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Attitudes towards English Medium Instruction (EMI)

Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)
Education and Skills Development (ESD) Language in Education series
29 April 2019
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Presentation Overview



- Introduction to EMI: Definitions
- What are the trends in attitudes towards EMI?
- Measuring the complexity of attitudes (Japan)
- Recent Research (Proficiency)
- Current Research (Challenges)

Defining English Medium Instruction



- EMI taken literally
 - A teaching and learning context where English is the medium of instruction
- Macaro 2018, p. 18
 - ‘The use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions where the first language of the majority of the population is not English’
- Humphreys 2017, p. 95
 - Problematizes this:
 - Anglophone countries – teaching subjects through English
 - Large number of international students
 - English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Should another definition be developed for post-colonial multilingual countries such as South Africa?
 - Would this definition be more focused on English as a Lingua Franca?
 - English as a tool for peacekeeping?

State-of-the-Art Article



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A systematic review of English medium instruction in higher education

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After outlining why a systematic review of research in English medium instruction (EMI) in higher education (HE) is urgently required, we briefly situate the rapidly growing EMI phenomenon in the broader field of research in which content and language have been considered and compare HE research outputs with those from other phases of education. An in-depth review of 83 studies in HE documents the growth of EMI in different geographical areas. We describe studies which have investigated university teachers' beliefs and those of students before attempting to synthesise the evidence on whether teaching academic subjects through the medium of English as a second language (L2) is of benefit to developing English proficiency without a detrimental effect on content learning. We conclude that key stakeholders have serious concerns regarding the introduction and implementation of EMI despite sometimes recognising its inevitability. We also conclude that the research evidence to date is insufficient to assert that EMI benefits language learning nor that it is clearly detrimental to content learning. There are also insufficient studies demonstrating, through the classroom discourse, the kind of practice which may lead to beneficial outcomes. This insufficiency, we argue, is partly due to research methodology problems both at the micro and macro level.

- Numerous studies beliefs/attitudes/perceptions (41 out of 83)
- Trends very clear:
- Negative:
 - Lack of Lecturer and/or Student proficiency (reported 60% comprehension)
 - + Could be a barrier to access EMI
 - Students simply prefer L1
 - Lecturers concerned students can't 'thrive'
 - Takes up more time
 - Feeling - no choice

- Positive:
 - Attract international students
 - Generate revenue
 - Globalisation – business – lingua franca
 - Increased job opportunities / career prospects
 - Study abroad
 - Intercultural understanding (less frequent)
 - Improve English ability
 - Access to teaching/learning materials
 - EMI is more interactive

Study in Japan ...

Background



2009 - Global 30 Project

Financial support - 13 universities

Attract and accommodate international students – declining Japanese 18yr olds



2014 – Top Global University Project (TGUP)

Attract international students + promote international exchange (study abroad) + create active 'global leaders' (MEXT, 2014)

Less focused on international students



- *What are the main predictors of Japanese university professors/students' attitudes towards EMI?*
 - a. Does Gender (Male/Female), Location (Tokyo/Kyoto), Academic Subject (STEM vs Social Science), and / or University Type (Private/National) statistically significantly predict attitudes towards EMI?*
 - b. Besides the four main predictor variables, are any other variables included in the statistical models statistically significant predictors of attitudes towards EMI?*

Sample

- Sample: 6 universities
- 3 in Tokyo, 3 in Kyoto
- 4 Private universities
- 2 National universities
- 57 professors
- 485 students



Method



- Questionnaire (development)
- Interviews



The Journal of Asia TEFL

<http://journal.asiatefl.org/>

e-ISSN 2466-1511 © 2004 AsiaTEFL.org. All rights reserved.



Developing and Validating a Japanese English Medium of Instruction Attitude Scale (JEMIAS)

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- JEMIAS – 13 dimensions

JEMIAS scale names and Items

<u>Scale Name</u>	<u>Scale Items</u>
Self-rated English Proficiency SELF_PROF	ITEM6+ITEM17+ITEM22+ITEM32+ITEM41
Student-English Proficiency SS_PROF	ITEM15+ITEM18+ITEM28+ITEM50
EMI as a form of English Improvement ENG_IMPR	ITEM2+ITEM16+ITEM42
Mixing/Collaborating with Foreigners FOREIGNERS	ITEM9+ITEM11+ITEM24+ITEM44
Access, quality, and difficulty of teaching/learning Materials MATERIALS	ITEM23+ITEM26+ITEM43+ITEM45
The effect of EMI on classroom dynamics DYNAMICS	ITEM21+ITEM31+ITEM35+ITEM36+ITEM47
The effects of EMI on pedagogy PEDAGOGY	ITEM4+ITEM10+ITEM13+ITEM37
The positive effects of increased EMI courses POS_INCR_COURSES	ITEM1+ITEM12+ITEM33+ITEM51
The negative effects of increased EMI courses NEG_INCR_COURSES	ITEM5+ITEM14+ITEM39+ITEM46+ITEM48
EMI takes up more Time TIME	ITEM3+ITEM8+ITEM34
English is (un?)necessary in Japan NECESSITY	ITEM20+ITEM38+ITEM40
English beyond Japan BEY_JAPAN	ITEM7+ITEM19+ITEM30
English for Work WORK	ITEM25+ITEM27+ITEM29+ITEM49

Main Findings



- Professor data - Factorial MANCOVA
- Student data - SEM

- Gender (GEN)
- Academic Subject (ACAD_SUBJ)
- University Type (UNI_TYPE)
- Location (AREA)

- English proficiency

Why attitudes research?



- Good starting point
 - Challenges
 - Motivations
 - Positive/Negative side-effects
 - Thoughts on impact of EMI
- Not every context is the same
 - Nuances
- Find out what is going wrong / right
 - Suggest changes in policy / practice







STUDIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION
<https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1590690>

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group



What drives success in English medium taught courses? The interplay between language proficiency, academic skills, and motivation

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the relationship between course performance, English language proficiency, motivation, and academic language skills in an English medium instruction (EMI) university context. It analyses test and questionnaire data from 146 students from an EMI business program at a Japanese university, and follow-up interviews with seven students. Proficiency test and subject exam scores revealed that knowledge of English language and academic English skill were statistically significant predictors of success in EMI, suggesting that lower proficiency students require more targeted language support in order to increase their likelihood of success. A motivation measure did not correlate with higher grades, contradicting research in language learning contexts. Interview data uncovered the multi-faceted nature of 'success in EMI' suggesting that students see success as a combination of final grades, lecture comprehension, English language proficiency gains, and long-term career advancement.

KEYWORDS

Japan; English medium instruction; proficiency; motivation; English for specific purposes



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<https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1590690>



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Table 6. Multiple regression output: TOEIC, ESP, motivation and content scores.

	ΔR^2	B	SE B	Standardized β	t value	p value
Constant	0.445	32.18	3.88		8.28	<.001***
TOEIC		0.020	0.004	0.333	4.86	<.001***
ESP Grades		0.329	0.047	0.475	6.99	<.001***
Motivation		-0.223	0.412	-0.035	-0.54	.59

1. What challenges do Japanese students face when studying through EMI?

2. Does English proficiency predict the level of challenge faced by EMI students in Japan?
 - Can a threshold of English proficiency that students need to reach be determined in order to mitigate EMI challenges?

 - If yes, what is this threshold for each skill? (Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking)

Selected References



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Resource References



- Please see comprehensive list in:
- Macaro, E., Curle, S., Pun, J., An, J., & Dearden, J. (2018). A Systematic Review of English Medium Instruction in Higher Education. *Language Teaching*, 51(1).
- Download JEMIAS for free:
 - <https://www.iris-database.org/iris/app/home/detail?id=york%3a936114&ref=search>
- All papers downloadable from here:
 - https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Samantha_Curle