Preface from the guest editor

New Directions in English as a Medium of Instruction in Tertiary Education

This volume contains a collection of articles by researchers and educators using English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in tertiary education (Dafouz & Camacho-Miñano, 2016; Dearden, 2016; Dafouz & Smit, 2020; Carrió-Pastor, 2020; Fortanet-Gómez, 2020). The growing literature on EMI, and the related field of CLIL (Ball et al., 2015; Carrió-Pastor & Bellés-Fortuño, 2021), seems to be sprouting rapidly, driven by social and political concerns and not only for professional reasons. The supremacy of English as a lingua franca has not yet been challenged and has apparently no serious contenders. English dominates the web in most fields of knowledge. International instant messaging and other electronic genres are good examples of intercultural communication taking place in English. The academic world has also nestled itself happily in the arms of this language and so has any industrial activity with international ambitions.

The above has had an impact on university education policies to the extent that regulations have been issued to set a minimum number of contact hours of English per week. While some universities have accommodated this requirement by allocating some credits to English language learning, others have opted to provide specialized courses in English. In this volume, scholars examine the current state of the latter option in some Spanish universities in the light of their own evidence and that of some other international studies on the same topic, to assess the current situation from within. The result is a volume that reflects on the theoretical side of EMI, while providing substantial evidence, yet showing an optimistic view with suggestions for the implementation of EMI courses and for further research. The reader will find information on such aspects as competencies, educational prerequisites for an EMI course, communicative strategies in EMI sessions, the role of instructors and the importance of critical thinking, among others.

The first article in this monographic volume of *Language Value* is 'EMI and Intercultural Competence at University of Alcalá: The case of the *Master's Degree in Teacher Training*' coauthored by Isabel de la Cruz-Cabanillas and Cristina Tejedor-Martínez. The University

of Alcalá is not new in using EMI practices in their degrees, as explained in this article, and so lecturers are aware of both the needs and issues in this respect. One of these needs concerns the awareness and implementation of the intercultural competence for both daily and specialized interaction to gear successful communication. The authors report on this aspect from their own research and practice in the University of Alcalá's *Master's Degree in Teacher Training*. Their conclusions reveal the importance of devoting time and practice to enhance intercultural competence to gain proficiency in professional settings along with ethical values that should not be overlooked.

The second article is 'English as a Medium of Instruction in Learning Professional Skills for Engineers' by Adrián Peñate Sánchez revises the notions of EMI and CLIL, among other related concepts. For this, the author focuses on a particular course devoted to the teaching of professional skills to students of engineering to realize that, while the intent is to develop an EMI course, there are certain social, linguistic, pedagogical, and institutional constraints which represent serious drawbacks to develop a truly EMI course. A positive stance emerges in the conclusion section with a set of recommendations to reach the initial governmental requirements of teaching content courses in English without necessarily ignoring the linguistic issues students come across in learning new concepts in English. The author suggests that a more convenient option should be what he labels as Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education (ICLHE) to cope with those students with a lower language proficiency level than required. It is clear then that the instructors have a prominent role in the careful design of the syllabus to integrate and adapt language in the enactment of situated communicative events in their sessions.

Precisely, an aspect concerning the role of lecturers in EMI courses is the topic developed in the third article, entitled 'Bilingual resources in English-medium instruction lecturers: the role lecturer's L1 is playing in EMI courses' and written by Mª Ángeles Velilla Sánchez. Her research set at the University of Zaragoza examines the instructors' use of multilingual resources, especially the use of the students' L1, in EMI courses to enhance the students' understanding of the concepts. Her conclusions show that the use of L1 seems to be a pragmatic device to ensure that students really comprehend certain conceptual requirements to move forward on in the course. Alternatively, her

data also makes evident that code-switching from English as a vehicular language to L1 is more likely to occur in undergraduate than postgraduate courses for the reasons she clearly describes in her study. Conclusions also suggest the need to carry out some further research in the matter.

The fourth article written by Francisco J. Álvarez Gil is 'Possible implementation of subjects taught using English as a Medium of Instruction methodology in tourism studies'. The author begins by reviewing and clarifying certain terminology that may not be so clear to newcomers, but which also represents fuzzy boundaries for instructors when it comes to developing real content sessions in English. Álvarez-Gil strongly believes that the use of EMI procedures in some courses is ideally only achievable on paper, as many students do not possess the necessary command of English to understand abstract concepts, let alone to write and discuss complex topics in this foreign language. Adopting a different stance, but coinciding in some assumptions, to that of Peñate Sánchez (this volume), this author believes that a set of ESP courses in the first two years of the degree in tourism may put students in a better position to successfully tackle EMI courses in the other two years of the degree. At present, first-year students have only had courses as part of the secondary school curriculum, fortunately reaching A2/B1 level. It seems unlikely, therefore, that these students will be able to follow instructions in English in the EMI sessions without prior improvement in their levels of English language proficiency.

María José Gómez-Calderón focuses on English cultural studies in her article entitled 'EMI and the Teaching of Cultural Studies in Higher Education: A Study Case'. The author analyzes the students' stance concerning the study of content courses entirely developed in English just after enrolling a university degree. In this case, the use of English seems mandatory as the students belong to a degree in English studies. The alternative to use such strategies as code-switching and translation on a regular basis would negatively affect the number of credits these students may take in their language of specialization. The interest of the author is, however, more concerned with how these students feel taking this EMI courses in their degree in English raising questions related to previous training in the language, the load of individual work, and their self-image

during class performances, among other aspects. The article also considers the role students' anxiety plays in this teaching-learning process.

The last article by Margarita Mele-Marrero and Andrés Rodríguez-Marrero entitled 'Tertiary Education Learning Outcomes, a Case Study: "You want us to think!"' also reflects on perceptions towards students' performance in a degree of English studies. The authors analyze the problems faced by these students during the learning process in content subjects taught in English. To do so, Mele-Marrero and Rodríguez-Marrero consider sociological, technological, linguistic and pedagogical aspects to try to explain the current educational situation in which a lack of skills and personal motivation together with a negative attitude towards the teaching and learning environment are often alleged to justify poor academic performance. The authors want, however, to see the other side of the coin, where higher success rates can be achieved through the use of critical thinking and cooperative work, as these can help students to overcome certain affective barriers during the acquisition of professional competences, while gaining confidence in their language skills. There is no doubt that this approach to teaching is not limited to EMI practices, but it relies on the engagement of learners, who can also feel the instructor's rapport with what they have to say. Another positive aspect is that the use of ICTs in the process is not to be rejected, but that students become a central and active part of their training through appropriate tutoring by critically selecting what leads to better problem solving and professional expertise.

In the book review section, very appropriately, Elena Domínguez Morales offers her consideration of the recently published monograph on CLIL and EMI, entitled Teaching Language and Content in Multicultural and Multilingual Classrooms CLIL and EMI Approaches (2021), edited by Carrió-Pastor and Bellés-Fortuño for Palgrave MacMillan. This book brings together a collection of edited works by specialists in EMI and CLIL. The volume represents a good contribution both for those new to the field and for practitioners. According to the reviewer, the editors have shown their concern in trying to present clear definitions to set the scene. This is complemented by further theoretical developments of these approaches in several chapters, and descriptions of actual practice exemplify what CLIL and EMI are all about in others.

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