



10

Translating Western Social and Human Sciences in Argentina: A Comparative Study of Translations from French, English, German, Italian and Portuguese

Gustavo Sorá and Alejandro Dujovne

Introduction

English is today's lingua franca, as French was in the modern period and Latin was in the Middle Ages. The data on the prevalence of English are robust, especially in the core spheres of symbolic production, such as science. In the social sciences, Johan Heilbron (2009) has noted that in the 1950s and 1960s, nearly half of the publications included in the International Bibliography of the Social Sciences were in English; by 2005, this percentage had risen to more than 75 per cent. Correlatively, the prevalence of other historically powerful languages has decreased, including French and German, which both represented around 7 per

G. Sorá (✉)

Department of Anthropology, The National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET), Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, Córdoba, Argentina

A. Dujovne

Centro de Investigaciones Sociales, IDES-CONICET, Buenos Aires, Argentina

© The Author(s) 2018

J. Heilbron et al. (eds.), *The Social and Human Sciences in Global Power Relations*, Socio-Historical Studies of the Social and Human Sciences,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-73299-2_10

267

cent of the database by 2005. Gingras and Mosbah-Natanson (2010) have noted a similar trend. By 2004, 85 per cent of the peer-reviewed publications in the social sciences listed in the Ulrich database were in English, as were 94 per cent of the articles in the Social Science Citation Index of the Web of Science published between 1998 and 2007. Despite objections to the specific language biases of these databases derived from their selection criteria, their analytical power lies in bringing together the dominant international publications in the different social sciences disciplines. What is the scope, dynamic and meaning of this phenomenon of cultural domination? Answering this and other questions allows us to understand how this phenomenon began and later perpetuated, without reducing its complexity to one or two variables like politics or economics. Such questions also provide insight into the unequal possibilities for scholarly production among English-speaking individuals and regions—and those with a strong tradition of bilingual education—in comparison to non-English speakers (Ammon 2010).¹

The growing dominance of English in the scientific realm is neither linear nor homogeneous. An analysis by country and by scientific discipline reveals differences in the uses and meanings of English. According to Daphne van Weijen's analysis of the Scopus database (2012), scientific communication in English is on the rise in countries like Holland and Italy, to the detriment of their national language. However, in countries like France and Spain, van Weijen reveals a more moderate rise in the number of texts in English and a more stable relationship between English language and national language texts. Language preferences also vary by scientific disciplines. English tends to be the preferred language in the "hard sciences" like physics and biology but its predominance diminishes in the social sciences and humanities, where national languages tends to predominate. In other words, a portion of scientific production—a portion that varies by country and by discipline—continues to be disseminated in various languages. For this reason, and because of the need to expand the reach of scholarly production in languages other than English, translation continues to be critical to disseminating research findings published in different places.

In recent years, several studies have analyzed the internationalization of the social sciences in Argentina, though few have addressed the problem

of translation. In one study on the institutionalization of political science in Argentina, Leonardo Medina Rodríguez (2014) analyzes the effects of the international circulation of specialists and ideas on the structuring of an academic elite through indicators such as study, teaching and research abroad, visits by foreign researchers and publications. His work reveals the multiple practices and relationships that connect an academic discipline with other fields, highlighting the structures that relegate this political science to the periphery in Argentina. The author's ultimate aim is to reveal the elite group of gatekeepers responsible for keeping the discipline connected with the main centers of the production of knowledge. In his study, Medina Rodríguez also examines certain dimensions of the publishing market for journals and books in the political sciences. In relation to journals, the only statistical evidence he presents is the miniscule number of articles published by Argentine political science professionals on the mainstream international circuit, based on a data survey of the Web of Science for March 2013 (2014: 142). Regarding book publishing, Medina Rodríguez notes a rift between the sphere of production (dominated by the large transnational publishing groups based in Spain) and that of national consumption in a chapter entitled "Towards a plurality of translations." Owing to the lack of concrete data on titles, publishers, series, translated books, translated languages and the uses of the different publications, further analysis is needed to confirm the important hypotheses the author lays out in the study. In this regard, it is possible to say that the use Medina Rodríguez makes of translation is more metaphorical and refers not to a specific practice² but to a system of printed goods involving editors, text translators and other mediators between intellectual fields of different languages and nationalities.

Our approach to the phenomenon of book translation brings up the topic of a certain degree of autonomy within the publishing field in relation to the academic-scientific field. Although the producers of ideas intervene in decisions regarding what to read and translate, they are subordinate to the editors who ultimately control translation-publication. To avoid the risk of generalizations, a sociological approach to the use of languages and its objectification in communications proves useful to understanding this phenomenon. Some precedents in this regard include the sociology of languages, translation and the international circulation

of ideas (Even-Zohar 1990; Heilbron 1999, 2009; Bourdieu 2002; De Swaan 2002; Sapiro 2014). Based on these works, we have developed an analytical perspective for the study of translations that examines the agents and logics behind the importing and exporting of ideas. Guided by these premises, in this chapter we analyze social sciences and humanities (SSH) book translations in Argentina from 1990 to 2011.

Argentina occupies a doubly-peripheral position in the global system. Its language, Spanish, is peripheral in comparison to English and, albeit to a lesser extent, in comparison to French and German as well. Second, in the geopolitics of science and culture, the United States and Europe are the main producers and communicators in all key areas (Gingras and Mosbah-Natanson 2010; Heilbron 2014). The choice of this national case is not only theoretical—margins are critical to understanding cores—but empirical as well. The first finding regarding English is that it is not the most commonly translated language in the sphere of the social sciences and humanities in Argentina, as becomes evident when the different source languages of the SSH titles are compared. In this work, we have studied the five most translated languages: French, English, German, Italian and Portuguese.

Argentina is analytically important in another regard. Though it is peripheral from the point of view of its language and with regards to the principal producers of science, it has a significant cultural weight within the Spanish speaking world. Spain is the main producer and exporter of books in this linguistic geography, with Mexico and Argentina vying for second place. According to the ISBN national records for 2015, Spain published 92,986 titles, Mexico, 29,895 and Argentina, 28,966. However, in terms of the number of titles per 10,000 inhabitants, Argentina (6.7) surpasses Mexico (2.5). This difference can be noted in other aspects of the publishing ecosystem, such as the number of bookstores.³ Although no precise data is available, different sources suggest that the city of Buenos Aires has as many (or even more) bookstores than all Mexico. All three countries have a longstanding tradition in the publishing of SSH translations. Thus, the analysis of book translations published in Argentina also means advancing towards an understanding of the forms in which these three countries compete and also complement one another as importers of ideas within the intellectual space of the Spanish language.

This study, which covers a period of a little over two decades, allows us to question certain broad assumptions in the social sciences and humanities: the unrivalled predominance of English and U.S. scientific production; the inevitable shift from print to digital communication; and the replacement of books by periodicals as a means of legitimizing scientific production. The logics of production and scientific communication merit observation and understanding in different contexts and from other angles.

In the hard sciences, increasingly universal validation criteria—publishing in a certain type of academic journals, for example, and the expanded use of citation indicators to establish the value of both journals and the works themselves—pose serious challenges for the workings and communications of the social sciences and humanities. The status of books is drawn into question as part of this process. Yet, as Renato Ortiz (2009) notes, in the SSH there is a close relationship between theoretical introduction/debate and the book format. The layout and format of books is well adapted to long-term research works. Moreover, books continue to play an important role in building SSH academic careers in major international intellectual centers such as the U.S., France and Germany. Finally, the value of an SSH book also depends on books in general and their broader social and cultural value, which is in turn related to the history of publishing and intellectual national fields. The degree of visibility and the circulation of scholarly publishers, observable through the type of bookstores that sell their books and the way these books are marketed (window placement, displayed on tables with “new releases” or “recommendations”), is a possible indicator of this phenomenon.

From a long-term perspective, books thus offer insight into the international circulation of SSH ideas.⁴ However, it is important to consider that the relationship to books can vary by discipline. In the case of the economic and political sciences—to mention the most salient examples—researchers increasingly opt to publish journal articles instead of books. On the other hand, analyzing books from this perspective means also examining economic and political interests at work in the publishing industry, barriers to publishing, and the intellectual value criteria in each academic field and discipline.

Publishing and Translation in Argentina

In order to analyze the translations of SSH books in Argentina between 1990 and 2011, we have built a database based on information from the national ISBN record. Although this source provides extensive information, it has reliability issues, and its search engine has several limitations. To achieve a consistent database, we cross-checked and refined the information with other sources, such as catalogues from the most important publishers and from online libraries, and information provided by the French embassy. We then classified the titles by disciplines, authors and production period (classic, modern and contemporary), among other variables. This classification was supplemented with a series of interviews with publishers. As shown in Table 10.1, French stands out as the most translated language: the number of books translated from French is more than twice that of translations from English, counting both American and British titles.

What disciplines and authors are translated the most? How many publishing houses release translations, and which publishing houses are they? How do they differ from one another? What impact have public funding policies had on the publishing of translated works? These and other questions are important to explaining these results. As we will see throughout the study, the publication of translations responds in large measure to the functioning of the publishing market. That is, it is not limited to the interests and dynamics of the academic field, which is usually where the circulation of ideas is analyzed. The first and clearest factor in this regard is the relationship between economic fluctuations, the publishing market, and the quantity of translations published annually.

Table 10.1 SSH book translations per language (Argentine publishing market, 1990–2011)

Language	Books translated (excluding reprints/re-editions)	Percentages
French	1660	45
English	779	21
German	652	18
Italian	441	12
Portuguese	166	4
Total	3698	100

The economic variables that come into play during times of stability/growth and times of crisis (in Argentina, 1990–1991 and 2001–2002) have a striking effect on publishing—and especially on translations. As is shown in Table 10.2, book publishing in Argentina rose significantly between 1990 and 2011, though from a global point of view, this does not represent a purely local phenomenon. During these two decades, book production surged in all markets, though the number of print runs diminished. The table also reveals that translations depend on local as well as external conditions. The 2008 global financial crisis made it more difficult for the country’s publishers to pay the going prices on the market

Table 10.2 Titles and SSH translations published in Argentina, 1990–2011

Year	Number of titles registered in Argentina (new+reedit)	SSH translations from French, English, German, Italian and Portuguese (no rep./reedit)	Argentine general publishing annual percentage change (%)	SSH translations annual percentage change (%)
1990		55		
1991	4800	51	0	0
1992	7400	64	154	118
1993	7800	86	163	156
1994	9600	104	200	196
1995	8700	107	181	195
1996	9900	132	206	251
1997	12,035	158	251	289
1998	13,096	147	273	267
1999	13,730	198	286	360
2000	14,151	186	295	338
2001	13,642	143	284	260
2002	10,346	117	216	213
2003	14,284	218	298	420
2004	18,129	234	378	429
2005	19,375	240	404	447
2006	21,182	236	441	433
2007	23,503	243	490	447
2008	22,911	272	477	509
2009	23,553	225	491	420
2010	26,387	241	550	449
2011	30,860	241	643	447
Total	325,384	3698		

of international book rights. To deal with this situation, some publishers developed alternative translation strategies, like putting together anthologies of foreign authors based on collections of articles published in academic journals, thus publishing books that do not exist per se in the country or native language of the authors.

However, to fully understand this scenario, it is important to consider the structural aspects of the Spanish-language publishing market. Insofar as the primary target of Argentine social science book production is the local market, Argentine publishers choose titles, authors and disciplines accordingly. At the same time, however, a portion of the Argentine publishing production is exported to other Spanish-speaking markets, and part of the books sold on the Argentine market are translations, most of which are imported from Spain and Mexico.⁵

As can be seen on Table 10.3, the predominance of French over other source languages remains steady throughout the period. However,

Table 10.3 Number of SSH books translated from each language per year

Year	French	English	German	Italian	Portuguese
1990	25	6	19	6	0
1991	29	11	11	4	0
1992	21	10	22	6	6
1993	45	17	16	5	3
1994	52	29	14	13	0
1995	56	23	17	10	1
1996	55	32	24	21	6
1997	71	43	18	17	10
1998	61	38	29	16	3
1999	96	49	27	19	7
2000	95	39	31	13	8
2001	73	22	16	25	7
2002	55	29	16	11	6
2003	93	41	43	33	21
2004	95	38	49	41	13
2005	115	36	41	40	14
2006	99	48	35	46	10
2007	110	55	42	29	10
2008	124	50	51	32	23
2009	111	55	24	25	16
2010	101	59	35	38	14
2011	89	49	72	23	13

Table 10.4 Translated SSH authors by language and historical Period (percentage)

	French (%)	English (%)	German (%)	Italian (%)	Portuguese (%)
Classics	5.8	3.8	9.2	7.0	0.8
Modern	4.9	4.0	20.3	5.7	0.8
Contemporary	89.2	92.2	70.5	87.2	98.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100

different languages vie for second place in those same years: in certain periods or years, more books are translated from German than from English (1990–1993, 2003–2005, 2008, 2011⁶) while in others, Italian translations outnumbered those from English (2001, 2005). These differences can partially be explained by the publishing activity in Mexico and Spain. But they can also be explained by other factors, such as the importance of the authors translated according to the historical period of their production. We have classified authors who published their most important works before 1900 as “classic”; those whose peak was between 1900 and 1950 as “modern;” and those who produced the bulk of their work from 1950 to date as “contemporary.” Among 1474 single authors (not including authors of books with two or more authors), 6 per cent are classic, 7 per cent modern and 87 per cent contemporary (Table 10.4).

The international prestige of languages is strongly associated with “classic” authors who wrote in those languages. For publishing houses, the classics represent guaranteed sales as demand for them remains steady over time. For this reason, though contemporary authors greatly outnumber the classic and modern authors, new editions and reprints are more common among the classic and modern. In many cases, their most renowned works—like *The Social Contract* by Rousseau or Karl Marx’s *The Communist Manifesto*—are on the required reading lists of university courses in various degree programs. As a result, they are regularly reprinted and re-edited, often in cheap editions released by sales-oriented publishers. The proportional weight of these authors is higher among Italian and German authors. In these languages, the texts most often translated are philosophical. The intellectual prestige of classic and modern authors draws the interest of publishers and the academic field to the contemporary production of a given language and country. This reveals that there is a

certain degree of variation and innovation that continues to justify the acquisition of translation copyrights. From this point of view, the paltry number of translations from Portuguese cannot be solely attributed to the fact that this source language is easy for Spanish speakers to understand. Although the syntactical and phonological similarities between Spanish and Portuguese facilitate the circulation of source language texts, translation is still essential to a broader dissemination of scholarly work.⁷ The absence of renowned classic and modern authors thus reduces the intellectual prestige of a language/country with respect to more established languages.

The relationship between the distribution of disciplines and languages is another approach to the analysis. As shown on Table 10.5, the first important fact is that half of all translations published in Argentina over the course of the period studied here correspond to just two disciplines, philosophy and “psych” (psychiatry, psychology and primarily, psychoanalysis). Considering that a varying, but always significant, percentage of the titles are selected based on the preferences of the local market, the predominance of these disciplines suggest a direct connection with the interests and demands of local academia and, more broadly, the intellectual sphere. Psychoanalysis, for example, represents a field unto itself in Argentina—especially in the city of Buenos Aires—with its own schools of thought, institutions, publications, debates, etc. Although this field is

Table 10.5 Translated SSH disciplines

Disciplines	Translations percentage (not counting reedition or reprinting) (%)
Philosophy	27
“Psy” knowledges	22
History	8
Sociology	8
Educational sciences	6
Essay	5
Law	5
Political science	5
Literary theory/critics	3
Economy	3
Other (18 disciplines)	10
Total	100

connected to the university, it is also present outside it, reaching a relatively broad readership (Plotkin 2001). The limited presence of other disciplines may be owed to a lack of local interest in these areas, especially since Spain and Mexico have a more established tradition of translating authors from fields like history (especially Spain) and sociology (especially Mexico). In the case of the political and economic sciences, this can also be attributed to the logics of production and communication, which have clearly shifted from books towards academic journals.

Table 10.6 shows a series of correlations between disciplines and source languages. While philosophy represents more than half of all texts translated from Italian and a high percentage of the translations from German, this percentage is much lower in the case of English and less than 10 per cent in the case of Portuguese. Psychoanalysis is the most translated discipline from French, with nearly 30 per cent of all titles, which is indicative of the strength of this language. This percentage contrasts with the relatively few translations, in absolute and proportional terms, of “psych” texts from other languages, and suggests a close relationship between the Argentine psychoanalytic cultural universe and the French schools (Dagfal 2009).

The authors chosen for translation provide particular insight into the logic behind the publication of translations. The number of works translated by an author indicates the interest he/she sparks among publishers and readers *a priori*: the more books translated, the more renowned the

Table 10.6 Percentage composition of books by language and discipline

Disciplines	French (%)	German (%)	Italian (%)	English (%)	Portuguese (%)
Philosophy	28	41	48	18	7
“Psy” knowledges	33	22	9	19	6
History	10	4	9	12	9
Sociology	11	4	3	10	13
Educational sciences	3	3	5	10	33
Essay	5	8	2	7	9
Law	1	10	12	5	7
Political science	3	6	6	7	12
Literary theory/critics	3	1	4	6	2
Economy	3	2	3	4	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100

author and/or the better his or her works sell. However, it would be a mistake to limit the analysis of an author's intellectual importance and publishing success to this indicator. This is because, as we saw earlier, some or all of an author's work may be published in a country other than Argentina (usually Mexico or Spain). In these cases, these works are found in Argentine bookstores but will not appear at the top of our list of the most translated authors. Another factor to consider is the moment when an author begins earning renown. If the author has already published extensively in his/her country of origin but was "discovered" in Argentina towards the end of our period of analysis, the translations of the author's work would have accelerated from then on. Finally, the author may be young and up-and-coming, with few published works to date.

Despite these exceptions, this indicator proves useful when examining the most frequently translated areas within SSH, that is, areas where Argentina has a higher degree of expertise. Additionally, the indicator allows us to compare and contrast the most translated authors within a specific discipline. In this regard, the significance of an author is not defined solely by the number of titles he/she has published but also by the release of similar works by other authors from the same country or from abroad. Finally, when we include the language variable, the indicator shows the relationship between the choices of authors and works within a discipline and from a specific country.

Among 'psych' authors (Fig. 10.1), those who established entire schools of thought within the field like Freud, Jung, Piaget and Lacan far outnumber the rest. However, Lacanian psychoanalysis clearly prevails. We can observe how this school structures a great part of the psychoanalytical theory circulating among different publishers, serving as one of the principal gateways into contemporary French thought.⁸

Unlike psychoanalysis, in the case of philosophy there is a more balanced ratio between French and German authors. In this discipline, most of the authors translated do not come from a single school or theoretical tradition. Although some intellectual ties can be acknowledged, the most translated authors are the founders or important figures of a range of philosophical traditions or schools. The one notable difference between the French and German authors is the period in which they were published in their native tongues. While classic and modern authors

Table 10.7 25 publishing houses with the largest number of translations

Publishing house	German	French	English	Italian	Portuguese	Total
Paidós	42	170	82	18	1	313
Nueva Visión	3	216	13	31	3	266
Amorrortu	13	99	61	19		192
Fondo de Cultura Económica	20	70	22	12	4	128
Losada	23	40	14	29	1	107
Prometeo	17	29	18	5	4	73
Aguilar, Altea, Taurus, Alfaguara	13	22	25	5	2	67
Katz	12	17	28	5		62
Manantial		53	6		2	61
Siglo XXI Editores Argentina		44	3	5	8	60
Eudeba	6	33	6	5	2	52
Sudamericana	11	16	15	7	1	50
El Cuenco de Plata	5	28	2	6		41
El Ateneo	3	21	12	2	2	40
Emecé Editores	2	22	15		1	40
Libros del Zorzal	4	24	6	3		37
Vi-Da Global	31		5			36
Lumen	2	5	10	17	1	35
Javier Vergara Editor	3	20	11			34
Hammurabi	19	1	5	3	3	31
Capital Intelectual	2	21	5	2	1	31
Alianza Editorial	11	7	8	2	1	29
De la Flor	1	22	1	4		28
Adriana Hidalgo	1	9	2	16		28
Biblos	9	9	5	3	2	28

predominate among the translated German authors, the French philosophers in translation are mainly contemporary. This leads straight to the question of the preferred languages in Argentina's publishing and intellectual milieu. As we will see below, the main SSH publishers are more focused and interested in contemporary French intellectual production—within philosophy but in other disciplines as well—than they are in other languages and national origins. This interest structures and is structured by the preferences of Argentina's intellectual and academic spheres (Fig. 10.2).

Publishing houses are another important variable in the logic of SSH book translations and, specifically, the dynamics of value formation. How

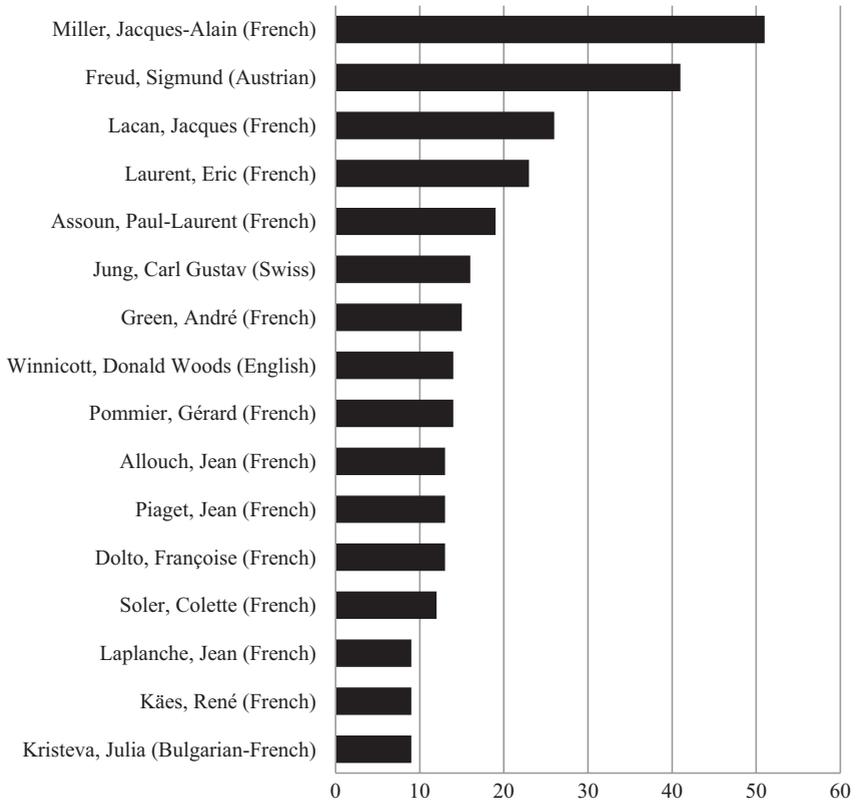


Fig. 10.1 “Psy” knowledges. Authors with the largest number of translated titles

many publishers were involved in translating the SSH? Which publishers were they? What is their relative position in the publishing field? What source languages predominate in their catalogues? What are the cultural effects of the different publishing houses based on their position and their editorial selections? In the period analyzed here (22 years), 519 publishers released 3698 SSH translations from French, English, German, Italian and Portuguese, not counting new editions or reprints. Twenty-five of these publishers released half of these translations, and just nine are responsible for one-third of all the works in translation. A comprehensive approach to these dynamics and their potential effects on the ideas that

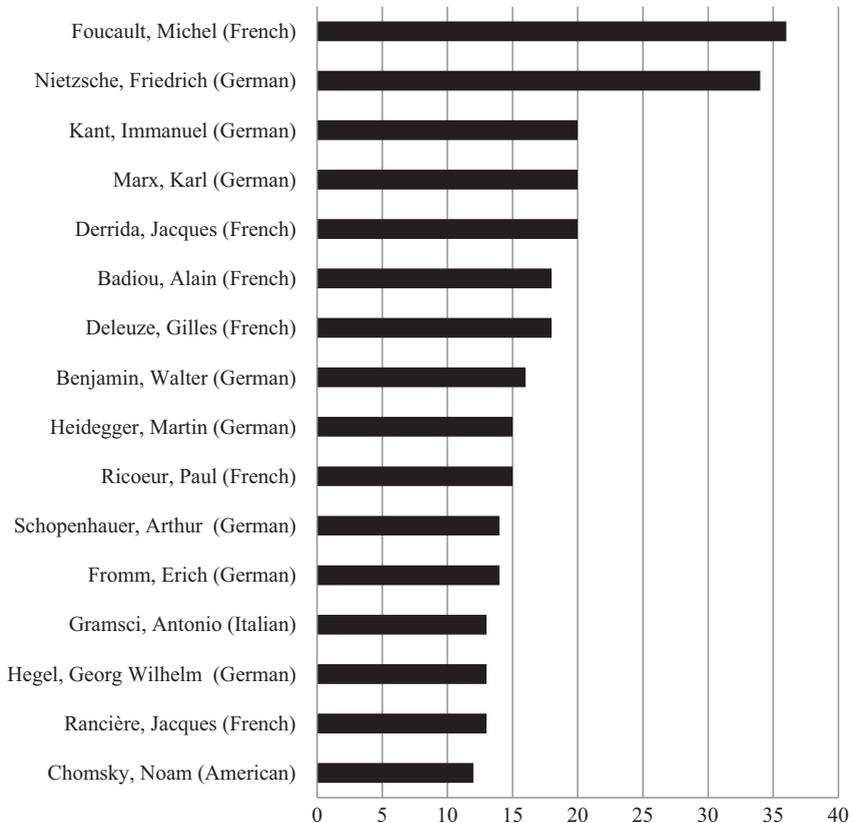


Fig. 10.2 Philosophy. Authors with the largest number of translated titles

are imported and circulated would consider all of the actors involved. However, due to space limitations, we will focus on the 25 publishing houses that released the largest number of SSH translations (Table 10.7).

If we examine the catalogues of each publishing house, including both translations and texts by Spanish-speaking authors, an initial distinction can be established between niche publishers and those that publish general interest works. In other words, the contrast is between publishing houses that focus (though not exclusively) on a relatively limited public from the SSH academic sphere, and those which target a broader readership through catalogues of works from other disciplines as well. This

distinction emerges as an important analytical factor when compared to the translated languages. The following chart displays the publishing houses with the greatest number of translations from French and English—the two most common source languages. The publishing houses with a higher proportion of French translations are on the left, while those with a greater number of English translations on the right (Fig. 10.3).

The chart suggests that the publishers primarily focused on one or more SSH disciplines and tend to prioritize works from French, while publishing houses more oriented towards general interest texts—many part of large publishing conglomerates like Planeta, Aique, Alfaguara-Taurus, Sudamericana, Emecé—generally translate more books from English. This trend, we argue, reveals the importance of the SSH publishers’ role in reinforcing the strength of the French language among readers and among the publishers themselves, reinforcing the language’s symbolic capital in connection with the SSH.

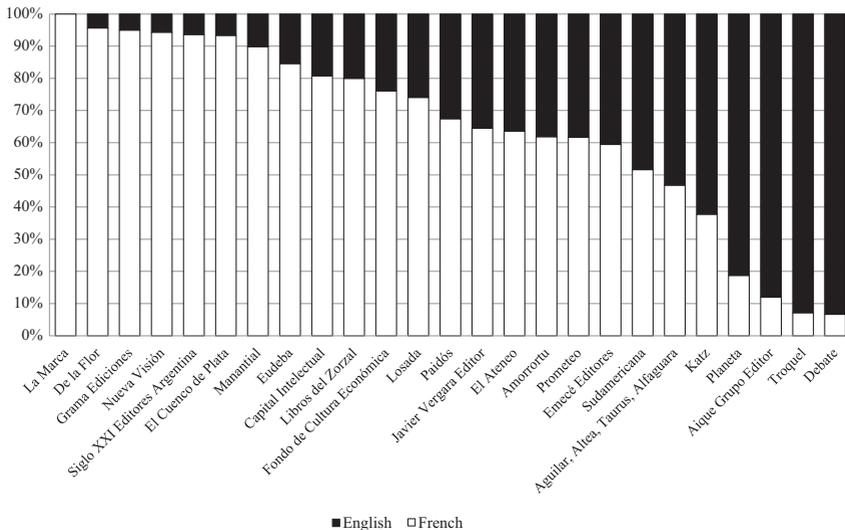


Fig. 10.3 Percentage of French and English translations. Opposition between niches (left)—general interest (right)

Publishers' reputations depend to some extent on the period of the authors included in their catalogues (classic, modern and contemporary). Losada, which holds one of the top spots in the publication of German and Italian authors, is indicative of this configuration. Founded in 1938, Losada is still renowned for the literature and essays it published in the 1950s and 1960s. Another case is that of the modern SSH publishing pioneers, like the Mexican Fondo de Cultura Económica (1934) and Siglo XXI (1966), which later opened branches in Argentina, and the Argentine Paidós (1945), Nueva Visión (1954) and Amorrortu (1967). At the more prestigious SSH publishing houses, books from French represent more than half of their translations. It appears that French authors are endowed with greater symbolic capital when gauging prestige among SSH publishers. This competition comes into focus when certain publishers release the complete works of certain authors, e.g. Lacan, Foucault, Jacques-Alain Miller or Bourdieu. Unlike the case of French, where translations tend to be more focused on authors, in English, the centrality of names diminishes.

While there are less specialized publishers on the left side of the graphic (like De la Flor), there are also a few specialized in SSH on the right, such as Katz and Aique. Alejandro Katz, for example, is a career publisher who headed the Fondo de Cultura Económica (FCE) in Argentina. In 2006, he founded his own publishing house that prioritized English-speaking authors and themes. Katz understood that this in itself constituted an innovation within a tradition of predominantly French titles. Aique is a publishing house specializing in the education sciences and has served as a bridge with English-speaking authors in this particular area of expertise.

Intellectual traditions and cultural sensitivities partially explain the interest French intellectual production holds among Argentine publishers. Yet this preference can also be attributed to other factors. The statistical assessment and interviews show that there are close long-term working relationships with French publishing houses specializing in the SSH, a relationship partly based on the perception of the quality of French publishing. The publishers with the largest number of translations in their catalogues maintain close links with the French publishing houses whose translation rights they generally obtain. While many local

publishers keep abreast of French book releases through newsletters and catalogues, the publishers interviewed for this work point out the importance of the personal relations maintained over a period of years at the Frankfurt International Book Fair and at commercial missions. This mutual trust and an insider's knowledge of how each house puts together its catalogue often results in dialogues and exchanges between publishers, helping the Argentines identify titles and authors that could be of interest to local imprints. Likewise, these relationships also give the Argentine publishing market certain privileges in the sale of publishing rights. According to the official in charge of the book office at the French embassy, French publishers "have become accustomed to selling literature to Spain, so that when an Argentine publisher requests the rights to a work of fiction, the French house generally gives priority to the Spanish publisher with which it has an established relationship. Similarly, since Argentine publishers always buy the rights to works in the social sciences and humanities, if a Spanish publisher wants to publish a French work in these disciplines, French publishers tend to go with the Argentine publisher."

State Support for Translations: The French Case

Another dimension that should be taken into account when analyzing the publishers' preference for French authors is the French government's broad range of cultural diplomacy policies. The Centro Franco Argentino (French-Argentine Center), an outcome of these policies, is an institution headquartered at the national universities of Buenos Aires, Córdoba and Cuyo that contributes to the dissemination of French works and authors and organizes visits of French intellectuals and scholars. Another aspect of this policy specifically focused on books is funding for the publication of translations. Since the end of the 1990s, when state subsidies for translation became common state policy across the world, many countries have successfully promoted their literary and intellectual production through translation. Such subsidies can be used to acquire translation rights and/or publish an author's work; they may or may not cover the

full cost of translating/publishing. France was one of the first countries to develop a solid and coherent policy to support French authors and their works.

The French publishing support program Programme d'aide à la publication (PAP) was introduced in Argentina in 1984. Managed by the local French embassy, the PAP in Argentina received a different name, the Victoria Ocampo Program after a renowned Argentine intellectual who had close ties to France. In addition to the PAP, other funding is available to cover the expenses of translation rights through the Institut Français and also via the Embassy, and up to 30 per cent of the translation costs from the Center National du Livre. We will focus our analysis here on the Victoria Ocampo program, which has contributed to a great number of the SSH works published in Argentina. As evidenced on the charts below, the French government's funding of SSH translations remained steady throughout the period studied here. From 1998 to 2010, the PAP subsidized 26.6 per cent of all SSH books in translation by French authors. In 2001 and 2002, the PAP subsidies remained steady but the total number of translations dropped as a result of the economic crisis, meaning that the percentage of books subsidized actually rose during this period (Figs. 10.4 and 10.5).

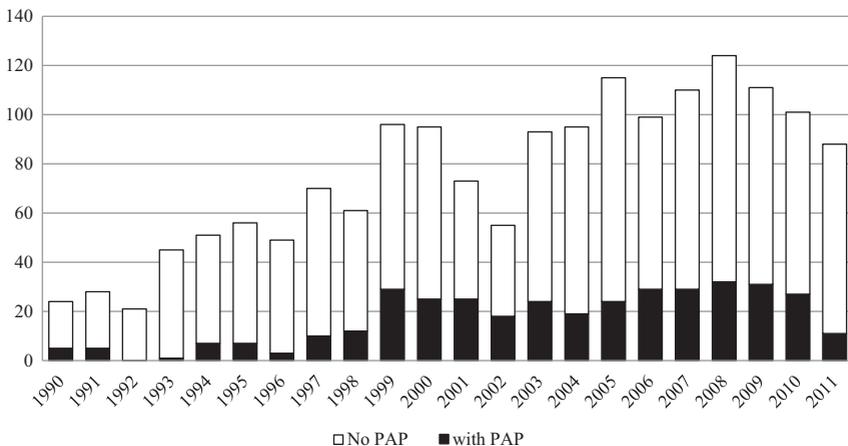


Fig. 10.4 Titles that received a PAP subsidy and non-subsidized titles

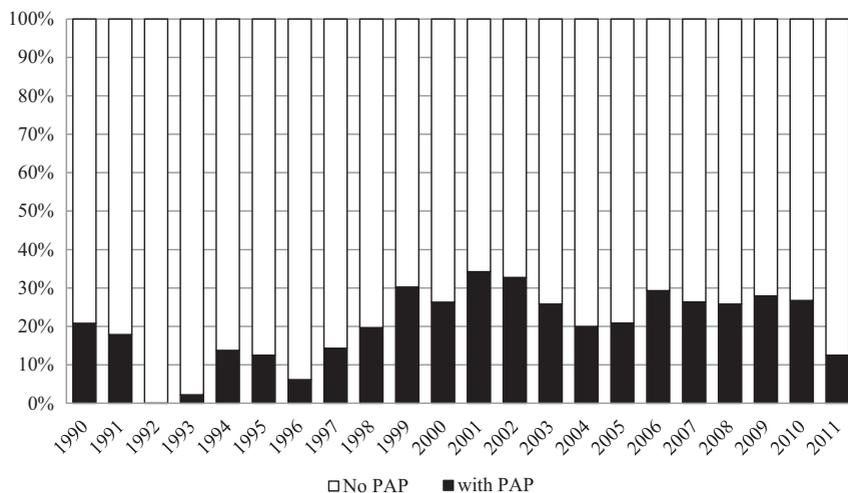


Fig. 10.5 PAP ratio of all translated titles

While all the publishers interviewed for this study concurred that subsidies are important, their individual attitudes varies according to the size of their publishing house and the economic context. The largest and most established publishing houses are not as dependent on subsidies as smaller publishers when it comes time to decide whether to move forward with a translation. However, among publishers both large and small, the funding available for French works in translation makes them attentive to the French publishing market and contributes to decisions to obtain French publishing rights. The publishers who translate the most are confident that once or twice a year they will qualify for a subsidy. In adverse economic times, when works in translation become less feasible, this financial support becomes even more critical. Decision making on whether to publish also depends on factors like the length of the work—the longer the text, the more costly its translation, and the higher the retail price of the books—or whether the author is already well-known locally. In the long term, then, the PAP contributes to reinforcing a preference for French authors and works.

Although no other country offers the same level of funding for translation as France, countries like Italy, Germany and Brazil do provide

financial support. However, politics also play a role—albeit indirectly—in sustaining English-speaking publishing markets and their global domination through translation and the selective support provided by scientific funding institutes.

Conclusions: Relativizing English's Predominance

International cultural domination responds not only to economic or political factors but also to the dynamics of symbolic production. The global power of English in scientific production and dissemination cannot be solely attributed to the language's perceived efficiency and aptness for analytical thought and empirical findings. As the English language plays a conspicuous role in the current dynamics of knowledge production, it must be the primary object of our research in order to understand the complexity of its influence and avoid the naturalized assumptions associated with this phenomenon. This is what we have intended to do in this work.

A wide variety of variables must be considered to explore English's predominance. A comprehensive exploration of the problem would require empirically solid and cumulative studies. Though our contribution in this regard is only partial, we consider that the findings of our study lay the groundwork for a systematic analysis and confirm that further research of this kind is needed in different regions and languages.

In the first place, it is impossible to understand the cultural and scientific strength of a language without knowing where it ranks among competing linguistic markets. In *Ce que parler veut dire*, Bourdieu (1982)⁹ emphasized the extent to which languages are not simply “linguistic” acts but social phenomena and should be approached as such. It is thus fundamental to observe the international dissemination of different languages through two measurable indicators, publishing and translating, both of which have great analytical potential. Second, our study focused on books, which interestingly are being relegated as a valid format of production of scientific knowledge as certain agents strive to establish a group of mainstream journals in which English is the only acceptable language for science.

Although books were the empirical object of this study, we do not intend to minimize the importance of scholarly journals. On the contrary, the value of printed books can only be understood in relation to other media or formats of scientific production and dissemination. In this regard, the CONICET team has carried out other research on academic journals¹⁰ (Beigel and Salatino 2015). Our interest in books lies in the fact that their role as a medium for scientific knowledge production is currently being called into question. On the one hand, the hubs of scientific production and the dominant scientific disciplines (exact, physical and natural sciences) minimize or deny the role of books as a tool for scientific validation. The question about the significance of books has produced often heated debates on the scientific evaluation commissions within institutions like the CNRS and CONICET, that is, not just along the periphery, but on central markets like France and Germany. Such debates offer an insightful window into the tensions surrounding this topic. At times, commission debates become veritable battles in which certain scholars defend books as the most relevant and durable objects of cultural knowledge and warn of the dangers of neglecting languages other than English. While this resistance to the dominance of the English language may be seen as a sort of reactionary nationalism from the point of view of mainstream hubs, it can also be viewed as a progressive approach to maintaining cultural diversity and a true cosmopolitanism in autonomous, diversified centers. This tension surrounding the book yields a set of important questions for considering the contemporary dynamics of academic production and the intersections with intellectual, social and political spheres outside scientific communities. Do SSH scholars no longer see books as the culmination of their intellectual endeavors? Who is the target audience of “academic books”? How do these books circulate? How are they exhibited and marketed? Though it is essential to consider that the English language and publishing in indexed mainstream journals are the dominant criteria for scientific production value, it is also necessary to relativize the scope and limitations of this empirical indicator.

The topics analyzed in this study—the global predominance of English and the U.S. academic system and the preference for French authors in Argentina—frequently elicit strong opinions, often with no empirical backing or supporting arguments. As we have seen, most of

the disciplines within the social sciences and humanities configure markets of symbolic goods that go beyond the borders of universities and do not fully comply with standardized norms for scientific productivity. To accurately gauge the extent of the English language in international scientific production and communication, it is necessary to keep in mind that: (1) science must be understood as a dimension within broader cultural production; (2) there are variations in the struggle for symbolic domination linked to the country, language and area of knowledge; and (3) history is a key dimension for understanding the timing of cultural phenomena.

Reflection is absolutely critical to understanding the dominance of English and the alterity it diminishes, which leads us back to the questions on specific empirical data that we posed at the beginning: to what extent is publishing (of books and journals) a factor in the production of value (scientific value specifically, but cultural value in general) and in positioning individual producers and collectives internationally? What media are currently responsible for establishing what is published and who participates in a scientific community? How does translation serve as an indicator of the connection between a unique scientific and cultural market and others? How does the translation world-system affect national markets?

Although Spanish may be considered a peripheral language at the world level, it is still an arena for ongoing struggles of global cultural legitimacy. Spanish is the target of “imperial” policies from Spain and a language that evokes complex feelings of cultural grandeur. It is the language of a market system for symbolic goods that comprises some twenty countries and an extensive territory—including the United States, where Spanish is the second most spoken language and whose Spanish publishing market is on the rise. However, the analysis of a language’s power cannot or should not be reduced to its relative ability to enter other linguistic markets, other nations. The study of translation also reveals how a language and a publishing market open up to other languages and cultural traditions. It is important to remember that the English language markets are characterized by relatively low percentages of *intraduction*,¹¹ which has stood at around 3 per cent for decades (compared to 13 per cent in France and Germany, 25 per cent in the Netherlands). The need

for a detailed understanding of what occurs in the translation to Spanish of SSH books on a market as culturally unique as Argentina's has been the focus of this study; future research should address the dynamics of book translations on the other Spanish language publishing markets, principally Spain and Mexico.

The statistical dimensions of each market (volumes and differences by disciplines, the historical period of the authors translated, etc.) should be examined along with ethnographic aspects at the level of individuals, the uses of languages, the many reasons behind the decision for selecting certain books and certain topics. Although these results are only partial, this work has attempted to expand our perspective on the myriad and fluctuating factors associated with symbolic dominance in global SSH production. We have seen that there are borders and specific configurations of linguistic domination that deserve to be observed in different contexts. This observation is essential to move towards a *realpolitik* of production and global legitimation of the knowledge generated—and the potential knowledge of the future—within the social sciences and humanities.

Notes

1. We would like to especially thank Heber Ostroviesky, who was involved in the initial stages of our research and then continued reading drafts, making comments, and offering advice throughout the process.
2. Regarding a critique of the use of translation as a metaphor in anthropological theory, see Sorá (2017).
3. *El libro en cifras. Boletín estadístico del libro en Iberoamérica*. CERLALC, Bogota, 2016.
4. Ultimately, for our aims here, it is necessary to compare the dynamics of production, circulation and value of scientific ideas in books and in journals at certain times and certain places. The CONICET team at Interco-SSH has begun research into both books and journals, although it is not yet possible to reach definitive conclusions given the current state of knowledge. Works by Fernanda Beigel and Maximiliano Salatino (2015; Beigel 2014) on scientific journals in Argentina will thus also be cited in this chapter, along with a recent study they have undertaken on competences and uses of languages among Argentine scientists.

5. One hypothesis associated with the differences between the three markets that merits further research is the distinct configuration in terms of the importing and exporting of general reading books and, specifically, SSH books. Historically, the Spanish market was built on exporting to the colonies, while the Mexican publishing market yielded powerful transnational enterprises, especially in the social sciences, like Fondo de Cultura Económica and Siglo XXI (cf. Sorá and Blanco 2018, in this volume). Comparatively, Argentine publishers have had lower export ratios and in terms of the subject matter of their catalogues, national culture dynamics have prevailed.
6. German's surge in 2011 can be attributed to the launch of Vi-Da Global, a digital imprint that has released a great number of re-editions of SSH translations. While Vi-Da Global falls within our study parameters and is thus included in our analysis, it is necessary to treat it as a singular phenomenon because its working logic is different from the norm and could thus bias the sample.
7. Sorá (2002, 2003) has shown that after France, Argentina was the country that published the most books by Brazilian authors in translation during the 20th century.
8. On the early reception of Jacques Lacan's work in Argentina, see Grisendi and Novello (2018).
9. There is an English language version of this book, *Language and symbolic power*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1991. This version differs from the original, however, as two essays have been left out and five others included.
10. In collaboration with Ana Maria Almeida from the University of Campinas (Brazil), Fernanda Beigel has begun a project on the uses of different languages by Argentine and Brazilian scientists.
11. This term refers to translating a foreign language text in order to import it to one's own culture.

References

- Ammon, Ulrich. 2010. The Hegemony of English. *World Social Science Report. Knowledge Divides*. Paris: UNESCO Publishing. www.unesco.org/shs/wssr
- Beigel, Fernanda. 2014. Publishing from the Periphery: Structural Heterogeneity and Segmented Circuits. The Evaluation of Scientific Publications for Tenure in Argentina's CONICET. *Current Sociology* 62 (5): 617–625.

- Beigel, Fernanda, and Maximiliano Salatino. 2015. Circuitos segmentados de consagración académica: Las revistas de ciencias sociales y humanas en Argentina. *Información, Cultura y Sociedad* 32: 7–32.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1982. *Ce que parler veut dire. L'économie des échanges linguistiques*. Paris: Fayard.
- . 2002. Les conditions sociales de la circulation internationale des idées. *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 145: 3–8.
- CERLALC. 2016. El libro en cifras. *Boletín estadístico del libro en Iberoamérica*. Bogota: CERLALC.
- Dagfal, Alejandro. 2009. *Entre París y Buenos Aires. La invención del psicólogo (1942–1996)*. Buenos Aires: Paidós.
- De Swaan, Abram. 2002. *Words of the World: The Global Language System*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Even-Zohar, Itamar. 1990. The Position of Translated Literature Within the Literary Polysystem. *Poetics Today* 11 (1): 45–51.
- Gingras, Yves, and Sebastien Mosbah-Natanson. 2010. Where Are Social Sciences Produced? In *World Social Science Report 2010*, 149–153. Paris: UNESCO Publishing.
- Grisendi, Ezequien, and Andrea Novello. 2018 Forthcoming. A New Humanism Breaks: Reception and Appropriations of Structuralism in Argentina (1960's–1970's). In Gisèle Sapiro, Marco Santoro and Patrick Baert (Eds.), *Ideas on the Move*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Heilbron, Johan. 1999. Towards a Sociology of Translation. Book Translation as a Cultural World-System. *European Journal of Social Theory* 2 (4): 429–444.
- . 2009. Le système mondial des traductions. In *Les contradictions de la globalisation éditoriale*, ed. G. Sapiro, 253–274. Paris: Nouveau Monde.
- . 2014. The Social Sciences as an Emerging Global Field. *Current Sociology* 62: 685–703.
- Ortiz, Renato. 2009. *La supremacía del inglés en las ciencias sociales*. Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI.
- Plotkin, Mariano. 2001. *Freud in the Pampas: The Emergence and Development of a Psychoanalytic Culture in Argentina*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Rodríguez Medina, Leandro. 2014. *Centers and Peripheries in Knowledge Production*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Sapiro, Gisèle, ed. 2014. *Les sciences humaines et sociales française à l'international: États-Unis, Royaume-Uni, Argentine*. Paris: Éditions de l'Institut Français.
- Sorá, Gustavo. 2002. Un échange dénié. La traduction d'auteurs brésiliens en Argentine. *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales* 145: 61–70.

- . 2003. *Traducir el Brasil. Una antropología de la circulación internacional de ideas*. Buenos Aires: Libros del Zorzal.
- . 2017. Traducción: potencial heurístico y desvíos teóricos de un tópico eficaz para pensar *realmente* la globalización. *Revista de Estudios Sociales* 61: 99–105.
- Sorá, Gustavo, and Alejandro Blanco. 2018. Unity and Fragmentation of Social Sciences in Latin America. In this volume.
- Van Weijen, Daphne. 2012. The Language of (Future) Scientific Communication. *Research Trends* 31: 7–8. <http://www.researchtrends.com/issue-31-november-2012/the-language-offuture-scientific-communication/>