Internationalization of education and mobility: an analysis upon the argentinian case

Internacionalización de la educación y movilidad: reflexiones a partir del caso argentino

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Abstract

The internationalization of education is a topic of growing interest. It refers to various patterns of power relations, as well as the accumulation of advantages and changes linked to the mobility in modernity and fundamentally the globalization effects in contemporary societies. In this article, on the one hand, the evolution of this education phenomenon is analyzed, taking into account the Argentinian case, particularly in the city of Buenos Aires. The existing inequalities and the problems linked to social exclusion and to the (dis) advantages that have an impact on the inequitable access to education in this international framework are considered as an underlying element of academic mobility. Likewise, the imminent globalization that permeates the different spheres of social life also has its correlation with the increase in mobility and the diversification of travel, among which are trips for reasons of study, as will be shown below with precise data on arrivals of non-residents to Argentina. Finally, certain decision factors are listed when developing study trips by non-residents entering the country, and to the city of Buenos Aires in particular, among them stand out: the gratuity, the democratic university ethos, certain discourses on educational quality, and references and scholastic traditions.

Keywords

Internationalization of education, scholastic mobility, accumulation of advantages, and globalization.

Resumen

La internacionalización de la educación es un tema de creciente interés. En la actualidad, refiere a diversos esquemas de relaciones de poder, así como a la acumulación de ventajas y vicisitudes vinculadas a las movilidades en la modernidad y fundamentalmente los efectos de la globalización en las sociedades contemporáneas. En este artículo analizamos, por un lado, la evolución de este fenómeno educativo, focalizando en el caso argentino, en particular, en de la ciudad de Buenos Aires. Se plantea como elemento subyacente a la movilidad académica las desigualdades existentes y los problemas vinculados a la exclusión social y a las (des)ventajas que repercuten en los inequitativos accesos a la educación en este marco internacional. Asimismo, la inminente globalización que permea las diversas esferas de la vida social también tiene su correlato con el incremento de las movilidades y la diversificación de los viajes entre los que se encuentran los viajes por motivo de estudio, tal como se mostrará a continuación con datos precisos sobre las llegadas de no residentes a Argentina. Finalmente, se enumeran ciertos factores decisorios a la hora desarrollar los viajes por estudios por parte de los no residentes que ingresan al país en general y la ciudad de Buenos Aires en particular. Entre ellos se destacan: la gratuidad, la universidad democrática, ciertos discursos sobre calidad y las referencias y tradiciones.

Palabras clave

Internacionalización de la educación, movilidad académica, acumulación de ventajas y globalización.

Introduction

There is a consensus in the social sciences that national higher education systems were created for an elite in their origins —males, urban and the most favored sectors of societies— (Bourdieu and Passeron, 2009; Buchbinder, 2005; Herrero, 2010), and then for the social origin of its audience, while the genre was modified with the incorporation of students from middle and low social sectors. These transformations in the students correspond with the changes in the educational legislations; first in the central countries —after the Second World War— and then in Latin America in the last twenty years, which modified the Education laws, extending the compulsory level of secondary levels, thus, broadening the recruitment base for higher learning[1]

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1 For an analysis of the changes in the educational legislations in this continent, see N. Lopez, The new laws of education in Latin America. A reading in the light of the social and educational panorama of the region (2007, Buenos Aires: IIPE UNESCO).

(Pochulu, 2004; Ezcurra, 2011; García de Fanelli and Jacinto, 2010). Thus, the International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC) of UNESCO, indicates that between 1994 and 2006 the enrolment of higher education showed an outstanding growth rate of 126%, going from hosting approximately 7 544 000 students at about 17 017 000 (Gazzola and Didriksson, 2008)[2].

In this continent since the last decades of the twentieth century, there is a sustained trend towards democratization and overcrowding of higher education. As Rama (2009) argues, this growth is expected to continue with an upward shift towards lifelong learning and postgraduate studies at all levels. The dynamics of the universalization of higher education —which in this continent is in the process of different problems and vacancies— has positive edges, such as increasing university enrolment in vulnerable sectors (Mayer and Cerezo, 2016, 2018 and 2018b), which means a democratization of knowledge along with a tendency towards more egalitarian societies (Mayer and Núñez, 2016).

However, in turn —and in parallel to these processes— is observed what has been called "segregating democracy" (Merle, 2009), which assumes that once high or total coverage levels are achieved, internal horizontal differentiation movements are generated (Braslavsky, 1985), i.e., differentiated proposals towards the same educational level. In other words, the tendencies towards the universalization of an educational level, whatever it may be, become at certain levels of devaluation, which generate distinction strategies in the agents to achieve educational trajectories (Mayer and Núñez, 2016) —and Biographical (Beck and Beck, 2001)— differentiated. In this sense, one of the possible strategies that are increasingly frequent between students and professionals consists either in internationalizing their studies obtaining degrees abroad, or in incorporating mobility to their trajectories by making a part of their studies or studying the language of the host country —and living— in another country for a certain time, which tends to have at least an academic semester. International education or the internationalization of education are long-standing processes. The history of the educational processes observes nomadic or mobile students, associated with families of diplomats, or from various areas that assumed displacement

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2 This enrolment was mainly concentrated in the studies of degree (96%) and in institutions of free public management.

by certain parts of the world (Gessaghi, 2016; Larrondo and Mayer, 2018). However, what is new is what is now understood by associating international education with globalization, conceiving it not only as a reorganization of economic-financial relations, but as a reorganization of all spheres of social life in which education is included.

In this sense, there is a consensus in affirming that the global rediscovering discovers the local as a global dimension, so that the internationalization processes lead to questions about the creation of spaces that are located both at a national level and the ways in which systems, practices and policies are revealed to foster the social, cultural and economic privileges of dominant groups (Howard and Gatzambide- Fernández, 2010). In this context, a turning point for studies is from the decade of the nineties to the date, by the end of the cold war and the redefinition of the power relations (Resnik, 2012). Koh and Kenway (2012) explore the creation of educational orders that encourage the formation of national leaders from the internationalization of their educational trajectories. Resnik (2012) argues that based on the internationalization processes of education, curricula are generated with international visions and that this orientation affects those who do not leave their habitual place of residence. On the other hand, Nogueira and Aguiar (2012) show how the affluent sectors of Brazil invest more and more in internationalized resources, particularly in the educational journeys and the learning of second and third languages.

Methodological considerations, theoretical approximations and relevant data

This article draws on a thorough theoretical review of the subject in relation to contemporary social and educational problems, particularly in what respect to the dimensions of globalization and its impact on the educational field (Resnik, 2015). In this sense, the approach assumes that although there are mobility and internationalization processes of education, what is in question here is its interrelation with the globalising processes and the global economy. The theoretical reflections of this work are composed of interviews carried out in the framework of the doctoral thesis of one of the authors (Catalano, 2017), whose topic deals with the integration and sociocultural practices of tourists from the countries Mercosur and Chile in the city of Buenos Aires. In this context, 28 interviews were conducted

in during 2016 and quantitative data provided by the Ministry of Tourism of the Nation (MINTUR) were re-worked. The choice of the qualitative methodology from interviews is because it allows understanding the sense and representations of the actors in question and the multiplicity of dimensions and explanations that they conceive to explain their situation and experience. The aim is to approach the actor's perspective in his/her context by abandoning the "unique" viewpoint for the plurality benefit of coexisting viewpoints (Bourdieu, 2000). The interview should be understood as the framework of a joint theoretical elaboration in which no total agreements or similar exploitations will arise, but interpretations that did not exist before the relationship (Saltalamacchia, 1992).

Even though later on will be provided the specificities of the concept of globalization and its implications in the daily life of the subjects, it is pertinent to specify the meaning of the internationalization processes of education. It is described —from international organizations— as the process of integrating an international, intercultural and global dimension to objectives and teaching/learning. The internationalization refers to the relationship between nations, people, cultures and systems, which through normative efforts are "harmonized" (Ball and Youdell, 2008), having a common educational space. The reference to the internationalization processes is inseparable from the Bologna declaration[3], which in 1999 lent the normative and convergence framework to develop the initiatives aimed at strengthening this process. While the common educational area is European —related to the European Community and other acceding countries— the Bologna process drives an "external dimension" (Zgaga, 2006) and, on the other hand, tendencies to emulate —with the difficulties of each case— these experiences outside the boundaries of the common space created[4].

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3   The Bologna declaration refers to a convergence process between universities in the countries of the European Union and others outside that space such as Russia and Turkey, which aims to standardize the content of university careers to facilitate the exchange of graduates and academic mobility. In addition to the specific public actors in the communication field, in this process participated —and participate— diverse actors such as companies and international organizations, which also originated discussions on the commodification and commoditization of Higher education, which implies the competitiveness of universities and their modernization to "adapt" their curricula to the needs of the "global market", over local needs.

4   For an analysis of the difficulties in the emulation of this declaration in Latin America, see J. Brunner, "The Bologna process in the Latin American Horizon: Limits and Perspectives" (2008, *Revista de Educación*, pp. 119-145, Spain: MECD).

In this way, mobility becomes an intrinsic aspect to the phenomenon of the internationalization of education. While this binomial —education and mobility— gives rise to the approach of mobility as part of a constellation between movements, meanings, experiences, rhythms and practices (Cresswell, 2008), coupled with the fact of considering the movement in the center of the social realities. The physical movement people that implies an origin and a destiny carries a set of phenomena that circulate satelliteally on the subjects, their interactions and meanings, perceptible from the individual level and also from a scale of society.

In the mobility and education relationship, is emphasized the displacement of individuals from a place of residence to a place of destination, for a certain period of time, and for a reason that has to do with the study, training, specialization and academic complementarity. Formation, exchange and qualification characterize this type of individual mobility, which in turn differentiates it from any other type, either migrant or tourist (Catalano, 2017); in turn, in other contexts this phenomenon is treated as academic mobility (Tremblay, 2005).

In the following lines will be analyzed the internationalization processes and academic mobility, focusing this study to the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires (AMBA). This analysis uses, on the one hand, primary data obtained through interviews carried out to students of the region[5] during 2016 and 2017[6], and data provided by the MINTUR regarding the entrance of tourists to the country.

These data were provided from the International Tourism Survey (ETI) and its systematization in the Statistical Yearbook of Tourism (AET), which since 2011 included the study category to explain the reasons for arriving in the country[7].

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5   The field work included interviewees from Chile, Paraguay, Brazil and Uruguay.

6   Las entrevistas fueron realizadas en el marco de la investigación doctoral *Turismo y MERCOSUR, prácticas socioeculturales de integración en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires*, de Bárbara Catalano. The interviews were carried out in the framework of the doctoral research tourism and MERCO-SUR, socioeculturales practices of integration in the city of Buenos Aires, of Bárbara Catalano.

7   Within the regulatory framework of these students who come to Argentina, it is stipulated that they can enter the country as "tourists" and process their residence as students in the National Directorate of Migration (DNM) within 30 days of enrollment in the University. This apparent unnoticed policy on the regularity of students has an impact on the compilation of official statistics. A particular characteristic of this type of student who travels for academic reasons is that it has an average of permanence of 50 days for the Year 2014 (MINTUR), which reflects a particular development in the area.

As shown in table 1 in the group of foreigners entering the country, the number of non-resident tourists who arrive whose main motivation is to study, in relation to all the data collected by the ETI, is distinguished annually. Although the absolute number of tourist arrivals has slightly reduced in recent years, should be emphasized that the participations of the total of tourists per study have shown a slight increase ranging from 3.48% in 2012 to 3.82% in 2015. However, these data need some considerations: many tourists may not mention at the time of being surveyed that they enter for educational reasons; the reason for this is to consider it detrimental to declare such an end for regulatory and bureaucratic issues. Another reason for this omission is that the decision to study may not be taken at the time of the interview. Finally, it is believed that in the face of emerging stigmas on the issue of migrants, many inpatients may not want to disclose the real purpose of their stay at the destination.

Table 1
Non-resident tourists arriving in Argentina
whose main motivation is to study

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015
Number of non-resident tourists arriving at the airports and ports of Buenos Aires and Córdoba Airport	2 904 452 (100%)	2 761 563 (100%)	2 828 771 (100%)	2 640 394 (100%)
Number of non-resident tourists whose main reason is to "study"	85 184 (3.48%)	85 717 (3.21%)	77 630 (3.64%)	68 975 (3.82%)

Source: own elaboration, adapted from AET-Mintur 2012-2015

The accumulation of advantages

The existing literature of the social sciences has tackled in a deep way the accumulation of disadvantages, which derive in vulnerability processes and social exclusion (Castel, 1997), recognizing the basis material for such situations but also anchoring in the density of social tissues. This accumulation of disadvantages has its correlate in processes studied in less depth that lead to the accumulation of advantages. Here are cited the pre-eminence of Bourdieu (2000), which has studied the fields of power and the different strategies of the affluent sectors to maintain their positions and that of the middle sectors

for (re) enclasarse. In the case of young people —in this case students— both processes are fundamental, since these are the efforts they make —often in solitude, others with their families— to avoid falling into disadvantageous situations, and to avail themselves of strategies that lead to privileged situations. In the words of Saravi (2010), accumulating advantages implies participation in events, situations, experiences and processes that strengthen social situations and collaborate in the reaffirmation of motorized privileges at other times of the cycle life or the individual in question. Then, if the analysis focuses on the accumulation of advantages, biographical experiences and transitional periods acquire primacy, where the juvenile and student status occupies a fundamental place[8]. As Saravi mentioned (2015), universalize basic education and extend coverage and years of compulsory are policies agreed by all social and political sectors, anchored in the narratives of the "example" of advanced countries that include high educational levels in their populations, with equally high living and development standards. However, in this continent this expansion is not homogeneous and is anchored on pre-existing exclusions or inequalities —levels of household income, geographical location, the educational climate of the home, and the belonging or not to ethnic and/or originating groups, just to mention a few— which represent significant advantages or disadvantages over which the inclusion processes develop.

These inequalities, advantages or disadvantages do not disappear because vast sectors of the population have been "included" (Saravi, 2015, p. 11). This leads to raise the first lines of this article: the tendency to mass the university level —by expanding its recruitment base due to the universalization of the previous levels— while it supports the yearning for inclusion and the creation of more egalitarian societies —processed through education— it does not eliminate social inequalities, but rather, it generates mechanisms for the development of new forms of social differentiation. This is where the educational institutions —in this case those of higher education— become important: not only to produce and reproduce positions, but as a framework where actors can influence —or believe it— in their future determinations.

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8   Esping Andersen (2002) argues that this connection of events, situations, experiences and processes, to the extent that the welfare conditions of a given moment presuppose other priors and enable other futures, allows to distinguish transient disadvantages which will be deeper and for long periods in the biographies.

Globalization, education, internationalization and mobility: some approximations

Beck and Beck (2001) argue that globalization changes the ways of thinking and perceiving the world and the responses that social agents and institutions try to give to a world that becomes increasingly uncertain and unstable, with the need to respond to multiple challenges, with corroded reinsurances of the welfare state (Mayer, 2012). If understood that globalization —as a reorganization and liberalization of all spheres— cove at all levels of social life, beyond the reforms and normative efforts —which will be described later— it is important to pay attention to changes —in this case is educational— since vital trajectories are affected by ideas and decisions that create audiences for the implementation of certain policy frameworks and reforms. In this sense, the educational changes, although they find possibility conditions in the reforms, often derive from shifts and more general social displacements circulating in the societies, consensus of international organizations or speeches that derive in specific practices. It is then about the dynamics and immediate changes that have national and global significance not only in terms of educational policy, but also in terms of equal opportunities, and with their implementation they can redefine educational practices. It is worth saying that in the face of formal equality of credentials, social agents unfold strategies to differentiate themselves in an increasingly uncertain and unequal world (Beck and Beck, 2001; Mayer, 2009) to try to obtain a comparison of their peers (Larrondo and Mayer, 2018). It is in this context that the concept of internationalization of education becomes relevant, understanding it as a process that relates to globalization, on the one hand, and with educational norms and agreements on the other. But is the destination chosen? And then, more specifically, why Buenos Aires?

The choice of destiny: studying and living in Buenos Aires

In the previous paragraphs were emphasized how the processes of mobility and internationalization are crossed by new inequalities or, in other words, distinction strategies that the social agents deploy to achieve —or to project, to achieve— distinctive advantages in their biographies. Without losing this axis of analysis, it is lawful to mention that within the repertoires

that organize the action of those who opt for these modalities, there is also a response to a way of perceiving and living the social life, in which the limits between work and leisure are porous, and space and time are becoming less differentiated. In this sense, there is a disorganization of the usual rhythms along with a flexibilization of the social life, in which the obligations and the pleasure are glimpsed. Due to the flexible modes of accumulation (Harvey, 1998), the individuals organize their time and their activities like a puzzle in which everything seems to fit in millimetres, calculating the times, the dedications to the leisure, to the work and to the socialization and the discovery of "new cultures". Some experts (Botto, 2015; Solanas, 2014) have exhaustively addressed the stages of the university accreditation processes, the advances and setbacks that this phenomenon brings to the global level —and in particular in certain regional integration processes— as well as the effectiveness of the public policies built in each block and from the different models of conceiving regional integration, from binational cooperation, "inter-government", public policy networks, etc. The present duality has also been addressed between the cooperation perspective of university accreditation and another one that is more oriented towards the mercantilist vision of education and the conception of the profession as a resource to be tradable, devaluing the forces that carry the collectives of professionals of different disciplines. However, there is a significant correlation between the recognition and accreditation of careers with the mobility of students within the regional integration processes (Botto, 2015).

In this line, beyond the hard work that implies the harmonization of norms and regulation of accreditations, recognition, homologation of titles, as well as the incorporation by the governmental agencies as of the universities of supra policies, it is evident that education and professional mobility and knowledge is a priority topic and agenda within the Mercosur.

Argentina became a strategic destination to complete university studies, especially at the regional level, while there is a growing importance that education has had in the framework of the regionalisms as stated in the cases of the European Union or Mercosur. In this regard, mobility-by-study programmes were developed in recent years, which led to a common regional space for higher education, fostered student mobility, a credit transfer system and the exchange between professors and researchers (Perrotta, 2014). Within them, Argentina implemented the promotion program of the Universidad Argentina from 2006 (Oregioni and López, 2011), which speeds

up the information to foreigners who want to study in Argentina and the flow of students is encouraged through the quality promotion and re-launching of the Argentinian education; however, it is very difficult to obtain accurate data on the flows of this type of mobility of individuals (Botto, 2015).

Among the foreign population (50 000 students), students of Peruvian nationality, followed by their Brazilian peers, excel first. Students from Paraguay, Bolivia, Colombia and Chile are also involved. To a lesser extent, a presence of students from Europe and the United States (La Nación, 2017) is registered.

In addition to the political processes specifically outlined in the preceding paragraphs that refer to normative agreements in developing facilities for internationalization, it must be incorporated the power relations that exist in the region. The concept of "cultural diplomacy" becomes important (Fierro Garza, 2008), and even though it is not a new term, it is its importance as a field of action and privileged space of foreign policy. This concept refers to the promotion of values that nurture a national identity and the history, politics and socioeconomic characteristics of a country abroad. Cultural relations allow the rapprochement between the various political, economic and social sectors of the different countries (Cummings, 2003)[9].

This perspective differs from the readings regarding education abroad as a tool for selling "Country brand" (Mongiello, 2012), for its emphasis on marketing and commercial, but also for its reductive character and the poor interpretation of the identity of countries, while both cultural and public diplomacy incorporate the idea of soft power. In other words, specific efforts are based on previous geopolitical logics, in which asymmetric power relations are involved (Sidicaro, 2003, p. 132). In addition to the normative efforts described above and the issues specifically related to education —referred below: the election of Argentina and specifically of Buenos Aires— will also be defined by the structure of power relations —Regional— where Argentina excels.

The processes of internationalization and mobility are inseparable from those related to globalization and modernization. In these, capitals or

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9   The concept of "cultural diplomacy" cannot be understood without "public diplomacy", which re-
     fers to the set of actions by which governments direct themselves to the people of another country.
     While "traditional diplomacy" can be described as the relationships that are established between
     institutions at the highest level, public diplomacy is responsible for how a country communicates
     with the citizenship of other countries.

"big cities" occupy a privileged place, where the national is linked to the global. Following the classic analysis of Borja and Castells (1998), cities such as Buenos Aires are constituted in "nodal cities", which express the accumulation of these processes and the changes that derive from them: these cities represent the main agglomerations either by their population or by their size, as well as by the socioeconomic relations that are generated inside. This geographic space condenses new-type relations between civil society and political society, as well as new participatory areas different from traditional ones. In the case of Buenos Aires, from its beginnings it was constituted as a city that amalgamates the traditional with the modern, in a framework of cultural diversity that is observed in everyday aspects like the gastronomy and in its urban morphology. Thus, the landscape shows a "modern" city, inscribed in a "global economy" and "flow society", which affects the social dynamics and the restructuring of time and space[10]. But, in addition to these factors, *Reina del Plata* conjugates a specific reputation within the National university system.

Free tuition

The difficulties —economic— of access to higher education —particularly university students— is one of the main reasons for the displacement of young people who wish to study abroad. To this end, they first perform a diagnosis in which they evaluate the possible options where the variables linked to the cost, distance and sociocultural affinity enter. The decision of the place where they are going to spend a considerable time of their lives is not an easy or random task. There are innumerable doubts and reflections before choosing the destination and the university, aspects that contribute to give a significant emotional imprint to those later experiences.

In the evaluation process, in the case of the regional students, one of the peculiarities observed in the interviews is that Argentina appears as one of the options that would bring the most advantages, since the public university

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10 The articulations and interactions between the global and the local become explicit in the urban transformation processes, in the modification of the spatial and social structure of the cities. Buenos Aires is immersed in a series of transformations that demonstrate the logic of new processes of accumulation, organization of production, communication of messages and exercise of power, simultaneously inclusive and excluding the "flow society" (Borja and Castells, 1996).

is free and the private universities have more convenient fees compared to others in Latin American. Although, as we will see later, this is not the only explanatory factor in the choice of educational destination, it does influence in an important way.

The *"Democratic"* university

> [I chose Argentina] because I wanted to study medicine and, well, being admitted in Brazil in the medicine faculty is difficult. We have a test that is a specific day and includes everything you studied in middle and high school. I do not know if it is said like this but in Brazil it is the medium middel. Also, there is a lot of people and few vacancies and also the private faculties are very expensive and I did not have money to pay. And here the UBA is a good faculty and accepts foreigners, the admission is good too. So, I decided to come here.

In the presidency of Juan D. Perón in 1949, with Decree 29337, the university fees were repealed. Since then, public universities and higher education institutes are free, as are the institutions of the other levels that make up the national education system. This presents a great advantage for foreigners, as it facilitates the study against the adverse realities in their own countries. Several nations of the region —being Chile the emblematic case— assume, in addition to a process of university selection, high enrolment costs and the development of "educational markets" (Ball and Yourdell, 2008; Gamallo, 2015). Although in the first decade of the new millennium the states of the region —many of them under "progressive governments" reforms— have broadened their budgets in education, many of them limit their participation to compulsory schooling and then fort the higher level facilitate scholarships and individual financing at high interest rates. Even in countries where quotas are being eliminated, admissions are usually defined according to pre-university tests for a number of vacancies that is lower than the number of applicants.

In Argentina, this logic is inverted. The reform of 1918, when appealing to diverse participation channels of the students in the university government, generates an inflection point, even if it remained an elitist *ethos* on its social composition. It is from the aforementioned decree when it happens what Chiroleu (2009) calls "external democratization", with free and unrestricted

income. Thereafter, the student population is diversified, and then with the dictatorial governments try to limit with a system of place. The return of democracy abolished the restrictions of entry in most of the universities of the country, along with the tariffs. In this sense, the construction of the public university in Argentina —unlike many of the countries of origin of our interviewees—, it is always linked to equality and democracy, and these are constant expressions and struggle for and by those emblems. This is what many authors have emphasized in pointing out the "plebeian" trait of the Argentinian University (Krotsch, 2014). The latter is important when explaining the reasons why students choose to study in Argentina when the expenses are perhaps even higher than staying in their own country. In several works (Mayer and Cerezo, 2016; Mayer and Cerezo, 2018a and 2018b) showed how the passage towards the university implies the putting into operation of certain knowledge and capitals that allow the achievement of institutional and academic affiliation. The democratic and culturally diverse "long-standing" *ethos* in national universities can be an important explanatory factor that generates attraction in foreign students, in the face of selection and exclusion processes in their local institutions, even when they can enter to them. This can be thought of even for the most elitist Argentinian universities, such as Universidad de Buenos Aires, which, despite the prestige and reputation —analyzed below— is not presented as an elite space[11].

Speeches on *"quality"*

The speeches regarding the "quality" university exist since its beginnings. However, like any social practice, it is a socially located discourse that should be contextualized not only in historical terms, but according to its enunciators. Thus, Fernández Lamara (2005) argues that for academics their meaning will be associated with knowledge, for employers to competencies, for students to employability and for the state can refer to aspects associated with social development, science or the costs and requirements of "human capital". Without entering into the debate about

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11 The expansion of the tuition was accompanied by the development of the "Universities of the Urban" (Mayer and Cerezo, 2016), which were the response of the state to house "new audiences", mostly first generation of students, and are born with a more inclusive spirit than the "traditional" universities.

"university quality", the meaning that the students give them is mentioned as —as a native category— related to a certain instrumentality for their present and future development, but which is anchored in the pillars built from governmental and international agencies and agencies, in which accreditation and evaluation are fundamental.

I came in August 2013, more than

> anything for the UBA, for the ranking, I think the UBA was in second place in Latin America. First I thought in Santo Tomé, in the south of Brazil. But then I realized that university wasn't that good. Then I saw the UBA, and then I thought: I better select UBA, I'm going for something more guaranteed... So I'm going to the UBA because it is good and the title obtained will be recognized. And I came directly to Buenos Aires, which is the first foreign destination I know.

The References

Lines above, in recounting existing power relations that delimit elections, or at least that are present in such delimitation, was referred to the concept of public diplomacy. This implies that previous experiences, stories and commentaries become reservoirs about the place to be chosen, as a reference. These Lego ambassadors, either because they had previous experiences in Buenos Aires or because of their reputation, are an important factor in explaining the motivations of the election. In this sense, are contemplated the images that their relatives have not only on the place, but also for the host society, that is, the residents who live in the area.

The experiences abroad are an additional value in the formation of students, this is not only observed when considering the requirements in qualifications by applicants to jobs, but also in the social imaginary about what it represents "Have an experience outside."

> "I had finished my career and at work I was always told:" You have to go to study outside, go through the experience" And I had submitted to a scholarship in Chile that I did not obtain until a colleague told me, "No!, but this is very good and is related to your work, the topics that interests you". He was my co-worker, we had commented in the office and I had to present a single letter of admission or pre-admission and I presented there in UBA and in December the list came out and I entered"

Here, it is clearly reflected the imposition that often occurs at the time of the decision to course a postgraduate study or specialization abroad. This is also manifested in a tradition, aspect in looking outward that is sometimes seen in societies with educational systems —and universities— of little development or reserved for elites, even when they have democratized their access.

Tradition, modernity and academic perspective

Tradition and geopolitical approaches that reflect historical vicissitudes about relations between States also comprise a key —albeit sometimes invisible or underlying— element that arises when choosing a destiny to study.

> Imagine that the Paraguayan university begins to have a diversity of career in the second half of the twentieth century, everyone came here or Uruguay, that is, the Paraguayan tradition was to look to Argentina, it is no coincidence that I looked at Argentina, it is no coincidence that I course a master in Paraguay and has had reference and Argentinian professors, because it is the closest you had. You ask me "Why Buenos Aires?" and it was the best thing I had at hand. Evaluating now I find it very good to have chosen Buenos Aires, in a moment I thought I wanted to go to the United States, because it was the only offer I had, and once you go there Americans offer everything, as you said, but analyzing the approaches and the intellectual freedom I have here... Today I'm glad to be here, I like the UBA, I like the discussion level, I understand Argentina in a way that I had not understood before (a student from Paraguay).

Differences in job development opportunities are also an element that potential young travellers take into account when deciding where to study, which brings to light differences in productive development levels and of the different countries and cities that are within the reach of being elected, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of the work markets that are characteristic of each area.

Conclusions

The educational processes, despite the rigidities inherent in the systems in which they are inserted, present a dimension of adaptability and response

to social changes. In this way, throughout the article, have been analyzed the internationalization processes in sociological aspects, that is, in its relation with the contemporary societies. First, the analysis showed the relation of the phenomena here studied with the social and educational inequality, the universalization and overcrowding of the middle level, and its implication in the higher level. As in other levels, the greater coverage incorporates new inequalities, which previously remained outside the educational institutions, then arise differentiation strategies —in the Lego actors— to excel. Secondly —and linked to social transformations—, internationalization and educational mobility are inseparable from the economy of post-organization, reflexivity, de-differentiation of society, flows and the travel expansion due to social organization and professional expertise (Urry and Lash, 1998), and on the mobility regimes (Glick Schiller and Salazar, 2013), as well as the power relations. Thus, social flows manifest behaviors that are coupled with the structural differences between the issuing and host countries of students linked to the various levels of society development. Education-based academic mobility would appear to replicate the differences between developed regions versus developing regions. But not only between countries and regions, but also —and mainly— among students: being able to access the experiences derived from the phenomena studied here, requires the deployment of a series of resources —mainly economic, but not exclusively— which are not equally available in all social sectors. In this sense, the still low proportion of international students, although it can be understood by the novelty of these processes in this continent, can also be explained by the inequalities that cross it and that leave in evidence these modalities. In addition, there are factors such as geographical distances and connectivity difficulties that show a counterface of the homologous process in Europe.

A last point in this instance is the one referring to the internationalization valuation as the "experience" that it provides. Here, as seen in the fragments of the aforementioned interviews, are also pondered the experiences and learning that these movements assume as the academic "quality". These statements appear as social recommendations —i.e., peers, family and/ or family— or because "the market" would capitalize on mobility. This dimension seems crucial to the extent that the gain of experience implies the acquisition of a specific capital, which transcends the contents of the academic training to be included in the general learning, that is, obtained living abroad: "contact" with other cultures, living alone, flexibility when moving, etc. In

a word, skills related to the emotional or soft skills. While the hard are the skills and knowledge specifically related to the area of academic concern, the soft are the skills linked to the experience in a context of strong and constant changes in "the market". Otherwise, in the commitment to study —and the choice of a career— is included the uncertainty as necessary —or not— of what the professional can do once he/she graduates. The internationalization experiences, by introducing a capital related to transversal skills and little present in the curricula —the soft ones— would give (the impression of) more security, being valued both socially and commercially.

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