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Internationalization, quality and multilingualism in higher education: A troublesome relationship

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Internationalization today is a priority in Higher Education Institutions' (HEIs) strategic policies to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in higher education. The general argumentative thrust in key policy documents of the European Union on internationalization points to the integration of an international dimension into all service missions of HEIs, multilingualism being one of them. English, the first language of the international community, however, takes a controversial role in this constellation: It is recognized as the language facilitating efficient communication in internationalization but, at the same time, it is not valued as a language contributing to its broader mission to enable and celebrate diversity. Against this background, this chapter aims to review current discourses surrounding language in internationalization policy at a time when new policy developments are underway for the period following Europe 2020. Offering a second, critical, reading of key internationalization policy documents, the chapter analyses the potential ideological impact current policy-making has on the perception of multilingualism and, in particular, on English.

Keywords: Internationalization Policy, Language Policy and Planning, Language Ideologies, English in Higher Education



