Having served for several years as policy advisor for curricular internationalization in one of Spain’s biggest and best-known universities, I am more than pleased to find a book that finally answers the questions to some of my recurrent problems — a book that addresses the concept of quality in internationalized multilingual universities from an applied linguistic perspective.

Although interest in quality and quality assurance in internationalized higher education institutions (HEIs) has ranked highly in recent research studies in Europe, USA and China (Yemini & Sagie, 2016), such interest has often sidelined the multifaceted roles of language(s) in these growing multilingual scenarios. With the exception of studies concerned with English language proficiency levels, which have proliferated in the last years as a result of English-medium education (e.g. Dearden, 2014; Lei & Hu, 2014), other quality issues regarding language(s) are rather scarce. Similarly, supranational reports and policy recommendations aligning these two aspects, while hugely interesting, have often not reached a wider audience or managed to provide concrete and tangible examples that illustrate quality assurance processes in particular HEIs.

To fill this gap, here is the book that enables us to recognize that quality in multilingual HEIs may be approached from very different and complementary perspectives. As the literature has pointed out (see Adams, 1993), quality has multiple meanings: it is dynamic, because it changes...
over time; it may be assessed by quantitative and/or qualitative measures; and it should always be seen within a certain context. In this regard, this volume offers all three perspectives. Firstly, it describes how different processes (whether formal or informal) may be used to assess the quality of an institution, and how such quality assurance processes may change over time depending on a myriad of factors (e.g. political, ideological, pedagogical, sociocultural, etc.). Secondly, it examines diverse measures, from quality indicators to a key indicator matrix, developed in very diverse settings to assist university leadership and curriculum planners in the design and assessment of quality measures. And, thirdly, it explores different teacher professional development programmes, based in linguistically and geographically diverse contexts, to make us see that quality should also be addressed from a qualitative and classroom-level angle. In other words, the book widens the traditional focus on the construction of quality in HEIs by combining diverse ways in which language issues may be addressed in multilingual universities, from the micro-, to the meso- and macro-level perspective. Most importantly, in my view, this is done without losing sight of the local realities and practices on which to build internationalized multilingual universities and, therefore, viewing quality as fitness for purpose (Harvey & Green, 1993).

Having undertaken university responsibilities where language matters, internationalization and quality issues were tightly interconnected, I envisage that Fernando Rubio-Alcalá’s and Do Coyle’s edited volume will make a critical and valuable contribution to the interplay of all three angles. Moreover, this work will inspire individual institutions to assess and enhance the quality of their international dimension and include specifically the role of language(s) in such quality assurance processes, placing at the centre their own stated aims and objectives. I am confident that it will stimulate reflection and conceptual growth among researchers working in this field and, concurrently, it will encourage planned action for a wide range of practitioners, from teacher professional developers to curriculum planners and content and language experts. While all these stakeholders play different but decisive roles in the implementation of quality assurance processes in internationalized multilingual HEIs, their voices and actions are not always visible. This publication, therefore, stands out by providing us with detailed descriptions of how such agents are engaged in the complex construction of quality, and by reminding us that, after all, quality is everybody’s business.

References