

Spanish Language in Cultural Industries

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Abstract:

Besides their symbolic and aesthetic value, cultural and creative activities are a relevant part of economy. Measuring this economic contribution is not in contradiction with symbolic and artistic meaning. The language is important in the process of creation and diffusion of cultural goods. In this paper we will try to assess the importance of Spanish language in cultural products of Spanish speaking communities. We make a tentative study to ponder and value that importance. And we take into account the position of Spanish, Portuguese, and other languages in the world, English being “hypercentral”; the varieties of Spanish and cultural industries of different countries, with different styles of dubbing and subtitling in cinema and TV; and the “neutral” or “international” Spanish. Strengthening the exchange of original contents in Latin America, Portugal and Spain is the best step for its creation and world diffusion.

Keywords: cultural economics; cultural industries; creative industries; language economics

The set of cultural and creative activities, in addition to being important in symbolic and artistic terms, represents a significant part of a country’s economic activity. In order to measure this contribution in monetary terms one needs to be familiar with the economy, and it does not conflict with its symbolic and artistic importance. The language is fundamental in the process of creating and spreading cultural goods. In this work we shall take some steps towards discovering the importance of the Spanish language in cultural creations in Spanish-speaking communities. We use as our starting point works by economists and statisticians to measure the economic value of cultural activities. We propose a way of approaching a calculation of how much weight a language has in those activities and their evaluation. Since we are referring to cultural industries in Spanish, we perforce refer to the situation of Spanish, Portuguese and other languages in the group of world languages in which English has a “hypercentral” role, to the unity and diversity of Spanish in the different places where it is spoken, the different centers of this language and its cultural industries, as seen in styles of dubbing and subtitling in cinema and television, and the so-called “neutral” or international Spanish. We reach the conclusion that the exchange of original content in

the Latin-American area is positive as a means of fomenting its creation and distribution on a worldwide scale.

1. Economic of language

The language used for expression is fundamental in the process of creating and spreading cultural goods. In this work we shall take steps to ascertain, and as far as possible, attempt to measure, the importance of the Spanish language in cultural creations of Spanish-speaking communities. To analyze the weight exerted by language in culture, it is necessary to penetrate more deeply into the field of “language economics” (Zhang and Grenier, 2013); and logically we must also pay attention to the purely linguistic area. We start from works by economists and statisticians to measure the economic value of cultural activities, which we have reviewed in the previous section. Subsequently, we need to consider the weight of language in cultural activities. In some cases another type of language may predominate, as in the case of plastic arts, but more often they need the spoken and written language to create or disseminate them. Later we centre on the study of the Spanish language in cultural creations produced or disseminated in Latin-American communities. In order to analyze “culture in Spanish”, we must take into account the different centers of this language. We will observe important aspects which can be measured, such as the flow of book translations, dubbing and subtitled films and television series, and versions in Spanish and English of songs of Spanish or “Latin” music. We shall review the different styles used in dubbed and subtitled versions in cinema and television, including what is called “neutral” or international Spanish, and will bear in mind the situation of Spanish, Portuguese and other languages in the whole group of world languages, where English plays a role that has been called “hypercentral”.

Languages not only have cultural and symbolic value. They also have an economic value, although one that is difficult to measure. One usual and clear way to assess it is measuring the difference in wages derived from being able to speak or write a second language. Learning a second language may be a decision driven by amusement or cultural enrichment, but it is also an asset in the labor market, and so has a value than can be measured with economic techniques.¹

¹ The research project “The Economic Value of Spanish”, sponsored by Fundación Telefónica, directed by García Delgado, Alonso and Jimenez, involves scholars from different fields and countries. The results are published in 14 books, freely available in

A more ambitious methodology tries to measure the economic value of a particular language. Girón & Cañadas (2009) select some particular products, goods or services in which language is very important; set coefficients or weights of language on them, and then assess the part of GDP that is based on language. The share of Spain's GDP, once the "language coefficients" are taken into account varies from 10,8 to 15,6 %, depending on using a restrictive criteria or a wider one. This would be the value of Spanish language in Spain.²

But what we need is the difference between one language and another. Spanish is a global language, in a world with English as "hyper-central" language and many other central, semi-central and peripheral or minority languages. There must be economic advantages (or disadvantages) for people or businesses using that language. Carreras & Ogonowsky (2009) take the methodology developed by Girón & Cañadas (2009) and use it with national accounts of Spain and Poland. Both countries are similar in population and size of the economy; but Polish is a language spoken in Poland and Spanish a global language with 400 million speakers in Spain and Latin America, and widely spread as a second language. This must be an advantage, especially for cultural industries produced in Spanish. But that methodology does not reflect, numerically, the difference: the share of GDP obtained is very similar in both countries. So, as the authors conclude, macroeconomic figures do not show the comparative value of Spanish and Poland. It is necessary to look inside the main sectors related to language, their functioning and their microeconomic figures.

2. Language in cultural industries

Cultural industries, or most of them, are language related, are very relevant in the part of the economy responsible for the economic value of a language. We will look inside these sectors, using relatively simple figure (number of books or tickets sold; box office...) and will give careful attention to the functioning of each sector, and its "chain of value". Then we will look at some linguistic features: the language (or dialect, or accent), in which cultural products are created or published or broadcast; and the

PDF format at <http://www.fundacion.telefonica.com/> García Delgado *et al* (2012) provides a theoretical framework and a synthesis. On language and emigration, see Alonso *et al* (2010, 2014).

² Girón & Cañadas (2009, p. 38). On Spain, see a former study by García Gracia *et al* (2003) and the official Satellite Account of Culture (Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports (2013). On Latin America, see Ernesto Piedras (2004, updated 2009) on Mexico, and the studies of Convenio Andres Bello, summarized in Santos & Piedras (forthcoming). Dulfano (2013) discuss the value of studying a second language in the USA.

different ways to reach a different language community, though translation, dubbing, or subtitles.

First, we need to define what we consider “cultural industry”. And then, we will select those related to language. Products of cultural industries may rely on written or spoken language, like literature, films, many songs; some other can be enjoyed without that language, like painting, sculpture, some music... In order to assess how much of the value of each cultural sector is language related, we need to listen to psychologists. A song is usually a mix of melody and lyrics, and experimental psychology tries to determine how important each part is. But we can also look at the sales figures of pop music, measuring pop music sung in English and in Spanish, and then we get a simple number or percentage.

“Culture” is an ambiguous word. The sectors included in “culture”, “cultural (and creative) economy”, “cultural economics”, or much more broadly, “entertainment and media”, are subject of discussion. We consider that it is useless to try to reach a precise definition and limits of the subject; depending on the purpose of each study, we need a narrow or broad definition of culture. The content of books may be very important when experts choose which ones are made compulsory at school, and that requires an assessment of the quality; but if we are studying the level of literacy, or the spread of a language in publishing industry, the content is not that important.³

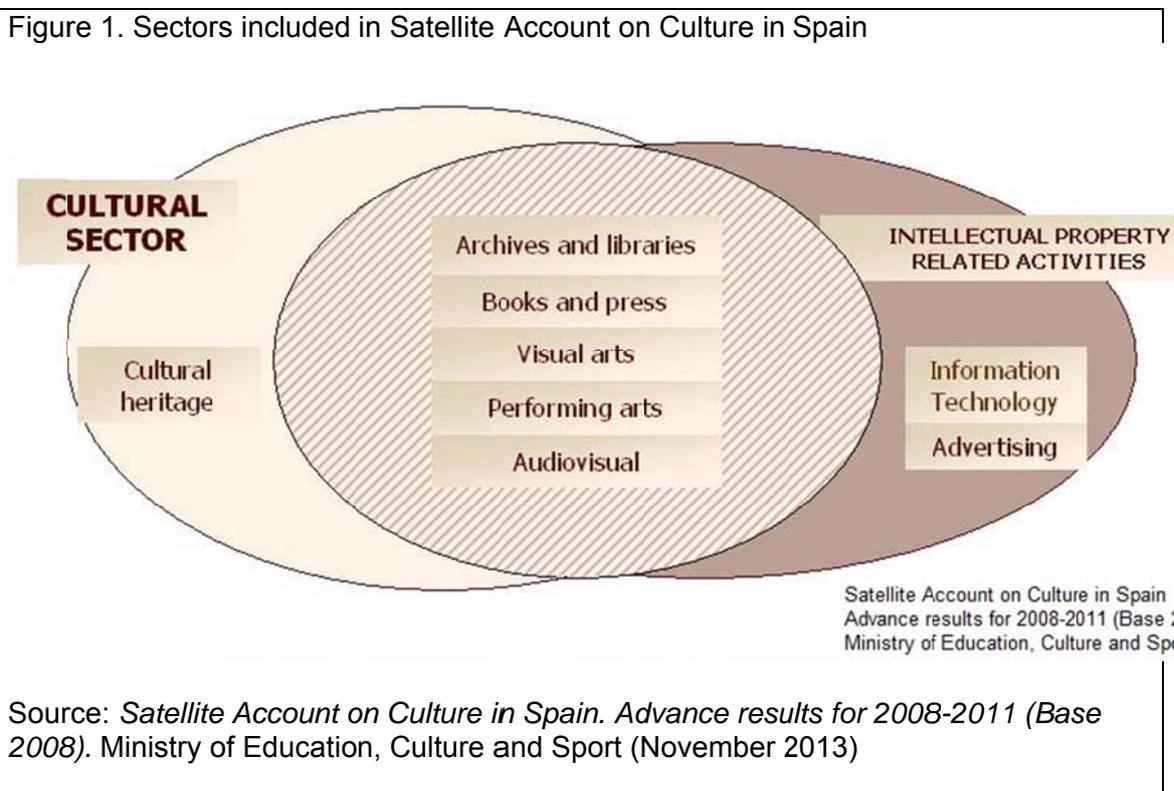
A methodological definition of culture is controversial; but the statistics and national account have already reached a consensus about what is included in “culture”. I would prefer a more restrictive definition, attending to the content of each media: it sounds ridiculous to consider all TV programs (sports, reality show, news...) as “culture”. Or, to use the other label, “Entertainment and media”. But what is included in “culture and creative economy” is a wide variety of sectors, apparently with the idea of making it appear more important. And, as Ruth Towse has said, “Even if we wanted to ignore this as hype, it has become impossible to do so”.⁴

We intend to measure the part of each cultural industry that depends on language; and then the part of this particular “language-related” cultural industry that is spread (published, broadcasted...) in each language. The “Satellite Account of Culture” in Spain is the reference to which we will try to assign weight on the importance of

³ See Santos & Montás (2011), 2.1. Definición de Cultura. 2.2. Industrias culturales” (pp. 49-60).

⁴ Towse (2010), pp. 40, 46, 105, 363, 378-9, 401, 544-5, 547.

language in each cultural and creative sector.⁵ Figure 1 shows the sectors included in Spain Satellite account, in the two different ways used to measure its economic value.

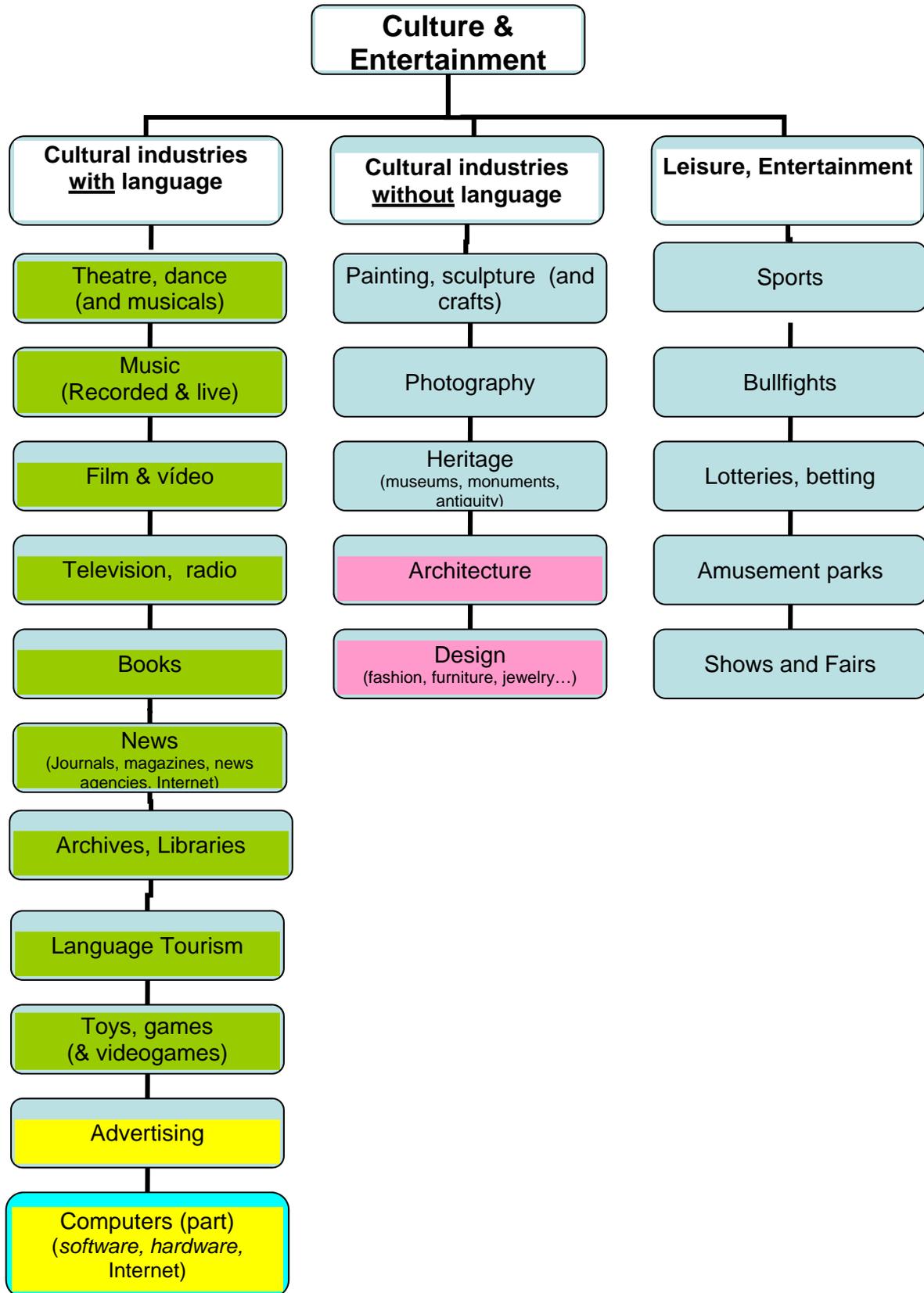


There is no sense in trying to impose a very narrow definition of “culture” or “cultural industries”. There is no good definition of culture separate from the specific purpose of a specific study. In a study of language in cultural and creative economy, we need to start with a really broad definition of the field; and then we will assign the weights for its cultural significance, and then for its relation to language. Figure 2 shows the list of sectors, included and excluded, in our study of language in cultural industries.⁶

⁵ The *Satellite Account on Culture in Spain* provides information and figures two groups of sector: those related to culture, and those related to intellectual property. A separate figure is provided for each of the two methodologies.

⁶ Those sectors are not exactly those included in the “Satellite account of Culture”. Data have been adjusted, taking into account other sources and estimations. See Santos & Montás (2001) for detailed figures.

Figure 2. «Culture & Entertainment» sectors and their relation to language



Source: Santos & Montas (2011)

Then we try to assess the importance of the language in each sector; and, in this first approach, the importance of Spanish language In cultural and creative sectors in Spain. Table 1 shows the weight assigned to “Culture” (C) and “Spanish Language” (Ñ) for each sector.

Table 1. Weight assigned to Culture (C) and Spanish language (Ñ) in “cultural industries” in Spain.			
	Culture C	Spanish language Ñ	Culture & language C x Ñ
Cultural industries <u>with</u> language			
Theatre, dance, y opera	100%	75%	75%
Music (recorded & live)	100%	55%	55%
Film, video	100%	95%	95%
Television, radio	100%	95%	95%
Book & Press			
Books	100%	85%	85%
Journals, magazines	100%	95%	94%
Archives, libraries	100%	95%	95%
Games, toys			
Videogames (<i>software</i> & consoles)	100%	50%	50%
Other games & toys	50%	25%	12,5%
Language Tourism	100%	100%	100%
Advertising	100%	95%	95%
Computers (internet, <i>software</i> , <i>hardware</i>) (In Satellite Account, “Information technology”)	50%	75%	37,5%
Interdisciplinary	100%	75%	75%
Cultural industries <u>without</u> language (or with little importance of language)			
Visual Arts			
Painting, sculpture	100%	0%	0%
Photography	100%	0%	0%
Architecture	100%	0%	0%
Heritage (museums, monuments...)	100%	0%	0%
Source: Santos & Montas (2011)			

It must be noted that, in our study for Spanish language, we assign a “Weight of Spanish language”; but it includes **two different concepts**:

- 1) The part of a cultural industry in which language is important
- 2) Within this “culture with language”, the part created or spread (published, broadcasted) in Spanish. Other languages need to be subtracted: English, other foreign languages, and co-official languages in Spain (Catalan, Basque, Galician).

In our study, we choose this way, only for simplicity. But the two different concepts must be treated separately, because the study of language in cultural industries may refer to Spanish, compared with English, but also to languages in countries with two linguistic communities, such as francophone speakers in Canada, or minority languages, such as native Americans in many countries.

These weights came from accessible and simple figures, like the proportion of books or press or radio and TV in foreign language, or in other co-official language in Spain. Some of the weights are difficult to assess: the importance of language in music, for instance, is studied in psychology journals, but we mainly rely on the sales figures. On the importance of culture for each sector, we have kept the standard in national account, although we think that the content should be much more relevant criteria. Television is considered 100% culture; this may appear odd (and it sounds odd to me); but in a study that focuses on language, it’s probably the best decision.

We must say that measuring the economic value of cultural industries in Spanish (in this first study, in Spain) is a necessary task. Knowing the statistics from cultural sectors and from national accounts is necessary, and for comparison (although, we must say, the methodology is not, at this time, homogeneous enough to allow an international comparison). But, as Carrera & Ogonoswky conclude in their comparative study on Poland and Spain, macroeconomic figures are a very limited source in order to assess the differential value of one particular language related to another: Spanish related to English, or to French and German, the other “big ones” in this league.

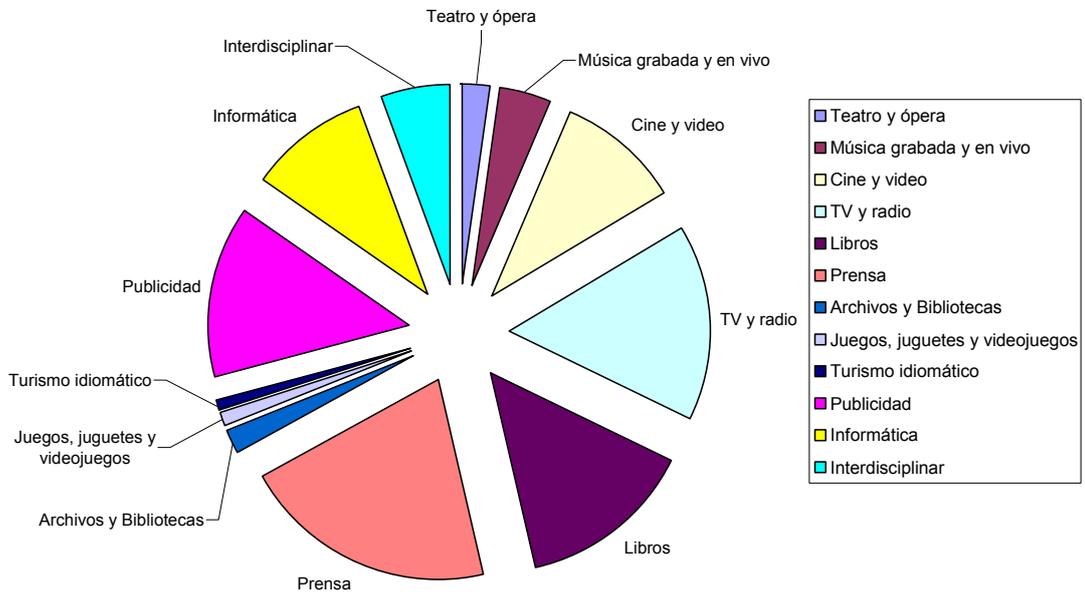
Table 2 shows the value, expressed in percentage of Spain GDP, of “cultural industries in Spanish”, only for Spain economy. Further studies must be done, taking into account the whole Spanish-speaking community.

Table 2. Economic value of “Cultural industries in Spanish” in Spain (year 2009)						
	Row data	Culture (Row x C)		Spanish (Row x C x Ñ)		
	%PIB	C	%PIB	Ñ	%PIB	% Cult. Esp.
Theatre, dance, y opera	0,09%	100%	0,09%	75%	0,07%	2,5%
Music (recorded & live)	0,21%	100%	0,21%	55%	0,11%	4,1%
Film, video	0,31%	100%	0,31%	95%	0,29%	10,4%
Television, radio	0,51%	100%	0,51%	95%	0,49%	17,3%
Books & Press (paper & digital)	1,04%	100%	1,04%	90%	0,94%	33,4%
Books	0,48%	100%	0,48%	85%	0,41%	14,4%
Press	0,56%	100%	0,56%	95%	0,53%	19,0%
Archives, libraries	0,06%	100%	0,06%	95%	0,06%	2,2%
Games, toys	0,10%	72%	0,07%	40%	0,03%	1,1%
Videogames (<i>software & consoles</i>)	0,05%	100%	0,05%	50%	0,02%	0,8%
Other games & toys	0,06%	50%	0,03%	25%	0,01%	0,3%
Language Tourism	0,02%	100%	0,02%	100%	0,02%	0,7%
Advertising	0,38%	100%	0,38%	95%	0,36%	12,7%
Computers (<i>internet, software, hardware</i>) (In Satellite Account, “Information technology”)	0,70%	50%	0,35%	75%	0,26%	9,4%
Interdisciplinary	0,23%	100%	0,23%	75%	0,17%	6,2%
Total	3,66%		3,28%		<u>2,81%</u>	100%

Source: Santos & Montas (2011)

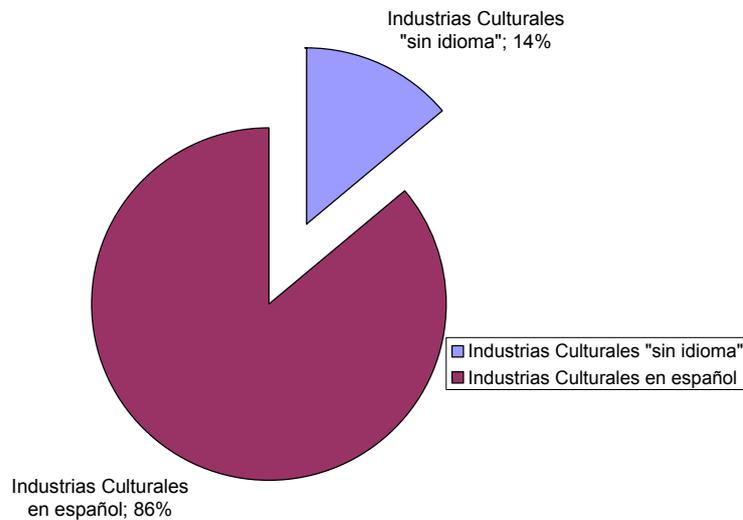
These results, numerically shown in Table 2 and detailed in our study, can be shown in a graphic, simplified way, through Figures 3 and 4 (next page).

Figure 3. «Cultural industries in Spanish» in Spain, by sectors (year 2009)



Source: Santos & Montás (2011)

Figure 4. «Culture in Spanish» in cultural industries in Spain (year 2009)



Source: Santos & Montás (2011)

2.1. The publishing market. Translation difficulties from Spanish to English

The weight of languages in the world is clearly shown in cultural industries. The importance of a language is determined by the caliber of its literary creations, but also the importance of the publishing industry in that language and the number of translations of literary works in that language to other languages, particularly to English. Using this indicator, we are able to evaluate the weight of languages in the world.⁷

English is the central, or rather “hypercentral” language, not only because of the number of people who speak it as a first language and “common language” or second language; but due to its weight in world culture and economics. This can be observed in the number of books originally published in English and later translated to other languages; and also, as the other side of the coin of this overwhelming dominance, the slight presence in the English-speaking world of works written in other languages. On the other hand, more than half the books translated worldwide were originally written in English. Heilbron (2010a, 2010b) outlines a “world system of translation”, taking into account both the source and the target cultures. Translation from a language shows the strength of that language. Considering the international flows of translated books, the international translation system appears as a 4-level structure:

- 1) 55 to 60 % of all book translations are made from English. Heilbron says it has a “hypercentral” position, in terms of a core-periphery model.
- 2) After English, two languages have a central position: German and French, each with a share of about 10% of the global translation market. Both are clearly ahead of all the other languages.
- 3) A group of 7 or 8 languages that have what a “semi-central” position. Each of them has a share of 1 to 3 % of the world market. Spanish, Italian, and Russian are in this group.
- 4) Other languages, from which less than 1% of the book translations worldwide are made. These languages can be considered ‘peripheral’ in the international translation system. But some of these languages have a very large number of speakers: Chinese, Portuguese, Japanese and Arabic, but their role in the translation economy is peripheral as compared to more central languages.

We consider that Heilbron’s classification must include a fifth level, including languages with few speakers, but with some cultural, economic and political power; and also

⁷ Heilbron 2010a and 2010b; Barré 2010; Werner 2009; Santos & Montás 2011.

minority languages in many countries. Its study can be very relevant for some cultural and economic purposes, and they are quite different from Chinese, Portuguese, Japanese and Arabic.

If we consider cinema or music we encounter the same situation in which the same dominance of the English language in cultural production and entertainment is to be seen. Other languages withstand this domination as best they are able. In cultural industries, however, no more than a few languages have a significant role, though far behind English: French, German, Spanish, Italian, Russian, Hindi and Chinese. This does not depend upon the number of speakers, rather it is the economic and cultural clout of the countries where each of the languages is spoken.

So-called “central languages” have a highly important cultural role, albeit a long way behind English. German, through its powerful publishing industry in Germany, and its political and economic influence, is one of the important languages. The same occurs with French in its area of influence. The Russian language was one of the most important, to go by the translations that have been made over time to other world languages. However, since the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 and the breakup of the Soviet Union, its influence has waned significantly. This has played a part in strengthening English even more. They are followed by two languages, Spanish and Italian, which are strong in the publishing industry and cultural industries as a whole. That is the “first division” of languages which are of cultural importance in the global period.

It is in this context that we have to consider the importance of the rise of Spanish as a world global language and particularly so in cultural industries. As a hypercentral language in cultural industries English is way ahead; but German, French and even Italians in recent decades have more powerful cultural industries with more global influence than Spanish, despite having a much lower number of speakers. The fact that all over the world, including in the United States, there are a large number of Spanish speakers gives Spanish a certain advantage. These are the three languages it needs to be compared with. Each of them (French, German, Spanish and Italian) are ahead of peripheral (although widely spoken) languages, which wield less influence beyond the borders of countries that speak them. They struggle with English to maintain global status or use their strength to reach it through translation into English and all other languages.

We must not understand this as a fight between Spanish and other neighboring languages, such as Portuguese, with many millions of speakers or Catalan. On the

contrary, the economic and cultural scope of Latin America, those speaking Spanish and Portuguese in the United States, and Spain, together add up to a group in which cultural exchanges are natural and are also a launching pad for the global market.

The reality of different languages in the world is more complex than the “ranking” of the most spoken languages, or in which one most things are published, or from which most translations are produced. Also of importance are the relations between different languages, neighboring ones for reasons of language, culture, geography or economics.

Following on from the studies of Johan Heilbron, Barré (2010) made a detailed study of central languages and minority ones with those the latter are related to via translations. He analyzes the data from Unesco’s *Index Translationum* from 1979 onwards. He not only measures the weight of the most important languages, according to the number of translations to other languages and those translated into theirs (it is reflected in the largest circles in the graph), he also takes the main languages and languages from their sphere of influence. Except for China for which the *Index* does not offer enough data, we can see his results in Figure 5, with special attention given to the Spanish and Portuguese languages and other neighboring ones. In this way the author explains in which group of languages Spanish belongs:

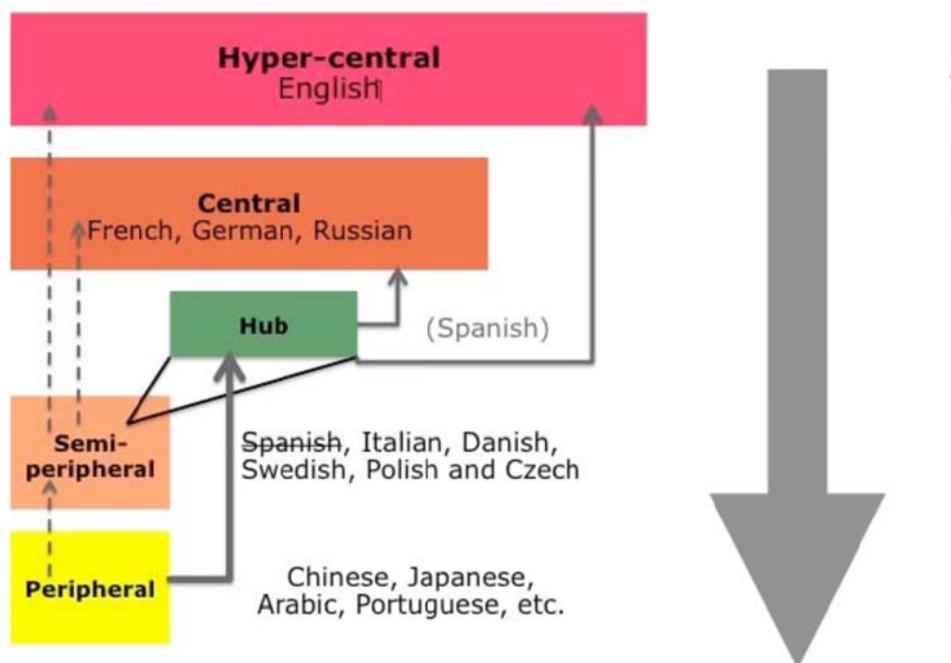
A group of languages made up of Spanish, Portuguese and Italian. In this group, languages such as Basque and Catalan can also be found. This bloc is particularly closely linked with English, French, and Romanian as well as with German and Greek (Barré 2010:203)

The trend in the last quarter century is not towards more translations, as would have been expected, had there been a repetition of the multiplication of exchanges through “economic globalization”. In fact, there were fewer exchanges and the position of the “hypercentral” language strengthened (Barre, 2010: 191).

It is important to point out that some “central” or “semi-central” languages may play a role of intermediary paving the way, for reasons of linguistic affinity and the publishing market leading to English, the “hypercentral” language and enabling global diffusion to be achieved. This seems to be what happens with French and German. Werner (2010) points out that in Brazil the Spanish language plays the “link language” role, since translation into Spanish provides it with an extra symbolic value (as well as a market one, we would add), making it a more attractive book for the difficult English language market. He analyzes the cases of the Brazilian writers Machado de Assis, Mario de Andrade, Jorge Amado, Clarice Lispector, Paulo Coelho and Patricia Melo. Except for the last one, whose agent concentrated from the outset on English, German and French, the others appear to follow the same path. Figure 6 shows this outcome.

Figure 6.- Representation of Heilbron’s system including Spanish as ‘hub language’ for the Brazilian Portuguese.

Book Translation as a Cultural World-System



Source: Source: Werner (2009)

A different aspect of the link between several languages is present in what is known as “portuñol” or “portunhol”, which is important in the broad border area between Brazil and Argentina, and “Spanglish” in the United States. These words are usually negative in meaning, since they are a mixture of both languages, and very distant from the educated version of either. In the field of literary creation there is a cultured version, which consists of using a very small number of words in the other language, as a literary device for placing a character, or in advertising to do the same for a product. Translating such texts also presents a creative challenge. In the novel *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, written in English by the Dominican Junot Diaz, winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 2007, the main characters of Dominican origin, speak in English with many words in Spanish. In the Spanish version, *La Maravillosa vida breve de Oscar Wao*, the opposite occurs: to obtain the same effect they use Spanish with a lot of words in English (Jiménez 2011).

2.2. Cinema, dubbing and subtitles. “Neutral” or” international” Spanish

In cinema and television, the importance of language does not lie in the language in which the films and series are produced. Rather, it is in the languages in which they are shown in cinemas, via dubbing and subtitles. We consider that not only radio but cinema and television as well depend crucially on words and, therefore on the language.⁸

In some countries it is usual to see films in the original version in cinemas and on television, with subtitles in the local language. As we have already mentioned, this occurs in Portugal and some Spanish-speaking countries. Choice depends partially on the culture and customs of each country, but also on market size. It must not be overlooked that subtitling is a great deal cheaper and quicker than dubbing a film. Most Latin-American countries with a large market usually dub.⁹

Dubbing films leads us to consider the topic of the diversity of Spanish in the world. Written Spanish has some idioms, expressions or words which do not have the same

⁸ Santos & Montás (2011) bearing in mind that in Spain, in general, foreign films are dubbed, allotted 95% Spanish language weighting for cinema shown in Spain. The same weighting is assigned to radio and television. In both cases, what is valued quantitatively is the weight of co-official languages in Spain, namely, Catalan, Basque, Gallego, and broadcasts in other world languages.

⁹ In Argentina dubbing has been enforced by law: decree 933/2013 published 17-07-2013, known as the “Dubbing law”. Wikipedia, sometimes irregular, has magnificent voices on dubbed cinema: “Dubbing (filmmaking)”, “Dub localization”, “Doblaje”. (Santos & Montás, 2011:14-127)

meaning in each Spanish speaking country. Despite this, there is a strong cohesive relationship in written Spanish and there is less difference found among the different varieties than can be found, for example in English. In the series of best-selling *Harry Potter* books written in English by the authoress J. K. Rowling, the United States version is edited, changing British words not in common use in America to their U.S. equivalent. These alterations are mentioned as the reason for Harry Potter's success in America. Moreover, Spanish editors of important Latin American authors of novels prefer to change some of these words or expressions to make the books more attractive to the public of Spain. But these differences are very small in written Spanish.

However, the same cannot be said for spoken Spanish, and thus for dubbing in the cinema. The accent in each country as well as numerous expressions means that every audience finds it strange or funny to see a film dubbed into Spanish but with another accent. There are also different traditions regarding how subtitles are translated. In Latin America it is normally done literally, whereas in Spain a free version is common, which on occasions creates a new phrase to achieve a similar result. A good example is the dubbing in Spain of the film "Gran Torino" (2008).

For films to be a box-office success it is not generally advisable to use the same accent and expressions from the Spanish for all Spanish-speaking countries, even if in the cultured written version the differences are less. In daily speech, there may be confusion with the meaning of a word or expression; but, more significantly, public reaction in the face of different accents may make it difficult for the film to be a success. This gives rise to two solutions: make several different dubbed versions, or tone down the accents to reach a compromise. This is how we obtain "neutral" or "international" Spanish in dubbing, which is a version of Spanish bereft of any expressions which might be confusing or impair commercial success. This has been gaining ground in Latin America and the United States; on the other hand, dubbings produced for the Spanish market are usually made in Spain. In practice, in audiovisual industries different Spanish versions are found: 1) the one for Spain, called Iberian or European; 2) The "Rioplátense" one for Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay; 3) the Mexican one for Mexico, the United States, Canada, Central America and the rest of the Latin American countries. We can add a fourth, which would be "neutral" Spanish, made in Mexico but toned down. The same Spanish language with a softer accent is used in film-making in the United States, or in co-productions involving Spain and Argentina (Gómez, 2012; Ávila, 2011). In television, "neutral" Spanish with a toned down accent is even more common, particularly if we include the large Hispanic audience in the United States.

Dialogue coaches in film studies aim to have in a short time all the actors speaking with the same flat accent. The chain aims to eliminate any trace of idiosyncrasy which might be a nuisance for the Hispanic audience in the U.S. bearing in mind how many accents are to be found in Spanish speaking countries. The challenge is to obtain the same uniform sound from all the actors, regardless of whether, off-camera, they speak with the clipped South American accent or the more languid Caribbean sounds. At stake is the huge Spanish speaking audience in the United States, one of the largest outside Mexico (Gómez 2012)

“Neutral” Spanish is not to be confused with the old belief that the Castilian accent was the norm for speaking the language. Governments and academies are significant in these decisions, but it is the markets, which depend upon public taste, that have greater or lesser weight.

Outside the realms of literary creation, a driving force in unifying written Spanish was born in the large multinational companies, when they adapted the text of their manuals, software, websites, etc to save the costs involved in making a single translation.¹⁰

2.3. A success story: *telenovelas* (in Portuguese and in Spanish) in a global market

A case which, rightly, has received much attention is the worldwide success of Brazilian and Mexican “telenovelas,” overcoming the fearful obstacles imposed by the markets in English speaking countries, the “hypercentral” language. In principle, this would appear to be the same pattern that we pointed out in the publishing industry, where the Spanish language or the importance of the market in the whole of Latin America, acts as a bridge to entry into other English speaking markets or those with a highly diversified number of languages. The expansion abroad of Brazilian telenovelas is founded upon previous success in all Spanish speaking countries. Linguistic proximity, along with common cultures and economies, are factors in facilitating exchanges, while they make it easier to break into English speaking markets (Wilkinson 2003; Medina and Barron 2011). In this case, however, the language is linked to a publishing industry, or a television one: the language systems measured by Heilbron and Barré via book translations are the equivalent to a certain extent of publishing or television markets. Also, the global dissemination of these productions accustoms audiences to different Spanish accents and expressions worldwide:

¹⁰ The weight of Spanish in the scientific field is the subject of García Delgado *et al* (2013). Ortiz (2009) writes from Brazil on the supremacy of English in the social sciences

Since Mexican telenovelas came into being audiences in other countries no longer associate that accent with laughter, as was the case when all they knew was through the films of Cantinflas. It was a similar case with Argentinian telenovelas, which have taught us that the accent heard in that area is not always as sad as in the tangos of Carlos Gardel. And telenovelas from Venezuela and Colombia have introduced the lilting accents of the tropics and voices such as *cheverísimo* and *sabrosura* into peoples' drawing rooms. In this manner Spanish speakers have learned that one can love and one can hate with different accents and different words (Gómez, 2012).

2.4. Latin music, songs in Spanish

Music, particularly of the popular type, has a language, even though it is said to be a universal language. In popular music, albeit a song may always be rather different from a recited poem, the song's lyrics, and thus the language it is sung in, is important in most genres. However, the weight of language in music varies considerably; some lyrics are practically irrelevant and others are a fundamental part in the experience received by whoever listens to it. To assess the importance of the lyrics to each song we need the aid of a music psychologist (Pettijohn *et al* 2009; Braticco *et al* 2011; Iwanaga 2013). But statistics provide us with a simple way of approaching the same target. People have a preference for different songs, for example, in Spanish speaking countries, songs in Spanish rather than songs in English. And their tastes, expressed through purchases, downloads, listening to radio broadcasts, going to concerts, etc., enable us to measure the weight of the language in the cultural industry of music. Our study gives Spain a weighting of 55% to the language in the music, especially through the importance of popular music sung in Spanish; and the consideration that language is highly important in music for the masses.

In the lists of hits (which nowadays are more complex, since they have to take into account albums and songs, CD purchases, downloads or those heard on streaming), songs in Spanish are of importance in the top placings, in Spanish speaking countries. And "Latin" music, the label by which music in Spanish in the U.S. is known, accounts for a significant share in the market for music recorded in the United States. Non-Spanish speaking artists sing songs in Castilian Spanish or Spanish versions of them. But, despite the strength that "Latin" music has acquired in recent years (it is defined as music containing more than 50% of the lyric in Spanish) we must be realistic regarding its diffusion: in the U.S. "Latin" music accounts for a much lower percentage than all the popular music sung in English, and artists who fit this label only become truly popular when they also sing in English. With exceptions such as Juanes or Maná, successful singers bring out English versions of their songs. But their importance is maintained,

and what is more, they are increasingly less geared to the specifically Spanish speaking audience:

The time has indeed come for the Hispanic market no longer to be seen as a niche market. The data show that U.S. Hispanics are the new mainstream (Dold 2013)

We may add that, just as we have seen with book translations, in Brazil traditionally, there have been many singers who have made versions in Spanish of their songs, and had great success. Let us mention, as examples, Roberto Carlos, Xuxa, Simone Bittencourt de Oliveira, Paolo Ricardo and Alexander Pires (Mesa, 2014).

2.5. Reading on Internet: press, encyclopedias

Technology makes the press available to us on Internet, as well as radio and television, from a variety of countries. Expats will feel at ease listening to their own particular accent, but if the aim is to reach a much wider audience, it is a good idea to make the Spanish of each country more akin to neutral Spanish. The fact that that “neutral” Spanish is frequently the product of a commercial imposition does not reduce its usefulness in any way and the advantages it can provide for the Spanish speaking community (Gómez 2012).

Spanish newspapers and magazines do not constitute such a widely distributed global market as that for books in Spanish. The printed press in general on a worldwide level is quite “local” in any language. On the other hand, news agencies, who feed news into newspapers all over the world, do have a global presence. The Spanish agency EFE is strongly represented in the Spanish speaking world and in Brazil, along with the Mexican agency Notimex and the Argentinian Telam. Through their Internet editions some newspaper titles have achieved wider dissemination. Nevertheless, the internationalization of prestigious dailies is not an easy task; local content is much prized by readers. Very recently, the Spanish daily *El País* in November, 2013, launched a digital edition for Brazil, in Portuguese, with content from the American edition that the newspaper already had. According to data from the newspaper itself, almost half of its Internet traffic, a total of 16 million “sole users”, comes from outside Spain, mostly from Latin America. The daily newspaper *New York Times* had announced a digital edition in Portuguese for 2013, but it has not yet taken off.¹¹

For newspapers and magazines as a whole, our study considers that Spain has a Spanish language weighting of 95%, taking into account the press published in Spain

¹¹ El País, 2014; Casero-Ripollés, 2010; Rojo y Sánchez, 2010.

in the other co-official languages. This weighting, in the Latin American area, has to take into account the publications in Portuguese.

The big names in the written press have adapted to the Internet era much better than encyclopedias, which have been wiped out by a new, different product, the anonymous Wikipedia encyclopedia. The present problem for the press is to find a business model which would make its content profitable. In this rapidly changing, innovative world it is difficult to know whether Internet giants, such as Google, are allies or enemies for their business. Robert Levine thinks that they are clearly in opposition:

The real conflict online is between the media companies that fund much of the entertainment we read, see and hear and the technology firms that want to distribute their content-legally legally or otherwise (Levine 2011:4).

Despite having announced this confrontation, with a title in Spanish (*Parásitos*, Parasites) which is more aggressive than the original English title, Levine's book, an attack on the "online-free-for all" culture, opts for the paid press model, which hitherto has worked well in the specialized economic press, such as the *Wall Street Journal* and *Financial Times*, both dailies. What is certain is that the traditional press business model is no longer viable. As a harsh critic of Levine replied:

Had our laws been crafted to preserve the "culture business as we know it" the photograph, the gramophone, the photocopier, the tape recorder, and, yes, the Internet, may have never arrived (Morozov 2011).

But Internet is not simply the digital edition of newspapers, albeit it is one of the most important. Other models are hard on its heels, and language is important in each of them. On one side stand the giants who make profits from advertising, or from the sale of electronic devices, free or paid traffic, on Internet: Google, Facebook, Apple, Amazon. With a completely different model, the anonymous encyclopedia Wikipedia has, as we have mentioned, wiped out products of such high cultural prestige as Britannica, Larousse or Espasa (Santos & Montas 2011: 151). Being anonymous, Wikipedia is fundamentally based on the *number* of readers and editors, thus keeping down the number of errors, and in the quantity and quality of its anonymous editors, to achieve its encyclopedic character, both at a cultural and popular level. What can we say about Spanish in this form of diffusion, which is universal and almost unique in its field?

Arias (2010) made a comparison between the Wikipedia versions in English, German and Spanish. His general conclusion was: "Wikipedia is an encyclopedia in which information has to be verified before use" and he is more specific when comparing

three versions: “the German one is more serious, the Anglo-Saxon one more diversified and the Spanish one less reliable”. And he is especially surprised by the small number of pages, fewer than in the Polish version, this in a language with fewer speakers than Spanish and much less cultural presence in the world.

We can see that Wikipedia in Spanish is an example of the improvable quality of knowledge disseminated in Spanish compared to the hypercentral English language. It is logical and essential to aspire to access markets and intellectual and scientific communities which express themselves in English. The Instituto Español de Comercio Exterior (ICEX) considers that, for Spanish cultural industries “target countries are those with a high disposable income level, and a profile of being consumers of products with added value (France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, China, Japan and other markets)” (Santos & Montás 2011:232). Even in the publishing industry, the sole sector in which Latin America is the region with the greatest presence of Spanish cultural exports, the ICEX offers, as an example of internationalization, translations into English of the Spanish books figuring in the *New York Times* best sellers list.

However, as we are arguing, the possibility of success for these books in markets in English depends, fundamentally, in addition to the authors’ quality, on the previous strength of the editorial industry in the Latin America and Spanish area, including creations in Portuguese. Facilitating and reinforcing exchanges in this field is a good way to internationalize cultural industries in Spanish. Aspiring to the maximum worldwide diffusion of cultural creation is not in contradiction with the idea of consolidating an “inter-American market of original contents”.¹² As shown by the statistics of translations and practice of the publishing market, as well as the success of telenovelas from Brazil, Mexico, Colombia and those produced in the United States, the strength of the market covering the area of Latin American language and culture gives a boost to the global creation and diffusion of culture.

3- Recapitulation and conclusions

We can revise what has been discussed hitherto and obtain clear conclusions.

¹² Buitrago and Duque (2013: 182), in their publication for the Inter-American Development Bank (BID-IDB) propose adopting an “Inter-American Market of Original Contents”, which would benefit cultural creations and also for general commercial integration. IDB president, Luis Alberto Moreno, has backed this idea.

1) Language is an important part of culture and therefore, of its economic value. To discover such importance we require psychology applied to music or cinema and the scenic arts. But we can also understand it by analyzing the economic statistics and measures, comparing the findings of cultural activities in different languages.

2) Spanish, due to the number of speakers and its cultural and economic importance, has a privileged place in comparison to other languages, which enables it to stand, near to French and German, among the “central” languages. It is always some way behind English, which occupies a position that has been called “hypocentral”.

3) Relationships between different accents and idiomatic expressions within the Spanish language, and with other languages which are, linguistically and culturally akin, among which in particular we have Portuguese, are a fundamental part for any economic, cultural or economic analysis, of the weight of the language in cultural industries.

4) In this broad sense, the Spanish language and its linguistic neighbors, through their large community of Spanish speakers and the important market it represents for entertainment and cultural products, is an asset for their cultural industries. In fact, as the telenovelas show, the publishing industry and the importance of the market in Spanish acts as a previous step for diffusion worldwide, in French, German and most of all in English. The possibility of achieving such global diffusion is the real line for signaling the inter-language hierarchy, and also between cultural industries created in the principal industries.

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