

**Paper for CHEPS summer school 2004**

**Discursive construction of internationalisation of higher education  
In Finland and the Netherlands**

**- Building the theoretical and methodological framework**

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*"The question is" said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."*

Lewis Carol. *Alice in Wonderland*.

## **1. Background and research task**

During the past five or so years, internationalisation of higher education has evoked numerous discussions among universities and national and international level policy makers, as well as higher education researchers. Various internationalisation policies and strategies have been drafted and implemented and various research projects conducted related to definitions, quantity and quality of internationalisation.

However, internationalisation of higher education can hardly be said to be a new, or a clear-cut phenomenon. "University", "science" and "research" are often described as international by their very nature, dating back nearly a thousand years to the early days of the Universities of Bologna and Paris and to the wandering scholar Erasmus of Rotterdam, who later gave name to the European higher education mobility programme Erasmus. On the other hand, higher education can also be seen as a highly national project, connecting universities to educating the national elites and reproducing dominant ideology (Castells 1991).

Nowadays the new forms of internationalisation are said to bear only a distant resemblance to the old community of scholars and to a growing extent to be transforming the institutions of higher education and contributing to redefining of the relationship between the state and higher education. Internationalisation is changing the national administrative, judicial and financial sovereignty over higher education and institutionalising into the organisational cultures, structures and policies of higher education institutions. (Trondal et al. 2001, 8). Furthermore, countries are no longer pursuing internationalisation as a solitary action, but as a part of a larger, both co-operative and competitive, political, social and economic international entity (van der Wende 2001). Internationalisation is seen as an instrument for capacity building, for finding new ways to manage higher education, for testing practises and as a general means to improve higher education. It is both an end in itself, and a means to achieve various other aims in higher education and society at large. (UNESCO IAU 2003,1.)

The new internationalisation is also seen as being accelerated by many other changes in the context and conduct of higher education. Some of the identified changes include e.g. the emergence of knowledge-based economy and development of the new delivery modes, new pressures for higher education institutions to prepare graduates for life and work in international context, decreasing public funding for higher education and related demands for diversifying funding sources. Also important is the overall globalisation of the world economy and growing interdependence between countries and regions of the world and the changing of the role of the national-states

on all policy fields. (UNESCO IAU 2003, 5. For discussions on globalisation and HE, see e.g. Moja and Cloete 2001, Scott 1998, Välimaa 2001).<sup>1</sup>

Summing up, internationalisation seems to take form of both competition and cooperation (see e.g. van der Wende 2001) on various levels of the higher education system, and seems to be related to the re-conceptualisation of the task of higher education and higher education organisations in the society, and closely related to the legitimacy of higher education (Meyer & Rowan 1977, Gumpert 2000). It also seems to be presented by using different discourses picturing the tasks of the organisations differently (Söderqvist 2002). My interest lies not so much on what internationalisation is as an operationalisable phenomenon in the everyday life of the universities or governments, but rather what internationalisation as a discourse makes us, researchers, universities and policy makers think and do. Similarly, my interest is not so much in the internationalisation of any of the specific tasks of a university, such as *internationalisation OF education* or *internationalisation OF research*, but rather the “nature” or “quality” of internationalisation, e.g. *internationalisation AS cooperation* or *internationalisation AS competition*. Internationalisation seems to be a **process**, encountered by, or created by higher education actors. It seems to be linked with a specific **set of activities** performed by universities, national and international actors, and individuals alike. And finally, it seems to be evidenced in linking international as an **attribute** to the actors and structures to of the higher education system. It is in these understanding as presented in the different discourses of internationalisation where my primary interest lies in.

In this paper I will not address further the multiple aspects of internationalisation and globalisation nor changing relationship between university, higher education and the state – the rich research literature on various aspects of higher education have sufficiently done that. Rather I aim to clarify my theoretical framework and translate together the elements from different theories, also briefly touching upon the issues related to methodology and empiria of my study, which focuses on the discursive construction of internationalisation of higher education in Finland and the Netherlands. Through study of discourses I seek to shed light into the way in which universities are being constituted as international institutions and to the way discourses are facilitating institutionalisation of internationalisation in universities. More specifically, in my research I seek to answer the following three research questions.

1. What kind of internationalisation of higher education -discourses can be found in Finland and the Netherlands?
2. To what extent have these different internationalisation of higher education – discourses institutionalised in higher education in the two countries, i.e. what is the strength of the discourses?
3. What are the possible implications of institutionalisation of given discourses for the non-discursive elements of university, and more generally for universities and higher education as larger scale social institutions?

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<sup>1</sup> Previous paragraphs after Nokkala & Uppström 2003.

## 2. Introduction to theoretical elements

The theoretical framework of my study is based on the recognition of universities as institutionally embedded organisations and the concept of university and the higher education as wider scale, durable social institutions with assigned task in the functioning of the society. In his famous anecdote, Kerr (1987) has argued that there are only 85 institutions in the Western world which have stayed essentially the same for the past 500 years, include the Catholic church, the parliaments of the Isle of Man, Great Britain and Iceland some Swiss cantons, the bank of Siena and approximately 70 universities. They all have their institutionalised structures and functions, internal rules and norms of conduct. As organisations they also share understandings of the legitimacy of the organisation. Many of their organisational procedures have been developed into taken for granted routines. Equally the wider notions of higher education and university are social institutions (Gumport 2000, Kerr 1987, Meyer 1977) with certain organisational, cultural and value-based features, which shape, facilitate and curb individual, and collective action. They include constitutive rules which e.g. constitute the whole possibility of scientific research and higher education as we know them. They are embedded in a larger field of various other social institutions or institutional concepts, such as the “nation-state”, “labour market” or “global higher education market” and also contain and consist of sub-institutions such as academic disciplines with their theories, methodologies and cultures (Becher 1989), academic freedom (Clark 1983, 92-94), values related to science (Merton 1973), procedures defining inspection of doctoral theses and structures such as various types of governing boards as well as organisational sagas of specific higher education organisations (Clark 1972). Some of these sub-institutions are more general and recognised everywhere (e.g. values of science), some are institutions in their own context (e.g. governing boards in some universities) (Jepperson 1991, 146).

My theoretical framework is based on translating together the institutional approach and critical discourse analysis, joined by the underlying assumption of social constructionism, that is, of the socially constructed nature of social reality. Social constructionism presumes that all social reality and its institutions, that is, the everyday life, is socially constructed in interaction between people and is dependent on the specific historical and cultural settings. (see Phillips & Jorgensen 2002, 5) Social reality consist of shared meanings formed in interaction between actors and shaping the actions of those actors. language and use of language can therefore be seen as the carrier or even definer of those socially constructed meanings. Language is not just a bridge to reality, but part of the reality itself. It not only describes the reality but also gives meaning to it and thus structures and constructs, reproduces and changes the social reality.

According to Berger and Luckman (1966, 51) “everyday life is, above all, life with and by means of the language I share with my fellowmen. An understanding of language is thus essential for any understanding of the reality of everyday life”. Searle (1995) on the other hand goes on to say that all social institutions, such as money, marriage or universities, are socially constructed through collective intentionality, which is mediated through the use of language. And if the use of language has a central role in constituting, i.e. creating the very possibility of, social institutions, the study of specific uses of language, discourses, may help us understand those institutions and the way they change. First, however, I want to briefly introduce the theoretical elements of my study.

### *Institutions are durable social structures*

The institutional theory is interested in the role of institutions in the society. Institutions are commonly defined as written or unwritten rules and conventions that are structuring and constraining social action by either facilitating or curbing our actions and ideas. Social institutions have been defined in a great variety of ways by different users and schools of thought, ranging from mere conventions (Douglas 1986) to equating them with organisations (Kerr 1987). The following definition by Scott (2001, 48) aspires to combine the different views and sketches a manifold picture of institutions and the mechanisms through which they influence the behaviour of individual and collective actors.

*“Institutions are social structures that have attained a high degree of resilience. Institutions are composed of cultural-cognitive, normative and regulative elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life. Institutions are transmitted by various types of carriers, including symbolic systems, relational systems, routines and artefacts. Institutions operate at multiple levels of jurisdiction, from the world system to localized interpersonal relationships. Institutions by definition connote stability but are subject to change process, both incremental and discontinuous.”*

He elaborates this definition by stating that institutions are multifaceted, durable social structures, which are made of symbolic systems, social activities and material resources, which he later specifies as the four types of carriers. (Scott 2001, 49, 77-83). Symbolic systems consist of rules and laws, values or cognitive categories, relational systems consists of roles and systems of roles, routines are patterned action reflecting the tacit knowledge of actors and artefacts reflect the importance of material aspects of institutions. In an institution such as higher education or university, all of these different types of features and carriers come together thereby providing several useful perspective into study of higher education as an institution.

Institutions come about through a process of **institutionalisation**, which depends on the internalisation of the institutions as a norm or taken-for-granted convention or a rule-like status, thereby “moving the actors” as if by an internal force. (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Zucker (1977, reprinted in Powel & DiMaggio, 1991, 85) argues that institutionalisation is both a process, whereby individual actors transmit what is socially defined as real and a property variable, so that e.g. institutionalised acts can be institutionalised or taken-for-granted to a greater or lesser degree.

Bergen and Luckmann’s (1966) description of the process of **institutionalisation** as consisting of three stages relates to the mechanisms of how the personal construction of meanings and habits come to be shared by all and later on personalised again as structures guiding individual activity. Habitualisation of activities or cognitive typifications between individual actors is a pre-stage of institutionalisation, in other words certain activities are routinised. When repeated in interaction between a larger group of actors, habitualised typifications become **externalised**, independent of the original actors and later on **objectivised** into external, objective reality. This objective reality then becomes meaningful for a single actor as an outcome of **internalisation** of the objectivised activities, structures and meanings. By emphasising the dialectical nature of the coming about of institutions Berger and Luckmann are also able to surpass the cleft between individualism and holism (Aittola & Raikila 1995, 221).

Using similar concepts, Tolbert and Zucker's (1996, 179-184) conceptualisation of institutionalisation presents a process where new features are becoming taken-for-granted as efficacious and necessary elements of an institution, or an institutional organisation. This institutionalisation process consists of three phases: **habitualisation** (i.e. generation of new structural arrangements), **objectification** (development of social consensus concerning the value of new structure) and **sedimentation** (spreading of new structures and their perpetuation over a long period of time). Institutionalisation of new elements may also contribute to the change in the original institution.

Although institutions are seen as relatively stable social structures, they still may undergo **changes**. Functional, political and social pressures may lead to deinstitutionalisation of institutionalised structures and practises and various forces internal or external to institutions may cause them to change. All the three pillars of institutions may be engaged in the institutional change: introduction of new regulative frameworks such as laws and change in the normative systems such as values may contribute to a change. Also linguistic frames may be instrumental in change. (Scott 2001, 182-190). Adler (1997, 340-341) uses the concept of cognitive evolution to explain institutional change: New features need to be legitimised by appearing as parts of the natural order of things, being based either on nature or reason. This also means that as certain institutional facts or sets of practises are legitimised, competing options are delegitimised. The institutional facts succeeding in that are not necessarily the most efficient ones but those most successful at imposing collective meaning and function on physical reality. They also have to have authority and evoke trust stemming e.g. from power or other authoritative meaning.

Scott (2001, 181) poses a question: "If the nature of actors and their modes of acting are constituted and constrained by institutions, how can these actors change the very institutions in which they are embedded?"

One possible answer is provided by the central idea of critical discourse analysis: The social structures and practises (e.g. institutions) consist of both discursive and non-discursive elements<sup>2</sup>. Discursive practices are shaped by non-discursive practises and in their turn shaping them. In social practises both discursive and non-discursive elements are present. An example is a purchase at a shop: asking for the desired object (discursive practise) and exchanging money for the object (economic practise) (Phillips & Jorgensen 2002, 65, 71). According to Fairclough (2001, 3; 2003, 6) the discourses may become to shape non-discursive practises on various different levels: for instance discourses of internationalisation of higher education may be *materialised in organisational and material structures* such as international offices (both in terms of organisation and office space) within universities and *enacted semiotically in particular genres of language* (see next chapter for explanation of genres), such as the genre of counselling of international students. They may also be *inculcated in new styles of "being"*, meaning a process whereby people come to own the new discourses and to act, talk, think and see themselves in terms of the new discourses, such as the academics seeing themselves as international actors.

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<sup>2</sup> E.g. the notion of power and power relations contemplated below would in my opinion be non-discursive elements, although yet again often reflected through the use of language and also, as argued later, has certain implications on the possibilities to influence discourses. Additionally economical, physical, psychological, biological, legal practises, etc can be seen as non-discursive practises, which can not be explained solely by discursive theories. ( See e.g. Jorgensen & Phillips 2003, 65,71)

Following Powell and DiMaggio, we may ask whose interest does institutionalisation of new elements and practises, or alternatively reproducing or changing current ones serve (Powell & DiMaggio 1983, reprinted in Powell & DiMaggio 1991, 79; Houtsonen 2002, 46). This is intimately linked with the notion of power, as they seem to imply perhaps that there is an imbalance of power in creation of institutions. According to Houtsonen (2002), institutional approach has often been criticised for avoiding the question of power, but he argues this not to be true and instead asserts that Powell and DiMaggio's concepts of coercive and normative isomorphic change provide tools for contemplating power vis-à-vis institutions. Organisations and other actors are seen as capable of manipulating the symbolic elements of institutional environments and thus have an influence over other organisations. Houtsonen (2002, 46) further argues that if institutions consist of symbolic meaning systems, it is relevant to ask who decides on their definitions, how do specific meaning systems become legitimated and how do they affect the positions of the actors. Fairclough (2001a, 61-62) argues that those in a position of power have the possibility to dominate the discourse e.g controlling the access of the participants into the discourse, the content of the discourse, the subject positions of those participating in the discourse and the social relations between the discourse participants. Following the theory of discourses as reproducing the existing social reality, those in a position of power therefore have a possibility to reproduce the existing power relations. The hegemonic struggle between different discourses explained further below, is another expression of power in discourse.

### *Institutions, organisations and higher education*

Meyer and Rowan (1977) argue that many formal organisation structures come about as a result of rationalised institutionalised rules, which they, following Berger and Luckmann, define as classifications built into the society as reciprocated typifications or interpretations, function as myths which organisations incorporate thereby gaining legitimacy, resources, stability and enhanced survival prospects. Institutions may then become to matter more for the organisations than the technical demands of production for which the organisations were originally designed for, eventually decreasing efficiency of the organisational work. Conversely, promoting efficiency as the sole purpose and disregarding the effect of institutions may lead to a loss of legitimacy of the organisation. It is fairly easy to use this notion to draw a parallel from this to the current day discussion on the functions of the universities vis-à-vis the society by arguing that the universities being immersed in the institutionalised rules and traditions of the academia are no longer up-to-date with the tasks endowed for them by the modern societies, or alternatively, that the eagerness to get universities adapted to the changing institutional surroundings of the universities with the strong market orientation have clouded the original task of the university as the site of intellectual pursuit.

Rationalised institutions, with their rule-like, taken-for-granted status arising from the notion of appropriateness are myths which make creation of organisations easy and appearing necessary. Rowan and Mayer (1977) argue that "the myths built into rationalized institutional elements create the necessity, the opportunity and the impulse to organise rationally", incorporating the institutionalised rules into organisational structures and processes. This increases the legitimacy of the

organisation. However, it is worth noting that Houtsonen (2002) criticised Meyer and Rowan's understanding of rules as inherently ambiguous. Institutional rules are mainly presented as taken-for-granted, established cognitive categories and beliefs, but also as normative and regulative rules.

In trying to understand the proliferation of international activities in universities and the change of the nature of internationalisation of higher education, it may however be argued that internationalisation of higher education has gained a status of such an institutionalised rule thereby making it necessary for the higher education organisations to incorporate it as a part of their organisational structures and processes (see e.g. van der Wende 2004, 11). International activities become the appropriate, necessary and rational part of the functioning of the university, increasing the legitimacy of the university as a social institution (see e.g. Meyer & Rowan 1977, Gumpert 2000) with an endowed task to increase the competitiveness of the society as a whole. In the level of discourses of internationalisation of higher education this is already evident as internationalisation is used as a legitimating discourse for the university, as will be demonstrated later on. Taking into account the consequences of institutionalisation of internationalisation as a legitimate, rational activity of the universities, it is of great significance what kind of understanding of internationalisation is institutionalising. If internationalisation is conceptualised e.g. solely in term of market or in terms of global solidarity, the consequences for organisational policies, processes and structures are likely to be different. These different understandings are discursively shaped making the study of discourses of internationalisation of higher education both interesting and relevant, as argued further below.

#### *Dialectical relationship between institutions and discourses*

Discourse analysis is both a theoretical and methodological approach to qualitative research, nature of social reality, and perceiving, analysing and interpreting data. On a general level, discourse may be defined "a particular way of talking about and understanding the world or an aspect of the world" (Phillips & Jorgensen 2002, 1). Discourse analytical approaches share the basic premises of social constructionism, in other words, accept that our ways of speaking about something do not neutrally reflect our world, identities and social relations but play an active role in creating and changing them. (Phillips & Jorgensen 2002, 1-5). Critical discourse analysis is one of the specific schools of thought within discourse analysis, emphasising the interplay, or what Phillips & Jorgensen refer to as dialectical nature, between discursive and non-discursive aspects of social practises, that is, between the use of language and the social reality (and institutions embedded in the social reality). Discourse-as-a-use-of-language is a form of social practise which both constitutes the social world and is constituted by other social practises, therefore both reflecting and (re)constructing other social dimensions. Institutions, like other social structures, may be said to consist of discursive and non-discursive side, which are in dialectical relationship affecting each other. (Phillips & Jorgensen 2002, 61-62,65).

Fairclough (2001) uses the concept of social practise to include both social structures on the one hand and social actions and agency on the other hand. Social practises he defines as relative stable forms of social activity, such as television news or medical consultations. Fairclough's social practises always include activities, subjects and

their social relations, instruments, objects, time and place, forms of consciousness, values and discourses. On the other hand, Fairclough's social practises also seem to come close to Scott's definition, as presented earlier, of institutions with their related activities and resources.

The aforementioned dialectical relationship then presupposes that discourses should be studied and analysed within their social context, and that they have the power to affect their context. Change in discursive practises is linked to the change in other social practises. The mechanism through which discursive change is brought about is that of **intertextuality** and its specific subcategory, **interdiscursivity**, i.e. that texts and discourses always draw on already existing texts. "Change is created by drawing on existing discourses in new ways, but the possibilities for change are limited by power relations which, among other things, determine the access of different actors to different discourses." (Phillips & Jorgensen 2002, 74). This is closely related to the question Scott presents on the possibility of actors to change institutions in which their actorness is embedded. Critical discourse analysis adheres to the idea that discourses function ideologically by way of reproducing or transforming existing power relations. This happens through a hegemonic struggle between different discourses on a specific order of discourse. (Phillips & Jorgensen 2002, 75-76). As different discourses point towards different action, this has a capability to reproduce or transform wider social practise. As critical discourse analysis wants to be critical towards the existing (power)structures in the society, it seeks to reveal the role of discursive practise in maintenance of the social practises and structures. Therefore the role of the analysis is to reveal the way that the role of discursive practises in the maintenance or changing of the social world, including the way that they uphold or aim to change ideology and power relations. (Phillips & Jorgensen 2002, 62-64).

Another useful concept by Fairclough is the *order of discourse*, which is "the configuration of all the discourse types, discourses and genres, which are used within a social institution or a social field" (Phillips & Jorgensen 2002, 67). The order of discourse constitutes the discourses and genres that are available for specific event of language use, but on the other hand, the speaker can borrow discourses from other orders of discourse. In this sense it may again be useful to take note of the idea that that discourses may be used strategically so that those in positions of power may impose their own discourses to those in less powerful situations therefore achieving a hegemonic<sup>3</sup> position within an order of discourse.

The order of discourse may be seen as the discursive side of a specific social institution such as the university. In my research the focus will be in the order of discourse of university, which consists of all different types of discursive practices used in that field, such as the language of teaching and scientific research publications, the promotion of the university for prospective students, the language in international cooperation etc. We can therefore hypothesise that the specific discourses related to internationalisation of higher education would be drawing from other discourses within the order of discourse of the university such as the discourse of academic values, discourse of research etc, but also from discourses situated in

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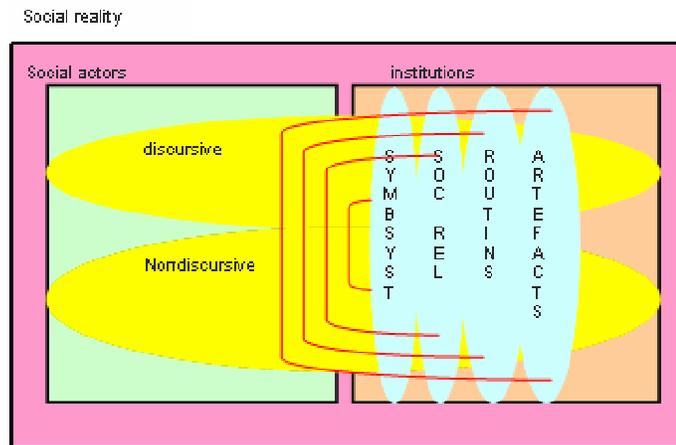
<sup>3</sup> Fairclough apparently borrows this concept from Foucault, and it still remains to be clarified, as well as to what extent it will be used in the analysis.

other orders of discourse, such as the labour market discourse or discourse of international competitiveness.

*Summing up – discourses, institutions and internationalisation of HE*

It may be concluded that university is a social institution consisting of various sub-institutions, such as academic disciplines, academic freedom, laws regulating higher education etc, and embedded in wider social institutions such as the nation-state, international academic community, labour market and international higher education market. As a social institution, it consists of both a discursive and a non-discursive elements, which are in constant interaction through the use of language by individuals as a social practise. Discourses that are used by individuals are partly constituted by the non-discursive elements of institutions, such as power relations, and partly constituting them. The discursive side of the university institution may be called the order of discourse of the university, which consists of all possible competing discourses within that institution. These individual discourses are drawing from the order of discourse of the university, but may also borrow elements from other orders of discourse, such as the order of discourse of labour market or business.

The relationship between social reality, social structures and practises, institutions and discourses may be tentatively conceptualised e.g. in the following way.



Internationalisation of higher education may be seen as an at least partially new element, which is institutionalising into the (discursive and non-discursive) practises of university. Various internationalisation discourses (such as competitive internationalisation discourse and cooperative internationalisation discourse) are one of the mechanisms, through which institutionalisation is happening. The discourses can be said to have institutionalised to a different degree, or to be competing for hegemony within the order of discourse, thereby reproducing or reconstructing the existing order of discourse. Adoption of one type of discourse or another type, points way to this or that type of action, and this way contributing to the redefinition of university and higher education as social institutions.

**3. Empirical data**

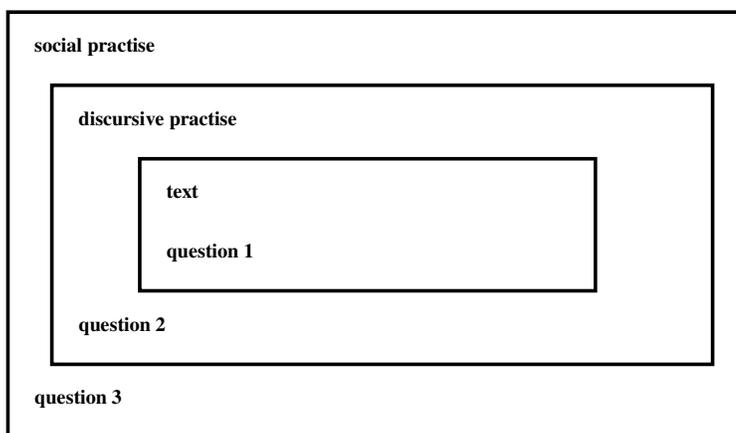
The empirical data of my study collected from Finland and the Netherlands consists of two sets of data. These will be analysed using the critical discourse analysis to create an understanding of the proliferation of different discourses of internationalisation and to demonstrate their intertextuality. Based on a preliminary analysis of part of the data, it is apparent that different discourses of internationalisation are present in different types of data, or even within one single document or interview.

1. The first set of data consists of **key policy documents** on the university, national level and international level. They will be analysed using discourse analysis in order to trace paths of intertextuality and interdiscursivity.
2. The second set of data consists of 14 **primary interviews** with certain key actors in the level national higher education system in Finland and the Netherlands. These consist of university rectors and rectors councils and representatives of the ministries of education and national agencies engaged in facilitating mobility and internationalisation. Additionally two interviews of European level actors have been conducted including a representative of EUA and the European commission. The purpose of the European level interviews is to provide a point of reflection from the perspective of interdiscursivity.

The experience of established researchers in Finland and Netherlands were consulted in selection of appropriate actors for interviews. Critical discourse analysis pays special attention to relations of power and the ways in which discourses reproduce and restructure them. Therefore the selection of interviews was done in a way allowing possible power relations to become visible. The top level of national higher education systems (i.e. the university leaders, and high officials in the ministries of education and in other aforementioned organisations) were selected as they can be said to contribute greatly to the national discussions and understandings on internationalisation.

The use of critical discourse analysis as a practical method of analysis is based on Fairclough's conception of the use of language as a communicative event consisting of three interwoven levels. He sees language as a text (written or spoken text or a visual image with its linguistic/lexical/grammatical features), as a discursive practice (production and consumption of text which both draw from previous discourses and texts, which Fairclough calls interdiscursivity and intertextuality) and as a social practice drawing from and contributing to wider social practices. (Phillips & Jorgensen 2002, 68-69). Fairclough (1989, 26) calls these three levels of language analysis as description (textual analysis), interpretation (analysis of discursive practice) and explanation (analysis of institutional and social practice).

The relationship between the three levels of text as described by Fairclough, and my research questions, may tentatively be pictured in the following way.



Picture 3 Three levels of discourse analysis

Although constructionist research does not use the concept of hypothesis, for the purposes of discussion I have listed some ideas which may be called my working hypotheses or assumptions made so far.

It is evident so far in the empirical data, which will be further clarified later on, that the internationalisation is framed in texts in three different ways:

- a) as a process (taking place around the HE actors and structures and participated by them),
- b) as an attribute (e.g. international university, international market etc) and
- c) as a set of activities (e.g. recruiting students and staff).

I assume that in the Finnish and Dutch higher education, as represented by the texts, there are different internationalisation discourses, which conceptualise these three dimensions/framings of internationalisation in different ways and, following Zucker (1977, 85), are institutionalised into higher education to a different degree. It will be decided later to what extent the notion of the hegemonic struggle between the discourses, that is, the critical in the critical discourse analysis, will be taken as the outlook on the analytical work.

In accordance with the theoretical elements, I assume that there are linguistic/grammatical/lexical features which can function as a basis of analysis of

- a) the existence and boundaries of a specific discourse,
- b) the way that these different discourses related to/present internationalisation as a process, attribute and set of activities (possibly giving more or less weight to one or two of the dimensions) and
- c) the level of institutionalisation as demonstrated by the textual features of the institutional carriers.

The wider outcome of the research will at its best be contemplation of the implications of institutionalisation of specific internationalisation discourses for universities and higher education as social institutions embedded in the contexts of the nation states etc.

In the heuristic table of the Annex 1 I have tried to describe the path from the theoretical elements described above to the analysis of empirical data and interpretation of the results of analysis. It is by no means exclusive or final, but rather

presents my trail of thought as it is at the moment. The actual analysis starts by identifying the three framings and based on those, identification of the different discourses, later on followed by a contemplation of the level of their institutionalisation and a discussion on wider implications of this.

#### **4. Examples of analysis**

In the following section, I will briefly introduce an example analysis of two rector interviews, one Finnish and one Dutch. At this stage the focus was mainly on finding similarities in the talk of the interviewees, rather than differences. The relation to the different country and organisational contexts of the interviews and document material remains yet to be clarified, as well as the relation of the empirical findings to the third research question.

##### *The position adopted by the interviewees*

One of the relevant interests of discourse analysis is the way in which the people through linguistic activity construct their own identities and assume subject positions for themselves (Juhila 1999, 201). Even though these subject positions are not in the focus of my analysis, for the purposes of interpreting what was being said in the interviews it is worth to note down the obvious positions of the interviewees vis-à-vis the interviewer. The two interviewees positioned themselves differently in relation to their institution as well as the interviewer. The position adopted by the Dutch rector was that of a researcher rather than as a rector, evident from the way of equating Dutch and Finnish universities and higher education systems in several occasions, as well as the analytical way of building categories of the different levels of the higher education system etc. The relationship of the interviewee to the interviewer was that of senior researcher to a junior researcher, trusting but educating. This is evident from the way that the interviewee is remarking to the interviewer “as you already know” etc.

The position adopted by the Finnish rector was somewhat different. The rector was to some extent making categories of the existing reality of internationalisation and relying heavily on general, taken-for-granted truths, which is evident from the frequent use of passive sentences. The rector’s own university was used as an example strengthening the generally known truths. The relationship between the interviewee and the interviewer was that of suspicion rather than trust, probably because of interviewer was known for her part in student politics which may have raised suspicions on her partiality. This was evidenced by e.g. the wish of the interviewee to do the interview without tape recorder and when the interviewer denied that, the wish to be able to check the transcription. Linguistically this was also evident from the way that the interviewee repeatedly checked whether the interviewer understood the point presented.

Despite the different contexts of the interviewees and the different positions they took, the discourses appear to be fairly similar, possibly indicating that the discourses spring from international rather than national context. However, it is impossible to say anything about that at this stage of the analysis.

### *The discourses*

Two discourses may be found in the interviews. The market discourse is a dominant discourse, which presents internationalisation by using interdiscursively the vocabulary from the order of the discourse of market and competition. Universities are defined as market actors creating their own international profile and gaining their legitimacy from their international reputation. Higher education is presented as a line of industry.

**Internationalisation as a process** is very much presented as an active, conscious process in which universities as engaging, rather than as an external process with no clear agency, just compelling the universities to respond. Internationalisation is almost seen as an activity, which has certain characteristics, preconditions and consequences.

*It's unfortunate the, from, from the perspective of of internationalisation to be a small system, because it is more difficult to create differentiation, at least in the eye of the beholder, in smaller system than it is in the larger systems, of course.*

*So that is how they have changed, universities have changed form from, between now and ten years ago, in a sense that they far more, put far more interest in, emphasis on on on internationalisation and international recruitment, eh, English programmes, eh, the bachelor master structure of course, eh international recruiting of staff, that is with this country, last ten years, changed dramatically I think.*

*Em, I am personally most interested and I wonder how how will develop further, most interested in how the European perspective with respect to internationalisation will look out, will we or will we not be able to create a European approach to, to higher education and to the international aspects of higher education.*

It is a hierarchically organised process consisting of several layers, the university level, national system level, European level and global level. Europeanisation is indirectly presented as one part of internationalisation, equally consciously created.

*Em, let me start with the various layers that I think can be distinguished as we talk about internationalisation. Do you wanna talk about specifically from the perspective of a university or at the systems level or both*

*This is actually something that I personally also try to do for that reason, I try to be on the, on on on the European eh, we call this, eh eh eh, theoretical front or what ever, eh, create visibility for this university in order to make sure that this university is seen as a major proponent of of of these Europeanisation processes,*

The major **activities** connected with internationalisation seem to be “playing the game”, “creating a reputation” and “carving out the niche”, all of these borrowing interdiscursively from the order of the discourse of business. Similarly universities are depicted as competing for talent or attracting people from the global talent pool or attracting best students. Universities rather than individuals are actors, individuals are objects of activities. This may be due to rectors being the people interviewed.

*Eh, does it eh, I think it's worth while attractive for a university like University of X to try to be a major institutional player in a, in the process of further Europeanisation. That will allow a university to create a even further, better reputation for itself.*

*Because you can't create attractive working conditions here, research environments are discussed a lot, so so therefore you can't like attract here international tops either.*

**International as an attribute** was mainly connected with competition (international competition) or with rather abstract notions of level/scale (international level/international scale). Most often international was presented as an attribute with international competition, which is presented in two different ways, firstly as something self evident and taken for granted but external to the universities,

*The international, the international competition will go on and and, eh, those who are not able to, to create the financial resources will be left behind.*

and secondly as a conscious strategy of the universities.

*But that strategy which is international competition between universities, for talent, is certainly something which is attractive to a university that has a sufficient quality.*

Participating in international competition is attractive to universities, but conditionally. It also has consequences (see above for both examples).

International is implicitly contrasted with national and presented as high quality, where as national is presented as low quality

*If a higher education institution has a role the it has to be competitive, it has to have quality, activities fulfilling international quality criteria and international activities, you just can't, you can't fulfil your role in some kind of vacuum, where you only have this national, where you only look at these national markets.*

The traditional discourse is a weak discourse and present mainly in the conceptualisation of the international community of scholars as something self-evident and eternal, untouched by temporal process of internationalisation. Internationalisation as a set of activities was linked to the individual actors, such as individual researchers cooperating. Internationalisation as a process was not visible in the discourse at all.

*It is known that research is international, it, it, I think that scientific community is international.*

*Now I go back again to this that without international scientific community our education does not manage internationally, we don't really have anything to say.*

Internationalisation in general seems to be something which does not involve an individual as an actor, except in an institutional position (namely the position of a rector as a driver or a negotiator in internationalisation as a set of activities). With few exceptions, individuals are mainly depicted as objects of activities: students to be recruited or staff to be hired, or as people to be sent abroad. The primary actor is the university, which as an organisation is engaging into the international competition, acting in the international market, recruiting foreign students and staff, forming alliances and building itself an international reputation. Something to note as well, is the fact that universities are depicted as active actors, rather than actors only pushed to react by external forces of internationalisation. These observations are in line with the observations of Trondal et al. (2001), who argue that the new form of internationalisation is, unlike traditional internationalisation characterised by international contacts by individual actors, institutionalised into everyday practices of entire higher education organisations, so that international activities are designed on

the level of the organisation rather than individual. However, this may have to do with the choice of people interviewed.

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Annex 1  
Heuristic table of the research design

| Discourses                             | Internationalisation discourse 1   | Internationalisation discourse 2   | Internationalisation discourse n-1   |
|--|--|--|--|
| Question 1a                            | <i>What is this discourse like<br/>How does it picture internationalisation</i>  | <i>What is this discourse like<br/>How does it picture internationalisation</i>  | <i>What is this discourse like<br/>How does it picture internationalisation</i>  |
|  | - How is it presented textually  | - How is it presented textually  | - How is it presented textually  |
| Question 1b                            | <i>How are the three framings conceptualised in this discourse</i>   | <i>How are the three framings conceptualised in this discourse</i>   | <i>How are the three framings conceptualised in this discourse</i>   |
| Three framings of internationalisation | internationalisation as process<br>- how is it conceptualised<br>- how is the conceptualisation presented textually  | internationalisation as process<br>- how is it conceptualised<br>- how is the conceptualisation presented textually  | internationalisation as process<br>- how is it conceptualised<br>- how is the conceptualisation presented textually  |
|  | internationalisation as an attribute /quality<br>- how is it conceptualised<br>- how is the conceptualisation presented textually  | internationalisation as an attribute /quality<br>- how is it conceptualised<br>- how is the conceptualisation presented textually  | internationalisation as an attribute /quality<br>- how is it conceptualised<br>- how is the conceptualisation presented textually  |
|  | internationalisation as a set of activities<br>- how is it conceptualised<br>- how is the conceptualisation presented textually  | internationalisation as a set of activities<br>- how is it conceptualised<br>- how is the conceptualisation presented textually  | internationalisation as a set of activities<br>- how is it conceptualised<br>- how is the conceptualisation presented textually  |
| Question 2                             | <i>To what extent is the discourse institutionalised i.e. how strong is the discourse</i>  | <i>To what extent is the discourse institutionalised i.e. how strong is the discourse</i>  | <i>To what extent is the discourse institutionalised i.e. how strong is the discourse</i>  |
|  | - how strongly are the carriers (symbols, roles and routines) present as evidenced by textual features   | - how strongly are the carriers (symbols, roles and routines) present as evidenced by textual features   | - how strongly are the carriers (symbols, roles and routines) present as evidenced by textual features   |
| Question 3                             | <i>What does it mean? I.e. How does it affect university and higher education as social institutions? What are the implications for the non-discursive elements of these institutions?</i> | <i>What does it mean? I.e. How does it affect university and higher education as social institutions? What are the implications for the non-discursive elements of these institutions?</i> | <i>What does it mean? I.e. How does it affect university and higher education as social institutions? What are the implications for the non-discursive elements of these institutions?</i> |