

These and similar actions are part of a much wider international coordination that controls knowledge systems. Political theorists and experts on empire building (Münkler, 2007, 2014; Münkler & Hausteiner, 2012) identify a shift in imperial governance away from twentieth-century control over territories and borders to the overreaching steering and supervision of the fluid, the ever changing currents of capital and information, goods and services, raw materials and people that characterise the new world order politics of the twenty-first century. To achieve the project of a new world order, governance depends on universal values, on globally unified and controlled paths of communication and categorisations of the world which are all framed by language (Gehrmann, 2015).[1] From a language politics perspective, the imposition of a new imperial order is based on the monitoring and control of the communicative shaping of world interpretations through a single language, if possible, that is capable of deterritorialising these unified interpretations in order to control flows of knowledge and information in ways that function independently from interpretations coined in the national languages. According to the authors quoted, the success of a new imperial world order will depend on the capacity to reformulate and recategorise interpretations of the world within the unified communicative system of language use, discourse structures and cultural models of the dominant world power (Hamel, 2006, 2007).

Controlling science becomes more difficult for the imperial world order under Anglo-Saxon hegemony when science and other knowledge systems function and publish results in languages other than English and use their own research design and interpretive patterns. Therefore, control of science is certainly a significant objective that explains the forceful pressure exercised over the past decades by various agents to spread English in science and to reduce or expel other languages from that realm. Scientific developments that escape imperial control need to be made invisible or marginalised from the core of scientific relevance, as is the case of Brazil whose scientific literature is simply wiped out[2] on the dominant radar of the empire.

It is within this general conceptual setting that this article will first sketch the sociolinguistic situation in Latin America as a context for language policy and planning (LPP) decisions in the academic field. It will then give a brief overview about Latin American universities and the language policy challenges they face to cope with neoliberal internationalisation. In line with a growing awareness among other language communities that yielding to an "English Only" policy would render a disservice to their own academic interests, Latin American universities are experimenting with diverse multi- or plurilingual[3] agendas. A framework for LPP is emerging which conceptualises the academic domain as an integrated field (in Bourdieu's sense). Within the Latin American academia plurilingual strategies are evolving that foster their own national languages and promote at the same time the appropriation of English and other

foreign languages (FLs) to serve their academic needs. We will then turn to the micro-level of language planning and give a more detailed account of two specific universities, a unit in the *Instituto Politécnico Nacional* (IPN) in Mexico City and the *Universidade Federal da Integração Latino-Americana* (UNILA) in southern Brazil. They are both exceptional in that they develop alternative ways of constructing plurilingual language policies beyond the accommodation of and to English. Finally, we will relate our findings on the micro-level to the more general picture in Latin America to draw some conclusions about the field and its perspectives.

Latin America: language policy and the development of science and higher education

Nation-state-building and higher education

To a large extent, we can consider Latin America to be linguistically integrated by two super central languages,[4] Spanish and Portuguese, at the level of dominant national and intra-regional communication. Different from the two other colonised continents, Africa and Asia, the four main European empires practised settlement colonisation in America,[5] sending significant contingents of white settlers to their colonies. After Latin America's independence at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the flow of European settlers to the New World even increased during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Thus, the white and Mestizo population became a majority in most countries.

Although the settler leadership that spearheaded the wars of independence rejected Spain and Portugal as colonial powers and considered them nations in decay, there was never any doubt about the central role Spanish or Portuguese was to play respectively as state languages in the new independent nations. A political, cultural and ideological orientation towards France, in the first place, led to the adoption of the French model of a unified nation-state (one nation – one state – one language) including its ideological orientation towards monolingualism that carries weight to this day. Today, all state institutions are solidly based in one language of European heritage.

Public education was meant to fulfil a significant state-building role after independence to create "solidarity among strangers" (Habermas, 1996); it was therefore carried out in the national language.[6] FL learning was not a priority in public education. Tiny elites learned some foreign European languages in secondary education or through private elite bilingual schools (Hamel, 2008).

Both public and most private universities take part in the nation-building process and form academic professionals in the state language. Research emerged in a significant number of universities during the second half of the twentieth century. Today, leading universities have reached international standards and have developed intense network relations with top international universities in a number of disciplines. Given the low or intermediate level of overall development, however, no Latin American country possesses an established academic field in research comparable to that of the industrialised countries in the so-called First World. Throughout most of the twentieth century, the academic elite sought to obtain postgraduate degrees in Europe or the USA. Since the 1970s, however, the development of postgraduate courses has tripled in the leading Latin American countries, thus covering well over 70% of the needs for postgraduate studies. Although statistics are not always very accurate and reliable, Table 1 sums up the relevant figures for universities and students by country which we will not discuss in detail.

Table 1.   Universities and student population by country in Latin America 2013.

Country	Number of universities by country 2013	Population in in the age of tertiary education 18–24	Total number of students enrolled 2013	Gross rate of tertiary enrolment 2013 (%)	Total population by country 2013
Argentina	131	3,460,613	2,768,144	79.99	42,538,000
Bolivia	55	1,011,489	422,499	41.77	10,400,000
Brazil	2391	27,748,183	7,935,977	28.60	204,259,000
Chile	162	1,391,172	1,166,219	83.83	17,576,000
Colombia	288	4,167,973	2,088,154	50.10	47,342,000
Costa Rica	60	408,669	204,375	50.01	4,706,000
Cuba	64	736,036	363,602	49.40	11,363,000
Ecuador	404	1,458,762	706,041	40.48	15,661,000
El Salvador	31	611,005	178,475	29.27	6,090,000
Guatemala	37	1,640,690	758,983	46.26	15,691,000
Honduras	15	877,430	186,015	21.20	7,849,000
Mexico	1652	11,420,467	3,335,918	29.21	123,740,000
Nicaragua	112	602,983	142,304	23.60	5,946,000
Panama	27	325,432	126,072	38.74	3,806,000
Paraguay	83	662,944	250,460	37.78	6,466,000
Peru	140	2,807,669	1,213,194	43.21	30,565,000
Dominican Republic	41	959,307	822,030	85.69	10,281,000
Uruguay	40	263,444	173,425	65.83	3,408,000
Venezuela	1345	2,757,220	2,196,953	79.68	30,276,000
Total	8592		25,038,840		597,963,000

Main source: UNESCO (2013) Institute for Statistics: http://www.uis.unesco.org/DataCentre/Pages/regions.aspx.

Globalisation, language policies in science and higher education (SHE) and the academic field

Latin American universities functioned and still function almost entirely in the national languages, and, in the past, small elite research units developed the FL skills they needed. Over the past decades, however, economic globalisation forced Latin American countries to open up their hitherto closed economies and to integrate into the world market under subordinate conditions, which included the creation of a significant number of private, profit and non-profit-oriented universities. A need for learning FLs, above all English, was felt to be more urgent than before. Since secondary public education did not provide the necessary FL skills in most countries, the universities set up FL centres to remedy what was now felt as a deficit.

As part of the worldwide linguistic globalisation process, the new prominence of English as the only hyper central language and its growing distance from the second ranking or super central languages affected the region and its academic system. Latin America constitutes by far the mayor component of both the Spanish and the Portuguese international language communities, two of the largest of the world. Spanish and Portuguese share the problems and perspectives of other super central languages such as French, Russian, German and Arabic. These languages played or still play a significant role as international languages in a number of domains.

The globalisation of English menaces first and foremost the super central languages, since it aims at expelling them from international domains including science, reducing

them to the status of central languages such as Dutch, Danish, Czech or Romanian with little or no international spread or functions (Calvet, 2002). In a second step, as we have pointed out, English penetrates national territories as a language for academic teaching. If this process were completed, English would acquire the monopoly of all international functions including the role of a lingua franca between other languages. This is why the resistance to English language spread is strongest among the super central language communities and their international organisations such as the Francophonie.

The spread of English in the field of science has exerted significant pressure, first and foremost on the most developed national academic systems in Europe, but it has had its specific effects in all non-Anglophone continents. The pressure exercised from the imperial centre appears like a unified strategy that operates probably in a combination of organised agency (Phillipson's, 1992 linguistic imperialism), and a Bourdieusean habitus, i.e. "a strategy without a strategic calculus" (Encrevé & de Fornel, 1983).[7] In the field of science, this imperial strategy functions as if following an imaginary script: (1) Divide and thus fragment the field. (2) Highlight first its most visible, salient and fetishised components which are the scientific publications as the area that represents the field as a whole. (3) Produce, select and, if necessary, twist statistics to "prove" the overwhelming dominance of English in this area and the lack of any alternative. (4) Once you reach your target, move on to the next subfield which is higher education to impose the hegemony of English in teaching on the grounds that English is already almighty in the previously conquered domain of publications. This is exactly what is at stake in European universities these days, calling for the internationalisation of academic teaching which in most cases means Anglicisation (Ammon, 2012; Ehlich, 2005; Gajo & Pamula-Behrens, 2013; Phillipson, 2015).

However, in the super central language communities and beyond[8] there seems to emerge a growing awareness that the imperial strategy does not operate to their advantage, working against the still dominant rush to English.[9] First, because the hegemonic strategy distorts the reality of research and particularly that of publishing, on the basis of a vicious circle between impact factors and citation indexes; it leaves out a majority share of the scientific literature that may have an impact in the real world. And second, in terms of politics, it disempowers all academic and language communities outside the Anglophone Empire[10] and subordinates them to the Anglo centre.

Therefore, it would be a big mistake from an LPP perspective to uncritically adopt the approach of the vast and powerful domain of bibliometric research that limits its scope to publications only, calling them "production" in an ideological procedure of metonymic reduction that Bourdieu (1984) characterised as fetishisation of science.

Rather, an integrated model of LPP in science and higher education is called for that incorporates all relevant components in the sociological and communicational concept of a "field" (Bourdieu, 1975, 1984; Gumperz, 1982). Scheme 1 is a descriptive framework since it identifies the components of the field and the relations between them as they exist in general terms everywhere, an in Latin America with its specific language distribution. At the same time, it can serve as a heuristic model of reference to organise the elements of LPP that emerge in specific Latin American contexts or elsewhere, as we shall see later.

The field contains the subfields of *Production* (i.e. planning and implementation of research), *Circulation* (oral and written reception, elaboration and distribution of scientific findings) and *Formation* (teaching and training at all levels).[11] The crucial sphere of publishing is part of the subfield of circulation. In Scheme 1, circulation activities appear fully integrated into the whole process of doing research, of reading and of teaching in relation to ongoing investigation. For some academics and decision makers who do not perceive the

**The Sociological & Communicational Field
of Science and Higher Education in Latin America (SHE)**
Subfields of production, formation & circulation
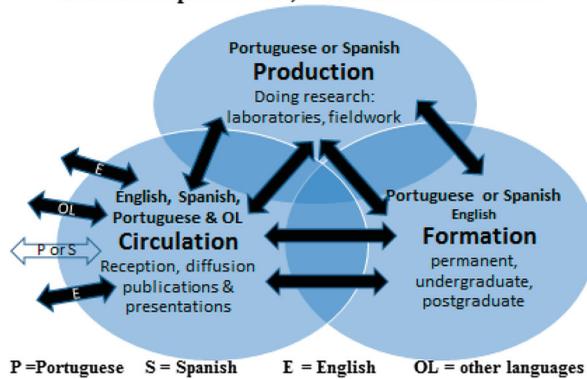
Scheme 1.   The sociological & communicational field (adapted from Hamel, 2013a).

field of SHE as a unity, it may seem appropriate to separate "publishing" from the rest and declare it the realm of English. What may look as an advantage in this subfield could however produce more important costs and disadvantages in the global field.

The arrows represent multiple relationships between the subfields such as the integration of research practises (production) into teaching (formation), and questions that may travel from teaching to research. Circulation, i.e. the reception including reading literature and listening to conferences is closely related as an input to both research and teaching, whereas the diffusion of one's own research through publishing and conferences stems from production. The arrows on the left side that exit this unit of the field represent communication (written and oral) with other units in the field which occurs typically in several different languages depending on disciplines and areas.

In most parts of the globe except perhaps in Anglophone countries, the field of SHE is intrinsically multilingual. Even in domains that are clearly controlled by one language, other languages are indirectly present as references to readings, theories or the like. Therefore, super central language communities have given up their previous monolingual models (e.g. the Francophonie, Maurais, Dumont, Klinkenberg, Maurer, & Chardenet, 2008) and are probing into multi- or plurilingual approaches in SHE.

Academic and language policies in Latin American universities

In Latin America, the field of SHE is moving, then, from a predominantly monolingual national language tradition to a more plurilingual composition. As a matter of fact, a plurilingual orientation has always existed for a tiny minority that in the past had maintained academic and cultural relations to the countries of the three historically leading languages in science throughout modernity: English, French and German.

In recent times universities are under pressure to restructure their research and teaching according to international standards. This includes adopting international ranking systems which assign higher values to papers published abroad, mainly in English language journals listed in the Citation Index, than to those published at home.[12]

Universities in Latin America have to adjust to globalisation trends particularly by enhancing reading of FL among students and staff, and by improving their academics' capacity of publishing internationally, especially in English.[13]

Whereas multilingual diversity in Europe operates in favour of English as the language for university teaching, this is not a real issue in Latin American universities. Given the linguistic homogeneity of the continent, teaching continues in each of the national languages, although English is entering the field through some postgraduate programmes, especially in the natural sciences. Leading postgraduate programmes in the social sciences and humanities are more steadfast in their use of the national language. Consequently, they attract students from the USA, Canada, Europe, and increasingly from Asia who consider learning Spanish or Portuguese through academic content matters an additional asset for their studies and their international experience.

Most of the time, universities are experimenting with plurilingual practices, although this plurilingualism is rarely formulated in explicit and encompassing language policies. Universities need to develop students' academic skills in their mother tongue and a FL, since in most countries public secondary education does not provide their students with the necessary academic literacy skills to study at university level in either language (López-Bonilla & Englander, 2011). Therefore, a LPP plurilingual framework useful for most Latin American countries should ideally integrate both the national *and* FLs within one single conceptual framework and one programme in tertiary education.

A plurilingual framework would contain an L1 pole or space, an L2 pole and an intermediate zone of intercultural and plurilingual activities that connects the two poles (see Scheme 2). The first pole organises all the activities and skills that strengthen academic capacities in the society's own national language(s). The second pole nurtures all the activities and skills in the FLs from a perspective of critical appropriation to make the FL work for the academic community's necessities. The plurilingual zone fosters the development of

A Plurilingual Framework for LPP in Science and Higher Education		
Portuguese & Spanish Pole	**Plurilingual Zone**	**English & Other Languages Pole**
Global Objective 1	Promote Plurilingual Spaces & Attitudes	**Global Objective 2**
Terminology & Databases	Promote the Development of Multilingual Terminologies & Databases with International Multilingual Participation	**Terminology & Databases**
Publications	Read and Publish in Several Languages	**Publications**
Translation from Portuguese & Spanish into Other Languages	Promote the Use of Several Languages in Science & Higher Education	**Translation from Other Languages into Portuguese & Spanish**
Teaching Portuguese & Spanish for Academic Purposes	Promote the Use of Several Languages for Academic Purposes	**Teaching English & Other Foreign Languages**
Teaching Science in Portuguese & Spanish	Promote the Teaching & Learning of Science in Several Languages	**Teaching Science in English & Other Languages**
International Exchanges	Encourage the Creation of Plurilingual Spaces and Attitudes	**International Exchanges**

Scheme 2.   A plurilingual framework for LPP in science & higher education (adapted from Hamel, 2013a).

a multi-language communicative repertoire and attitudes that may include teaching of inter-comprehension and the transfer of academic skills from one language to another.

Unfortunately, mother tongue skills and FL learning are usually developed by separate institutions, and we rarely find explicit and well-defined LPP at university or even at country level. On the whole, language policies have a low profile in Latin American universities and are typically covert rather than explicit except the requirement to pass a FL proficiency exam. Since 2010, several countries have set up scholarship programmes for international student mobility for undergraduate and postgraduate students which motivate FL learning.

Let us have a look at the micro university level of LPP which has attracted major attention in recent times. The following two cases from Mexico and Brazil are exceptional since they depart from the policies of most universities in the continent. They both develop plurilingual LPPs of their own.

Meeting plurilingual challenges at the National Polytechnic Institute in Mexico

Since its foundation in 1936 the *Instituto Politécnico Nacional* (IPN) was designed to contribute to an intensive industrialisation process under state control and the technical education of students belonging to lower social classes.[14] In 2014, the IPN possessed 81 academic units in 17 of the 32 federal entities (31 states and Mexico City), with 17,500 members of staff and 180,000 students.[15] Research and teaching cover three areas: engineering and physico-mathematical sciences, biological and medical sciences, as well as social sciences and business administration.

One of its many schools is the *Unidad Profesional Interdisciplinaria en Ingeniería y Tecnologías Avanzadas* (UPIITA), an interdisciplinary unit that teaches telematics, mechatronics and bionic engineering at undergraduate and postgraduate level. In 2014, some 250 members of staff taught 4350 students. Right from its beginning in 1997, UPIITA has striven for excellence integrating research and teaching even at the undergraduate level. At present, its teams regularly win national and international prizes. Internationalisation played a significant role in its development, including staff and student exchange programmes and intensive FL teaching in the school's own FL centre. Given its technological orientation, English is by far the most important FL. Undergraduate students enrol in three compulsory term courses of English at the beginning of their studies. Some of their courses are taught in English. At the postgraduate level, all the scientific literature is in English. Most lecturers participate in international congresses and publish in prestigious journals.

The international student mobility programme initiated in 2009 at IPN has greatly enhanced FL learning and has made it attractive.[16] IPN established exchange agreements with over 160 universities in 48 countries. Given their high levels in content matters and FL proficiency, UPIITA students made up the largest cohort sent abroad within IPN for several years. This success is credited to an individual tracking and coaching procedure. Students who want to participate in the study abroad programmes must apply at least one and a half years prior to travelling and they have to produce valid intermediate certification in English as well as in another language depending on the target country.

Despite the leading role of English, both staff and students develop skills in other FLs as well, especially since leading technological institutions in Germany, Poland, France and the Czech Republic rank top as preferred destinations, followed by universities in Brazil and Asia (Korea, Singapore, Taiwan).

Thus, a significant number of students with an advanced command of English study other European and Asian languages. UPIITA requires a B2 level in German and in

English on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) for mobility students going to Germany. On the whole, UPIITA was able to create an academic culture of international perspectives and plurilingualism, which rarely arises in Mexican technical universities.

Individual biographies collected for a study (Álvarez López, 2015) over a period of five years reveal common patterns of international professional development and the acquisition of plural language skills.

Miguel, who studied bionic engineering at UPIITA, grew up in a trilingual context where he achieved advanced language skills in English and French before entering university. During his undergraduate studies, he spent a full year in Germany at the University of Stuttgart and the Max Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems in the same town. After graduating in 2012 at UPIITA, he initiated an MSc in Oldenburg, Germany, and he is at present (2016) studying a PhD in Germany. Miguel started learning German just before he went to Germany, the cradle of bionics, where he improved his German language skills significantly. All classes in engineering at German universities he attended were conducted in German. Miguel used English at conferences and in courses he himself taught, as well as with many other foreigners in Germany. Being married to a German, the couple continues using English among themselves, the language in which they met. Their child is brought up bilingually in German and Spanish. Miguel's language proficiency is rated as: Spanish (L1), English (C2), German (C1), French (B2), Portuguese (B1) and Esperanto (A2).

Julián graduated in 2014 in mechatronics. A previous semester at Munich Technological University and the acquisition of German helped him to find his first job at Volkswagen of Mexico where he met a number of IPN alumni who all spoke some German and had study abroad practices. He then moved on to the Ford Motor Company where he again met alumni with comparable experiences.

Similar international plurilingual biographies are common at UPIITA. Given their successful life experiences, the interviewed students vindicate their choices in their professional and personal lives which in all cases include studies of excellence, studies abroad and the acquisition of a plurilingual communicative and professional repertoire. Such successful international life experiences are not very common in other IPN schools, which exhibit less support for internationalisation policies and plurilingualism. Therefore, we conclude that the academic culture of professional development and research in several languages as a trademark of UPIITA is a strong element to predict academic and professional accomplishment. Needless to say, they developed the appropriate "esprit de corps" to identify with their school as grateful alumni and they vigorously support its policy of excellence, internationalisation and plurilingualism.

UNILA: Latin American integration through two languages

The *Universidade Federal da Integração Latino-Americana* (UNILA, Federal University of Latin American Integration) founded in 2010 stands out among the 65 federal universities in Brazil.[17] Located in Foz do Iguaçu on the tri-national boarder between Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay, UNILA has the mission to contribute to the integration of Latin America and, more specifically, to the integration of South America whose southern part is organised by Mercosur, the Free Trade Agreement of the Southern Cone since 1991. It includes Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay with Bolivia and Venezuela joining later. Mercosur's integration policy goes well beyond common tariff barriers; it comprises the free circulation of citizens as well as communication and education in its two official

and working languages, Spanish and Portuguese.[18] A boom of language programmes for the "other" language emerged in the 1990s in the Mercosur member states (Carvalho, 2012; Hamel, 2003).

UNILA has the mission to form human resources capable of contributing to Latin America's integration, regional development and cultural, scientific and educational exchange.[19] Its research areas and study programmes embrace biological sciences (ecology and biodiversity), economics (economic integration and development), political science and sociology (society, the state and politics in Latin America), engineering of renewable energies, civil engineering and infrastructure, and international relations and integration.

The original plan established that half of its staff and student population should come from Brazil, the other half from Hispanic America. The two official research and teaching languages are Spanish and Portuguese; all students should become bilingual, and the students from one language group were supposed to write their thesis in the other language. This last requirement was dropped. UNILA hosted 3146 students in 2016, being 2052 Brazilians and the rest Hispanics with a strong contingent from neighbouring Paraguay (426). The university staff comprised 270 Brazilian professors and 49 from Hispanic American countries. Twenty-nine undergraduate and eleven postgraduate programmes were in place. University policy envisages reaching a more balanced composition of staff and students between the two language groups in the future.

Since bilingual proficiency in the two official languages cannot be expected at entrance level, students follow a three-term common core programme for all disciplines; it includes fundamentals about Latin America, epistemology and methodology, and an intensive L1 and L2 language programme which targets academic proficiency in the four skills in both languages, as well as a sound communicative knowledge in L2 to foster intercultural integration.

A recent study on UNILA students' language proficiency, usage and ideologies (Carvalhal, 2016) reveals some interesting findings about the effects of LPP after four years of management and experimentation. Advances in second language learning as well as language choices interact with variables such as linguistic prestige, the ethnolinguistic composition of the staff and student bodies and UNILA's location on the tri-national border.

The prestige relationship places Portuguese above Spanish today since Brazil is the most advanced and economically dominant nation in the area. This is sharply felt on the border where citizens in Hispanic countries show positive attitudes towards higher living standards in Brazil; they watch Brazilian television and know some Portuguese. In contrast, Brazilian frontier residents do not look much across the border; they show little interest in their neighbours and do not feel inclined to learn Spanish (Berger, 2015). This general asymmetry of prestige permeates sociolinguistic relations at UNILA and their community's residence in the area, together with uneven numbers of a larger cohort of Brazilian staff and students. According to the survey in Carvalhal (2016), Brazilian students feel less the necessity or motivation to learn Spanish and their improvement in Spanish remains lower than that of their Hispanic peers regarding Portuguese. Among the external students who stay at local boarding houses, only Hispanics have the opportunity of practicing the other language at their residences and in town. In general terms, Portuguese is considered to be the dominant, unmarked language, the most used in academic activities, administrative business, and in informal communication in the university and outside.

As to other FLs, more that 50% of the interviewed students show interest in learning English and French as international languages and, to a lesser degree, German and Russian. English is associated with access to science and a requirement for mobility

Table 2.   Expectations and use.

UNILA: relationship between expectations and real language use evaluation

Predominant language use	Expectations (%)	Uses (%)
Predominantly Spanish L1	9.8	25
Predominantly Portuguese L1	7.5	43.2
Predominantly Spanish L2	0.3	5.8
Predominantly Portuguese L2	22.1	11
No predominance	58.3	15
No response	2	–

Note: Carvalhal (2016).

programmes. Therefore, English for academic purposes is inserted in a range of under-graduate disciplines as either compulsory or elective courses.

The use of indigenous languages, which encounter high barriers even in intercultural universities designed for indigenous population in Latin America (López, Moya, & Hamel, 2009), has increased over time at UNILA. Many students from Paraguay or Bolivia are speakers of indigenous languages. Given the massive presence of Guarani on the Paraguayan side of the border, there is significant interest and demand for Guarani and also Quechua, the leading Andean indigenous language, from both the student body and from the local public that attends language courses. Guarani is also taught in study pro-grammes of literature. Although indigenous languages, mainly Guarani, play a modest role in the university's activities, their presence is important and carries significant symbolic value in the larger Latin American context where indigenous languages are gaining visi-bility and incidence in the general educational systems.

Most students of both groups relate Portuguese–Spanish bilingualism to integration, intercultural exchange and growth in opportunities. Thus, their positive attitudes, linguistic orientations and social practices coincide with the goals of UNILA's language policy and contribute to the construction of intercultural and plurilingual spaces. The relation between learning the other language and academic achievement, however, turns out to have a weaker position in students' perceptions: a majority of students (about 90% in the Carvalhal, 2016 survey) do not explicitly associate the learning of the other language with the development of academic and scientific skills and knowledge which implies that there is a low degree of awareness relating to the university's "content and language inte-grated learning (CLIL)" approach.

UNILA is still experimenting with efficient programmes to develop general proficiency and academic skills in the official languages as both first and second or additional languages. Their functions as languages of study in the language courses and as languages of instruction in regular content matter courses are not yet integrated in an optimal way. Although academics were hired since UNILA's foundation with the overall bilingual pro-gramme in mind, many of them are not yet fully bilingual and assign a higher priority to disciplinary content development in their teaching than to the bilingual programme. There-fore, bilingual practices in their classrooms do not conform to a clear second language learning strategy, but are more or less improvised and subject to individual arrangements with the students. In many classes, lecturers who teach in Spanish will allow Brazilian stu-dents to use their native language in oral and written activities and vice versa. Thus, stu-dents develop receptive bilingualism but are not sufficiently compelled to use the other language to develop productive skills. Given that almost two-thirds of the staff is Brazilian

who teach in Portuguese according to the general rule that everyone lectures in his or her native tongue, Brazilian students have fewer opportunities to acquire and improve Spanish through their ordinary courses than Hispanic students who learn Portuguese. On the whole, the use of the other language was lower than students had expected. Table 2 shows the expectation that students have at entrance level about their future language use, compared to the self-evaluation of leaving students about their factual language practice during their studies. We can see that L1 use was significantly higher in both languages than expected, whereas Portuguese L2 use turned out to be significantly lower. The promise of the model that language use would be balance was taken for true by over 50% of the students, but only 15% of the outgoing students had the impression that the model was fully in place.

Administration is usually ignored as a component in LPP studies of institutions. The language(s) used in the administrative apparatus play(s) however a significant role, both in their functional use and in their symbolic value which represents overt and hidden power relations. As a Brazilian federal university, UNILA is subject to Brazilian legislation which means the compulsory use of Portuguese at all levels of administration and government including the issuing of official documents such as decrees and diplomas. Services to students are generally delivered in Portuguese. Specific forms, as well as webpages and other information are distributed in both languages. In-service training is underway that teaches Spanish to the personnel and develops plurilingual attitudes.

In sum, UNILA has achieved to establish a bilingual model which is asymmetric in favour of Portuguese in quantitative and qualitative terms, but it is working and improving. The imbalance could be reduced over time with a higher influx of Spanish speaking staff and students and a special effort of status and practice planning to enhance the role of Spanish.

Perspectives for language politics and planning in Latin America

The language policies in the two particular academic contexts described above need to be interpreted in the light of the more general issues raised at the beginning. Despite important structural and contextual differences both universities develop comparable models of institutional plurilingualism.

UPIITA: a quest for academic excellence and plurilingual experiences

The UPIITA experience in the Mexican National Polytechnic Institute clearly shows a path to success by combining a small number of decisive components. Based on a programme striving for excellence, UPIITA places high requirements on hiring staff and selecting students. Once inside, they obtain a degree of support and stimulus that is quite exceptional compared to other schools at IPN and elsewhere. Members of staff are supported and encouraged to develop research and technical design together with their students, to write and publish and to present their findings at national and international conferences. Students are invited to participate in research and mobility programmes, but in order to become eligible they have to meet high requirements in their studies and in FLs. In return, the personal coaching programme helps them to stay the course and they are awarded scholarships for their study abroad.

It is within this context that a plurilingual model in the field can emerge successfully. The subfields of *Production* and *Formation* are solidly grounded in Spanish and maintain intense reciprocal interaction. The subfield of *Circulation* in turn acknowledges the leading role of English in the reception (reading, listening) and distribution (publishing, presenting)

of research findings. English enters the field as well through teaching, although to a minor degree. The fundamental aspect which makes the model work is that every component is kept in check through other elements. Other languages enter vigorously into the field; their learning is fostered through the prospect of travelling to some of the world's top technological institutions in Europe and Asia where teaching happens in the countries' national languages or sometimes in English, and the desire to learn other international languages from an enrichment perspective that enhances cultural and intellectual development beyond the profession. In each communicational space of the field, including study abroad periods, a plurilingual communicative sphere evolves where sometimes two or more languages are simultaneously involved, occasionally only one, but where a plurilingual horizon is usually present. All activities developed in Spanish strengthen the national language pole; the acquisition of FLs and its usage in reading, at conferences and while studying abroad fosters the FL pole from a perspective of appropriation that maintains the institutional control over all the processes involved. The use of FLs and, even more so, the study abroad experiences develop the intercultural zone that links the two poles and develops positive attitudes towards intercultural experiences.

UNILA: integrating multilingual worlds in one university

On the whole, the experience of developing a bilingual university in the context of regional South American integration has so far shown predominantly positive results. Research and teaching develop on a daily basis in Portuguese and Spanish delivered by native speakers. Students from all over South American attend the university; they become bi or trilingual and eventually get their degrees which open a vast international market of labour opportunities for them. According to the survey (Carvalhal, 2016), which covered both incoming and leaving students, attitudes and language ideologies are overwhelmingly favourable to bilingualism, intercultural exchange and regional integration. Initial expectations regarding the attainable levels of bilingualism were not completely met, significantly less so by Brazilian students. This is in part due to the still substantial majority of Brazilian staff and students, but probably more so to the need to develop and implement more efficient second language planning. Specific L2 courses which focus on language as an object of study need to be better coordinated with disciplinary courses where the L2 is the language of instruction in order to develop L2 proficiency for academic purposes in the four skills. This would imply a stronger presence of a CLIL approach in academic disciplines. However, such a strategy usually encounters resistance from professors to open up their courses for systematic language development purposes. To achieve this aim, the bilingual component of UNILA's special character and its mission to act as a university of integration would have to acquire a higher status and a more central role in the university's life than it seems to have now. Only under such conditions the superb structural advantages of a bilingual university could be exploited in an optimal way to enhance second language learning and enrichment bilingualism.

A plurilingual model of LPP emerges in UNILA as well. In the two subfields of *Production* and *Formation*, the academic field is solidly grounded in a bilingual model based on the two languages of academic work and integration. Day to day activities in research occur in the academics' languages, where receptive bilingualism develops as an efficient modality of communication. Teaching, as stated before, occurs in the academic standard varieties of each language, allowing for receptive bilingualism in classroom interaction. In the third subfield of *Circulation*, English and other FLs come in through reading articles, e-mails and other forms of digital communication with colleagues abroad, as well as publishing in other languages.

Even at a very young age, UNILA has gained regional and international recognition; the symbolic value of its design for integration cannot be underestimated in the Latin American context. Last not least, UNILA exhibits an original and realistic plurilingual model which privileges Portuguese and Spanish as the legitimate regional and super central international languages for doing research and academic teaching. It demonstrates that there is no need to rush to English and to establish it as the dominant or "normal" language inside the university. On the contrary, English and other FLs come third and are taught and used as additional languages according to concrete local needs.

Perspectives

Although both universities are quite far apart in size, structural dispositions and sociolinguistic contexts, some striking similarities surface from their language policy practices. In both cases, plurilingual models develop which do not only keep an open space for more than one FL, but also preserve and cultivate their own national language without any subtractive effects. They establish their own language hierarchies according to their needs and not as the result of some worldwide imposition of rankings. The Mexican school places English in the first place above all other FLs, which is a correct decision given the general language distribution in technology. However, the institution's language policy does not presuppose, as often happens in similar contexts, that English will be enough to act successfully as a visiting student at university and in the community in any country. And, given that students seem to be oriented towards centres in Europe, Asia or Brazil, UPIITA encourages and requires the learning of those countries' languages where possible. This orientation stems from the senior researchers' own study abroad experiences which taught them that the local languages are in most cases the medium of instruction, and that they play a significant role for academic interaction, social integration and intercultural exchange.

As we have seen, UNILA in Brazil takes an even more courageous step since it responds to a political project of regional integration, Mercosur, which has fought for its independence from US hegemony. Consequently, the university's language policy challenges world language rankings with English on top; it assigns priority to the two regional languages relegating English to a tertiary position with a strictly functional role. This policy is realistic and seems adequate since it constructs an optimal framework: lecturers teach in their mother tongues in most cases, and students are expected and required to become bilingual in two languages which are at the same time closely related.

Both university-based language policies reflect a plurilingual orientation, even in their more implicit and less coordinated components. At the same time, they exhibit sound realism since they are grounded in specific sociolinguistic conditions which they take into account to obtain an optimal design. Thus, local communication needs and local language orientations are privileged, keeping a healthy distance and independence from generalised dominant ideologies about the inescapable might of English and its world governance.

Imperial pressure to control flows of information and the communicative shaping of world interpretations through the imposition of English as the only world language is no doubt present in these academic contexts and outside. However, attempts to "wipe out" whole world regions as being irrelevant for science and higher education, as we contended at the beginning, are countered in a number of Latin America universities through autonomous strategies that develop excellence in research and structure the field of SHE without severing academic links to the Anglophone world. Plurilingual models of academic

management play a significant role in that endeavour. Being part of the Hispanic and the Portuguese commonwealths and linking up with the Francophonie, they belong to the many vigorous academic worlds that may remain invisible to the radar of English monolingualism.

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Disclosure statement

Notes

1. We owe much of this framing and the references to Münkler's and Mocikat's work to Gehrmann's (2015) text and to communication with him.
2. Limited space does not allow us to describe the mechanisms of commodification and neoliberal restructuring of the worldwide university system that attempts to domesticate the field of science through rigid citation and impact factor control (Fernández-Ríos & Rodríguez-Díaz, 2014; Gehrmann, 2015; Mocikat, 2009).
3. In this text, we understand "multilingual" as a descriptive term as well as a languages-as-a-problem perspective. "Plurilingual" in turn looks upon a diversity of languages from an enrichment perspective (see Hamel, 2013b for a detailed explanation).
4. See Calvet's (1999) and De Swaan's (1993, 2001, 2010) terminology which defines English as the only hyper central language today; then come less than 10 super central languages (French, Spanish, Portuguese, etc.) to be followed by a third level of some 100 national or central languages which have little or no international spread or functions. Finally, we have over 6000 vernacular languages.
5. By contrast, the most intensive colonisation of Africa and Asia, which occurred during a later period, practised predominantly exploitation colonisation, leading to a totally different demographic pattern with a tiny influx of European population, mainly as military, governmental civil servants and groups of merchants. Therefore, the European colonial languages never became national languages, despite colonial and post-colonial efforts to impose them. As a consequence, the function of state building is quite different in Africa and Asia from that in Latin America.
6. Bilingual education for the indigenous population, although established today in all Latin American countries with indigenous population, still has to fight for its acceptance and adequate implementation against the nation-state ideology.
7. This really is a central component of Bourdieu's *habitus* concept which liberates the interpretation of fairly homogenous collective behaviours of similar actors from the burden of conscientious agency and complot theories.
8. Although the Scandinavian languages belong to the group of central languages and therefore seem less equipped to resist the spread of English, their communities have taken an international lead in designing alternative plurilingual models that help preserve the presence of their languages in the field of SHE from an enrichment perspective (Hartmut Haberland, Lønsmann, & Preisler, 2013; Hult & Källkvist, 2016; Preisler, Klitgard, & Fabricius, 2011).
9. See reports on language in science and higher education debates for major language communities in Ehlich (2005) and Gajo and Pamula-Behrens (2013).
10. See Kachru's (1986) classical model with its three concentric circles that explains the dynamics of English language spread. This is exactly the kind of construct which constitutes an Empire beyond territorial borders, according to modern conceptualisations (Münkler, op. cit.).
11. See a different organization of the field by Preisler (2005), modelled for Denmark.
12. There is a vast literature in non-Anglophone countries on these topics. The announcements of English-spread pundits that English is everywhere are often vastly exaggerated. English is by no

means a language of internal communication in any Latin American country, as Graddol (2006) sustains.

13. A significant area of research has developed on the difficulties that encounter non-English language academics to write their articles and then to get them published in English (Ammon, 2012; Englander, 2011; Englander & Uzuner-Smith, 2013; García Landa, 2006; Hanauer & Englander, 2013).

14. By constitutional mandate, public education including the university level is free of charge in Mexico.

15. Figures are retrieved from: Anuario General Estadístico 2014. Instituto Politécnico Nacional. http://www.gestionestrategica.ipn.mx/Evaluacion/Documents/Anuarios/ANUARIO_2014_V3. pdf (accessed: 03.03.2016).

16. Student mobility has been a central topic in Europe for decades (Teichler, 2012). See critical voices in Fabricius, Mortensen, and Haberland (2016).

17. The federal universities are the leading institutions of higher education in Brazil; they typically range above the state universities except two Sao Paulo state universities, the University of Sao Paulo (USP) and the University of Campinas (UNICAMP) which always come out on top of the national ranking scale. USP has also been No. 1 in Latin America for several years.

18. The third official language is Guarani, the largest indigenous language which is co-official and spoken by over 70% of the population in Paraguay where it evolved and urbanised into the language of national identity. It is however not a working language in Mercosur.

19. See UNILA's homepage https://www.unila.edu.br/es/conteudo/voca%C3%A7%C3%A3o-da-unila.

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