

Title: Broadening the domain of International Entrepreneurship – a direction toward field consolidation?

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Abstract

The rapidly developing field of International Entrepreneurship (IE) is still recognized as an emergent discipline. Numerous scholars have argued that broadening the scope of IE and including established and large companies to its domain will help the field to gain self-determination. However, these calls for demarcation lack a head-on analysis. The aim of this paper is to assess whether IE has and can keep the characteristics of a distinct research area with the delimited scope. The article reviews the development of IE domain during almost three decades of the discipline existence and evaluates IE using the three criteria of a discrete academic field suggested by Hambrick and Chen (2008). Finally, the implications for consolidating the position of IE are proposed.

Key words: International Entrepreneurship, academic field, domain

Broadening the domain of International Entrepreneurship – a direction toward field consolidation?

Introduction

The field of International Entrepreneurship has been rapidly developing for almost three decades; although it has generated a rich research basis, it is still recognized as an emergent discipline (e.g., McDougall and Oviatt 2000: 906; Jones and Nummela 2008: 349; Mathews and Zander 2007: 12). Like any scientific field that goes through the process of establishment, IE experiences formation problems of defining its unique subject, core theoretical concepts and directions for future research (Hisrich et al. 1996; Zahra and George 2002: 260; Etemad and Lee 2003; Etemad and Wright 2003; Zahra et al. 2004). Meanwhile, the main interest of IE researchers has been focused on internationalization of small and newly established firms (Keupp and Gassman 2009). However, in recent IE literature, scholars are constantly calling for broadening the scope of IE and including established and large companies to its study area (e.g., Giamartino, McDougall and Bird 1993; Coviello and Jones 2004; Zucchella and Scabini 2007; Keupp and Gassman 2009). They argue that this delimitation will help the field to gain self-determination and develop as a distinct area of scholarly inquiry (Zahra and George 2002: 260; Young, Dimitratos and Dana 2003). Acceptance of this need for demarcation has become one of the major trends in IE research (Zucchella and Scabini 2007: 2); however, the calls for the field delimitation remain rather superficial and lack subsequent head-on analysis. Moreover, scholars do not question the appropriateness of the domain enlargement for the field establishment. The aim of this paper is to review the IE field and evaluate whether it has and can keep the characteristics of a discrete academic field with the broadened scope. In addition, I propose some implications that may help to consolidate the position of IE as a scholarly discipline.

1. Broadening the scope of IE

According to Zucchella and Scabini (2007: 6), the term ‘International Entrepreneurship’ first appeared in 1988 in the article by Morrow who described technological and cultural changes of global environment and emerging opportunities for new ventures in foreign markets. However, Keupp and Gassman (2009: 601) and Autio (2005) indicate that the actual development of IE field was initiated by the seminal article of Oviatt and McDougall (1994: 49) where they introduced the phenomenon of International New Venture (INV), *‘a business organization that, from inception, seeks to derive significant competitive advantage from the use of resources and the scale of outputs in multiple countries’*. In the later works, this type of firms was also called ‘born global’ (Madsen and Servais 1997). Although nowadays IE stream of research has wider coverage of topics, it emerged as a special narrow focus within International Business (IB) research on the phenomenon of rapidly and irregularly internationalizing small and young firms. Their internationalization has been actively opposed to the traditional internationalization theory known as Uppsala model that describes incremental foreign expansion of large and established companies (Johanson and Wiedersheim-Paul 1975; Johanson and Vahlne 1977; Young, Dimitratos and Dana 2003: 34).

Although the definition of INV has set the first conceptual basis for IE, it has been widely criticized for its phenomenological rather than theoretical nature; in addition, this definition established the trend of quite restrictive research focus on only small and young firms (Wright and Ricks 1994: 699; Mtigwe 2006: 17; Keupp and Gassman 2009: 601).

Several scholars argue that international entrepreneurial activities may occur also in large and established companies, for example in form of corporate entrepreneurship (Zahra 1993; Zahra and Schulte 1994; Zahra and George 2002: 256). However, one should notice that in fact the study by Oviatt and McDougall (1994) focuses on new international ventures, and there is no special attention to company size. In addition, international new ventures are a heterogeneous group of firms, which includes as one sub-category born-globals. In other words, since the emergence of IE research, there has been no particular focus on only small firms. The reason why IE initially has had rather narrow scope of studying only small enterprises is rather empirical. Given that many of the key researchers in IE had a background in entrepreneurship (e.g., Oviatt, McDougall, Zahra, George) and the fact that the majority of the studied firms were small, lead to the obvious development of focusing on SMEs in the beginning.

Later – in line with the development of entrepreneurship as a discipline – the focus has shifted from the subject characteristics (e.g., size and age) to the behavioral attributes of individuals and organizations. Table 1 presents the evolution of IE definitions along the decades of the field existence and shows this very visible trend of the broadening scope of IE.

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Zucchella and Scabini (2007: 3) propose that by now IE field has included studies on INV (born globals), new MNE subsidiaries, established international firms, and established MNE subsidiaries. However, they propose that even this already broad scope should be extended by incorporating to IE object born-again globals (firms that are neither born-globals nor MNCs' subsidiaries) and mature and low-technology firms that can also act entrepreneurially on international arena (*ibid.*: 19). Therefore, the authors suggest that IE scope should shift from specific subject towards attributes of individuals and organizations (e.g., resources, capabilities, and behavior). In general, many scholars support the idea that for the emerging field like IE, it is not yet the right time to narrow down the scope (Giamartino, McDougall and Bird 1993: 38; Coviello and Jones 2004; Dimitratos and Jones 2005; Styles and Seymour 2006; Keupp and Gassman 2009) because there is still no common agreement what constituted the domain of IE and what builds its theoretical foundation (Zahra and George 2002: 260; Dimitratos and Plakoyiannaki 2003; Wright and Dana 2003; Acs, Dana and Jones 2003).

In respond to these constant calls for the broader domain of IE, I see the need for assessment or at least some estimation of what this delimitation would imply for the theoretical advancement of field. My main concerns relates to the ability of IE to keep its characteristics of the distinct academic field, which are even now quite unclear. The following discussion intends to address this issue.

2. Delimitation of IE as an academic field

There is still no common agreement among scholars whether IE can be called an academic field. For instance, Jones and Nummela (2008: 350) indicate that IE has gained the position of the scientific discipline. However, many researchers support the opinion that IE does not have its distinct area of scholarly inquiry (e.g., Zahra and George 2002: 260; Zahra et al. 2004: 743). Dimitratos and Jones (2005) and Mtigwe (2006), in turn, maintain that it is important for IE to have a domain of its own in order to establish its more profound

theoretical foundation and enrich its theoretical contribution. In order to evaluate whether IE possesses the status of a distinct area of scientific research and will be able to maintain it with the broadened domain, some definition and criteria for an academic field are needed.

Hambrick and Chen (2008: 34) argue that an academic field exists '*when a sustainable number of major universities designate positions for its members, grant tenure to its members, seek peer tenure evaluations from its members, and allow its members to supervise graduate students*'. They state that a field first develops as an informal community whose members view its agenda as permanent; however, intellectual and professional goals of the community cannot be achieved if it continues acting only informally. The authors provide a synthesized model of the three criteria that define an established academic field – *differentiation*, *mobilization*, and *legitimacy building*. In what follows, I apply these three criteria to evaluate the field of IE. The application of this particular model for my analysis seems to be relevant because it has been already used for assessing the field of Strategic Management (Hambrick and Chen 2008)

2.1 Differentiation

Differentiation criterion relates to some unique phenomenon that cannot be explained by the theories within other existing disciplines. '*There must be something distinctive about the domain of the new field that established fields are unwilling or unequipped to address. Such distinctiveness is difficult to portray, however, if the new field is simply a subspeciality of an existing field*' (Hambrick and Chen 2008: 35). As I showed in the previous section, there is no common opinion about the domain of IE. The only agreement that is shared by most of researchers is that current IE studies are to a great extent focused on small and young firms (e.g., Keupp and Gassman 2009: 601; Wright and Ricks 1994: 699; Zahra and George 2002: 256; Mtigwe 2006: 17). Although this focus is now recognized as a main obstacle for IE development, it marked out IE research from the mainstream IB theory (Young, Dimitratos and Dana 2003: 34). Will the suggested demarcation of IE domain make the field differentiate and give it a unique subject?

One of the directions for the delimitation relates to the attributes of a firm under study, namely, size and age. Scholars adhering to this position suggest that besides INVs and born globals, IE should also study internationalization of MNCs, their subsidiaries, and various types of established firms regardless their industry (e.g., Jones and Nummela 2008; Keupp and Gassman 2009). However, the internationalization of large and established corporations has been widely studied by IB research. Therefore, now IE scholars try to claim the affiliation with the subject that they used to distance from (Young, Dimitratos and Dana 2003: 34). Thus, just a simple inclusion of companies of different size and age into the domain of IE may put the field uniqueness under risk because it questions the originality of IE intellectual ownership.

Another direction for the demarcation proposes that IE should change its focus from subject features to behavioral traits of agents (both individuals and organizations) acting entrepreneurially on international arena (Zucchella and Scabini 2007). These traits include pro-activeness, innovativeness, risk taking (McDougall and Oviatt 1997: 293) and discovery, enactment, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities (Oviatt and McDougall 2003: 7; 2005a: 540). Interestingly, these attributes are almost an exact quote from the widely known definition of entrepreneurship by Shane and Venkataraman (2000: 218); only international context is added, which implies that it imposes new qualities on entrepreneurial activity.

McDougall, Oviatt and Shrader (2003) show that international new ventures differ from domestic ones regarding the degree of entrepreneurial team experience and international experience, strategy aggressiveness, and innovativeness and competitiveness of their

products. Although their study provides one of the most comprehensive quantitative examinations of the difference between international and domestic new ventures, the authors admit that their results cannot be generalized; additionally, they do not focus on pre-internationalization activities and other immeasurable entrepreneurial attributes (e.g., motivation, independence, pro-activeness etc.) (*ibid.*). Therefore, more qualitative research needs to be conducted to ascertain whether domestic and international entrepreneurship have different features or they possess similar attributes but with different intensity. Consequently, delimitation of the IE scope by the shift towards entrepreneurial attributes of individuals and organization should be done through an extensive theoretical work on understanding whether the concept of entrepreneurship changes depending on domestic or international context. Until now this conceptual difference remains undefined, which restricts establishment and differentiation of IE as an academic field.

2.2 Mobilization

Hambrick and Chen (2008) base mobilization criterion on the social movement theory, which refers to ‘the process by which a group secures collective control over the resources needed for collective action’ (Jenkins 1983: 532). The effectiveness of mobilization is affected by political opportunity structure (static and dynamic conditions of environment), by shared interests that define group identity and solidarity, and by social infrastructure (e.g., availability of social ties and forums where field purpose, philosophy and agenda are discussed) (Hambrick and Chen 2008: 37).

IE field has been mobilizing its intellectual resources through starting and maintaining special academic journal and scientific conferences. Thus, *Journal of International Entrepreneurship* and related to it McGill International Entrepreneurship Conference have been serving as the main forum for IE researchers for more than a decade. Also, Australia-based International Entrepreneurship Research Exchange helps to balance North-America’s dominant position in IE research. Through these forums, IE field has been gaining its identity and establishing an academic infrastructure for discussing agenda for new research.

At the same time, many studies on IE are very often presented in more general journals and conferences. For instance, journals like *Entrepreneurship: Theory and Practice*, *Journal of Business Venturing*, *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, *International Business Review* and some international marketing journals like *Journal of International Marketing & Marketing Research* accept works on IE topics. Also, IB conferences like Academy of International Business (AIB) and Entrepreneurship conferences like Babson College Entrepreneurship Research Conference (BCERC) or Research in Entrepreneurship and Small Business (RENT) often have separate tracks for IE studies. One may argue that this disorder indicates that IE is still viewed as a sub-specialization of mainstream research, which in turn may be a sign of poor distinctiveness. However, I believe that these more general forums serve the important function; they show both the origins and the emerging state of IE, provide the room for dialogue with other field and allow cross-fertilization of ideas for field development, which saves it from becoming too narrow and self-referred.

The presence of IE research in both specialized and general forums indicates that the field has made a considerable effort to mobilize its intellectual resources, and this consolidation should be taken further. However, the delimitation of IE scope may bring some confusion about the special forums for researchers in the field because their thematic boundaries may become too broad. Wider scope of IE may cause some vagueness about intellectual ownership of a unique domain that IE has been trying to obtain; hence, field identification and study positioning may become problematic for researchers. If this unique

intellectual resource is not clear, IE scholars cannot fully control it and act collectively as a group of researchers belonging to one academic field.

2.3 Legitimacy building

Legitimacy building relates to the demonstration to the members outside the aspiring community as well as insiders and potential members that the goals of an emerging field can be accepted as valid and reasonable, and the aspiring community is qualified to achieve these goals. Legitimacy building has two forms. First, through *persuasion*, strong arguments and evidence a field shows not only its contribution to knowledge but also a larger benefit on the level of the whole society. Usually, this vision is declared in ‘utopias’ that show how a field can make the world a better place. Second, through *emulation* of methods and paradigms from well-established fields, an emergent field demonstrates its origins and ‘right track’. (Hambrick and Chen 2008)

The strongest approval for the goals of an academic field as legitimate ones is availability of educational programmes and supervision corresponding to this field (Hambrick and Chen 2008: 34). These programmes show that usefulness of the field is accepted not only by aspiring community but also by external actors. In addition, they demonstrate the need in certain specialists and knowledge for the whole society.

As I discussed earlier, IE’s contribution to the body of knowledge remains unclear due to vague domain of the field. Also, larger contribution to societal development has not been articulated. Although the field attracts attention of public authorities and institutions (Birley and MacMillan 1995; Dana 2004; Hisrich 2010), there are still no established educational programmes in IE; the topic is taught only in form of separate courses within Entrepreneurship or IB degrees, and there is lack of teaching materials (Jones et al. 2008). Therefore, as a young field, IE has not *persuaded* its core contributions yet. The broader scope of IE would question even more the necessity of separate IE courses and the need of IE specialists for society. If IE goals do not differ from those of other well-established disciplines, the education authorities would be reluctant to go through bureaucratically complicated and expensive process of preparing a new courses and programmes.

IE has been building legitimacy mainly through *emulation* of theories and concepts from original fields; probably, through the scope broadening it will continue to do so. However, this domain delimitation does not allow IE to demonstrate its distinctiveness and have a ‘right track’ of its own. Hence, legitimacy building only through emulation without persuasion is not enough for IE to claim its status of an academic field.

As my evaluation shows, the delimitation of IE domain at this point of time is rather questionable direction for consolidating its position as an academic field. Only the criterion of mobilization is fulfilled rather sufficiently. To my understanding, the main obstacle mainly concerns the first criterion of possessing a unique research subject and staying differentiated from other disciplines. The problem of discrepancy with the legitimacy building criterion is rather the outcome from the first one. Therefore, at this point IE scholars need to seek for the alternative ways for IE to establish the status of a scientific field. I provide some implications on this issue in what follows.

3. Implications for IE field consolidation

I suggest that it is too early for an emerging field of IE to expand its domain because it is still unclear what constitutes the initial domain. One cannot plan a journey without having an idea about the point of departure. To move forward, IE should look into its origins and

understand what concepts it actually takes from these sources and how they intersect (Wright and Dana 2003: 149; Zahra and Newey 2009). This reassessment may help to realize if there is anything synergically new coming from the original theories and constituting a distinct field or there is a simple sum of separate concepts labeled with the tag of IE (Zahra and Newey 2009). This evaluation may shed a light on the actual attributes of IE research and help to determine the directions for its consolidation. I propose that IE scholars should address the following issues.

3.1 The original theories of IE

The analysis of literature reveals two views on what original theories make the foundation of IE field. Some researchers argue that IE builds on three disciplines: International Business, Entrepreneurship, and Strategic Management (Zucchella and Scabini 2007; Oviatt and McDougall 1994: 45; 2005b: 6; Zahra and George 2002: 256). However, the majority of scholars limit this list to only two: International Business and Entrepreneurship (Keupp and Gassman 2009: 600; McDougall and Oviatt 2000; Mathews and Zander 2007; Yeung 2002; Dimitratos and Jones 2005: 119; Acs, Dana and Jones 2003: 6; Fletcher 2004: 295; Etemad and Wright 2003: 1; Etemad and Lee 2003: 7). To move field forward, first, IE research community needs to reach the consensus about what theories actually intersect in IE field. Including or withdrawing Strategic Management theories from IE may have important outcomes for the field development; therefore, researchers should provide strong arguments about their decision to consider this body of knowledge or not.

3.2 The building blocks from the original theories

After deciding about the core academic areas that IE develops from, scholars should see what building blocks from these areas are in fact taken into the field and what inherited problems they bring. For instance, there is still no clarity about what IE inherited from *International Business* (Yeung 2002; Young, Dimitratos and Dana 2003). IE emerged from the widely known Uppsala model (Johanson and Vahlne 1977); however, to demonstrate its distinctiveness, the field was initially positioned as a ‘totally segregated body of knowledge for which traditional international business theories could offer no useful insights whatsoever’ (Young, Dimitratos and Dana 2003: 34). However, in fact, risk taking behavior and opportunity development are present in Uppsala model (Johanson and Vahlne 1977; Figuera-de-Lemos, Johanson and Vahlne 2009). Indeed, companies move abroad exactly for new opportunities exploration and exploitation, which has a certain level of risk regardless the mode of internationalization. Moreover, the network approach of the revisited Uppsala model explains very well the phenomenon of rapid internationalization and makes the model applicable to firms of various sizes and age (Johanson and Vahlne 2009: 15). I propose that IE needs to reconsider its relation to IB theory that has evolved since first Uppsala model was introduced. Researchers need to define common and distinct points of the two research streams. This issue brings the discussion back to the topic of IE differentiation question that I addressed earlier.

Also, IE inherited fundamental problem of defining ‘entrepreneurship’ from *Entrepreneurship* research because this area itself is a terminological and conceptual jungle and overlaps with innovation, change management, and strategic management (Yeung 2002: 36; Fletcher, 2004; Dimitratos and Jones 2005). It is crucial for IE field differentiation to identify what ‘entrepreneurship’ really means, whether it can happen on organizational level and has different features depending on domestic and international context (Zucchella and Scabini 2007: 78; Dimitratos and Jones 2005: 122). As I said before, the work by McDougal, Oviatt and Shrader (2003) on comparison between

domestic and international new ventures should be developed further, perhaps, in more qualitative direction.

According to Zucchella and Scabini (2007: 80), *Strategic Management* theory brings resource-based view, dynamic capability concept and network approach to Entrepreneurship; therefore, IE also inherits them. Also, Zahra and George (2002: 274-275) state that IE incorporates strategic theories through viewing the influence of generic, functional and entry strategies on internationalization. However, the authors do not discuss what new features these views and concepts obtain in context of IE and how IE becomes distinct through incorporating them. For example, network approach is recognized as a most influential theoretical foundation of IE (Young, Dimitratos and Dana 2003; Mort and Weerawardena 2006); however, exactly this approach undermines the notion of 'international' and blurs the difference between entrepreneurship and international entrepreneurship. Geographical borders become irrelevant because 'networks are borderless' (Wright and Dana 2003; Johanson and Vahlne 2009: 13). From the network perspective, internationalization does not differ from the general expansion of a firm because entry barriers are not associated with country specific borders or location specificities but are related to new contacts establishment and their exploitation (Johanson and Vahlne 2003: 93). Thus, following the advice of Johanson and Vahlne (2009), we propose that not geographical criteria but rather extent of insidership/ outsidership should be indicators of firm international expansion. However, this direction would require more in-depth and qualitative research on internationalization through networks and their context.

3.3 Intersecting the original theories

Zahra and George (2002: 260) state that the interplay between entrepreneurship and internationalization makes IE a unique stream of research. In addition, Jones and Nummela (2008: 350) maintain that the phenomenon of IE should be extended by intersection with these original disciplines in order to search for fresh ideas and in-depth understanding of the field. However, according to Zahra and Newey (2009: 1066), IE has tried to build its theory by following the simplest and least effective way of theorizing at the intersection of these fields. It borrowed various concepts from original disciplines, which is an accepted practice in science and is not a problem in itself. However, IE has superficially combined these concepts without asking what problems of original theories it intends to solve and whether they are compatible at all. This blind use of different concepts resulted in the ignorance of unique phenomena explored by IE. The authors argue that this way of theorizing handicaps the research stream, does not create strong academic impact and restricts legitimization of the field. Following the logic of Zahra and Newey (2009), I propose that IE researchers need to reconsider the way different concepts from original theories are intersected; IE can maximize its impact by not only intersecting original theories but also by extending them and, at best, transforming the core fields.

This extension and field development can be achieved by further studies on how IE combines paradigmatically different concepts from IB and Strategic Management that are based on rational and causative logic with Entrepreneurship that may be irrational and effectual (Saravathy 2001). The other direction for maximizing the impact of IE could relate to finding the balance between IB and Entrepreneurship theories; some scholars agree that IE failed to integrate them (e.g., Yeung 2002: 35; Dimitratos and Jones 2005: 119). Some adhere to the opinion that IB has obtained a dominant position in IE (Giamartino, McDougall and Bird 1993: 39; Keupp and Gassmann 2009: 612); others argue that IE employs the theoretical concepts of IB to a very little extent, and IE should embrace more International Business theory in order to broaden its domain (Young,

Dimitratos and Dana 2003: 32). Probably, this imbalance results from more mature position of IB and still evolving status of Entrepreneurship (Keupp and Gassmann 2009: 603, 611). Additionally, IE researchers should raise the dialogue on the position of concepts from Strategic Management in IE; so far this issue has been discussed very little and mainly with regard to SM contribution to Entrepreneurship theory (Zucchella and Scabini 2007).

Also, some authors intersect the concepts of internationalization, entrepreneurship, and international entrepreneurship in a way that they almost equalize them, which leads to theoretical confusion (Johanson and Vahlne 2009: 13; Fletcher 2004: 295). Thus, Mathews and Zander (2007: 9) suggest that 'internationalization may be defined as the entrepreneurial process of the firm's becoming integrated in international economic activities'; similarly, Mtigwe (2006: 18) say that the essence of international business is international entrepreneurship and 'entrepreneurship is a common currency of all international business activity'. Likewise, Welch (2004: 145) argues that 'international entrepreneurship and internationalization have a common heritage and a concern about similar issues'. The logic of these statements indicates that all international business activities are entrepreneurial, and there is blurred distinction between IB and IE. To resolve this confusion, IE scholars need to define differences and/or similarities in the concepts of internationalization, entrepreneurship, and international entrepreneurship and which of them is more general in relation to the other.

Conclusion

This paper questions the recent trend in IE research that the field needs to broaden its domain in order to gain the foothold and develop further. It provides the evaluation of IE according to the criteria of an academic field to reveal whether IE has the features of a scholarly discipline and whether scope delimitation can help it to gain the status of discrete area of research. Nevertheless IE is a potentially rich and fast growing research area, it has not yet fully consolidated its position as a distinct academic field. IE does not completely satisfy all criteria of a distinct academic field because of insufficient domain differentiation, and legitimacy building. Only the criterion of mobilization is fulfilled enough; therefore, I agree with the scholars who say that IE is still in its infancy, and the work on strengthening its intellectual resources should be continued (e.g., Zahra and George 2002; Dimitratos and Jones 2005; Keupp and Gassman 2009). However, this paper questions the commonly accepted idea that IE should establish its position through delimiting its domain.

I argue that instead of trying to maximize its subject coverage and turning the focus outwards, first IE should look inside its already rich but rather messy body of knowledge and define its current position. I propose that this alternative way of developing the field further can be done by addressing to the three issues: identifying the core theories that IE builds on, detecting the main building blocks from these theories and examining the ways of intersecting them. Therefore, before asking what IE can be and what else we can include in its domain it is important to answer what IE is in fact and what it is not. Definitely, the answers to these questions are serious academic challenges that may pose even more questions.

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Table 1. The evolution of definition of International Entrepreneurship and its subject.

<i>Source</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Comments</i>
McDougall (1989)	IE is 'the development of international new ventures or start-ups that, from their inception, engage in international business, thus viewing their operating domain as international from the initial stages of the firm's operations'	Established firms are excluded
Zahra (1993)	IE is 'study of the nature and consequences of a firm's risk-taking behavior as it ventures into international markets'	
Oviatt and McDougall (1994: 49)	International New Venture is 'a business organization that, from inception, seeks to derive significant competitive advantage from the use of resources and the scale of outputs in multiple countries'	This definition is rather phenomenological than theoretical; it focuses on newly founded and small ventures (Keupp and Gassman 2009). This definition to a great extent is built on IB theory (Oviatt and McDougall 2005b).
Wright and Ricks (1994: 699)	International entrepreneurship is a research on 'small firms entering the realm of international business'	Size of the internationalizing firm becomes the criterion for the field (Wright and Ricks 1994)
McDougall and Oviatt (1997: 293)	IE is 'new and innovative activities that have the goal of value creation and growth in business organizations across national borders'	
McDougall and Oviatt (2000: 903)	'IE is a combination of innovative, proactive, and risk-seeking behavior that crosses national borders and is intended to create value in organizations' 'IE behavior may occur at the individual, group, or organizational levels'	Firm's size and age are not decisive. But this definition excludes non-for-profit and governmental agencies. This integrative definition has established the foundation point for IE (Dimitratos and Jones 2005: 121).
Yeung (2002: 31)	Transnational entrepreneurship is 'the exceptional qualities required in the process of creating and sustaining particular business ventures across national borders by social actors'. Transnational entrepreneur is 'a social actor capable of bearing risks and taking strategic initiatives to establish, integrate, and sustain foreign operations' (p. 37)	
Zahra and George (2002: 261)	IE is 'the process of creatively discovering and exploiting opportunities that lie outside a firm's domestic markets in the pursuit of competitive advantage'	This definition captures the constructs of creativity and competitive advantage but ignores control over resources, risk taking, entrepreneurial mission and the outcomes of entrepreneurial activities (Mtigwe 2006).
Oviatt and McDougall (2003: 7; 2005a: 540); McDougall, Oviatt and Shrader (2003)	'IE is the discovery, enactment, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities – across national borders – to create future goods and services' '...IE examines and compares – across national borders – how, by whom, and with what effects those opportunities are acted upon'	The age and size of internationalizing firm are not emphasized
Dimitratos and Plokoyiannaki	'International entrepreneurship is an organization-wide process which is embedded in the organizational culture of the firm and	

(2003: 189)	which seeks through the exploitation of opportunities in the international marketplace to generate value'
Mtigwe (2006: 17)	IE is 'a courageous managerial value creation process through which an individual engages in innovative, proactive, calculated risk-taking behavior designed to prosecute foreign business opportunities presented by multinational market success and imperfections for financial and non-financial rewards'
Mathews and Zander (2007)	The field is International Entrepreneurship Dynamics covers three entrepreneurial processes that can be spread internationally: 1) the discovery of opportunities, 2) the deployment of resources for the exploitation of these opportunities, and 3) engagement with international competitors
Zucchella and Scabini (2007: 9)	'International Entrepreneurship is not the entry <i>per se</i> in a foreign market but it is a combination of attitudes at the individual and organizational level (proactiveness, innovativeness, risk taking) and of actions over time, along an evolutionary and potentially discontinuous process'