English-medium programmes (EMPs) in business education:
Developments at Austrian business faculties and implications for programme design

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Research design: 3 phases of data collection (2011/12)

Status quo survey: Austria
- exact number of EMPs
- overall distribution pattern (i.e. institutions and degrees)
- entry requirements

Course description analysis: MA @ WU
- language learning aims
- programme design (e.g. ESP, pre-sessional courses)

Interviews programme managers: WU
- organisational difficulties
- target groups, recruitment and marketing
- entry requirements
- English language proficiency (staff and students)
- collaboration between discipline experts and language specialists
- language support classes
Distribution patterns

0 BA / 15 MA (=58%) / 11 PhD (=42%)

- University of Innsbruck
- WU, Vienna University of Economics & Business
- University of Vienna
- Johannes Kepler University Linz
- Alpen Adria University Klagenfurt
- Graz University of Technology
- Vienna University of Technology

MA
PhD
Implementation years

2011/12
2010/11
2009/10
2008/09
2007/08
2005/06

2010: official launch of EHEA

PhD
MA
EMI implications: University management

- **Internationalisation of HE → English-medium instruction (EMI)**
  
  (cf. Maiworm & Wächter 2003 & 2007)

- **Business and management studies** particularly affected (cf. Maiworm & Wächter 2008)

- **Lack of awareness what EMI entails** on organisational and pedagogical levels

- **Infrastructure for incoming students**

- **Test the English proficiency of teaching staff?**
  
  → e.g. Univ. of Copenhagen, Delft Univ. of Technology

- **Proficiency test as the basis for tailor-made training courses?** (cf. TOEPAS Uni Copenhagen; Kling & Staehr 2011)
EMI implications: Teaching staff

- **Confident users of English**: publications & conference talks
- **Workload (?)** (cf. Maiworm & Wächter 2003; Klaassen 2001)
- **Less nuanced language**
  (cf. Wilkinson 2010; Dafouz & Núñez 2009)
- **Establishing rapport** with students, notion of “we are all in the same boat” (cf. Smit 2010)
- Explicit aim: **terminology knowledge**
  Implicit aims: **presentation/negotiation skills**
- → **genre knowledge?** e.g. Business reports, contracts, recommendations, forecasts etc.
## EMI Implications: Programme design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>EMI</th>
<th>Pre-sessional EMI</th>
<th>ESP</th>
<th>Pre-sessional ESP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International Management CEMS</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative Finance</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy, Innovation, and Management Control</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supply Chain Management</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>64</td>
<td><strong>64 (89%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>8 (11%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Tailor-made ESP class!*
EMI implications: Programme design

- Explicit focus on subject-specific language skills = rare
- ESP (English for Specific Purposes) = neglected area
- Training of discipline-specific English skills = side effect → incidental language learning
- Reduction in ESP classes as a consequence of the Bologna reforms (cf. Wilkinson 2008)
- Universities try to ensure high standard via entry requirements → general English
- “students are not merely learning a discipline but also [...] the specific language of the discipline” (Wilkinson 2008)
EMI implications:
Students

- **TOEFL or IELTS** obligatory for **57%** of EMPs
- **C1 level required** (IELTS score:7; TOEFL:600/250/100)
- **IELTS &TOEFL** developed for institutions in **English-speaking countries**
- Questionable whether appropriate for EMI programmes in **non-English-speaking environments** (Wilkinson 2008)
- **Coherent admission policy needed**: standards vary across and within countries (Wilkinson 2005)
EMI implications: Admission policies

- 11% of the EMPs: only mandatory for students from outside the EAA
- common assumption: students from EU / EAA states possess the necessary English skills to cope with English medium instruction
  (cf. Räsisänen & Fortanet-Gómez 2008; Wilkinson 2008)
- Study on lecture comprehension of Norwegian students and exchange students: both have difficulties in English-medium lectures (Hellekjaer 2010)
- Norwegian students did not reach band 6 in IELTS academic reading section (Hellekjaer 2009)
Conclusions:
Universities should...

... consider **testing teaching staff’s English proficiency**

... raise programme designers’ awareness for the **ESP element in EMPs**

... standardise **entry requirements** but do not rely on them

... develop **students’ discipline-specific English skills**

... strive for **more collaboration** between language & subject specialists
Thank you

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Data set

1) Status quo survey
   - 7 (out of 9) Austrian state universities offer EMPs in business studies

2) Case study
   - 4 English-medium MA programmes taught at WU

3) Expert interviews
   - 5 programme directors of all EMPs at WU
     (academic year of 2011/12)
Research foundations

- **Wächter & Maiworm (2002;2008)**: motives behind the introduction, student target groups, marketing strategies, quality assurance issues etc.
- **Wilkinson**: potential pitfalls & success factors (2008a; 2010a); impact on content teachers (2005b;2010b)
- **Räisänen & Fortanet-Gómez (2008)**: ESP and EAP practices
- **Greere & Räsänen (2008)**: conceptual considerations; the different types of English-medium teaching in HE
- **Hellekjaer (2007;2010)**: English proficiency of students
- **Klaassen (2008; 2010)**: English proficiency of lecturers
- **Kling & Staehr (2011)**: testing the English proficiency of the teaching staff in EMPs