

Boosting Open Access books in Spanish &, contributing to the multilingualism in the Open Access space

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Introduction

Transition towards open access has recently gained speed and strength. From a political perspective, the impulse received by *Plan S* so that by 2020 all publicly funded research is published in scientific, open access journals and the launch of the *Global Alliance of Open Access Scholarly Communication Platforms* (GLOALL) by UNESCO¹ show the clear support to promote open access to knowledge. Although open access monographs are usually the second step of those plans –due to their intrinsic complexity-, there is no doubt that a very important takeoff is taking place. This is evidenced not only by the growing number of open access titles but also with regards to the diversity of funding models, technological infrastructures for the hosting of contents or metadata of monographs, or the centrality of the topic in debates, courses and conferences on scholarly publishing (Puuska, Guns et al., 2018).

In this context of effervescency one of the topics rising concern among the associations promoting open access (OASPA or AAUP, in example)² is the plurality of contents online and the diversity of languages, topics and approaches. While the contents in English from Europe, USA and Canada are growing due to public policies as well as innovation in the publishing and scholarly sector, books in open access from other countries are not so many, are not so visible or are not discoverable.

A recent study (Giménez-Toledo and Córdoba-Restrepo) regarding open access books in Latin America shows that, opposite to what happens in the case of scientific journals in the region, there are no collective strategies boosting open access books, at least in university presses. Despite the fact that some institutions are firmly supporting the publication in open access and that there are mandates promoting open access, there is a lack of specific measures, research funds for the publication in open access, specific training for publishing professionals in issues such as intellectual property and infrastructures facilitating the dissemination and recovery of open access books. That

¹ <https://en.unesco.org/news/launch-global-alliance-open-access-scholarly-communication-platforms-democratize-knowledge>

²10th Conference on Open Access Scholarly Publishing / OASPA Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing) or AUPRESSES Annual Meeting 2019
<http://www.aupresses.org/events-a-conferences/annual-meeting/aupresses-2019/program>

makes it difficult to count with a global vision of the publication of open access books in Spanish in the international framework, with the corresponding lack of presence of contents in Spanish online. This invisibility represents a lack of plurality in the contents, approaches and cultural contexts which are highly relevant for the research carried out in the Humanities and the Social Sciences. For this reason and, in line with the *Helsinki Initiative about Multilingualism in Scholarly Communication*³ it is very relevant not only to favor the transition towards open access of book publishers in Spanish but also to develop strategies in order to make that output visible.

Objectives and methodology

This work intends to show, on the one hand, the degree of presence of scholarly books in Spanish in large international platforms and, on the other, to identify the reasons of the publishers for not publishing open access books. There is, therefore, a quantitative (descriptive) approach and a qualitative one.

This work has the following main objectives:

- To analyze the presence of scholarly books in Spanish and Ibero-American publishers in the main international platforms: Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB), AmeliCA, OAPEN, Open Edition, Scielo Books, JSTOR and UNEBOOK, comparing them with the number of books in other languages. A map will be presented including what scholarly books in Spanish represent globally.
- To analyze the profile of Ibero-American publishers (University Presses and commercial publishers) which publish and make visible their scholarly books in open access, as well as their country of origin as an additional variable in the analysis as well as an interesting information for the promotion of open access.
- To identify conditioning factors in the research and publication systems of Spain and Colombia, as case studies, which could contribute to the explanation of the aforementioned data.
- For those countries, identify the reasons for not publishing in open access or the difficulties for doing so, through interviews (10-15) with University Presses and commercial publishers which are being carried out in the framework of a current research project⁴.

From those results, it is intended to sketch some further steps for Ibero-American publishers with regards to their transition to open access, considering their own context and considering non euro-centric solutions.

Preliminary results

³ <https://www.helsinki-initiative.org/es>

⁴ CSO2015-63693-P. *Las prensas universitarias iberoamericanas y el libro científico en español*. Ministerio de Ciencia, Innovación y Universidades / FEDER.

According to the first analysis in international platforms of open access books (April, 2019) the coverage of books in Spanish is very low, particularly taking into account the huge output of scholarly books in Spanish-Speaking countries such as Spain (17% of the titles produced annually) or Colombia (around 20%). Some preliminary data are the following:

Table 1. Total number of titles, titles in Spanish and % of titles in Spanish in some of the main international platforms of open access books.

	Nº titles	Nº titles in Spanish	% titles in Spanish
DOAB	15041	491	3,26
Open Edition	6975	445	6,38
Scielo books	1103	10	0,91
JSTOR	5198	583	11,22
OAPEN	8821	59	0,67

Source: own elaboration from cited sources. April 2019

Such distance between publishing output and production of open access books is given by different reasons, initially identified in the interviews and conversations with publishers. Open access, as a global phenomenon is known, but open access books are understood as a type of output that can only be developed by large international publishers. The most innovative funding formulas are unknown, together with the international projects for hosting scholarly monographs and technical issues concerning the management of metadata or Creative Commons licenses. On the other hand, there is a limited availability of funds for research which represents an obstacle for the funding of open access books. Apart from that reason, which affects several Ibero-American countries there is a lack of reflection and collective strategy for the dissemination of open access contents in Spanish, which suggest the necessity of a dialogue between funding agencies, publishers, university libraries and book-related institutions in order to boost this type of publication and, therefore, show a fraction of the research developed in Spanish in the Humanities and the Social Sciences.

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