

# Teacher preparedness for English-medium instruction

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This paper focuses on lecturers' preparedness to teach EMI courses. Although many higher education institutions worldwide have rushed to jump on the EMI bandwagon, a strikingly low percentage of them have deemed it necessary to organise pre-service or in-service courses to help practitioners tackle this new teaching scenario. As a result, some potential teachers are reluctant to take part in EMI programmes, while some in-service EMI teachers complain because of a feeling of helplessness that arises from what they feel as lack of assistance from their institutions. In this article, after reviewing recent surveys on current practices in the training and accreditation of university teachers in EMI, I will examine what skills EMI teachers consider essential to deliver their classes effectively, whether they believe those can or even should be accredited, and, last but not least, how universities could support EMI teacher preparation. This analysis will allow us to reach EMI stakeholders by sharing research findings with them. Finally, a research agenda for future work on teacher preparedness for EMI will be put forward in an attempt to fill the gaps found in the review of the literature on the topic.

**Keywords:** EMI, teacher training, teacher competencies, EMI accreditation, teacher support

## Introduction

At a time when EMI has become an inherent part of the language policy of many universities all over the world, it is striking how little heed has been paid to the training and certification of teachers in many settings. Not only is the lack of attention to professional development for EMI noticeable (O'Dowd, 2018), but also the paucity of evidence-based research on teacher training (Sánchez-Pérez, 2020; Pérez Cañado, 2020). What transpires is that EMI programmes have more often than not been implemented without considering teacher training, accred-

itation, and teacher support, as if university lecturers who take the EMI plunge would not need any backing from their higher education institutions. However, surveys carried out among EMI teachers clearly reveal that practitioners share qualms and concerns that need to be addressed.

With this context in mind, this article first summarizes the most recent surveys to later on focus on the skills faculty should have, the role of EMI certification and how lecturers could be supported. Next, I will propose how EMI stakeholders can be reached and a future research agenda on teacher preparedness. Due to space constraints, the article is mainly focused on Europe.

## Surveys on EMI teacher preparation

Research on EMI teacher training needs can be divided into two main groups: studies that provide the perspective of governing bodies or the university representatives in charge of EMI programmes (Costa & Coleman, 2013; O'Dowd, 2018; Wächter & Maiworm, 2014), and those that collect EMI teachers' opinions (Dimova & Kling, 2018; Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2018; Werther et al., 2014).

I will start by focusing on the first group. In two surveys answered by 50% of Italian universities in 2012 (Costa & Coleman, 2013) and by all face-to-face Italian universities in 2015 (Broggini & Costa, 2017), the authors contacted the most appropriate addressee at each university, including deans, heads of the internationalization project, chairs of English and heads of university language centres. Strikingly, only 15% in 2012 but an even lower 2% of the participating universities in 2015 delivered a language course, whereas 8% in 2012 and 10% in 2015 provided methodological training for EMI lecturers, the figures being even lower among private institutions. The percentages unearthed in the second study make it clear that EMI teaching training is not a priority in the Italian context. The authors put forward two main reasons to explain these results: either universities do not feel any need for such particular training, or they cannot afford it due to the economic recession.

With a more ample European perspective in mind, O'Dowd (2018) surveyed 70 European universities through a questionnaire that was explicitly addressed to representatives of universities that were offering (or planning to offer) EMI subjects or courses. O'Dowd revealed that 30% of the participant institutions did not provide any EMI-related training courses, whereas half of those that provided training overlooked EMI teaching methodology and focused only on communicative skills. This means that two thirds of these universities considered that there is no need to pay heed to the methodology of teaching in English, that is, the methodology of teaching in a foreign language. As for the qualifications required

to teach EMI courses, the diversity of courses of action was outstanding. In this vein, O'Dowd (2018: 562) concludes that "the fact that the minimum level ranges from B2 (43%) to C2 (13%) is disconcerting and shows a need for research in this area which could contribute to common guidelines across the whole European higher education area."

To my knowledge, the largest survey carried out so far is that by Wächter and Maiworm (2014). These authors only considered English-taught programmes (ETPs) that were fully taught in English and managed to collect responses from 1,155 programme directors from 28 European countries. Almost all the participants (95%) rated the English proficiency of EMI teaching staff as good or very good, but the authors regard this as an unrealistically positive picture bearing in mind "the negative remarks over the English skills of ETP teachers often heard from students or critics of ETPs" (p.101). Half of master's programmes and 70% of bachelor's programmes reported that English was an important criterion for the recruitment of new academic staff, but only about a third of the respondents offered English language courses tailored to the needs of their academic staff. Similarly, mandatory English courses for staff were very rare: 19% for bachelor's and 11% for master's programmes.

Strikingly, Wächter and Maiworm did not survey the methodological needs of teaching staff and their analysis was mainly focused on teachers' and students' English proficiency, although they underscore that "the need to train the teachers, including native English-speakers, to handle linguistic and cultural diversity was mentioned by quite a few of the respondents" (p.106).

The surveys briefly reviewed in this section clearly show that many higher education institutions are willing to implement EMI, but less keen to devote the necessary means to a basic question that would ensure its successful implementation, namely teacher training and accreditation. Consequently, EMI faculty are not well supported and feel that their training needs are neither perceived nor met (Dang et al., 2021), which is in sharp contrast with the results obtained when surveying governing bodies or university representatives. This leads us to focus on the competencies that an EMI teacher should meet in the following section.

## EMI teacher competencies

Before offering qualifications in EMI teaching, we need to determine the skills (in this article the terms *skills* and *competencies* are used interchangeably) necessary to teach subjects in English, and this expertise cannot be limited to English proficiency. In fact, the literature on EMI teacher competencies can be divided into two main topics, namely language proficiency and methodological competence.

One of EMI teachers' main concerns is English proficiency as attested by studies (Broggini & Costa, 2017; Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2018). Bearing in mind that the percentage of native English speakers among EMI teachers is remarkably low in most universities contexts, e.g. one in ten in Italy (Costa & Coleman, 2013) or Spain (Macaro et al., 2019), it does not come as a surprise that language competence has received much attention on the part of researchers. In this vein, in their systematic review of 77 studies published in English and 38 in Chinese, Dang et al. (2021) mapped the global EMI picture to later on zoom in on the Chinese university context as a case study. These authors once again found that lack of English competence was a recurrent theme among non-native-English-speaking EMI teachers.

The EMI teachers participating in Helm and Guarda's (2015) study claimed that, rather than being worried about their academic English proficiency, their main concern had to do with their lack of communicative English skills, particularly spoken fluency and informal interaction skills, and this irrespective of the discipline. These linguistic limitations do obviously have an impact on how classes progress and sometimes may even hinder the rapport between teachers and students, where communication-skill-related weaknesses may cause teachers to avoid certain conversational situations. Similar results were found by Doiz et al. (2018), whose participants underscored the difficulties they found to foster interaction with students spontaneously, to deal with unanticipated classroom situations, to pronounce correctly some terms, and to explain complicated concepts in different ways in their lectures, among other issues.

Despite many universities having linguistic requirements to allow lecturers to participate in EMI programs, a range of different levels of proficiency are found even within the same country. In Spain, for example, some teachers are allowed to teach if they hold a B2 certificate (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages or CEFR), a language proficiency that does not seem to be appropriate to teach complex content at university level (Drljača Margić & Vodopija-Krstanović, 2018; Henriksen et al., 2019). In fact, the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities (Bazo et al., 2017) recommends a C1 level as the minimum level for EMI lecturers based on the general descriptors of this level. Acknowledging that language scores may not be sufficient to indicate a teacher's ability to teach in EMI, as they may be able to make up for their linguistic limitations through a variety of strategies (multimodality being a very good case in point) and thus resort to their strategic competence (the CEFR includes descriptors of compensatory strategies for different proficiency levels), researchers have not delved into this issue and little is known about what impact teachers' English proficiency has on content learning – probably due to the difficulty of how to show causality.

Although the teachers surveyed in some studies (e.g. Drljača Margić & Vodopija-Krstanović, 2017; Pérez Cañado, 2020) show a complacent view of their language proficiency, especially regarding writing but less so oral ability (i.e. vocabulary for interpersonal communication), in other studies EMI teachers tend to be quite candid and critical about their command of English (Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2018). Different studies have shown that EMI teachers pay more heed to domain-specific vocabulary than to general English vocabulary and that they need to expand the latter to explain the former as well as domain-specific concepts (Pecorari et al., 2011). In fact, Dimova and Kling (2018) underscore that lecturers make up for their lack of sophisticated and nuanced vocabulary with their teaching experience and their content knowledge.

In order to overcome perceived language issues, different authors have come up with diverse solutions. Although some authors have backed the need for continuous language learning support (Aizawa & Rose, 2019), the most habitual suggestion is to call for a re-evaluation of the teaching methodology that should go hand in hand with a greater focus on student-centered learning that would benefit not only students but also teachers themselves (Rose, 2021; Wilkinson, 2013). Other authors like Gundermann (2014) have argued that students' complaints about their EMI teachers' English proficiency actually mask concerns about their teaching styles. In fact, it has been observed that EMI classrooms tend to be more monologic and therefore less interactive than L1-medium classes (Macaro, 2018) and a reason to explain this change may lie in the fact that teachers may feel less comfortable in EMI due to their linguistic insecurities. However, the relationship between the level of interaction and language proficiency still needs to be empirically tested, although Bradford (2019) proposes that more emphasis should be laid on pedagogical and intercultural skills than on language proficiency.

The role to be played by methodology is thus recurrently mentioned in the EMI literature. Classroom observation (Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2021; Sahan, 2020) indicates that EMI lectures are usually teacher-centered with very little student-teacher interaction, a side-effect of which is that the potential for students' language learning can be severely limited as they have few opportunities to speak, and whenever they take part in class, their contributions tend to be limited to single words or short phrases. Other authors like Morell (2020) have also discussed interactional and multimodal competence as crucial to deliver EMI courses. Morell observed that EMI teachers deemed successful those lectures that had a higher concentration of verbal and non-verbal modes of communication and made greater use of questions.

Another of the issues that clearly reflects the need to pay more attention to EMI teachers' methodological training lies in the great diversity of language practices found across EMI classrooms. Several authors (Mazak & Carroll, 2017; Rose,

2021; Sahan, 2020) have observed that the amount of L1 use varies considerably not only across institutions but also within the same institution, while most universities do not provide teachers with any guidelines about this issue. Observation studies confirm that translanguaging practices (the use of all the speaker's linguistic and semiotic repertoire to maximize communication) are an inherent part of the fabric of EMI courses (Mazak & Carroll, 2017), and this is so despite the prestige traditionally attached to monolingual approaches or English-only language policies. Although L1 use is sometimes perceived as a hurdle to EMI learning (Macaro et al., 2020), when it is incorporated it offers a tool that students find useful to cope with content learning and course materials. Rose (2021) found that EMI was rarely English-only or English-always in practice in Japan and China, and so did Doiz and Lasagabaster (2021) in Spain. Translanguaging varied from a few words or short sentences in the latter study to PowerPoint slides and readings in English with some lecture delivery conducted in Chinese in the different studies summarized in the former.

Mazak and Carroll (2017) affirm that translanguaging should be allowed if equity and universal access to EMI education are to be fostered. EMI teachers may thus need training on how to break away from the widespread monolingual view of language codes that permeates many higher education institutions, so that they can overcome prejudices and the predominant monolingual ideology. In this vein, the increasingly diversified EMI classroom also leads teachers to meet the need to develop intercultural communicative competence so that they manage to communicate with students from other cultures successfully.

It could be concluded that although the priority in the initial stages of EMI implementation in higher education was placed on teachers' English proficiency, the importance of methodological training has lately been coming to the fore and an increasing number of researchers are focusing their attention on more pedagogical aspects. However, the research carried out so far tends to be small-scale case studies undertaken by researchers who are heavily involved in the programme, and this brings us to teacher accreditation, our next focus of attention.

### **EMI teacher accreditation**

Macaro et al. (2019, p.104) define EMI certification as "an official qualification given to an individual that provides evidence of the competence needed to teach a particular subject in a particular way, and identify some of its possible components by drawing on previous research on EMI requirements" for higher education. Since it is assumed that EMI teachers possess a high level of English

proficiency (Dubow & Gundermann, 2017; Wächter & Maiworm, 2014), most universities do not contemplate the need for such certification.

A widely recognized certification for EMI is therefore missing not only at the international level, but also at the national level in the vast majority of countries. In fact, in order to meet local quality assurance criteria, one of the most common courses of action has consisted in designing *ad hoc* instruments to assess EMI teachers' English skills to teach EMI courses. However, these internal procedures for assessment developed by each university limit their usefulness outside the particular institution wherein it was designed. Admittedly, they could be described as certifications with a very limited range of use and EMI teachers are more often than not obliged to re-apply for accreditation if they move to another higher education institution.

In the following lines I am going to briefly refer to two examples to illustrate certifications. The University of Copenhagen commissioned such an instrument (Test of Oral English Proficiency for Academic staff, also known as TOEPAS) that consists of simulated teaching in which lecturers deliver a self-selected prepared mini-lecture in front of two other lecturers that role-play as students. This certification has been developed to ensure adequate technical properties (it has been validated through a number of studies) and, in fact, it has demonstrated that raters can be successfully trained to apply the language rating criteria irrespective of the disciplinary content and even if elicited through a simulated lecture (Dimova & Kling, 2018). To my knowledge, this is one of the few examples of a locally developed, performance-based, and thoroughly tested EMI certification in the European context.

The University of Freiburg also developed a certification of the quality of the language used in EMI programmes, known as English Medium Instruction Quality Management. Although language centres are usually responsible for assessing students' language proficiency, in this case they were also in charge of devising an instrument to certify EMI teachers' communicative skills. This certification encompasses both linguistic and communicative competencies with regards to teaching in multilingual and multicultural programmes (Dubow & Gundermann, 2017). The authors acknowledge that there is a need to assess how skillfully language is used to teach to linguistically and culturally heterogeneous student bodies, as linguistic proficiency may not be sufficient. Unlike the aforementioned TOEPAS, this certification takes place in an authentic setting (notes are taken during the classroom visit based on the assessment criteria) and not in a simulated classroom environment, and the feedback is provided by the experts, the students and the teacher themselves. However, no reference is made to the effectiveness of the accreditation.

When EMI teachers are asked about the accreditation process, they deem it important (Macaro et al., 2019), but they also affirm that it should include pedagogical and methodological aspects which have been largely overlooked. EMI faculty in Spain are in favour of some kind of global, more international and wide-ranging accreditation system, although there is a lack of consensus about who should be leading such accreditation (Macaro et al., 2019). The majority would support an international consortium led by relevant universities, not necessarily Anglo-centric, which indicates that efficient EMI teaching is seen as something that goes well beyond English proficiency. However, other studies reveal that EMI teachers in other contexts do not consider certification important, as Galloway et al. (2017) found in China and Japan, while locally developed certifications such as the TOEPAS mentioned above seem to be working out. In any case, one of the main challenges to certification is ensuring that EMI teachers have the necessary skills to teach effectively in the foreign language.

Last but not least, certification needs to be perceived as a rewarding and useful tool rather than as a required formality by faculty, which is why it would be advisable to make “the procedure more worthwhile for teachers as a formative element in their competence development” (Henriksen et al., 2019, p.94).

## EMI teacher professional development

Sánchez-García and Dafouz (2020, p.39) define professional development (PD) as the diverse “learning activities professionals engage in to enhance their skills, knowledge and capabilities.” These authors highlight that there are important differences between countries with regards to how PD is approached: although PD plays a paramount role when it comes to ensuring the quality of EMI, it has been neither a policy priority in many universities nor the focus of studies on this area. In fact, whereas needs analysis is regarded as a lynchpin of PD programmes, according to Macaro (2018) it is striking that the empirical accounts of EMI teachers’ beliefs about this issue are very rare.

EMI teachers regularly complain about the excessive onus that is placed on their shoulders, which leads them to affirm that too often they have the impression that the success of EMI programmes depends on their professional performance (Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2018). In fact, although they are usually willing to get involved in PD, which they expect to be provided by their university (Drljača Margić & Vodopija-Krstanović, 2018), the aforementioned surveys (Broggini & Costa, 2017; O’Dowd, 2018) clearly indicate that they do have little support from their institutions. Consequently, it does not come as a surprise that the number of



studies that have collected data regarding lecturers who have completed EMI PD courses is rather limited. I will briefly summarize three of them.

Ball and Lindsay (2013) undertook a study at the University of the Basque Country based on an in-service training course that included both language and pedagogically oriented courses. They observed that lecturers developed a more positive attitude towards pedagogically oriented courses, as “what really matters is pedagogical awareness” (p.59). Likewise, the participants especially appreciated the opportunity to meet colleagues of other disciplines and discuss EMI-related challenges with them.

Guarda and Helm (2017) designed a PD course that was made up of seminar discussions, lectures, pair and group work, and participant presentations. Their findings showed that not only did teachers need language support, but they also benefitted from a space for reflection on their practice. In fact, some of the participants acknowledged that they had reflected on training pedagogy for the first time (p.908). The PD experience gave them the opportunity to realize that they needed to adopt a more student-centred approach to help students tackle the inherent complexity of learning in English, and in fact, nine months after the course teachers claimed to pay more heed to students’ needs, to boost their participation in class, to give their courses a more international dimension, to increase the use of technology to support student understanding, and to allow more flexible language practices (i.e. use of the L1).

Similarly, Tuomainen (2018) describes an experience that consisted of pre-course needs analysis, six joint meetings, individual teaching demonstrations and post-course analysis. The findings revealed that, although initially lecturers were concerned about language issues (fluency, accuracy and pronunciation), after the course they found more beneficial their discussions about EMI, the language practice in authentic situations, and the corrective feedback received. The author underscores that collective reflection turned out to be “an effective way to encourage lecturers and teachers to be more at ease and less critical of their language skills” (p.238), as small group practice alongside tailored individual meeting exerted a reassuring effect.

In sum, the previous PD experiences coincide in highlighting the importance that lecturers attach to having a space in which they can share their opinions, fears and perceived challenges, because this discussion with colleagues happens to be most rewarding. However, little is yet known about how these PD programmes do actually impact their subsequent teaching practices.

EMI researchers are well aware of teachers’ demands, which is why different PD proposals have been presented, albeit only very recently (Fortanet-Gómez, 2020; Dang et al., 2021). This is another confirmation that this is an issue that has hitherto been neglected but which needs to be urgently tackled. Most proposals

combine a linguistic and a methodological dimension, but they vary as regards the combination of these two pillars with other aspects such as coaching and participation in teacher exchange programmes (Fortanet-Gómez, 2020), or the need to be trained to face the increasing cultural diversity inherent to classes in most university settings as a result of the new wave of EMI programmes (Sánchez-García & Dafouz, 2020). But researchers include not only intercultural skills, but also other aspects such as learners' knowledge and the use of ICT, all of them training components to which much attention has been paid in the most recent EMI teacher training proposals. However, it is worth considering that the review undertaken by Dang et al. (2021) indicates that the actual number of PD programmes that currently cater for both linguistic and pedagogical support is limited and therefore higher education institutions should strive to satisfy EMI teachers' training needs and demands.

EMI generates a complex emotional response characterized by stress and insecurities due to EMI teachers' linguistic limitations, which often makes them feel more vulnerable (Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2018). With a view to overcoming this vulnerability, EMI teacher development could be boosted by fostering the collaboration between content and language teachers (Lasagabaster, 2018; Zappa-Hollman, 2018). This situation has led some researchers (Lasagabaster, 2018; Schmidt-Unterberger, 2018) to call for EMI content and language teachers to work together through team teaching. According to Shagrir (2017), team teaching could become one of the most important PD components of EMI lecturers. Lasagabaster (2018, p. 401) defines team teaching in EMI contexts as "collaborative work between a content lecturer and a language lecturer in an EMI programme in which the abilities of the team members complement each other to improve the learning results, so that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts." Although team teaching is not always easy to implement, Schmidt-Unterberger (2018, p. 536) demands that "top-down initiatives from university management are needed to provide their faculty with incentives for team teaching," in the form of monetary compensation or reduction in the teaching load. In fact, in a survey carried out by Pérez Cañado (2020) at a Spanish university, the most highly rated statement referred to the need for additional incentives for partaking in EMI (see also Ball & Lindsay, 2013).

To wrap up this section, it can be concluded that there is little guidance in the EMI literature to design cogent PD programmes (duration, content, etc.) at a time when many institutions are struggling to find best practices, as empirical evidence is visibly lacking and the few studies available are not wide-ranging as they tend to be focused on a single institution (e.g. Guarda & Helm, 2017). In addition, whenever they are available, there is a wide array of courses of actions not only across universities, but even across faculties and language centres.

## How can research findings reach EMI stakeholders?

Macaro (2018) blames decision-makers at both national and institutional level for not providing researchers with resources to carry out good research that would allow them to inform best EMI practice. But at the same time policy-makers do not find EMI research accessible for two main reasons: first, because they are often unaware of the research that is being conducted (even within their own institution) and second, because researchers often fail to divulge their findings and make them accessible to the broader university community. Therefore, we should not put the blame only on policy-makers, as we researchers should also bend over backwards to transmit our knowledge so that it reaches all university stakeholders, including obviously teachers and students.

Research reveals that many faculty members are positive towards EMI, while they find ways of coping with it and eventually manage better with experience and over time (Henriksen et al., 2019, p.61), but many still complain about not being heard. Putting EMI into practice should be an unceasing top-down and bottom-up communication process in which both policy makers' decisions but also policy players' (i.e. EMI teachers and students) needs and opinions and researchers' findings ought to be borne in mind. This negotiation is indispensable so that all stakeholders are consulted and teaching staff's EMI capabilities considered.

The project EQUIIP is one of the few international endeavours aimed at reaching and buttressing stakeholders by focusing on educational developers or EDs (Dafouz et al., 2020). EDs are defined as those who support lecturers when it comes to designing courses, programmes and their didactics. Seven partner European universities worked together to develop modules for EDs that would help them to provide continuing PD to all those lecturers involved in international programmes in general; but the modules would also dovetail with the interests of EMI lecturers and trainers in particular, as EMI plays a key role in many higher institutions' internationalization process. One of the main objectives of the project is to make macro-level agents (policy-makers, such as universities' senior leadership) aware that a multi-level exchange is indispensable and that the EDs' role is paramount in the implementation of international programmes. University administrations tend to be ignorant about what is happening in EMI classrooms and they need to be made aware of how negative incorrect implementation of these programmes may be for teaching quality (Costa & Coleman, 2013). At this micro-level (the classroom), one of the main demands put forward in the EMI literature is the need to foster the partnership between language and content teachers. As Zappa-Hollman (2018) bluntly puts it, it is indispensable that this information reaches decision makers in higher education institutions in order to inform them about the investments necessary to underpin such collaboration and

make it effective. If EMI is to reach all stakeholders, the gear assembly between the macro-level and the micro-level needs to be oiled through cogently implemented actions based on the results obtained by researchers on EMI. The aforementioned EDs could thus play a vital role in the transmission of knowledge between researchers and stakeholders.

Policy makers and university managers should be aware of the need to draw specific courses of action concerning the use of certification results to hone EMI programmes. It is also of paramount importance to make teachers aware of the need to participate in such accreditation systems and react to the feedback received. Incentives would undoubtedly help to pave the way for teachers' reaction but the current economic recession makes it complicated to implement them.

### **A research agenda for further investigation**

Due to the recency of research on EMI at university level and the lack of preparedness of EMI faculty across countries and continents, many different aspects are in dire need of research. In the following lines I will highlight some of the issues that in my opinion need to be tackled in the short run, although I am well aware that this list is far from comprehensive.

First and foremost, research should strive to establish what competencies EMI teachers need and how they could be appropriately certified. Although at the initial stages the need to implement EMI programmes as soon as possible led certification to play second fiddle, there is an increasing number of researchers that have underscored the need to develop common guidelines that go beyond the local institution so that an international system of certification for EMI teachers is set up (Fortanet-Gómez, 2020; O'Dowd, 2018). In this final section I will focus on some particular competencies: language competence and pedagogical practices such as the use of multimodal resources, the implementation of dialogic teaching, and teacher collaboration. I will wrap up with the need to investigate the role to be played by teacher training.

One of the main challenges faced by researchers consists in examining how pedagogy and language interact. An area that deserves further attention is how teachers' English proficiency affects the teaching/learning process and whether a minimum level of proficiency should be established before giving approval to potential candidates' participation in EMI programs. The English C1 level of the CEFR has been established as a benchmark in some institutions, but there are manifold courses of actions that vary not only from country to country but also from institution to institution, such as requirements based on local prac-

tices, although empirically designed certifications are the exception rather than the norm among the latter.

Since multimodality (e.g. the use of the full range of communicative forms, powerpoint presentations such as images, writing on the blackboard, font size, gestures, gaze, etc.) is strongly influencing current pedagogical practices (Early & Kendrick, 2020), analysis of how EMI teachers implement multimodal practices and how effective they are also promises to be a fruitful field of research.

Research is needed to define the most suitable strategies to foster student participation, engagement and interaction. Surveys reveal that teaching methods remain being rather traditional and teacher-centered in EMI classes (Costa & Coleman, 2013), while research has found that factually based questions tend to monopolize class discussions as a result of both teachers and students being used to authoritative exchanges (DeWaelche, 2015; Sahan, 2020; Tsou, 2017). The type of questions teachers ask impinge on students' thinking, which is why appropriate questioning is linked not only to students' understanding but also to their critical thinking.

Teacher collaboration also needs to be examined in more depth as there is hardly any longitudinal study on the impact of such collaboration on both students and teachers themselves. Ethnographic research based on detailed examinations of partnerships would be applauded (Zappa-Hollman, 2018), as the research hitherto available indicates that this kind of experiences are producing positive results whenever they are implemented, although long-term effects are still in need of further research.

Most EMI studies are situated in particular countries or even in particular institutions which is why cross-national studies would be advisable. Although each context has its own specificities, comparative studies would help to draw more robust conclusions on teachers' needs, because many of the challenges posed by EMI are shared by universities despite teaching practices being influenced by the academic norms and pedagogies characteristic of each context (Lasagabaster & Doiz, 2021). Such comparisons would illustrate the relevance of research beyond the more local or national context, while providing the necessary support for the generalizability of the findings, all of which should help to design more robust EMI teacher training programmes. Much is said about the local issues of EMI in higher education (Drljača Margić & Vodopija-Krstanović, 2017), but it is high time that the local approach aimed to meet the global perspective.

Although teacher training is a key part of EMI programmes, research has hitherto paid little attention to this fundamental question. Whereas most studies have focused on how teaching and learning takes place in EMI classes (Dimova et al., 2015), the efficacy of the currently available teaching training courses has

to be tested. Several proposals have been made (Guarda & Helm, 2017; Sánchez-Pérez, 2020), but there is little evidence to support the effectiveness of such training. In addition, longitudinal research should examine the fluctuation of the impact of PD programmes on teaching practices to reveal whether their effect lingers over time.

In conclusion, teacher preparedness should be foregrounded in EMI implementation, as it must occupy a central place in the internationalization process in which universities around the world are currently immersed. Although many higher education institutions are trying to catch up with this increasing demand after their initial neglect, there is still a long way to go to make amends.

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