

# Situated circulation and publication languages of the academic elites of the Southern Cone<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

The concern about the growing centrality of English as an academic language is not new and it has been discussed with increasing interest because of its consequences in the impoverishment of the interculturality of science, as well as in the loss it implies for bibliodiversity (Helsinki Initiative, 2019). The use and abuse of the impact factor in academic evaluations and the hierarchisation that this meant for journals conceived as “mainstream” progressively inclined the academic elites of non-hegemonic countries to publish in those journals and English (Guédon, 2011; Gingras, 2016). It also produced linguistically segmented circuits of production and circulation, as has been documented in the Arab world (Hanafi and Arvanitis, 2014). This situation is part of the dominant trends of a global academic system that developed in recent decades, deepening the opposition between, on the one hand, scientific research with supposedly international standards and, on the other hand, expressions of science vilified as marginal to the “universality” of science.

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The latest World Science Report published by Unesco (2021) points out the inequalities produced by the hypercentralization of English as the language of publication and analyses its effects according to regions. It is striking that this hegemony seems to have deepened concerning the previous report. In a similar direction, the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI) carried out a recent study on multilingual science, and its initial results have had a wide repercussion in the Ibero-American sphere, spreading the idea of a “dictatorship of English” in the dissemination of science<sup>2</sup>. In the report, carried out jointly with the Elcano Institute and signed by its researcher Ángel Badillo, it is estimated that in 2020, approximately 95% of all articles published in mainstream scientific journals were written in English, while only 1% in Spanish or Portuguese (OEI, 2021)<sup>3</sup>. Only 13% of scientists in Spain presented their work in Spanish, 12% in Mexico, 16% in Chile, and around 20% in Argentina, Colombia and Peru. The situation in Portuguese is a bit more complex. Only 3% of Portuguese researchers and 12% of Brazilians chose their language to publish their work, while the rest did so in English.

This landscape leaves little room to imagine a transformation of these trends, especially if we do not face the hegemony of commercial publisher databases, such as Scopus or WoS-Clarivate, whose geographical and linguistic biases have already been widely analysed (Archambault *et al.*, 2009; Pinto and González, 2009). At the same time, it is difficult to truly calibrate the incidence of publication in English in the Ibero-American world because studies of academic trajectories or complete universes of production are still scarce for the simple reason that these databases of individuals and production are not always available in a thorough manner. We know, however, that several circuits, diverse notions of “excellence”, and different forms of knowledge production exist and coexist, not only in the South but also in the North (Paradeise and Thoenig, 2013; Mugnaini, Damaceno, Digiampietri and Mena-Chalco, 2019; Mbula, Tijssen, Wallace and McLean, 2020). Accordingly, no one doubts that the hypercentrality of English is a reality. However, there is sufficient evidence to affirm that this is not the unique reality (Curry and Lillis, 2022).

The ability to write and publish in different languages has its specificity according to the location of each academic community, at the crossroads of disciplines and the margins of maneuver observed in the evaluation standards to which they are subjected. Researchers affiliated with a university in the United States, or the United Kingdom do not need to publish in another language. As a result, they have

2. See: <https://elpais.com/ciencia/2021-07-27/la-dictadura-del-ingles-en-la-ciencia-el-95-de-los-articulos-se-publica-en-esa-lengua-y-solo-el-1-en-espanol-o-portugues.html>.

3. The study progress report was presented at a public event in July 2021 and can be accessed at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bue0tfGLKwk>.

a competitive advantage, given the greater ease of publishing in journals included in mainstream databases, most of which use English. On the other hand, for Chinese or Latin American researchers, publishing in English implies intense learning of a language other than their own, in addition to the additional costs of revision and translation, not to mention the need to engage in dialogue with certain specialized debates and types of literature that do not necessarily coincide with those of their places of origin or action. An intermediate situation could be found with a researcher from India. In this case, although English is used as the official language, publishing in a mainstream journal requires knowledge and dispositions that are generally not available in peripheral universities. Therefore, we are not referring only to basic communication skills but to a broader set of *linguistic abilities* (and cognitive abilities) that are involved in the ability to write in English. The mastery of these skills depends not only on social origin but also on academic training, institutional capital, and insertion in international teams and networks, among other factors that are crossed by different types of inequalities (Beigel, 2017).

It is common to think that publishing in English is either an “imposition” or the desired goal for those who produce from the “periphery” and whose native languages are not English (Ortiz, 2008; De Swaan, 2001). Nevertheless, Curry and Lillis (2019) argue that many multilingual scholars remain engaged with their local communities and also write (and, in some cases, primarily) in their native language. They also note that, despite the increasing pressure from evaluation agencies and institutions to publish in English-language journals with a high impact factor, some researchers are beginning to engage in the practice of “equivalent publishing”, understood as an exercise that transcends mere translation and consists of rewriting their work in different languages and for different audiences.

Some disciplines and universities tend to publish in Ibero-American journals, which are edited in Spanish or Portuguese and are generally indexed in *SciELO*, *Redalyc* or *Latindex*. Additionally, publication in national journals and the native language also survives (Mugnaini, Damasceno, Digiampetri and Mena-Chalco, 2019). This means that, contrary to what is often said in public debates about evaluative cultures and publications, these are not simply a reflection of heteronomous criteria but a terrain of dispute in which there is a permanent tension between global orientations and local standards (Beigel, 2014; Bringel, 2015). In addition, this phenomenon is not exclusive to scholars from the (semi)peripheral countries analysed in this article. Paradeise and Thoenig (2015) conducted a study of numerous university departments in hegemonic countries. They verified that there are various modes of adaptation to heteronomous pressures that depend, to a large extent, on institutional autonomy. The seniority of the researcher also allows them, many times,

greater independence, unlike young people who often must adapt their careers to the demands if they want stability, promotion and access to funding.

On the other hand, the idea that internationalised circulation styles correspond to old and prestigious metropolitan universities while local habitus is entrenched in “provincial” universities has been equally problematised. The location of a researcher in a prestigious institution in a metropolis such as Buenos Aires or São Paulo does not necessarily imply that this individual has a globalised trajectory and that cosmopolitan-oriented relationships predominate. As we shall see, these dominant institutions often have the most significant material margin to accommodate and protect dissident sectors and resistance. In contrast, the smaller and more peripheral ones show a stronger tendency toward internationalisation as an escape from institutional pressures. On the other hand, none of these institutions is exempt from a local dynamic where university power and administrative-bureaucratic logic intervene (Beigel, 2017).

With these elements in mind, we will devote this article to the observation of the relationship between researchers’ self-perceptions of the value of publishing in English (and, more broadly, of the importance of that language for academic achievement) and the diversity of circulation practices observed in their entire publication trajectory. To establish this relationship, we draw on two sources. The first is the Survey of Linguistic Abilities and Internationalization (Encuesta de Capacidades Lingüísticas e Internacionalización – Ecapin), developed on three populations of researchers from Argentina, Brazil and Chile in the framework of a tri-national research project<sup>4</sup>. The second source, in turn, consists of the empirical observation of a sample of resumes of academics surveyed from the three countries.

The article is divided into four parts, in addition to this introduction. In the first part, we suggest the concept of “situated circulation” as an alternative to linear and traditional internationalisation perspectives. This allows us to provide further

4. The tri-national team, formed in 2015 under the coordination of Fernanda Beigel, intended to comparatively analyse academic internationalisation and linguistic capabilities in Argentina, Brazil and Chile. To do so, we created the Survey of Linguistic Capabilities and Internationalization (Encuesta de Capacidades Lingüísticas e Internacionalización – Ecapin), executed in 2018 in three populations of academics based on a self-administered questionnaire. To select these populations, taking into account the different contexts, “matched” populations were selected based on a definition of “researcher” and a set of internationalisation requirements. It was impossible to achieve perfect equivalence given the differences between national scientific systems and the availability of access to information on the individuals who form each academic universe. As we will see in more detail in the second part of the article, we selected the universe of Conicet researchers for Argentina. In contrast, for Brazil, we set the teachers of postgraduate programs with the highest Capes category, and for Chile, the researchers who had directed projects funded by Fondecyt between 2010-2016. For more details on the survey, see the articles by Beigel, Almeida and Piovani; and Almeida, Baranger and Piovani in this same dossier.

centrality to the agency and proactivity of researchers and their strategies *vis-à-vis* the places of knowledge production and the multiple institutional mediations at different scales. In the second part, we synthetically present the tri-national survey that forms the basis of this study and discuss the evaluations of publication in English among the scientific elites of Argentina, Brazil and Chile. We also contextualise the similarities and differences of the different national cases. Then, we examine the bibliodiversity in the academic trajectories and the multiscale circulation of these academics based on the presentation of a sample of resumes selected based on the universes surveyed in the three countries. Finally, the fourth part of the text exposes and examines the main results, trying to shed a comparative look on the circulation and languages of publication of the scientific elites of the Southern Cone. Overall, the article aims to capture different profiles of circulation and forms of valuation of English, highlighting the importance of the agency, diversity and dynamism of the circulation process and its socio-institutional anchorage.

Situated circulation: between global standards and situated academic trajectories

There is some consensus on the diagnosis of the construction of the hegemony of English as a growing process since World War II, with an even more significant strengthening after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Its advance in recent decades has been exponential and, at the same time, proportional to the decline of other previously more globally influential languages, such as French and German. The impacts of this hegemony, in turn, are numerous. On the one hand, it reinforces asymmetries and inequalities in terms of access to resources and publishing opportunities. On the other, although it supposedly allows for more global intelligibility, it also reduces complexity and cognitive potential by limiting semantic structures, as many linguists emphasize. Consequently, the diversity of intellectual traditions, the plurality of accents and the multiplicity of connotations are diminished (Ortiz, 2008), which is particularly serious for the social sciences and humanities but has harmful effects on all disciplines.

In the intellectual debate and reports by international organisations, deep “capability gaps” have been identified between central and peripheral countries and regions, where the language issue is particularly relevant. Despite this, the incidence of English in a non-hegemonic scientific field is far from uniform, even when there is no high cost in terms of linguistic capabilities at stake. Mweru (2010), for example, conducted empirical research with Kenyan researchers to find out why Kenyan academics do not publish in international peer-reviewed and mainstream journals, even when they have no great difficulty in English. The main factors found were: lack of time, low salaries, problems accessing relevant books and journal articles,

bad experiences with international journals, and lack of university support. Thus, language skills matter, but they cannot be considered self-explanatory factors since speaking a language does not necessarily mean the ability to write academically in that language. This explains why many countries in the Global South, even when they live bilingual realities with English as the official language, continue to activate mainly local and national circuits and rarely mainstream ones.

On the other hand, the debate on academic dependence, the profoundly unequal nature of internationalisation and international circulation cannot be read only in terms of structural “determinations” or intellectual colonialism. Researchers from the periphery – and in the case we are particularly interested in, the South American scientific elite – have highly complex trajectories and are active agents in constructing their careers. They possess varied linguistic capacities and develop strategies to relate to not only “global” or “external” agents but also local and national ones, depending on their political or scientific conceptions, the room for manoeuvre offered by the evaluative cultures, the formats of public competitions, the modalities of career promotion, the dynamics of the construction of relevant research for societies, etc.

Within this dynamic, the notion of *internationalisation* turns out to be limiting because it refers, in its most extended uses, to a unidirectional dynamic according to which scientists move outside their country and traditionally towards the North. In this sense, it is usually understood mainly as a logic imposed from outside based on the conditioning factors of the peripheral position of a researcher, a country or a region. Moreover, the very idea of a scale shift has long been associated with the progressive displacement of scales from the local and national to the international or, in other words, from the “bottom” to the “top”, but rarely in the opposite direction, from one locality to another, or under schemes of multiscale and relational vector dynamics.

Over the last decade, this deterministic vision of internationalisation and its fixed scales has been criticised (MacKinnon, 2010). The contributions of feminist critical theories have been crucial in enriching this perspective in the sociology of science and knowledge. Seminal works such as those of Harding (1986) and Haraway (1988) have undoubtedly opened up new leads for understanding fundamental debates about the position, perspective and situation in science and knowledge. In their critique of objectivism and an imposed universality that fosters reductionism and the imposition of the language of man (white/colonial), they suggest a view that defends *situated knowledge*. For these authors and a good part of feminist theorists, it would be a matter of vindicating a “partial (and embodied) perspective” that opposes the vision that separates the object from the subject and promises the transcendence of all limits.

In our case, we are not so much interested in discussing here the objectivity or partiality of knowledge but rather another dimension of its “situated” character: the localisation of knowledge production and the multiscale dynamics that are evidenced in the trajectory of the agents. This means, from our perspective, assuming a contextual and territorial openness of the academic spatiality of knowledge, as well as of the individual and social practices of circulation of scientists, which are always *localised*. We argue that the *agency* and proactivity of researchers also need to be considered, along with the importance of the *places of production*, because different interactions and forms of circulation that manifest the rootedness of these trajectories are evidenced. Therefore, it becomes fundamental to examine researchers’ self-perceptions and the different types of institutional *mediations* that offer collaboration alternatives at different scales.

Understanding them this way does not mean that this knowledge and these practices are strictly “local” but rather that they start from a place or *specific locus* (Bringel, 2006). Circulation, however international it may be, occurs in a situated manner, following certain conditions of institutional and social possibility. Rather than accepting a merely “imported” (or exogenous) conception of internationalisation, circulation and publication, the concept we suggest here of a *situated circulation* presupposes a complex and permanent dynamic of adaptation, decoding and recoding of the main orientations that circulate within and outside communities, and in the pendulum of local and national borders.

The circulation of knowledge does not arise from scratch, in a vacuum or by mere exogenous stimulation. It is associated with existing national and international collaborations and networks. It always starts from local conditions with which the agents (scientists, in our case) are linked, grow and manoeuvre. It depends not only on their nationality (although this is a crucial factor for linguistic capabilities) but also on their primary locus of institutional and social action. This encompasses both institutional anchors and cultural and social interactions that are summarised in the position of the researchers, in the structural and situational locus and, why not, also in the cognitive perspective. If the agents relate differently to these local and national contexts and conditions, a heterogeneity of practices and strategies is derived from them.

The concept of situated circulation recognises that collaborative research and publications are related to a localised dynamic of knowledge production, with its social and institutional anchors and regional or global interactions. Publication in English, and participation in collaborative projects, associations or international congresses, have a cost, in one way or another, according to the platform offered by local and national conditions, which do not disappear but are fed back by supranational contacts, networks and stakes. Specific historical conjunctures of expansion or

restriction of scientific policies are also critical. Transit through different institutions, academic mobility or the change of production sites is also key to understanding circulation trajectories.

Two main implications can be drawn from the above. Firstly, given that knowledge production is rooted in the diverse locus that a person moves through, it is fundamental to consider critical conjunctures and various social markers to operationalise the geopolitics of knowledge. Far from binary geographies that look for causal factors always in proactive exteriority (North/South, centre/periphery, international/national, local/global), it seems central to consider communities and institutions' inner dynamism. To this end, it is crucial to grasp the complexity and diversity of individual and institutional situations and the structural heterogeneity of the various spaces without any ontological subjection. This implies thinking of *positionality* in terms of a "new perspectivism", according to which the place from which we speak marks our vision of the world, but we are also part of this construction. Because that place is traversed by multiple circuits of legitimisation and various inequalities (institutional, geographical, gender and ethnic-racial), without which we can hardly understand the effectiveness of linguistic capacities in a given national scientific community, disciplinary field or individual trajectory.

Secondly, in times of internet and digital cultures, the dynamics of academic production and circulation are always multiscalar. They operate through diverse mechanisms, whether through material interactions with different agents or mobilities or in the process of epistemic construction that involves a dialogue with a broad discursive universe. The compartmentalisation of scales often ends up separating the "international" or the "global" as proper to internationalisation. It leaves the "regional"<sup>5</sup> and the "national" limited to a reductionist notion of the "local". This hierarchical notion of internationalisation and the sometimes-restricted use of the idea of 'international circulation' often obscures the transits, tensions, constructions and choices of agents in developing their trajectories. These are socially constructed in a unique balance between these interactions and the platform provided by the place and position in which each researcher is inserted.

The specialised literature often highlights a considerable difference between the social sciences, humanities and the hard sciences in terms of scales of circulation.

5. When speaking of "regional" in this paper, we refer to a continental scale, particularly in our case, the Latin American space. In previous studies Beigel (2014) has already analyzed how and why this form of regionalism tends to be obscured and downplayed in traditional studies on internationalization, while Cairo and Bringel (2010; 2019), in turn, have proposed, in broader terms, the centrality of analyzing the dynamics and processes of articulations that result in regional constructions and their relations with the 'regionalization' of diverse sociopolitical practices.

While the former tends to work on a national scale (where the local also matters), the latter would operate on a more global scale. Arvanitis, Waast and Al-Husban (2010) argue that in the case of the Arab world, for example, much of the most relevant social science research goes unnoticed abroad for three reasons: it is mainly published in Arabic, it is rarely translated, and it is not necessarily connected to the “global” agenda. However, Hanafi (2011) also pointed out that in these same disciplines, a growing segmentation has occurred whereby some Arab researchers writing in English circulate globally while those publishing in Arabic tend to move in local circuits. In recent studies, which leave behind the use of mainstream databases with their well-known limitations, it has been discovered, by observing complete corpora of researchers’ publications, that their publication strategies go in different directions and that there is more bibliodiversity than expected (Mugnaini *et al.*, 2019; Baranger and Beigel, 2021).

Consequently, some critical issues emerge regarding international circulation and publication in English: in addition to the historic North/South asymmetries that impact the unequal structure of knowledge circulation, it is crucial to reinstate the conditions and histories of each national scientific community and its localised institutional structures. Several types, forms or “patterns” of circulation will emerge from this, which will vary according to the combination of multiple factors: the processes of institutionalisation, the material resources and intellectual capital accumulated in research centres and work teams, as well as the agency of researchers based on the social capital and linguistic capital available. Therefore, this rootedness cannot be overlooked, nor can it be homogenised in a new form of reductionism. It is not the same thing to be in a large, old, metropolitan and prestigious university or a small, newer one located in provinces within semi-peripheral countries, such as those analysed in this paper. But even in those cases that seem to be opposites, the institutions will also evidence the multiscalar circulation, which is a sign of the scientific production of our time. In what follows, we will try to advance in one of the social markers that allow us to operationalise this situated circulation: the valuation of publication in English and its practical impact on the trajectories of the scientific elite in Argentina, Brazil and Chile.

The valuation of publishing in English among the scientific elites of the Southern Cone

The Ecapin tri-national survey, in which the present study is framed, explores the issue of publications in English among the most internationalised elites of Argentina, Brazil and Chile, seeking to observe this phenomenon from different angles, giving a specific place to the perceptions of researchers. The questionnaires follow a stan-

dard structure for the three countries, although each national team added particular elements according to the diversity of academic careers in the selected populations. The block of information that we will take in this paper refers to English skills and, in particular, to the perception of the relevance of English in the disciplinary field and one's trajectory.

In general terms, the survey allows us to visualise the differences between two idiomatic styles differentiated by the disciplinary origin – the first with a relatively low incidence of English, identifiable with the social and human sciences. The second, predominance of English, is associated with the “hard” sciences. The average for the three countries involved in the study shows that in the social and human sciences, 25% of researchers state that they have never published in English; more than a third have done so in a low proportion (up to 10% of their publications) and less than a tenth have published more than half of their publications in that language. In the other areas (exact and natural sciences, agricultural sciences and engineering, biology and health sciences, and technology), the contrast is clear: 90% of researchers state that English is the language of more than three-quarters of their publications.

TABLE 1

*Researchers of the 'hard sciences' who value English as “very important”, according with different aspects, by country and discipline – CBS, CEN and CAIM [%]*

ASPECT	Argentina	Chile	Brazil
Literature discussion	94%	92,5%	95,4%
Participation in congresses and meetings	72%	s/d	92,6%
Communication with colleagues abroad	81%	81%	95,8%
Publishing in the country	21%	s/d	47%
Publishing abroad	95%	89%	97%

Source: Ecapin Survey.

The survey also made it possible to characterise the researchers' valuation of the role of English both in their trajectories and the discipline in which they work. As shown in Table 1, there is significant homogeneity in the perceptions within the fields of the “hard” sciences. While for Brazilians, English is considered very important in most aspects of their trajectories, with values higher than 92% of respondents, the importance of English for participation in scientific meetings for Argentinians is much lower (72%), which reflects the existence of exchange spaces outside the dominant language, as well as relevance is given to national congresses. It is interesting to note the importance of English as a language for publications in their own country: while 47% of Brazilians consider it essential, only 21% of Argentinians

value it positively. This is linked, as we will see below, to the development of journals published in English in each country and to the national and institutional bets on this circulation strategy.

Let us now see what happens with the social sciences and humanities. In this case, the valuation of English as “very important” in different aspects of their career is always lower than in the rest, but it still has a high weight. As seen in Table 2 below, more than half of the Argentinians value it as “very important” in the reading the bibliography, participating in scientific meetings and communicating with colleagues from other countries. As regards publications abroad, it is “very important” for 82.54%. The highest values are found in the responses from Brazil. At the same time, for Chilean researchers, it seems to be less important for communication and the production of texts than for the reading of the bibliography, where a higher value (70%) is recorded, although considerably lower than that of their colleagues from Argentina and Brazil.

TABLE 2  
*SSH researchers who value English as “very important”, according with different aspects, by country [%]*

ASPECT	Argentina	Chile	Brasil
Literature discussion	82,54%	70%	95,4%
Participation in congresses and meetings	49,66%	s/d	92,6%
Communication with colleagues abroad	55,25%	55%	95,8%
Publishing in the country	11,19%	s/d	47%
Publishing abroad	59,83%	44%	97%

Source: Ecapin Survey.

These evaluations are influenced by several factors that impact the dominant conceptualisations of what type of scientific prestige is considered valid. Among these factors are the “messages” that researchers receive from the national evaluative culture and the regulations for teaching evaluation or academic career mobility at the institutional level. In the case of the Brazilian surveyed population, our sample includes researchers and teachers from graduate programs considered to be of excellence, i.e., rated with the maximum grade (7) by the Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (Capes) in all areas of knowledge. One of the essential elements for a program to obtain such a grade is its degree of “internationalisation”. And the weight of this internationalisation lies mainly in its researchers and their ability to get international funding, participate in international committees, teams, projects and networks, or carry out stays abroad. However,

despite the multiple possibilities and vectors for evaluating internationalisation, one of the most highly valued items is the “intellectual production” of permanent professors of the programs in international journals.

We must add a stimulus to this institutional pressure on Brazilian researchers who participate in graduate programs of excellence. In general, they are or aspire to be “productive” researchers (*bolsa de produtividade em pesquisa*) of the Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (CNPq). This salary incentive program is dedicated to high-level researchers that mainly value individual scientific production. Although the normative criteria for evaluating applications are established by committees divided by areas of knowledge, the trajectories that are usually rewarded are the ones in which there is a more significant presence of publications in journals indexed in the mainstream system (whether Brazilian or international journals).

This is undoubtedly a solid incentive to indirectly promote publication in English abroad and in Brazilian publications that have migrated to that language. The requirements of the different levels of the CNPq grant have enabled various segmentations marked not only by salary stratification and status differences to access funding but also by gender asymmetries (Barros and Silva, 2019). Most of the CNPq productivity grantees are professors from the most important metropolitan universities concentrated in the Southeast of the country, such as the Universidade de São Paulo (USP), the Universidade Estadual de Campinas (Unicamp) or the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). Although the amount received for the grant varies (it usually ranges between 13 and 20% of the base salary as a professor at a public university), being a CNPq grantee is an important status symbol within the Brazilian academic community. In addition, it enables entry and adds points for success in other public calls for applications, reproducing Merton’s classic “Matthew’s effect” (1968).

In contrast, when a broader universe of researchers is analysed, the diversity of forms of circulation and their national rootedness grows. Mugnaini *et al.* (2019) conducted a comprehensive analysis of the publications included in the resumes of 260,663 researchers registered in the Lattes Platform (an open national database of curricula vitae). They found that Brazilian journals occupy a significant portion of the articles of these individuals in all scientific areas, revealing the usefulness of national journals as publication vehicles for Brazilian authors. On the other hand, of the total number of journals detected (23,000), 60% are not indexed in Scielo, Scopus or Web of Science (WoS). For the social and human sciences, it is thus verified that they publish assiduously in non-indexed journals and that circulation within the Latin American and Caribbean regions exists but less frequently than at the national level. This phenomenon is part of the specific situation of the relative isolation of Portuguese as a language of regional communication.

In the case of Chile, Ramos Zincke (2021) states that the neoliberal institutional transformations that promoted competition reached Chile earlier and more consistently than in other Latin American countries, significantly changing the dynamics of scientific research and the balance between its local and international orientation. As a result, Chilean scientists currently constitute a population relatively well adapted to internationalisation and its regulation expressed in global mainstream indexing. It is a population that exhibits “good behaviour” in this matter, pressured or motivated by the scientific agencies of the State to the universities, showing a significant degree of conformity or practical adjustment to this logic.

Many Chilean universities’ have salary incentives that reward publications in WoS-Clarivate with a fixed sum which is concrete manifestation of this competition system (something that in Brazil occurs in some private universities). Analysing the publication patterns of Chilean scientists in the framework of our tri-national survey, Ramos Zincke (2021) points out that between 2007 and 2016, WoS and Scopus publications grew by about 40% across the globe, while in Latin America and the Caribbean, they had an increase of over 80%. For Chile, its increase is even higher than the growth of Latin American productivity: more than 140% in both indexing systems, which implies a figure above the other countries with the highest scientific productivity in the region (Brazil, Mexico and Argentina).

This scenario, on the other hand, contrasts with the low valuation of English for publication abroad observed in the Chilean survey, i.e., the fact that only 44% considered English “very important” for this type of publication. One factor that may explain this valuation is related to the country’s strong commitment to indexing its national journals in the mainstream circuit, with which many Chileans can publish in Spanish and in their own country and still collect the monetary reward. To verify the weight of national publication in indexed journals and examine the importance of English, few studies analyse the complete trajectories of Chilean researchers. However, when book publishing is included, it is interesting to note that the local vector remains strong, especially in the social and human sciences, where the dialogue with the Chilean literature is relevant in the network of citations (Ramos Zincke, 2014).

Argentina, on its part, is a rather exceptional country in the context of evaluation policies in Latin America firstly, because it has a system of categorisation of teacher-researchers (Proince) that uses criteria established by the university system itself, with weighting schemes that differ significantly from global standards<sup>6</sup>. Secondly,

6. Proince operated until 2019, when a new system was created in the last months of Mauricio Macri’s government (called Sidiun). However, it was not implemented.

researchers at the main public scientific agency, the Conicet (Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas) are not subject to a differentiated salary regime based their productivity in the mainstream circuit, as we saw in the case of Chile and Brazil. However, the evaluative culture of Conicet has been strongly internationalised for several decades. Writing in English and impact indicators affect entry competencies and promotion. These trends are observed when analysing the five “most relevant productions” that these researchers choose to apply for promotion. From a total of 23,852 publications arising from promotion requests from 2013-2015, we could detect that most were articles and not books, 7% had been published in Argentina, and 83% were in English. An interesting fact is that in the social and human sciences, high rates of internationalisation of publication are also observed, but instead of global standards predominating, a form of circulation oriented to journals indexed in Latin American repositories is developing (Beigel, 2017).

The observation of the publications of the researchers’ complete curriculum, on the other hand, showed us that the academic trajectories of Conicet are less homogeneous than what is evidenced when they must choose the most relevant productions of their career to compete or apply for promotion (Beigel and Gallardo, 2021). This bibliodiversity is not only manifested by the resilience of the book publishing but also by a more significant presence of articles in national language.

Publication spaces and situated circulation: a sample of trajectories from Argentina, Brazil and Chile

Publication in English and the mainstream circuit occupy very high percentages of high valuation in all disciplines, including the social and human sciences, within the academic elite of the Southern Cone. However, as we have seen, this growing presence of English is closely linked to the rewards offered by evaluation policies. Thus, when researchers have to choose their most relevant publications in a dossier for promotion in their academic career or admission to a research or teaching position, they tend to select the journals and languages they consider most effective in achieving their objective. This is also observed in researchers working in large, medium and small universities in the three countries that participated in the survey.

Despite this, available studies on large universities, such as the University of Buenos Aires (UBA), the University of São Paulo (USP) or the University of Chile (UCH), verify that there are essential cores of researchers and professors who maintain a local habitus of circulation. In addition, although it may seem contradictory at first glance, it is precisely in these large universities where many of the non-indexed journals that proliferate in Latin America and serve as a vehicle and dissemination

for these academic sectors still subsist (Beigel and Salatino, 2015). USP, for example, maintains its portal with 197 journals with very diverse profiles, some of them very old, such as the *Revista de la Facultad de Derecho* (founded in 1893). In none of these, nor most of the more traditional journals of the university, there is a significant concern with indexing or internationalisation. Most of the journals published by the university are printed exclusively in Portuguese and are not indexed in either Scopus or WoS. A similar situation occurs at UBA, with more than 90 journals, most of which are not indexed or included in collections such as Latindex, Scielo or Redalyc. This indicates that multiple styles of production and circulation survive in these prestigious and old institutions. Or perhaps it is precisely because they are university structures with greater autonomy that there is institutional space to harbour resistances and build bridges between local and global standards.

Based on this working hypothesis, we complemented the tri-national survey with a study of the resumes of the professors and researchers. They participated in our survey to assess the distance between their self-perceptions about the importance of English and their circulation styles observable in the publication of books, participation in conferences and the language of their publications. To this end, we built a purposive, non-probabilistic sample without a statistical link to the matched samples used in the survey but selected from the same delimited populations. To choose the individuals, we set the predominant institutional affiliations in Ecapin for each country, trying to respect the disciplinary and generational diversity of the survey.

The populations selected in the survey are differentiated by the particular structure of each national scientific system and the possibilities of reliably accessing their researchers' resumes. In the Brazilian and Chilean cases, all researchers work as university professors, while in Argentina, Conicet researchers may work inside or outside universities. Since Conicet is autonomous and has a full-time research career, the dominant affiliation institutions were selected based on our previous knowledge of this institution and its institutional and spatial distribution in the territory (Beigel *et al.*, 2020). Consequently, for the Argentine case, individuals were selected based on the four dominant institutional affiliations in that organisation: a) researchers without a university teaching position, b) researchers with a teaching position at UBA, c) researchers with a teaching position at the National University of Córdoba and d) researchers with a teaching position at the National University of La Plata. For each subgroup, 25 individuals were selected, 5 for each of the disciplinary areas of the sample/survey (exact and natural sciences, agricultural sciences and engineering, biology and health sciences, social and human sciences, and technology) and of these five individuals, one for each category of the organisation (Assistant, Adjunct, Independent, Principal and Senior). The total number of resumes surveyed was 100.

Among the multiple options available for the Brazilian case, as we have already mentioned, the Ecapin team decided to select as the population for analysis the professors of graduate programs with the highest Capes evaluation (grade 7), given that this is a generationally and institutionally diversified group and that, by the qualification of their work institutions, they presumably have internationalised demands and publication levels. These highly qualified programs from which the survey was drawn are found in more than 60 university institutions and research institutes. But the most significant number of survey responses came from five metropolitan universities. Accordingly, we selected our sample to analyse the circulation indicators by taking the institutions with the most remarkable presence: 1) University of São Paulo (USP); 2) State University of Campinas (Unicamp); 3) Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ); 4) Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG); and 5) the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS). In each institution, 20 individuals were selected, 5 cases for each of the four disciplinary areas of the survey (exact and natural sciences, agricultural sciences and engineering, biology and health sciences, and social and human sciences), seeking a balance between the different stable stages of the academic career, which in Brazil corresponds to adjunct, associate and full professors for the federal universities (and between professor-doctors, adjunct professors and full professors in the case of the universities of the State of São Paulo, which have their differentiated structure of the academic career). The total number of resumes surveyed was 100.

In the absence of similar criteria to the other two cases in which Conicet and Capes provide a relatively analogous institutional framework, to select the population of researchers in Chile, we chose the group of researchers who are beneficiaries of the leading scientific and technological projects financed in the last fifteen years by the Chilean State through the National Fund for Scientific and Technological Development (Fondecyt, Ministry of Education). This group of researchers works in the leading universities of the country that develop research activities and cover all disciplinary areas. Between the University of Chile and the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, they make up more than 40% of the respondents to the survey. This corresponds to the proportion that these two traditional universities in Santiago have in the selected population as a whole. They are followed by the University of Concepción and the University of Santiago de Chile, reaching 60% of the total population and the survey.

Consequently, we selected 20 individuals for each of the four institutions distributed according to age ranges. As in the case of Brazil and Argentina, five individuals were chosen in each institution for each of the four disciplinary areas of which the sample/survey is composed. The total number of resumes processed was 80.

The sample of Argentinian individuals is balanced in terms of gender parity since Conicet currently has more than 50% female researchers. For Brazil and Chile, gender parity was not introduced in the sample due to the primarily male composition of the population. On the other hand, from previous studies, we know that, on average, 90% of Conicet researchers obtained their PhDs in Argentina. But given the equal distribution of the sample by age/category, in this subpopulation, 78% have doctoral degrees issued in Argentina, and the remaining 22% are researchers aged 60 years or older, among which there is precisely a greater preeminence of foreign degrees. In the case of Brazilian researchers, the policy of “sandwich” grants resulted in many doctoral degrees being obtained in the country but with stays abroad usually lasting between 6 and 12 months. Chilean researchers represent a situation that is practically the opposite of the Argentinian situation: only 35% of the individuals selected did their doctorate in a Chilean university, while the rest did so in a foreign university. As we shall see, this localisation of the doctoral training process impacts the profile of the circulation trajectories of researchers from semi-peripheral countries.

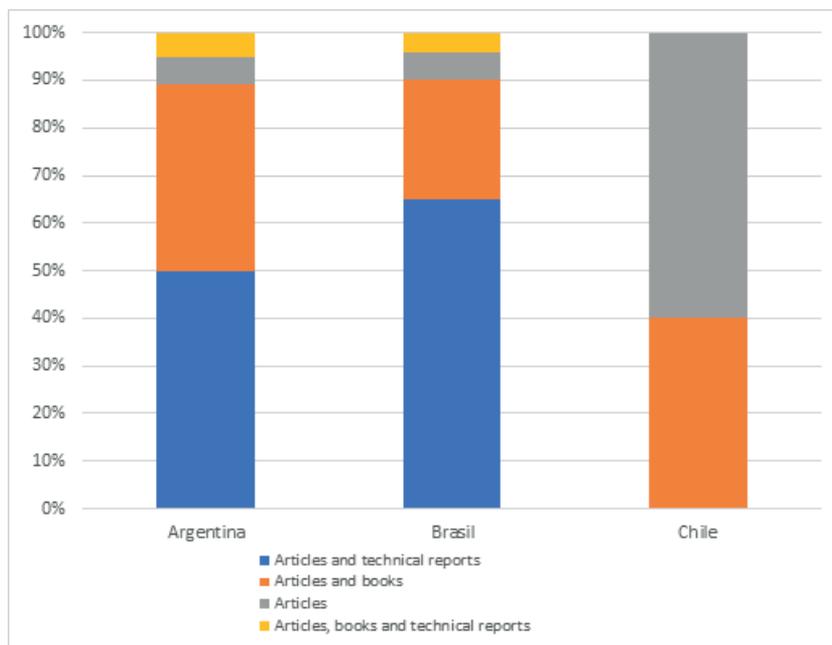
The resumes were collected in the three countries based on the public profile of each researcher on the official website of their place of work<sup>7</sup>. Unfortunately, Chilean researchers’ resumes were unavailable in institutional repositories, nor was there a national resume database, such as Lattes for Brazil or Sigeva for Argentina. The survey protocol included the following indicators: (a) bibliodiversity, i.e., types of publication present in the curriculum; (b) percentage of publications in English; (c) a percentage of publications in the national language; (d) percentage of national publications; (e) percentage of participation in national congresses.

When comparing this curricular survey, one of the first aspects that attract our attention is comparing the production format observable in the three groups. Figure 1 shows that the Argentinian profile reaches 88% of researchers with articles and book chapters or books in their list of publications. Only 4% have articles, and 8% do not have books but only articles because they add technical reports, which prefigures a more technological profile. A look at the complete profile of these researchers reveals a much more book-like picture, which is not only observed among researchers in the social and human sciences, which would be relatively unremarkable but in all scientific areas.

A similar profile can be described for Brazil, where the proportion of researchers who only publish articles, or articles and technical reports, is practically identical to that of the Argentinians. Therefore there is also a large majority who publish articles

7. We would like to thank Anabella Abarzúa Cutroni, Victor Algañaraz, Gonzalo Castillo and Cecilia Garro Scalvini for their collaboration with the surveys of this resume database.

FIGURE 1  
*Bibliodiversity by country*



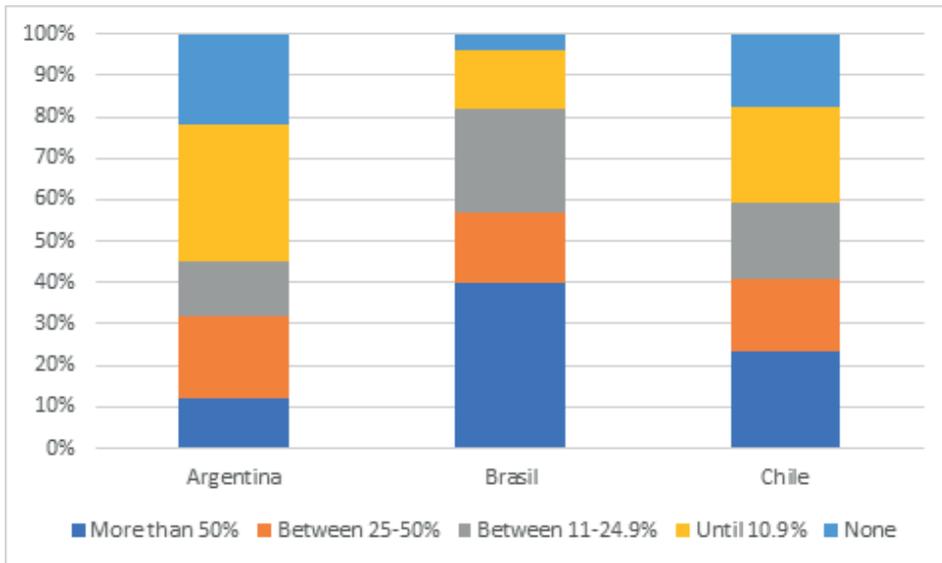
Source: Produced by the authors based on Ecapin Survey.

and books. In the case of Brazilians, technical reports in combination with papers and books have more weight, probably due to the space given by Capes evaluations to “technical production”, which also has a specific area in the Lattes curriculum itself. In contrast with the Argentinian and Brazilian profiles, in the Chilean group, this aspect is seen as much more shaped by mainstream standards since 60% of the researchers have only articles in their profiles.

Concerning national publications, previous studies showed that when researchers chose the most relevant publications that would be effective for promotion, they tended to select publications in article format and journals outside the country. However, in this survey of profiles chosen for this work, 83% of all selected researchers have publications in Argentina, with a lower proportion in the case of the Chilean group, which has 65% of the total with publications in Chile.

Figure 2 shows that Chile represents the highest proportion of researchers with no publications in the country. The case of Argentina is also striking, with more than 20% of researchers with no publications in Argentina. It should be remembered that the internationalisation process of Conicet extends to all areas, including the social sciences, where a Latin American orientation predominates. This explains the differences from Brazil, where national publications have a greater weight in all disciplines.

FIGURE 2  
*Percentage of national publications by country*



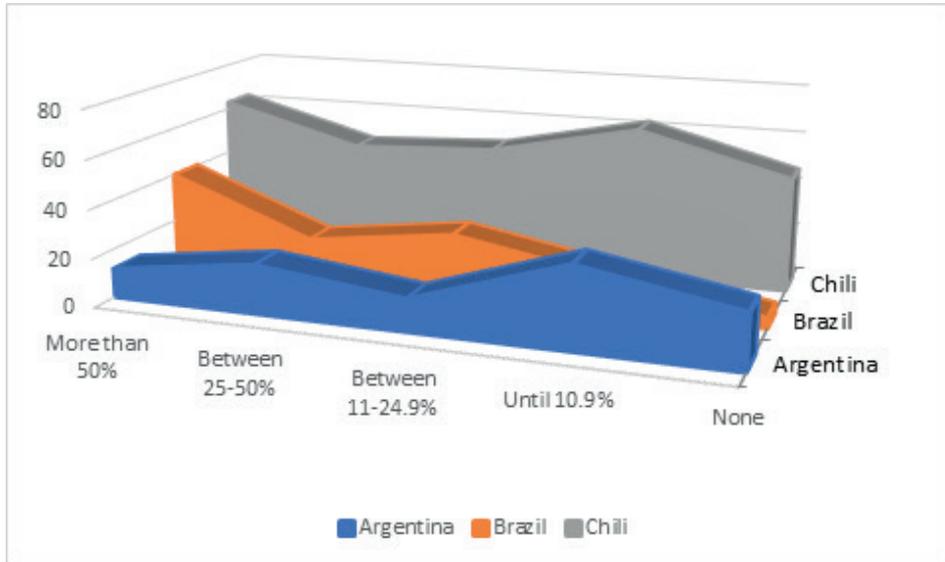
Source: Produced by the authors based on Ecapin Survey.

Figure 3 contains the same information but in the form of lines that allow us to see the combinations more clearly. This shows two opposing profiles between Brazil and Argentina regarding the number of researchers with more than 50% of their publications in their country. Brazil has 40% of researchers with more than half of their publications in their country, and Argentina has only a little more than 10%. In this sense, Argentina and Chile are similar, with around 20% of researchers in each group having no national publications. The group of Brazilian researchers thus appears as the one with the highest proportion of national publications and the lowest percentage of researchers without national publications (4%).

However, concerning the percentage of publications in English, the Ecapin survey showed the crucial importance of publications in this language for most respondents. 92 and 96% of all respondents reported having published at least once in English. At first glance, these data could give a homogenising image that tends to confirm the often mentioned hypercentrality of English. However, let's analyse it more closely, based on the survey of resumes. We can verify that we are not simply facing a sort of "acculturation", as it is often described in many studies based on mainstream information systems.

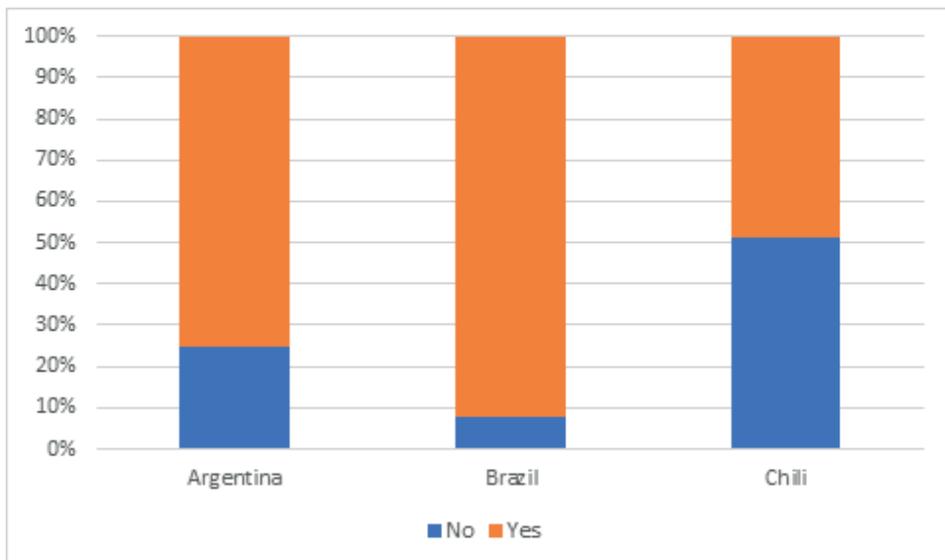
In Brazil, for example, only 9% of researchers have no publications in Portuguese, a very different value from the groups in Chile and Argentina. It is striking that the Argentinians recorded a relatively high proportion of individuals with no

FIGURE 3  
*Country profiles differentiated by the percentage of national publications*



Source: Produced by the authors based on Ecapin Survey.

FIGURE 4  
*Percentage with at least one publication in the national language, by country*



Source: Produced by the authors based on Ecapin Survey.

publications in Spanish (24%), but even higher in the case of Chile, with just over half. Figure 4 compares the distribution of individuals who have no publications in the national language. In the case of Chile, it is strongly influenced by the weight of the doctorate in English-speaking countries.

Finally, one last important observation concerns the percentage of congresses in the country. We intended to survey it to make contrasts with the internationalisation visible in the mobility of individuals and that promoted by publications. We observed two very similar profiles for Brazil and Argentina, with 90% of the researchers in each group presenting more than 50% of their congresses in their own country. Unfortunately, it was impossible for Chile to carry out a consistent survey of this fact due to the absence of information in the profiles of some of the universities studied. The existence of an important percentage of participation in national meetings and exchanges in the cases of Argentina and Brazil reinforces the idea that, beyond the fact that a good part of the researchers of the academic elite publishes in English, there is also a non-negligible tendency towards complementarity of strategies, national publication and multi-scalarity in both countries. Beyond specific thematic congresses, it should be remembered that almost all disciplines and areas of knowledge in Argentina and Brazil have national instances of regular exchanges in the format of events promoted by national associations or financed by public agencies, many of which serve as catalysts for debates of special local interest. Moreover, participation in these national spaces implies that even in cases where international circulation is robust, national roots are important when defining discussions and publicly presenting initial research advances.

## Conclusions

In many public debates, in universities and outside, it is common to associate, in a solid nationalistic tone, publication in English with the loss of a rooted (or autonomous) national debate. Likewise, researchers from more traditional programs and universities are often classified as “elitists” for being an active part of a network that imposes external publication criteria. Based on the analysis of a population of researchers from the scientific elite of Argentina, Brazil and Chile, who value publication in English very highly, we have shown that this reality is much more complex and diverse.

The link to an old and prestigious institution does not necessarily mean that its researchers rely on a mere reproduction of the mainstream circuit and logic. Being part of an internationalised institution in the Southern Cone offers, as we have seen, comparative advantages from the outset since they have greater autonomy to

accommodate multiple styles of circulation and production, opening up spaces for the formation and reproduction of these profiles. Bibliodiversity and multilingualism are relevant in the trajectories of the elite researchers analysed here, with a significant portion publishing in national journals and their native language.

Despite this general statement, different profiles can be observed in the three countries analysed. In Chile, there is a greater introjection of English not only outwardly as a form of global integration, but also inwardly, that is, in structuring its own scientific community. Meanwhile, there is a more significant concern for valorising the Latin American circuit in Argentina and Brazil -the latter with a stronger orientation within its borders. These trends allow us to visualise how the geopolitics of scientific knowledge is also associated with specific political and historical processes. In the Brazilian case, for example, the argument of the continental size of the country, together with a language different from the rest of the region used to explain the persistence of a more self-centred debate in recent decades. While some see this as a kind of provincialism, it can also be understood as a concern to discuss issues relevant to the country on its own terms and needs.

This path emphasises the need to analyse more systematically the existence of different modalities and patterns of international circulation within and outside the scientific elite. As we have argued in this article, the construction of situated forms of circulation can only be understood after examining how the crossings between scales and mediations occur in each case. The comparative look at circulation and languages of publication of the scientific elites of the Southern Cone illustrates both approximations and distances between the three national cases in terms of bibliodiversity, the proportion of publications in the country, percentage of publications in English and participation in national congresses. Taken together, these data also allow us to open a discussion on the differential relevance of English and the native language according to the location of researchers in specific academic communities and disciplines. Other relevant crossovers, such as the relationship between the age of researchers and publication in English, could not be explored in the present study but are important for future analyses.

Finally, the contradictory meanings observed in the national anchorage of the observed academic communities (comparatively stronger in Brazil than in Argentina and Chile) can be understood as a comparative advantage if one wants to stimulate a local discussion agenda toward a more socially relevant science. However, they can also be understood as fragility if a good part of the Brazilian journals continues to opt for the English edition, and the journal classification system (Qualis), in its recent reformulations, stimulates a preference for those with a high Impact Factor. Thus, the academic evaluation system continues to be the figurehead that can reori-

ent these trends so that diversity and multiscalar circulation can prevail, stimulating institutions to promote different styles of production and interaction. Likewise, the notion of situated circulation can be a theoretical-methodological alternative to critical readings of internationalisation that tend to be homogenising and to the prospects of delocalised cosmopolitanism.

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### **Abstract**

#### *Situated circulation and publication languages of the academic elites of the Southern Cone*

This article analyzes the relationship between researchers' self-perceptions about the value of publishing in English and the diversity of circulation practices observed in their entire publication trajectory. Methodologically, we use both a trinational survey carried out with the academic elite of Argentina, Brazil and Chile and an empirical observation of a sample of researchers' resumes from these three countries. The contribution is twofold: in conceptual terms, we propose the concept of "situated circulation" as an alternative to linear and traditional perspectives of internationalization; In the empirical field, we show how the bibliodiversity in the academic trajectories and the multiscalarity of the circulation of these academics gives us a complex and diverse look in the three cases. As a consequence, the findings allow us to go beyond the usual views on English as a language of publication and advance the debate on the dynamism of the circulation process and its social-institutional anchors.

Keywords: Situated circulation; Publications; English; Academic elites; Bibliodiversity.

### **Resumen**

#### *Circulación situada e idiomas de publicación de las élites académicas del Cono Sur*

Este artículo analiza la relación entre las autopercepciones de los investigadores acerca del valor de la publicación en inglés y la diversidad de prácticas de circulación que se observan en su trayectoria completa de publicaciones. Para ello, nos basamos metodológicamente en una encuesta trinacional realizada con la élite académica de Argentina, Brasil y Chile y en la observación empírica de una muestra de currículums de investigadores de estos tres países. La contribución del texto apunta en una doble dirección: en términos conceptuales, proponemos el concepto de "circulación situada" como alternativa a perspectivas lineales y tradicionales de la internacionalización; en el terreno empírico, mostramos cómo la bibliodiversidad en las trayectorias académicas y la multi-escalaridad de la circulación de esos académicos proyecta una mirada compleja en los tres casos. Como consecuencia, los hallazgos nos permiten ir más allá de las visiones habituales sobre el inglés como idioma de publicación y avanzar en el debate sobre el dinamismo del proceso de circulación y sus anclajes socio-institucionales.

Palabras clave: Circulación situada; Publicaciones; Inglés; Élite académicas; Bibliodiversidad.

### **Resumo**

#### *Circulação situada e idiomas de publicação das elites acadêmicas do Cone Sul*

Este artigo analisa a relação entre a autopercepção dos pesquisadores sobre o valor da publicação em inglês e a diversidade de práticas de circulação observadas em suas trajetórias. Para isso, nós nos baseamos metodologicamente em uma pesquisa trinacional realizada com a elite acadêmica da Argentina, Brasil e Chile e na observação empírica de uma amostra de currículos de pesquisadores desses três países. A contribuição do texto é dupla: em termos conceituais, propomos

o conceito de “circulação situada” como alternativa às perspectivas lineares e tradicionais de internacionalização; no campo empírico, mostramos como a bibliodiversidade nas trajetórias acadêmicas e a multiscalaridade da circulação desses acadêmicos projetam uma realidade complexa e diversificada nos três casos. Isso nos permite, então, ir além das visões habituais do inglês como língua de publicação e avançar no debate sobre o dinamismo do processo de circulação e suas ancoragens socioinstitucionais.

Palavras-chave: Circulação situada; Publicações; Inglês; Elites acadêmicas; Bibliodiversidade.

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