Higher education as a marketable product

A critical discourse analysis of universities’ persuasive strategies to recruit students

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Lleida
“As we are, we speak. As we speak, we are”.

(Martins, 2004: 71)
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Abstract
The new capitalist market economy is invading most of the spheres in our society and education is no exception. This paper attempts to begin to explore the impact of this social change on higher education through the review of literature available on four main research strands: the new capitalism, persuasive discourse, marketization in higher education, and Critical Discourse Analysis. A sample comparative critical discourse analysis of Cardiff University (CU) and the University of Lleida (UdL) websites is also made in order to examine two specific cases in which higher educational institutions adopt particular strategies to recruit international students. The results seem to confirm the initial hypothesis based on my experience as a student at both universities: CU may be more attractive than the UdL for international students because it uses more effective marketing strategies on its website. The study confirms that universities’ discourse reflects the current transformation of higher education into a marketable product.

KEY WORDS: marketization of higher education, persuasive discourse, advertising strategies, universities’ discourse, universities’ website.

Resumen
La nueva economía de mercado capitalista está invadiendo gran parte de las esferas de nuestra sociedad y la educación no es una excepción. Este trabajo trata de iniciar una indagación del impacto de este cambio social en la educación superior a través de cuatro líneas de investigación: el nuevo capitalismo, el discurso persuasivo, la mercantilización de la educación superior y el Análisis Crítico del Discurso. Un análisis crítico-comparativo por muestreo del discurso de las páginas web de la Universidad de Cardiff (CU) y de la Universidad de Lleida (UdL) permite estudiar las estrategias para atraer estudiantes internacionales. Los resultados parecen confirmar la inicial hipótesis basada en mi experiencia como estudiante en ambas universidades: CU parece ser más atractiva para los estudiantes internacionales que la UdL por sus estrategias de marketing más efectivas. El estudio confirma que el discurso de las universidades refleja la actual conversión de la educación superior en un producto de mercado.

PALABRAS CLAVE: mercantilización de la educación superior, discurso persuasivo, estrategias publicitarias, discurso de las universidades, páginas web.
Table of contents

Chapter 1. Introduction........................................................................................................... 6
Chapter 2. The new capitalism.............................................................................................. 8
  2.1. The social impact of the new capitalism ................................................................. 8
  2.2. The marketization of universities ......................................................................... 9
Chapter 3. The role of persuasive discourse in marketization ...................... 13
  3.1. Characteristics of persuasive discourse ................................................................. 13
  3.2. Persuasive discourse and marketing strategies ...................................................... 16
Chapter 4. The marketization of the discourse of higher education ................. 20
  4.1. Universities’ new discourse .............................................................................. 20
  4.2. Universities’ websites ....................................................................................... 21
Chapter 5. A critical perspective on the analysis of discourse .................... 24
  5.1. Towards a definition of CDA............................................................................... 24
  5.2. Critical approaches............................................................................................. 26
    5.2.1. Sociocognitive approach ........................................................................... 27
    5.2.2. Discourse-historical approach ................................................................ 27
    5.2.3. Dialectical-relational approach ............................................................... 28
  5.3. The methodology in CDA................................................................................... 29
Chapter 6. A sample comparative analysis: UdL and CU............................ 32
  6.1. Analysing social practice .................................................................................... 33
  6.2. Analysing discursive practice ............................................................................. 35
  6.3. Analysing textual practice ................................................................................. 36
Chapter 7. Conclusions and implications......................................................... 41
References......................................................................................................................... 45
Chapter 1. Introduction

If we accept that language and society are intrinsically connected, we could say that society and the discourse produced by a part of it are the main concern of this project, as “language, culture and behaviour have grown up together, constantly influencing each other” (Whorf, in Thomas and Wareing, 1999: 26). In particular, the main aim of this project is to reveal the influence of a market-oriented way of thinking on higher educational institutions, as shown in their universities’ websites and, more specifically, in their efforts to recruit new students.

Regardless of the increasing number of studies to investigate how the market ideology permeates discourse practices in universities, the particular effect of the marketization of universities on their websites’ discourse has not been given due attention from a critical perspective. For this reason, I would like to analyse the reciprocal influence between universities’ discourse and current society, thereby contributing to a better understanding of the dialectical relationship between language and society, which influence each other.

Due to its subtleness, the power that language can have on people’s actions and beliefs is rarely noticed by the average person. This is precisely the ultimate motivation for this project: to raise awareness about the degree to which universities’ are using language as a marketing tool to recruit students and, subsequently, boost their economic profits.

Although most of this project is devoted to exploring how the topic of analysis has been researched, I have also included a chapter in which I attempt to put into practice the analytical framework of discourse analysis by comparing the University of Lleida and Cardiff University websites in order to study their adoption of the discourse of advertising and persuasive strategies to attract international students. For my analysis, I have focused on 5 comparable web pages of each of the two institutions’ sites (Appendixes 1-5).

The reason for this specific selection is that the University of Lleida has been the home university for my degree in English Studies and Cardiff University was the institution in which I had the opportunity to be an Erasmus student during the academic year 2012-2013. Therefore, my commitment could not be stronger as I equally feel part of the two
institutions. Moreover, I had the opportunity to follow a course in discourse analysis in both universities, which gave me the solid basis I needed to carry out this study.

This project is divided into six chapters besides this brief introduction. Chapter 2 introduces the current social context created by what has been defined as “the new capitalism”, as it provides the market conditions in which universities are expected to carry out their social task. Chapter 3 focuses on persuasive discourse strategies used in the field of marketing and which are now being adopted by higher educational institutions. Chapter 4 will consider the ways in which the discourse of marketing has been incorporated into universities’ websites, which has resulted in a blurring of boundaries between their informing and persuasive functions. In chapter 5, I present the analytical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a potentially suitable tool for the study of the consumer-oriented relationship between students and universities. In chapter 6 I have put to test this framework with a sample comparative analysis between the discourses of two universities with which I am particularly familiar: University of Lleida and Cardiff University, to which I will refer as UdL and CU, respectively. It has been precisely my initial familiarity with the two institutions and their websites that has led me to carry out this sample comparative analysis with the hypothesis that, as far as their webpages are concerned, CU uses more effective marketing strategies than UdL. Finally, in chapter 7, I try to draw a few conclusions about the possible impact of the discourse strategies employed by the two institutions on potential international students.
Chapter 2. The new capitalism

Our era is directly influenced by the relentless progression of technology, the notable improvement of communication and the invading marketization. Kaneko (2005: 1) puts a lot of emphasis on the latter and states that “at the dawn of the 21st century one may observe that another spectre is haunting the world, and at this time its name is marketization”. The particular qualification of the current process of marketization as a “spectre” is by no means random, as it suggests the subtlety of this intangible process which nowadays has reached most of the spheres in our society. Notwithstanding, in order to understand the marketization of public institutions and to make visible its consequences on society and universities for this study, it is necessary to go a step further and analyse the context which made way for this “spectre”. The most popular name with which most authors have labelled this specific context is “the new capitalism”.

2.1. The social impact of the new capitalism

Capitalism is the term which best defines our current society or, at least, the alterations undergone in the Western World. The notion of new capitalism is defined by Jessop (2000, as cited in Simpson and Mayr, 2010: 37) as “those forms of contemporary transformations of capitalism which are characterized by a 'restructuring' of the relations between the economic, political and social”. In Simpson’s (2010: 37) words, the new capitalism is “a 'colonization' of [politics, education and culture] by the economic field”. Mautner (2005: 98), however, prefers to see it as “a 'process of convergence', albeit one that is 'asymmetrical' and in which the market ultimately emerges as the stronger partner”. At any rate, the result of this “'promotional' or 'consumer' culture” (Featherstone, 1991) is that non-business institutions are going through a process of 'marketization' in many spheres.

At this point, there is one main question which automatically arises: What is the impact of the new capitalism on society? According to Fairclough (1993: 139), “one feature of the modern is the unification of the order of discourse”, of what Bourdieu (1991) called the “linguistic market”. That is to say, the current culture uses discourse “as a vehicle for selling goods, services, organizations, ideas or people” (Fairclough, 1991: 140).
Indeed, the genre of advertising has colonised all the fields of our society and, consequently, the marketization of public discourse is now a fact. As Simpson (2010: 97) puts it, “the language of the free market is now firmly embedded in discourse practices employed in the workplace, in politics, the media and universities”. Concisely, not only is the political discourse an example of marketization of discourse, but the spheres of education and culture have also been soaked by the discourse of market.

Indisputably, change is inevitable, it is always round the corner and, thus, it is necessary for institutions to adapt to it. For this reason, in the same way as work practices have been altered, discourses have also been transformed in order to fit the demands of the new capitalism. As a consequence, as Martins (2004: 72) suggested, “a kind of *market-speak* has become salient, and pervades mainstream public discourse, and, not least, and perhaps most surprisingly, academic as well as non-academic discourse about academia, and educational matters in general, like never before”.

As it has been previously stated, the adoption of the market discourse firstly involved the political field. Public services could not escape from the marketization of discourse, so they succumbed to its vast impact. One of the services which has been particularly affected is higher education and, more specifically, the university, which has begun to construct students as 'consumers', which “inevitably results in a more consumer-oriented relationship between students and university” (Simpson 2010). The relevance of this process deserves to be devoted a whole subsection together with its causes and its blatant impact on society.

### 2.2. The marketization of universities

In the late 19th and throughout the 20th century, the promotion of equity in social opportunity became a state’s responsibility in most developed countries. One of the government’s goals was, for instance, to establish justice in the chances of receiving higher education. Therefore, “higher education became a social opportunity universally available, irrespective [of] family background, academic ability or age” (Kaneko, 2005: 4). Therefore, the fact that university institutions were open to the masses was partly due to the increasing support from the government.
The situation of public universities started to change in the second half of the 20th century. As an answer to the long British crisis of the 1970s, Margaret Thatcher, the longest-serving British Prime Minister of that century and the only woman to have held the office, decided to privatise public institutions. Privatising the public sector such as energy, water and telecommunications industries was expected to trigger an increase of revenues as well as a reduction of loans. According to Seymour (2012), privatisation was expected to “make the large utilities more efficient and productive, and thus make British capitalism competitive relative to its continental rivals”. This, together with other important changes during the so-called Iron Lady’s term of office (1979-1990), transformed not only the United Kingdom but also the political economy of other countries from Europe.

With the privatisation of state companies, the government also expected universities to be entrepreneurial and thereby adopt principles and practices of the private enterprise. This meant they would stop being defrayed by the state. One of the strategies of the government was “to make the universities (...) to be more independent from the government” (Kaneko, 2005: 5). So as to meet the new demands from society, universities experienced a process of marketization through which they had to be more entrepreneurial and change in order to become closer to the business and industry sectors. The substantial organisational changes that universities have been undergoing since the late 1980s and early 1990s in order to echo a market mode operation are described by Webster (2003: 85) as the “adoption of a free-market or corporate-business perspective”. This perspective is what can explain that present-day (a) universities tend to be more financially autonomous, (b) managerial approaches such as staff appraisal or training are increasingly used, (c) institutional planning is introduced, and (d) marketing is one of educational institutions’ major worries nowadays.

However, one of the most notable modifications and the one with more relevance for this study was, and still is, the structuring of the order of discourse of higher education on the model of market organisations. This new tendency has a strong bond with the “changes in the funding of universities, with a decrease in public governmental spending in most countries, and an increasing need to rely on external (often private) sources for money” (Wedlin, 2008: 146). Certainly, it is economic profit that has become the current greatest ambition of entrepreneurial universities. Making a profit
from their education and research activities has become, as Holt (2008: 128) defined, “a near obsession in universities [which] has supplanted, or at least supplemented, the traditional aims of ‘truth-seeking’ in the academic world”.

If current universities increasingly resemble market organisations, it is reasonable that students are seen as customers. Therefore, the main aim of institutions of higher education is to sell their products to as many customers as possible. What is more, Wedlin (2008: 151) considers that students are so aware of their new condition as clients, that they “also use rankings to argue that they are ‘customers’, demanding more and better services of various kinds: career services, recruitment activities, etc.”.

Engwall (2008: 12) also points out that international developments and an increasing internationalisation of universities push competition between institutions of higher education and research even further. That is to say, universities compete against each other as if they were ordinary businesses fighting for their place in the market while offering similar goods or services. Similarly, just as enterprises struggle to attract as many customers as possible, higher educational institutions fight for the recruitment of international students by providing academic degrees, research and services. The central reason of their interest is that foreign students provide the budgetary support which universities no longer receive from the government. At the same time, however, it should not be forgotten that the number of international students remarkably increases the institution’s reputation which, subsequently, will be instrumental to attract a larger number of students.

This new economic goal of universities has led to a series of new initiatives. The inter-governmental Bologna Process is an instance which illustrates some of the changes in education with reference to the goal of attracting international students. In actual fact, the Bologna Process’ raison d’être is to contribute to a process of convergence in which student exchange is easier among European universities. Yet, since there are always two sides of the same coin, the initiative has also accentuated the idea of competition among institutions when it comes to students’ recruitment.

Hoxby (2002) suggests that the lower costs of travelling contribute to increasing competition among universities, as moving to foreign countries to study is cheaper. However, the most influential factor in the competition for student recruitment is the
flow of information between universities and students. The advances of communication technologies, especially the Internet, allow students to get information from any institution regardless of the country. As a consequence, websites have become a key tool for universities in order to provide information about themselves and attract international students.

Yet, technological change is not the most important issue in the process of marketization, but rather the adaptation of universities’ discourse to the context created by the new capitalism. In this framework, “it is the market that prescribes the guiding principle and role model for change” (Wedlin, 2008: 143) and it is universities that adopt market ideals and market principles so as to meet the market demand and to contribute to its development. The new capitalism involves, as Fairclough (2003: 34) claimed, “changes to the networking of social practices [which] lead to changes in the possible forms of actions and interactions, including changes in genres”. In fact, new genres are created by the adoption and combination of some traits of existing genres. In the particular case of universities, it is the discourse of persuasive strategies in marketing that is undoubtedly being adopted nowadays. Hence, it is remarkable to focus the study on the characteristics of persuasive discourse as well as on the persuasive strategies used in the market.
Chapter 3. The role of persuasive discourse in marketization

Persuasion is a round-the-clock activity in our daily routine, to the point that it would be even more precise to state that it has always been embedded in our lives. According to Machin and Mayr (2012: 163), “since the time of Aristotle, there has been an interest in how to persuade people in the context of public speaking” and, what is more, in how to convince others in the context of private life discourse. It could be said that one of the human being’s strongest desire is the wish to persuade, to lead and direct other people. In other words, persuasion could be equated to a gut instinct and language, to the main characteristic faculty of human nature. The latter –language– presents a considerable quantity of tools to lead other people’s decisions and opinion. For this reason, it is essential to study the linguistic traits of persuasive discourse which help communicators to influence and even manipulate the audience.

3.1. Characteristics of persuasive discourse

In addition to the previous view of persuasion as an intuitive aspect of the humankind, we have Brooks and Warren’s view (1970: 238), which considered it an art, “the art, primarily verbal, by which you get somebody to do what you want and make him, at the same time, think that this is what he had wanted to do all the time.” Twelve years later, Lakoff (1982) characterised it as the nonreciprocal “attempt or intention of one party to change the behavior, feelings, intentions, or viewpoint of another by communicative means.”

Notwithstanding the differences between the definitions, they complement one another and therefore, by taking the two studies into consideration, the focal traits of persuasive discourse could be pointed out. First of all, there is no doubt that the nature of persuasion is defined by its crucial objective: getting the receiver of the message to do what the speaker wishes. This can imply a change on the part of the receiver either in action, behaviour, attitude or opinion. Secondly, persuasion tends to be verbal, even though it would be possible to convince with gestures as well as with facial expressions. Lastly, persuasion may be seen as an art, since particular skills are needed in order to use language in such a way that it does not only express thought, but it can also have a specific influence on the listener or reader without their noticing.
A good illustrator of persuasion as an art is the current marketing success associated to a hidden persuasive message. Nowadays, it is thought that the more hidden persuasion remains, the more effective the result is on the audience as they have the feeling of being freely making a personal choice or decision. In order to achieve this reaction, Robles (2003: 523) believes that “este emisor particular ha de ser capaz de presentar un discurso verdadero, aunque sólo sea en apariencia”. The author uses the term “verdadero” to refer to a plausible discourse which sounds convincing to the receiver. This effect can be achieved by articulating all the mechanisms language possesses.

According to Calvi (2009), the factors which mainly influence the success of persuasion are both the source and the message (language). The former needs to be trustworthy, whereas the latter must pay attention to style, organisation and structure. Hence, there is no doubt that language plays a key role as a tool to appeal the receiver. At this point, it is vital to remark the most common linguistic strategies which, according to Robles (2003: 513-523), are used in persuasive discourse to create an apparently real message:

1) Quantification

Quantifiers are elements which specify the quantity of objects or individuals in possession of a particular attribute. They can also signal the degree of possession of that specific attribute. At any rate, quantifiers normally praise the distinctive qualities of a product or an activity with the use of numeral, indefinite and gradual adjectives. It is very common to find percentages, numbers and adverbs of quantity, among others, in order to give objective and scientific credibility to the message.

The most frequent quantifiers are those which Junker (1994 as cited in Robles, 2003: 513) called “universal quantifiers”. This type of quantifiers includes terms such as *each, each one, all, everything* and *whole* among others. Yet, non-universal quantifiers such as *many, much* and *a lot* are frequently used as well because they denote high quantities although they do not imply totality.

2) Causality

The selection of arguments which can create a convincing message is one of the first steps in the process of persuasion. Even though appealing to emotion is a very common strategy, there are more effective ways to persuade, for example, providing cause-effect
relations. They can be logical, psychological, aesthetic, direct or indirect but, in any case, they must express a relation of cause in order to convince the audience.

3) Comparison

One of the most effective ways to create an apparently real message is through comparative and superlative constructions. These structures outline the excellence of the speaker’s product, service or idea to the detriment of the competence, which subsequently seems to have a lesser quality and not to be worthwhile. The choice of adjectives and nouns with positive connotations is also very effective to highlight the positive qualities and overshadow the negative.

4) Relative constructions

Even though they seem to go against the principle of linguistic economy, relative constructions are recurrent structures used in persuasive discourse. The main reason why they are used is that there is no adjective which can convey the meaning with the very same accuracy. Furthermore, it is sometimes needed to add specific nuances or information that an adjective is unable to suggest. Thus, defining relative clauses tend to be preferred over non-defining relative clauses.

5) Omission

Persuaders sometimes resort to the omission technique so as to avoid making reference to their drawbacks. Not only does persuasive discourse omit, when necessary, possible negative information, but there is also the method of using indefinite or impersonal pronouns such as it which could refer to anything or nothing at the same time. By this, the interpretation of the text becomes responsibility of the persuadee, not the persuader. Likewise, by preferring assumptions over specifications, the speaker avoids commitment or explicit promises. Thus, the persuadee has no chances of blaming the persuader as there is no written or oral evidence to prove the hidden manipulation.

After having analysed the most common structures in the process of creating a true and trustworthy message –at least in appearance–, it is vital to point out that this process of selection and omission of techniques and information is not wrong in itself as “one cannot report any event or situation, however truthfully, without selecting some facts in preference to others” (Cook, 2003: 64). This is specially the case of advertising which,
due to the lack of space in adverts and commercials, only shows one aspect—for obvious reasons, the positive features—of a product or service. Since universities adopt the discourse of marketing to reshape their own, it is essential to firstly focus on the persuasive techniques adopted by marketing strategies.

3.2. Persuasive discourse and marketing strategies

The two main worries which concern advertising professionals are the processes of learning and coaxing. El-daly (2011: 37) described the first as the process of informing the audience about the product or service by linking it “to a certain situation, activity, lifestyle or type of person”. This goal can only be considered effectively achieved when the audience learns about the product or service and can associate it to a particular feeling, activity or archetype. This process is summarised by El-daly (2011: 37) in the following words: “the idea is that when people think of these situations, they also think of the product”. In order to communicate effectively and thus achieve the “learning” goal, four principles introduced by Paul Grice need to be followed or, at least, taken into consideration, as it is presumed that all speakers adhere to them. In short, a simplified explanation adapted from Bloor and Bloor (2007: 24) and Pelclová, J. (2010: 60) of Grice’s four maxims could be the following:

- Quantity: give as much information as is needed.
- Quality: do not give false or unsubstantiated information.
- Relation: provide relevant information.
- Manner: be clear, orderly and avoid ambiguity.

The second main goal in the process of advertising—coaxing—is more complex, as it is a process by which advertisers get to have an effect on people’s beliefs, opinions, attitudes, convictions and motivations. With the aim of being successfully persuasive, the discourse needs to appear, regardless of the paradox, not persuasive at all. In terms of Jakobson’s (1960) communicative functions, the persuader needs to foreground “the referential function while backgrounding the conative function in order to mask the direct command”. Goatly (2000: 183) outlines “six important aspects of consumerist ideology” which advertisers use as camouflaging devices to disguise the persuasive goal of the message:
1) Desire and power

One of the main strategies to increase consumption used in advertising is to stress the desire of power. Irrespective of the real need for the product, consumers are made to feel dissatisfied unless they get a particular good or service. What is more, they are made to think there is a “link between buying the product and attaining power or competitive advantage” (Goatly, 2000: 187). Products are presented as powerful, as the cause of positive results, as the solution to a particular problem. Thus, it is believed that power is transferred from the product to the consumer.

2) Buying as a problem solving

Michael Hoey suggested that “the problem-solution structure could be a basic template for many generic structures (Hoey, 1973 as cited in Goatly, 2000). In fact, it is very common in our consumerist society to associate the purchase of a product with the way to solve problems. When goods or services are presented as the solution to problems, consumers are depersonalised or disempowered as the product or service replaces them. Their assumed vulnerability makes them rely on advertisers.

3) Acquiring qualities

Similarly to the first, this strategy plays with the psychological effect of conflating the product with the customer. Therefore, if power can be transferred from the product to the buyer, “any positive attribute of the product is supposed to transfer itself to the possessor or to the possessor’s relationship” (Goatly, 2000: 190). This strategy is very effective in advertising as people tend to feel more important when they possess valuable property.

4) Choosing an identity

If advertisers can promise power, solutions and positive qualities hand in hand with their product or service, they can also promise an identity. In fact, “some classes of advertisements (...) exploit the fact that we achieve identity by identification” (Goatly, 2000: 191) and they take advantage of people’s desire to be associated with a particular social group. Thus, advertisers attempt to portray an appealing personality who most people want to resemble as a technique to attract attention and create desire for the product.
5) Distinguishing yourself: exclusivity, uniqueness and tradition

Contrary to the previous strategy, advertising sometimes creates the idea that “to define ourselves as more successful than average we must distinguish ourselves through the goods we consume” (Goatly, 2000: 193). Mostly, the goods and services offered are presented as unique, special or exclusive so as to enhance the power and singularity of the individual when purchasing them. Another recurrent technique is to point out the consumer’s exceptionally good taste or sensible criteria to choose a particular product.

6) Buying a lifestyle

A common marketing strategy is not to focus so much on the product’s qualities but on a promised lifestyle which goes with it. Thus, costumers are made to believe that as soon as they purchase a good they will be adopting a certain way of life. Yet, advertisers cannot make “overt promises that by buying the product [they] will also be buying something else” (Goatly, 2000: 195), so pictures, adjectives and nouns are strategically used to suggest this idea.

Once the two main objectives of advertising –learning and coaxing– have been achieved, it is necessary to resort to another persuasive strategy which involves creating an impression of face-to-face and personal communication between persuader and persuadee. The strategy of creating a friendly relationship with the receiver is not easy in the slightest, since anyone can come across an advert unintentionally. Therefore, an ad is addressed to a wide range of potential receivers, not only one. In actual fact, advertising is defined as non-personal one-way mass communication because it is able to create a non-reciprocal interaction with millions of people.

Despite the lack of intimacy or personal nature of ads, advertisers get receivers to feel that they are treated as individuals in face-to-face communication. This is due to the conversationalization of discourse, which creates a “friendly interaction between the speaker (the persuader) and the receiver (the persuadee)” (Pelclová, 2010: 10). As a result, the conversationalization of the discourse of advertising creates an artificial relationship which presents the encounter as a casual conversation, as if persuader and persuadee had an intimate and equal relationship so as to appear trustworthy to the audience.
In the discourse of advertising, one of the most relevant linguistic resources is the use of personal pronouns, in particular, *you* and *I*. Whereas *you* is absolutely effective as it shows a direct interest in the addressee, although the real concern is the product or service sold, *I* increases “the effect of intimacy between writer and reader” (Bloor and Bloor, 2007: 42), in this case between persuader and persuadee, in order to make the receiver feel, somehow, identified with the speaker. Therefore, pronouns are very effective in terms of a simulated intimate relationship between advertiser and audience.

All the aforementioned persuasive strategies used in marketing have also been adopted by universities since the last decade of the 20th century. This is the so-called marketization of higher educational institutions, which has a significant but still subtle effect on its discourse. As this paper is focused on the language used on universities’ websites, the next section is devoted to the study of the current content and structure of their homepages.
Chapter 4. The marketization of the discourse of higher education

The marketization of universities, which involves, among many aspects, the adoption of the persuasive and marketing strategies for student recruitment, is materialised in the discourse of their homepages. Even though websites have been an instrument used by universities for at least two decades, their content has remarkably evolved as a result of the marketization of higher educational institutions. In an attempt to catch up with the market’s pace and be able to attract as many students/customers as possible, current universities seek an attractive discourse via an enthralling website.

4.1. Universities’ new discourse

Before the privatisation of public institutions, universities were associated to sound traditions of knowledge, free thinking, studies in a wide range of disciplines, intellectual challenges and mentoring. Nevertheless, due to the recent marketization of higher education, current institutions tend to display more abstract concepts and ideas that represent the values of consumer capitalism. Their competitive and advertising strategies have imbued their discourse, particularly, the language used on their websites.

Hoxby (2002) noted that “students’ college decision-making behavior reveal[s] a similar pattern, with an increasing percentage of students applying to more geographically distant colleges and universities”. Subsequently, just as market companies do, institutions have notably increased their interest in marketing policies as they now compete against each other in the recruitment of international students. As a result, their webpages’ layout and content are now given thorough attention as they are crucial when it comes to advertising universities’ products and services.

Since the end of the 1990s, universities around the world have modified and improved the appearance and infrastructure of their webpages. Following Zhang and O'Halloran (2013: 468) we learn, for instance, that Harvard University updated “its homepage in 2008, Cambridge University in 2008, Sydney University in 2009, and Peking University in 2009”. The reasons for these overhauls on both appearance and content are not just a response to the progression of technology, but also to a gradual alignment of our society with the values of the changing social context, the new capitalism (see chapter 2).
The influence of market competition on higher education practices has led to subtle shifts in the function of universities’ websites. If their previous role was to provide access to concrete information about educational resources, now they are used to promote universities “as a desired environment for students to obtain a degree as the end result, removed from actual processes of learning, the rewards of hard study and the mentorship of scholars” (Zhang and O’Halloran, 2013: 469). Thus, not only do websites provide access to university resources such as the library, departments, and research centres, but they also construct an intimate relationship with the university’s potential consumers, students. In this sense, O’Halloran et al. (2013) point out that advertising is about ‘selling’ the notion of self-fulfilment as part of an individual’s constructed identity and lifestyle”. This particular trait can be found in the discourse of universities, which provide information more focused on students’ lifestyle, rather than on the “educational product” (i.e. a degree) they offer.

Owing to its new compulsory function, a university website’s layout is not a mere result of graphic, stylistic and aesthetic criteria. On the contrary, there is rigorous study of textual, visual and design features behind its content, structure and arrangement, as elements such as colours, pictures and choice of words, to name but three, have their reason of être and their respective effect on the receiver.

4.2. Universities’ websites

For Kress and van Leeuwen (2002: 351), “color as a semiotic resource is increasingly used by corporations and universities to represent their unique identities”. Hence, we tend to associate certain colours to particular institutions after having browsed their webpages where they relentlessly appear. Moreover, colours are used “to elicit emotional reactions to organizational documents” (Richards and David, 2005, p. 40) as they create connections in the viewer’s mind between visual design and the organization.

However, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 30) state that “other than denoting identity, color also represents, projects, enables or constructs social relations”. For example, they indicate that blue creates an impersonal relationship with readers due to its general role of indicating the hyperlink status of the text. Yet, orange colours are more orientated to
the construction of interpersonal meaning and the creation of a welcome feeling for visitors. Bright colours might be strategically used to direct the attention of potential students to particular parts of the website. Red, for instance, tends to be used to highlight points of conflict as well as important issues.

With regards to images, which have the function of supporting the information given, universities are more prone to select those portraying “groups of students from different nationalities or ethnicities with smiling faces” (Zhang and O'Halloran, 2013: 478). By choosing this type of pictures over those displaying teaching and research carried out on the campus, students perceive the university’s global orientation which nowadays seems to be more important than its mission to excel in teaching, research, human development and knowledge. At this point, it is worth mentioning about the viewer’s feeling of being directly addressed, which is created by pictures portraying people who look straight to the camera. This technique is used with the aim of creating a more personal relationship with students browsing the website.

As Askehave (2007: 739) states, “the 'product' on offer is not simply (or perhaps not at all) courses and study programs but all the 'extras', that is, an exciting experience coupled with a friendly atmosphere, beautiful surroundings, and campus (support) facilities”. Thus, current higher educational institutions focus their efforts on portraying a very attractive university lifestyle which might enhance the students’ feeling of self-fulfilment.

Most of the information provided in higher educational institutions’ websites is related to students’ future life at the new university and city. Since economy is the primary concern of students, “the admissions office, business office, and students’ aid office have grown in importance on every campus” (Mitra, 2009: 139). Also, loans offered by the same university or external entities have notably increased as an overall share of the student aid package.

It cannot be ignored that links to social media such as Facebook and Twitter are a must nowadays. Universities provide them on their homepages so as to “facilitate the building of dialogic public relationship with the users” (McAllister, 2012). In this way, students are more likely to receive updated information from the university, to increase their willingness to be part of it and to enrol for a course.
Another element of the discourse of advertising which may have an impact on universities websites is *scientification*. Bloor and Bloor (2007: 148) affirm that “a common strategy in advertising is to attribute scientific authenticity to the product” and so it is in universities’ publicity. As a result, the new tendency is to resort to other institutions or important figures when references are needed. Besides, “student and staff testimonials are increasingly used to attract potential students in admission campaigns” (Teo, 2007 as cited in Zhang and O’Halloran, 2013: 469).

The previous main characteristics of the content and layout of universities’ homepages (strategic colours, appealing images, emphasis on university lifestyle, links to social media and testimonials as a means of *scientification*) are nothing but illustrators of the marketization of higher education’s discourse. The urgent need for institutions to adapt to the current context of the new capitalism leaves evidences along the way. Webpages are a materialisation of one of these signs, as they are now designed to provide information about the global orientation of the university rather than to present its progression in teaching and research, which used to be primary values not long ago. Websites are also used to provide evidence of the university’s “productivity”. That is to say, percentages of the number of students who graduate in the four-year period as well as efficiency rates are, to name but two, material evidences to prove the university’s output. This suggests that the marketisation of higher education does not only affect universities’ advertising, but the whole idea of education. Nowadays institutions’ main concern is “productivity” as well as students’ satisfaction, both parameters imported from the industry and business sectors.

In order to analyse the impact of the new capitalism on universities’ discourse, I consider that, Critical Discourse Analysis can be the most appropriate method because, as Zhang and O’Halloran (2013: 471) point out, “adopting a CDA approach to investigate homepages allows us to explore the social norms and structures which underpin how homepages are constructed, and the role of homepage discourse in reinforcing those norms and structures”.
Chapter 5. A critical perspective on the analysis of discourse

Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) is considered as a suitable method of analysis for this case study because it extends “beyond the description of discourse to an explanation of the social factors which account for the production of discourse itself” (van Dijk, 1993). In this project, CDA is considered to provide a critical perspective on the analysis of universities’ discourse and to uncover the bidirectional influence between society –in this particular case, the new capitalism (see chapter 2)– and discourse –language used on universities’ websites–. However, before proceeding with the analysis, it is important to introduce the main tenets of CDA.

5.1. Towards a definition of CDA

CDA is a discipline in the area of applied linguistics which can be defined as a “problem-oriented social research” (Hidalgo, 2011: 1) which focuses on “all types of semiotic artefacts, linguistic and non-linguistic” (Van Dijk, 1997: 28). Nonetheless, it must be noted that language is usually a significant element in CDA, because it is seen as a powerful ideological instrument, “a form of social practice” (Hodge and Kress: 1988) or, in Machin and Mayr’s words (2012: 4), “a means of social construction [which] both shapes and is shaped by society”. Thus, what distinguishes CDA from other types of analyses of discourse is that it is not so much interested in language use itself, but in “social and ideological functions of language in producing, reproducing or changing social structures [i.e. representations of the world], relations and identities” (Simpson and Mayr, 2010: 50).

At this point, it is necessary to clarify the notions critical and discourse since, as it has been noted, both concepts are intrinsic to the definition of CDA. Concerning the former, it is important to resolve misconceptions associated to the term critical. Hidalgo (2011: 5) explains that “for some, to be critical might imply to be judgemental” whilst Fairclough et al. (2011: 358) use the term to refer to “rational thinking to question arguments or prevailing ideas”. CDA focuses on linguistic features in order to critically expose “connections between language, power and ideology that are hidden from people” (Fairclough, 1989: 5). Therefore, the term critical would imply “denaturalising
the language to reveal the kinds of ideas, absences and taken-for-granted assumptions in
texts” (Machin and Mayr, 2012: 5).

As for the second term, *discourse*, its complexity resides on its multiplicity of
meanings. Based on Bloor and Bloor’s classification (2007: 6-7), six types of senses of
the term *discourse* could be distinguished:

1. Discourse as the highest unit of linguistic description (i.e.: phonemes <
morphemes < words < phrases < clauses < sentences < texts < discourses).
2. Discourse as language usage, for example a speech.
3. Discourse as spoken interaction only.
4. Discourse as verbal and non-verbal human interaction.
5. Discourse as communication expected in a specific context with a specific
   register, for instance the discourse of law.
6. Discourse as the whole communicative event, i.e. the communicative situation
together with its greater context such as the historical or social framework.

After the explanation of the two fundamental terms in CDA, it would be appropriate to
introduce CDA’s main principles outlined by Norman Fairclough and Ruth Wodak in a

1. CDA addresses social problems: raising awareness of social problems and
   injustices created in discourse is critical analysts’ main task.
2. Power relations are discursive: discourse hides power relations as they are
   expressed, for instance, through the particular choice of words.
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture: “(…) every instance of language use
   makes its own small contribution to reproducing and/or transforming society and
   culture (…)” (Fairclough *et al.*, 2011: 370)
4. Discourse does ideological work: CDA attempts to raise awareness of the subtle
   way in which discourse constructs social beliefs and attitudes.
5. Discourse is intertextual/historical: discourse must always be understood with
   reference to its historical and cultural background. Even intertextuality –the set
   of relations among different texts– should be considered.
6. The link between text and society is indirect or “mediated”: orders of discourse (structured sets of discursive practices associated with particular social domains) show the connection between sociocultural processes and textual properties.

7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory: CDA goes beyond a linguistic description and thus intends an interpretation of the relationship between discourse, text and social processes.

8. Discourse is a form of social action: due to their social commitment, not only do critical analysts uncover social injustices hidden in discourse but they also attempt to give guidelines to produce a discourse free of unfair inequalities.

At this point, there seems to be no doubt that CDA’s goal perfectly fits with the aim of this particular case study: to unveil the power of language. CDA also studies the relationship between language and society, just as this project which explores the connection between the universities’ discourse and the new capitalism. The main objective of this branch in the field of linguistics together with its “share[d] interest with disciplines that study social groups and social structures (…), human cognition and behaviour” (Bloor and Bloor, 2007: 2) are the perfect ingredients which make CDA a suitable method for analysis in the present study on the marketization of universities.

5.2. Critical approaches

One of the peculiarities of CDA is that it is not homogeneous. On the contrary, this method of discourse analysis offers a wide variety of critical approaches which, regardless of their individual traits and methods, share a common interest: to examine the linguistic features of discourse in order to understand why and how they are produced as well as to identify their possible ideological consequences.

As Bloor and Bloor (2007: 4) state, “it is difficult to define the boundaries of CDA as a discipline” not only due to the broad variety of possible approaches but also because of its wide-ranging scope. Certainly, any social issue can be a reason for concern in CDA as long as discourse plays a relevant role in it.

Regardless of the type of social problem examined, the linguistic analysis which is at the centre of CDA should be complemented by a historical, cultural, socio-economic,
philosophical, logical, psychological or even neurological approach, according to the nature of the object of analysis. According to Fairclough et al. (2011: 364-362), the three principal models in CDA are the sociocognitive approach, the discourse-historical approach and the dialectical-relational approach.

5.2.1. Sociocognitive approach

The most representative personality in the sociocognitive approach to CDA is Teun van Dijk. The author himself describes the task of this particular approach, which is interested in the study of cognition, and specifically, in the analysis of the sociocognitive aspect of discourse. In other words, this approach to CDA is focused on the relations between mind, discursive interaction and society. Van Dijk (2002: 65) declares that the three “are both mental and social phenomena” and, therefore, the socio-cognitive theory attempts to explain “how social structures may affect (and be affected by) discourse structures via a theory of social cognition” (van Dijk, 2002: 79).

In any communicative event, language users need to produce and/or understand discourse in a social environment. In both the production and comprehension of discourse, cognition, i.e. “the set of functions of the mind, such as thought, perception and representation”, plays a key role. Hence, apart from the textual description (grammar, style, rhetoric, semiotics…), the sociocognitive approach also scrutinises the mental “‘definition’ of the situation that controls the adequate adaptation of discourse production and comprehension to the social environment” (van Dijk, 2002: 66).

5.2.2. Discourse-historical approach

If the most emblematic figure associated to the sociocognitive approach is undoubtedly Teun van Dijk, Ruth Wodak is the key representative in the discourse-historical approach. As a matter of fact, it was Wodak together with some scholars in Vienna and the Frankfurt School who developed the model.

This approach studies the connection between discourse and the historical context. Its distinctive feature “is its attempt to integrate systematically all available background
information in the analysis and interpretation of the many layers of a written or spoken text, specifically taking into account (...) context” (Wodak and Meyer, 2009). Therefore, this approach constantly moves back and forth between discourse and empirical data as both elements need to be considered in the analysis.

The major goal of this critical model is its practical application as it attempts to denounce problems created by discourse throughout history, which distinguishes from other models. According to Fairclough et al. (2011: 364), the discourse-historical approach “is particularly associated with large programmes of research in interdisciplinary research teams focusing on sexism, antisemitism and racism”.

5.2.3. Dialectical-relational approach

The third main approach to CDA is the dialectical-relational approach. It shares some similarities with the two previous approaches as it also considers the relationship between context and discourse. This model is associated to Norman Fairclough and attempts to enlighten “the socially transformative effects of discursive change” (Fairclough et al., 2011: 362) as well as the way discourse is affected by society. To put it simply, its main aim is to examine the discursive aspects of social transformation.

In order to understand the dialectical-relational approach, it is necessary to introduce the concept of social practices. As Bloor and Bloor (2007: 8) explain, “social practices are human behaviours which involve following certain socially established conventions within which the actors have some degree of individual freedom and opportunities for unique behaviour”. Business meetings, religious service and birthday parties would be, as the authors suggest, some instances of social practices.

There are five elements which create any type of social practice: action, social relations, participants, the material world and discourse. The relationship between these elements is dialectical, i.e. each element needs the others to create a social practice. Fairclough’s approach is also relational because, contrary to traditional social science which tended to analyse things in themselves, the dialectical-relational model follows structuralism, as it concentrates on the relationship between things. In particular, Fairclough’s approach studies the relationship between text, discourse and social practice.
5.3. The methodology in CDA

Since the main goal of this project is to uncover the current process of the marketization of universities, the model which best fits with the methodology is Fairclough’s dialectical-relational approach, as it examines the relationship between language, discourse and society. The other two focus on the connections between discourse and mind and discourse and the historical approach respectively, which is not the goal for the particular case study included in Chapter 6.

Fairclough understood the nature of discourse as the result of three different types of practice: social, discursive and textual. In other words, discourse has a social level (discourse is shaped by and influences social structures and activities), a discursive level (discourse is both produced and interpreted in particular situations) and a textual level (discourse is constructed through semantic features).

The social practice level is of great significance as “it is never possible to read meaning directly off the verbal and visual textual signs” (Janks, 1997: 331). Instead, it is necessary to resort to the outer frame of discourse, i.e. its social dimension, which includes both the historical and social context, in order to interpret its real meaning. The analysis of this outer dimension aims to identify the nature of the social practice in which discourse takes place in order to understand the text’s representation of the world as well as the influence of context on this representation.

In order to recognise this relation, it is necessary to locate the historical, social and cultural framework in which the text is produced. The identification of the characters represented together with the relation of power among them can also reflect the degree of influence which context has over discourse. Likewise, the predominant ideology –a set of shared beliefs and customs– has a notable impact on the goal as well as on the strategy followed to reach it.

The discursive practice level of analysis is also essential because it is an intermediate level which mediates between the text itself and its social context. In fact, it is at this level where the influence of context over participants’ production and interpretation of a text is studied. The analysis focuses upon the question of “which discursive practices are being drawn upon and in what combinations” (Fairclough, 1993: 138). Therefore, the concept of interdiscursivity is crucial as it “highlights the normal heterogeneity of
texts in being constituted by combinations of diverse genres and discourses” (Fairclough, 1993: 138).

Interdiscursive relations (i.e. relations between genres, discourses and styles) require consideration, since the discourse type –genre – determines and shapes the text and, consequently, the particular way of acting and interacting linguistically. As Fairclough (2003: 34) claimed, it should be pointed out that “a text may not be 'in' a single genre, it may 'mix' or hybridize genres” as various discourses and styles can be combined. Genre hybridity analysis can give information about the target audience to which the text is directed as well as its author. Besides, the discourse type will also be in accordance with the text’s intention and nature.

Once the genre of discourse has been identified, it is possible to proceed to the textual practice level, since genre has a great power on important aspects of texts. For instance, genre influences the character of the semantic and grammatical relations, the type of ‘exchange’, speech functions –statement, offer or demand– and mood –declarative, interrogative or imperative– (Adapted from Fairclough, 2003). It is important, therefore, to identify the way a text represents the world and its social identities.

From the wide variety of models for language description, Systemic Functional Linguistics (henceforth SFL) is for Fairclough’s approach to CDA the most influential model to identify the text’s representation of reality. Michael Halliday’s model is a suitable tool for the critical analysis of the textual practice of discourse since it uses linguistic terms to explain the social impact of language. Some of SFL’s main concerns which are of special interest for this case study are modality (modal verbs and their equivalents), choice of words, pronouns, transitivity (the grammatical relationship between participants of a clause with regards to their syntactic function). The notions of politeness and politeness strategies (tactics to protect participants’ positive face –public image– or negative face –freedom from imposition–) are also very important in Fairclough’s approach to CDA. However, these are terms from the field of pragmatics.

As announced in the introduction, this project includes a final chapter with an analysis of two universities’ websites. The reason for the inclusion of this brief case study is to put into practice the theoretical method of CDA and use it to study the relationship between the discourses of two universities and their social context from a critical
perspective. Following Fairclough (1992) and Cots (2006), the analysis is based on a series of questions grouped into three sets, each of them corresponding to the three levels of practice considered by Fairclough: social, discursive and textual. Even though there are several other factors to be taken into account, only the most relevant questions have been selected in order to carry out this specific study. Although “these three dimensions of analysis will inevitably overlap in practice” (Fairclough, 1992: 231), they are commented separately in order to facilitate the systematic analysis. Thus, in the first place, the social practice is considered, for which the new capitalism becomes an important referent. Secondly, the analysis focuses on the discourse practice which, in this particular case, refers to aspects involved in the production and reception of text. Finally, the textual dimension involves an analysis of the language used.
Chapter 6. A sample comparative analysis: UdL and CU

This sample comparative analysis is aimed to study the linguistic features of the respective websites of the universities of Lleida and Cardiff. This examination is intended to (a) show the persuasive strategies employed by the two institutions in their attempt to attract students, and (b) demonstrate that language reflects society and, in this particular case, a society imbued with a capitalist ideology.

In order to understand the strong bond between the universities’ discourse and the new capitalism, it is necessary to provide a general view on the social and discursive practice before focusing on the actual text of UdL and CU websites. Three sets of questions (adopted from Fairclough, 1992, and Cots, 2006) corresponding to the social, discursive and the textual practices will be the guide for this sample comparative analysis.

**Social practice:**

a. In what type of social situation is the text produced?

b. What social identities are represented in the text?

c. What is the relationship between them?

d. What is/are the social goal(s) of the author(s)?

**Discursive practice:**

a. Considering its situation of use, how conventional is the text?

b. Does it remind of other texts?

c. Who are the producer(s) and the intended receiver(s)?

d. Is the text sincere or manipulative?

**Textual practice:**

a. Are any of the participants in more control of the construction of the text?

b. How are ideas represented? Is the author’s attitude expressed?

c. Which syntactic structures and lexical choices affect the meaning of the text?

d. Are there any rules of politeness followed?

In order to give an answer to the aforementioned questions, the data used for the analysis correspond to the following sections of the universities’ respective websites:
the “Homepage” (Appendix 1), the “Presentation” (Appendix 2), “The City” (Appendix 3), “International Students” (Appendix 4) and “Language” (Appendix 5). This selection is based on the works of Gatfield (1997) and Gray et al. (2003) described in Askehave’s research (2007), which revealed the most important factors to which students pay particular attention for their choice of university. Through the examination of verbal strategies used, I will be able to either confirm or refute my initial hypothesis that CU uses more effective marketing strategies than the UdL, if we take into account their websites.

6.1. Analysing social practice

The analysis of the social practice presented by the communicative situation between the university and the potential students focuses in the first place on how the two universities represent their social and cultural context in their websites. Cardiff is presented as a city “in south Wales, c. 200 miles from London” (Appendix 3), which highlights its proximity to the capital city of the UK which is known worldwide. The two official languages in Wales are English and Welsh. However, not all Welsh people can speak the latter. As it can be seen in “The City” page (Appendix 3), there is a recurring reference to the UK when presenting the city, suggesting that Cardiff is part of Britain as well as of Wales. This association is very effective, as the UK is known internationally, but not Wales. The characterisation of Cardiff as a British city is reinforced by the three main predominating colours on the website: red, blue and white, the colours of the British flag.

With reference to Lleida, the city is presented as close to the mountain, the coast, the countryside and important cities such as Barcelona. Its strategic location is constantly highlighted in “The City” page (Appendix 3) in order to add value to the town and make it sound as an interesting place, especially after saying how close it is to the internationally known city of Barcelona. Similarly to Cardiff, Lleida has two official languages, Catalan and Spanish. The “Language” page emphasises that “Catalan people can speak both Catalan and Spanish” (Appendix 5). Nonetheless, there seems to be a clearer pro-Catalan attitude on the UdL website than there was for Welsh in CU. Thus, in “The City” page (Appendix 3), Catalonia is mentioned six times whereas Spain
appears only twice. What is more, Spain is not directly mentioned as the country in which Lleida is, but only as a way of comparing the city to others from the peninsula. This pro-Catalan attitude is also construed by the colours chosen for the webpage: purple, black and white, being the former very similar to Lleida’s maroon flag. Yet, the choice of colour is not as effective as CU’s selection because Lleida is not an internationally-known city.

As regards the representation of social identities, the universities construct two main identities in their websites: the university and young students. Just by looking at the pictures throughout the different pages analysed, CU seems to address any student regardless of their nationality since Asian, African and European teenagers appear together. A world map (Appendixes 2 and 4) also suggests the multiculturalism of the university. UdL’s internationality is not suggested by the pictures, but by the 52 languages into which the viewer can translate the website. We should notice, however, that only the main headings are translated, but not the whole text. Since Spanish and Catalan are not common second languages overseas, English is the only foreign language in which the website is fully translated. CU merely presents its content in English and Welsh, as the former is considered a lingua franca and the latter is also an official language in Wales.

The “International Students” page (Appendix 4) becomes a turning point in the relationship established between the university and its potential students-clients. CU could be compared to poetry whilst the UdL could be associated to prose. This metaphor illustrates the fact that the former emphasises an emotional response whereas the latter emphasises information. CU presents pictures with people of different races, a short video clip with international students explaining their reasons for choosing CU, specific information according for students from different countries, a prospectus to download, several links and several means of contacting the university (telephone number, Twitter, Facebook, email, Skype or Google+ among others). By contrast, UdL’s pages merely present links with different types of information as well as various contact details at the bottom. It is only by the font size that a distinction can be made between headings and links. The lack of images and video clips, together with the textual monotony, contribute to the website’s lack of emotion and personal identification. CU seems to create a more personal bond with the potential student as well as an emotional attraction. As a result, viewers might get a better impression of the
website since they can feel they are treated individually. Contrary to CU, the UdL establishes a less personal and more informative link with the readers, which may not be so appealing for the young people. Pronouns notably reinforce the relationship created by universities’ discourse, as CU uses *you* to talk about students, which sounds more personal, while UdL refers to them as *they*, which creates distance.

At this point, it is significant to draw our attention to the different representation which CU and UdL make of international students. As it can be seen in the “International Students” pages (Appendix 4), CU describes as “international” any person who is not a resident in the UK. On the other hand, UdL distinguishes among six types of international students: Erasmus, UdL’s Mobility Programme, Ciência Sem Fronteiras-Spain, Visiting students, Regular students and MSc European Forestry. Practical as it may seem, this classification might appear as very complex for prospective students and forces them to adopt an identity (which they may find hard to do at this stage) before knowing much about the university. Conversely, Cardiff seems to treat all students equally by calling students with different national backgrounds *international students*.

6.2. Analysing discursive practice

The notable improvement of current technology explains the fact that the use by universities of online means of communication is not the least bit surprising. Nonetheless, since there are infinite numbers of websites, universities need to use effective appealing strategies to attract potential customers. Striking pictures, pleasant colours, short texts with a standard language, a clear menu and accessible ways of contact are some of the key elements that a conventional website needs in order to give a good impression and maintain the reader’s attention. If one takes these elements as a reference, it could be said that CU has a fairly attractive website, which uses conventional effective resources to increase accessibility. On the other hand, UdL’s website strikes the reader for the lack of images in the “International Students” and “Language” pages (Appendixes 4 and 5) as well as the very long texts in the “Presentation” and “The City” pages (Appendixes 2 and 3). These characteristics do not contribute to the user-friendliness of the website.
A peculiarity shared by the two universities is the degree of interdiscursivity of their respective discourses. Both texts are a result of a mixture of genres. CU articulates a variety of discourses as its layout resembles, in particular, a magazine or an electronic newspaper with elements such as images, simple headlines and emphasised key words. At first sight, it seems that CU provides information just as journals do. Nevertheless, the use of imperatives, the personal pronoun you (see “International Students” in Appendix 4) and words with positive connotations (“The City” in Appendix 3) are characteristic elements of the discourse of advertising.

With respect to the UdL, even though the “Homepage” (Appendix 1) shares similarities with any electronic newspaper, the “International Students” page (Appendix 4) is plain, has no images, and merely presents links with information. “The City” page (Appendix 3) resembles the layout of a tourist guidebook, as it contains a considerable amount of text with a few pictures of places, but not people.

The recurrent use of credible images, videos and references to other people or institutions’ opinion about the university in CU’s “Homepage”, “Presentation” and “The City” (Appendixes 1, 2 and 3) make the university appear sincere. Just as advertisers do, these elements are used to attribute credibility to the marketable product, in this case, higher education. In spite of the few images shown on the website, UdL does not resort to external factors to prove the authenticity of its discourse. This may result in a less credible attitude on the reader.

6.3. Analysing textual practice

Without any doubt, the participant in control of the construction of the website is the university. An example of the power that the university may have in defining the relationship with the prospective students can be the classification that UdL makes in the “International Students” page (Appendix 4). They are forced to classify themselves according to one of the labels proposed for the types of international students. Another example is CU’s emphasis on Cardiff’s inexpensive living cost in “The City” page (Appendix 3), in which it is assumed that students look for an affordable city as one of their top priorities. CU present students as people who consider an affordable university as the most appropriate place to study.
Nonetheless, since the fulfilment of the universities’ economic goal –to boost profits by attracting as many “clients” as possible– directly depends on the students’ decision, students also condition the construction of the text. Both CU and UdL take into account the interests of students, and point out in particular, all the fun and interest of the activities which can be done in their respective cities (Appendix 3). This is what Askehave (2007: 725) defines as the new discourse of universities representing themselves “as a provider of innovative goods and services which then meets the demands of its customers and clients”.

At no time do CU and UdL declare that their main goal is to convince international students to attend the institution. Quite the opposite, they disguise it as an altruistic goal of providing the best place for student’s higher studies, as it can be seen in the “Presentation” page (Appendix 2) that CU claims that they “aim to educate (…) students to the highest standard and support them through the transition to independent learning”. Likewise, the UdL declares that its main aim “is the education of its students” (Appendix 2).

The most recurrent advertising tactics used by CU what Goatly (2000: 189 and 195) called “Acquiring qualities” and “Buying a lifestyle” strategies. The former strategy makes the customer believe that “any positive attribute of the product is supposed to transfer itself to the possessor” (Goatly, 2000: 190). Thus, CU makes students believe that they will gain right-thinking and independent learning (Appendixes 1 and 2). The latter strategy gives the impression that “by buying the product [one is] adopting a certain 'lifestyle' or 'way of life'” (Goatly, 2000: 195). Hence, it seems that students’ lifestyle will include an “inexpensive location”, “a vibrant city”, a “relaxed atmosphere”, “youthful heritage” and “super-smart city bars and venues” (Appendix 3) in case they enrol at CU.

The UdL also resorts to the “Buying a lifestyle” strategy, especially when it comes to describing the city. Therefore, students get the impression that if they study in this Catalan institution, they will have plenty of activities to do: “exploring the region”, “skiing, adventure sports, fishing, walking along the banks of the Segre [and] admiring the landscapes” among others (Appendix 3). Yet, the UdL uses a tactic which is not used by CU: “Buying as problem solving”. As it can be appreciated in the “Presentation” page (Appendix 2), the UdL presents itself in possession of countless
services like libraries, computer rooms, Wi-Fi technology, Sports Services and dining rooms. Therefore, readers get the impression that “the way to solve problems is by buying a product” (Goatly, 2000: 188). In this case, the possible difficulties with university life and studies will be solved by attending the UdL.

The presentation of a wide variety of services and activities, which constitute the ingredients of a university lifestyle, is not trivial in the slightest. On the contrary, such a great emphasis on products and services has displaced knowledge and values, the traditional concerns of higher educational institutions. As a result, higher education has been converted into a marketable product. This can explain the fact that the word education only appears once the webpages analysed. The term education has been superseded by words of the field of business such as service, which appears 17 times throughout the UdL’s pages, provide, which is repeated 5 times on UdL’s pages and 3 times on CU’s. Economic terms appear several times in CU’s website (affordable, budget, costs, funding and fee). Hence, there seems to be no doubt that the “educational market” has a strong influence on higher education institutions’ discourse.

The nature of the lexical repertoire chosen for the construction of the universities’ discourse is also very interesting. Most of the adjectives used in CU’s website to describe both the institution and the city have sheer positive connotations. For instance, leading, confident, forward-looking and excellent are used to describe CU (Appendixes 1 and 2). Outstanding, thriving and widely recognised are some of the adjectives used to label the city of Cardiff (Appendix 3). With regards to nouns, words such as collaborations, quality, achievements, successes and distinctions used in the “Presentation” page (Appendix 2) denote a positive meaning. The same occurs in “The City” page (Appendix 3), in which advantages, capital city and epitome highlight the city’s positive side.

In the same line, the UdL also chooses a positive lexical repertoire to describe the institution and its location. The adjectives “lively, ever-improving educational institution” and “enthusiastic promoter” used in the “Presentation” page (Appendix 2) together with “privileged strategic position”, “incomparable natural laboratory” and “pleasant academic atmosphere”, used in “The City” page (Appendix 3), are good examples of the university’s will to cause a good impression on their website visitors. Similarly, nouns such as “discounts in shops”, “many other advantages”, “the ability to
think for themselves” (“Presentation”, appendix 2), “the right to express themselves” and “the region’s most popular attractions” (“The City”, appendix 3) convey a positive feeling to potential students-customers. It should be remarked that both institutions avoid mentioning any of their drawbacks and omit any term with negative connotations.

Not only does the lexical choice have a significant impact on the meaning of the text, but also syntactic structures. For this reason, transitivity (Appendix 6) has been thoroughly analysed in “Presentation” and “The City” pages (Appendixes 2 and 3) as it determines the syntactic function carried out by each of the two social identities. In CU’s pages, the university is the Actor of all the material processes, i.e. verbs of actions, whereas students do not perform any. This difference denotes that CU feels responsible for students’ welfare and therefore the university does things for them, so they do not need to take much action. With reference to the 17 relational processes, i.e. verbs of existence and states, CU is the Carrier of all the Attributes. Such a large amount of relational processes suggest that all the Attributes associated to CU are unalterable. The verbs be and have are used to assign permanent positive qualities to the university. Consequently, the website visitor gets the impression that the 17 attributes are part of the institution’s existence and that they guarantee that CU’s qualities will not change.

As for the UdL, the number of material and relational processes is balanced, as there are 14 material processes and 15 relational processes represented through verbs. The university is the Actor of 9 material actions whereas students perform 5 of them. The similar numbers give the impression to students that they are assigned a more active or prominent role than in CU. Concerning the 15 relational processes, the Catalan institution is the Carrier of 11 of them, which means that students only possess 4 of the Attributes mentioned. The effect is the same as in CU, because website visitors may think that the university’s qualities are long-lasting. Furthermore, students will also believe that the qualities assigned to them will be certainly guaranteed.

Finally, politeness is another important persuasive strategy to focus on. CU’s “Language” page (Appendix 5) presents some instances of Face Threatening Acts (FTA) for students, i.e. utterances which may threaten the students’ self-image. Modal verbs of obligation such as need and must may trigger a negative response, as they may be interpreted as directing the addressee’s actions. Thus, CU mitigates each FTA
through the use of politeness strategies. For example, the institution uses positive politeness to highlight the advantages for students ("That will enable them to benefit fully from their course of study.") as well as negative politeness to stress their freedom to choose by avoiding imposition ("If you would like to improve your English before starting your course (...)""). Conversely, the UdL completely avoids any type of FTA when the tuition languages are presented (Appendix 5). The Catalan institution only attempts to save the positive and the negative face of students by protecting their public image ("The Language Service tries to help students" (…)) and their freedom from imposition ("students have the right to use the language they prefer").

In short, the persuasive linguistic devices in CU and the UdL websites reflect their attempt to adapt to the current social context dominated by the new capitalist market economy with the use of marketing strategies to recruit international students and thus increase their profits. Yet, even though they have some strategies in common, they differ in effectiveness in relation to international student recruitment. CU seems to use persuasive linguistic strategies more effectively than UdL, as it (a) creates a more personal bond with students, (b) presents a clear layout, (c) provides credibility through pictures and testimonials, and (d) portrays the university as a helper for students.
Chapter 7. Conclusions and implications

The central aim of this project was to explore the current influence of the dominant market economy on the discourse of higher educational institutions and, as a last stage, attempt a sample analysis of the discourse of two specific universities by applying a model from Critical Discourse Analysis. The project has essentially involved three steps: (a) an analysis of the penetration of marketisation in present-day society, (b) an analysis of the connection between persuasion, marketization and higher education, and (c) an exploration, including a practical application, of the method of CDA.

The study has shown how universities adopt the discourse of advertising in order to recruit international students and increase their profits. The study of the new capitalism (chapter 2) has been crucial to understand the social context of the marketization of universities. As a result of the privatisation of higher education, the bygone role of universities as creators of social knowledge has been superseded by their new role as service providers. Hence, higher education has become a marketable product and students are now given the status of “customers”.

Persuasion is an unceasing activity in our daily routine, as we humans have the gut instinct to lead, direct and thus persuade others. Common as it may be, the persuasive discourse can be used strategically to significantly influence people. Therefore, the description of persuasive linguistic strategies in chapter 3 has been crucial to understand the way language can be used to manipulate. Advertisers take advantage of the powerful impact that language can have on people to create their advertising campaigns. Similarly, since universities have now become more competitive due to their closeness to business and industry sectors, they resort to marketing strategies when it comes to producing a discourse to attract their customers, students.

The new discourse which universities have adopted after the marketization of higher educational institutions is materialised in their websites (chapter 4). Many institutions have changed the content and layout of their homepages in an attempt to attract as many students as possible and align with the new values of the current capitalist society. This overhaul has given websites the new function of promoting universities rather than merely providing information about educational resources.
Since language has been, and still is, a key tool for universities to advertise themselves, CDA (chapter 5), in particular Fairclough’s dialectical-relational approach, has been the theoretical instrument chosen to critically analyse the social impact of the new capitalism on the universities’ discourse. Its suitability as a method for this study resides in its main goal of examining the relationship between language, discourse and society.

UdL and CU’s webpages are two clear instances of higher educational institutions’ discourse which has been influenced by the new capitalism. Since the universities’ choice of certain linguistic forms is a reflection of the discourse that they communicate, the semantic and grammatical resources (textual practice) together with the social and cultural context (social practice) and the communicative tools and situation (discursive practice) of CU and UdL’s webpages have been studied in the light of CDA (chapter 6). The results of the analysis of different webpages from each university can confirm the initial hypothesis that CU uses more effective marketing strategies on its website that the UdL and that the former adapts more effectively to the current capitalist society.

Results show that even though both universities represent themselves as a place close to a well-known city, CU constantly reflects its British feeling whereas UdL presents a pro-Catalan attitude. CU’s representation is likely to be more effective than UdL’s, as the UK is known internationally, but not Catalonia. Apart from their official languages, both institutions present their webpages in English, an effective decision to reach students from any country considering that it is a lingua franca.

The universities’ representation of international students differs because CU uses the same term to define all foreign students whilst UdL classifies them into six types. The UdL’s classification might be seen as introducing unnecessary complexity right from the beginning and forcing student to adopt an identity. Besides, UdL’s frequent reference to prospective international students with the pronoun they creates a distant relationship with the institution. On the other hand, CU’s choice of you reinforces its personal bond with the students, which is also created by the use of emotive resources such as pictures of smiling students and short positive statements. Conversely, UdL’s plain pages with long texts construe a more informative and detached link with the reader.
With regards to interdiscursivity, CU’s website resembles an electronic newspaper or magazine due to the amount of visual support and scarcity of text. Its discourse also recalls the genre of advertising because of the use of imperatives, the pronoun you and a very positive lexical repertoire. Moreover, it shares with the discourse of advertising the scientific credibility attributed to its marketable product—higher education—through pictures and quotations. On the contrary, owing to the excess of text and relative lack of images, UdL’s pages share more similarities with a tourist guidebook or an informative report on the university. Thus, UdL’s discourse may seem less credible than CU’s as there is not much evidence to prove the authenticity of its statements.

Scientification is not the only advertising strategy used by CU and UdL. The “Buying a lifestyle” tactic is also used by both universities as they put more emphasis on the university lifestyle rather than on education per se. CU also resorts to the “Acquiring qualities” strategy, which makes students believe that they will gain the positive attributes of the product the university sells, higher education. UdL uses the “Buying as problem solving” tactic by offering a wide variety of services that will help students with any problems they might face during their studies. Regardless of the particular advertising strategy chosen, both universities achieve to disguise their real goal as an altruistic intention of educating students. This is reinforced by transitivity, as both CU and UdL are the Actors of verbs which suggest the notion of “service” (help, educate, facilitate and cater). The universities are also the Carriers of most relational verbs (be and have), which makes the reader have the impression that the positive qualities attributed to the institutions are unchangeable facts, which creates a feeling of stability and reassurance on students.

The selection of adjectives and nouns to present CU and the UdL is also consistent with an advertising strategy which puts emphasis on the universities’ positive aspects at the same time as it overshadows the drawbacks. There is no doubt that universities are in control of the construction of the websites, as they decide the type of information provided. Notwithstanding, CU and UdL conceal their power through politeness strategies which make students believe that everything is done for their benefit and that they have the freedom to choose. This attitude is very common in advertising, making customers believe that not only are they always right, but that they also have rights.
In conclusion, this research project has shed some further light on the marketization of universities. The adoption of persuasive strategies used in the discourse of advertising seems to be transforming higher education into a marketable product and students into customers. Even though the sample comparative analysis of two universities is very small, it shows the reciprocal influence between society and language, in the sense that the discourse of the new capitalism and the new discourse of higher educational institutions reinforce each other.

Finally, I would like to present my final project as a basis for future critical studies on universities’ discourse since there is scarce awareness of the power of language and its bilateral influence on society. In fact, language is a reflection of humanity, of our culture and of ourselves because, as Martins (2004: 71) stated, “as we are, we speak. As we speak, we are”.
References


CU: Presentation. [Online]. Available at: http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/about/ [Accessed: 26 May 2014]


Higher education as a marketable product

Appendix 1: Cardiff University - Homepage

http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/
Higher education as a marketable product

Appendix 1: University of Lleida - Homepage

Un centenar de escolares participan en la ETSEA en la Universidad de los Niños y las Niñas

Los 'tletes' de las ciencias reciben sus premios en la UDL

A nivel nacional, Paula Goñi Guembe es pionera en la evaluación de la calidad de la educación superior.

A study by the universities of Lleida and London provides the keys to designing more innovative universities

Appendix 1: University of Lleida - Homepage

Welcome to UDL [{}]

The UDL combines its success as a long-standing university with a young and dynamic structure that is committed to high-quality teaching based on advanced methods.

Our offer includes training and research activities with the aim of transferring knowledge to the fields of engineering, computer science, the health and bio-sciences, the educational sciences, law, economics and the arts. To do so, the UDL is actively engaged in delivering high-quality courses in all these fields. [1]

Information for International Students

Mobility student: Erasmus Programmes, UAL, Mobility Programme, Erasmus plus France-UK, Erasmus and other exchange programmes.

Incoming students: foreign students outside the framework of the exchange programmes and the diploma agreements signed with other universities. Regular students: students who wish to obtain a degree from the University of Lleida.

University of Lleida

http://www.udl.cat/
Appendix 2: Cardiff University - Presentation

Founded in 1883, Cardiff is established as one of Britain’s leading universities.

Our research has global impact and is led by world-class staff who share their knowledge through teaching.

"The University is an ambitious and forward-looking as the city it’s located in, and has an excellent reputation for the quality of its teaching and research."

Guardian University Guide 2013

http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/about/
Appendix 2: University of Lleida - Presentation

Paula Goñi Guembe

Presentation

Higher education as a marketable product

Paula Goñi Guembe

Appendix 3: Cardiff University – The City

Cardiff & Wales

Cardiff is a thriving, beautiful city that's widely recognised as an outstanding place in which to live and study. It combines all the advantages of a compact, friendly and inexpensive location with the cultural and recreational facilities of a modern capital city.

About Cardiff

A vibrant city

Cardiff has something to offer.

Areas of Cardiff

Learn about the city areas of Cardiff for students.

Surprisingly affordable

Cardiff is one of the most affordable cities in the UK. Calculate your costs.

Where is Cardiff?

Find out more about Cardiff and its surrounding areas.

What the guides say

Cardiff is the epitome of cool, pulsing with a creative energy and relaxed atmosphere that complements its youthful heritage.

Cardiff is one of the best places to study in Britain. It is all that any architect dahder would desire.

Cardiff seems to have it all: grand civic architecture in a breezy waterside location, super smart city bars and venues just a short hop from lovely countryside.

To find out more about the city of Cardiff go to visitcardiff.com

Campus life

Location guide

Did you know?

Cardiff is one of the most affordable cities in the UK. See how far your money goes by using our interactive money guide tool.
Appendix 3: University of Lleida - The city

The city of Lleida

A City on a Human Scale

The city of Lleida, with 126,308 inhabitants, is the largest demographic, economic and cultural centre in Lleida Catalonia. The town, which may appear on some maps with the Spanish spelling “Lérida,” enjoys a privileged strategic position. It is only two hours drive to the old vine in the Pyrenees and an hour to the beaches of the Mediterranean. Lleida is located in the centre of a rich agricultural region, on the banks of the river Segre. It is a city with plenty of services, with a long tradition as a centre of trade and one of the highest incomes per capita in Spain.

Lleida is located 155 kilometers west of Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia. Catalonia, one of Spain’s 17 autonomous regions, is a modern, diverse region with its own identity, characterized by a rich history, culture, language and traditions. The city has a continental climate, with cold, dry winters and rainy hot summers. Temperatures usually range from below 0°C in the winter to over 35 °C in the summer.

The city has two official languages: Catalan and Spanish (also known as Castilian). Catalan is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. Catalan belongs to the same language family as Spanish, Italian, French and Portuguese. In Catalonia, Catalan is widely used in public life, the mass media, trade and business. Most Catalan people can speak both Catalan and Spanish.

Both official languages are respected at the universities in Catalonia. Teaching staff and students have the right to express themselves in the official language that they prefer. Lectures are taught in Catalan or in Spanish, depending on the lecturer, and students have the right to use the language they prefer. To find out the tuition language of particular courses, contact the Academic Coordinator in each faculty/department.

The region: between the Pyrenees and the Mediterranean

The variety of landscapes (the Pre-Pyrenees and Pyrenees, the Plain of Lleida and the semiarid area of the lowlands) constitute an inexhaustible natural laboratory, which invites all visitors to explore the region. Skiing, adventure sports, fishing, walking along the banks of the Segre, admiring the landscapes of the dry regions or visiting unique terrains such as the wetland zones of La Muga, Ulldecona and the Aran River are some of the region’s most popular attractions. The extensive olive groves and Mediterranean sandstone formations, which cover practically the whole of the southern part of the region, and the sandy desert, mostly found along the river courses of the Segre and the Tarsis, add further appeal to the area. The serra de Montsant is an area of huge natural beauty. The geological and paleontological interest of the area makes it an outstanding centre of scientific research.

Catalan Romanesque architecture is a common feature in the region with fine examples the Lleida, which has been declared a World Heritage Site, and the Aiguablava, Celler by the Monasteries of Valldoreix de les Monges, Santa Creu and Poblet (the Collectors Round) or the Son Vida, a notable example of the Gothic art in the city.

Higher education as a marketable product

Paula Goñi Guembe

The University in Lleida

The University of Lleida has a number of campuses distributed across the city. Each building and its surroundings form part of an international system that constitutes a functional unit, which integrate into the urban fabric. Each campus has been designed to create a pleasant atmosphere that is conducive to study, research and debate.

However, it can be said that the University of Lleida is located on one campus, with the School of Agriculture Engineering at one end and the Support Campus at the other, and the Health Sciences and Rectorate campus lying between the two. A former monastery on the Rombau area that was refurbished by the architects Miguel Espinach, Raimon M. Puyol and Tafí Ubeda, and now houses the Rectorate, general university services and the Faculty of Arts. It is opposite another of the city's outstanding buildings, the old maternity hospital, which was converted into the public library by the architect J. Llaurador.

The Campus of the School of Agricultural Engineering is on the Hierro-Lleida highway. It stands on eleven hectares of land formerly owned by Lleida Provincial Council that until a few years ago was open terrain.

The Health Sciences Campus is located on two sites. The first of these is the Aneu de Vilarnau University Hospital. It houses the health sciences teaching unit in a space handed over by the Ministry of Health and Social Security. The second is the Hospital on Santa María that houses the Faculty of Medicine, the University School of Nursing and the Saint Agapitum Library, which are all found in the formerly owned by Lleida Provincial Council.

The new university campus lies on the left bank of the River Segre between two of the city's bridges. Along the river are the campus library, which is a building that was designed by Cristian Sufi at the most recent anniversary of the General de Lleida, the Polytechnical School, the Faculty of Law and Economics, the Faculty of Educational Sciences, a university hall of residence, an academic management building and a block of classrooms.

Appendix 4: Cardiff University - International students

Higher education as a marketable product
Paula Goñi Guembe

http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/for/prospective/international/
Appendix 4: University of Lleida - International students

http://www.udl.cat/serveis/ori/estudiantat_estranger/eng.html
Higher education as a marketable product

Appendix 5: Cardiff University – Language

English language requirements

As overseas applicants whose first language is not English must have a standard level of English that will enable them to benefit fully from their course of study.

How do I prove my level of English?

You need to provide the results of any English language entry tests that you have taken. We also accept a variety of alternative tests of evidence of English language competence (see below).

The English language qualifications accepted by the University for entry and the required scores are listed below (please note that we have stated the minimum admission requirement, for some courses the admission tutors may ask for higher grades).

Students who have studied or worked through the medium of English may not be required to sit a formal test, if they can provide evidence, in the form of a reference letter which confirms their language ability.

Note English tests or examinations must have been taken no more than two years before the proposed date of entry to the University. Where the English tests or equivalent qualifications were taken over two years before the proposed date of entry, an applicant must be able to demonstrate that they have maintained or improved their English language competence and may be required to provide an up-to-date test result.

How can I improve my level of English?

If you would like to improve your English before starting your course, or are required as a condition of your offer to attend pre-sessional English courses, you can find out more information on our English language programmes pages.

Recognised English language qualifications

Below are the recognised English language qualifications required for standard undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

We prefer students to have English at GCSE grade C or above, but we accept any of the following.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Minimum Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IELTS (Academic Test)</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL iBT (Test of English)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge English (CE)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Test of English – A</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS, IBT, Trinity IELTS, Pearson tests of English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you sit IELTS, TOEFL IBT and Pearson tests on the same day, you will receive a glider certificate valid for the following dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IELTS</th>
<th>TOEFL IBT</th>
<th>Pearson Test of English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: In some cases, students may be asked to attend a pre-sessional English course instead of, or in addition to, an IELTS Language qualification.
Appendix 5: University of Lleida – Language

Higher education as a marketable product

Paula Goñi Guembe

Appendix 6: Transitivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTOR</th>
<th>PROCESS</th>
<th>AFFECTED</th>
<th>CARRIER</th>
<th>PROCESS</th>
<th>ATTRIBUTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>educate</td>
<td>our students</td>
<td>It (CU)</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>all that any right-thinking fresher could desire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>welcome</td>
<td>students</td>
<td>We (CU)</td>
<td>have</td>
<td>a range of residences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The university</td>
<td>helps</td>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>one of Britain’s leading universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>share</td>
<td>their knowledge</td>
<td>Our research</td>
<td>has</td>
<td>global impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>an international University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The university</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>confident and forward-looking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The university</td>
<td>has</td>
<td>an excellent reputation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our ambition</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>to be among the top 100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>a thriving and beautiful city</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That (Cardiff)</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>widely recognised</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It (Cardiff)</td>
<td>combines = has</td>
<td>all the advantages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>has</td>
<td>something to offer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>one of the most affordable cities in the UK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>c. 200 miles from London</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>the epitome</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>one of the best places to study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>seems to have</td>
<td>it all</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### UdL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTOR</th>
<th>PROCESS</th>
<th>AFFECTED</th>
<th>CARRIER</th>
<th>PROCESS</th>
<th>ATTRIBUTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>provide</td>
<td>high standards</td>
<td>The main aim</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>the education of its students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(students)</td>
<td>following</td>
<td>other (...) activities</td>
<td>Our objective</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>to ensure that students enjoy...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(students)</td>
<td>participating</td>
<td>in the UdL</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>make up = are</td>
<td>most of the UdL community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We (UdL)</td>
<td>offer</td>
<td>a wide range of services</td>
<td>The UdL</td>
<td>has</td>
<td>libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They (students)</td>
<td>access</td>
<td>these facilities</td>
<td>The UdL</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>an enthusiastic promoter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Cultural Services</td>
<td>organise</td>
<td>cultural activities</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>become</td>
<td>members of the clubs run</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our International Relations Office</td>
<td>facilitate</td>
<td>transfers</td>
<td>The UdL</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>an entrepreneurial university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>find</td>
<td>information</td>
<td>The city of Lleida</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>the largest...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>use</td>
<td>their UdL Student Card</td>
<td>It (Lleida)</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>only two hours’ drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The university</td>
<td>will provide</td>
<td>(UdL Student Card)</td>
<td>Lleida</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>located in the centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(UdL)</td>
<td>promotes</td>
<td>a comprehensive educational model</td>
<td>It (Lleida)</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>a city with plenty of services...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It (UdL)</td>
<td>caters for</td>
<td>the requirements</td>
<td>Lleida</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>located 155km west of BCN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(UdL)</td>
<td>ensure</td>
<td>all students have basic skills</td>
<td>The city</td>
<td>has</td>
<td>a continental climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The University</td>
<td>uses</td>
<td>innovative methodologies</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>have</td>
<td>the right to express</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>have</td>
<td>the right to use</td>
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