



Current paradigms in the international management field: An author co-citation analysis

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Abstract

Although many papers have aimed at describing the evolution of the International Management (IM) field, most of them have applied a subjective approach. Instead of trying to establish the most current research lines or interests, this study investigates the intellectual structure that serves as a basis for the IM research. To achieve this aim, we try to identify the main research trends used in the most relevant IM journals. By means of the co-citation analysis, we analyze the articles published in five top journals from 1997 to 2000, identifying the main trends and analyzing their dissemination within those journals.

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1. Introduction

Since all researches can be cyclical, any field of study needs to take an occasional step back and ponder on how the research area is actually composed (Daniels, 1991). This interest in analyzing and identifying the different research trends in the International Management Field (IM) can be confirmed by the periodical publication of works that reflect on the delimitation of this area (Boddewyn, 1999; DuBois & Reeb, 2000; Martinez & Toyne, 2000) and the analysis of the different subject matters that research tends to

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focus on (Boddewyn & Iyer, 1999; Contractor, 2000; Morrison & Inkpen, 1991; Ricks, 1985; Ricks, Toyne, & Martínez, 1990; Toyne, 1989; Werner, 2002). This type of analysis can be carried out from two approaches. First, the subjective approach based on a qualitative analysis of the literature, starting from the researcher's interpretation. Second, the objective approach is based on bibliographical analysis and quantitative in nature. Both approaches have their pros and cons, and therefore must be construed as complementary approaches to understand the structure of any field of study. In the case of the IM Field, however, we only find researches of the first type (Inkpen & Beamish, 1994; Lu, 2003; Peng, Lu, Shenkar, & Wang, 2001; Werner, 2002; Werner & Brouthers, 2002; Wright & Ricks, 1994). This is an important limitation to understand the real status of the IM field, as it makes it difficult to compare the different proposals and, more importantly, it makes the description of what the field is and the prescription of what it should be to appear melted.

For this reason, the study proposes the use of an objective rather than subjective criterion to identify the main paradigms within the field of IM, by means of the Author Co-citation Analysis—ACA—(Garfield, 1963; Small, 1974). This method, based on bibliometric analyses, has been widely used to identify the structure of knowledge in different fields of study (Acedo et al., 2001; Culnan, 1986; Knight, Hult, & Bashaw, 2000; Pilkington & Liston-Heyes, 1999). Basically, the ACA assumes that both journal articles and books are the sources that contain the knowledge making up a field of study. The ACA methodology analyzes the bibliographic references cited in research documents, as an indicator of the sources of information used and the ideas or approaches connected or integrated in their work (Culnan, 1986; Garfield, 1963). With this methodology, our study aims at identifying the structure of the most important contributions to the field of International Management. This structure shows the organization of the different research paradigms and whether or not these are linked together. This work provides a systematic approach to the identification and organization of the theories that can be found in the research works published in the most relevant IM-related journals. This kind of analysis provides a useful tool for the study of possible 'research holes' and the orientation of future research lines. Finally, this article also aims at being a quick reference that allows new researchers to become familiar with this field of study. The structure of this paper is as follows: First of all, some of the most relevant contributions to IM as a field of study are described. Second, we briefly discuss the foundations for the ACA method and explain how it works. Later on, we show in detail the application of the ACA to the IM field. The results are analyzed in the following section, and we finish by presenting our main conclusions and future lines of research suggested by the discussion of the results.

2. The analysis of international management as a field of study

According to the paradigm concept (Kuhn, 1962), the study of organizations is multiparadigmatic (Fabian, 2000), with the paradigms being incommensurable (Burrell, 1999; Clarke & Clegg, 2000). Consequently, multiple paradigm classifications have been proposed for the discipline of management (Clegg, Hardy, & Nord, 1996; Fabian, 2000; Hoskisson, Hitt, Wan, & Yiu, 1999). Similarly, it is reasonable to think that other

characteristic of IM is the coexistence of several paradigms. Nevertheless, only a few works have addressed the identification of the different approaches within this discipline (Lu, 2003; Werner, 2002).

The analysis of the intellectual structure of IM has manifested itself in three major types of research. First of all, there are those works that aim to delimit the content of IM as a field of study, by establishing what kind of works form a part of this field and what kind of works do not (Boddeyn & Iyer, 1999; Boddeyn, Toyne, & Martínez, 2004; Caves, 1998; Contractor, 2000; Ricks, 1985; Toyne, 1989; Wright & Ricks, 1994). Second, there are those works that try to identify the most influential journals within the area of IM (DuBois & Reeb, 2000; Johnson & Podsakoff, 1994; Pierce & Garven, 1995). Third, other articles discuss in depth the most important research trends within the study of IM (Buckley, 1991, 2002; Lu, 2003; Morrison & Inkpen, 1991; Werner, 2002).

Within this last group, we can distinguish two major methodological approaches (Chandy & Gopalakrishna, 1992). The first approach is based on subjective and qualitative analyses, carried out by noted academics in this field of study. This approach includes the most recent contributions of Buckley (2002), Lu (2003), Martínez and Toyne (2000), and Werner (2002), among others. The second approach employs objective tools of analysis, usually based on the bibliometric analysis. In the case of the IM Field, few works fall within this category (Chandy & Gopalakrishna, 1992; Li & Tsui, 2002; Stephen, Kelley, Johnson, & Siefers, 1995). The present work can be included within the last sub-group, as it is aimed at identifying which are the main paradigms within the field of IM, thus complementing the outlook provided by the works pertaining to the first approach.

3. Methodology: the co-citation method

The co-citation analysis appears as one of the most common tools for examining a body of literature (Zitt & Bassecouard, 1994). Many studies have proved its validity as a tool for understanding the intellectual structure of a scientific discipline (Ramos and Ruiz, 2004). This well-developed tool has been previously applied to other disciplines such as Management (Acedo, Barroso, Casillas, & Galán, 2001); Organizational Behavior (Culnan et al., 1990); Strategic Management (Acedo et al., 2001; Franke et al., 1990); Small Enterprise Research (Ratnatunga and Romano, 1997); Marketing (Heischmidt and Gorden, 1993); Management Information System (Culnan, 1986); and Macro-economics (McCain, 1983).

This methodology assumes that bibliographic elements act as concept surrogates (Callon, Courtial, & Penan, 1995; Moya, Jiménez, & Moneda, 1998; Small, 2003), so any bibliographic reference included in a paper reflects some influence on the author's results. Moreover, considering that they analyze large, highly aggregated data and set a map on these data, this methodology 'neatly operationalizes the elusive notion of 'consensus', so that the field, in effect, reveals itself' (White, 1990). This procedure prevents any personal biases of the researcher when interpreting the field as a result of the experience. The co-citation method is founded on the count of the number of times that two documents or authors appear jointly cited. This methodology identifies groups of closely related documents that can be considered as belonging to the same 'research front'

(Culnan, 1986; Price, 1965). Although these works address the same questions they do not necessarily have to agree with each other. Besides being useful at identifying different approaches or groups of authors, the ACA can help the scientific community to understand in which way the different clusters interrelate (Pilkington & Liston-Heyes, 1999).

The citation analyses are not unusual in the IM field, having already proved useful for measuring the relevance of journals through scientific references (DuBois & Reeb, 2000) or the evolution of a certain journal (Inkpen & Beamish, 1994). In fact, the co-citation method was applied in the field of IM by Stephen et al. (1995) in an attempt to observe the evolution of research approaches.

This methodology presents two differentiated stages, which are, the data gathering and the data analysis. The data gathering is comprised of three different tasks: (1) the selection of the journals to be analyzed, which contain the source documents; (2) the identification of the most representative/relevant works within the field of IM; and (3) the creation and purge of the co-citation and correlation matrices. Afterward, the analysis is carried out by applying different multivariate-analysis techniques to summarize the information contained in the co-citation matrix in the first place and, once we have the results, by assigning the analyzed articles to the different paradigms identified. This process is similar to earlier co-citation studies (Callon et al., 1995; Rowlands, 1999).

4. Data gathering

4.1. Journal selection

Any study based on co-citations must start from a set of source authors or documents that make up the core of the discipline or approach being analyzed (Canon et al., 1995), and from which the co-citation matrix is obtained. Following the recommendation of White and Griffith (1981) we have chosen to use documents instead of authors, because the former allow for a more precise identification of the research fronts in a field of study. Most often, the works are selected on the basis of their relevance, that is, the number of times that a given work is cited.

In this sense, and in keeping with Bradford's law², we first identified the journals considered to be the most relevant in the field of international business, and whose references would subsequently be analyzed. Various authors have commented on the difficulty of selecting the most relevant journals in this field of study (DuBois & Reeb, 2000; Gomez-Mejía & Balkin, 1992; Lu, 2003). This difficulty is due mainly to two major reasons: (1) In spite of the continuous dialogue that has existed on this matter for decades (Ricks, 1985; Toyne, 1989; Toyne & Nigh, 1998), no clear consensus has been reached regarding the conceptual and theoretical delimitation of the realm of the IM field (Boddewyn, 1999; Martínez & Toyne, 2000), and (2) the field of IM is an open field, with

² This law proposes that a few journals, publications, scientists, etc. contain the majority of articles, citations, etc. (Garfield, 1980).

numerous and relevant exchanges with other disciplines such as economics, organizational behavior, strategic management, marketing, etc. (Chandy & Williams, 1994).

Although some works have aimed at creating a ranking of journals within the IM domain (DuBois & Reeb, 2000; Lu, 2003), they have frequently omitted those journals with a broader perspective. These omissions are made in an attempt to analyze the IM independently from general management, although some works do have analyzed the IM research impact on journals with a broader scope (Werner & Brouthers, 2002). Following one of the criteria established by DuBois and Reeb (2000), in our study we opted to ask researchers directly about what journals they considered to be the most relevant influences on their research studies in the field of IM. In our request, researchers were asked to identify five journals and to classify them according to their importance. As previously done by Pierce and Garven (1995), we did not limit the scope of the journals included in the answers, as we would otherwise limit the possible diffusion of the knowledge field (Inkpen, 2001). This inquiry was distributed using two different mailing lists: first of all, the Academy of International Business mailing list (AIB-NET). Simultaneously, it was sent to the international division of the Academy of Management (IMD-L). A total of 105 responses were obtained (45 IMD-L; 60 AIB-NET). With this information, we created two different rankings, one reflecting the frequency and the other one weighted³. Altogether, more than 80 journals were mentioned by at least one researcher. Table 1 shows the ranking of the top 10 journals.

The results confirmed that there exists a strong consensus regarding the leadership of the *Journal of International Business Studies* (JIBS), in agreement with earlier works (DuBois & Reeb, 2000; Phene & Guisinger, 1998). They show a great similarity to the rankings proposed by those articles that tried to evaluate journal's quality. If we analyze only those considered purely international, we see that there is a full coincidence with the so-called core proposed by DuBois and Reeb (2000), or the three international journals considered by Lu (2003). Likewise, we can confirm the influence of journals that cannot be considered specific to the field of IM (Lu, 2003; Peng et al., 2001; Werner & Brouthers, 2002), such as the *Strategic Management Journal* (SMJ), the *Academy of Management Review* (AMR), the *Academy of Management Journal* (AMJ), etc.; although, as suggested by Ebrahimi, Ganesh, & Chandy (1991), IM-focused journals predominate over more generally oriented ones. Finally, we decided to include the top five ranked journals in our study: the *Journal of International Business Studies* (JIBS), the *Management International Review* (MIR), the *International Business Review* (IBR), the *Strategic Management Journal* (SMJ) and the *Journal of World Business* (JWB).

4.2. Selection of documents

Having identified which journals the source documents were to come from, we proceeded to create a database with all the articles (excluding notes, book reviews, etc.) from these journals, published between 1997 and 2000. This period of time was consistent

³ The weighing ranged between a scale from 1 (the least relevant journal of the five) to 5 (the most relevant journal of the five) according to each researcher.

Table 1
Top 10 journal ranking

Ranking	Journal	Frequency	Weight (%)
1	Journal of International Business Studies	105	100.0
2	Management International Review	71	67.6
3	Journal of World Business	44	41.9
4	Strategic Management Journal	41	39.0
5	International Business Review	37	35.2
6	Journal of International Management	32	30.5
7	Academy of Management Journal	27	25.7
8	Academy of Management Review	26	24.8
9	Journal of International Marketing	18	17.1
10	Harvard Business Review	14	13.3

with that used by previous studies (DuBois & Reed, 2000). Since the *Strategic Management Journal* cannot be considered specific to this area, we decided not to include all of its articles. We proceeded to select the articles that made reference to concepts related to IM (international, multinational, global, intercultural, etc.) in the title or abstract. Altogether, the database included 583 articles.

We then compiled all the references included in those articles. The Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) appears to be the most common source for reference retrieval. Only three of the five journals selected are included in this database (JIBS, JWB and SMJ). Since MIR and IBR were unavailable, they were introduced manually and were subsequently homogenized with the structure of the references from the SSCI. In order to assure the homogeneity of all the references, we only used references from articles, excluding books and other similar documents. In total, 11,556 citations from over 100 different journals were extracted.

Table 2 shows the top 20 journals according to the number of references found. The leadership of JIBS is once again apparent, as is the large number of citations from journals not related to the IM field. In fact, of the 20 journals listed on the table, only four can be considered to belong to this field of study (JIBS, MIR, JWB and IMR), which together contribute a total of 2364 citations (38.5% of the total from the 20 journals). The next international-oriented journals are the *International Business Review* (100 references and ranked 22nd) and the *Journal of International Marketing* (87 references and ranked 25th).

Once the database is prepared, we must establish what works are to constitute the support for the different paradigms. In keeping with the criterion of relevance, we must delimit the set of articles in such a way that they will be as relevant as possible, but keeping in mind that the inclusion of the greatest possible number of documents contributes to analysis enrichment. Following the example of previous works with similar time spans and number of citing documents, we used all those articles that have been cited at least 15 times. In this way, 50 articles were selected to serve as the starting point for subsequent analysis (see Table 3).

The distribution of these 50 documents by journal shows us, first of all, the prominent relevance of JIBS within the field of IM and, second, the strong influence of other

Table 2
20 main journals reference distribution

Ranking	Journal	Frequency	Weight (%)	Accum. (%)
1	Journal of International Business Studies	1632	14.1	14.1
2	Strategic Management Journal	779	6.7	20.9
3	Academy of Management Review	431	3.7	24.6
4	Journal of Marketing	423	3.7	28.3
5	Academy of Management Journal	329	2.8	31.1
6	Management International Review	318	2.8	33.9
7	Journal of World Business	247	2.1	36.0
8	Harvard Business Review	246	2.1	38.1
9	Administrative Science Quarterly	229	2.0	40.1
10	Journal of Marketing Research	205	1.8	41.9
11	International Marketing Review	167	1.4	43.3
12	Management Science	152	1.3	44.6
13	Journal of Business Research	140	1.2	45.8
14	California Management Review	130	1.1	47.0
15	Journal of Management Studies	128	1.1	48.1
16	Organization Science	126	1.1	49.2
17	Journal of Finance	120	1.0	50.2
18	Sloan Management Review	115	1.0	51.2
19	Journal of Management	111	1.0	52.2
20	Human Resources Management	107	0.9	53.1

disciplines, particularly in SMJ. Overall, more than half of the articles cited more than 15 times (29 works, 58%) were published in journals not specific to the field of study of IM.

4.3. The co-citation matrix

Using the database created in the previous stages, the co-citation matrix is created. This matrix shows the number of times the documents, taken in pairs, are cited together by all of

Table 3
Distribution of source documents by journal

Frequency	Journals
<i>IM journals</i>	
17	Journal of International Business Studies
2	International Marketing Review
1	Columbia Journal of World Business, Journal of International Marketing
<i>Other journals</i>	
10	Strategic Management Journal
6	Academy of Management Review
2	Journal of Marketing, Management Science
1	Human Resources Management, Journal of Law, Economics and Organization, Journal of Management, Journal of Management Studies, Harvard Business Review, Journal of Marketing, Journal of Marketing Research, Long Range Planning, Quarterly Journal of Economics.

the analyzed works. This co-citation matrix exhibits two characteristics: first, it is a symmetrical matrix and, second, the values in the diagonal are zero, since the same article cannot appear cited twice in the same paper. Nonetheless, in accordance with the meaning of co-citations, the cells in the diagonal must take a maximum value, reflecting the similarity of approach. The assigned value was calculated by dividing the sum of the three highest values in the corresponding row by 2 (Culnan, 1986; White & Griffith, 1981).

In order to standardize the data and avoid possible scale effects, as well as reducing the number of zeros in the matrix, the Pearson correlation matrix was estimated (Moya et al., 1998; Rowlands, 1999). Following similar studies (Culnan, 1986), we will use both matrices in our analyses to verify the soundness of the results.

5. Analysis

5.1. Mapping dominant paradigms in IM field

We proceeded to apply three multivariate analysis statistical techniques to the co-citation and correlation matrices. First of all, multidimensional scaling was employed, allowing us to generate a map in order to observe the relationship between the works by identifying the dimensions that best explain the similarities and differences between the variables. Second, we applied a cluster analysis, which lets us obtain a series of groups of significant documents. Finally, correspondence factor analysis was used to identify which works make up each factor and their degree of contribution or loading as an approximation of the relative influence that each work has within each paradigm. Although the use of these techniques may prove to be redundant, each one of them permits us to determine some additional aspects of the relationship between the source works. Additionally, it makes it possible to check the consistency of the results obtained; this utility being reinforced by using matrices with different data with the different methods (frequencies and correlations).

Fig. 1 shows the document map obtained through multidimensional analysis. In order to obtain this map, we applied multidimensional scaling (MDS) (Rowlands, 1999). This analysis consisted in projecting the works on a two-dimensional map, using the data from the correlation matrix as input data. The result of this analysis was obtained using the ALSCAL routines of the SPSS statistical program. The values obtained in the statistical analyses that exhibit goodness of fit (stress of Kruskal's formula $1=0.03$) and the estimated variance percentage (RSQ=0.99) permits us to state that this representation is a good approximation of reality (Cuadras, 1981). The grouping of the works appearing on the graph obtained through multidimensional scaling was produced using the results obtained following the cluster analysis as the basis (using Ward's hierarchical method).

Although the construction of the axes is arbitrary, the position of the works on the map suggests a meaning for the axes. That is, the horizontal axis seems to refer to the 'level of analysis' of the object of the study. On one hand, the works located in the quadrants to the left of the vertical axis analyze different aspects related to interorganizational relations, especially joint ventures and strategic international alliances. On the other hand, the works located to the right of the vertical axis focus on individual organization behavior.

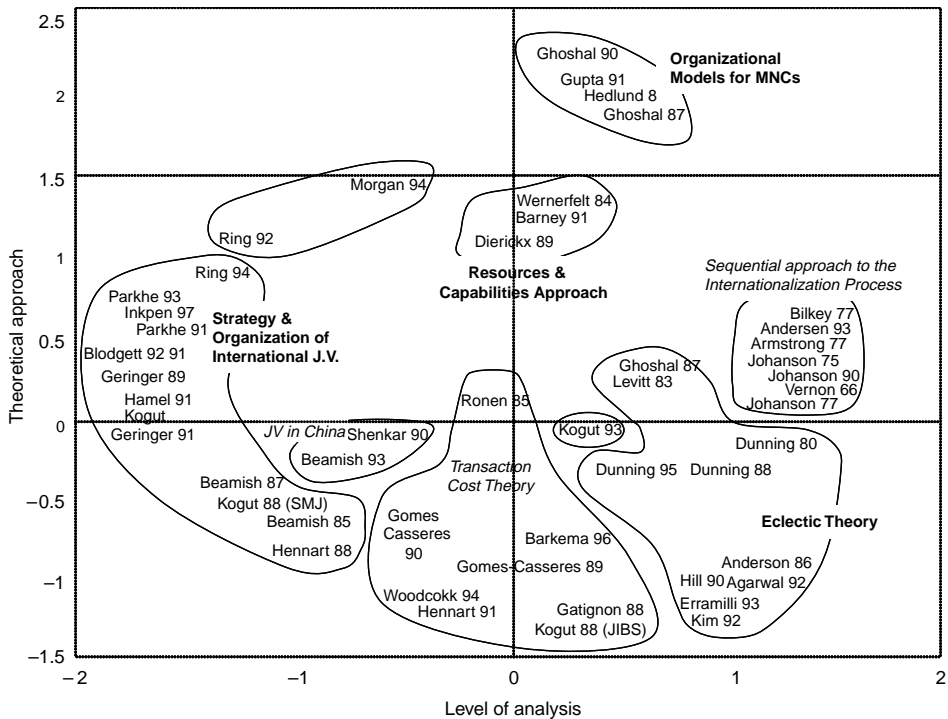


Fig. 1. Multidimensional scaling.

With respect to the vertical axis, the differences are derived from the ‘theoretical approach’ on which the works are based. The works located in the quadrants above the horizontal axis adopt a management orientation, using works based on the Theory of Resources and Capabilities (Barney, 1991; Wernerfelt, 1984), Organizational Theories (Ghoshal, 1990; Hedlund, 1986), Organizational Learning (Barkema et al., 1996; Parkhe, 1991), Strategy (Geringer, 1989), Marketing Strategy (Morgan and Hunt, 1994), etc. On the other side, that is below the horizontal axis, are located the works more closely related to economic orientations such as Transaction Costs (Agarwal and Ramaswami, 1992; Hennart, 1988, 1991; Kim and Hwang, 1992), Dunning’s Eclectic Theory (Dunning, 1980, 1988, 1995; Hill et al., 1992), etc.

Along with the two previous techniques, we also employed correspondence factor analysis in order to identify the works that constitute each factor and discover the influence of each one of the works within their respective schools, using factor loading analysis. This analysis was carried out using the Varimax rotation, following the example of previous works (Rowlands, 1999). The rotation of the axes in the factor analysis aims, as its ultimate goal, to obtain factors endowed with theoretical significance, as well as to achieve the simplest possible factorial structure (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1999). In this study, we have opted for the Varimax rotation for three basic reasons. First of all, because it was the rotation method used in previous studies similar to this one. Second, because

the correlations present among the different factors are not too great. Third, in order to be able to interpret the results more clearly, we hope to identify each author with a research front. Moreover, the oblimin rotation increases the number of negative factor loadings, which makes its possible interpretation much more complex. The data to be used in this analysis were obtained from the co-citation matrix in order to avoid the effect of negative loading, which is difficult to interpret (Culnan, 1986; Rowlands, 1999).

Following the example of previous studies (Culnan, 1986; Rowlands, 1999), we have considered that a work should be included in a trend when its loading is equal to or greater than 0.4, and if the loading is greater than 0.7 then the work is a contribution of great relevance within the corresponding paradigm. Table 4 shows the results of this analysis. As can be observed, all of the information is summarized in eight factors that explain 82.6% of the variance. Significantly, most of the references are loaded with a weight greater than 0.7, corroborating the relevance of these works within their respective paradigms. Likewise, it can be observed that some of the works exhibit considerable loading in more than one factor (greater than 0.4). These works are of even greater interest, as they represent bridges between paradigms and allow us to observe a broader spectrum of influences among those works that belong to the different research fronts, helping us to understand their evolution and the ties that have been forming between the different research trends.

Based on the results of the factor analysis and multidimensional scaling, we identified eight groups, although some of them have a close mutual relationship.

The first group is related to the study of 'International Alliances and International Joint Ventures (IJVs)', where we can include the works of Geringer (1989, 1991), Hamel (1991), and Parkhe (1991, 1993), etc. The following two groups represent Economic Approaches. Group 2 includes the works most closely related to the Eclectic Theory (Agaewal and Ramaswami, 1992; Dunning, 1980, 1988; Kim & Hwang, 1992, etc.), while factor three focuses more on the Transaction Cost Theory (Barkema et al., 1996; Gatignon and Anderson, 1988; Gomes-Casseres, 1989, 1990; Hennart, 1991). The proximity between the two approaches can be observed not only graphically but also in the number of works that, assigned to one of the two groups, have a loading greater than 0.4 in the other (four of the 10 works from the Eclectic approach and three of the eight from the Transaction Cost Approach).

A fourth group corresponds to the school we might call 'Sequential Approach to the Process of Internationalization' (Andersen, 1993; Johanson & Wiedersheim-Paul, 1975; Johnson & Vahlne, 1977; Vernon, 1966, etc.). Fifth, we find the works of Ghoshal (1987, 1990), Gupta (1991), and Hedlund (1986), which reflect aspects related to 'Organizational Models for Multinational Companies', and analyze the relationships between headquarters and affiliates, new network structures for multinational companies, etc. Sixth, clearly differentiated group is related to the 'Resources and Capabilities Approach', made up of the works by Barney (1991), Dierickx and Cool (1989) and Wernerfelt (1984). These three works share the common characteristic that they are not documents specific to the study of IM. A seventh factor is made up of two works (Beamish, 1993; Shenkar, 1990), related to the analysis of joint ventures in China. Both appear very close to the first factor, but the specificity of the national environment studied makes them appear separately in the factor analysis. Finally, we must mention the works of Morgan (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) and Ring

Table 4
Factor analysis (rotated)

Author (first)	Year	Journal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Blodgett, L.L.	1992	S.M.J.	0.933								
Kogut, B.	1989	J. Ind.Ec.	0.908								
Geringer, J.M.	1991	J.I.B.S.	0.891								
Geringer, J.M.	1989	J.I.B.S.	0.838								
Hamel G.	1991	S.M.J.	0.835								
Parkhe, A.	1993	A.M.R.	0.821								
Inkpen, A.C.	1997	A.M.R.	0.810								
Parkhe, A.	1991	J.I.B.S.	0.747								
Kogut, B.	1988	S.M.J.	0.733								
Hennart, J.F.	1988	S.M.J.	0.631		0.467						
Ring, P.S.	1994	A.M.R.	0.617							0.519	
Beamish, P.W.	1987	J.I.B.S.	0.602								0.452
Beamish, P.W.	1985	J.W.B.	0.551								
Dunning, J.H.	1980	J.I.B.S.		0.804							
Kim, W.C.	1992	J.I.B.S.		0.798	0.410						
Hill, C.W.L.	1990	S.M.J.		0.853							
Dunning, J.H.	1995	J.I.B.S.		0.750							
Agarwal, S.	1992	J.I.B.S.		0.744	0.452						
Anderson, E.	1986	J.I.B.S.		0.737	0.424						
Erramilli, M.K.	1993	J. of MK.		0.639	0.593						
Levitt, T.	1983	H.B.R.		0.561							–0.406
Dunning, J.H.	1988	J.I.B.S.		0.557							
Ghoshal, S.	1987	S.M.J.		0.547						0.461	
Gomes-Casseres, B.	1989	J.Ec.Beh.			0.891						
Hennart, J.F.	1991	M.Sci.			0.847						
Barkema, H.G.	1996	S.M.J.			0.837						
Gatignon, H.	1988	J.L.Ec. O.		0.585	0.755						
Kogut, B.	1988	J.I.B.S.		0.506	0.727						
Gomes-Casseres, B.	1990	J.I.B.S.			0.718						
Ronen, S.	1985	A.M.R.			0.592						–0.547
Woodcock, C.P.	1994	J.I.B.S.		0.441	0.525						
Johanson, J.	1990	I.MK.R.				0.918					

(continued on next page)

Table 4 (continued)

Author (first)	Year	Journal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Andersen, O.	1993	J.I.B.S.				0.916					
Johanson, J.	1975	J.Mgt. S.				0.894					
Bilkey, W.J.	1977	J.I.B.S.				0.881					
Johanson, J.	1977	J.I.B.S.		0.440		0.792					
Vernon, R.	1966	Q.J. Ec.		0.566		0.570					
Armstrong, J.S.	1977	J.MK.R.	−0.428			0.441					
Ghoshal, S.	1987	S.M.J.					−0.927				
Ghoshal, S.	1990	A.M.R.					−0.882				
Hedlund, G.	1986	H.R.M.					−0.873				
Gupta, A.K.	1991	A.M.R.					−0.868				
Barney, J.	1991	J of Mgt.						0.965			
Wernerfelt, B.	1984	S.M.J.						0.941			
Direickx, I.	1989	M.Sci.						0.888			
Shenkar, O.	1990	L.R.P.							0.914		
Beamish, P.W.	1993	J.Int.MK.							0.822		
Morgan, R.M.	1994	J of MK.								0.811	
Ring, P.S.	1992	S.M.J.	0.492							0.703	
Kogut, B.	1993	J.I.B.S.						0.403			0.590

Extraction method: Main component analysis; Rotation method: Varimax. Note: A.M.R., Academy of Management Review; H.B.R., Harvard Business Review, I.MK.R., International Marketing Review; J of Mgt., Journal of Management; J.Ind.Ec., Journal of Industrial Economics; J. of MK., Journal of Marketing; J.Ec.Beh., Journal of Economic Behavior; J.I.B.S., Journal of International Business Studies; J.Int.MK., Journal of International Marketing; J.L.Ec. O., Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization; J.Mgt.S., Journal of Management Studies; J.MK.R., Journal of Marketing Research; J.W.B., Journal of World Business; L.R.P., Long Range Planning; M.Sci., Management Science; Q.J.Ec., Quarterly Journal of Economics; S.M.J., Strategic Management Journal.

(1992), which appear together to form the last cluster, as well as the work of Kogut and Zander (1993), isolated from the others, although it shows a loading greater than 0.4 in the first and sixth groups. The appearance of this work can be considered the starting point for knowledge management in the IM research, as it reflects its growth and spread among many fields of knowledge.

5.2. Assigning the analyzed articles to different paradigms

Having identified the different research paradigms in the field of IM, the last phase of the analysis focuses on studying the editorial profiles of the five journals used in this study. In order to do so, we assigned the articles published in these journals to one or more research trends according to the following criterion: a work can be assigned to a paradigm when it cites at least two of the source documents considered in the previous stages of the study (Acedo et al., 2001). In this sense, of the 583 works analyzed, only 117 (20%) could be assigned to one of the first six groups or trends identified in the previous phase. We have excluded the last two groups from this analysis, due to the small number of works they include. The results show that, of the 117 works, 17 have been assigned to two paradigms and five have been assigned to three paradigms.

The analysis of the distribution of these paradigms throughout the different publications analyzed can give us an idea of the editorial policy followed, as well as a guide for future publications on the part of the researchers, which is complementary to that proposed by Pierce and Garven (1995).

Table 5 shows how the 117 articles are distributed among the five journals and the six research trends. Due to the existing disparities between the number of works in each of the six trends analyzed and in the five journals, we proceeded to perform the Chi-square test in order to determine if significant differences existed in the trend-journal relationship. The result allows us to state that certain relationships are actually more intense than others.

Table 5 shows the absolute number of articles from each journal assigned to each paradigm. We observe that the articles that study interorganizational systems and joint

Table 5
Distribution of documents by research trend and journal

Journal	Total	Join ventures	Electric theory	Trans-action cost theory	Internatio-nalization process	Organiz-ation of MNCs	Resources and capa-bilities
IBR	36	11	6	4	13	2	0
JIBS	46	16	9	15	4	1	1
JWB	9	3	3	2	0	0	1
MIR	12	2	3	0	5	2	0
SMJ	14	5	2	2	0	3	2
		37	23	23	22	8	4

Chi-square=19.6; with p value=0.051 and 11 degrees of freedom. Note: IBR, *International Business Review*; JIBS, *Journal of International Business Studies*; JWB, *Journal of World Business*; MIR, *Management International Review*; SMJ, *Strategic Management Journal*. %J represents the percentage of the articles from the indicated trend within the journal (row). %T shows the percentage of articles that, from the total assigned to a certain trend, are included in the journal.

ventures are widely distributed. Regarding the economic approaches, we must point out the high concentration of works in JIBS (both, from the eclectic paradigm and from the transaction cost theory). Likewise, the works belonging to the fourth paradigm, the analysis of the internationalization process, are concentrated mainly in MIR and IBR. This fact shows that European journals have a greater interest in the study of the internationalization process, considering the Uppsala approach relevant to the current research. This interest can be due to the smaller size of the European national markets and firms, which regard the internationalization process as a challenge. Finally, the works relating to the study of Resources and Capabilities are grouped in the SMJ, not surprisingly, since it is the only one of the five journals that specializes in Strategic Management, instead of IM.

6. The basis of the IM research

The results obtained reflect that the IM field is an eclectic discipline, this being positive (Contractor, 2000), since the multidisciplinary approaches for understanding the field provide a more thorough explanation than single-track theories. Nevertheless, having a wider perspective, although an opportunity, may well be turned into a weakness, as it might compromise the future development of the discipline, by producing an excessive fragmentation of the field.

In this sense, the absence of works in the central area of the map shows a lack of research that serves as a basic reference for the whole field of study, with the only possible exception of the efforts made progressively by Dunning (1980, 1988, 1995), which are oriented toward the search for a theory that would unify the area. This aspect can be observed in the temporal/spatial evolution of the three works by this author considered in this study, which progressively approach the center of the map. The works published by Dunning also appear as a link between the intra-firm level approaches, from the Sequential Approach or the Organizational Models of the MNCs, and the inter-firm level of the International Alliances and IJVs or the Transaction Costs Theory.

Second, the analysis shows that, although IM has been taken as an independent field, it is strongly influenced by other fields of study. The results reflect the wide variety of research approaches and topics that make up this field of study, as well as the influence of other disciplines, such as Economics, Strategic Management, Organization Theories, etc. Thus, for instance, two of the identified paradigms are founded on economic theories—(2) Eclectic Theory and (3) Transaction Cost Theory—, while the approach identified with number 5—Organizational Model for MNCs—is based on organizational approaches, and number 6—Resources and Capabilities Approach—represents a strategic orientation. In light of the above, we should be cautious when considering IM as an independent field, a more accurate description being that of an interdependent field. As Buckley (2002, p. 370) recently stated, ‘international business could become merely an area of application for applied concepts from other disciplines’.

In the third place, it is worth noting the time distribution of the analyzed documents. Thus, it is possible to observe a slow shift from the right to the left in the MDS chart. Therefore, the sequential approach seems to be the most classic paradigm (mid-70s),

the International Alliances and IJVs (mid-90s) being the most recent ones. In this sense, it is remarkable to note that the newer paradigms complement rather than replace older ones, as can be noticed by the large attention that is still paid to the Sequential Approach, three decades after the publication of the first works.

Also worth-mentioning is the *nationalism* exhibited by researchers (Wright & Ricks, 1994). Although the effort made to analyze other countries, especially China, while being still small (Li & Tsui, 2002; Peng et al., 2001), is one of the pillars of today's research.

Finally, with regard to the distribution of the paradigms among journals, we have found differences between the editorial policies of the major journals in the area, which are those that most influence researchers. Although the IJVs research (factor 1) prevails in four out of the five journals analyzed, trends seem to be located in European journals (Sequential Approach), while the economic approaches are mainly found in US-based journals. These differences show a multiplicity of research interests, probably arising out of the different aspects related to IM, or out of the different approaches used for understanding a given aspect that is difficult to compare—incommensurability of paradigms (Kuhn, 1962).

7. Future directions of the IM field

Our results show that IM, although considered an independent field, does not have one prevailing paradigm, as it embraces multiple theories and approaches. Below we explain how these characteristics may prove useful for researchers when it comes to targeting their study:

First of all, the lack of global approaches suggests that it is necessary to make a major attempt to bring together the different existing perspectives and establish some links between them. It is therefore necessary to develop theories with a wider scope, which link inter and intra-firms, and static and dynamic, economic and managerial factors. The fact that only 20% of the articles have been assigned to any of the different approaches identified shows the relevance of the field specialization, since the particular aspects of the international management field have been identified thanks to other theories (Toyne, 1989; Wright & Ricks, 1994).

There is a lack of ambition in generating independent IM paradigms. Thus far, most authors have opted to use approaches from other disciplines instead of creating new ones of their own. Buckley (2002) posits the need to identify a new 'big question' for the discipline. We agree with Buckley and to such need we add the requirement that the IM field be able to generate paradigms of its own, specifically oriented to the differential questions of the discipline. With the exception of Dunning's works, the paradigmatic bases of the area are becoming more estranged. This process is accompanied by the specialization of the existing academic journals and the creation of new narrower-focused journals. In our opinion, apart from establishing links between the existing paradigms, the field needs one or more binding proposals in the central area of the map, and it also has to be able to take up proposals from other areas.

The results also suggest important challenges for the editors, members of the boards of editors and revisers of the journals in the area. Thus, the differences found between American and European editorial policies bring about the need for a better targeting of

the articles according to the paradigm on which they are based. This tendency has also been noticed in other fields, such as in general management (Acedo et al., 2001; Usdiken & Pasadeos, 1995). On the other hand, we cannot forget that researches include cultural assumptions, and it is therefore necessary to broaden the scope of the journals so that they embrace works with a wider cultural basis. Likewise, the specialization of the journals according to certain paradigms or spheres of study should be offset with an integrating effort made by those journals that aim at finding their way in the core of the discipline, journals with a generic ambition in the sphere of the theoretical development of the IM field.

8. Conclusion

Although many authors have addressed several reviews of the IM research, it is necessary to go on reviewing the field as it evolves (Boddeyn and Gopalkrishnan, 1999). The goal of this study was to identify the main research paradigms within the IM field by analyzing the co-citations from 583 papers published between 1997 and 2000 in the five most influential journals, according to academics of that area. The main contribution of this paper is the use of an objective methodology—the Author Co-citation Analysis (ACA)—, which is not based on the subjective interpretation of the researcher, as suggested in the literature (Boddeyn & Iyer, 1999). These methods allow us to provide clear tools for researchers to identify potential new directions as well as to locate their work within the field (Locke & Perera, 2001). Furthermore, this paper provides a useful approach for new researchers, as they can identify the main contributions made to the IM and how they are structured. In general, this analysis allows for the identification of possible research lacks, offering interesting guidelines for future research (the needs of establishing bridges among the existing paradigms, generating paradigms characteristics of the area, reflecting on the editorial lines and their contribution to the future development of the discipline, among others).

This study sets out the starting point for further analyses that aim at a better understanding of the IM field. First, it would be interesting to identify how the different approaches have evolved by means of objective procedures instead of the experts' opinions. To achieve this, we should need to increase the number of years considered to analyze the evolution of these trends over different periods. This idea is used to explain the evolution of the science and the competition of the different paradigms (Chen, Cribbin, Macredie, & Morar, 2002; Kuhn, 1962; Small, 2003; White, 2003). Second, we propose to study the influence of cultural aspects on the dissemination of ideas, in particular, and of research, in general, within this field. In this sense, it would be interesting to analyze if there are any differences among researchers depending on their origin as proposed by Usdiken and Pasadeos (1995), according to whom some journals used to publish more articles written by authors from their country than by authors from third countries. Third, the differences found in the editorial policies suggest the need for analyzing the impact of the editorial board's individual background (origin, experience, research interests, etc.) on the kind of articles published by a given journal. Finally, a wider range of publications

and kinds of documents should be considered (research notes, books, papers presented at conferences) in order to obtain a more detailed description of the field.

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