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Title:

Discourses of ‘internationalisation’: a multimodal critical discourse analysis of university marketing webpages

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Abstract

This paper reports on an investigation of a Higher Education institution's webpages for prospective students. The study is used to illuminate how different conceptions of internationalisation are, or are not, represented to home and international students in university marketing. Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is used to investigate the webpages' discursive strategies through detailed analysis of linguistic features and images. The research explores how discourses frame or sideline conceptions of internationalisation, and it shows that in this case the dominant discourse of internationalisation is a narrow and exclusionary one. The paper concludes that in the webpages of this non-elite university a broader version of internationalisation is being marginalised in a neoliberal climate perhaps because it cannot be quantified, does not fit the individual consumer model, and so is squeezed out under the pressures of other discourses.

Key words:

Higher Education, discourse, internationalisation, international students, universities, critical discourse analysis

Introduction

A broad and all-inclusive view of internationalisation was given in Knight's often-quoted definition: 'the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education' (Knight 2003, 2). However, since then, there has been considerable debate about what internationalisation consists of in practice and what it should be, particularly in view of the impact of globalisation and marketisation on Higher Education (HE). Working out what form internationalisation should take in HE in England is even more urgent in the current political climate. Questions about international links and relationships have become especially prominent since the 2016 referendum vote in favour of Britain's withdrawal from the European Union. There is a danger that what will prevail in a nationalistic and competitive environment will be a narrow focus solely on international student recruitment and its benefit to the economy.

The risk is that such a discourse is squeezing out the possibility of any broader aim of internationalisation. The broader, more inclusive view emphasises a potentially transformative impact on all students, home as well as international, encompassing values of intercultural communication and difference, co-operation, sharing, and seeing commonalities. As a former international student myself, my position is one of advocating internationalisation in its broader interpretation. The inclusive version also fits with a wider conception of the purpose of HE, as suggested by the origin of the word 'university', derived from the Latin for 'whole' (Palfreyman and Temple 2017, 1). This is particularly salient, as the role universities and colleges play and the vision that they present is also up for debate.

The paper investigates the discourses in a university's webpages for prospective students, to examine what conceptions of internationalisation are presented through marketing.

Discourses matter as they limit what people think and articulate (Trowler 2001, 183), and constrain and regulate what they perceive and how they act (Wodak 2006, 180). Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is used to investigate the webpages' linguistic features and images, as a way of gaining insight into the complexities of an ideological context (Baker and Levon 2015, 233). This illuminates what other discourses may be framing and possibly marginalising internationalisation. The overall aim is to ask whether in institutional marketing the internationalisation discourses are unduly limited, and if so, how this comes about.

Literature Review: Internationalisation

Internationalisation is one of the most significant developments in HE in recent decades (Law 2016). HE's internationalisation involves discourse, with language constructing, reproducing and justifying this agenda. This is important, for the language used to articulate the purpose of universities leads to 'the kinds of universities and the kind of education that we shall end up with' (Collini 2017, 35). The plural, 'discourses', seems appropriate here, for, as Wodak says, 'we are confronted with a flow of discourses' (2006, 180). Multiple discourses are meshed together, sometimes complementary and sometimes conflicting, in a 'nexus' (Scollon and Scollon 2004, 8). It is thus important to consider how internationalisation discourses meld with other HE discourses, especially through keywords, whose apparent 'matter-of-fact, common-sense status' (Holborow 2015, 71) creates a dominant discourse.

A range of case studies have examined internationalisation in other national contexts: for example, Denmark (Tange, 2010); Japan (McKenzie and Gilmore, 2017) ; Australia (Arkoudis *et al.*, 2013; Marlina, 2013); Canada (Guo and Chase, 2011); the Netherlands (de

Haan, 2014); and countries at the European margins (Cots, Llurda and Garrett, 2014). Findings from a large European comparative study suggest that the rationales for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to internationalise are similar across European national contexts, and that the immediate organizational context is more salient, linked to the extent to which a particular institution is embedded in a global competitive arena (Seeber, Cattaneo, Huisman and Paleari 2016, 698). This implies that differences between universities according to their status may be more significant than differences between UK institutions and those elsewhere.

However, although the rationales for internationalisation may be similar between UK universities and those in other countries, the practical consequences of internationalisation vary. The role of English as a global *lingua franca* and its associations with privileges for English speakers is raised as one of many ethical dimensions of the internationalisation of HE (Hoey, 2016, 41-42). This distinguishes internationalisation in the UK and other English-speaking nations from internationalisation elsewhere, for example when university teaching staff have to adapt to using English as their medium of teaching in Denmark (Tange, 2010, 142), and staff at Dutch universities receive English language training (de Haan, 2014, 147). Thus internationalisation means shifts in the ‘language ecology of universities’ where English is an additional language (Cots, Llurda and Garrett, 2014, 314).

In debates about internationalisation in UK HE, there are contrasting constructions of the international student and discourses about international students often serve to ‘other’ them. International students often have subordinate or outsider status as de-powered non-citizens (Marginson 2012); they are absent from the TEF (Hayes 2017), and are often presented as deficient and needing support (e.g. McDonald 2014). There are two extreme constructions of international students, one emphasising the UK attracting the ‘brightest and best’

international students, and the other, the damage done by ‘sham students’ (Brooks 2017, 12). Discourses dominated by the deficiency of international students are persistent. Words with negative connotations are often used to describe international students, and the emphasis is on ways to help them assimilate and integrate. For example, a study of internationalisation in one UK faculty showed that international students were deemed a ‘burden’, emphasising their induction needs and adaptation to the new culture of the learning environment (Robson and Turner 2007). Likewise, a questionnaire on academic staff experiences at two universities identified the ‘challenge that international students appear to present to some academic staff’ (Barron, Gourlay and Gannon-Leary 2010, 487). Similarly, despite describing benefits that international students bring, a third study found that international students bring ‘complications’, and need to ‘overcome’ ‘barriers’ (McDonald 2014).

This emphasis on the responsibility of universities to overcome the deficiencies of international students is also shown by numerous calls to do more to support them. This is not just couched in terms of academic support; social integration is also said to be important, with a need to prepare academic staff, and to support them and indeed home students (Arthur 2017, 888). This is, however, not an issue confined to the UK. The need to enhance interaction between domestic and international students has been highlighted, for example, in Canada (Guo and Chase 2011) and Australia (Arkoudis et al. 2013).

In the debates, we see an overlapping and fusion of discourses about internationalisation and globalisation. The latter often refers to universities’ global outreach through the overseas expansion of campuses, trans-national partnerships, and online courses targeting overseas markets. UK education is seen as ‘a traded high premium commodity’ (Enslin and Hedge 2008, 108) and UK HE has been developed as a national brand (Lomer, Papatsiba and Naidoo 2018).

Radical critics argue that the ‘othering’ of international students is part of a dominant imaginary of colonial Western supremacy, in which neoliberal governmentality plays out on a global scale, with institutional elites (Suspitsyna 2015; Yi and Jung 2015; Stein and de Andreotti 2016), and a limited view of international students as customers or knowledge recipients of a benevolent West (Stein 2017).

However, there are other voices saying that a broader and benign version of internationalisation is possible, as shown in two Australian studies. The first indicates that harnessing internationalisation could lie in curriculum changes, redesigning learning tasks, and professional development for academic (and other) staff (Leask and Carroll 2011, 657). A second Australian study similarly showed that internationalisation need not be confined to acclimatising international students to an existing environment, but can include developing the expectations of home students to promote peer interaction and diversity as a learning resource (Arkoudis et al 2013, 233). Classroom pedagogical choices by academic staff appear to be key (Elliott and Reynolds 2014, 318). Research on improving intercultural communication emphasises the potential for people to communicate more effectively through awareness that communication is shaped by sociocultural and language conventions (Bowe, Martin and Manns 2014, 241). Seeing a university as an ‘internationally-minded community’ (Robson and Turner 2007, 42) might help transform the university community as a whole, for home students too, not just international ones. There is potential to replace a narrow linguistic view with awareness of world Englishes, the plurality of English, and of multilingual identities (Marlina 2013, 18).

Some literature points towards the possibilities of ‘internationalisation at home’ practice on the ground (e.g. Spiro 2014), openness in relationships and care, and humanity (Coate and

Rathnayake 2013). There are calls to reframe the focus on international students by expanding internationalisation as ‘international study’, with importance of ‘encounter’ (Madge, Raghuram and Noxolo 2015), and with students as agents in knowledge-making (Raghuram 2013). The division between international and home/domestic students has been questioned, with a call to consider them together as heterogeneous populations (Jones 2017, 934). A case study on email miscommunication between staff and students in a UK university concluded that addressing the mismatch of perceptions about email etiquette was important for all students, regardless of whether they were international (Lewin-Jones and Mason 2014, 88). Similarly, the student participants in one study of ‘home’ and ‘international’ PhD students at a UK university challenged discourses of polarisation between them, since adjusting to the PhD was a shared experience (Holliday 2017, 213). This challenges the view of UK HE as the standard to which international students must adapt and is seen as part of a shift away from ‘seeing Western education as a gift to the deficient non-West’ (Holliday 2017, 216). A more optimistic view is that

the diversity of the student body on university campuses provides a rich source of lived experience in cultural boundary-crossing that could be harnessed as a resource in promoting intercultural understanding and, in turn, developing graduates as global citizens (Caruana 2014, 86).

The question this raises is why the broader version of internationalisation is marginalised in practice. One reason is that internationalisation is also related to the marketisation discourse. Marketisation’s impact on HE has been widely researched (e.g. Trowler 2001; Askehave 2007; Brown and Carasso 2013; Flowerdew and Wang 2015; Nixon, Scullion and Hearn 2016; Tomlinson 2017). The extension and creation of markets and the commodification of services in many spheres, including education, has occurred under a neoliberal agenda (Connell 2013). Ball pointed to the ‘new moral environment’ that competitiveness and

privatisation entails (Ball 2007, 188), with changed relationships and identities for teachers and students.

In August 2017, the then Home Secretary commissioned the Migratory Advisory Committee to study the impact of international students, saying ‘We understand how important students from around the world are to our higher education sector, which is a key export for our country’ (Rudd 2017). The motivation for this commissioned study clearly indicates one direction of the discourses around internationalisation. It is significant that it comes from the Home Office, not the Department for Education, and the emphasis is on economic gain. There is clearly a fundamental tension between policies of restricting migration and the economic benefits of attracting international students. Government policy on international students is uncoordinated & ambiguous (Sá and Sabzalieva 2018, 237–8), and international students are included but are not the main players in larger agendas such as curtailing immigration (Merrick 2013).

In UK policy documents international students are primarily valued as an income source (Lomer 2018, 313), with emphasis on recruitment, economic gain, and increasing the numbers. The benefit of international students for the UK economy is emphasised in national policy referring to their fees and economic activity. Estimates range from £11bn (Universities UK 2016, 28) to £22.6 bn (Beech 2018), compared to the low cost of hosting the students at £2.3 bn (Beech 2018). Because international students pay higher fees, they are sometimes viewed as ‘cash cows’, as shown in the literature on HE marketisation in the UK and elsewhere (e.g. Cantwell 2015). Thus ‘internationalisation’ often refers to the strategic recruitment of international students, focussing on economic gain through increasing numbers, in a managerially-led activity (Warwick and Moogan 2013, 105).

One aspect of marketisation is the introduction and subsequent raising of tuition fees for home students. Students therefore increasingly see themselves as customers buying a product, with an instrumental view of education, focussing on what they will gain from the qualification, rather than education having merit in itself (Hussey and Smith 2009, 46).

Defining students as consumers and customers, and their own increasing orientation towards this identity, may have negative effects (Naidoo, Shankar and Veer 2011), including impact on academic performance (Bunce, Baird and Jones 2017).

Another significant keyword within the marketisation discourse is employability, relating to graduates being able to 'sell' themselves as commodities within the labour market, with universities functioning to equip students with requisite skills. Universities base marketing strategies on telling prospective students how they will be equipped for the competitive jobs market (Bowl and Hughes 2016, 285). Like the students-as-consumers discourse, the employability discourse is heavily critiqued, as having adverse consequences on pedagogy and the curriculum (Boden and Nedeva 2010), being 'muddled' (Chadha and Toner 2017, 1), and consisting of a series of 'follies' (Frankham 2017, 628). Thus the focus on marketisation and employability is one cause of a limited view of internationalisation.

The competitive environment also means pressure to measure performance via HE benchmarking. Data for such comparisons is increasingly available (Horseman 2018, 233). Universities' position in league tables is relatively fixed, almost as if there is an 'iron law of hierarchy' (Croxford and Raffe 2015, 1637). The word 'stratification' is often used to signify this 'stable vertical order', and represents how universities are positioned in relation to each other (Bloch and Mitterle 2017, 930-931). Stratification may be relevant here in so far as internationalisation may have a different significance to universities according to their status,

and there may be ‘subtle messages of differentiation’ (Bowl 2018, 686) in the language universities use.

When analysing the impact of internationalisation, globalisation, marketisation and employability, differences due to local conditions and localised dimensions should not be neglected (Deem 2001). Similarly, ‘policy’ refers not just to government decision-making, but it is also ‘made and remade in many sites’ and “formed and enacted within localities and institutions” (Ball 2013, 8). Policy is not a straightforward linear process of design, implementation and evaluation, but rather a set of complex interaction involving many different actors (Viczo and Riveros 2015, 479), and it is therefore a dynamic process rather than a terminal product (Ozga 1999; McCarty 2011). For example, studying the ‘cosmopolitan capital’ generated in high-status and lower-status HEIs, Friedman concludes that the global citizenship ideal is differentiated according to specific student populations, and existing students receive unequal messages about their future positioning, reflecting the institution they attend (Friedman 2018, 13). This further shows that universities are differentiated within the marketplace, and this in turn may impact on how internationalisation is conceived.

Taking account of all these internationalisation discourses, this paper investigates how they are, or are not, reflected in a university’s webpages aimed at recruiting home and international students. It explores how the university frames (in public) its internationalisation and the presence of international students, and asks what in the construction might exclude broader interpretations of internationalisation.

Methodology

University website marketing pages are used as the data source for this study because they almost inevitably reveal priorities for universities. They represent what a university says about itself and are often the first information about a university that a prospective student encounters. Websites now form the core of institutional marketing practices (Saichaie and Morpew 2014, 500), and are international students' primary information source (Universities UK International 2017).

Previous HE discourse studies selected institutions belonging to different groupings and with diverse missions (Hartley and Morpew 2008; Graham 2013; Saichaie and Morpew 2014; Knight 2017). However, selecting one single text for an initial investigation is a recognised first step (Reisigl and Wodak 2009, 100), and that is what is presented here. Looking at one institution enables analysis and exemplification in detail of how complex discourses may interrelate.

The university in this study is given the pseudonym 'Brookvale' University. This particular university was purposefully selected as a non-elite university (it does not belong to the Russell Group), has a relatively low number (5%) of international students (HESA 2018a), and it is not in a large cosmopolitan city. These considerations are important so that attention can be paid to stratification and reproduction of 'differential life chances' (Stein 2017, 19). One focus of literature on internationalisation is competition between institutions for position in global rankings (e.g. Marginson 2006; Bowl 2018; Naidoo 2018), but it is important also to consider lower tariff universities that do not figure in such global rankings.

A decision needed to be made about which webpage(s) to analyse. An added complexity is that these are interactive sites, requiring action as well as interpretation (Adami 2015, 137).

For this study, it was important not to obscure the up-front messages by following too complex a path deep into the layers of the website. I therefore analysed the first general webpage aimed at all prospective students as well as two that are signposted as ‘international’. This decision rested on an assumption that a prospective international student would be likely to look at all these pages but that a prospective home student might not look at a page if they considered it solely aimed at international students. The choice of these three pages was thus to enable some contrastive analysis and to yield texts of a realistic length for detailed qualitative analysis. In what follows, I refer to these three selected pages as the international pages and the general page.

The overall methodological approach taken is Critical Discourse Analysis. CDA is a set of principles (Wodak and Meyer 2009, 5), especially critiquing society by engaging closely with text (Antaki et al. 2003, 10). CDA probes what may be hidden, opaque or disguised, and questions what may be taken for granted (Farrelly 2010, 100). In other words, it generates a fundamental analysis of the very ‘shape of the issues to be considered’ (Bacchi 2000, 50). It connects detailed textual analysis with wider discursive and political concerns (Mills, 2004, 140), such as the pervasive ideologies that support the dominant powerful groups in society, whose values appear to be common sense (Mayr 2008, 13). The number of texts selected for CDA analysis is often very small, and a single text may be chosen by the analyst, as here, because it appears interesting and worthy of analysis (Machin and Mayr 2012, 207).

In this study, I structure my analysis by taking the framework of five discursive strategies identified by Reisigl and Wodak (2009) as part of their Discourse Historical Approach (DHA): Nomination; Predication; Argumentation; Perspectivization, framing or discourse representation; Intensification or mitigation (Reisigl and Wodak 2009, 94). In the Analysis

and Discussion section below, I explain each of these five discursive strategies in turn and explore how they are realised through linguistic and visual techniques. The DHA approach largely focuses on linguistic realisations of discursive strategies, but it can be used to explore visual devices too (Sedlaczek 2017, 485).

University websites are increasingly image-rich, so I combine analysis of linguistic features with analysis of image-text relations (Martinec and Salway 2005; Martinec 2013). That multimodality is a central feature of discourse is now widely recognised (e.g. Iedema 2007; Barton and Lee 2013; Rose 2016), which is why visual evidence has gained status in scholarly research (Howells and Matson 2009, 3). This includes studies of educational marketing, for example, as in a study of American college viewbooks (Hartley and Morphew 2008), analysis of multimodal video texts in an Australian university (Tan, Smith and O'Halloran 2015, 562), and a study of an institutional website of a Study Abroad provider (Michelson and Álvarez Valencia 2016). Brookvale's website is (unlike some university marketing pages) still text-heavy and I therefore take the text as primary, considering how the text is intensified and modified by images. It is beyond the scope of this analysis to explore further the interactive sites and signs, for example the video clips accessed through some of the thumbnail images.

Analysis and discussion

This section analyses the selected university webpages using Reisigl and Wodak's five types of discursive strategies as listed above (Reisigl and Wodak 2009, 94), taking each in turn, and adding commentary on the images which reinforce them.

Nomination

Nomination strategies rest on how people and things are named and referred to, and others omitted. There are significant differences between Brookvale's international page and its general page. The international page tells prospective students: *You'll be part of a truly international student and staff community in a traditional British setting*. However, international students are absent from the text on the general page, which twice says *our students and staff* without the adjective *international*. The general page also says Brookvale *enjoys a national reputation as a very friendly place*, emphasising the national rather than international. The general page uses the adjective *inclusive* three times, refers to students achieving/realising their potential twice, and refers to the *universal accessibility* of the facilities. The nomination strategy foregrounded in the text on the general page constructs the university not as international but as inclusive, referring to the including of students with disabilities. Absences from the text are worth considering, such as who or what is *not* nominated (Reisigl and Wodak 2009, 114), and here it is international students that are absent.

Reference to *a traditional British setting* and *experience British life* could be seen as confirmation of the ideological stance that underpins discourses of internationalisation, reflecting a discourse of prestige and superiority (Walker 2014), linked to postcolonial neoliberal globalisation (Suspitsyna 2015).

What comes across strongly on these pages is a discourse of student-as-consumer, and university as provider. CDA approaches require consideration of interdiscursivity, part of the intertextuality of a text, i.e. which other 'genres, discourses and styles it draws upon' (Fairclough 2013, 180). The phrases *every person counts* and *listening to our students* have resonance from advertising elsewhere. *Every person counts* echoes the Tesco supermarket strapline 'Every little helps' in its trochaic rhythm and pattern of 'every' + noun + verb in present simple tense. *Listening to our students* echoes the familiar 'listening to our

customers' strapline of many businesses. This is part of 'recontextualisation' in organizational discourse, described by Iedema and Wodak (1999) as 'shifts in meaning and materiality' (Iedema and Wodak 1999, 13), and by Fairclough as the use of a discourse in one field which originated in a different field (Fairclough 2010, 233). Although Brookvale's website does not refer to students as customers, that is implied, with the discourse of consumer advertising recontextualised to the educational field. To put it more strongly, recontextualisation 'can be seen as 'colonization' of one field or institution by another' (Fairclough 2013, 180), in this case the student equated to the supermarket customer.

It is perhaps surprising that the construction of the students on the general page is of students who need support, whereas the international page does not refer to support. This seems to contradict the studies cited earlier which suggest that the internationalisation discourses represent international students as deficient and needing support. The suggestion here is that international students are no more likely than home students to need support.

In short, Brookvale uses nomination to present itself as a supportive, friendly place with an emphasis on inclusivity. The construction of itself as international is only used to appeal to international students, though that too is perhaps secondary to the notion of its prestige (in global terms) as a British institution.

Predication

Predication strategies qualify positively or negatively what is constructed by nomination. As these are marketing pages, it is not surprising that the predication here is positive. A frequent device used here for discursive qualification is adjectives to show positive traits: *excellent*,

outstanding, friendly, innovative, beautiful, state-of-the-art, inspiring, exceptional, first class, unique, effective, acclaimed, ideal, first rate, idyllic, cutting-edge. Several of these adjectives are repeated (e.g. excellent is used nine times). Such overlexicalisation can convey over-persuasion and may indicate a problematic area (Machin and Mayr 2012, 37). Reliance on these synonymous adjectives could perhaps be a compensatory move for an institution that may not have prestige status ranking statistics to use.

The adjectives are used to qualify resources, facilities, support and teaching. The sole mention of international is where one facility is described as an *internationally-acclaimed resource*. In other words, as with the discursive strategy of nomination, there is an absence of internationalisation and international students.

Verbs such as *provide* and *offer* are used with a similar positive force. For instance, the verb *provide* usually collocates with things that are desirable or necessary, such as ‘information’, ‘service’, ‘help’ (Stubbs 2002, 65). The collocates on these webpages are mostly linked to employability (work experience, career development, earning opportunities). This suggests that the purpose of the university is to prepare students for employment, and the dominant discourse is about employability rather than internationalisation.

Argumentation

Argumentation strategies justify or question ‘claims of truth and normative rightness’ (Reisigl and Wodak 2009, 94). The claim made on the international page is that Brookvale is *a truly international student and staff community*. However, there is only one small bit of wording that refers to international students, which is *...academic and sports*

scholarships...both available to international students. This is a slim argument for justifying the claim to be an international community.

Whether the images justify the claim to be international is open to interpretation. Some of them could possibly be interpreted as conveying an impression of an international student body, as they depict young people who could perhaps come from different countries. Strong caution must however be used here, as skin colour is no indication of country of origin and the students depicted could all be home students from different ethnic backgrounds.

Identifying someone as an international student from their appearance is highly problematic, and there are no captions to the images.

So, the claim to be international does not appear to be justified by argumentation strategies.

By contrast, other claims are justified. The first claim is that of the employability of

Brookvale's graduates. A statistic about graduate employment is used on both the general page and the international page as an argumentation device. Claims about opportunities for employment are supported by this statement on the general page: *Brookvale graduates are*

consistently among the most employable in the country with over 94.9% in work or

continuing to study within six months of graduating. The use of the numerical percentage

94.9% in work adds to the normative claim that employment is the goal of university study.

This is reinforced by the use of the verbs *gain* and *succeed* in the claim *you will gain the intellectual and practical skills and qualifications you need to succeed in today's world.*

There is in fact a double layer of claims about employability in this statement, firstly the taken-for-granted assumption that these skills and qualifications are necessary, and secondly,

that coming to this university will definitely result in the student gaining them. The

grammatical structure 'will + verb' is used to express the "neutral future of prediction"

(Leech and Svartvik 1994, 76), so there is no sense of this being an opinion or anything other than a statement of fact.

On the international page, the same employment statistic is used with transposed sentence structure (with the statistic at the front), but the overall point made is the same, reinforced by semiotic mixing (O'Halloran 2008, 453) of linguistic and mathematical symbols: *94.9% of our graduates go into work or education within six months of graduating – well above the national average*. The validity of this device as an argumentation strategy targeting prospective international students could be questioned, as the source of this statistic appears to be the HESA Destination of Leavers from HE (DELHE) survey, which only draws on UK-domiciled leavers (HESA 2018b).

The second claim that is justified by argumentation strategies is the quality of the facilities, an emphasis also found in a previous study on university marketing (Hartley and Morpew 2008). The international page states that Brookvale University *has been investing over £150 million on facilities* and refers to a specific building *opened by Her Majesty The Queen*. The use of the present perfect tense (*has been investing*) implies that this investment is an on-going process, and has not finished (which would be implied by a different choice of tense, the simple past 'invested'). The sum of money quoted is intended to impress through its size, and the mention of Her Majesty The Queen may be aimed to appeal to an international audience through conveying an air of prestige.

The overall effect of Brookvale's argumentative strategy is the justification and rationalisation of the employability purpose of university study, and justification of the claims made about the quality of the facilities.

Perspectivization, framing or discourse representation

Perspectivization strategies position the point of view of the speaker or writer by expressing 'involvement or distance', which may be achieved through the use of deictics (Reisigl and

Wodak 2009, 94). On Brookvale's webpages, the pronouns and possessives 'we', 'us' and 'our' serve to express involvement and can be classed as deictic. These words are context dependent: they do not carry any meaning by themselves. At first sight, the meaning seems clear – 'we' refers to 'Brookvale University'. However, it is worth probing here as 'we' could mean existing students, staff and students, university senior managers, the wider local community, or any other construct of 'we'. In these webpages, the membership categorization device 'we' is used frequently, but it is an opaque pronoun, and it is not clear who it refers to. This can be explored with reference to a claim made on the international page: *Some come for the friendly community atmosphere we've created*. The 'we' could be seen as the same 'we' as in the sentence *we offer a range of academic and sports scholarships*, in which case it refers to university managers and decision-makers. The *community atmosphere* is presented here as a fact, which is part of a discursive strategy, for '...texts are often at their most persuasive when they don't seem at all rhetorical, but rather pass themselves off as fact or realistic description' (MacLure 2003, 80). It could be argued that a *community atmosphere* at a university is an abstract, intangible concept relying on the relationships and interconnections between people, but the implication here is that, like the sports facilities, it is a concrete material construction that owes its existence to deliberate investment. Semiotic cohesion (O'Halloran 2008, 453) between words and images can be seen between *friendly community* and an image of a group of smiling students close together taking a selfie. The images conform to the 'downplaying of the rigors of academic life' found in a previous study (Hartley and Morphew 2008, 679).

Switches in positioning are interesting, for example the shift on the general page from third person 'students' to direct second person 'you':

We concentrate on helping students achieve their potential... and we will offer you every support to achieve that goal.

At first, the reader is outside the description, but is then drawn in and made part of it. The text which follows continues with ‘you’ and ‘will’. The use of pronouns ‘we’ and ‘you’ implies a personal relationship and the perspective of the writer is that the reader will apply to the university. There is an assumption that the reader will share the writer’s view.

As well as expressing personal relationships, the perspectivization devices on these pages serve to emphasize individual gain. The prospective student is directly addressed as ‘you’, and implies the singular. The first sentence on the international page is: *Brookvale is an ideal location - it is big enough to allow you to experience British life, but small enough for you to become part of the community.* This immediately involves the reader. This wording is directly underneath an image of one student, reinforcing the appeal to the individual reader. The image has no caption, but the reader can infer through semiotic cohesion of words and image (O’Halloran 2008, 453) that this image is an illustration of one international student who has come to the university. The image shows a man with a broad smile looking at a computer screen, an example of intersemiotic repetition (Royce 2002, 194), as this reinforces the wording: *Whatever your reason for choosing Brookvale, we offer an excellent environment in which to study and the high quality teaching you need to get the most from your studies.* The man is not looking at the camera, but appears to be engrossed in reading whatever is on his screen. The image and text thus represent ‘intersemiotic complementarity’ (Royce 2002, 193), in that there is no need for an explicit caption labelling him as an international student.

The focus on what the student will ‘get’ is reinforced by a concentration of verbs from the semantic field of ‘giving’ (e.g. *offer, support, provide*). The actions here all indicate a relationship with the university giving and students receiving. Unstated is the relationship’s predication on the fees that students pay, and them as customers.

This emphasis on individual gain fits the marketisation and employability discourse that came with the waning of the ideology of HE as a public good, state-funded for the availability of all, to the benefit of individuals and society as a whole. Collective benefit has been undermined by neoliberal processes of marketisation, privatisation and competition, emphasising value to individuals rather than the public good (Kehm 2014, 93-94).

Intensification and/or mitigation

Intensification and/or mitigation strategies have the objective of modifying (intensifying or mitigating) the force of utterances (Reisigl and Wodak 2009, 94). On Brookvale's general page intensification is one of the discursive strategies used. Repeated use of adjectives with positive connotations (discussed above) is an intensifying strategy, even a hyperbolic device. Positive adjectives are often reinforced by intensifying adverbs. On the international page, the university is constructed as not just international, but *truly* international. This strategy is used for other claims. For example, the university is not just 'friendly' but is *truly friendly*, students are not simply 'welcomed' but are *warmly welcomed*, courses are not merely 'relevant' but are *highly relevant*, people are not just 'happy' but are *genuinely happy*.

As well as the use of adjectives and adverbs, another linguistic technique to intensify claims is the use of verb tenses. The verbs are in simple present tense (e.g. 'is', 'are', 'offers') or future expressed with 'will' (e.g. *you will gain...*), so the truth claim could be seen as absolute, and there is complete commitment to the assertion. There is no use of modal verbs to indicate degree of possibility (e.g. might, may, can), which would mitigate the claims or indicate any doubt.

Images are used above all to intensify the claims about the facilities and buildings, referencing the place-bound attractiveness of the university. The claim to be international is only intensified by two images, those of external affiliation badges. These are the logo of the Erasmus Plus programme (Erasmus Plus 2018) and the hashtag of the #WeAreInternational campaign established in 2013 by the University of Sheffield (University of Sheffield 2017). However, these only appear on the international page, not the general page, which rather downplays the claim to be international.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to analyse the presence of internationalisation in a sample university's webpages. The principal finding is that in these webpages the role of internationalisation and international students is marginalised. On the general webpage internationalisation hardly features. The dominant discourse of internationalisation is restricted to international student recruitment and even for those international students, internationalising of the curriculum is absent. Furthermore, through words and images, the university presents itself as being about buildings/facilities, services, support, and above all individual employment success, not curriculum, knowledge, and academic staff.

Students (home and international) are represented as consumer recipients of what university provides for them and are shown as very much in need of support and help, not as active co-creators. The discursive strategies focus on achieving 'success', predominantly framed as employability, in other words what prospective applicants could individually gain from studying there, not on earlier notions of HE being about the public good. 'Community' does figure on these webpages, but for home students there is no suggestion that community could

be international, and notions of inclusivity on the home page are not linked to internationalisation.

Analysing the webpages in that way has demonstrated that using the DHA discursive strategy framework is a robust way of exploring the discourses in such texts, and that multimodal analysis can be incorporated into it. All five of Reisigl and Wodak (2009)'s discursive strategies were identified even in just these few webpages. Linguistic devices used on both pages include adjectives with positive attribution, predictions with 'will', and use of pronouns 'we' and 'you'. There is evidence of intersemiotic complementarity (Royce 2002, 193), as the images and text work together to reinforce each other. For example, images support the textual claims about Brookvale's physical surroundings and facilities. Moreover, although the student-as-consumer discourse is not explicitly stated, it is prominent through interdiscursivity. The nouns, verbs, and adjectives all contribute subtly to a discourse of student-as-consumer, on the receiving end of what the university can give them. Even the word 'community' is used to refer to something the student will be provided with, rather than something they will actively create.

Thus, the study sheds some light on how broader versions of internationalisation do not play out in a less prestigious university, supporting the claim that there is unequal access to a broader view (Harrison 2015; Friedman 2018). The study goes further, however, suggesting how discourses of internationalisation may lose ground to other discourses. On Brookvale's webpages, the pressures of other discourses mean that internationalisation for home students is squeezed out by a focus on what they individually gain, with these gains not seen as encompassing who they might be studying alongside and what the internationalised curriculum might mean. This may be connected to the neoliberal model of HE, especially the pressure this puts on non-elite universities. The complex value of international students present in human encounters is marginalised under neoliberalism because it cannot be

quantified and does not fit the individual consumer model, particularly in a non-elite university.

One question that remains is whether it is possible to broaden the view of internationalisation, so that internationalisation is not just about international students. It was beyond the scope of this study, but a further study could usefully add an ethnographic element (Machin and Mayr 2012, 216–217), exploring the complex processes by which some discourses get to be prioritised within universities, including how university marketing webpages are written and images selected, and what conscious intentions the authors, designers or editors have. Doing that might help to suggest ways of broadening the process to include a wider view of internationalisation.

This paper thus has policy implications of wider application, beyond Brookvale. Given the role that university websites play in marketing and presenting an image of the university, it seems important that internationalisation is not only addressed at international students. If there are in practice wider benefits to internationalisation, as more broadly conceived and described earlier, could this not be made more apparent both to domestic and international student applicants alike, perhaps as a first step towards them becoming co-creators of their learning experiences?

This paper's analysis of the language and images that sustain a narrow view of internationalisation could contribute to the struggle to emphasise wider perspectives. For, as Lomer, Papatsiba and Naidoo suggest, critical awareness of international branding may lead to 'informed engagement or resistance' (Lomer, Papatsiba and Naidoo 2018, 149). The language and images analysed here show that the restricted view comes about through a complex of neoliberal assumptions about hierarchical, competitive university systems, individual students as customers, and education focussed on resources. Challenging this

climate is not easy, but illuminating the way those assumptions appear in university marketing and online presence is an important step towards that.

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