

Instructors' Perspectives on English-Medium Instruction in Taiwanese Universities

Chun-Chun Yeh

Using English as medium of instruction (EMI) in countries where English is not the first language has been a growing trend in the recent decades. In an effort to draw international students and promote campus internationalization, Taiwanese universities have started to offer English-medium courses; yet, little systematic research has examined their implementation and even less is known about the views and experiences of instructors teaching such courses. This interview study of 22 national and private university instructors focuses on three aspects of EMI teaching: instructors' motivations for offering English-medium courses, perceptions of student learning and teaching strategies adopted in EMI teaching, and views of the current EMI policy in Taiwan. Findings suggest that teachers offered English-medium courses for a variety of reasons, yet all the motivations seem to point to the global status of English in today's academic and professional world. The interview data also show that code switching was used as a pedagogical strategy to facilitate student learning and manage student-teacher relationship. As to the impact of English-medium teaching, although some participants were optimistic about students' English improvement, others raised concern about its detrimental effect on subject knowledge learning, particularly in students of lower English proficiency and learning motivation. An implication of this result is that students' preparedness for classes in English, including their general English proficiency and skills in English for discipline specific academic purposes, has to be carefully considered when any EMI policy is formulated at either national or institutional levels.

Keywords: English as medium of instruction, teacher perspectives, higher education, teaching and learning

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Using English as medium of instruction (EMI) in countries where English is not the first language has been a growing trend in the recent decades. In the Netherlands, for example, advanced courses have often been conducted in English since the 1960s (Crystal, 2003). Recent research has provided more data showing that English is increasingly used as a language of university teaching in European countries (Ferguson, 2007). Coleman (2006) also identified seven reasons for this Englishization of European higher education institutions: content and language integrated learning, internationalization, student exchanges, teaching and research materials, staff mobility, graduate employability, and the market in international students. In the 21st century Taiwan has caught up with this EMI trend. In an effort to draw international students and promote campus internationalization, the Taiwanese government has actively encouraged universities to offer courses in English (Ministry of Education, 2007). Individual universities began to provide various incentives, such as reducing teaching hours and subsidizing teaching material production, to instructors conducting subject courses in English. A recent statistic shows that the number of English-medium courses offered in Taiwanese universities had grown from 2,013 to 4,099, an increase of 103.63% within five years (2005-2009) (Lin, 2010). Despite this burgeoning of English-medium courses, little systematic research has examined their implementation and even less is known about the views and experiences of instructors teaching such courses. This interview study is thus an attempt to fill the gap.

English-Medium Teaching in English as a Second Language (L2) Contexts

Over the past decades, researchers have examined various aspects of English-medium instruction in higher education, such as policy evaluation (Gill, 2006; Jiang, 2010) and student perceptions and performance (Byun et al., 2011; Gerber, Engelbrecht, Harding, & Rogan, 2005; Li, Leung, & Kember, 2001). In studies devoted to the understanding of EMI instructors' experience and behavior, some have focused on English L1 lecturers teaching content courses to English L2 students (Crawford Camiciottoli, 2005; Flowerdew & Miller, 1995, 1996). However, in English L2 countries, English-medium courses are predominantly taught by local

teachers, who are themselves English L2 speakers. There is likely a difference in teaching effectiveness and methods between these two groups of instructors. The purpose of this review of literature is to examine and discuss the relevant studies on English L2 instructors' experience and behavior in EMI teaching.

Lecturing in a second language can predictably present problems and challenges, which have been discussed from two perspectives. The first one concerns students' insufficient command of English, which was believed to cause poor participation and academic achievement in English-medium courses (Doiz, Lasagabaster, & Sierra, 2011; Flowerdew, Li, & Miller, 1998). The second challenge is teachers' own ability to conduct courses in English. Some instructors tended to have problems with pronunciation, accent, fluency, intonation, and even non-verbal behavior (Klaassen & De Graaff, 2001). They reported difficulties in using English for communication purposes, such as using humor, telling anecdotes, making digression, and giving spontaneous examples (Wilkinson, 2005). They therefore were less able to express themselves clearly and accurately, explain in different ways, qualify or refine statements, or improvise (Vinke, Snippe, & Jochems, 1998). Even for those who appeared to be highly proficient in English and experience little difficulty in delivering lectures in English, instructors reported needing more preparation time to learn and look up in a dictionary for technical vocabulary and "vocabulary of teaching" in English (e.g., for starting discussions and summing up information) when teaching English-medium courses for the first time (Paseka, 2000; Vinke et al., 1998; Wilkinson, 2005). Because of these linguistic limitations, some instructors felt that their teaching quality was lower in English-medium instruction (Vinke et al., 1998).

Despite a widely held belief that English-medium subject courses can achieve "the double benefit of subject knowledge and improved target language proficiency" in students (Coleman, 2006, pp. 4-5), researchers have questioned the impact of the English medium on subject learning. First and foremost, some students may not have adequate language proficiency to explore abstract concepts, participate in class, or even comprehend lectures in English (Duff, 1997; Gerber et al., 2005). Furthermore, as discussed above, using English as medium of instruction often resulted in reduced teacher expressiveness and clarity, which, as Vinke et al. (1998) argued, may affect student learning negatively. Another common feature in English-medium instruction—teachers' slower speech—seemed to have a more ambiguous effect. On the one hand, a reduced speech rate may facilitate students' processing of presented information, but on the other hand, it can decrease the

amount of course content delivered per lecture (Vinke et al., 1998). In this sense, English-medium teaching can be detrimental to students' learning of disciplinary knowledge, although Wilkinson (2005) observed that some teachers and students may be willing to compromise on content quality for language gains.

Researchers have also investigated pedagogical strategies employed in English-medium teaching. These strategies included adjusting language (e.g., slowing down rate of delivery, simplifying sentence structures, and restricting choice of vocabulary), simplifying content (e.g., reducing the density of new information), using additional support (e.g., providing slides and specialist terms in advance), and adjusting teaching methods (e.g., emphasizing more on student participation and discussion) (Flowerdew, Miller, & Li, 2000; Vinke et al., 1998; Wilkinson, 2005).

Another often cited pedagogical strategy in EMI teaching involves code switching, the alternate use of students' first language (L1) and the designated medium of instruction in the classroom. The issue of using L1 in second and foreign language classrooms has been controversial, with the opponents arguing that teachers using L1 in the language classroom are reducing learners' access to target language input and thereby limiting their learning opportunities (Swain & Lapkin, 2000). On the other hand, the proponents contended that judicious use of code switching by teachers can have a pedagogical advantage particularly when it is difficult or time-consuming for students to process and understand the target language (Cook, 2001). In content-based classrooms, code switching has been similarly adopted as a pedagogical strategy (Ariffin & Husin, 2011; Flowerdew et al., 1998; Flowerdew et al., 2000; Taha, 2008; Wilkinson, 2005; Zabrodska, 2007). Content teachers have been found to switch to a shared mother tongue to complement students' weaknesses in English, manage student-teacher relationship, and supplement English-medium teaching (e.g., repetitions, translations, elaborations, and explanations of material presented in English) (Flowerdew et al., 2000; Taha, 2008). Additionally, Flowerdew et al. (1998) found that Hong Kong Cantonese-L1 lecturers used Cantonese when they wanted to encourage student questions, build ethnic solidarity, and cite local examples. In fact, these lecturers considered the ability of using Cantonese to facilitate English-medium teaching an advantage they had over their non-Cantonese-speaking colleagues. Wilkinson (2005) also observed that content teaching in the English medium could be effective if code switching is allowed. This literature suggested that although code switching may be seen as violating the official all-English policy, content teachers generally believed that code switching was helpful to the teaching process.

Following the rise of English-medium teaching, a number of Taiwanese studies have been conducted to explore students' perceptions of learning in EMI courses (Chang, 2010; Hsieh & Kang, 2007; Huang, 2009; Wu, 2006). In addition to looking at student attitudes, Hsieh and Kang (2007) conducted an experiment to explore the effectiveness of EMI instruction but found no significant difference in academic achievement between students receiving instruction in Chinese (students' L1) and those receiving instruction in English. Lai, Tsai, and Wu's evaluative case study (2009) of an English-medium master's program addressed, in part, teachers' role in EMI instruction. The researchers observed that although the program was generally successful, not many teachers were willing to spend extra time on English-medium instruction. To tackle this problem, they proposed reducing teaching load and providing teaching assistants to help with non-teaching tasks. Despite this small body of literature, instructors' perspectives have been left largely unexplored except Yeh's (2010) research on 348 teachers' views and practices of EMI teaching. This survey study found that EMI instructors used various teaching strategies to facilitate learning, such as checking students' understanding frequently, using simpler English, speaking more slowly, and code switching to students' L1, mandarin Chinese. In addition, instructors identified students' inadequate English proficiency as the greatest difficulty in English-medium instruction, but they were generally satisfied with the outcome of their teaching.

These studies have provided an initial picture of English-medium teaching in Taiwan, where using the English medium in content courses was not yet an official policy but a vigorously promoted practice in higher education. While an increasing number of lecturers are becoming involved in this practice, empirical research into instructors' perspectives is still limited in number. Qualitative inquiry aiming to give voice to teacher participants is even rarer. The current interview study recruited 22 EMI instructors to explore, from teachers' perspectives, the following three issues:

1. Considering the general recognition that English-medium teaching in content courses often pose additional challenges to teachers, why did the instructors offer such courses in Taiwan, where an official EMI policy was not yet in place?
2. English-medium teaching has been known to present difficulty for students with inadequate English proficiency. How did these instructors perceive student learning in such courses? Did they adjust their teaching or adopt particular strategies to facilitate student learning?

3. While enjoying an increasing presence, English-medium teaching was still a relatively new practice in higher education in Taiwan. As forerunners of this practice, how did these instructors perceive the current EMI policy in Taiwan?

The Study

Participants

This paper reports on a follow-up study to a survey exploring Chinese-speaking university instructors' views of and experiences with EMI teaching. From the pool of instructors responding to the invitation to participate in follow-up interviews, 22 were selected to include a wide diversity of teaching contexts, such as school type, discipline, and course level; and teacher background, such as position, EMI teaching years, and highest degree. Table 1 presents the interviewees' background information.

Table 1 Interviewees' Profile(1)

	Discipline	Position	EMI teaching	Course level	Highest degree
P1	SS	Full	6-10	G	E
P2	S	Full	6-10	G	E
P3	SS	Assoc	2-5	G	E
P4	S	Full	6-10	G	E
P5	S	Assis	2-5	G	E
P6	SS	Assis	Under 1	G	non-E
P7	S	Assis	Under 1	G	E
P8	SS	Full	2-5	G, U	E
P9	S	Assis	Under 1	G	E
P10	SS	Assis	2-5	G, U	E
P11	S	Assis	2-5	G, U	E
P12	SS	Lecturer	2-5	U	E
P13	SS	Assoc	6-10	G	E

Table 1 Interviewees' Profile(2)

P14	S	Full	Above 11	U	E
P15	S	Full	Above 11	G	E
P16	SS	Assoc	2-5	U	non-E
P17	SS	Assis	Under 1	G	E
P18	SS	Assis	Under 1	U	non-E
P19	S	Assoc	2-5	G	E
P20	S	Assoc	2-5	G	E
P21	S	Assis	Under 1	G	E
P22	S	Full	Above 11	G	E

Note: S = sciences, SS = social sciences, Assis = assistant professor, Assoc = associate professor, G = graduate course, U = undergraduate course, E = English-speaking country, non-E = non-English speaking country.

As shown in Table 1, this sample included 7 full professors, 5 associate professors, 9 assistant professors, and 1 lecturer. As to disciplinary distribution, slightly over half of the professors ($n = 12$) came from science disciplines, while 10 others taught in various social sciences fields. No humanities instructors were included. This distribution, in fact, roughly reflected the EMI teaching situation in Taiwan at the time of the study; namely, most EMI courses were offered in sciences and social sciences departments, while humanities professors rarely taught courses in English.¹ As to the course level, 15 professors offered English-medium courses only at the graduate level, 4 only at the undergraduate level, and 3 at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. Furthermore, three interviewees earned their doctoral degree in Taiwan, while all the others obtained their highest degree in English-speaking countries, mostly the United States.

Data Collection and Analysis

This study adopted the interview method. The targeted interviewees were

¹ This study did not include language instructors or professors of English departments.

offered the option to choose between face-to-face and phone interviews. Consequently, 4 of the 22 interviews were conducted in person, while the other 18 by telephone, all on a one-to-one basis. Although phone interviews may lose some language nuances that are more noticeable during face-to-face interviews, they enjoy a number of advantages: they reduce the cost of a research project while expanding the geographic reach, and they offer privacy and may thus increase people's willingness to accept interviews and voice freely their opinions (Hahn, 2008). The interviewees were probed on their motivations for teaching English-medium courses, challenges in and strategies for EMI teaching, and their views of the current EMI policy in Taiwan. These interviews, lasting between 30 and 60 minutes, were conducted in the interviewees' first language, mandarin Chinese. They were tape-recorded with the participants' consent and then transcribed verbatim to prepare for analysis.

The transcripts were analyzed using the constant comparison method as described in Glaser and Strauss (1967). First, the data were organized into three large parts based on the research questions stated: (a) instructors' motivations for offering EMI courses; (b) instructors' perceptions of student learning and their teaching strategies; and (c) instructors' views of EMI policy. Second, the data were read and reread to identify keywords that served as the basis for codes and subcodes. Codes thus generated included foreign students, code switching, translation, and lost learning. Finally, all coded data were analyzed again to find both patterns and discrepancies. The validity of this study was established mainly through the use of multiple interviewees from different study backgrounds and types of educational institutions, which provides triangulation of "person" as referred to in Denzin (1978, as cited in Berg, 2009). In addition, an audit trail was developed and maintained throughout the research process, including data analysis.

Results

Motivations for Offering EMI Courses

Analysis of the interview data showed that these instructors offered EMI courses for reasons including institutional policy, foreign students in class, study and work background, and an interest in raising students' English ability and maintaining their own English proficiency.

Institutional policy. Among the reasons provided by the interviewees,

institutional policy was the most frequently mentioned ($n = 12$). As discussed earlier, although English-medium teaching was not a nationwide enforced policy in Taiwan, most universities were under pressure from the globalization trend and sought to internationalize the campus by offering a range of English-medium courses. Some of these were organized under specific all-English programs and others were isolated courses. Among my participants, four reported no choice in choosing the medium of instruction because they were teaching in programs where English had been designated as the language of instruction. On the other hand, while not enforcing using the English medium, most universities took measures in an attempt to encourage more instructors to offer English-medium courses. A number of instructors cited school incentives in the form of financial supplement or teaching hour waiver as reasons for teaching isolated English-medium courses. P16, for example, reported that she taught in English simply because a research grant she obtained came with an obligation that she teach at least one English-medium course per semester for two years. However, noting that the English medium was not suitable for her courses, she expressed no intention to offer more EMI courses after termination of the obligation.

Foreign students in class. Having foreign students in class ($n = 10$) was the second most frequently cited reason for instructors offering English-medium courses. As discussed in the previous section, Taiwanese universities sought to internationalize the campus, and recruiting foreign students seemed to be one sure way to ensure campus internationalization. However, as interviewees explained, these foreign students came from diverse language backgrounds (mostly English L2 countries, such as South Asian and Eastern European countries), so English as lingua franca of academia was often adopted in the classrooms. For example, P1 explained that his foreign students did not always understand Chinese, so he had to teach in English and require local Chinese-speaking students to use English as well.

Study and work background. Ten professors referred specifically to their study and work background as one of the reasons for teaching English-medium courses. As shown in the Interviewees' Profile (Table 1), a great majority of my informants obtained their doctoral degree in English-speaking countries. Some had even taught in the United States and Singapore. Because of such study and work background, most of my interviewees seemed to be fairly confident in their English proficiency. One of them, for example, explained why she chose to offer English-medium courses: "English is not an obstacle to me" (P19). Several said that they found it "natural" or "easier" to teach their specialist subjects in English. Two

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of them noted that they would not know how to explain or teach their subjects in Chinese because they “learned the subject knowledge abroad [in English]” (P13). P10, an assistant professor, explained why he chose the English medium from the very beginning of his teaching career:

I studied my PhD through the English medium. [When I started my teaching career,] all I did was to transfer the whole package [to this teaching context]. There is not much difference because [the subject knowledge] is learned through English. Basically there is not much need for adaptation. (P10)

Students’ English improvement. Seven instructors reported that they were interested in improving students’ English proficiency through EMI teaching. They pointed out that English proficiency would be important for their students’ future, be it in the industry or academia. For example, P14, an engineering professor, detailed the role of English in his students’ future job seeking:

When students graduate, they go to science parks, where English is also required. So, I want them to understand [English], to get familiar with an English environment. All the students I have supervised wrote their master’s theses or doctoral dissertations in English . . . When they go to job interviews, they stand out. They become more competitive. (P14)

Referring to the dominance of English in the research world, P17, a social sciences professor, maintained that students should become sufficiently proficient in English to read research works “in their original language”:

I want [students] to know the terms in their original language because later when they read papers and write up research, they need to refer to [papers] in their original language. This is because many theories were developed by foreigners. (P17)

Noting that their courses did not focus on the language per se, these professors nonetheless argued that English-medium courses would give students more opportunities to use and improve their English.

Maintenance of own English proficiency. Another important reason advanced by instructors for their use of English in lectures was to maintain their own English proficiency ($n = 4$). They pointed out that English oral proficiency was important in attending international conferences and sustaining global communication. Having recognized that frequent use was paramount in maintaining oral proficiency, these professors hoped to polish their English through teaching in English. A senior professor, having switched to EMI teaching in the recent years, reported her satisfaction with an improved ease of speaking in English, which she attributed to her adoption of English in lecturing:

My English improved at the greatest rate in these two years because I had to keep talking [in English when giving lectures]. Now when I step up to a podium, I talk in English, automatically. (P8)

Student Learning and Teaching Strategies

The professors were asked about their perceptions of student learning in EMI courses. Three, all teaching at the graduate level, believed that their students did not have problems understanding lectures, but a great majority of the interviewees reported noticing students' difficulty with lecture comprehension. For example, P10 estimated that only one-third of his students could follow English-medium lectures. Another professor described how his students appeared to have tried hard but still failed to understand lectures in English:

When attending lectures . . . some students would look like they're listening to Studio Classroom [a popular English learning broadcast program in Taiwan], really attentive, eyes fixing on a spot in the classroom. But still, they can't understand much [of the lecture]. (P9)

Other symptoms indicating students' lack of understanding included their "fidgeting in their chairs," "losing concentration," and eventual "dozing off" (P4).

Facing an apparent mismatch between students' English ability and the medium of instruction policy, these instructors developed strategies to facilitate student learning, including additional tutorials for domestic students, slowing down teaching,

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simplifying language and course content, and using visual aids. However, the most frequently reported strategy was code switching to Chinese, the instructors and their students' shared mother tongue. Instructors reported switching to Chinese for summarizing, translating, asking questions, and telling jokes. P19 gave a Chinese summary after a few minutes' English lecturing. P11 said, "When I see no response from [students], I repeat the sentence in Chinese." P12, a private college lecturer, used Chinese to encourage student participation to answer questions:

If I want [students] to answer questions, I do it bilingually. I ask the question in English first. Then I translate it into Chinese. Students need the Chinese translation to answer questions. (P12)

While the above three cases illustrate teachers' use of code switching to facilitate student learning, still another example demonstrates its social function of managing student-teacher relationship. P4, with half of class composed of foreign students and half domestic students, used Chinese for various purposes including telling jokes. He explained why he had to deliver his jokes in a bilingual fashion:

After I crack a joke, [the foreign students] will laugh, but the domestic students have no idea why they're laughing. So I have to repeat the gist of the joke in Chinese. I have to be bilingual. (P4)

Although not all of the instructors performed code switching themselves, most allowed students to ask questions in Chinese to boost participation. However, when they had both international and domestic students in class, these instructors still had to translate students' questions between Chinese and English, as explained by a life science professor:

I'll translate foreign students' English questions into Chinese because I have to ensure that students do not have comprehension or learning problems because of the English medium. So, when I feel that translation is needed, I translate foreign students' questions [into Chinese], or I translate Taiwanese students' questions into English. (P11)

Another reported strategy also involved L1 use. Most EMI instructors prepared

English-language slides for classroom teaching, but P11 had her teaching assistants identify difficult words in the slides and annotate them in Chinese before she used the slides in class. Similarly, P13 had her assistants translate English-language slides into Chinese before passing them to students for out-of-class self-study.

A number of instructors made special comments on the frequency of code switching at various stages of the semester. Several reported that they started their courses in 100% English, but learned to insert more Chinese later in the semester. For example, P14 switched languages more frequently in the second half of the semester and used Chinese for roughly half or one-third of the class time because the students' mid-term exam results clearly showed their lack of lecture comprehension. Similarly, P16 reported using more Chinese as the semester progressed because she believed it was more important to help students learn the subject knowledge than to apply the all-English policy. On the other hand, there were also professors who prepared to code-switch between English and Chinese right from the beginning of the semester. For example, P8 reported that he promised in the first class meeting to take a "bilingual" approach in the course to reduce students' fear towards English-medium teaching.

It has to be noted that not all of my teacher participants allowed code switching in their teaching. On the contrary, three insisted on English use for both the teacher and students. P1 noted that he imposed an all-English policy in the classroom to create an English environment and develop students' confidence in using English. P22 took points off for test answers written in Chinese. While most instructors implemented an all-English policy during class time, P21 required students to talk in English even during recess time to reinforce the habit of using English for communication.

Instructors' Views of EMI Policy

When these instructors were asked to evaluate the current EMI policy in Taiwan, seven of them asserted their whole-hearted support, while all the others expressed certain reservations about the following three issues: (a) Does EMI teaching benefit student learning? (b) Are faculty ready for EMI instruction? and (c) Should EMI teaching be implemented comprehensively?

Does EMI teaching benefit student learning? As noted earlier, it is widely believed that English-medium teaching can improve both subject knowledge and English competence. The interview data showed that some of my teacher

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participants seemed to share this belief. When asked if and how EMI teaching benefited student learning, several instructors spoke about the positive effect of EMI teaching on students' English improvement. They believed that EMI teaching was a great opportunity for students to receive input in English, as an instructor explained:

[Students] may not have other opportunities to learn in an all-English environment. And this is a live environment, totally different from listening to the [English learning] radio broadcast.
(P17)

P10 voiced a similar opinion and concluded that “some students may in the long run benefit from regular contact with English.” In contrast to this positive view about English improvement, some professors raised concern about students' acquisition of subject knowledge. They voiced worry about possible “lost learning” (P4) in students of lower learning motivation and lower English proficiency and observed that instructors should not compromise student learning “for the sake of EMI teaching” (P11). P16 cited his students as saying that they worried about their learning of subject knowledge and that they may end up neither learning subject knowledge nor improving English competence. Still other professors, although recognizing students' difficulty in understanding English lectures, seemed to believe that students would eventually survive and benefit from English-medium teaching. A professor experienced in EMI teaching was optimistic about students' learning ability and held that if given a chance, “students will catch up” (P22). As to students' frustration from failure to understand lectures, P17 maintained that even that frustration would be beneficial to students.

Are faculty ready for EMI instruction? A second issue concerned faculty preparedness to teach in English. A few instructors raised concern about faculty ability and confidence to teach in English. P12 cited her colleagues as examples and observed:

They seem to feel considerable pressure, because...perhaps not because they don't have the ability. But they don't use English on a daily basis. Then for them [English-medium teaching] is extra work.

Similarly, P15 commented that teaching in English was particularly a problem for those who had received all their education in Taiwan and always been teaching in

Chinese. P6 was one of the three participants who had earned their doctoral degree in Taiwan. He admitted not being able to express himself fully when teaching in English although he felt that classroom English was already easier to handle than everyday English. He explained:

It's easier to improvise when using the mother tongue. Sometimes my speech does not flow smoothly [when I teach in English]. (P6)

But even for teachers holding a doctoral degree from an English-speaking institution, English-medium teaching was still a challenging task. For example, when asked whether he planned to offer EMI courses in the following semesters, P20 said:

To be honest, I would prefer to use the Chinese medium because teaching in English is still more difficult. . . . It still doesn't feel smooth. (P20)

P15 had lived, worked, and taught in the States for nearly 20 years before taking up his teaching post in Taiwan. Admitting that his English was deteriorating after eight years of stay in Taiwan, he observed: "Teachers need training on teaching in English."

Should EMI teaching be implemented comprehensively? A third issue brought up in the interviews concerned the comprehensive implementation of EMI instruction. At the time of the study, EMI instruction in Taiwanese higher education was generally encouraged but not required at both national and institutional levels. In addition, more EMI courses were offered in public universities than private institutions. Nevertheless, there seemed to be a discernible trend to expand EMI instruction to more college and universities. Concerning this trend, five instructors argued that EMI teaching was more suitable in higher-ranking universities, predominantly public universities in Taiwan's case. They further observed that EMI instruction in lower-ranking schools would be doomed to failure because of students' insufficient English proficiency. This argument seemed to be partly supported by the account of an instructor teaching in a lower-ranking private college, P12. She reported that half of the students were scared away upon learning that her course was to be taught in English. Those who stayed had such low English

proficiency that she could use English in teaching only about 20% of the class time. As to whether to implement EMI instruction at graduate or undergraduate levels, it seemed that the interviewees generally held that EMI instruction was more suitable at the graduate level because graduate students had better English proficiency and higher learning motivation. On the other hand, it would not be practical to implement EMI instruction at the undergraduate level because “[English-medium teaching] would affect the learning of subject knowledge” (P16), “there are no foreign students in undergraduate programs” (P16), and “undergraduate students would not be interested in EMI courses” (P21).

Other reservations about comprehensive implementation of EMI teaching involved course nature and course type. In terms of course nature, a social sciences professor, P16, commented that English-medium teaching should not be introduced to courses where instructors need to cite local examples regularly. In addition, both sciences and social sciences instructors maintained that EMI teaching was not suitable in courses dealing with concepts challenging to learn even in one’s first language, let alone in a foreign language. As to course type, three instructors argued that EMI teaching was more suitable with elective courses because students can assess their own English competence and learning motivation and then decide for themselves whether to take the courses or not. Overall, most teacher participants objected to comprehensive implementation of EMI instruction on university campuses.

Discussion

This study identified five motivations for instructors offering English-medium courses: institutional policy, foreign students in class, instructors’ study and work background, improving students’ English, and maintaining own English proficiency. It is argued that all these five motivations point to the global status of English in today’s academic and professional world. As the most widely studied language in the world, English has become lingua franca of academia and the default language in higher education (Crystal, 2003; Flowerdew, 1999; Graddol, 2006). Universities seeking to recruit foreign students thus have to implement policies to enforce or promote English-medium instruction in order to attract international students and accommodate their learning needs (Coleman, 2006). Furthermore, instructors’ motivation to improve domestic students’ English through English-medium teaching attested to not only the idea that English-medium subject courses can achieve “the

double benefit of subject knowledge and improved target language proficiency” in students (Coleman, 2006, pp. 4-5) but also the widely held notion that improved English proficiency can enhance students’ employability and prepare students for the global labor market (Doiz et al., 2011).

In addition, the current study found instructors teaching in English to maintain English competence. This finding is in accordance with Paseka’s observation (2000) that “using a foreign language as the medium of instruction is one way of upgrading the language skills of teachers” (p. 359). In another European study, the teacher participants were similarly reported as believing that their English had improved in the process of preparing for English-medium courses (Doiz et al., 2011). Although empirical studies relating content teachers’ use of a foreign medium and their target language proficiency are still largely lacking, these accounts have suggested that, as much as language instructors do (Fraga-Canadas, 2010), content teachers feel a need to maintain, and even seek to improve, own English proficiency because, as my study participants pointed out, today’s researchers need the tool of English for participation in international communication, an observation that lends further support to the relationship between English-medium teaching and the global status of English.

As for teaching strategies, this study found that Taiwanese EMI instructors used strategies similar to those reported in the literature, such as using visual aids and handouts, reducing speaking speed, simplifying language and course content (Crawford Camiciottoli, 2005; Flowerdew & Miller, 1996; Vinke et al., 1998; Wilkinson, 2005). In addition, the instructors reported code switching to Chinese (and often more frequently in the later part of the semester) to increase lecture comprehension and build rapport with students. They also allowed student code switching to reduce anxiety and encourage participation. This flexible application of the all-English policy has been reported in other EMI studies (Byun et al., 2011; Flowerdew et al., 1998; Flowerdew et al., 2000; Taha, 2008; Wilkinson, 2005). In particular, Flowerdew et al. (2000) noted that none of the lecturers in their study said that they had never used Cantonese in English-medium courses, suggesting that code switching was a prevalent phenomenon and a frequently adopted pedagogical strategy in EMI teaching. It is also worth noting that although several instructors in this study decried and actively discouraged the use of Chinese in English-medium classrooms, others defended their bilingual policy or code switching practice, arguing that students’ learning of subject knowledge was more important than an inflexible application of the all-English policy, a point that brings us to an evaluation

of the impact of English-medium teaching on students' subject learning.

This study found a great majority of instructors in support of English-medium teaching, which was in itself not a surprising finding, given that the sample was taken from the population of instructors engaging in EMI teaching. Nevertheless, it is worth pointing out that most of these instructors had major reservations about the current EMI environment and policy. Some of them raised doubt about teacher ability to conduct courses in English, while others spoke about whether EMI teaching should be implemented in all universities, at all course levels, and in all disciplines. But for educational innovation to claim successfulness, students' improved performance should be the first and foremost focus (Klaassen & De Graaff, 2001). Instructors in this study voiced a general worry that taking courses in a language yet to be mastered may have disadvantaged students' acquisition of subject knowledge. Their comments on the potential lost learning, caused by students' inability to understand the course content, and reduced learning, resulting from teachers' deliberate simplification of course content to match students' language proficiency, provided support for the views voiced in previous EMI studies (Byun et al., 2011; Vinke et al., 1998). Furthermore, as observed by informants of this study, the issue of lost learning could be more apparent in students with lower learning motivation and English proficiency. An implication of this result is that students' preparedness for classes in English, including their general English proficiency and skills in English for discipline specific academic purposes, has to be carefully considered when any EMI policy is formulated at either national or institutional levels.

This study examined faculty perceptions of EMI teaching, using data gathered from interviews with 22 university instructors from a variety of disciplinary and institutional backgrounds. While this wide diversity of backgrounds and teaching environments can be seen as the strength of the current study, its small sample size rendered it difficult to compare similarities and differences among contextual variables. In future research, these variables can be kept as constant as possible so that one can examine whether any particular variables or combinations of variables have an impact on how instructors perceive EMI teaching. Nevertheless, despite this limitation, this study has given voice to teachers engaging in English-medium instruction and yielded insights into teachers' motivations, experiences, and beliefs in this educational practice. Given English's dominance as a global language and the popular belief about the double benefit of subject knowledge and language proficiency to be reaped from EMI instruction, English-medium courses are

expected to increase in number. Further extensive investigation of teachers' views and experiences is therefore required for the planning, implementation, and revision of an EMI policy.

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臺灣大專院校教師對全英語授課的看法

葉純純

近年來，在英語非母語的國家開設全英語課程已成為一種趨勢。為了要吸引外國學生及推動校園國際化，臺灣大專院校也開設了許多全英語課程。本研究訪談了 22 位公私立大專院校開設全英語課程的教師，要探討以下三個議題：開設全英語課程的動機、對學生學習狀況的認知和相應的教學策略、對台灣全英語授課政策的看法。研究發現，教師開設全英語課程動機多樣，但這些動機都與英語在學術及實業界的全球地位相關。在教學策略方面，教師常使用語碼轉換來幫助學生學習與建立良好的師生關係。本研究還發現，部分受訪教師認為全英語授課能改善學生英語程度，但也有一些教師認為全英語授課會對學科知識的學習有不利影響，尤其是對英語程度及學習動機較低的學生，影響可能更大。本研究因此建議，未來在推動全英語課程時，應仔細考量學生的一般英語能力及學門相關英語學習技巧，以做為規劃全英語課程的依據。

關鍵字：全英語課程、教師觀點、高等教育、教學與學習

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