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Special Issue: English Medium Instruction (EMI) Teacher Training in Higher Education

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Introduction

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Globalization has had a tremendous impact on tertiary education all over the world, prompting many universities in non-native English-speaking countries to adapt English as their language of instruction. English Medium Instruction (EMI) first appeared as a strategy to respond to the challenge of internationalization, but it has become an effective tool for the transformation of institutions of higher education into multilingual contexts. Originally, EMI was defined as “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” (Macaro et al. 2018, 37). However, the pivotal role of students in the education process and introducing the notion of learning into the EMI phenomenon has promoted the use of the term English Medium Education (EME). Furthermore, the multilingual view of teaching and learning in international contexts has led Dafouz & Smit (2020) to the coining of English-medium education in multilingual university settings (or EMEMUS).

The rapid implementation of EMI in institutions of higher education has been brought about due to a number of reasons. Among these motives are to develop global skills in the home student body and increase their employability, to gain access to cutting-edge knowledge and increase global competitiveness, to raise the international profile, to increase income from education services, to enhance student and lecturer mobility, to improve English proficiency, to reflect developments in English language teaching (ELT) and to raise the quality of tertiary education (Macaro et al. 2018; Ruiz de Zarobe & Lyster 2018).

The introduction of EMI in a university is a complex process and the challenges that arise embrace all the groups of stakeholders, namely, university administration, academic staff and students. One of the key administrative issues is that few universities pay sufficient attention to EMI staff training. The studies of current practice have highlighted a need for a more rigorous approach to EMI teachers’ linguistic and pedagogical training (Dearden 2015) and a need for more awareness on behalf of the administration

to develop such training courses. A university administration's acknowledgement of the need for training their staff and students to face the new EMI classroom scenarios is only the top of the iceberg. Resistance to improve professional skills to meet the requirements of internationalization is a bigger issue. The resistance to change current practice can be explained by the fact that an EMI course is a time-consuming issue and the academic staff needs support from the university administration in the form of comprehensive language policies, EMI training courses, and incentive schemes.

Moreover, the implementation of EMI should naturally lead to a change of methodology, as the mastering of EMI strategies may facilitate the challenges raised by insufficient language proficiency. Student-centered lecturing is in fact a much more important factor in the success of a lecture than the lecturer's language competence (Klaassen 2001). Students are better able to understand a lecture with higher degrees of interaction and with a more conscious combined use of verbal and non-verbal modes of communication (Morell 2018; 2020; Morell et al. 2020). EMI teachers should even reconstrue their personal and professional identities by shifting the focus from language issues to those of identity and ideology (Dafouz & Smit 2020).

Thus, the demand for EMI teacher training is huge universally (Gustafsson 2018; Lasagabaster & Doiz 2018) with both academics and students on EMI courses complaining that the teaching staff lack expertise in the areas of English language proficiency, including English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English for Academic Purposes (EAP), pedagogical skills, EMI-specific micro-skills and intercultural awareness. As a consequence of the need to better prepare lecturers to face the challenges of EMI, educators and researchers have shown a growing interest evidenced by the recent upsurge of publications, such as Dafouz & Smit (2020) and Sánchez-Pérez (2020) (both of these books are reviewed in this issue), a specialized journal, i.e., *The Journal of English Medium Instruction*, and a number of conferences.

In the 6th Integration of Content and Language in Higher Education (ICLHE) Conference we, Teresa Morell of the University of Alicante (Spain) and Ksenia Volchenkova of the South Ural State University (Russia), the co-editors of this special issue met. The ICLHE is the association for expertise, networking and resources in the integration of content and language in higher education with the aim to promote exchange of opinions and research concerning the interface between content and language in higher education. This 6th ICLHE Conference "Multilingualism and Multimodality in Higher Education" was held from October 15 to 18, 2019 in Castellon, Spain and hosted by Universitat de Jaume I. It addressed how focused language instruction can be utilized as a foundation

for disciplinary content learning, with specific consideration to the multimodal nature of languages and of today's teaching and learning practices. At this event we shared our research and experience on EMI training course design and implementation, and from our reflections we came to the conclusion that case studies of EMI teacher training and EMI course design have been insufficiently covered in the literature on EMI and need to be comprehensively studied. Consequently, soon after the conference we set out to propose this special issue of the *Alicante Journal of English Studies* on EMI teacher training in Higher Education.

Through this special issue we hope to begin to fill the gap of the much-needed research to support institutional authorities to implement effective EMI teacher training programs and to offer some research based advice on how to prepare lecturers to cope with the challenges of EMI. The present volume consists of eight articles that range from the more general to the more specific views of EMI. The first article deals with institutional internationalization, the next three focus on EMI lecturers' perspectives, the following three describe teacher professional development programs and the last explores EMI teacher trainers' perceptions. Each of these contributions are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Emma Dafouz's article, "Repositioning English-Medium Instruction in a Broader International Agenda: Insights from a Survey on Teacher Professional Development", aims to align EMI more directly with the internationalization strategies of universities and with all its stakeholders. The study draws on a teacher professional development (TPD) survey addressed to academic staff ($n=2091$) at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM) in Spain. Among the lecturers' perceived needs was internationalization of teaching/learning and research for which they asked for English language courses with an ESP/EAP perspective and courses in other languages. In addition, lecturers asked for Spanish to be used as a language for internationalization. Dafouz suggests that TPD for EMI or English medium education (EME) needs to be viewed beyond English-only training and that a more international, multilingual and multicultural vision of teaching and learning should be adopted.

Esther Nieto Moreno de Diezmas and Alicia Fernández Barrera in "Main Challenges of EMI at the UCLM: Teachers' Perceptions on Language Proficiency, Training and Incentives" address lecturers' motivation, fears and stance towards the EMI plan at the Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha (UCLM), Spain. Findings from 20 semi-structured interviews with three separate groups of lecturers: (i) EMI practitioners, (ii) lecturers interested in EMI, and (iii) lecturers from the Department of Modern Languages revealed that a number of difficulties have

hampered a more rapid growth of their institution's EMI implementation. These drawbacks are mainly related to incentives for lecturers to join the bilingual program, anxieties about their language proficiency, the perceived inadequacy of teacher training, teacher recruitment and commitment in the program. The authors point to the need to establish a Language/Multilingual Policy Plan that includes a comprehensive EMI teaching plan and guidelines related to teacher recruitment and commitment.

Vicent Beltrán-Palanques' contribution "EMI Lecturers' Training Needs: Towards the Construction of a Measurement Instrument" focuses on the design and implementation of a questionnaire to explore the needs of EMI lecturers. He reports on the adequacy of the survey instrument and on the preliminary results derived from its administration to a group of EMI lecturers at the Universitat de Jaume I (UJI) in Castellon, Spain. The results provide some insights into a variety of aspects that could be addressed in EMI training courses, namely: 1) communication and language use, with special emphasis on interactional and discourse strategies and diction; 2) pedagogy, including scaffolding techniques, techniques to promote interaction and microteaching sessions; 3) material design with special attention paid to the designing of multimedia and digital resources as well as tasks, assignments and activities; and 4) multilingualism and multiculturalism, focusing particularly on the roles of English, internationalisation at home and intercultural communication. In addition, surveyed EMI lecturers' unfamiliarity with the benefits of multimodal discourse provides further evidence of the need to raise EMI lecturers' awareness of multimodal competence in EMI training courses.

Ana M^a Piquer Píriz and Irene Castellano's study entitled "Lecturers' training needs in EMI programmes: Beyond language competence" explores the training needs of 27 EMI lecturers at Universidad de Extremadura (UEX) Spain in relation to the five main dimensions identified by Pérez-Cañado (2020), specifically: 1) linguistic competence (2) methodology and classroom management (3) resources and materials (4) training needs, and (5) feedback based on participants' EMI experience. The data, which was collected through semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire, revealed that the lecturers involved in the teaching of disciplinary contents through English at the UEX are mostly experienced teachers with a good command of English. They claim to concentrate their efforts on the contents they teach but, at the same time, show some sensitivity to the concept of Integrated Content language in Higher Education (ICLHE), that is, to language. Their reported needs are mostly related to further training in classroom discourse and developing their EMI pedagogical competence. Despite rating their experience as very positive and enriching, they also make clear that it is demanding and time

consuming and, thus, they call for more institutional support and recognition. In Elena Borsetto and Ada Bier's article, "Building on International Good Practices and Experimenting with Different Teaching Methods to Address Local Training Needs: *The Academic Lecturing Experience*", the design, evaluation and evolution of the EMI professional development program at the Università Ca'Foscari di Venezia in Italy is presented. In the authors' words, "The purpose of the *Academic Lecturing* programme is to help participants try their hand at new teaching methods and new technologies as a means of making lessons more interactive, thus increasing their accessibility and making them more effective, and to help participants to improve their strategic use of English within their disciplinary field". Course participants' feedback has been used not only to improve and adapt training to lecturers' needs, but also to support the claim that transformation in teacher education can be brought about by integrating the two main dimensions of language and of teaching methodology with a third element, the use of technologies.

Francisco Rubio-Cuenca and María Dolores Perea-Barberá of the Universidad de Cadiz (UCA) Spain in their contribution, "Monitoring EMI Teachers to Assess their Progress in University Bilingual Programs, show that monitoring sessions (MS) may serve as a valid tool for assessing the impact of in-service training on bilingual teaching. These MS, or collaborative interviews, aim to gather EMI teachers' perceptions and beliefs and to provide them with feedback on their classroom practice. This data is then used to improve future language development and methodology programs. The results show that teachers have experienced remarkable progress by incorporating language awareness into their practice as EMI teachers, thus contributing to improve the language level of both their students and themselves. Furthermore, the implementation of specific didactic strategies help to make the learning process more dynamic, participatory, stimulating and creative.

Carmen Maiz-Arevalo and Elena Orduna Nocito of the UCM in "Developing Intercultural Communicative Competence: A Cornerstone in EMI in-service Training Programmes in Higher Education" analyze a specific in-service training module intended to develop the intercultural communicative competence (ICC) of a group of 21 Spanish lecturers working at two public universities. Results from questionnaire responses and self-reflection reports show that prior to training participants were willing to learn but unaware of the importance of ICC. However, after being trained they realize that EMI goes beyond language and that the intercultural component is highly significant in the internationalization of HE. Consequently, ICC should be given more presence in EMI training courses and language policies.

Ksenia Volchenkova and Elizaveta Kravtsova in their paper “EMI Lecturer Trainers: Reflections on the Implementation of EMI Lecturer Training Course” address the shortcomings and prevailing challenges for EMI teacher trainers in designing and implementing an EMI training course. The study draws on semi-structured interviews of eight EMI trainers from three Russian universities: South Ural State University (SUSU) in Chelyabinsk, Chelyabinsk State Medical Academy of Federal Agency of Health Care and Social Development (ChelSMA) in Chelyabinsk, and the Institute of Information Technologies, Mechanics and Optics (ITMO) in Saint Petersburg. EMI trainers claimed that the key challenges they faced were lecturers’ low English language proficiency, insufficient knowledge of EMI pedagogy and strategies, lack of self-reflection and feedback and resistance to active learning techniques. The main misconceptions of EMI trainees that make EMI training more challenging are their doubts that interaction with and between students can provide a better understanding of lecture content, and the belief that EMI lecturers do not need any innovative pedagogical techniques since they are all experienced teachers. The authors suggest considering these challenges while designing EMI training courses.

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