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## Book Reviews

# English-Medium Instruction in Japanese Higher Education: Policy, Challenges, and Outcomes

Bradford, Annette & Brown, Howard (Eds.). (2017).  
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The use of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) is a rapidly growing trend that is shaping the present and future of higher education in non-English-speaking countries. EMI refers to “the use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions in which the majority of the population’s first language is not English” (Dearden, 2015, p. 2). As of 2014, 52 out of 55 non-English-speaking countries have already employed EMI in higher education, and the number of EMI courses offered in universities in the majority of these countries is expected to increase (Dearden, 2015). Japan has also seen a steady increase in EMI courses at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. According to a report by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology, 309 out of the 777 universities in Japan offered undergraduate-level EMI courses and 222 provided graduate-level EMI courses in 2017 (MEXT, 2019). Against this backdrop, a number of books have been published on the topic, addressing a wide range of challenges and opportunities that EMI has brought to higher education. Many of these books focus on specific aspects of EMI (e.g., language policies) and use compilations of

case studies from many countries, typically devoting one or two chapters to each country (e.g., Fenton-Smith & Humphreys, 2018; Jenkins & Mauranen, 2019).

*English-Medium Instruction in Japanese Higher Education: Policy, Challenges, and Outcomes* is unique in that it focuses exclusively on EMI in Japanese higher education. In doing so, it seeks to enable higher education practitioners and policymakers to “clearly understand why EMI policies are in place, how EMI is being enacted, what challenges exist and how they have been overcome, and what the impacts of EMI may be” (Bradford & Brown, 2017, pp. xix) in Japanese university contexts. The book’s editors Annette Bradford and Howard Brown, who are recognized for their research on EMI in Japan, achieve these objectives by compiling chapters written by researchers and practitioners who have had direct experience of EMI in Japanese universities through teaching, research, curriculum design, program coordination, or policy planning. Written with sufficient detail and clarity, this book serves as a timely and valuable resource for gaining a deep understanding of the background to and present state of EMI in Japanese universities and for comprehending the nature of the challenges that EMI stakeholders, such as administrators, faculty members, and students, face on a daily basis.

Owing to its exclusive focus on Japan, the book enables its readers to gain an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the social backgrounds, implementation processes, and stakeholder experiences of EMI in universities in the country. The book comprises 18 chapters thematically organized into six sections. The first section addresses the social background and driving forces of EMI in Japan. In order to provide a solid knowledge base for subsequent chapters, Bradford and Brown used the ROAD-MAPPING theoretical framework (Dafouz & Smit, 2014), which is the first conceptual framework in EMI literature for describing and analyzing EMI in a specific context. By applying the framework’s six dimensions (roles of English, academic disciplines, language management, agents, practice and processes, and internationalization and glocalization), Bradford and Brown systematically described the current state of EMI in Japanese universities. Next, Hashimoto and Mulvey review past and present policies, respectively, aimed at promoting implementations of EMI

in Japanese universities. This section provides readers with sufficient background information for understanding why and how EMI has become prevalent in Japan.

The second section focuses on curriculum development, introducing several case studies to exemplify the ways in which EMI programs have been developed. Yamamoto and Ishikura, for instance, describe how they designed and directed an English-only undergraduate program in Osaka University successfully, managing the staffing issues and structural dilemmas caused by the different academic calendars of domestic and international students. The third section reports the diverse challenges that have emerged at the institutional and administrative levels during EMI implementation. For example, based on his experience as Director of an EMI program, Poole argues that macro-level policy decisions to implement EMI and promote internationalization are in conflict with micro-level bureaucratic and administrative practices, and this conflict adversely affects the implementation of EMI. These two sections provide valuable insights from insiders that one can rarely gain from other information sources (e.g., journal articles).

The fourth section focuses on the experiences of students and instructors in EMI classes, and the fifth section introduces the specific EMI practices of three universities, along with practical suggestions for further improvement. For instance, Iyobe and Li explore the success factors of EMI programs on the basis of the data gathered from a small public university. They conclude that student exposure to EMI, collaboration between content and language specialists, and a curriculum that integrates language and content instruction are important factors for establishing a successful EMI program. Finally, the last section discusses the future prospects of EMI in Japan. In the final chapter, Bradford and Brown draw parallels between the current trend of EMI and the IT revolution in higher education in the 1990s. Driven by the economic crisis of the 1990s and the demand for new type of graduates with a new set of information technology (IT) skills, universities rapidly attempted to incorporate IT into their educational curricula and facilities. However, after experiencing backlashes at the organizational and practice levels, many universities failed to

fully integrate IT education into their curricula. Bradford and Brown argue that if Japanese universities truly aim to internationalize their learning environments through EMI implementation, they need to embrace the necessary changes, develop long-term strategies, and fully integrate EMI into their educational curricula. The authors identify multiple examples of both the backlash against (i.e., sections three and four) and the potential of EMI (i.e., sections two and five) in this book, and their arguments are clear and persuasive.

Beyond its focus and depth of understanding, the book has multiple strengths that are worth emphasizing. First, it sheds light on the experiences of international students – an important, yet understudied area of the EMI research that has been conducted so far in Japan and overseas. As explained in Chapter 2, section 1, the increase in the number of international students is expected to contribute to further internationalization of universities and to greater competition in the globalized higher education market. Attracting international students is, therefore, one of the major reasons why universities have introduced EMI. However, as discussed in Chapter 7, section 3, the admission policies and procedures of EMI programs are creating barriers to the entry of international students. Even after admission, students experience linguistic, pedagogical, and administrative challenges, but their needs for additional support to manage these challenges often remain unnoticed, as discussed in Chapters 10 and 16. These are serious problems that hinder universities from achieving one of the primary objectives of EMI, that is, attracting international students for promoting internationalization. However the existing literature has rarely examined such issues (Macaro et al., 2018). Similarly, the book shares the experience of a foreign-born language instructor who had to transition from language teaching to content teaching via EMI (Chapter 12). Owing to the lack of qualified EMI instructors, Japanese universities often ask language instructors to teach EMI courses, which raises important questions at both the theoretical and practical levels, such as who should teach EMI courses and what backgrounds and competencies EMI instructors should have. We do not yet have the answers to these questions owing to the paucity of literature (Macaro, 2018). Similar knowledge gaps exist in the areas of availability of faculty training programs and

in-depth analyses of psychological burdens that faculty experience, and they are addressed in Chapter 15, section 5, and Chapter 13, section 4, respectively. This book not only contributes to filling those knowledge gaps, but also gives EMI practitioners insights into the issues they are likely to encounter when organizing or running EMI courses.

In terms of the book's limitations, readers would have benefited from the inclusion of chapters that provide quantitative overviews of EMI in universities in Japan. The research cited in this book is primarily qualitative (e.g., participant observations, autoethnography, and case studies) and involves relatively small numbers of participants ( $N < 40$ ). The choices of methodology are appropriate for the purposes of each chapter, and the insights generated from them are undoubtedly valuable. However, the inclusion of several chapters that either integrate quantitative data or report on quantitative studies – such as a chapter that reports the results of a large-scale survey on the prevalence of EMI in Japanese higher education (Brown, 2017; MEXT, 2019) – would have helped readers to assess the extent to which the issues reported in this book can be applied to other educational institutions in Japan.

In addition, the inclusion of chapters addressing either the general experience of domestic students or their opinions toward EMI would have reinforced the comprehensiveness of the book. Although Chapters 9, 10, and 11 in section 4 focus on student experiences, Chapter 9 focuses on international students, and Chapters 10 and 11 analyze specific aspects of EMI students: gender (Chapter 10) and students' opinions of Asian varieties of English in their EMI classes (Chapter 11). Because many overseas studies have addressed student experiences, especially the challenges they experience in their EMI classes owing to their limited English proficiency (Macaro et al., 2018), some readers may have been interested in learning how Japanese students in general experience and evaluate EMI classes. As mentioned earlier, informing EMI practitioners about the common challenges that emerge through EMI implementation is one of the primary objectives of the book, and the inclusion of chapters addressing Japanese students' experiences, attitudes, and opinions toward EMI would have helped to accomplish this objective.

Nevertheless, the coverage of this book is still the most comprehensive among similar works. It not only critically examines the current state of EMI in Japan, but also investigates its contextual background. While EMI researchers appear to have reached an agreement on the definition of EMI (Macaro, 2018), its applications and subsequent challenges can still vary significantly depending on the historical and social contexts in which EMI has been implemented. By addressing these contextual backgrounds, this book attempts to explain in a persuasive and informative way why EMI has been implemented in the ways it has been thus far, particularly in Japan. In addition, thanks to multiple insights from various stakeholders such as researchers, instructors, program coordinators, and international students, this book succeeds in providing a balanced view of both the potential and challenges that can exist at multiple levels of EMI implementation. As such, I recommended this book to those who wish to update their understanding of the diverse EMI issues faced by Japanese universities. It will be particularly appreciated by researchers entering this field; instructors who wish to understand the common challenges of and strategies for EMI implementation; and academic staff and faculty members who plan to design a program or curriculum involving EMI.

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