JEAN MONNET CHAIR – UNIVERSITY OF GRANADA

"PM2 by European Commission. Open, free and common project management framework for all European institutions, companies and citizens. – PM2EU+"

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WHITE PAPER

"Projectification" or "Projectization" of Society

One of the Jean Monnet Chair's ongoing activities is the publication of a book concerning the phenomenon of the projectification of society. This publication will be made possible thanks to the collaboration of a panel of international experts from universities, professional organisations and project management practitioners.

When a body of knowledge is in the process of consolidation and continuous expansion, the meaning of each of the used terms is defined and shaped by the different studies, research and references that are generated.

In this sense, the debate among the authors of the book on the meaning and scope of some words, especially "projectification" and " projectization", has been enriching. So, the Jean Monnet Chair believe that sharing the ideas that have raised along the debate will help for the project management community to clarify the meaning of these terms.

As a starting point we used the next reference:

> According to Müller (2009), the (level of) projectization indicates the extent to which a business is based on projects and the project way of working pervades. Thus, projectification and projectization should be rather distinguished, even though this is not (yet) commonly accepted. Projectization means the degree of organising activities through projects, what is a precondition for projectification; projectification has a much wider meaning, embracing projectization.

Javier Pajares (University of Valladolid – Spain)

> Projectization and projectification don't mean the same, but the frontier between them is very diffuse and sometimes "dangerous". It is similar to the words credit and loan in the financial sector. I mean that the border is so narrow that somebody may use projectificacion when they should want to suggest projectization; and still, it is also possible that somebody uses projectization when projectification is the desired meaning.

> For this reason, it could be inspiring to know that a Google search for projectification gives 31,500 results, whereas projectization gives only 13,500. Therefore, I suggest using projectification, except in particular cases. But these arguments lose strength when I

realize that in Spanish, the Google figures are the opposite: 939 for proyectización and 124 for proyectificación (Feb 17 th. 1:18 CET).

Reinhard Wagner – Asked to ChatGPT (Alma Mater University – Slovenia)

The terms "projectization" and "projectification" are related to the process of organizing work into projects, but they have slightly different meanings.

"Projectization" refers to the process of organizing work that is typically performed in a functional or departmental context into a project-based structure. This involves the creation of a temporary organization, often with a project manager and team, that is focused on completing a specific project or set of projects. Projectization is often used to improve project efficiency, reduce costs, and increase the accountability and visibility of project work.

"Projectification," on the other hand, refers to a broader trend in modern society where more and more activities are being organized as projects. This trend can be seen in many areas, including business, government, education, and even personal life. Projectification can be seen as a response to the increasing complexity and uncertainty of the modern world, where traditional organizational structures may be less effective.

In summary, projectization is the specific process of organizing work into a project-based structure, while projectification is a broader trend towards organizing more and more activities as projects.

Beata Jałocha (Jagiellonian University in Krakow)

Generally, most scientific publications use term projectification. This seems natural because, as we all know, this term, coined by Christophe Midler, has inspired extensive research into project-driven processes. The phenomenon gained its name, which allowed - in Wittgenstein's understanding that it is possible to know what is named - to start in-depth research on projectification processes.

According to Arvi Kuura's paper you cited "projectification and projectization should be rather distinguished". Hence, the key element that allows us to understand the difference between projectization and projectification is, in my opinion, how we define project:

- In case of projectization, we rather refer to the well-known project definition, where project is understood as a managerial activity limited by resources, time and scope.
- When we talk about projectification, the notion of project becomes much more complex and fuzzy. While researching projectification, scientists often refer to other various forms of activities, not necessarily defined as projects in a more strict sense - grants, co-financing initiatives, collaborations or personal activities are commonly also referred to as projects (although in the strict sense they are not projects).

Moreover, projectification is not only about number of projects – it is institutionalization of projects in society, where projects and project-alike activities become embedded within all levels and areas of society through beliefs, norms, values, structures, and modes of behavior.

There is a blurred line between projectization and projectification. However, I agree that the first can be actually measured, while the second is an umbrella concept, a multidimensional socio-cultural construct.

Conclusion

It has been possible to reach a consensus on the use of "projectization" when referring to the process of organising work that is normally carried out in a functional or departmental context through projects. On the other hand, "projectification" is used when there is a change in organisational structures towards project-based management, at any of the levels studied, as a response to a VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) environment in order to optimise management and expected results.

Everything indicated here refers to the English terms. When it comes to Spanish, doubt arises in the use of the term because, apart from the Google citations indicated by Prof. Pajares, Jesús Martínez (IPMA) suggests what is projected is the project, while an organisation, an entity and therefore society is projectized. The problem arises from having two terms in English and only one in Spanish. The solution could be to use "increase in the number of activities managed as projects" when it comes from the English term "projectization" and keep projectization when it comes from the English term "proyectification", although this would create what in terms of language and translation is known as a "false friend".