1 Introduction

The current role of English as the main academic lingua franca is beyond any doubt. The epitome of this linguistic hegemony can be seen in the increasing number of universities the world over that are offering English-medium instruction (EMI) among their course options. The mushrooming of EMI is inextricably linked to universities' desire to attract international students, teaching staff, and researchers, to increase mobility, to augment revenue, to climb up education ranking systems, to improve English proficiency, and, last but not least, to enable graduate students to use English effectively in the workplace of the twenty-first century. At a time in which internationalization has become a mantra in the discourse of higher education institutions, EMI represents one of the most preeminent tools in university language policy in order to achieve the aforementioned internationalization-related objectives (Doiz, Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2013a; Kirkpatrick, 2011a; van der Walt, 2013). Altbach and Knight (2007) define internationalization as the policies and practices undertaken by academic systems and higher education institutions to tackle the global academic environment. Yet, this international drive is not something new, as it stems from these institutions' medieval origins in Europe and their desire to attract both faculty and students from diverse countries. The main difference with any previous period, however, has to do with its scale, as this torrent has never been seen before in history and its surge in the last two decades is unparalleled.

In this context, Englishization (the use of English in educational contexts where local languages were previously used) has become such a global trend that Macaro (2018: 300) considers that little can be done "to halt the express train of EMI." Chapple (2015: 1) has defined it as "a 'galloping' phenomenon now 'pandemic' in proportion," a quite telling expression in the current COVID-19 situation, while Block and Khan (2021: 7) put it down to a "resigned general sense of TINA (there is no alternative)." In fact, EMI programs can even be found in countries in which there has been very little foreign language teaching tradition, such as China, Italy, Japan, Saudi Arabia, or Spain. In China, for example, Hu and Lei (2014: 564) claim that "it is no exaggeration to say that English proficiency has become a most coveted form of cultural capital in Chinese society." Some authors (e.g. O'Dowd, 2018) have mentioned that it looks as if higher education institutions were willing to jump on the EMI bandwagon despite the fact that, strikingly, they show little commitment to delivering fully fledged programs. On many occasions, the willingness to appear on the EMI picture is much more determinant than the actual support that EMI stakeholders garner from their institutions. As a result of this

situation, an influx of literature has appeared that examines the influence of EMI language policy (Darquennes, du Plessis & Soler, 2020; Wilkinson & Gabriëls, 2021) and that aims to ensure quality bilingual or multilingual practices at university level (Rubio-Alcalá & Coyle, 2021). It is important to note in this Introduction that, although EMI programs are immensely diverse, due to the succinct and dynamic nature of Cambridge Elements, some sections and topics are ineluctably concise because synthesizing is of the essence.

EMI entails different challenges that need to be faced, but perhaps of greatest import is that teaching staff need to deliver and students need to learn high-stakes content in an L2 (a second or additional language). But which contexts can be considered to be EMI? This acronym needs to be understood before we go any further.

2 Definition of EMI

Definitions are always narrow, constrained, and prone to criticism, and may even lead to more questions than answers. This is also the case with the term EMI, the definition of which has sparked debate (for a backdrop of terminological issues, see Macaro, 2018 and Pecorari & Halmström, 2018a). Nevertheless, and despite their inherent limitations and a lack of consensus among researchers, definitions help us to make sense of the world. With this in mind, EMI can be 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). This definition implies that countries included in the so-called inner circle (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, or the United States), wherein English is an official language, would be excluded from EMI.

The term EMI is habitually used together with other words and acronyms such as Englishization, CLIL (content and language integrated learning), ICLHE (integration of content and language in higher education), and EME (English-medium education), among others. Although these terms are often used interchangeably or authors prefer one over the others, in the following paragraphs I will briefly summarize the reasons why I have decided to keep using EMI.

Englishization is defined by Wilkinson and Gabriëls (2021) as the process through which English is gradually gaining ground in some particular domains (mainly education, politics, culture, and economics) in which another language was used before. In the domain of higher education, English clearly holds the upper hand and many aspects of academia (teaching –especially at master's level – publications, etc.) have switched to it, while the vernacular language

loses not only space but also status. However, Englishization covers more aspects than just instruction – our reason for using it in this text – but its wider scope prevents us from using it as the main label for this Element. Moreover, according to Wilkinson and Gabriëls, it is an evaluative-descriptive term that may embody negative connotations for some of its users, whereas EMI remains more neutral.

In the case of the term CLIL, this is much more common at pre-university levels and refers to an approach with an explicit dual focus on language and content. Although the connections between CLIL and EMI are evident, the lack of integration between language and content on the part of EMI university lecturers has led many researchers to disregard the CLIL acronym and use the label EMI at tertiary level. Aguilar (2017) points out that content is the priority in EMI and, although incidental language learning is expected (Banegas & Manzur Busleimán, 2021), there are usually no clear-cut and explicit language objectives. Different research studies have borne this out (Macaro, 2018), as in EMI programs, language is not assessed and the collaboration of content and language lecturers is conspicuous by its absence (unlike in CLIL, where such collaboration is not only advised but actually fostered). In this vein, in their review of no less than 496 studies that used the acronym EMI, Pecorari and Halmström (2018a) observed that 87 percent of them were set in contexts of tertiary education, which confirms the close association of EMI with higher education.

Although the initialism ICLHE (integrating content and language in higher education) is also becoming commonplace in research studies undertaken in higher education, it can also be applied to languages other than English. In fact, I teach in a bilingual institution in which both Basque and Spanish are official languages, and thus ICLHE could refer, besides English, to either of them. Therefore, EMI is much more precise and defines an educational choice in which English is the medium of instruction.

Finally, Dafouz and Smit (2020) coined the term EMEMUS (English-medium education in multilingual university settings), or EME for short, and assert the following to defend the use of this term:

> EMEMUS is conceptually wider in the sense that it is inclusive of diverse research agendas, pedagogical approaches and of different types of education, comprising, for instance, online programmes and teacher pedagogical development. Furthermore, the concept is more transparent because it refers to "education," thus embracing both "instruction" and "learning" instead of prioritising one over the other. (3)

The acronym is clearly focused on the tertiary level (university) and acknowledges that English coexists with other languages on campus (multilingual), but

what makes it truly distinctive is the inclusion of the word "education" to encompass both instruction and learning. Although EMEMUS is rapidly gaining ground, it is still not as popular as EMI.

When it comes to terminology, and especially when surrounded by these many different options, researchers should define from the very beginning what they mean. Thus, I have decided to stick to EMI because it is a widely used term that is deeply seated in the literature, as found by Pecorari and Halmström (2018a), as mentioned earlier. This is also the reason why, in this Element, I will not make reference to studies and authors that use EMI to refer to pre-university levels.

3 EMI at University Level

In this section, the factors that have contributed to the rapid spread of EMI will be considered, as well as its impact on the language ecology of the institutions concerned. In the specific case of EMI, language ecology refers to the study of how English interacts with the other languages and their environment, that is, the various social factors that surround any of the languages in contact. Language is a social practice that takes place in a social context, and therefore it cannot be considered in isolation.

3.1 The Spread of EMI

The main instigators of the Englishization of higher education have been politicians, educational institutions, and policymakers (Lanvers & Hultgren, 2018) in a top-down fashion easily recognizable in many contexts all over the world (Corrales, Rey, & Escamilla, 2016; Dearden, 2015). Therefore, EMI is sometimes not considered to be an approach but rather a political – and therefore a hierarchical – decision. South Korea is a very good case in point, as South Korean universities receive financial government support depending on the proportion of EMI courses offered. In this way, this economic incentive has become a powerful tool to foster interest in EMI among South Korean higher education institutions (Byun et al., 2011) and has helped to provoke an increase in the international student population (Kim, 2017). In a similar vein, in 2011 the Chinese Ministry of Education issued a directive in which universities were urged to offer 5–10 percent of undergraduate courses in English (or other foreign languages) in three years (Peng & Xie, 2021). The South Korean and Chinese cases bring to light that Asian countries adopting EMI are not constrained to those formerly colonized by English-speaking countries (e.g. Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, or Singapore), where EMI has been very popular for decades now, but that this trend is much wider in scope. As a result of this,

many universities are not monolingual anymore and offer either whole programs, or at least some modules in – inevitably – English.

The impact of neoliberal global forces in the search for profit should also not be disregarded when talking about the spread of EMI, since English has become an indispensable part of the market, as it helps to make graduates more competitive and *marketable*. As Ryan (2018: 16) puts it, "EMI appears to reflect neoliberal market-oriented discourse that assumes a key role in using English to promote outward-looking, internationalisation perspectives." This neoliberal approach has undoubtedly helped EMI to blossom globally, since higher education has become a lucrative industry, the economic impact of which "contributes to global academic capitalism" (Gill & Kirkpatrick, 2013: 1–2). In this vein, universities also see EMI as a way to seize a portion of the major English-speaking countries' market share of international students and they tend to acknowledge it (more or less openly) in their language planning and policy. Kirkpatrick (2011b) highlights that Malaysian medical students are taking their degrees at Russian universities because the cost is 75 percent cheaper than that of a British or Australian university. He also points out that until very recently, the internationalization of Asian universities consisted mainly of students travelling to "western" countries to obtain degrees, which proved a highly profitable business for providing institutions while it meant both an economic and a brain drain for the sending countries. The implementation of EMI thus entails an attempt to attract international students while retaining local ones.

Language policy becomes a key element. Liddicoat (2018: 2) underscores that "the impact of internationalisation on the language planning of universities can be seen in all areas of academic work, in teaching and learning, in research and in administration." As a result of the preferential treatment given to English in many university contexts, it has been incorporated as an additional means of instruction alongside the national language(s). However, language policy is often hard to pinpoint at the micro level, that is, at the institutional level. In a very illustrative example, Marcos-García and Pavón (2018) scrutinized the web pages of seventy-six Spanish universities (fifty state and twenty-six private) and were surprised by the fact that only eighteen of them had an accessible document establishing their language policy. This is even more striking taking into account that all these higher education institutions had regularly increased the number of credits delivered in English on a yearly basis. This is a clear indication that top-down decisions are not always underpinned by clear-cut language policy documents, and that their visibility and accessibility leaves much to be desired.

Risager (2012: 112) distinguishes three main types of language policies when analyzing the introduction of English as a lingua franca in tertiary education:

(i) an English-only monolingual language policy in which other languages play second fiddle or none at all; (ii) a bilingual language policy in which English (maybe occasionally along with other international languages) goes hand in hand with the national language; and (iii) a trilingual language policy in which English is used together with the regional and the national languages (and maybe occasionally other international languages). The following sections will provide examples that dovetail with these three different types.

In terms of the different types of EMI programs found in the literature, Baker and Hüttner (2017) distinguish three main types: (i) student mobility programs in non-anglophone settings that attract students from a wide range of countries; (ii) internationalization-at-home programs to provide local students with EMI due to the impossibility of sending out all of them (from a theoretical standpoint, these programs incorporate intercultural perspectives while dealing with global issues and boosting participation in international activities); and (iii) Anglophone-context programs in which student bodies have become massively internationalized. Since, according to the definition provided earlier, this third type should not be included in EMI literature, I will not address it in the sections that follow. As for the first and the second types, they may also be merged, as many universities endeavor to attract both mobility and local students through EMI courses.

In the next few paragraphs, I will focus on the spread of EMI by continent. In the European context, the Erasmus exchange program and the Bologna Process were originally designed to boost student mobility programs and multilingualism among university stakeholders. However, reality has shown that English is becoming predominant in some specializations, especially in northern Europe, albeit not so much in southern countries. The Netherlands and the Nordic countries were trailblazers in using EMI in Europe, but its spread has nowadays reached even countries that in the past had little English as a foreign language learning tradition, such as Italy, Greece, and Spain (Doiz, Lasagabaster, & Sierra, 2013a). In a widely quoted work – because it is one of the few large-scale EMI studies – Wächter and Maiworm (2014) examined the presence of English-taught programs (ETPs) in Europe. Twenty-eight European countries participated in their survey but the authors only focused on ETPs that were 100-percent taught in English. Therefore, mixed programs taught both in the local language and English were excluded, despite the fact that in some contexts they are much more commonplace than ETPs. Strikingly, the survey revealed that ETPs had increased by 239 percent in just seven years (between 2007 and 2014) when the results were compared with those of a previous study by the same authors. However, ETPs were much more common in northern Europe than in the south, the geographical divide being quite remarkable. The number of

students enrolled on ETPs varied considerably and ranged from a low 0.3 percent in Spain or 0.5 percent in Italy (both at the bottom of the proportion of students enrolled on ETPs) to 12.4 percent in Denmark or 4.4 percent in Sweden (both at the top of the ranking). Over the last few years, however, Denmark has been reducing EMI programs across different universities, whereas they are still growing in Sweden. Nonetheless, there are some common trends, such as the fact that they are more commonplace at master's and doctorate levels, and are more likely to proliferate in some disciplines (business and management, social sciences, and engineering and technology) than others (law or medicine at bachelor's level).

Disparity can even be found within the same country. In a survey carried out in Italy, Costa and Coleman (2013) reported that EMI was much more popular in universities in the north of the country (90 percent of them offering EMI courses) or the centre (87.5 percent) than in the south (only 22 percent). However, differences were also detected depending on the discipline, the growth of the courses being more common in some fields of knowledge than others.

According to Galloway, Kriukow, and Numajiri (2017), in Asia some country-specific studies have been completed but a large-scale study on the spread of EMI is still missing and "there is yet to be such a thorough investigation of this trend as in Europe" (9). However, the competition for international students in East Asia has exerted a knock-on effect and contributed to EMI being established in many universities. Taiwan is illustrative of this, as its government decided to boost EMI because its members were afraid of competition from neighboring countries. A program to promote international competitiveness was thus launched that included measures aimed at encouraging courses in English. Similar programs can be found in other Asian countries, although the language policies undertaken have varied considerably from country to country. For example, whereas South Korean universities aim to introduce EMI in all their existing programs, Japanese universities have gone for only a few 100-percent English-taught programs (Byun et al., 2011), and EMI "is still at an experimental stage in China, and has developed unevenly in different regions" (Zhang, 2017: 6–7).

In the Middle East, in countries such as the United Arab Emirates or Saudi Arabia, local universities are forging partnerships with universities from the United States and the United Kingdom to increase the presence of EMI in order to attract international students and investments. The so-called branch campus or satellite campus is becoming popular – that is, a university abroad that is part of a university located in an English-speaking country, the students of which get a highly regarded degree granted by a reputable English-speaking university.

This is an example of the internationalization-at-home programs mentioned earlier, as many of the students may never have been abroad. Although US universities are leading the way, UK, some continental European, and Australian universities are following suit and opening branch campuses throughout Asia. These can be found in Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore, India, or China, to name but a few countries (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

To my knowledge, EMI has not received much attention in Latin America and, in fact, the information about its expansion is very patchy. Authors nevertheless agree on pointing out that EMI is at its earliest stages in this part of the world (Martinez, 2016; Tejada-Sánchez & Molina-Naar, 2020), probably because top-down pressures have not been so unrelenting (Berry & Taylor, 2013). However, there is an increasing social awareness about the social and economic capital that English implies. This is stimulating the spread of EMI, to the extent that Tejada-Sánchez and Molina-Naar (2020: 364) conclude that "EMI is inevitable in this region." In their critical review of CLIL/EMI in Latin America between 2008 and 2018, Banegas, Poole, and Corrales (2020) conclude that most studies tend to be small-scale, usually carried out by teacher researchers focusing on their own practices. Although, as the authors claim, EMI is still in an embryonic state, they "envisage sustained expansion as a default approach for bilingual or English-medium education" (298). In a study focused on the largest Latin American country, Gimenez and colleagues (2018) gathered information from eighty-four Brazilian universities and 79 percent of them were already offering EMI, while a further 6 percent were planning to do so. More than 1,000 programs, courses, and activities were found, the largest percentage of them taking place at postgraduate level. This represented a significant increase with respect to the 50 percent of universities that offered EMI in a previous survey in 2016, just two years before. This growth could be attributed to the incentives provided by the Brazilian Ministry of Education to bolster internationalization. Defining the role of English in education has also become a priority for the Colombian government, while English has been positioned as a key factor of its internationalization strategy (Tejada-Sánchez & Molina-Naar, 2020). All these authors coincide in that lack of English proficiency is one of the main weaknesses of Latin American education systems, which is why hopes have been placed on the positive impact that EMI may have in this regard. However, they also warn that unequal power relations may limit EMI implementation to a handful of institutions.

Although Africa is the continent about which less information is readily available (Macaro et al., 2018), similar concerns to those in Latin America can be found in the literature. Excluding South Africa, this continent has the fewest cross-borders initiatives (Altbach & Knight, 2007). A number of branch

campuses can be found in several countries (Egypt, Nigeria, Kenya, etc.), but it is really hard to find any additional information about EMI practices outside these international partnerships (Darquennes, du Plessis, & Soler, 2020).

In conclusion, variation and heterogeneity remain intrinsic features of EMI programs, but it is hard to challenge the widespread belief that EMI will carry on spreading and it is here to stay. International associations such as ICLHE (Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education; see https://iclhe.org/) or the launch of journals specifically focused on this field of research, such as the *Journal of English-Medium Instruction* (https://benjamins.com/catalog/jemi), are also conspicuous examples of the interest that EMI has raised among researchers. However, although in general university governing bodies' firm commitment to jump on the EMI bandwagon seems to be enough to avert any hurdle on the track, the decision to make English the language of instruction and scientific research has provoked controversy in contexts as diverse as the Arabian/Persian Gulf (Belhiah & Elhami, 2015), South Korea (Kim, 2017), the European Nordic countries (Kuteeva, Kaufhold, & Hynninen, 2020), or Italy (Pulcini & Campagna, 2015). Such controversy has been sparked by the belief that EMI may have a detrimental effect on higher education institutions' multilingualism and language ecology, our next topic of interest.

3.2 EMI and Multilingualism

One of the most controversial issues relating to the spread of EMI lies in universities' endeavors to foster multilingualism, which may be hampered by English overshadowing the other national and international languages in contact. It is in this context that the concept of "language ecology" comes to the fore (see Haugen, 1971), which can be defined as the study of how languages interact with each other and with the surrounding social factors in a given context, and how their use and status can be preserved. In this way, ecology becomes a metaphor from biology that is used in educational linguistics, and language management and planning at tertiary level.

In this regard, two main schools of thought can be distinguished. On the one hand, authors such as Phillipson (2006) warn against the perils associated with the hegemony of major English-speaking countries (native speakers being in an advantageous position) and the social inequalities exacerbated by EMI (high English proficiency being realistically reachable only by students belonging to privileged social classes). These fears led him to coin the well-known term "linguistic imperialism," a concept that describes the imposition of an imperial power's language policy on third parties who cannot face the pressure exerted by global forces to push Englishization. The publication of research results

could be a good example of this hegemony. Nowadays, researchers are required to publish in indexed journals that may lead to high citation scores (the higher the number of citations, the more influential a researcher becomes), and journal rankings have privileged research completed in English. Since English is the language of such journals, the language choice is far from being open and the linguistic pressure exerted by this policy can be clearly seen in the small share of publications in languages other than English. Some research areas such as humanities and social sciences may be more prone to find this language/science policy problematic, as their work is deeply embedded in their specific cultural setting, and research output in English may not be viable. Since the bulk of scientific publication is written in English, EMI is believed to cater for students' need to be able to read specialized language in their specific academic fields with ease. Haberland (2014) argues that the imposition of English has been facilitated not only by the decisions made by administrators and the acceptance by those who have to put it into practice, but also by language ideologies (that is, conceptualizations about languages influenced by political and economic interests) that support that EMI is possible. In fact, this situation has brought about linguistic tensions surrounding the issue of domain loss of the local languages in the European Nordic countries, particularly in the sciences, since English has a higher status than the local languages (Kuteeva, Kaufhold, & Hynninen, 2020). As a result of this, language policies have stirred heated debates in the Nordic context due to the increasing presence of English not only at university level but also in the wider social sphere, which has led to a certain sense of language domination and to the belief that universities' language ecology may be jeopardized.

On the other hand, university authorities and some researchers strongly believe that EMI will help to pave the way to ecologically balanced multilingual institutions, as the local and the global language can coexist and even strengthen each other. Since Englishization is inextricably intertwined with identity, if the local cultural identity is underpinned and the stakeholders are given voice, this glocal (global and local) perspective will benefit universities and will bolster the internationalization process (Lasagabaster, 2021b). Other scholars such as Van Parijs (2011) support a more pragmatic vision and highlight the usefulness of English as a translingual communication tool. Although multilingualism and internationalization more often than not become euphemistic terms to refer to English (Saarinen, 2012), in many higher education institutions local languages are not being upstaged by English because they are strongly associated with identity and utility. This was confirmed by Vila and Bretxa (2015), who examined the language policies of medium-sized languages at university level. The authors define medium-sized languages as "all those placed between