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# Internationalisation, higher education and the growing demand for English: an investigation into the English medium of instruction (EMI) movement in China and Japan

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# About the authors

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# Abstract

The globalisation of English has seen an increase in English education and education through English. Universities around the globe, including those in non-anglophone contexts, are part of this trend, offering programmes in English, despite having a ‘non-native’ (note that in this report, the terms ‘native’ and ‘non-native’ are placed in inverted commas to acknowledge the problematic nature of these terms) English-speaking staff and student body. English as a medium of instruction (EMI) – the use of English to teach subjects in countries where English is not the official language – has become a growing global trend. This has implications for the use of English as a lingua franca (ELF) in the academic domain and for teaching practice. The study reported here aims to explore the EMI phenomenon in higher education in Japan and China. Questionnaires, interviews and focus groups with staff and students provide insights into the differing approaches to, driving forces behind, and attitudes towards EMI. It responds to Dearden’s (2014: 2) call for a ‘research-driven approach which consults key stakeholders at a national and international level’ by providing insights on staff and student perceptions. The empirical and critical examination of the rapid expansion of EMI in Japan and China provides initial insights to act as a platform for further research and also staff training. The study also raises questions as to whether approaching EMI monolingually is the best way forward. The report concludes with a range of practical suggestions for different stakeholders, including staff, students, materials writers and policymakers.

# Context and background to the project

## The growth in EMI

The global spread of English has seen an increase in importance placed not only on English language education throughout the world, but also on education *through* English. Recent years have witnessed the internationalisation of universities worldwide, and this has become a priority for higher education institutes (HEI). HEIs are in competition to attract international students and are keen to internationalise their curricula and develop a global presence. This takes many forms, including internationalisation policies, setting up branch campuses in other countries, staff and student exchanges, collaborative degree programmes and courses and initiatives to recruit international students and staff. Further, as HEIs in ‘non-native’ English-speaking countries make efforts to internationalise and strengthen their global competitiveness, there has been an increased focus on establishing – and extending – English medium instruction (EMI) courses and programmes for non-language subjects. In fact, EMI has become somewhat of a ‘galloping’ phenomenon, now considered ‘pandemic in proportion’ (Chapple, 2015: 1). It has been described as being ‘the most significant trend in educational internationalization’ (*ibid* 1) and also as somewhat of an ‘unstoppable train’ (Macaro, 2015: 7).

EMI has been defined as ‘The use of the English language to teach academic subjects in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the population is not English’ (Dearden, 2014: 2). Courses and programmes are gathering momentum at an unprecedented rate. Initial growth was predominantly in Europe, where EMI programmes at European HEIs increased by 1,000 per cent between 2001 and 2014 (Wächter and Maiworm, 2014). However, it has become a global phenomenon and is rapidly gaining popularity in Asia. In Japan, for example, there was a five per cent increase in Japanese HEIs offering EMI programmes from 2008 to 2010, constituting 29.2 per cent of all undergraduate provision (Chapple, 2015). In 2010, of 135 HEIs across mainland China, 132 had run EMI courses/programmes by 2006, averaging 44 courses per institution (Wu et al, 2010, cited in Lei and Hu, 2014). In addition to an increase in bilingual and EMI programmes, there has been an increase in joint programmes that award degrees from foreign universities, as well as the adoption of English textbooks for some disciplines (Lei and Hu, 2014).

This increased role of English in HEIs in ‘non-native’ English speaking contexts has resulted in a number of changes. Not only is it changing the linguistic landscape of these institutions, but many institutions now seek to hire international faculty who teach in English and this is increasingly a major criterion in hiring decisions. The number of EMI courses is also often used to determine the quality of an institution’s educational provision and to determine government funding and rankings. There is also increased pressure on faculty to publish in English in international journals. Many HEIs also require students to take at least some EMI classes in order to graduate.

## Driving forces behind EMI policies

In order to understand the foundations on which EMI programmes are based, it is important to examine the driving forces behind their establishment. An HEI may decide to deliver content in English for a number of reasons. These include:

- gaining access to cutting-edge knowledge and increasing global competitiveness to raise the international profile
- increasing income (and compensating for shortages at the domestic level)
- enhancing student and lecturer mobility
- enhancing the employability of graduates/ international competencies
- improving English proficiency
- reflecting developments in English language teaching (ELT)
- using English as a neutral language
- offering EMI for altruistic motives.



### *Gaining access to cutting-edge knowledge and increasing global competitiveness to raise the international profile*

EMI is closely related to the overall movement to internationalise higher education. Offering EMI is viewed as a way to access cutting-edge knowledge and contribute to a 'brain gain'. It can help attract international students and faculty, thus raising the international – and the research – profile, of an institution. Moving up domestic and international rankings can help with publicity and attract students and staff. It can also help secure funding, in addition to enhancing graduate employability. EMI also aids the internationalisation of curricula by fostering international partnerships through exchange programmes, degree-conferring programmes and initiatives like faculty exchanges.

### *Increasing income (and compensating for shortages at the domestic level)*

By removing language barriers, EMI programmes can be a useful way of generating income and can compensate for shortages at the domestic level in some contexts, particularly in places where domestic enrolment is decreasing. They open up new sources of revenue, improving the income base through tuition fees from international student recruitment (Wächter and Maiworm, 2014). Some institutions also charge domestic students higher fees to enrol in EMI programmes.

### *Enhancing student and lecturer mobility*

EMI provides opportunities for student and faculty mobility. Such mobility can help attract talented students, who may stay on to become researchers and/or faculty in their respective HEIs, thus contributing to the aforementioned 'brain gain' and raising the research profile of the HEI. They can also generate income through tuition fees.

### *Enhancing the employability of graduates/ international competencies*

EMI has been adopted by many HEIs to enhance the employability of their graduates in both domestic and global markets. It can help foster intercultural competence through mixing with students from different countries and, therefore, enrich learning. Such competencies are seen to be attractive for the increasingly internationalised labour market. With globalisation, and the global spread of English, many governments see a need for the education of an international population and knowledge of a subject area in one's own language is often seen to be insufficient.

### *Improving English proficiency*

The growth in EMI is also related to the increased desire to improve the English proficiency of a country's citizens. English has become a language of prestige. EMI policies are related to government objectives to develop national human capital that can speak English. 'English as a global language is now a factor that needs to be taken into account in its language policy by any nation state' (Spolsky, 2004: 9) and many nations see English skills as being an indispensable competency and key to their modernisation and global competitiveness.

### *Reflecting developments in English language teaching (ELT)*

Developments in English language teaching (ELT) towards more communicative and student-centred models have also been influential in the EMI movement. In East Asia, for many years, the preferred method of language instruction was grammar translation, which entailed having a student directly translate sentences from his or her first language into the target language. Although this method continues to be widely used, Communicative language teaching (CLT) has gained considerable ground around the globe. This has led to an increased focus on teaching in English and exposing students to as much authentic English as possible, which has contributed to content-based approaches in English-language classrooms around the world – seen as being an important way to provide students with authentic target language input.

### *Using English as a neutral language*

English is often used as the medium of instruction, given its perceived neutral position in multilingual environments such as East and Southern Africa or India.

### *Offering EMI for altruistic motives*

The growth in EMI programmes may also be related to an altruistic motive, i.e. to contribute to the improvement of the developing world by providing high-level education for students (Wächter and Maiworm, 2014).

## The effectiveness/impact of EMI

There are both top-down and bottom-up perspectives of the EMI movement. While it has been criticised by some for creating social inequalities and negatively influencing the national language(s) in some societies, many students and staff desire EMI due to the many benefits it can offer.

### Benefits

The perceived benefits include:

- English proficiency in addition to content knowledge
- intercultural understanding and global awareness/citizenship
- enhanced career opportunities
- staff employment.

#### *English proficiency in addition to content knowledge*

For many, EMI can be seen to kill two birds with one stone, giving students a chance to increase their English proficiency skills and enhance their academic progress in other subjects at the same time. It is seen to create a favourable learning environment, which gives extensive exposure to the target language and opportunities for meaningful use of it to negotiate the curricular content, thus leading to better acquisition.

#### *Intercultural understanding and global awareness/citizenship*

EMI can also provide an opportunity to make foreign friends, thus providing intercultural dimensions and other learning opportunities. Mixing with international staff and students can promote international and comparative understanding, which can also enhance students' employment opportunities.

#### *Enhanced career opportunities*

Perceived labour-market value is often a strong motivating factor for students to join EMI programmes (DeWit, 2011). Students often view these courses as beneficial for their future career or educational opportunities.

#### *Staff employment*

EMI also creates jobs in many contexts, particularly for TESOL practitioners when supplemented with English support courses.

## Challenges

However, there are also a number of challenges in relation to EMI. The aforementioned positive outcomes are not guaranteed and there is a fear that a lack of planning can lead to unrealistic expectations. Careful planning is required when considering embarking upon, or perhaps expanding, EMI. Some of these challenges and possible side effects include:

- language-related issues (English proficiency and the impact on national language(s))
- cultural issues (Westernisation)
- social issues (inequalities)
- management, administration and resources (staffing, support for international students, management and faculty culture).

#### *Language-related issues (English proficiency and the impact on national language(s))*

Language-related issues, or linguistic challenges, can be further divided into:

- a. challenges related to English proficiency of staff and students
- b. impact on national language(s).

As noted, one of the major perceived benefits of EMI is the improved English proficiency of students. However, in order to achieve this, students – and staff for that matter – need to be adequately supported. Simply teaching in English and requiring students to submit their work in English will not automatically lead to improved proficiency in English. Many programmes do have entry requirements demanding a certain level of English proficiency, but these are often not sufficient to ensure students have an adequate level of proficiency to tackle the academic content. A lack of English proficiency has been found to influence student performance in a number of ways (Airey, 2011; Airey and Linder, 2006; Beckett and Li, 2012; Chapple, 2015; Doiz et al., 2012; Hellekjaer, 2010; Tange, 2012; Tsuneyoshi, 2005), summarised as:

- detrimental effects on subject learning and understanding lessons and lectures
- longer time to complete the course
- chance of dropping out
- problems communicating disciplinary content
- asking/answering fewer questions
- code-switching
- resistance to EMI.

There has been a lot of discussion in the literature over the quality of instruction due to English proficiency (Byun and Kim, 2011) and there have been many reports of HEIs experiencing difficulties recruiting staff to teach in English (Hu, 2009; Tsuneyoshi, 2005). English proficiency has been reported to influence staff performance in a number of ways (Airey, 2011; Airey and Linder, 2006; Beckett and Li, 2012; Pecorari et al., 2011; Tange, 2012; Tange and Jensen, 2012; Thøgersen and Airey, 2011), including:

- avoiding asking/answering questions
- code-switching
- impoverished classroom discourse
- increased pressure
- extra time needed for preparation/instruction
- simplifying disciplinary content and difficulty explaining it
- interacting less with students and developing a weaker rapport with them.

ELT/TESOL practitioners working on EMI programmes, either teaching content or language/academic skills support classes, may also struggle to navigate unfamiliar content in English, particularly if they are not experts in the subject matter. Many HEIs are, in fact, moving towards a content-based programme taught through English, where the focus is on content with language support. Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) refers to a 'dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language' (Coyle et al., 2010: 1). Teachers working with CLIL are specialists in their own discipline and the focus on curriculum design and assessment is in the content rather than the language. This is often thought to be different to CBI (content-based instruction), which is carried out by traditional language teachers and often involves teaching a series of content-based themes in English language learning orientated classes. Met's (1998) 'continuum of content and language integration' distinguishes between programmes that focus more on content and those that focus more on language classes with content-based themes, which offers a helpful framework to position different courses and programmes.. Massler et al. (2014) also differentiate between CLIL in subject lessons and CLIL in language lessons. In the former, the focus is on the content, whereas the latter focuses on teaching the language around content themes. Terminology can be confusing and Cenoz (2015) notes that CBI/CLIL programmes often share similar characteristics and refer to the same thing. Here, it is assumed that the terms can be used synonymously, with CLIL being preferred in Europe and CBI in the USA and Canada.

Further language-related issues relate to the English bias and the possible negative impact that EMI may have on national languages. Dearden (2014), for example, notes that this is one of the reasons some countries have not adopted EMI. This also relates to cultural concerns related to the dominance of a Western-centric approach to higher education.

#### *Cultural issues (Westernisation)*

Some scholars have pointed to cultural issues associated with the increased use of English in academia. The internationalisation of higher education in general, with the adoption of curricula from 'native' English speaking contexts, international exchanges, the quest to publish in leading journals originating in the West, and EMI, has been criticised for creating a dependency culture and reinforcing the US-dominated hegemony (Mok, 2007: 43). Phillipson (2008), who has written extensively on the topic of linguistic imperialism, is very critical of EMI. It is seen as another form of linguistic imperialism, which benefits some, but not all involved. The global EMI movement clearly marks a new era for English language use in the academic domain and raises questions about standard academic norms, particularly since students in often traditionally monolingual classrooms, such as Japan and China now use English as a lingua franca (ELF) with their international peers and lecturers. Research within the Global Englishes research paradigm showcases the global use of English and raises important questions about the relevance of 'native' English norms for ELT (Galloway, 2017a; Galloway and Rose, 2015). Such discussions also raise questions about norms in EMI and the need to reconceptualise the 'E' in EMI. As Galloway (2017a) notes:

*With the global spread of English medium instruction (EMI) in Higher Education institutes in non-Anglophone contexts and the lowering of the age for English instruction in many contexts, there is an ever-increasing demand for ELT practitioners in addition to the ever-increasing demand for English language proficiency. The topic of a paradigm shift in ELT is clearly timely. The mismatch between the languages taught in the classroom and the increasing evidence of how it functions in real life calls for an urgent need for a critical examination of ELT. The monolingual approach does not permit the use of ELF strategies or translanguaging and anything that deviates from the 'standard' is seen as a sign of a lack of proficiency (p xiv).*

In addition to perpetuating the stereotype that 'native' English is the best variety of English to learn, or even exists for that matter, the global spread of EMI is perpetuating the stereotype that having a Western-style education is superior and something that is necessary for a successful future. The globalisation of English, and the spread of EMI raises important questions for EMI as well as ELT.

#### *Social issues (inequalities)*

'Globalization is something that has winners as well as losers, a top as well as a bottom, and centres as well as peripheries' (Blommaert, 2010: 197). Brock-Utne (2012) argues that there is an inherent inequality in movements towards English as a language for education in that many children are forced to learn in a language they do not use outside of school, and that they have not mastered their own language. Further, in many contexts, an elite English-speaking class has often emerged and it can also be said that EMI teaching positions favour those who have studied abroad and who speak English, since this is often a major criterion in hiring decisions with the lack of EMI qualifications or training.

#### *Management, administration and resources*

- Staffing: EMI courses and programmes that offer language and academic support classes may create jobs for TESOL practitioners, who may be employed to support content professors and/or classes. However, there have been reports that contracts end once a content professor's English proficiency improves (Cots, 2013). Further, Wilkinson (2013) notes that, 'the scope of the English specialists' role would seem to be inversely related to the recruitment of international content staff whose academic careers have mainly been conducted in English' (p7). Many, however, have raised the issue of the shortage of suitable staff, and there are several concerns over the English proficiency of those who are recruited.

Dearden (2014) reported that in 83 per cent of countries surveyed with EMI courses, the lack of qualified teachers was an issue, with many faculty members required to teach on such programmes simply because of their English proficiency or experience abroad, and many being unwilling to do so due to the increased workload and the burden of training.

- Staff training: EMI requires more than merely translating content and delivering it. It involves teaching subject matter, or supporting students learning such subject matter, in English, often in classes with students from diverse lingua-cultural and educational backgrounds. Well-designed staff training is instrumental in determining the success of an EMI programme (Ball and Lindsay, 2013; Wilkinson, 2013). However, as Dearden (2014) points out, there are few pedagogical guidelines for effective EMI teaching and learning: there is little or no EMI content in initial teacher education (teacher preparation) programmes and continuing professional development (in-service) courses, which is concerning given the rapidly growing number of EMI programmes worldwide.
- Support for international students: The growing number of international students raises a number of challenges for HEIs. Those with limited proficiency may experience difficulty communicating with faculty, or understanding the institutional culture, for example. Faculty may also need training in intercultural communication.
- Management and faculty culture: Administrative and management issues are also important. For an EMI programme to be successful, systems have to be put in place to support them. Staffing can be problematic and expensive. EMI can also present challenges to faculty culture, especially in countries where students and staff may not be familiar with the Western style of higher education.

## Research

While the global EMI movement may be one of the most significant trends in higher education in some settings, this has preceded and outpaced empirical research. The majority of studies to date have been conducted in the European context, although recent years have seen more studies in Asia.

The **driving forces** behind EMI have attracted much scholarly attention. Studies have been conducted in Europe (Wächter and Maiworm, 2014), Japan (Brown, 2014) and Korea (Byun and Kim, 2011). A number of studies have also examined how EMI is **approached**. In Europe, large-scale studies have been conducted to understand how EMI is implemented (Ammon and McConnell, 2002; Wächter and Maiworm, 2014). Studies in the Asian context are also on the rise, with studies in Japan (Bradford, 2016; Brown, 2014; Burgess et al. 2010; Huang, (2006) and China (Huang, 2006; Hu, 2009). However, there is yet to be such a thorough investigation of this trend as in Europe. With regards to research on the **effectiveness** of EMI, there are concerns that it has been gathering momentum without sufficient attention to measuring its effectiveness. As Mok (2007) notes, it is important to examine whether internationalisation efforts have actually contributed to enriching students' learning and improving the quality of their education. Some studies have reported a positive correlation between EMI exposure and English proficiency (Aguilar and Rodríguez, 2012; Park, 2007; Tatzl, 2011; Wong and Wong, 2010). Others have reported that EMI also has

positive effects on content learning (Aguilar and Rodríguez, 2012; Park, 2007). However, as Zhu and Yu (2010, cited in Lei and Hu, 2014) highlight in their review of 90 publications in China, there are several theoretical discussions or descriptions of EMI programme characteristics, but little empirical research at the practical level on the impact EMI is having on both students' disciplinary and language learning. It is also unfortunate that 'not many studies have focussed on the ground-level (mis)alignment between EMI as policy and the actual experiences, and **attitudes**, of key stakeholders, namely students and faculty' (Hu, 2009: 23). Nevertheless, recent years have seen some studies on attitudes, revealing positive responses from faculty and/or students (Aguilar and Rodríguez, 2012; Costa and Coleman, 2013b; Pecorari et al., 2011; Hu, 2009). Studies have been conducted on staff and student attitudes in China (Hu et al., 2014), Japan (Tsuneyoshi, 2005; Chapple, 2015; Jon and Kim, 2011), and Korea (Jon and Kim, 2011; Kim, 2014; Cho and Palmer, 2013).



# Research focus, data collection and analysis methods

## Data collection

### The aims of the study

The study aims to investigate this global trend towards EMI in higher education in Japan and China. It draws on literature from the fields of the internationalisation of higher education, Global Englishes and EMI/ELT/ TESOL, aiming to contribute to theory in these fields and curriculum evaluation and development. It also aims to provide much-needed insights into the approaches to, driving forces behind, and attitudes towards EMI. Specifically, it aims to:

- *investigate the approaches to and driving forces behind EMI policy in HEIs*
- *investigate differing conceptualisations of EMI among key stakeholders*
- *investigate the role of English as an academic lingua franca in EMI*
- *bridge the gap between theory and practice.*

In addition to the growing number of EMI courses and programmes, EMI is becoming a growing field of research. However, research remains relatively scarce in East Asia and only a few studies have examined this at the practical level. As noted, recent years have also seen a growing theoretical debate on the need for change to ELT practice in light of the globalisation of English, yet empirical research is lacking (Galloway, 2017a; Galloway and Rose, 2015). The comparative and multidisciplinary aspect of this study aims to contribute to EMI curriculum innovation and also inform ELT/ TESOL teacher education programmes preparing pre- and in-service teachers to work in EMI settings.

## The setting

The main study included seven HEIs in Japan and eight in China, although 15 in both were contacted originally. As Dearden (2014) notes, we have to explore whether there are certain content areas where the transition to EMI may be easier for teachers and learners. Thus, a variety of institutions and departments were chosen. These are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1:** List of participating HEIs

	Japan	China
Students and staff	Meiji Gakuin University Akita International University Waseda University Sophia University International Christian University	Shantou University Shanghai International Studies University Xiamen University Tan Kah Kee College
Students		Hubei University China University of Geosciences Wuhan University of Science and Technology Huanggang Polytechnic College Huazhong Agricultural University
Staff	Meiji Gakuin University University of Niigata Prefecture	

Japan and China were chosen for a number of reasons. The study originally aimed to include HEIs in South Korea and a global survey, but permission to access participants was difficult to obtain. For the main researcher, having connections in Japan and China made it easier to establish initial contact. Both settings also provide an interesting backdrop for an investigation into EMI. First, the majority of research on EMI has been conducted in Europe, and as Hu and Lei (2014: 24) note, 'it is not clear to what extent the Europe-based findings, including the mixed/contradictory ones about the effectiveness of EMI in disciplinary and language learning, can be extrapolated to non-European contexts.'

EMI is also a rapidly growing trend in both contexts. In Japan, approximately one-quarter of HEIs offer undergraduate EMI (MEXT, 2008, 2009, cited in Brown, 2014), although only around 20 offer full undergraduate EMI programmes and many only offer isolated EMI classes (Brown, 2014: 50–51). Nevertheless, there have been numerous government initiatives, such as The Global 30 Project (Mext, 2012) and the subsequent Super-, or Top Global University Project (TGUP), which aims to put 13 Japanese universities in the top 100 world-ranked universities, and 24 additional universities to further develop Japan's globalised higher education profile (MEXT, 2014). In China, the Ministry of Education issued a directive in 2001, noting that in the next three years, five to ten per cent of all undergraduate curricula in leading universities should be taught in English or another foreign language (*China Education Daily*, 22 September 2001, cited in Hu, 2009). In both contexts, the EMI movement is also closely related to government objectives to improve English proficiency, making them interesting contexts to examine how this is approached and also stakeholders' attitudes towards this goal. In China, EMI policy is part of the goal to internationalise the curricula and upgrade the quality of education (Huang, 2006). It is a key reform initiative to provide access to 'cutting-edge knowledge in the West' (Hu et al., 2014: 29) and to 'develop a global perspective in Chinese students' and 'enhance their command of English' (*ibid.*). The number of EMI courses has also become an important performance indicator when assessing HEIs in China, with those offering ten per cent of all courses in English being graded as being 'excellent' and those with few or none as 'poor' by the Ministry of Education (Hu et al., 2014: 29).

In Japan, 'For universities struggling to maintain or improve their ranking, EMI can be seen as an investment' (Brown, 2014: 58), particularly for private HEIs competing with each other amid a declining domestic student population. This is a serious concern in the Japanese context, where internationalisation has been viewed as 'a lifeline of the university in Japan' (Ninomiya et al., 2015: 123). There is also a drive to nurture globally minded human capital to improve the country's competitiveness, with a parallel project to the Global 30 project for domestic students, The Global Jinzai (globally competent human resources) programme offers funding to develop language classes, study-abroad programmes, e-learning, and EMI classes, to give students an international competitive edge. Thus, in Japan, 'English-medium instruction is one representative form of educational experiment in developing English skills for the global society' (Taguchi, 2014: 15). In fact, Chapple (2015) notes that improved English proficiency was found to be the main reason for Japanese student enrolment in EMI programmes, and therefore, these contexts provide interesting settings to investigate the driving forces behind EMI.

Both contexts have also experienced developments in ELT over the years. In China, before spreading to other parts of the country, EMI was introduced in Shanghai by the municipal government to address the problem of expensive – and ineffective – English-language instruction in schools (Hu, 2007, cited in Hu and McKay, 2012). There has also been a drive for 'Chinese-English bilingual education' at the primary and secondary levels (Hu and McKay, 2012). Similarly, in Japan, the senior high-school English curriculum, which was fully implemented in 2013, aims to conduct English classes in English (Hashimoto, 2013) and Brown (2014: 50) notes that 'Finally, language educators in Japan are turning to EMI pedagogies for authenticity and validity in language learning, and to strengthen their own professional identities.'

## Research design

The study involved three main data-collection instruments. Questionnaires were conducted with 579 students at 12 HEIs in Japan and China, and 28 members of staff at eight universities in Japan and China. The questionnaire was administered online using surveymonkey.com and responses were anonymous. Eighteen students and 28 staff members (ten English for academic purposes (EAP) teachers and 18 content teachers) from six universities were interviewed. Four focus groups with students and four focus groups with staff (three with EAP and one with content staff) were also conducted (see Table 2). The instruments were piloted with a small set of Japanese university students in January 2016 by the main researcher and adjustments were made accordingly. For the main study the main researcher visited each selected university to meet with stakeholders, administer the questionnaires and conduct interviews and focus groups. The process

of obtaining consent was relatively lengthy and ethics forms, questionnaires and interview and focus group prompts were sent well in advance to programme administrators. Interviews were conducted by the main researcher alone, in English, and focus groups were moderated by the main researcher, in English. Semi-structured interviews were used to guide the discussion towards common questions. All instruments elicited responses on approaches to and experiences with EMI, attitudes towards the driving forces behind EMI policy and student motivation for enrolling on such programmes, the role of English and other languages in EMI and language support and training, and overall attitudes towards EMI. The overall research aim generated three research questions, which formed a guide to the study:

1. *How is EMI approached?*
2. *What are the main driving forces behind EMI policy?*
3. *What are staff and student attitudes towards EMI?*

**Table 2:** Interview and focus group participants

University	Student interview	EAP staff	Content staff	Student focus group	Staff focus group
<b>Japan</b>					
Akita International University	2	1	5	-	-
International Christian University	-	-	2	-	-
Meiji Gakuin University	3	2	2	-	-
Sophia University	2	3	4	1 (n=5)	1 (n=3)
Waseda University	2	-	4	-	-
<b>China</b>					
Shantou University	7	4	-	1 (n=4)	1 (n=5)
China University of Geosciences	2	-	1	-	-
Hubei University	-	-	-	1 (n=5)	1 (n=4)
Shanghai International Studies University	-	-	-	1 (n=8)	1 (n=4)



## Analysing the data

### Quantitative analysis

Quantitative data analysis was conducted using PASW (Predictive Analytics Software) 18.0.

Descriptive statistics were used to summarise the data, and a Mann-Whitney U-test was used to compare differences in means between two groups (Japanese and Chinese students).

### Qualitative analysis

All qualitative data sets were analysed separately in *NVivo 10*. The analysis of the questionnaire's open-ended responses and the interview data involved thematic analysis of the responses. Data was first divided into two cases, the responses from members and students first analysed separately through within-case analysis (Bazeley, 2013). Data was coded separately and codes were developed and a thematic framework for staff and students was created in each data set. Focus-group analysis involved thematic analysis, but the main focus was on the nature of social interaction within each group (Halkier, 2010). Additionally, when analysing the emerging themes, the focus was predominantly on a group as a whole, rather than on individuals within them (Krueger, 1994). It was acknowledged that the data emerging was to a great extent a joint product of these groups, rather than being merely a reflection of individual perspectives (Smithson, 2000). When analysing the interaction, particular attention was paid to how, and whether, the groups establish common grounds, and how individual participants contribute to this common ground (Överlien, et al., 2005). Thus, analysis focused on the content of the discussions and on the dynamics of interactions within the groups.

## Ethics and limitations

Consent was sought and obtained, and participants were given the opportunity to withdraw at any stage, as well as being offered a copy of the results. Anonymity has been protected for the participants and pseudonyms are used throughout this report. Survey limitations include the small sample size for staff. Further limitations include the fact that the study was only conducted in Japan and China, although it is hoped that the qualitative findings will provide sufficient detail to allow another researcher to 'share in the researcher's understandings and find instantiations of them in their own professional experience' (Richards, 2003: 266). As a Western university lecturer, there were concerns over the power relationship between the main researcher and the participants. Social desirability (or prestige) bias, where participants provide the desired/acceptable answer, was a concern. However, it was not possible to hire an external focus group moderator in each context, or for other members of the research team to travel to Japan and China, and the methodological approaches sought to empower the participants and hear their voices. 'Respondent validation' (Gibbs, 2007: 94), whereby interview transcripts are sent to participants to clarify that they are representative of their opinion, was also offered to participants. With this in mind, efforts were made to integrate data collection as unobtrusively as possible. Participants were made to feel comfortable and questions were asked based on their narrative in the interviews, which enabled them to talk openly and extensively about their attitudes. As a lecturer on a TESOL programme, the main researcher, who collected the data, was interested in understanding the EMI phenomenon to inform her own teaching practice on the MSc TESOL at The University of Edinburgh, where there is currently only limited coverage of EMI through a case study used on one of the core courses on Second Language Teaching Curriculum. From this respect, the project resembles action research to a certain extent, given that the topic was of direct interest to her, with the potential of informing her own teaching practice, given the growing number of students on the MSc TESOL planning to work in EMI contexts.

# Findings and discussion

## Students

There were 579 students at five Japanese universities and seven Chinese universities in the responses. The demographic characteristics are summarised below:

- 336 (58 per cent) were studying in Japan and 243 (42 per cent) in China.
- 65 per cent were female; 35 per cent were male.
- 57 per cent were aged 20–30; 42 per cent were either 18 or 19 years old; a few responses came from students of 31 years or older.
- 26 per cent are undergraduate students in their first year, 33 per cent in their second, 31 per cent in their third and seven per cent in their fourth year. The exceptions were postgraduates or others.
- The respondents were enrolled in various fields of study: international and global studies (35 per cent), English-related, e.g. English education, TESOL, English literature (17 per cent), economics, management or finance (ten per cent), engineering (seven per cent) and others (e.g. journalism, religion) (31 per cent).
- More than one-third started learning English when they were eight to 11 years old, nearly seven per cent between up to three years old and a very few (one per cent) started at 16 years or over.
- More than half reported having had a study-abroad experience: less than one month (21 per cent), one to six months (five per cent), seven months to one year (nine per cent), one to three years (seven per cent) and more than three years (13 per cent).
- More than half had experienced studying content in English before commencing the EMI programme: less than one month (three per cent), one to three months (four per cent), four to six months (two per cent), seven months to one year (six per cent), one to two years (eight per cent), three to four years (nine per cent) and more than five years (25 per cent).

## Staff

There were 15 male and 13 female members of staff from seven HEIs in Japan and four universities in China in the responses. Of 28 respondents, eight were from Japan, six from China, five from the US, and the rest from other countries. Demographic characteristics are as follows:

- Over half (15) were between 41 and 50 years old, seven were aged 31 to 40, three were aged 51 to 60 and three were aged 20 to 30.
- More than half were teaching English and the others teaching various subjects.
- Almost all of them were teaching undergraduate students, though 13 were also teaching at postgraduate level.
- The vast majority – 22 out of 28 respondents – indicated that they had been teaching the major/subject/course for three or more years.

All of them had work experience abroad.

## Questionnaire results

### Approaches to EMI

The results show that the HEIs have varying levels of **language proficiency requirements**. Those with International English language proficiency tests included:

- Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC).
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

They mentioned varying scores required on these tests. Some national level tests were also mentioned:

- Test in Practical English Proficiency (EIKEN).
- College English Test (CET).
- Institution owned entrance exam.

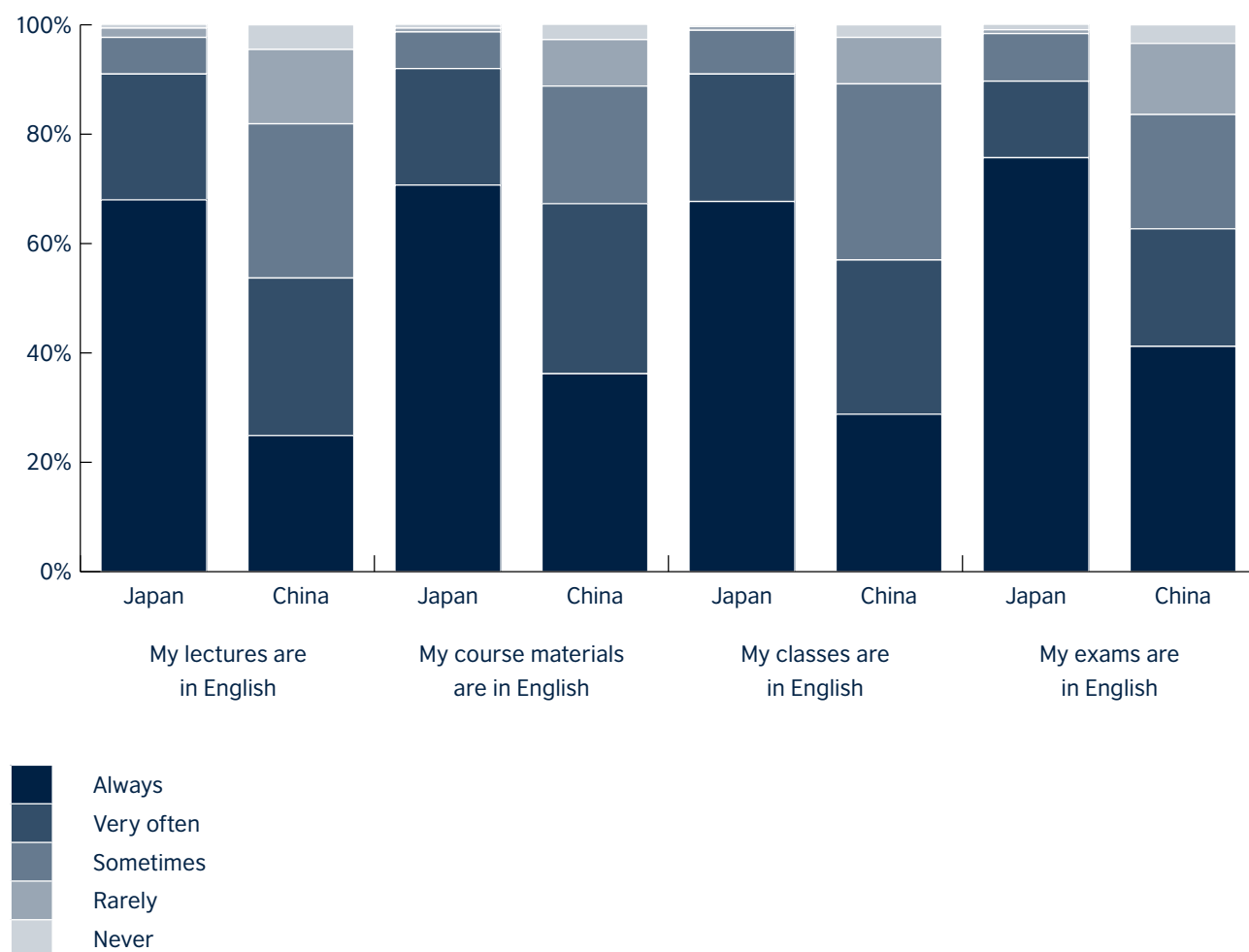
More than 70 per cent of students and staff believed that the EMI programme attracted international students and 'native' English speaking students were required to submit other scores, such as the SAT, Graduate Record Examination (GRE), Grade Point Average (GPA) or International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE). Specific minimum requirements vary by programme and university.

Different universities also provide varied **language support** for their students. Some provide an intermediate year of English such as summer pre-school courses and EAP courses and some provide additional support, such as English for Special Purposes (ESP) classes alongside content classes (the next section will report on student and staff attitudes towards the effectiveness of such additional support).

Students in Japan and China report that their teachers in EMI programmes **delivered lessons** in

different ways. As can be seen in Figure 1, Japanese students noted that the language of instruction, materials and exams was mostly only English, while a less frequent use of English was reported by Chinese students. In addition, staff were asked to rate the frequency of using English on a 5-point scale (1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Very often, and 5 = Always). All respondents except one in Japan reported that their students always or very often received lectures (M = 4.7, SD = 0.9), classes (M = 4.7, SD = 0.9), course materials (M = 4.7, SD = 0.9) and exams (M = 4.7, SD = 0.9) in English.

**Figure 1:** Differences in exposure of English between Japanese and Chinese students



### Attitudes towards EMI

With regards to **attitudes** towards EMI, respondents rated the extent to which they agreed on a four-point Likert scale, namely 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, and 4 = Strongly Agree.

#### Staff

It should be noted that the sample size for staff (only 28) is small. Nineteen of them either strongly agreed or agreed that EMI programmes should be offered only in English (M = 3.0, SD = 0.7). Fourteen also either strongly agreed or agreed that the use of English and **mother tongue** in their lessons could be helpful for certain students on some occasions (M = 2.6, SD = 0.8). This fact also reflects the mixed results for **English-language support** for students. Fourteen either agreed or strongly agreed with the practice of content professors helping with students' English-language proficiency (M = 2.7, SD = 0.8) and 13 agreed or strongly agreed they should be supported by English teachers with English-language support classes (M = 2.9, SD = 0.9). Twenty-five reported having colleagues from around the world, and 16 either strongly agreed or agreed that their colleagues were suitably **qualified** (M = 3.1, SD = 1.0).

For the important **characteristics of teachers** working on EMI programmes, there was significant agreement on the following characteristics:

- Providing clear explanations (M = 4.0, SD = 0.2).
- Sensitivity to students' needs and problems (M = 3.9, SD = 0.3).
- Knowledge of subject (M = 3.9, SD = 0.4).
- Ability to explain concepts in the subject (M = 3.8, SD = 0.4).

In contrast, having some kind of **qualification** or **certificate** in EMI (M = 1.9, SD = 0.7) and having a '**native-like**' accent (M = 2.1, SD = 0.9) were considered less important.

Staff strongly believed that EMI was **appropriate** for university students (M = 3.4, SD = 0.5). Moreover, staff perceptions were relatively positive in relation to the impact on students' **English proficiency** (M = 3.4, SD = 0.6) and **subject knowledge** (M = 3.4, SD = 0.8), although eight reported having insufficient **materials for teaching** (M = 3.0, SD = 1.2).

### Students

Among four items related to students' attitudes towards their EMI courses/programmes, students were more likely to believe that classes should be supplemented with **English-language support** classes provided by English teachers (M = 3.0, SD = 0.6). Although the number of staff was small, this is consistent with staff responses (M = 2.9, SD = 0.9). However, a topic with the lowest levels of agreement was the usage of English and **mother tongue** in EMI programmes (M = 2.7, SD = 0.7), similar to staff responses (M = 2.6, SD = 0.8). More than 60 per cent agreed that they had sufficient **qualified teachers** to teach subjects through English (M = 2.9, SD = 0.7), while teachers reported higher levels of agreement with the statement (M = 3.1, SD = 1.0).

With regards to important **characteristics of teachers** for EMI (*'native-like' accent, experience abroad, knowledge of subject, knowledge of English, clear explanations, sensitivity to students' needs and problems, knowledge of students' language and culture, teaching experience, teaching methods, certificate in EMI skills, ability to explain concepts in the subject*) for EMI, the mean scores for all ten characteristics were all above 3.0 and, therefore, seen to be important. The most important were 'knowledge of subject' (M = 3.5, SD = 0.7) and ability to give 'clear explanations' (M = 3.5, SD = 0.7), which nearly all either agreed or strongly agreed with. However, compared with teachers, students placed more value on having a certificate in EMI (M = 3.1, SD = 0.6 versus M = 1.9, SD = 0.7 for staff) and a 'native-like' accent (M = 3.0, SD = 0.7 versus M = 2.1, SD = 0.9 for staff).

Overall, most have a positive image of their EMI courses/programmes and tend to believe that they are a more effective way to improve students' overall **English language proficiency** (M = 3.2, SD = 0.6) than **subject knowledge** (M = 3.0, SD = 0.6), unlike teachers who view EMI programmes as being beneficial for students' overall English language (M = 3.4, SD = 0.6) and subject knowledge (M = 3.4, SD = 0.8). When asked about the appropriateness of EMI for their context, nearly 90 per cent either agreed or strongly agreed that EMI is appropriate at university level (M = 3.2, SD = 0.6), but only 65 per cent agreed at primary level (M = 2.7, SD = 0.8). Nearly 85 per cent either agreed or strongly agreed that there were sufficient **materials** to teach their subject in English (M = 3.0, SD = 0.6), which is very similar to the staff's results (M = 3.0, SD = 1.2).

As can be seen in Table 3, significant associations were found between students' nationality and their majors, English education and overseas experience. Almost all students who were studying in international and global studies were Japanese in this study, while all students in engineering were Chinese. The results also revealed Japanese students start learning English earlier than Chinese students. Furthermore, 80 per cent of Japanese students reported having overseas experience, but 80 per cent of Chinese students did not have any. A Mann-Whitney U-test revealed significant differences between Japanese and Chinese students in their attitudes towards EMI programmes. Japanese students tend to believe 'EMI programmes should only permit the **use of English** in lectures and classes' (M = 2.9) while only 2.5 (M) of Chinese students feel the same, U = 17413, p = 0.000. Japanese students also strongly believed that 'their EMI content lecturers should also help them with their **English-language proficiency** (M = 3.0 versus 2.8 for Chinese students, U = 17587.5, p = 0.008) and 'EMI content classes should be supplemented with **English-language support classes** provided by

English teachers' (M = 3.1 versus 2.9 for Chinese, U = 18298, p = 0.036). Japanese students also placed more importance on the following EMI **teachers' characteristics**:

- 'Native-like' accent (M = 3.1 versus 2.9 for Chinese, U = 17457, p = 0.007).
- Experience abroad (M = 3.1 versus 3.0 for Chinese, U = 17808.5, p = 0.02).
- Teaching experience (M = 3.3 versus 3.1 for Chinese, U = 17392.5, p = 0.006).
- Teaching methods (M = 3.4 versus 3.2 for Chinese, U = 17950, p = 0.028).
- Ability to explain concepts in my subject (M = 3.4 versus 3.3 for Chinese, U = 18148, p = 0.041).

In addition, as for EMI's effectiveness on students' overall **English-language proficiency**, Japanese students' approval ratings are significantly higher than Chinese students' (M = 3.3 versus 3.1, U = 16282, p = 0.006).

**Table 3:** Students' demographic characteristics by nationality

Variable	Label	Japan		China	
		N	%	N	%
<b>Gender</b>	Male	102	30.4%	99	40.7%
	Female	234	69.6%	144	59.3%
<b>Major</b>	International and global studies	202	60.1%	1	0.4%
	English-related	35	10.4%	62	25.5%
	Economics, management or finance	2	0.6%	56	23.0%
	Engineering	0	0.0%	40	16.5%
	Others/not decided yet	97	28.9%	84	34.6%
<b>Age started learning English</b>	0–3	40	11.9%	2	0.8%
	4–7	83	24.7%	38	15.6%
	9–11	81	24.1%	144	59.3%
	12–15	130	38.7%	56	23.0%
	16–19	2	0.6%	3	1.2%
<b>Experience abroad</b>	I have never been abroad	66	19.6%	198	81.5%
	Less than one month	94	28.0%	25	10.3%
	One to six months	26	7.7%	4	1.6%
	Seven months to one year	49	14.6%	1	0.4%
	One to three years	29	8.6%	11	4.5%
	More than three years	72	21.4%	4	1.6%

*Open-ended questionnaire results*

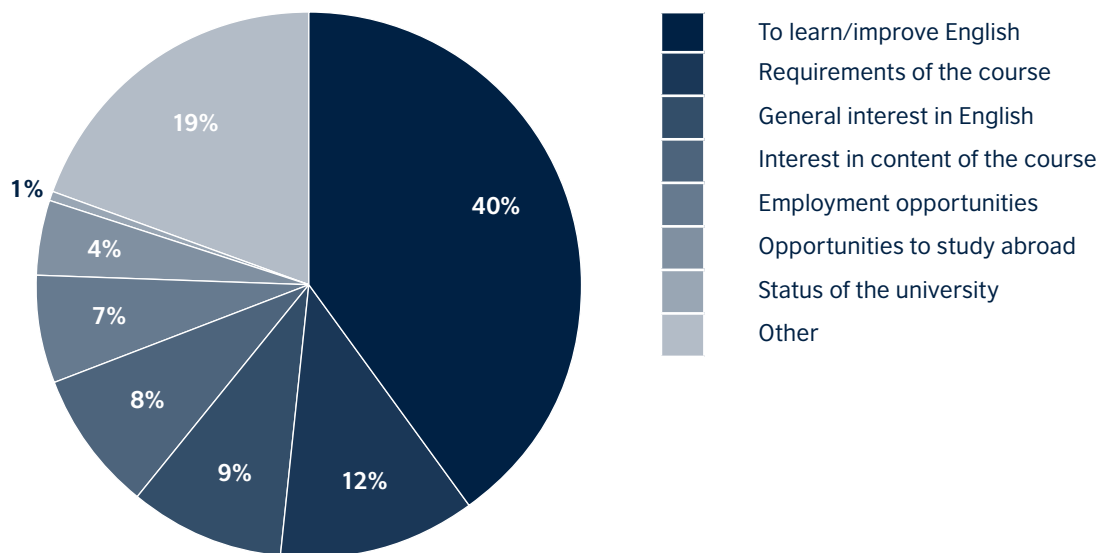
The 455 responses provided by students and 23 responses provided by staff were analysed in NVivo and a number of reasons were determined as to why students enrol on EMI courses/programmes (see Table 4 and Figure 2).

Forty per cent of students cited learning or improving their **English proficiency** as the main reason, as opposed to nine per cent of staff, who believed this was the students' main motivation. Comments included 'just want to learn English', and 'I want to acquire another language'.

**Table 4:** Reasons for students enrolling in EMI programme – staff and students' views

Reason	Students N=455	Students %	Staff N=23
To learn/improve English	183	(40%)	2
Requirements of the course	53	(12%)	9
General interest in English	42	(9%)	2
Interest in content of the course	37	(8%)	1
Employment opportunities	30	(7%)	2
Opportunities to study abroad	19	(4%)	1
Status of the university	3	(1%)	2
Other (geographical location, parents' choice, no justification, for fun, and other unclassified responses)	88	(19%)	7

**Figure 2:** Reasons for students enrolling on EMI programmes – students' views





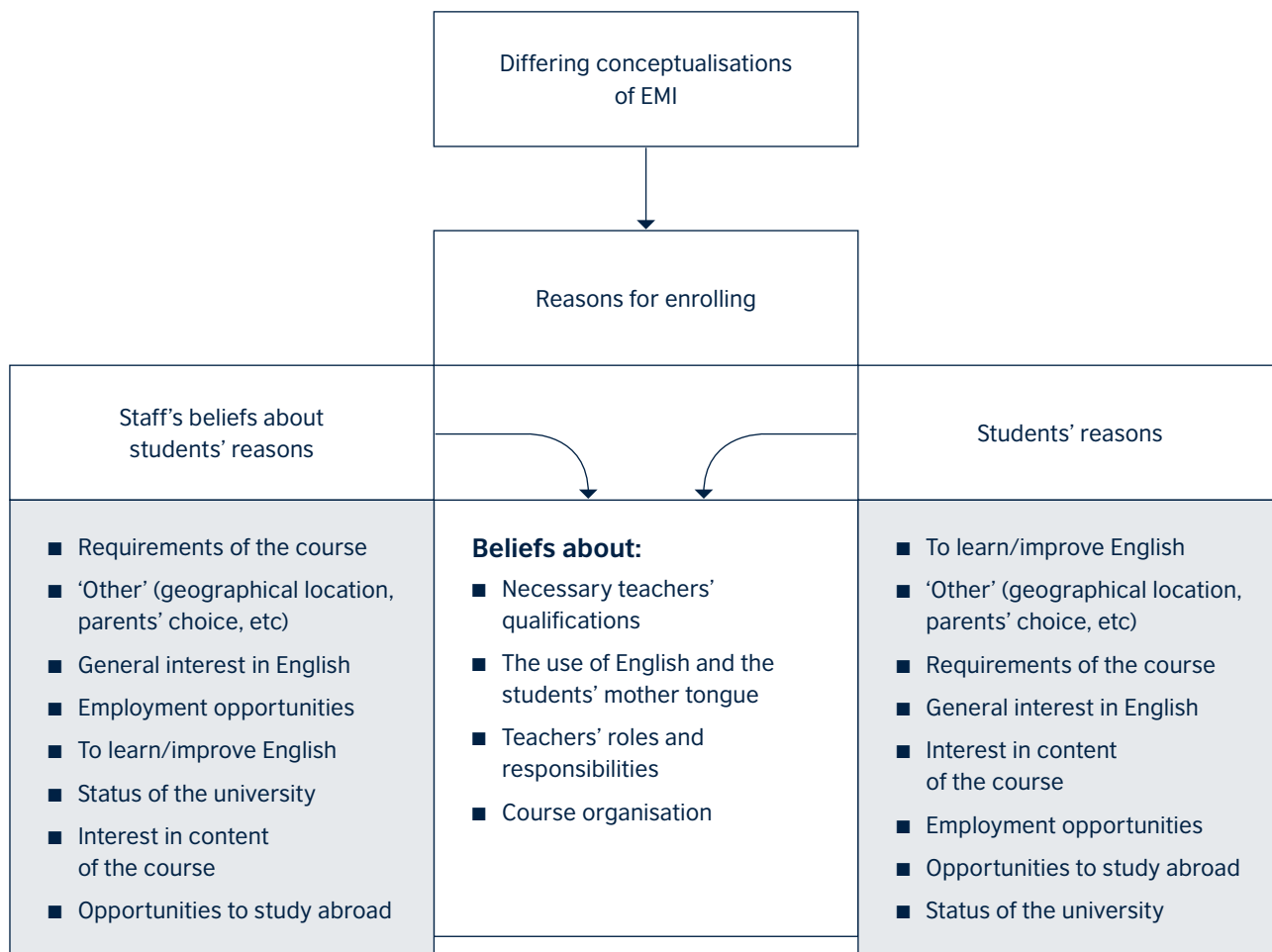
This perception of EMI as a tool for **learning English**, as opposed to learning *through* English, seemed to have a crucial impact on the students' evaluations of their experience with the programme and explained a number of their responses throughout the collected data sets. It was evident, for example, in their responses to the question about the desired qualifications they sought in teachers on EMI courses. When asked whether there are enough qualified teachers to teach on EMI programmes in their context, among 204 responses, 20 were about the teachers' **professional qualifications** (e.g. training or degree), six about their **knowledge of the content** they teach, four about the teachers' **skills or methods of teaching**, and 16 irrelevant answers. Some 158 remaining statements focused solely on the teachers' **English competence**, 49 reflecting a belief about **'native' ownership of English**. Comments included: 'my current English teacher's accent is not quite 'native'', or 'teachers should be 'native' speakers of English if teaching in English'. A word frequency query revealed that the word 'native' occurred 21 times, the word 'Japanese' 24 times, and 'Chinese' three times, indicating that **nationality** was an important marker of teacher competence. Further, **experience abroad**, or being a 'native' English speaker or a 'foreigner' was seen as being better than being a Japanese teacher with no previous experience abroad. Comments included: 'almost all of them have studied abroad', 'school have many foreign teachers in English', or 'there are many teachers who are 'native' English speakers'. The students clearly equated being a 'native' English speaker, or having a 'near-native' accent, which they seemed to believe to be a result of education or work abroad, with being a good teacher.

Although the overall attitudes towards EMI among staff and students could be described as predominantly positive, their more detailed views on how it is **implemented** differed. This could, arguably, stem from the aforementioned discrepancy in their views of the main purposes of EMI. For example, when explaining their responses that **only English** should be permitted (which, as noted on p16, was the predominant opinion among Japanese students), students made comments such as: 'because it's an English programme so it's for improving English language for the students', or 'only in this way can we improve our English'. Similarly, when justifying their belief that the **mother tongue** should not be permitted, students stated that 'it won't help us improving our English', or that their mother tongue was 'useless' in this context. By contrast, teachers' comments on this topic reflected a conceptualisation of EMI as an **instructional approach** to content learning, rather than as a tool for learning English. Although they agreed that English should be the primary language used in EMI classrooms (see p16), teachers saw an occasional use, or the use of the mother tongue 'in extreme cases', as beneficial, due to it being a 'good resource for students' and a tool for 'clarifying points'. They praised the benefits of a 'bilingual environment' and of the use of their mother tongue to help them acquire difficult concepts in English and 'to scaffold and assist understanding'.

These differing conceptualisations of EMI clearly influence the reasons students enrol on EMI courses/ programmes, and also why faculty think students enrol (see Table 4 on p18 for the staff and students' open-ended responses to the question about the students' reasons for enrolling), which influence their overall attitudes towards EMI. This relationship has been summarised in Figure 3. If a student enrolled with the idea that they are enrolling on a course which is aimed at achieving nothing but improving their English proficiency, their expectations of the

teachers will be different: they will have different beliefs about, for example, what makes a good teacher and what languages should be used in the classroom. On the other hand, the qualitative analysis of the open-ended responses to the questionnaire items provided important insight into the possible sources of some of the beliefs and attitudes expressed in the questionnaire, by raising questions about the very conceptualisations of EMI by staff and students.

**Figure 3:** Thematic framework for the questionnaire responses





## Interview results

### *Approaches to EMI*

Regarding **approaches** to EMI, the interviews revealed that the institutions seemed to differ mainly in terms of their approach to providing EAP and ESP classes to students and the policy and practice regarding the use of English and other languages in the classroom. With regard to the former, the differences lay in the placement strategies, the scope of available English-language classes, the duration and availability of these courses throughout a given programme of study, and in their relevance to the subject matter discussed in content classes. Additional differences lay in the availability of additional, and optional, English-language support centres or classes. The students' placement was mainly done on the basis of a variety of language tests, such as TOEFL and IELTS. It was common for HEIs to provide compulsory EAP classes. The duration of these courses ranged from one year to four years. However, with the exception of one university in China and one in Japan, EAP or ESP classes linked to the content that the students were learning were uncommon. This seemed to be the major concern for students, who complained that 'It [EAP class] just tells us how to make conversation in daily life but it does not help with my major' (Maria, Shantou). The divide between the **content** of EAP courses and content classes was, in fact, the main cause for concern not only among students, but also among staff (see later discussion on collaboration related challenges). By contrast to most of the HEIs that took part in the study, one Japanese HEI produced its own materials for EAP classes, which were tailored to the students' needs on the basis of their content classes. As one EAP teacher in this university noted, this is to 'provide models for the students for their writing classes [and is] more appropriate than off-the-shelf textbooks, [as] some faculties focused on main concepts in their fields' (Yvonne, Akita International). The students in this HEI were the only ones that unanimously agreed that 'it's a good idea to have EAP' (Kozue, Akita International) and that they are 'very helpful' (Mayumi, Akita International).

The same Japanese HEI offered additional methods to support the students' English-language development and their progression through the course of study, offering an:

*...academic achievement centre, peer tutoring centre where they get – it's more like peer mentoring: the tutor has taken the class they are in, help with assignments. Each faculty provides academic support with advisees. The BE faculty take over from the EAP. Most faculties have around ten advisers for support. The academic support is mainly through the peer support in the AAC, academic advisers help more with course selection.*

Yvonne, Akita International

As previously noted, this was reflected in the students' positive comments about the support provided. In the other HEIs, however, it was common for students to criticise the availability of these additional support classes and centres, their relevance to the students' needs, their effectiveness, and their price, in the cases in which this support was not free. Some students were also unaware of having such support classes and centres, although it was clear from the teachers' accounts that the HEI offered support.

The approaches to EMI also varied with regard to the central element of EMI – the use of the **English language** itself. These differences mainly resulted from individual teachers' approaches and beliefs. They were reflected in a respective use of English in lectures, presentations, and personal communication with students, as well as in their attitudes towards the students' use of English, and in their choice of course materials. In line with the quantitative results teachers reported 'predominantly' (Bill – Akita International) speaking English in the lectures, and 'encourage[ing] English' use among students but 'not make[ing] it a rule' (*ibid.*). It was also common to scaffold the students by using **other languages** to assist their understanding:

*I will describe the outline of the class using English and to provide more detail I will use Chinese.*

Ruolan, China Geoscience

*When students don't have experience of these topics in high school, or any other Japanese context, and they're reading about it in a language that's challenging, it's like scaling a wall and there's little places to put your hands and toes, it's a slippery slope, it's our job to work out some bigger handles for them. If I sense their bewilderment I will throw in a little Japanese.*

Richard, Akita International

Most teachers seemed to share this attitude towards languages used in instruction, although they often reported facing ‘dilemmas’ (Akihiro, Akita International) over the extent to which it is acceptable to code-switch before the shared mother tongue ‘become[s] a crutch and they will rely on that’ (Richard, Akita International). Additionally, the students, although generally seeming to share the belief that **code switching** may help them understand the subject-specific concepts, ironically seemed to perceive their teachers’ use of their L1 as a sign of low English competence (see section on language-related challenges). This observation provides an additional insight into the findings from the questionnaire data analysis which revealed the students’ belief that only English should be used by their teachers in EMI classrooms (see pages 16 and 19).

#### *Driving forces*

The underlying reasons that students enroll in EMI courses and programmes relate to the role of English as a global language, the need to compete globally, and the increased need for **English proficiency**:

*It’s part of globalisation. Countries like France and Germany, they are able to speak English, many people in the world can speak English and Japan would be left behind if they didn’t.*

Tomomi, Akita International

*As far as I am concerned it’s because of globalisation, so I think every country needs to communicate with other countries. So I think Chinese education wants to teach students to learn English so that they can compete in the globalisation.*

Jingshu, Shantou

*I think the demand for English speakers is getting higher in this globalised society. Many Japanese people cannot speak English so well; so many universities think it is important to improve the English skills of Japanese people, so they have started to conduct programmes in English.*

Hideki, Meiji Gakuin

Several also noted that it is important for both employment prospects and also for future study:

*Maybe on one hand they can broaden their horizons and on the other hand maybe if they want to develop themselves they can communicate and maybe they can study abroad in the future I think, it’s good for their future.*

Lisa, Shantou

Other reasons from students included gaining access to **cutting-edge knowledge**. However, one participant commented that it is merely ‘a kind of trend, but I don’t think many people really understand the meaning of globalisation’. Some students also referred to the fact that Japanese universities need **international students** and also that EMI is a useful **pedagogic tool**.

*We need exposure to English in different fields, such as vocabulary for Mathematics.*

Yumi, Waseda

Reasons from staff also included the general belief that in the globalised world, ‘for better or ill, English has emerged as the primary medium of exchange’ (Ryan, Akita International) and, thus, it is important to educate students in English. However, most staff believed that the increase in EMI-providing HEIs results ‘partially because of globalisation and partly because of the government’s promotion, (Hiroko, Waseda).

*I think it’s external pressures to internationalise or globalise (...). A big pressure is from the government in terms of improving the language ability of the Japanese in general and specifically I think with mind-set to be competitive in international markets and to be able to work with people from different backgrounds.*

Akihiro, Akita International

*I think one of the reasons is that probably when the medium is Chinese, the university might not be able to attract more international students and for funding as well. Especially universities, they want to label them as international universities, so sometimes the policymakers may assume that English should be used in an international university, yeah.*

Ruolan, Shantou

### Attitudes towards EMI

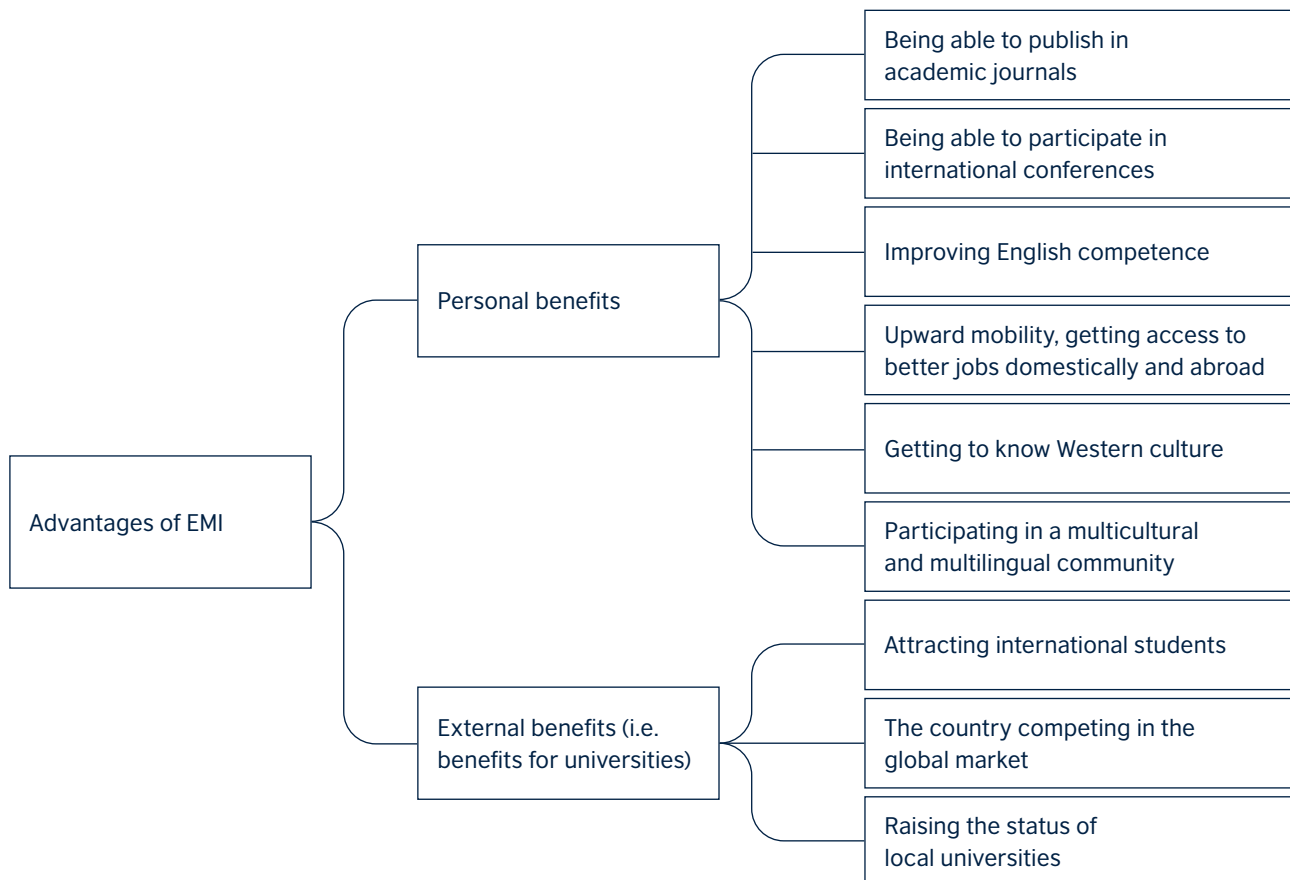
Although the interviews supported the findings from the quantitative analysis that staff and students have overall optimistic and positive **attitudes** towards EMI (see p16), they provided additional insights into their opinions on particular aspects of implementing EMI. The underlying theme of the interviews was **challenges** to implementing EMI, evident in extensive accounts of challenges and negative experiences (see Table 5).

**Table 5:** Percentage of interview data covered by accounts of challenges and benefits of EMI

Group of participants	Advantages of EMI (mean percentage of interview data)	Challenges (mean percentage of interview data)
Students	7%	37%
Staff	6%	12%

All students seemed *aware of* certain **advantages** of EMI (Figure 4), but these were mentioned briefly and they did not engage with the topic. For this reason, the remainder of this section focuses on the various **challenges** to implementing EMI.

**Figure 4:** Advantages of EMI – staff and students’ views (interviews)



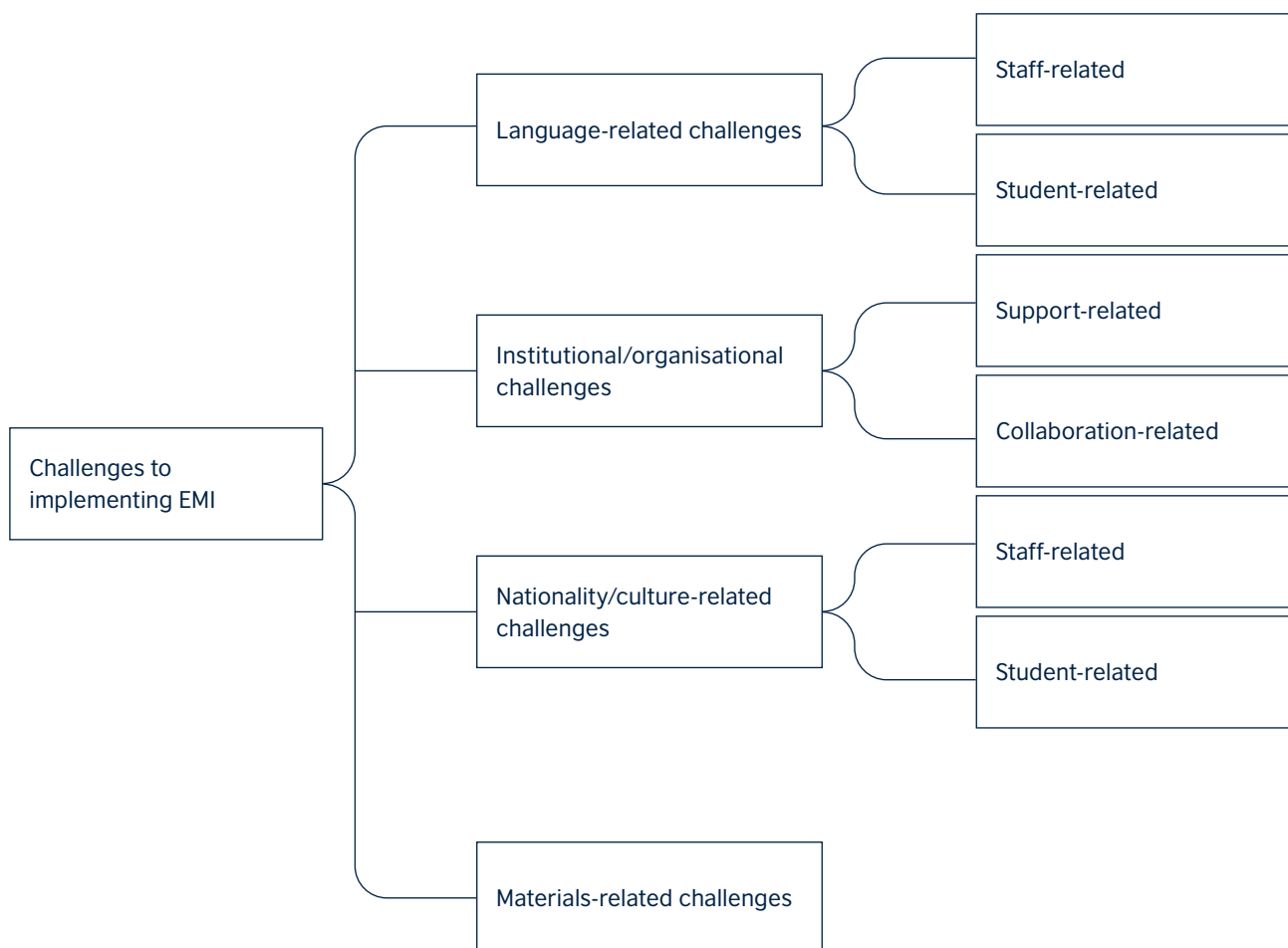
### The typology of challenges to implementing EMI

A number of challenges emerged. Both staff and students mentioned 'language-related', 'Institution/organisational', 'nationality/culture-related' and 'materials-related' and 'materials-related' challenges (see Table 6 and Figure 5 below). However, these groups attributed these challenges to different factors.

**Table 6:** Staff and students' perceptions of problems with EMI

Challenge	Status		
	Student (n=18)	EAP staff (n=10)	Content Staff (n=18)
Language-related	18	8	9
Institutional/organisational-related			
Support-related	9	6	2
Collaboration-related	0	10	4
Other	9	10	9
Nationality/culture-related	5	3	6
Materials-related	2	0	3

**Figure 5:** The typology of challenges to implementing EMI for staff and students



### Language-related challenges

**Language-related challenges** were the most frequently mentioned challenges. However, staff and students' responses differed with regard to whom they believed to be facing these challenges. Ten out of 18 students perceived them as resulting from their teachers' use of English, as opposed to their own, believing that their 'non-native' English speaking lecturers' command of English was insufficient, and also perceived their use of their mother tongue as a marker of their limited English competence.

Comments included:

*To tell you the truth, I love them, because every teacher helped me, but, to be truthful, their English is poor. Their knowledge of the major is strong, but their English is poor. It's true, it's true.*

Zhiyuan, China Geosciences

*In one class we had a professor who could not speak very well in English and he used Japanese a lot. The international students withdrew from the class.*

Kozue, Akita International

*To tell the truth, a lot of professors, their English is not good. They will speak in Chinese and they prepare a lot of PowerPoint in English. I don't think it's a good way to improve our English.*

Qiaoyang, China Geosciences

The remaining eight students referred to students' English competence. Comments included:

*I'm not a 'native' English speaker, so it's difficult to get deep knowledge of the language.*

Sachi, Meiji Gakuin

*At first I really struggled to learn the content in English, so I memorised. By doing so, I was able to use this in exams; I could use English by memorising. I struggled to write essays in English.*

Sonako, Sophia

Contrary to the students' beliefs, the teachers believed that the students' English competence was insufficient, and the teachers' accounts of 'language-related challenges' were, in fact, all about the students' limited command of English (28 comments made by the total of 16 staff members). Comments included:

*There are a few, one in particular I can think of right now, who do have their difficulties, and they don't always understand all of the classroom instructions.*

Brian, Sophia

*We had one student who had something to read and she was reading it one paragraph at a time and it was taking a lot of time (...) It was taking up too much time, she said it was too much, she was just reading the first sentence to get a rough idea, so it can be overwhelming for some students.*

Sihan, Shantou

Thirteen teachers also stated that their use of students' L1 was aimed at helping them understand difficult content:

*No, not all in English only, like the books are in English, but the teachers will use Chinese to explain. Maybe they will use English to make students understand they need Chinese.*

Meng, Shantou

*(...) in my Research Methods course, when the material is very technical, it is sometimes easier to process the material in Japanese, and when I talk about programming for statistical analysis, it's just too much information for students, so I have to find a way to make it slightly easier for the students to understand.*

Nana, Waseda

### Institutional/organisational challenges

**Institution, or organisation-related, challenges**

were most frequently mentioned by the staff members ( $n=19$ ), and second most frequently discussed by students ( $n=9$ ). '**Support-related challenges**' referred to challenges stemming from insufficient English language support that the university offered to students. Out of 16 students who commented on the topic of additional language support, nine did not believe it was sufficient or relevant to the students' needs. Comments included:

*The support is not sufficient. There is a writing centre at Waseda that I use. The time is limited and it consists of designing the thesis.*

Masa, Waseda

*It [the additional English class] just tells us how to make conversation in daily life but it does not help with my major. My major has many terms that are difficult to understand, that I have never seen before.*

Ziyuan, Shantou

There were also differences between the EAP and content staff. EAP staff were more critical of the language support provided by the university than the content staff (see Table 7). The majority of content staff who commented on this issue believed the support was sufficient; only four EAP staff shared this belief. In addition, only two content teachers mentioned problems stemming from insufficient support, as opposed to six EAP staff. Comments include:

*If you ask me if the ELC, the whole programme, is preparing students for content courses, I really doubt that.*

Ruolan, Shantou

*It's in there somewhere, but they haven't had much experience of output with it. One year of English instruction is not enough to prepare them for English content.*

Ben, Sophia

**Table 7:** Comparison of beliefs about sufficient support versus support-related problems (note that some participants did express an opinion on the available support)

	Student (n=18)	EAP staff (n=10)	Content staff (n=18)
1: Support-related problems	9	6	2
2: Support – sufficient	7	4	13

This is in line with the fact that all EAP staff, as opposed to only four out of 18 content staff, reported on **collaboration-related challenges** between EAP and content staff (Table 7). This problem was the most frequently mentioned problem by EAP teachers, but the third least mentioned problem by content teachers. Comments include:

*There's no idea of what is happening in those classes (...) We need to find out what the students need from the third and fourth year teachers, what skills they need. Like do they need communications skills, do they need advanced academic writing skills, if they're writing a thesis they need to know how to write a research paper.*

Martin, Sophia

#### Nationality or culture-related challenges

**Nationality or culture-related challenges** stemmed from the clash between the students' or teachers' cultural and educational background and the new linguistic reality of the internationalised EMI classroom. These were discussed by both staff (n=9) and students (n=5). Students predominantly discussed their teachers' cultural and national background, either commenting that the foreign teachers 'need to know more about the Japanese culture' (Tomomi, Akita International) or criticising the local, 'non-native' English speakers' teaching styles which they perceived as being at odds with the requirements of EMI classes. Teachers, on the other hand, were mainly concerned about the local students' educational background, which they felt clashed with the learning styles required by EMI programmes. Comments included:

*The structure, they encourage discussions, they don't just teach, they ask students opinions. But the teachers who are only used to teaching in Japan will just lecture.*

(Student) Ayumi, Meiji Gakuin

*Students need to develop critical thinking. The Japanese people can be quite passive and receptive to the ideas of statement given by the government, by the information from social forces. You have to have a mind-set to question.*

Akihiro, Akita International

*Japanese students are quiet and they are unfamiliar with exchanging their opinions.*

Hiroko, Waseda

#### Materials-related challenges

**Materials-related challenges** were mentioned only by two students and three content teachers, supporting the questionnaire findings that the majority of participants think there are sufficient materials to teach content classes in English (see p.16). However, both groups were concerned about the relevance of the content class materials for a given context and about the level of English required to study with these materials. Comments included:

*Obviously writers/authors don't aim to write specifically for non-English students and non-English speakers. And in Europe, it's full of jargon and a lot of things that are taken for granted, it's not for Japanese people.*

Akihiro, Akita International

*The materials I am using are a bit essentialistic from the current perspective. They are written from more an American perspective.*

Hiroko, Waseda



## Focus groups results

The focus group discussions provided similar findings to the other data sets about the **approaches** and **driving forces** of EMI. With regards to their **attitudes** towards EMI, the main finding emerging from the focus group analysis was, once again, that despite positive attitudes towards EMI on the theoretical level, on the practical level the participants recognised various **challenges** to EMI implementation. However, in contrast to the interviews, where the focus was on the *out-group's* challenges with EMI, the members of the focus groups established common ground and negotiated a collective identity, using this in-group identity to share their group's problems (e.g. students discussing students' challenges and teachers discussing teachers').

### *Student focus groups*

With regard to the **driving forces** of EMI, the students mostly focused on **globalisation** and the role of English as 'an international language' (Meicheng, Hubei). English is seen as being a 'basic skill for students to learn' (Zhang, Hubei). They also mentioned 'fierce competition between universities', seeing EMI as 'a way to show your university's strengths' (Zao, Shanghai International Studies) highlighting the role of EMI in improving a HEI's **competitiveness**. Other motivating factors included the wider access to **cutting-edge knowledge** that English offered, government **policies** regarding education, and **English proficiency** being a marker of 'high social status' (Fan, Hubei).

With regard to the issue of the **use of English** and other languages in their EMI courses, the students generally seemed to prefer their teachers to use English, although a common opinion was that 'the teachers should adapt the programmes to the students' ability' (Zhang, Hubei), which relates to teachers' use of their mother tongue. It was also clear from the students' discussions in most groups that they occasionally faced problems **understanding the content** in English, but believed that in the long run the instruction in English would benefit them:

*(...) when the teacher is trying to explain something in English it is even harder to know what it means, but what you gain from this environment is a lot more related to the west. It could be more prolonged achievements.*

Ziyuan, Shanghai International Studies

The preference for English also seems to stem from the belief that it would in the future enable them to gain better access to **cutting-edge knowledge**:

*In physics, if you want to do well you should learn in English. In the Western countries, physics is more advanced than it is in China, so you should study in English.*

Zhiqi, Shantou

However, in some accounts this preference for English seemed to stem from the aforementioned conceptualisation of EMI as a course with the primary aim of teaching the students English, as in the following example:

*What I learn is language, not Chinese (...) I think when the teacher is teaching in English is okay.*

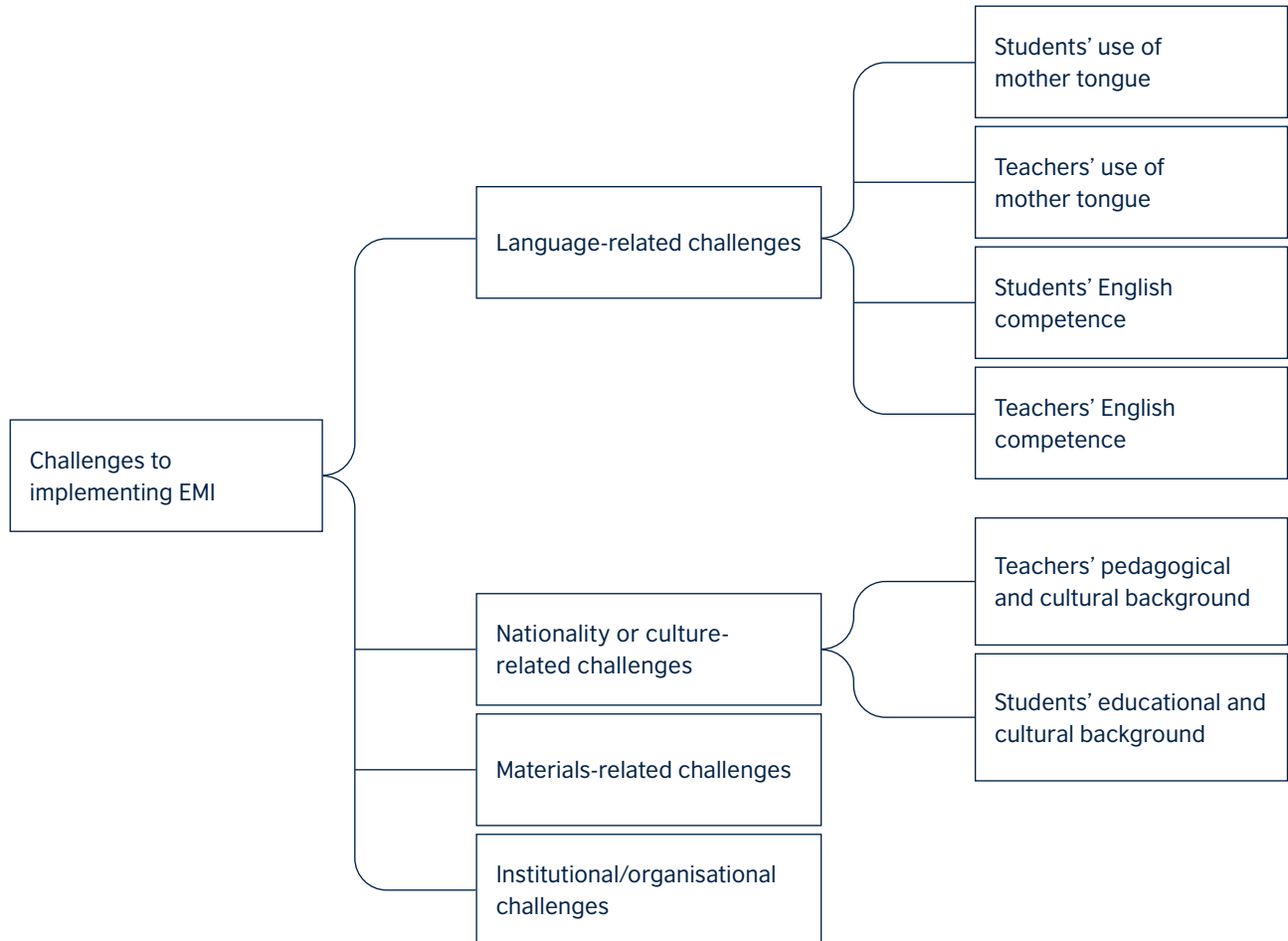
Meng, Shantou

With regard to the available **support** and EAP courses, although the topic was not discussed in depth, participants from Shantou University seemed particularly happy with the organisation of EAP classes, as they were, in this university, available throughout all of the four years of study.

With regard to the **attitudes** towards EMI, as with the interviews, there was recognition of some of the **benefits** of implementing EMI, but there was no in-depth or extended discussion of these benefits (Figure 6). Rather, they were merely listed by each participant and left without comment from the rest of the group. Thus, the focus group analysis also focuses on the **challenges** associated with EMI.

All groups covered themes which were similar to the interviews, classified into linguistic (mentioned by 16 participants across three focus groups) and material-related challenges (six participants across three groups), as well as cultural (four students across two focus groups) and organisational challenges (four students across two groups) (Figure 6).

**Figure 6:** Thematic framework for student focus groups





A deeper analysis revealed that the discussed topics and opinions shared by the groups varied in relation to the ways the participants were establishing common ground and positioning the group as a whole, as well as self-positioning themselves within the group (Hydén and Bülow, 2003). For example, in the Hubei focus group, where all the participants majored in English education, they established a collective voice of ‘English majors’ quite effortlessly, and constructed their narratives as a group of ‘experts’ in their field. They spoke of themselves as collective ‘majors in English education’ on one hand, and talked about other students as ‘them’ or ‘other students’ on the other (see Appendix A for an extract). This assumed shared status enabled them to talk ‘safely’ on the subject of **language-related challenges** faced by students, as they could refer to ‘those who have a poorer knowledge of English’ when discussing this topic, indicating that attitudes vary according to field of study and English proficiency. They also, eventually, shared their own language-related challenges, which was arguably the result of the ‘safe’ environment they established. On the other hand, this shared status seemed to result in some group members’ opinions being silenced or ignored (see Appendix B for an extract), arguably because of the participants’ evaluation of what is socially desirable and acceptable in their circumstances. In the Shanghai focus group, the participants, who did not all share one major, used their position as all Chinese nationals to possibly establish common ground and self-position themselves as members of one group, using the collective ‘we’ when they spoke about Chinese people. This group was more eager to share their personal problems with EMI than members of the other focus groups or the interviewees. However, in the Sophia focus group, the participants did not seem to have established a shared identity or status from which they could speak in a collective voice. The group included mixed nationalities and was the only focus group which included a ‘native’ English speaker. In fact, one of two ‘native’ English speakers’ position as an expert was determined at the very start of the discussion and this, in addition to his background as a relatively experienced teacher, possibly heightened this ‘expert’ position. He attempted to encourage and lead the discussion. Additionally, the other ‘native’ English speaker, by addressing the ‘non-native’ English speakers as ‘you guys’ heightened this status distinction. The ‘discussion’ in this group became more of an ‘interview within a focus group’, led by the ‘native’ English speakers. This was the only group that did not discuss language-related challenges and they were more critical of using languages other than English in EMI classes.

### *Staff focus groups*

Overall, the focus group discussions confirmed the findings from individual interviews. With the exception of a course in Law in Shantou University, which offered its students the opportunity to ‘take an English class together, and it’s a Law context’ (Jesse, Shantou), the **language support** classes were believed to be general EAP rather than subject-specific ESP classes. As previously noted, they ranged in terms of their duration and availability, with Shanghai International Studies being the only one that offered EAP classes in each consecutive year of study. These classes focused ‘on different aspects of English – listening, speaking, reading...’ (Danyi, Shanghai International Studies). With regard to the practice of using English and other languages in the classrooms, although the staff were not aware of an official policy, overall the use of English was believed to be ‘just taken for granted’ (Danyi, Shanghai International Studies). The teachers, again, felt that it was acceptable to code-switch to explain difficult terminology, with one exception of an EAP teacher in Hubei, who stated, ‘I want to create an English speaking atmosphere in class. No Chinese’ (YueYue, Hubei). These findings were in line with the somewhat mixed results of the quantitative analysis (see p16) and the results of the interview data analysis discussed on p21. With regard to the students’ use of **their mother tongue**, again, the opinion was that although it was acceptable, it was desirable to encourage the students to use English, although some staff members seemed to be stricter about it than others, as the following extract from the Sophia focus group seems to indicate:

Moderator: *Is everything in English (lingua franca)? Are students allowed to use their mother tongue?*

Simon: *No, specifically not. We have Koreans etc.; they’re not all Japanese, so it’s unfair if they flip into Japanese. Japanese is used sometimes as a lingua franca.*

Nobuko: *I have Chinese students, and French students, so they talk to each other in their mother tongue.*

Moderator: *Opinion on this?*

Simon: *I try to stop it, because we are trying to create this common bond.*

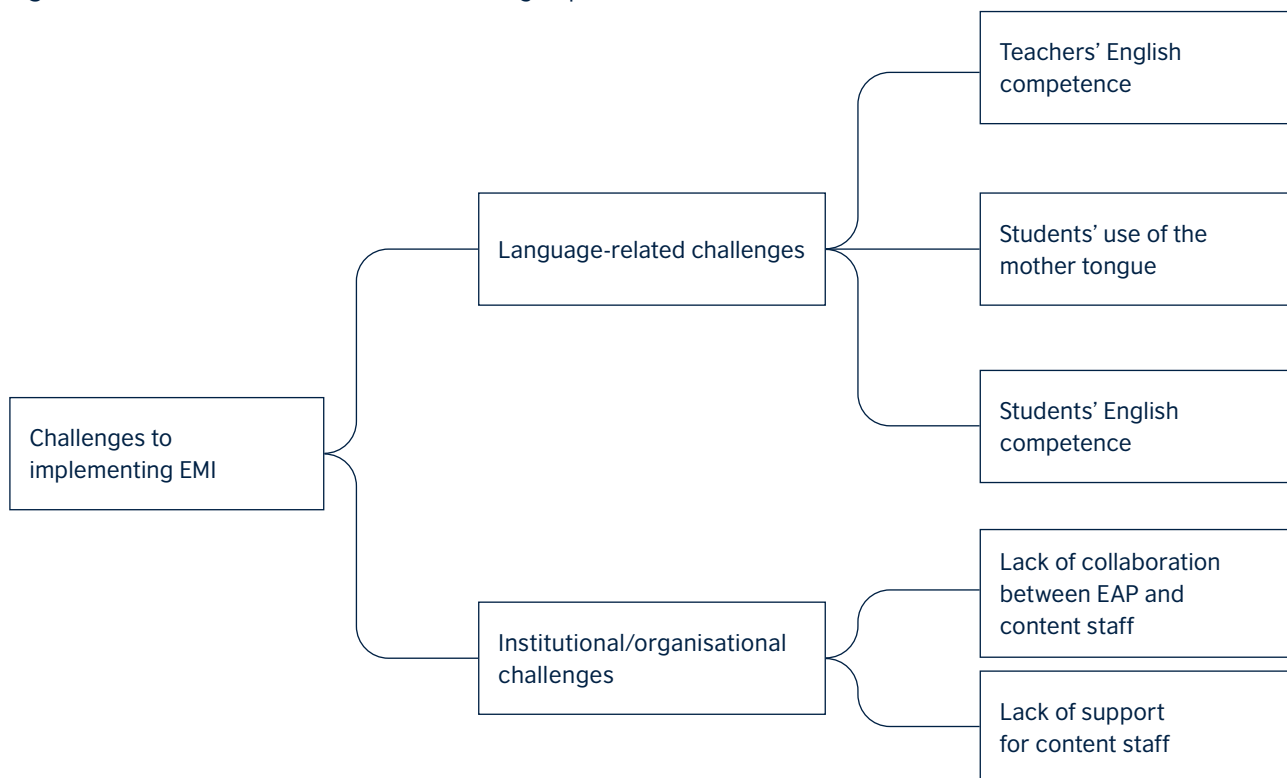
Nobuko: *Actually, students prefer that, according to their comments. They prefer the class to be strictly English when teaching in English.*

Kumiko: *I abide by strictly English. If it’s just one or two sentences I don’t actively stop them, but I try to get them back into English speaking.*

With regard to the **driving forces** of EMI, focus groups discussed the same issues which came up in the interviews. The staff mostly focused on the factors behind the increased presence of EMI courses, including the increasing **student interest**, who ‘have a desire to go **abroad** to further their studies and want to use English as a tool (...) to fulfil their dream on their majors’ (Fei, Hubei). The other driving force was believed to be at a higher, institutional and policy level, and to be related to ‘the **internationalisation** of higher education institutes nowadays’, as ‘many universities and institutes want to attract more overseas students’ (Yating, Hubei). One participant also mentioned the increased competition between different local universities, and believed EMI to be an important element to ‘win’ the students over other universities, and one believed it to be a way to achieve ‘the end goal for China [to] no longer function in isolation’ (Tom, Shantou).

With regard to general opinions and **attitudes** towards EMI, the groups largely focused on language-related challenges of various kinds (discussed by 14 teachers across four groups) (Figure 7). However, by contrast to the interviews, in which teachers mostly discussed the students’ **language-related challenges**, in focus group discussions they focused more on staff members, whose ‘English is not there’ (Shantou staff focus group). Other themes were the **lack of collaboration** between EAP and content staff (discussed by 11 teachers across four groups), various issues related to **code switching** (eight teachers across four groups), and the need for **support** for, mostly content classes, staff (eight teachers across three groups). The latter was related to some accounts coded as language-related challenges, as the content teachers were believed to ‘need substantial training in language skills’ (Amanda, Hubei) (see Appendix C), and the opinion was that they ‘don’t know much about English’ (Di, Shanghai International Studies).

**Figure 7:** Thematic framework for teacher focus groups



Three groups out of four were EAP teachers, and the remaining group comprised content teachers who all taught in the School of Education and had a background in English education. Although the teachers did not establish as clearly a visible collective identity as the students, they did seem to be working towards establishing common ground as ‘us, who can speak English well’ (Yating, Hubei focus group). Among EAP staff a possible, though not always clearly evident, marker of autonomy seemed to be the experience of teaching English, they mostly spoke as individuals and their discussions, for the most part, were narratives constructed around individual experiences. However, in the content staff group (Shanghai International Studies) there was a clearly evident ‘expert’, Di, who straight away established his dominant status, being both the only male, and the most experienced teacher. His position was deferred to by other members, with TingTing, whose introduction followed Di’s, introducing herself as ‘just a teacher’.

All groups generally tried to avoid conflict and, as previously noted, focused on their shared status as those who don’t have problems with English, as opposed to content teachers (from other departments) who do. Their narratives constructed within the groups were much more critical than individual narratives presented in the interviews, and the shared common view was that ‘content teachers and language teachers are completely separate’ (Fei, Hubei). The teachers believed that there was not enough communication between the departments, and that knowledge exchange between content and EAP teachers was needed, although it seemed that they mostly meant teaching the content teachers ‘best practice’ (Tom, Shantou). Overall, the staff focus group confirmed what, more implicitly, emerged from the interview data, namely that lack of **collaboration** between content and EAP teachers was an important issue. These views were much more clearly articulated in the focus group discussion. They were also critical of the content teachers’ English competence, as they ‘don’t know much about English’ (Di, Shanghai International Studies), and believed that they need support ‘at least by English language training’ (TingTing, Shanghai International Studies University). This was a common view shared in all four staff focus groups.

# Implications, applications and recommendations

## Implications

The study reported here provides insights into the implementation of EMI, the driving forces behind this implementation and the attitudes of key stakeholders in the East Asian context. The results raise critical questions, providing a platform to inspire further research and curriculum evaluation and design.

## Approaches to EMI

Entry requirements vary both between and within countries and several faculty members are unaware of the English requirements to enter their EMI course or programme. The quantitative and qualitative data analysis revealed that EMI is approached in many different ways, particularly in relation to the provision of English language support, some providing EAP support and some providing subject-specific ESP courses. The type and duration of such support also varied and some institutions provide additional support, such as through language support centres and writing centres. Only one institution in China and one in Japan provided ESP classes linked to the content of the students' major, which concerned staff and students. Further, only one institution had developed tailor-made EAP, and it was these students that had positive attitudes towards EAP classes. The study also revealed that EMI is delivered differently in Japan and China, with more English used in the former. Staff reported using the students' mother tongue as a pedagogical tool, showing an understanding of students' needs. They did appear, however, concerned as to how and when to use the students' mother tongue, and that students may end up depending on it too much. This is further complicated by the fact that student interviews revealed that such language use is seen as a sign of a lack of English proficiency. The data analysis also revealed that faculty were unsure of the university policy regarding language use in EMI classes. Not only did the quantitative responses to the question about the language of instruction reveal mixed results (see p16), but the interview participants reported facing 'dilemmas' (see p22) with regard to this. Similarly, the staff focus group participants were not aware of policies with regard to the use of languages in EMI classrooms, and stated that speaking English is 'just taken for granted' (see p29). With regards to those teaching on EMI programmes, many staff have international colleagues whom they believe to be suitably qualified. Students also feel that there are enough qualified staff in their context.

Faculty members did not see the need for any kind of qualification in EMI, nor do they think a 'native-like' accent is important.

They do, however, think those recruited to work on such courses should be able to provide clear explanations, be sensitive to students' needs and problems, have a good knowledge of the subject and be able to explain concepts associated with this subject. Students also see knowledge of subject and clear explanations as the most important characteristic, but also believe the others to be important including a 'native-like' accent and a qualification in EMI. Japanese students also placed more importance on some teacher characteristics than Chinese students, such as teaching experience, 'native-like' accent, experience abroad, teaching methods and ability to explain concepts.

## Driving forces behind EMI policy and motivation

The open-ended questionnaire data revealed that staff and students had different opinions as to why students enrol on EMI courses/programmes. While students seem to sign up to improve their English proficiency, not many faculty members believed this was the reason. The interviews confirmed that students see EMI as a tool for learning English and this was discussed when they talked about desirable characteristics for their teachers and whether there were enough qualified teachers.

Several responses also indicated a belief in 'native' English ownership of the language, indicating a preference to be taught by 'native' English speakers. The interviews revealed that they see a need to learn English to compete globally and also improve their employment prospects. It also provides access to cutting-edge knowledge and, in Japan, there was recognition of the fact that Japanese HEIs need international students and that English can be a useful pedagogic tool. Staff have similar beliefs that English is needed to function in today's globalised world and see EMI as being related to globalisation in general and government policy.

Staff in China also recognised the need for international students and funding, both of which can be achieved through EMI, noting the importance of the use of English in an 'international' university. The focus groups confirmed these findings; students discussed the role of English as a global language, English as a gatekeeper to academic knowledge, government policies, the high prestige associated with the English language, and also the fierce competition among HEIs.

The staff focus groups discussed students' interest in studying abroad, the general movement towards the internationalisation of higher education, and also the increased desire to attract international students.

### **Attitudes towards EMI**

Interestingly, while faculty members believe EMI programmes should only use English, many also believe that the mother tongue can be a useful pedagogical tool. Students, however, do not favour the use of the mother tongue in class. In addition, Japanese students are more in favour of only permitting the use of English than Chinese students. Open-ended qualitative data revealed that students' desire to permit only English relates to the fact that they see EMI as a tool to improve their English which, as noted, is one of their main motivations for signing up. However, the interviews revealed that while they prefer teachers to use English, there is a desire for teachers to adapt the content of the class according to students' English level, and despite being aware of comprehension difficulties regarding their English level, they still want teachers to teach in English. Their attitudes towards the use of English seem to be related to their conceptualisation of EMI as a course with the primary aim of teaching the students English.

Faculty members also do not see a need for English support classes, and do not see these classes as being helpful. This was in contrast to students, who believe that classes should be supplemented with English language support classes provided by English language teachers. Further, Japanese students are more likely to think that their content lecturers should also help them with their English proficiency than Chinese students and also that EMI content classes should be supplemented with English support classes. The open-ended questionnaire data revealed that teachers conceptualise EMI more as an instructional approach to content learning, rather than as a tool for learning English, thus seeing the mother tongue as a useful resource in the classroom.

Faculty members and students are in favour of using EMI at university level and feel it positively impacts on both students' English proficiency and subject knowledge in equal measures. Students also feel that it improves their English proficiency, but were less confident in it being an effective way to improve their subject knowledge. Compared to Chinese students, Japanese students had significantly higher scores of agreement regarding the positive influence EMI has on their English proficiency. Open-ended questionnaire data confirmed that staff and student attitudes towards

the effectiveness of EMI to improve students' English proficiency differed. The questionnaire revealed concerns among faculty over the availability of suitable teaching materials, although students seem to think the materials suffice. While some benefits of EMI were listed (Figure 6), these were not extensively discussed in the interviews and focus groups. The qualitative data provided more insights into the challenges to EMI, and in all three qualitative data sets the main focus was on challenges to implementing EMI, particularly language-related challenges. Students treat EMI as a language course and criticise the teachers' English competence and code-switching as challenges to 'learning English'. The teachers, on the other hand, were more concerned with the students' low English competence, and used the students' mother tongue to help students understand content. Both groups attribute these language-related challenges to the members of the group to which they did not belong. This was different in the focus group discussions. Establishing a kind of common ground, or a collective identity, helped the focus group participants to discuss their own group's problems. Students discussed their own problems and teachers also used this shared status to point out the problem of the lack of collaboration between departments and between the content and EAP teachers. This lack of collaboration was one of the 'institution-related' challenges, the most frequently discussed challenge in the staff interviews. Another institutional/organisational-related challenge that emerged in the staff interviews was the problem of insufficient English language support. The interviews also revealed that the EAP and content staff members' views on the issues of collaboration and additional language support considerably differed.



## Recommendations

The present study has revealed that not only is EMI approached in different ways, but that staff and students' attitudes differ. There are also differences in attitudes between the two contexts. The results also reveal that Japanese students start learning English from a younger age and also have more experience abroad. There is no one-size-fits all approach to EMI and an in-depth understanding of both the context and the needs, and attitudes, of key stakeholders is essential to ensure the successful implementation of EMI. This will also help ensure that the various challenges identified in this study can be addressed, and possibly overcome. Language-related challenges are clearly important for both staff and students and attitudes towards the use of language(s) in EMI courses and programmes differ. This study calls for a critical investigation into the language policies of EMI programmes and HEIs are urged to provide staff and students with a clear rationale of both the purpose of the programme, including the intended learning outcomes, and also the policy on the use of language(s). In this study, English was found to be used more in Japan than China and staff and students' attitudes towards the use of the students' mother tongue also differed. The study also revealed that the teacher's use of the mother tongue, which they see as a useful pedagogic tool, is seen by students as a possible sign of a lack of proficiency in English. This raises questions about both the language policy and also how proficiency should be defined in today's globalised world. As a global lingua franca, English is used increasingly in multilingual encounters and it is imperative that we raise students' awareness that English does not have to be acquired monolingually, nor is it used monolingually. Today, multilingualism is the norm and having the use of more than one language is a valuable asset. Such awareness raising, which could potentially be part of an introduction or induction at the start of the course or programme could also provide students with a clear rationale for EMI, and the associated policy, to avoid disappointment. Whether the goal is improved English proficiency, improved subject knowledge, or both, it has to be made explicit to both staff and students. This may take the form of a lecture, a workshop, or materials integrated into the course and should aim to help staff and students critically examine the EMI policy, the use of language(s) on such programmes, and

the outdated assumption that English is best learned and monolingually and that the ideal teacher is one who has a 'native' or a 'native-like' accent. Thus, this study calls for HEIs, and those researching the topic, to consider how 'English' proficiency in EMI is to be conceptualised. In this study, 'native' English is afforded a high status and seem to believe that the language is best learned monolingually. The pedagogical implications of research in the field of global Englishes (Galloway, 2017a; Galloway and Rose, 2015) is gathering momentum in the field of ELT/TESOL and as (Galloway 2017a) notes:

*With moves towards EMI, more research is also needed within the context of higher education. Despite the publication of a recent book on Translanguaging in Higher Education (Mazak and Carroll, 2017), a context that is 'increasingly characterised by the global movement of people and ideas' (p6), making it a 'ripe context for translanguaging' (ibid.), monolingual ideologies still 'dominate university language policies (even unwritten ones) and tensions often occur between the everyday multilingual practices of students and university classrooms that can become artificially 'monolingual' (ibid. p7). (p86)*

Taking an EMI class alongside international students provides students from a traditionally monolingual classroom with an opportunity to use ELF, and it is unfortunate that students do not see the valuable use of other languages as useful pedagogic tools.

It is also clear from this study that more research is needed on the academic and language support for students. Only one HEI in this study uses tailor-made materials and there is a clear feeling among EAP staff that they want more collaboration with their colleagues delivering the content. They expressed a desire to know what is happening in these classes in order to help them support the students, and students were also very positive about the need for academic and language support classes. Staff and students have different attitudes towards why students enroll on these programmes, placing the programmes at different ends of Met's (1998) continuum. If the main motivating factor is to improve their English proficiency, rather than learn the subject they are studying, then this will influence how MI should be approached. Needs analysis should be an important part of any curriculum evaluation or design and it is clear from this study that

further research should be undertaken at both the institutional and the national level in both contexts. A number of challenges were also identified, particularly language-related challenges and students want staff working on such programmes to be sensitive to their needs and to be familiar with their cultural and educational background. Internationalising higher education does not have to result in adopting a Western style of education. While staff may not place value on having a 'certificate' in EMI, this study has implications for pre- and in-service training for both content and English-support staff. It is hoped that the challenges highlighted in this study will be useful for those considering adopting, or expanding, EMI or evaluating their current provision. Faculty and students clearly need guidance. Students require guidance on how to both learn the language and the academic subject matter and faculty require guidance on the language policy, the type of support needed to support students and the context in which they are working. If the goals of EMI are also to be English acquisition, then the focus cannot only be on the delivery of content.

It is hoped that this study has provided insights into how EMI is implemented and conceptualised in the Japanese and Chinese context. In order to encourage collaboration, curriculum development and research, this study calls for the development of an online global EMI network or teaching/research forum. This would create a much-needed forum for researchers, practitioners, and possibly students, in different contexts to 'meet', share good practice and possibly conduct collaborative curriculum evaluation and design. It would also enable those that have developed tailor-made materials to showcase their materials and could also provide a way to promote the much-needed collaboration between EAP and content staff. This online 'meeting' point would provide a way for HEIs to showcase their cutting-edge EMI programmes, and for staff to explore working in certain contexts with those currently working there or teaching their subject area.

As noted at the start of this report, EMI is also a growing field of research, and this network could also provide researchers with an opportunity to disseminate their research and embark on collaborative research projects. Both staff and students reported that they enjoyed having the opportunity to share their views, particularly in the focus groups. Online forums could provide a useful way for students to talk to those already enrolled on certain programmes or perhaps those studying on MA/MSc TESOL programmes to talk to staff already working in these contexts. The pedagogical implications of the global spread of English have led to the creation of a number of courses focusing on this topic on pre-and in-service teacher education programmes (Galloway, 2017b, for an overview of one such programme). This study recommends that not only should such courses incorporate a focus on EMI, but also that ELT/TESOL teacher education programmes include more coverage of working in EMI contexts.

Staff and students think EMI is an important way for students to improve their overall English proficiency and gain access to cutting-edge knowledge. Staff also feel that it is reflective of government policies to internationalise and important to improve the overall competitiveness of the institution. This report concludes that the global EMI trend will continue to accelerate, but increasing the quantity of provision, should be accompanied with a focus on the quality of provision. Quantity of provision may raise the international – and domestic – profile of an institution, but unsatisfied staff and students will ultimately have a negative impact. The perceived benefits of EMI cannot be guaranteed and careful planning and curriculum evaluation are necessary. The expansion of EMI is accelerating at an unprecedented rate and it is hoped that this study will contribute to the growing body of research needed to ensure that provision does not continue to outpace empirical research.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A

### Focus group extract

Hubei student focus group – establishing common ground as ‘we, English majors’ and distancing themselves from ‘other students’.

The extract below shows how this focus group spoke of other students as ‘they’ when they discussed potential problems. Otherwise, they spoke of themselves as ‘we’ and used the shared status as ‘English majors’:

Meicheng: (...) But for *those who have a poorer knowledge of English*, they have difficulty in understanding the teacher, so if *they* are taught in English, sometimes *they* are faced with comprehension problems and cannot understand the teachers, so *they* just learn nothing.

Zhang: Even when the subject is in Chinese, *they* have different levels and ability to understand the knowledge. It depends on *themselves*.

Meicheng: When *they* listen to Chinese, *they* can understand what the teacher is talking about, but if *they* don’t understand English, *they* don’t know what the teacher is talking about, *they* just catch words, and the meaning of the whole sentence, *they* don’t understand the meaning and *they* don’t know what to do (...)

Yihu: In many classes *they* have too many students and the teacher can’t adapt to everyone.

Meicheng: Not all the classes are the same as *ours*. *We are English majors* and we are taught in a small group...

## Appendix B

### Focus group extract

Hubei student focus group – silencing and ignoring topics, which may be too ‘personal’ or ‘sensitive’.

In the following extract, H2 started by talking about ‘students’ in general, and then shifted her subject position to ‘we’. She then gets interrupted by another speaker who, again, speaks about students as ‘them’. H2 does not participate in the discussion until the next question is asked.

Zhang: But I think students in the college should have a self-study method, so even if the teacher cannot adapt their methods, the student could help themselves by self-study or other approaches. *So I think it’s flexible, we shouldn’t...*

Fan: I think *many students* are considering going abroad to further their study, and I think it is actually necessary for teachers to teach courses in English. *The students* need to be able to speak English (...)

Meicheng: What’s the next question?

## Appendix C

### Focus group extract

Shanghai staff focus group – supporting content faculty with English support and training.

Moderator: Your opinions of other professors in other subjects. Do they need support and training?

Yiling: Yes definitely.

TingTing: Language training.

Danyi: To teach something like Politics in English, I don’t know how that can be done. Surely their spoken English is not good enough for them to carry out this all English environment. But I don’t know how they can be supported.

TingTing: They can be supported, at least, by English language training.

Danyi: Do you think they are willing to do that?

Yiling: They have to, if they have to teach Commerce or Business in English.

Danyi: They have published articles in English in international journals.

TingTing: I don’t think they have the confidence to teach in English.

Yiling: It’s quite different, if you are asked to teach Business English and you are confident in your English skills, it’s not a Business major, right.

TingTing: Yes, that would be a challenge to us, to teach a special knowledge subject.

Yiling: For some of those professors I think it would be a great challenge.

Danyi: Their English is not good enough.

TingTing: So they don’t want to present themselves in English. They would have to be happy to do so, not everyone is qualified to do that, or confident about their English.

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