BRITISH COUNCIL

English-Medium Instruction in Higher Education

Context, experience and attitudes in the Republic of Armenia

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Contents

Executive summary

This report presents the context for English-Medium Instruction (EMI) in Higher Education (HE) in the Republic of Armenia and the experiences and attitudes of its key stakeholders. At the time of writing, the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia is consulting on a proposed new Strategy for the Internationalization of Higher Education and Research. A key strand in this strategy is 'the development and implementation of educational programs in foreign languages [which] will make HE accessible to international students and will enhance the attractiveness of education for local students'. To help inform the development of the strategy, the British Council undertook to explore the current experience of EMI and its progress in Armenian Higher Education and to set out a number of recommendations for consideration.

The research was carried out by Professor Andrew Linn between October 2019 and February 2020 and was based on visits to a selection of universities alongside a more extensive questionnaire study. The focus of the research was the lived reality of all those involved in the delivery of EMI, including Ministry officials, University leaders and administrators, teachers and students, with the largest cohort of stakeholders surveyed being the students. The questions underlying the project were: 1) what are the challenges faced by those involved in EMI in Armenian Higher Education? ; 2) how can an understanding of those challenges inform improved outcomes in the future?

The report consists of four main sections. After an introduction which includes a survey of the relevant research literature (sections 1c and 1d) and an outline of the project (section 2), section 3 presents the language ecology and education system in the Republic of Armenia. Section 4 presents the research instruments employed in exploring EMI in Armenian Higher Education before we go on to focus in more detail on the views and experiences of students (section 5) and university staff (section 6). Section 7 provides a summary of the report and a list of the 24 recommendations set out in the course of the report, as well as suggestions for further research avenues.

The recommendations reflect the fact that EMI in HE is a 'joined-up' phenomenon and not one that exists only within the confines of university courses:

- It depends on English teaching in High School (both what is provided and how it is perceived)
- It takes place in an environment where English is used and experienced across wider society
- It sits alongside and interfaces with Armenian-medium instruction
- It is part of a multilingual reality for both teachers and students
- It feeds future employment prospects and responds to the needs of the local and national economy.

The recommendations fall under six broad categories:

- A global policy issue,
- A diverse and multilingual Higher Education sector,
- Students' background, language competence and support needs,
- Staff support and development,
- The socio-political and academic context,
- Alternative approaches and delivery modes.

1. Introduction

a. EMI and research into EMI

The image which in recent months has come to define the phenomenon of English-Medium Instruction (EMI) is that of a "runaway train". Higher Education (HE) institutions across the world have been offering programmes delivered through the medium of English in increasing numbers, but, the image suggests, without much control over their progress. In the words of the original song of the same name by country music star Vernon Dalhart, 'the engineer said the train must halt / he said it was all the fireman's fault!'. As we will see below, countries like the Netherlands are the engineer in this image, deciding *post hoc* that English-medium teaching in universities has gone too far and that the brakes need to be applied, in the case of the Netherlands via the development of new legislation.

The British Council, with its oversight of teaching in and of English worldwide, has recently contributed to the control of the train while it is in motion by offering guidelines on English-medium delivery in basic education, concluding that 'introducing EMI at primary level in low- or middle-income countries is not a policy decision or practice that should be supported' (Simpson 2019: 11), suggesting that the train may be slowing down.

However, while researchers offer warnings about the impact of English-Medium Instruction, and governments and other organisations may attempt to apply brakes via local policies and principles, the reality is that Higher Education leaders continue to see EMI as a cash-cow for a variety of reasons (Galloway, Kriukow & Numajiri 2017: 4-5), and the train continues, again in the words of that popular song, 'down the track, the whistle wide and the throttle back'.

English-Medium Instruction has come to be the standard term for the phenomenon we are concerned with here, although, inevitably with a relatively new concept which has only yet more recently become an object of academic research, there is a fair amount of agonising in the literature over the validity and value of 'a plethora' (Macaro 2018: 16) of competing terminologies (including *CLIL* [Content and Language Integrated Learning] and others). Very recently the alternative formulation English-Medium Education (EME) has been gaining currency (cf. Dafouz & Smit 2020).

As EMI has mushroomed in Higher Education globally, its reach has expanded, and to understand the practices fully, we need to look at more than just modes of instruction. Dafouz and Smit go further and propose the longer acronym *EMEMUS* (English-Medium Education in Multilingual University Settings) in order to embrace e.g. the research agenda, online and alternative pedagogies, and learning as well as teaching (Dafouz & Smit 2020: 3). The MUS focus draws attention to the specific sociolinguistic setting of the multilingual university. As our project was set up to study EMI, and this is the term used with informants and other stakeholders throughout, we will continue to use it here. Furthermore, the notion of EMI has already become embedded in the academic landscape, not least via the 2015 British Council report, English as a Medium of Instruction: A growing global phenomenon (Dearden 2014).

In the history of Linguistics (as in the history of other disciplines) there is a clear process by which an emergent disciplinary field gains independence and reaches maturity. Local studies within the parent discipline (here English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or Applied Linguistics) lead to peer-reviewed articles in established journals and then to independent journals for the new subject area. Researchers begin to self-identify as members of a new discourse community and come together in workshops and conferences and focused professional associations. The final seal of an academic field's independence is the development of taught programmes (e.g. the MA in English as a Medium of Instruction at the University of Bath, UK to launch in 2020) and the publication of summary volumes which provide an overview of the field and establish the main parameters for it. Macaro (2018) fulfils this latter role and bears the straightforward title English Medium Instruction. There is also now a nascent book series, Routledge Studies in English-Medium Instruction, further

cementing this term as the "industry standard". EMI research has arrived.

Terminological and conceptual argument will doubtless continue (cf. Baker & Hüttner 2018), but for our purposes we will adhere to what is probably the most widely accepted definition of EMI in the literature, namely:

> **The use of the English language to teach academic subjects in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the population is not English. (Dearden 2014: 2).**

b. EMI in Higher Education globally

The growth in English-taught programmes in European universities has been monitored for the past two decades and has been nothing short of spectacular. In their 2002 survey, Maiworm & Wächter identified 725 English-taught HE programmes in Europe (outside "inner circle" English-speaking countries). The number had risen to 2389 by 2007 and by 1000% to 8089 in 2014 (Wächter & Maiworm 2014).

Dearden (2014) found that, while the novelty of the term *English-Medium Instruction* meant that it was sometimes difficult to get fully-informed responses from the 55 countries she surveyed as part of her investigation of this 'growing global phenomenon', EMI has indeed traversed the globe. EMI is offered at all three levels of education (primary, secondary and tertiary) and in all sectors, public and private.

The pattern worldwide is not uniform. According to Dearden's survey, EMI is more prevalent in university education than at lower levels and more prevalent in private than in public institutions 'largely due to EMI giving an international image, prestige and reputation to the institution in question' (Dearden 2014: 11). Wächter & Maiworm (2014) found that the number of English-taught programmes was greater in Northern than in Southern Europe and that 80% of English-taught programmes in Europe were at Master's level. In the same year Dearden was reporting 80% of the countries she surveyed offering English-medium HE programmes in the public sector and 90% of private HE institutions doing so.

In many countries English is only the latest in a series of non-native mediums of instruction, and adopting an international language rather than the national one for teaching and for publication purposes is not a recent historical shift. For Europe there was only one lingua franca of education until Early Modern times, and that was Latin. From the 16th century French gained prestige as an international language of culture and learning, with German assuming this role in the nineteenth century. While the number of publications in the natural sciences were roughly equal for English, French and German around 1900, by the year 2000 over 90% of those publications were in English (Ammon 2016: 35). During the Soviet period, the authorities worked to install Russian as the inter-ethnic language of communication across the Soviet states, including in the domain of education. The rapid move to English away from Russian in former Soviet countries like the Republic of Armenia has a political motivation (as language planning invariably has), but there is a well-established historical precedent for adopting an international lingua franca in education and other official and culturally significant domains.

c. Research into EMI

Although research into EMI cannot be said to have grown at the pace of the phenomenon itself, scholarly attention has turned increasingly to this issue, but not in a consistent or uniform way. We noted above that a new book series (albeit as yet without any volumes announced) has been established to support research in the field, but as far as we know there is no specialised journal as yet, which means that research findings have tended to be rather dispersed and can be hard to locate.

Macaro et al. (2018) is a systematic review of the existing literature up to November 2015, including doctoral theses. The authors of this review identify 285 empirical studies of English-medium instruction, distributed as follows *(table overleaf)*:

Education Phase	Quantitative	Qualitative	Mixed	Total
Pre-primary	0	2	3	**5**
Primary	18	10	13	**41**
Secondary	27	49	61	**137**
Tertiary	28	33	41	**102**
Total	**73**	**94**	**118**	**285**

Figure 1 (Macaro et al. 2018: 44)

The majority of studies focus on secondary education, which may seem surprising given the enormous rate of growth in HE and the fact that the majority of researchers are employed within the Higher Education sector. At tertiary level Macaro and colleagues found that, while there were 40 empirical studies focusing on Asian contexts, none of those concerned any Central Asian country. Of the 52 studies on EMI in European countries, none focused directly on the countries of the South Caucasus. Thus our concern with the region of the Silk Road in this and associated reports means entering somewhat uncharted territory. Even a 2020 journal special issue on the role of languages in English-Medium Instruction at university makes no reference at all to the region or any of its constituent countries (*International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 23:3).

The literature has continued to grow, and we can state with confidence that EMI research is in the ascendant, and that this is likely to continue as a growth area within Applied Linguistics in the coming years as more and more case studies are reported and provide data for more sophisticated theoretical insights. We should also anticipate that the literature will increasingly move beyond local and even national case studies, overcoming the 'remarkable fact about EMI' that, 'though striving towards internationalization, it is almost entirely a purely national endeavour, not only in terms of discussions and implementation, policies and attitudes […] but certainly in terms of the research that has tried to cast light on these issues' (Dimova, Hultgren & Jensen 2015: 319).

> **Recommendation 1: Ministries and universities should look beyond their own context to share insights, good practice and materials in the development of EMI as a worldwide challenge.**

A Web of Science search for "English medium instruction" is more catholic in its embrace than the 'systematic' review undertaken by Macaro et al. and yields 120 publications for the year 2015, increasing to 201 in 2018. Adding the South Caucasus country names to the search term yields no hits. This is, however, a rough and ready measure: "English medium instruction Kazakhstan", for example, is a search term which fails to find a recent article on that topic (Zenkova & Khamitova 2017), reinforcing the point that the research can be hard to locate

All the same, our general observation holds good, that EMI research is in the ascendant, and the South Caucasus and Central Asia are regions which have been largely neglected in the research literature to date.

d. Key issues

The empirical research literature on EMI has tended to emphasise the practical challenges inherent in the delivery of EMI. While the introduction of EMI in HE institutions is typically top-down, a management initiative driven by one or more of the perceived benefits for the institution (enumerated in Galloway et al. 2017: 4), it is teachers and administrators who have to try to make it work and who bear the brunt of the delivery of a teaching model which may not have been well prepared or communicated within the institution and where the staff involved may have had little by way of professional development or upskilling.

Zenkova and Khatimova (2017) report that 24 universities in Kazakhstan offer courses where English is the medium of instruction. However, in the institution they investigated in their research, which was intending to introduce EMI, only 3 out of 10 of their informants had heard of CLIL and none had heard of EMI. At the same time informants were concerned about the introduction of EMI in the context of perceived insufficient proficiency in English amongst both staff and students, a lack of motivation, resistance to methodological innovation, the lack of teaching materials and resources and general unpreparedness for the development.

Research into existing EMI provision has typically revealed that the anxiety mentioned by those staff at the Innovative University of Eurasia in Kazakhstan is felt elsewhere. Macaro et al. (2018: 52-55) found that 'a number of deep concerns have been expressed by lecturers and students and in virtually all studies consulted', and specifically:

> **We find lecturers deeply concerned about their students' inability to survive, or better still thrive, when taught through English [...]**
>
> **In Korea...nearly a third [of students] were ill-equipped linguistically to benefit from an EMI programme [...]**
>
> **English played a significant role in marginalising the students who did not have adequate competence in English [...]**
>
> **More studies reported lecturers as identifying that they [themselves] had linguistic problems than those that did not [...]**
>
> **and in a Swedish study...only a minority of teachers considered they had language problems whereas a sizeable proportion of students were less enthusiastic about their teachers' level of English.**

Focusing on the Nordic scene, which has been the subject of a considerable amount of research, we find some of these issues spelled out with particular clarity. Of 578 students at the University of Oslo, Norway, 33% reported reading English texts to be more difficult than Norwegian, while 80% of students experienced 'some difficulties', and this in a context of long-established and high levels of English proficiency (Ofte 2014). It has also emerged that students evidence decreased interaction (they ask and answer fewer questions) and focus on note-taking rather than on the content (Airey & Linder 2006). Students (Hincks 2010) and lecturers (Thøgersen & Airey 2011) alike tend to speak more slowly, and it takes lecturers 22% longer to cover the same material than it does when using their first language. University teachers report that teaching through English takes longer to prepare and makes their presentation less fluent and flexible (Airey 2011). More generally the literature reports on the lack of effectiveness of EMI in promoting language learning (Doiz & Lasagabaster 2020: 258).

e. Managing the "runaway train"

Clearly we are emphasising the negative findings here, but they do predominate in the research literature.

These findings do not mean that EMI should be avoided by national education policy-makers and university management. Quite the contrary, as EMI does have real institutional benefits which are well recognised and understood by staff: 90% of Zenkova and Khatimova's informants saw the institutional benefit of English-medium delivery in terms of potential for higher international league table rankings, academic staff and student mobility and enhanced international cooperation. But the runaway train is running away and people are getting injured in the process; there is evidenced damage in terms of staff and student wellbeing. Policy-makers and managers need to be aware of all this and be willing to invest in minimising that damage in order to maximise the benefits. Implementation of EMI must be informed by a cost-benefit analysis, but Higher Education as a humane international endeavour should not be prepared to accept a pay-off between human cost on the one hand and institutional benefit on the other.

Before we go on to present our research project and its findings on the experience of institutions in the South Caucasus countries, we will conclude this introduction with a challenge set by Macaro et al. at the end of the literature review to which we have made full reference in the above. The authors state this:

> **One thing is clear: policy makers and particularly university managers are not going to be swayed by sociolinguistic and sociocultural objections to the implementation of EMI as proclaimed in books on the subject (68).**

Let's hope that they are wrong.

2. Background to the study

a. Project brief

This report is one of the outcomes of a consultancy carried out for the British Council between October 2019 and February 2020. The initial remit was to cover the three countries of the South Caucasus (The Republic of Armenia, The Republic of Azerbaijan and Georgia) as well as The Republic of Uzbekistan. All these countries are constituent members of the British Council Wider Europe region, which spans from Serbia to Kazakhstan and from Israel to Russia, embracing fifteen diverse countries, many of which were formerly part of the Soviet Union and have experienced significant and contrasting political changes in the course of the past quarter century.

Given the substantial reach of the project as it was originally conceptualised, and given the relatively short timeframe for the research, it was ultimately agreed that the project team would focus our energies on the South Caucasus for the current purposes.

The study of English and the development of English-medium programmes in Uzbekistan are the subject of several other British Council-led projects (e.g. *Open Learning for English Teachers (INSET)* and *Internationalising Higher Education*) and have also been explored by our project team as part of their ongoing research in Central Asia (e.g. Bezborodova and Radjabzade 2020), and so this country will be treated separately and also in the context of advanced English-medium study in the wider Central Asia region. This notwithstanding, the project brief remained a challenging one, exploring three independent Higher Education systems in differing linguistic and socio-political environments, all of which were new to the author of this report.

The brief for the project begins by noting that:

> **[…] there is limited information available on the quality of teaching and learning on programmes offered in English [in the region], the effectiveness of programmes taught through the medium of English, the levels of English among lecturers, the levels of English among students or the professional development of lecturers teaching in English. In addition to that, there is not always an agreed policy on and general approach to EMI in Higher Education in each of these South Caucasus countries or local strategies for integrating EMI into institutions and departments. (British Council 2019: 1).**

In short, there was a considerable amount of work to do to chart the context, experiences and attitudes involved in planning, developing, implementing and monitoring English-medium programmes in these countries, and the research which has gone into this report was never going to provide all the answers or all the data relevant to its various stakeholders ('such as respective Ministry officials and Institution decision makers', British Council 2019: 1).

This report (alongside its two country counterparts) constitutes a snapshot of the situation in Armenia, seen from the perspective of policy-making and policy implementation. It is an exploration of the *lived reality* of English-medium teaching and learning in Higher Education for those at the sharp end ('including teachers, learners and administrators', British Council 2019: 1). If pitfalls are to be avoided and lessons learned, this report will need to be treated as a *starting point* for the Ministry and the university sector to develop their own ongoing review and monitoring processes, ideally, as noted in Recommendation 1 above, in a collaborative and international spirit.

b. Approaching the project

We need to be clear about our positionality, as the use of English in Higher Education is a vexed question and one which may engender strong views and conflicting political positions. A new Language and Accessibility Bill being debated in the Netherlands in 2019, for example, focuses on promoting Dutch-language proficiency in Higher Education (where EMI has ridden high in recent years), and on potential quotas for English-medium programmes in order to 'safeguard' Dutch-medium courses, indicating that language-political positions in HE can switch suddenly. Even (and perhaps particularly) in countries boasting very high levels of English proficiency amongst the population, the increasing prevalence of and presence of English and the mushrooming of English-medium courses (Airey, Lauridsen, Räsänen, Salö & Schwach 2017; Edwards 2020), has not been met with universal enthusiasm. For this reason, readers of this report are entitled to know what position the authors are coming from.

The author of this report has two decades' experience of investigating language policy and language planning in the Nordic countries, which regularly top the league for national competence in English. The 2019 Education *First English Proficiency Index,* as one barometer of English worldwide, lists the four peninsular Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) in the top 10 internationally, all described as demonstrating 'Very High' levels of proficiency in English, at least according to the Education First global ranking method.

While Armenia is not listed, Azerbaijan and Georgia constitute, by contrast and along with Turkey, the bottom three countries in Europe, and indeed Azerbaijan is ranked 85th out of 100 internationally, in the 'Very Low' proficiency category. We will not dwell on this issue here or on the validity of such league tables, but they do make a striking point, however: while English-Medium Instruction is a global phenomenon, the language-readiness of local stakeholders to embrace it is highly variable. One of the 2019 findings to emerge from the survey of 2,8 million adults taking the Education First English tests worldwide is that 'there is also a polarizing effect in [Europe], with most of the EU's neighbors [like Armenia] not developing English proficiency at the same pace as member states' (Education First 2019: 5).

> **Recommendation 2: Ministries and universities should take account of evidenced levels of English proficiency in society across the Republic of Armenia before further committing to advanced programmes of study which rely on English competence for students to succeed.**

Our point is that, even (and perhaps particularly) in the English-language paradise that the Nordic Countries and the Netherlands seem to embody, the increasing prevalence of and presence of English and the mushrooming of English-medium courses (Airey, Lauridsen, Räsänen, Salö & Schwach 2017; Edwards 2020), has not been met with universal enthusiasm. Indeed so-called domain loss (see section 6b below) has in recent years been a serious concern in government-level policy-making. For these reasons, readers of this report are entitled to know what position the author is coming from.

The research was undertaken on behalf of the British Council by Andrew Linn, Professor of Language, History and Society at the University of Westminster in London. His most recent work has been on the changing status and attitudes towards English in Europe (e.g. Linn 2016) and also attitudes and experiences in English-medium environments in Central Asia (e.g. Linn, Bezborodova & Radjabzade 2020). In line with the prevailing research tradition on EMI in northern Europe, this project focuses on understanding the lived reality of using particular languages for particular purposes, both the benefits and perceived positives as much as the challenges and the difficulties for stakeholders.

It is important to remain mindful of the basis for language policy-making in Higher Education contexts articulated by Kirkpatrick: '...actual practice [and hidden realities] should inform language policy', leading to 'a coherent language policy for which all stakeholders have been consulted' (Kirkpatrick 2017: 7). At the same time, we would concur with Lin (2015: 30) that 'along with the commitment to being explicit and reflexive about issues of researcher positionality, adopting a critical stance is very important if LPP [Language Policy and Planning] research is to contribute to promoting social justice and challenging unequal relations of power often found in LPP contexts'.

All practical arrangements for the project were made by the local British Council office in Yerevan, to whom the author of this report is indebted for their efficiency in making the necessary arrangements at short notice and also for their hospitality and willingness to respond to the unexpected.

3. National context

a. General education

Education in the Republic of Armenia is offered at four levels. Primary education (level 1) is provided for six- to nine-year-olds, preceded by pre-primary education (level 0) from the age of 3. Compulsory secondary education is provided up to the age of 17 and then tertiary education follows for eighteen- to twenty-two-year olds.

According to UNESCO figures (UNESCO 2019), in 2018 83.2% of eligible students were enrolled in secondary education and 54.6% in tertiary education. 62.7% of the eligible female population were enrolled on Higher Education programmes while the number of males was rather fewer at 47.1%. These latter figures were borne out by our classroom observations which noted a higher proportion of female students attending classes than males across the disciplines. Our sense was that more female students contributed to classroom interaction in the EMI classes we witnessed. This disparity is notable given the somewhat traditional gender roles which prevail in the workplace.

Expenditure on education in 2017 was 2.71% of GDP, down from 3.84% in 2009. Literacy rates are high at around 99% for all age brackets.

b. Higher education

The Republic of Armenia joined the European Higher Education Area in 2005, signing up to the Bologna Process, adopting the three-level structure of Bachelor's (4-year), Master's (2-year) and PhD study. There are currently 58 Higher Education institutions in Armenia, down from 65 in 2017 (based on Gharibyan 2017; MFARA 2019), which is still a significant number in a country of 3 million inhabitants. 27 of these institutions are public universities, and in addition there are five institutions established in partnership with other countries. The Higher Education landscape also includes 31 private, for-profit institutions and seven branch campuses of Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian universities. We understand that there has been significant control of private institutions, which previously numbered over 100. As well as these university institutions, there were in 2017 98 research institutes and other specialist academic organizations, variously under the oversight of the Ministry of Education and Science, the National Academy of Sciences and other government bodies. The Constitution stipulates that 'All citizens shall have the right to free higher and other vocational education in state higher and other vocational educational institutions on the basis of competition as prescribed by the law' (Tsaturyan et al. 2017).

Major reforms are currently in train. We are informed that a new Law on Higher Education and Science is being debated and will soon be ratified. This will require all institutions to undergo accreditation, which may force down further the number of independent Higher Education institutions in the country as will a move to consolidate state universities and see greater co-operation between institutions. There is likely to be a new funding model for Higher Education, based on performance against Key Performance Indicators.

The far-reaching reforms which are likely to come into force in the coming years are on the back of reforms already achieved. A national Quality Assurance agency was incorporated into the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in 2011, and a national university ranking system was trialled in 2013, with one of the quality indicators being internationalisation; this system is currently on hold. According to data provided by the Statistical Committee of Armenia, numbers of international students remain very low excepting the significant growth in Russian students over the past three years, as shown in figures 2 and 3 overleaf.

International Bachelors students in Armenia 2015-2019					
	2015	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**
Russia	-	-	51	60	70
Romania	-	3	1	-	-
Bulgaria	1	2	2	1	2
Poland	2	2	2	-	1
China	5	11	9	3	4
Jordan	-	1	-	-	-
Total	**8**	**19**	**65**	**64**	**77**

Figure 2

International Masters students in Armenia 2015-2019					
	2015	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**
Russia	-	-	59	91	58
Georgia	4	8	9	5	3
Romania	4	2	4	2	5
Bulgaria	3	2	2	2	1
Poland	1	2	2	4	2
China	5	4	5	5	11
Jordan	4	3	7	5	4
Total	**21**	**21**	**88**	**114**	**84**

Figure 3

In short, it is clear that the Republic of Armenia is very serious about the quality of Higher Education and is rigorously committed to internationalisation as part of that, despite the rather low percentage of GDP allocated to education. There are significant resource challenges on the ground, but the seriousness of the endeavour is admirable and impressive. As Manja Klemenčič noted in her 2016 feasibility study on Higher Education strategy in the Republic of Armenia, however, 'the most exciting and most challenging part is only beginning: that of collectively imagining the desirable future for higher education in Armenia (Klemenčič 2016: ii).

c. Language ecology

The Republic of Armenia's Law on Language was ratified in 1993, two years after independence from the Soviet Union. It states that the official language of the Republic of Armenia is Armenian (Article 12 of the Constitution) and that the state will protect and disseminate the Armenian language not only within the country but also amongst diasporic Armenians. There are a number of other laws which make reference to language use in specialised contexts, such as in the media and in education.

A state Language Policy was ratified in February 2002 with the following programme objectives:

- Regulation of literary Armenian
- Ensuring full-scale presence of Armenian in the computer network
- Ensuring education in official language
- Providing teaching of Armenian to non-Armenian speakers
- Supporting mass media to ensure language purity
- Ensuring the implementation of legislative requirements in language design/ formation of correspondence and public writings
- Ensuring the rights of national minorities in Armenia in the field of language.

(Country Report 2008)

Armenia is described as 'an ethnically homogenous state (97.8% Armenians)' with Armenian being the native language of over 97% of the population (Country Report 2008). There is however a commitment both in law and in practice to recognising and supporting other languages and their users. In 2001 the Republic of Armenia became a signatory to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. This formalises special obligations to Assyrian, German, Greek, Kurdish, Russian Ukrainian and Yezidi, amongst the 20 nationalities represented in the population.

Armenian uses a distinctive and unique alphabet which was devised in the 5th century CE. The language exists in two standard varieties, Eastern and Western, and both varieties continue in existence. Eastern Armenian, based on the dialect of the capital Yerevan, was the official language of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic from 1920-1990, while the diaspora, following dispersal occasioned by the Armenian genocide (1914-1923), preserved Western Armenian. The spoken language evidences marked dialectal variation.

The legacy of the Soviet Empire means that Russian is still widely known in the Republic of Armenia, such that 'most of the (adult) population in Armenia is bilingual, or has some proficiency of Russian (in the broad sense of bilingualism)' (Country Report 2008). Russian is more prominent in the language ecology of Armenia than in the neighbouring countries of the South Caucasus, and it remains an important lingua franca and key feature of the language repertoire of Armenians. The current hunger for English in the region should not obscure this fact. Even ten years ago the numbers of applicants for places to study English at Yerevan State Languages University and Yerevan State University way outstripped the number of places available, and English applications outstripped applications to study Russian by a factor of 5,75:1, even though the tuition fee for Russian was 'comparatively low' (Country Report 2008).

Internationally, knowledge of Russian is a more compelling "unique selling proposition" [USP] for the Armenian workforce than knowledge of English. According to the European Commission Europeans and their Languages report (European Commission 2012: 5-6), English is the most widely spoken foreign language used by 38% of Europeans, with 12% speaking French as a foreign language, 11% German, 7% Spanish and only 5% Russian. Just over two-fifths (44%) of Europeans claimed that they are able to understand at least one foreign language well enough to be able to follow the news on radio or television with 25% of Europeans able to do so in English while only 3% can do so in Russian.

Recommendation 3: Measures should be taken to ensure that access to Russian and support for the learning of Russian as an employability tool are not neglected.

c. Language learning

The study of Armenian is mandatory at all educational institutions on the territory of Armenia (Country Report 2008). Russian remains the first foreign language in schools with English, French or German being introduced as a second foreign language.

In Higher Education, according to the 2008 Country Report, 8,6% of university students were specialising in languages, and 93% of them were female. The percentage of language students rose to 15% of the total Master's community, and again the majority of candidates were female.

The Caucasus Research Resource Center—Armenia is currently carrying out a project to assess the state of knowledge of foreign languages in the Republic of Armenia, and it will be instructive to see their findings.

d. *Strategy for the Internationalization of Higher Education and Research*

In 2017 Gharibyan noted that 'there is no clear internationalization strategy at the national level', and, if there were to be such a strategy, 'it should be possible to attract more students from neighboring countries'. In the academic year 2017-2018 3,8% of the total Higher Education enrolment were from the Armenian diaspora and 3% were international students, with the majority in professional fields such as medicine, architecture and construction. By far the largest number of overseas students (42%) were from India.

The strategic need expressed by Gharibyan has now been rectified by the drafting of an ambitious *Strategy for Internationalisation of Higher Education and Research in the Republic of Armenia.* This is an impressive statement, in line with the robust approach being taken elsewhere to the development of HE capability and capacity, and is very significant in terms of the strategic framework for the development of EMI in the Republic of Armenia.

The draft of the Strategy (Strategy 2019: 8) states:

> **the fact that international students are not very interested in studying in Armenia (6,8% of the total student population) indicates that the HE in Armenia is not attractive or is little attractive. Among the reasons for this could be: The small number of educational programs in foreign languages and the barriers to their organization [...]**

So the very first reason suggested relates precisely to a perceived dearth of programmes delivered through the medium of other languages. The perspectives from students and staff outlined below provide an important test of this hypothesis.

4. The research

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a. Research outline

The research for this project deployed a number of methods in order to paint the broadest possible picture in a short space of time. This was in line with the project brief as articulated by the British Council, which recommended a three-pronged approach: 1) a pre-visit review of relevant literature; 2) visits to universities; 3) a survey administered to teachers, although in the event the majority of our respondents were in fact students.

The British Council liaised with national bodies in the Republic of Armenia to provide the necessary documents describing and reporting on national and local conditions. This material was patchy, an issue compounded by having to rely on English-language materials and some translations.

The one common language for all stakeholders in this activity is of course English, and, since we have already established the global nature of EMI, the only way of ensuring international best practice, and also the development of international support networks, is by allowing the ready circulation of materials. An (ideally searchable) online repository of EMI policies and guidelines from across the world would be of enormous value to practitioners and researchers alike.

> **Recommendation 4: Ministries and universities should commit to providing English-language versions of policies and guidelines relating to English-Medium Instruction so that they can be readily shared and compared.**

We have already given an overview of the key research into EMI in section 1c above, and in the following sections we elaborate on our approach to the other two research instruments in the project brief, noting the challenges and limitations of these approaches in general as well as some of the positive outcomes.

b. Country visits

Although the project brief only referred to visits to universities, it was important that our visits sought to establish a broader picture than discussions with members of university communities alone could provide. For many of the students we spoke to, studying through English is seen as a route to the world beyond university, to more prestigious and better-remunerated employment and to the possibility of working in an international context, whether at home or overseas. Thus English symbolises the world beyond academia. It was relevant to be able to form a picture of the prevalence of English in the city landscapes and in wider society, the extent to which English is or is not a part of the day-to-day scene. It was also important for us to gain a sense of the presence of English in universities beyond the classroom to help inform our understanding of whether English is in practice any more than just an academic tool for Higher Education.

Visits centred on the capital city, Yerevan. Capital cities, with their economic and political standing, will inevitably reflect more internationally focused, more affluent and more highly educated demographics than other parts of the country where employment may be more locally focused and the ambition of young people may tend in different directions, present a somewhat skewed image of the day-to-day realities across the countries as a whole.

Recommendation 5: A nuanced and differentiated approach should be taken to any further implementation of English-medium programmes, recognising that not all Higher Education institutions fulfil the same function and that local benefits, associated with national and local languages, may in some instances be more significant than national or international ones.

Dependencies here include the needs of the local economy for which students are being educated (which languages will be the most relevant for future employees?), the languages taught in the local schools and the levels of achievement in foreign languages amongst High School graduates (how well equipped are young people in that region for study in a foreign language?) and the level of resource available to institutions and to individual students and their families. A number of Yerevan-based institutions have branches in the regions, and there is also a welcome commitment by the Ministry to greater collaboration between institutions.

The report author visited Yerevan between 23 and 25 October 2019 and was hosted by the Head of Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education at the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport before visiting academic institutions. University visits were to Yerevan Brusov State University of Language and Social Sciences, Armenian State University of Economics, and Yerevan State Medical University. We also visited the English-medium Agribusiness Teaching Center, part of the International Center for Agribusiness Research and Education (ICARE) Foundation, a collaboration between the Armenian National Agrarian University and Texas A&M University, USA.

Particular gratitude should be expressed to Ministry and university colleagues for their welcome and their openness. It is hoped that, as English-medium programmes increase in number, their introduction will be supported by the policies and the resources needed to ensure a positive experience for teachers and students and positive outcomes in terms of skills, employability and the welfare of all involved in the delivery of EMI.

c. Classroom visits

While changing uses of English and attitudes towards English are questions of the wider language ecology of the country and are relevant to take into account as we seek to understand the English-language reality of stakeholders in the round, the heart of the matter in this report is of course what goes on in the learning environment. To what extent is English used or not used vis-à-vis other languages available to those in the classroom? What is English used for and who uses it? Do stakeholders appear to manage the classroom interaction comfortably through the medium of English? Are students engaged in the learning experience? A key question to which we don't have the answer is how the classroom experience in English-medium classrooms compares with that of Armenian- or Russian-medium classrooms (or indeed French-medium as at L'Université française en Arménie [The French University in Armenia]), and this would be a valuable next stage in understanding the reality of English-medium study.

Classroom observations are notoriously difficult to set up effectively. As Dörnyei (2007: 190) puts it, 'regardless of how low a profile we strive to keep we must face it: classroom researchers are intruders who are inevitably obtrusive'. He goes on:

> **It is a real challenge in most situations to find ways of minimizing the intrusion so that classroom events are as natural and unstaged as possible while we are present, which of course is the prerequisite for obtaining data.**

Classroom research is a well-established field, going back at least 40 years (cf. Martin-Jones 2015: 95), and ideally we would have set up our classroom observations more rigorously and over a longer period, based on developing relationships with those we were going to observe. Macaro states quite baldly that 'detailed Conversation Analysis techniques are essential for interpreting what is going on in EMI classrooms' (2018: 216). In practice, this wasn't possible, and we should recognise the limitations this has imposed on the insights gained from attending classes at local universities. However, our report is quite explicitly a "3D snapshot", with all that implies.

We attended classes at all the three Armenian Higher Education institutions we visited. In all cases the group of visitors included both British Council and other university colleagues, which inevitably meant that there was a feeling of a delegation having come to town. In one class the university photographer took pictures during the class which further reinforced the sense of this being an "event", despite our efforts to communicate in advance that we were not reviewing or monitoring or judging. One teacher asked us after the class what our judgement was.

Students seemed on the whole to be genuinely disinterested in our presence while teachers were inevitably more or less aware that this was not an entirely normal classroom situation and tended, despite their best efforts, to "play to the gallery".

We did not know in advance of our visit what classes we would be observing which meant that we were unable to prepare in detail. This was a good thing as we were looking for the lived reality and we needed to be open to taking the situation as we found it and not as we had preconceived it or thought it might be in comparison with classroom situations with which we were ourselves familiar. We went in with an open mind and looked at the snapshot in the round, noting the layout and dynamic and the resources used, as much as the nature of the language interaction, as these all form part of the pedagogical approach. EMI is not and cannot be a simple substitution of one language code for another. Teaching and learning through the medium of a third language presupposes a different feel, a different level of engagement and calls for a different approach to manging the classroom experience. As Diallo & Liddicoat (2014: 116) note, 'where pedagogy is not attended to in the implementation of language policy, this results in problems for implementation that can severely compromise the policy and its objectives'.

All three classes observed were examples of what Macaro (2018) terms 'interaction-constrained settings'. They were not formal lectures and neither were they set up to be maximally interactive. All involved the teacher presenting information to which the students reacted in a largely formulaic manner, quoting back definitions or responding with yes/no answers. In all three cases the teachers were fluent in their use of English and had a strong command of their subject material. The direction of flow was firmly one-way, from teacher to students, and it was not possible to determine with any great clarity the extent to which English was a live resource for the students, given their limited and highly constrained involvement in the dialogue.

> **Recommendation 6: Universities should provide appropriate staff development to ensure that EMI classes are set up to encourage, recognise and reward student-led English-medium interaction.**

If our classes truly reflect the norm, then we have to conclude that in the Armenian HE context, students are not getting or capitalising on the opportunity to develop their academic English skills in class.

In all three classes we noted at the end of each five-minute interval who was talking, whether it was the teacher, the students or whether there was interaction going on. The contribution noted was predominantly that of the teacher with some dialogue, but no instances of pure student input.

Where students interacted with each other informally, for example to clarify a point between themselves, this was effected in their own language. International medical students, for example, defaulted to their shared home language, bringing more linguistic richness to the classroom but based on pragmatism rather than policy. Some students told us, however, that, while their class was officially English-medium, in practice the whole group frequently defaulted to Armenian as they were all Armenian speakers and this was the pragmatic solution.

There is no one language ecology under the umbrella of EMI. The role of the various languages in the class involving only international medical students, who, it can be assumed, have access to little or no academic Armenian or Russian, is different from that found in the mathematics class at the National Agrarian University. Similarly, the nature of the discipline plays a role in terms of choice of language and the nature of language use. The maths class on Integration by Parts presupposes a dramatically different discourse to the detailed analysis of the institutions of EU government. As Kuteeva & Airey (2014) remark, 'a one size fits all university language policy is unlikely to correspond to the needs of all disciplines equally'.

Classroom observations demonstrated that the diversity of the material, the language background of stakeholders and issues of classroom and interaction management would all benefit from more discussion and training in institutions. As students prepare to enter the workplace they should have experience of operating within a multilingual professional context and learn to handle this and to benefit from it.

> **Recommendation 7: Institutional or national policies on EMI in HE should recognise the value of there being a range of languages in the classroom and acknowledge the value of linguistic diversity and the multilingual repertoires of teachers and students alike.**

d. Group discussions

We met with student groups at two universities in the Republic of Armenia and we had a group discussion with staff at one of those institutions. We met administrators and senior management in varying permutations (depending very much on availability in the course of a busy university schedule), and again we are grateful for the generosity of all concerned in giving of their time and their frankness of views.

All those involved in the group discussion received a letter from the project team explaining what the project was about, who was driving the work and to whom we would be reporting (Appendix 1). The letter also clarified what we would do with the information received and that it would only be used anonymously. The project had previously been through the University of Westminster's standard ethics approval process, and all participants were invited to sign a form giving consent to their involvement in the project under the terms set out in the letter. This process was new and intriguing to many involved.

The questions we put to participants were standardised (Appendix 2). The starting point was a set of questions used with colleagues in universities in Uzbekistan on a previous project and honed in consultation with British Council colleagues in Tbilisi. (As the first of our visits in the South Caucasus was to Georgia, this set the precedent for the line of questions in the other two countries, to ensure comparability of coverage). To allow participants freedom to speak openly, the sessions were not recorded, and to allow us to be involved in the conversation unencumbered, we were grateful to British Council colleagues for taking detailed notes of the discussions.

We met students and teachers in different sessions so that neither group felt constrained by the presence of the others. The meeting of teachers was slightly confused by the presence of both English-medium subject teachers and teachers of English, whose experiences and attitudes tended to be rather different.

Recommendation 8: Future studies of English-medium study environments should differentiate between different actors' roles and experiences of English in HE.

e. Questionnaire survey

In order to factor in more views and experiences than was possible in the course of the very short visits, a questionnaire to be distributed to teachers, students and administrative staff at universities in the three countries of the South Caucasus. The questions were based on those we had previously used in a large-scale survey of attitudes and experiences at Westminster International University in Tashkent (Linn, Bezborodova & Radjabzade), awnd building on that, other universities in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (Bezborodova and Rabjabzade 2020). These surveys in turn built on a survey instrument earlier developed and distributed at Stockholm University (Bolton & Kuteeva 2012), all of which is designed to allow for more robust international comparison in the future. The precise formulation of the questions was agreed with senior British Council colleagues, and the survey was distributed, managed and initial analysis undertaken by the British Council team, to whom we are again grateful. The list of questions is given as Appendix 3.

The questionnaire survey on *Your Experience of English at University* was completed by a total of 383 respondents from Armenia, comprising 247 students, 127 teachers, 8 administrative colleagues and 1 senior academic manager. Respondents came from the following 18 institutions which offer English-medium programmes, and the list includes the institutions we visited in person **(in bold):**

- **Yerevan State Medical University- YSMU**
- Armenian State Pedagogical University- ASPU
- **Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences- YBSULSS**
- Gavar State University - GSU
- Eurasia International University - EIU
- **Armenian National Agrarian University- ANAU**
- Komitas State Conservatory of Yerevan - KSCY
- European Regional Academy - ERA
- Public Administration Academy of the Republic of Armenia - PAARA
- National University of Architecture and Construction of Armenia - NUACA
- National Polytechnic University of Armenia - NPUA
- Yerevan State University - YSU
- European University of Armenia - EUA
- Vanadzor State University - VSU
- Yerevan Northern University - YNU
- **Agribusiness Teaching Center - ATC**
- **Armenian State University of Economics - ASUE**
- European University Foundation – EUF.

The largest cohorts of respondents were from ASPU (95), NPUA (72) and YSMU (55). The range of subjects taught by the teaching staff who responded was vast, from the STEM disciplines to a host of Social Science and Humanities disciplines. This is noteworthy as it indicates that EMI is a reality across the discipline spectrum in Armenia, but as we noted above, English has a different role to play in different disciplines. Literature, Education and Law, for example, are much more reliant on Armenian for professional communication than Medicine or Computer Science: one size does not fit all.

Recommendation 9: Further work should be done to establish the need for particular languages in the context of particular disciplines, both in preparing students for employment and also in terms of the research needs of staff.

90 of the 127 teachers were "content" teachers, i.e. they were engaged in EMI as defined above. 23 of the teaching staff are described as EFL teachers, and others were teachers of other languages. We have chosen not to exclude the views of straight language teachers from our analysis, as these are teachers operating in an EMI environment as part of a single workforce, and their views and experiences are valid from the point of view of providing the optimal context for EMI to flourish and be a positive experience for all stakeholders.

94% of teachers described themselves as local rather than "international", and 77% of students also identified as "local". None of the administrative or managerial colleagues identified as international. International students reported 13 different countries of origin. We know that numbers of overseas students in Armenia are currently small, but the geographical reach is significant, suggesting that, if the student experience is attractive and marketing effective, there is capacity to attract students (and lecturers) from a broad international base. Part of what makes the environment attractive will be an appropriate and appropriately resourced medium of instruction.

Since the majority of respondents to our survey describe themselves as local, the majority also report that Armenian is their mother tongue. However, even in this snapshot, students report 6 "mother tongues" other than Armenian. This is a potential resource. Respondents include native English and Russian speakers, who can give the benefit of their greater fluency in class and beyond, helping fellow students with difficulties of expression, etc.

The linguistic variety represented on campus should be a reminder that global communication is not just about English. Respondents report that between them they know a further 9 languages (German, French, Spanish, Punjabi, Dutch, Italian, Turkish, Korean, Chinese) although we did not ask about degree of fluency or nature of that experience. As we noted above, having English is not a particularly special skill in 21st-century Europe, and those students who know other languages have something additional to bring to the world of work.

Recommendation 10: All institutions, in locally appropriate ways, should take steps to celebrate language diversity and language learning more generally, as well as recognising cultural diversity as the enriching reality of globalisation and a commitment to international Higher Education.

Finally, before we look in detail at the views and experiences of stakeholders, it is worth noting the variety of functions that English is recognised as fulfilling in Armenian Higher Education, as shown in *figure 4.*
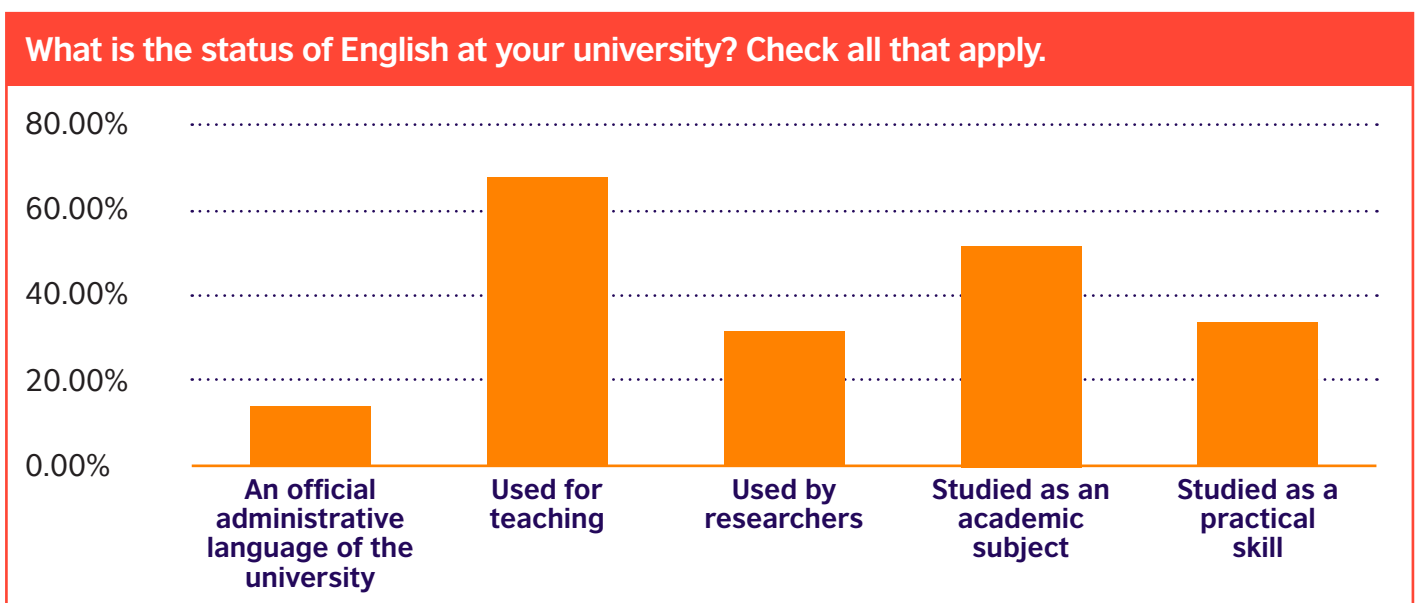

What is the status of English at your university? Check all that apply.

Figure 4

5. Students' perspective

a. Students' background and expectations

The student groups we spoke to were majority Armenian nationals. One of the classes we observed was, however, entirely international. This view of the national and linguistic make-up of student groups underlines the fact that English has a potentially very different role to play in different classes.

The international class comprised students who had enrolled on their course in the expectation that English would be the medium of classroom discourse. Here there is no option to default to Armenian or Russian, to adopt translanguaging practices (Mazak & Carroll 2016) to help the flow of the class, although students were seen to use their home language between themselves to help clarify points. The teacher has to stick to English at all times and negotiation of language use is straightforward.

The two student groups we spoke to were articulate and forthcoming and a credit to their universities. Some of the views they expressed were shared, but in other respects their experiences differed. One point that we heard from both groups of students and also from lecturers was that the English learned in School did not adequately prepare students for English-medium teaching at University. On this point the students were very clear in their views, particularly when I asked them what message they would like me to convey to the Ministry! One student responded that she wished to tell the Ministry that the level of English learned in School is not enough and that they don't have a rich vocabulary and 'cannot speak'. Students noted that there are few opportunities to speak English in the School context and that teaching in English invariably switches to Armenian. Several students expressed a wish to have more EMI at School, but it should be remembered that these are students who are now studying on EMI programmes in HE and so have a particular perspective.

The students we met were competent and confident in English but there is clearly a perception that they have not got there by virtue of their School education, noting that they pay a lot of money for extra tuition. If this extra tuition is necessary or seen to be necessary, EMI will not be open to all but may become the preserve of those with money and opportunity, favouring students from richer families and from urban backgrounds, leading to EMI as linguistic capital on the linguistic market, (following Bourdieu (cf. Hamid 2016)).

> **Recommendation 11: The Ministry should undertake a review of the teaching and learning of English in the schools, and of ways to embed the academic skills necessary for successful EMI study beyond School more effectively in the School curriculum.**

Where the groups differed was in their perception of their teachers. One group at one university reported that their EMI classes are indeed delivered in English by teachers who have good English, and as a result they felt that their English was improving. In another university students felt that their teachers underestimated their language skills by translating a lot of material into Armenian and defaulting to Armenian in class, specially where, in the perception of students, those teachers had less good English than their students and did not like to be corrected. This presents an interesting scenario if it is widespread, in which students feel that in fact they are the ones with the superior language skills and so are not learning language from the EMI classroom. However, another student in this group reported that only 2/3 of the students were confident in English and so teachers had no choice but to translate into Armenian. These same students reported that they had little opportunity to use English in or out of class and that they had no access to native speakers.

The views reported here are from a small and somewhat arbitrary selection of students in rather different institutions, and we will now go on to consider our questionnaire findings drawn from a considerably larger sample of students. However, the views just noted do make an important point: <u>EMI is not a single uniform thing,</u> either in how it is delivered or how it is perceived and experienced. It is doubtful that there can be a single national EMI policy except in terms of general principles. In practice, what EMI means will be negotiated by the local stakeholders, and, if that is not going to lead to frustration, disappointment and disenfranchisement, that negotiation must be explicit and a shared contract between students and teachers.

Recommendation 12: While following the general principles set out in this report, universities should recognise that EMI means different things in different learning environments and for different disciplines and so EMI provision should be developed and negotiated based on local conditions and local needs wherever possible.

b. Student views on their own and others' language competence

We have just noted some individual students' thoughts about the English proficiency of those who teach and study alongside them. No institutions explicitly state an evidenced level of English proficiency as one of the admissions requirements for undergraduate study, rather it is fluency in *Armenian* that is the relevant language requirement for matriculation at an Armenian institution. For Master's and PhD-level admission to Armenian institutions, students are expected to achieve 6.5 in the IELTS test or 79 in TOEFL iBT.

The private American University in Armenia, not one of the institutions surveyed as part of our project, does require IELTS 6.5, which is equivalent to the top of B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), between *Independent and Proficient* user in the CEFR terminology. In our survey, only 52% (n=129) of students believed themselves to be at this level or above. However, only 19% (n=47) conversely believed themselves to be at level A *(Basic User):* 'Beginner' (A1) or 'Elementary' (A2) in the terms of our survey. It is true that the data has not been thoroughly cleansed, and informants were self-selecting, but it is striking that students capable of completing the survey and with sufficient interest in the English language to do so should regard themselves as being only basic users of English. This is in line with the self-criticism students articulate with respect to their language skills on arrival at University and also the rather critical discourse around fellow students in one of our focus groups.

Only 14% of the students surveyed reported that they had taken an international English test, such as IELTS or TOEFL (n=34/247), with scores ranging from A2 to C2. In the light of the above insights into students' perceptions of their preparedness for EMI at University, this is a matter <u>which needs addressing urgently.</u> Students cannot know what their language needs are, and institutions cannot know how to support them, when an understanding of the level of English proficiency is based on a vague self-assessment, everything from A1 to C2, and a sense that what they learned at School is insufficient. Institutions can't provide the right type of support without having a calibrated benchmark as to what is needed.

Recommendation 13: A standard international test should be adopted, carried out and reported for all students, whether local or international, enrolling on EMI programmes.

Recommendation 14: Standard international test outcomes should form the basis for a nationally agreed programme of language support, through both the taught programmes and extra-curricular provision.

c. Use of English in and out of class

Only 75% of those students (n=186) questioned reported that they use more than one language when at university, which suggests that a number of those who responded are not actually taking English-medium courses or that they didn't understand the question. We have already seen that the use of English in EMI classes is variable, ranging from the universal, where all students are international, to cases where the reality is to use more Armenian. In the latter cases, we need to acknowledge that staff and students are operating in a multilingual learning environment which reflects a multilingual world, and this should not be artificially swept aside. In response to the statement, 'I think we should be more tolerant to linguistic diversity on campus', only 13 out of 247 students disagreed.

It is an artificial version of the multilingual ecology in which we live to insist dogmatically on English-only in EMI classes, provided that all stakeholders in the learning agree on their expectations. However, an interesting recent finding is that translanguaging practices ('multilingual, multimodal, and multisensory sense- and meaning-making' (Li Wei 2018)) can also function as a mechanism of exclusion and reinforcement of language standards by a group of 'elite' translinguals (Kuteeva 2020), and from that perspective a rigorous English-only policy does at least help ensure linguistic democracy in principle if not in practice. This is an area which certainly calls for more investigation and debate.

> **Recommendation 15: Universities should develop a language policy wherein it is formally recognised that the world of study and research is multilingual, and which values linguistic diversity and encourages language learning and language tolerance.**

The following information is instructive in shedding light on the multilingual ecology which surrounds university students in the Republic of Armenia.

How often are you exposed to English in your spare time (for example, through music, computer games, or films) compared to when you are at the University?					
	About the same	All English in spare time	Less English in spare time	More English in spare time	No English in spare time	Total
Administrative staff	0	0	5	3	3	8
Content teacher	16	5	39	34	1	95
EFL teacher	5	8	5	9	0	27
ESP teacher	2	2	0	2	0	6
Student	**62**	**18**	**54**	**108**	**5**	**247**
	85	33	103	156	6	383

Figure 5

EMI provision implies that English-medium is something special or different, that it is a just a property of university study. However, English is everywhere; 76% of students state that they have as much or more exposure to English outside the university environment.

Recommendation 16: Universities should recognise and build on the prevalence of English in the wider society to demystify English-medium at university and to help to give students greater confidence in their English skills.

d. Language support

58% of students surveyed reported that they had taken courses specifically to improve their English since starting University, although 6% of the student respondents did not answer this question. We don't know without further investigation where these courses were delivered or what they covered, or how effective they were. The point is that over half these students involved with EMI programmes in Armenia have recognised a need for more training and have taken the initiative to get it. This is not surprising since students feel anxiety about their English-language competence, and our survey suggests that more is desired by way of 'additional professional English support'. 78% of students reported that they would be either 'very likely' or 'somewhat likely' to sign up for additional language support, if it were offered, and just over half the students surveyed (n=134) stated that they would be 'very likely' to avail themselves of such support.

These findings conflict slightly with the answers to Question 26: 'Does your university offer you sufficient support with English language development?'. In answer to this question, 60% of students report that they feel that their university does offer them sufficient support, while 26% were 'not sure'. A conclusion potentially to be drawn is that EMI students in practice feel that they have a need for more support and training, and indeed are ambitious to improve their English skills, whether academic or otherwise, over and above what is already on offer.

Of those students who were of the opinion that their university did not offer sufficient support with English language development, given the preferences listed, most calls were for more English language courses, followed by the provision of more English-language materials and in third place came the establishment of an English language support unit. Students seem to be calling for very practical language support around their EMI programmes rather than major infrastructural investment, but more needs to be done to work with stunts and understand the specific areas of need.

Recommendation 17: Universities should focus on the provision of practical resources rather than new infrastructure.

e. Perceived benefits of EMI

A key question for the Ministry and universities in Armenia relates to the market. All planners and strategists are aware of the inherent danger in the view that, "if you build it, they will come". The draft Strategy for *Internationalization of Higher Education and Research in the Republic of Armenia* includes the following assertion:

Today, the proportion of courses offered in foreign languages in the total number of courses offered at HEIs is very low [...] The development and implementation of educational programs in foreign languages will make HE accessible to international students and will enhance the attractiveness of education for local students. Moreover, it will enable the integration of international students in the educational process and will improve the intercultural communication skills of Armenian students. (Strategy 2019: 9)

The easy correlation between offering more courses in foreign languages and an influx of both international and local students is dangerous as it may fail to acknowledge the real challenges involved in implementation. Any strategy based on increasing Foreign-Language-Medium Instruction (FLMI) would need to address the key challenges we have noted in this report, including:

- Proficiency levels on entry
- The language needs of EMI students and how to address those both in content classes and in other support
- The additional burden of studying through a foreign language
- The need for adequate resources both on-line and in libraries to support English-medium courses
- Training for both staff and students within and beyond the institution in engaging with an EMI pedagogy and acknowledging that the discourse dynamic in a FLMI classroom is not the same as when all interlocutors are native speakers of the language of instruction
- Celebrating and supporting language diversity and language learning.

For now, however, we will consider the reasons given by students for choosing an English-medium programme. Figure 4 shows the total numbers of all those surveyed, including staff, and it is interesting to note where the motivations of staff and students do and do not coincide, as shown in Figure 5:

What was the main reason for you to choose an English Medium Programme (EMP?

Pie chart segments: 44.27%, 19.01%, 18.75%, 8.59%, 5.21%

Legend:
- It helps me improve my English skills
- It gives me access to most up-to-date knowledge in my sphere.
- It gives an opportunity to work in international companies.
- It allows me to earn a higher salary now or in the future.
- It wasn't my choice (e.g. family, manager, etc. decided for me).
- it has fewer teaching hours than other educational sectors.
- It is prestigious.
- It offers less-crowded classes.
- Other (please specify).

Figure 6

What was the main reason for to choose an English Medium Programme (EMP)?					
	Administrative staff	Senior mgt	Teacher	**Student**	Total
It allows me to earn a higher salary now or in the future.	2	0	11	**20**	33
It gives an opportunity to work in international companies.	2	0	11	**59**	72
It gives me access to the most up-to-date knowledge in my sphere.	1	1	43	**28**	73
It has fewer teaching hours than other education sectors.	0	0	2	**0**	2
It helps me improve my English skills.	3	0	43	**124**	170
It is prestigious.	0	0	0	**3**	3
It offers less-crowded classes.	0	0	2	**1**	3
It wasn't my choice (e.g. family, manager, etc. decided for me).	0	0	5	**2**	7
Other	0	0	10	**10**	20
	8	1	127	**247**	383

Figure 7

For students, and bearing in mind that the majority of respondents are Armenian students, the <u>overwhelming motivation is to improve English-language skills</u> (50%), followed by what actually follows from that, namely the opportunity to work internationally (24%). EMI then is seen as a means to increase language competence as a means to achieving employment ambitions. Only 11% of students report that taking an EMI course is primarily about better access to subject knowledge.

However, there is insufficient evidence to suggest that students will acquire the same language skills via EMI as they would if they were to study content and language in parallel. As Galloway (2017) suggests, since 'an intensive English language programme can achieve the same result in just ten weeks, it seems that EMI is not as effective as traditional language study'.

Recommendation 18: Substantial implementation of further EMI programmes should be based on convincing evidence that the students' language goals are being achieved by EMI rather than by EFL or ESP provision.

In order to inform this comparative perspective:

Recommendation 19: Substantial implementation of further EMI programmes should be based on convincing evidence that the students' language goals are being achieved by EMI rather than by EFL or ESP provision.

This form of provision might be styled <u>English-Enabled Instruction.</u> It would be a USP for Armenian HE, and would be better aligned with the legal requirement that students studying in the Republic of Armenia should master the Armenian lang1uage.

f. Other views on EMI and on the use of English

In order to form a rounded picture of the experiences and attitudes of those involved in EMI in Armenia, we asked a number of direct questions in our survey, not all of which need drawing out here, but the data can be made available on request. One question which is particularly relevant to those who are now considering the way forward for EMI programmes in Armenia and the support required for that is what stakeholders consider to be the most important factors for a good English-medium course.

The underlying data looks as though respondents may have interpreted this question in different ways. In any case, the overwhelming majority in all groups considered that the most important concerns are the <u>subject-knowledge</u> and the <u>language fluency of the teachers.</u> Students' fluency does not seem to be high on the list of criteria with top priority for students. After the content and language skills of the teachers there is no one criterion which seems to be singled out as of top importance. Content teachers appear to value resources (online and library) highly while for local students and administrative staff the presence of international staff and students is of high importance. The only really sure thing here is the emphasis placed on the combined subject and language skills of the content teachers (although these criteria do also get substantial numbers in the 'least important' category too, hence the caveat on the findings):

Qualities of a good English-medium course	Position					Total
	Admin. staff	Content subj. lecturer	EFL lecturer	International student	Local student	
Teacher's subject knowledge	**3**	**21**	**6**	**11**	**70**	**111**
Teacher's fluency in English	**3**	**17**	**7**	**12**	**70**	**109**
Students' fluency in English	1	11	3	4	24	43
Variety in class activities	1	10	4	3	38	56
All students contributing to the discussion	1	12	1	4	34	52
Using English all the time	1	12	5	4	38	60
Using online resources	1	17	4	8	39	69
English-language resources in the library	1	15	4	9	37	66
International staff	3	13	3	7	42	68
International students	3	11	4	8	44	70

Figure 8 showing numbers of respondents assigning each quality a score of 1 (top importance)

- 90% of local students agreed or strongly agreed that they liked using English.
- 22% of local students disagreed that using English on campus was 'just as easy' as using their own first language.
- While 24% of local students were neutral on the subject, 44% agreed or strongly agreed that 'British English is better than other forms of English'.

6. Staff and institutional perspectives

—————

a. Teachers' background and expectations

The majority of our Armenian respondents were students, however we also had a strong response from teaching staff. Of these, 90 can be described as subject content teachers, i.e. those engaged in EMI as we are understanding it in the current context. The remaining 33 teachers were foreign language teachers. 94% of the teachers surveyed were local.

In discussion, teachers reported many of the experiences common to EMI worldwide (see, e.g. Henriksen, Holmen & Kling 2019: Ch. 7). It was noted, for example, that classes are "slower" in English and that it takes longer to prepare for EMI classes than Armenian-medium classes. There was not a sense that the University was providing training to prepare staff for English-medium teaching, and that particularly EMI methodology was a priority for professional development.

Teachers felt that teaching content in English was straightforward enough at a superficial level, but it becomes more difficult when there is a need to express the teachers' own feelings and thoughts. In some disciplines even translating the concepts is not an easy task, as discourse patterns vary across languages; technical terms and academic discourse mean different things in the context of different language systems. 5 of the 127 teachers who responded to the survey reported that EMI was not their decision, rather that it had been imposed on them. However, teachers also spoke up for the value of EMI from the students' perspective. Students believe that EMI is a good thing, for reasons we have already discussed, and, while it is challenging for students, they are motivated by the possibility of study abroad and better-paid jobs in the future.

> **Recommendation 20: Universities should be open about the challenges for teachers in developing and delivering EMI teaching, and peer-to-peer support groups should be enabled as well as more formal professional development, following consultation with staff to understand their particular needs.**

The sector and students are eager for EMI programmes, and one of the "brakes" which should be applied is a culture of openness and honesty about the challenges and demands on teachers, especially those who are well-established in the profession and who may find the switch to new methods more challenging (Henriksen, Holmen & Kling 2019: 157).

b. Teachers' views on their own and others' language competence

Teachers are more optimistic about their own language ability than students are. 51% of subject content teaching staff describe themselves as being at CEFR C-level, i.e., in our terms, 'proficient' or 'advanced'. The teachers we witnessed in action in Armenia were highly proficient and clearly took great pride in their excellent language skills. They were outstanding EFL role models for their students. However, one of our subject content teacher respondents self-assessed as CEFR A2-level, which is not sufficient to cope with EMI; a language user possessing A2 competence 'can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters', which is a far cry from the complex language requirements of university-level study.

72% of subject content teachers would be likely or very likely to sign up for additional professional English support, if it were available. 59% say they have already done so since starting to teach at their university, and it would be instructive to know more about where they have accessed that support.

Based on the self-assessment of teachers, there is clearly a strong desire for ongoing professional development both in language and in EMI pedagogy.

It is recommended that all agencies address this as a top priority, as articulated in the draft *Strategy* (2019: 9): '[...] the implementation of systems encouraging the knowledge of foreign languages and of professional development programs at HEIs is very important'.

We encountered some insightful views amongst university staff around the potential impact of EMI on wider society. Some questioned the benefit of studying through English when graduates will go on to work in the Armenian economy. Although not described as such, concerns were expressed about *domain loss,* whereby areas of language use are handed over to English so that the *domain* in question ceases to be functional in the local language, e.g. medicine or engineering (for more on the domain loss phenomenon in language policy, see, e.g., Hultgren 2016). In the course of our research medical students spoke to us about the challenge for international students studying through the medium of English having to communicate with patients expecting to discuss medical matters in their own language.

Given that the status of Armenian is enshrined in law, it is somewhat fantastic to maintain that Armenian will be lost to English, but, in the context of the "runaway train" **it is recommended that debates about potential domain loss and the rise of English as both opportunity and threat should be encouraged,** focusing on ways of ensuring a flourishing multilingual ecology with Armenian, Russian and English co-existing to mutual benefit.

c. University strategic leadership

The driver for increased EMI provision is typically top-down and a strategic decision at executive level to seek to increase student numbers by offering programmes which will attract overseas students and also increase the employability appeal for the home market.

Interestingly, the emphasis in Armenia appears to be on undergraduate (Bachelor's) provision, while the major growth in EMI programmes elsewhere further West and North in Europe has tended to be more at postgraduate (Master's) level. Numbers at Master's level are smaller, but it is potentially easier to keep the brakes on EMI as students are both more advanced in their language learning (hence the IELTS 6.5 requirement in Armenia, which is the same as for most UK-based programmes) and academically more resilient, having already completed a number of years of university study.

> **Recommendation 21: The emphasis should be on Master's-level EMI, where the risk to the quality of the student experience is less.**

In one institution we were made aware of the challenge to wholesale implementation of EMI as only 20% of the lecturers "know" English, although it was hoped that this could be increased to 60%. As will be clear from the current report, increasing capacity in this way is not a simple linear process. Upskilling teachers to "know" enough English does not address the issue of the challenges inherent in EMI delivery, nor the embedding of pedagogical techniques and methods appropriate to the foreign-language classroom.

Offering salaries to those who are prepared to embrace EMI teaching which are twice those of Armenian-medium teachers strikes us as a dangerous policy. Such a financial benefit is likely to encourage lecturers to embark on EMI for the wrong reasons and without adequate preparation. It is also in danger of creating a two-speed curriculum, where EMI is presented as being twice as valuable as a commodity and its providers as being twice as valuable as colleagues.

Recommendation 22: Incentives to adopt innovative practice are a useful thing, but the principle of putting a price on EMI delivery should be resisted as it is likely to engender undesirable behaviours without a clear rationale for any salary differential.

HE in Armenia is a competitive market, not least as more international providers enter that market. We have heard that there will be a brake on the proliferation of private providers in order to ensure quality of provision. However, it may be that universities can be more innovative in their EMI offer if they are empowered to offer more short courses and CPD for business. While current students might or might not need English skills for the workplace in the future, business and industry know what their actual needs are, and professional upskilling delivered through English could serve the economy more directly and more immediately than more undergraduate EMI programmes.

Recommendation 23: Universities should capitalise on their experience of industry-relevant EMI programmes to explore the market for EMI Continuing Professional Development for Business and Industry locally and nationally.

d. Classrooms and resources

As we noted in section 4c above, none of the classes we observed could be described as truly English-medium pedagogical experiences. While the teachers were super-fluent, delivery was almost entirely one-way with students at best responding in a formulaic manner. Students were not using English dynamically as part of an interactive and immersive learning experience; they were passive recipients and students arrived at and left the class quite freely, further pointing to a feeling of disengagement. It may be that other classes are able to offer that immersive experience in a way that the lecture-type events we witnessed could not. However, if EMI is really to be a shared experience for all those in the room, thought should be given to classroom lay-out and avoiding the "sage on a stage" model with students as passive recipients of pre-packaged facts. I'm sure what we witnessed was indeed not indicative of all taught contexts.

This is not an issue unique to Armenia. As O'Dowd notes, based on his survey of the research literature, 'there are also serious questions relating to whether content teachers are willing and able to make the methodological changes necessary to teach successfully through a foreign language and to what extent they are being trained in methodologies suited to EMI' (O'Dowd 2018: 556.). O'Dowd concludes that there is significant variation across Europe in terms of the training provided for EMI teachers as well as in terms of the level of English competency required and methods for accreditation of EMI teachers. Armenia could be a European leader here by addressing these issues as an integral part of the new strategy on internationalised HE. (see previous section for more on the question of certification).

More of an issue may be the lack of classroom infrastructure. One classroom we witnessed had no technology beyond a few elderly posters on the wall and so was unable to capitalise on the wealth of on-line resources available to aid the classroom experience. Another classroom appeared to have a projector, but the only medium supporting the lecture was the whiteboard. In Armenia classes were organised in a traditional format with desks and chairs in several rows.

Informal discussion suggested that there were no relevant English-language materials related to the programme in question available in the university library.

Delivery in English is not divorced from the international norms with respect to resources associated with the English-medium learning environment, whether this be library resources, online and interactive materials or other pedagogical tools and techniques.

Recommendation 24: Care and thought should be given to developing the EMI learning experience in the round, comprising an immersive and joined-up multimedia learning environment which does not just focus on the medium of instruction.

7. Conclusions

a. Summary of project

Our task has been to gain a rounded picture of the experience of and attitudes to English-medium instruction in the Higher Education sector in the Republic of Armenia in order to provide recommendations for those involved in developing this provision further. The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport is committed to the further provision of FLMI education as a principal enabler of increased internationalisation and rightly wants to gain a fuller understanding of the reality of EMI to date before moving forward.

We began by establishing what we mean by EMI and provided a survey of the insights arising from previous research to set out the issues for all stakeholders—teachers, students and planners—as evidenced by the longer experience of EMI in other parts of Europe and beyond. From this it became clear that there are broadly two potentially conflicting positions. Ministries and universities on the one hand are attracted by the idea of increased EMI provision as it seems to offer a number of benefits. In theory EMI provision will enable more international students to enrol on degree programmes. This brings increased income for the institutions as well as for the communities in which they are situated, as overseas students spend money in the local economy. The delivery of teaching and assessment in a foreign language appears to offer a two-for-the-price-of-one experience for local students, who can develop subject-specific skills and knowledge while at the same time developing their skills in a language which could prove valuable for their future employment. Furthermore, the opportunity to teach in an international language could allow for the engagement of international staff, potentially with international research ambitions. In practice it seems however that thus far international student numbers remain low as do numbers of teachers from overseas.

On the other hand (bottom-up) the research tells us that there are non-trivial practical challenges for both students and teachers in engaging with the experience, and support for the enterprise tends to be limited in HE institutions, which introduce EMI without notable training and support for those involved.

To achieve our 'rounded picture', we adopted several research instruments. Initial desk research on the existing literature was followed by a visit to the capital, Yerevan, where we attended a number of universities, observed EMI classes, met with focus groups of staff and of students and spoke to key Ministry colleagues. Informed by this we then designed and carried out an on-line survey of staff and students at a larger selection of HE institutions (18 in all). This mixed-methods approach and its findings has informed the discussion we present in sections 5 and 6 above. Section 3 provides an overview of Higher Education in Armenia, which we hope will be relevant and interesting for readers not familiar with an EMI context which to date has not figured in the research literature.

b. Summary of recommendations

A number of recommendations are made in the course of our report, which we list for convenience here. We have been explicit above about our positionality. Our background is in the European HE tradition, with which Armenian HE is aligned. We are committed to a Higher Education system which recognises and values the multilingual reality of the HE sector and the broader society it serves, and so we would resist an 'English everywhere' policy. This view appears to chime with our survey respondents, of whom the majority indicated that they were in favour of tolerance of language diversity on campus and that they liked learning languages.

Recommendation 1: Ministries and universities should look beyond their own context to share insights, good practice and materials in the development of EMI as a worldwide challenge.

Recommendation 2: Ministries and universities should take account of evidenced levels of English proficiency in society across the Republic of Armenia before further committing to advanced programmes of study which rely on English competence for students to succeed.

Recommendation 3: Measures should be taken to ensure that access to Russian and support for the learning of Russian as an employability tool are not neglected.

....

Recommendation 4: Ministries and universities should commit to providing English-language versions of policies and guidelines relating to English-Medium Instruction so that they can be readily shared and compared.

....

Recommendation 5: A nuanced and differentiated approach should be taken to any further implementation of English-medium programmes, recognising that not all Higher Education institutions fulfil the same function and that local benefits, associated with national and local languages, may in some instances be more significant than national or international ones.

....

Recommendation 6: Universities should provide appropriate staff development to ensure that EMI classes are set up to encourage, recognise and reward student-led English-medium interaction.

....

Recommendation 7: Institutional or national policies on EMI in HE should recognise the value of there being a range of languages in the classroom and acknowledge the value of linguistic diversity and the multilingual repertoires of teachers and students alike.

....

Recommendation 8: Future studies of English-medium study environments should differentiate between different actors' roles and experiences of English in HE.

....

Recommendation 9: Further work should be done to establish the need for particular languages in the context of particular disciplines, both in preparing students for employment and also in terms of the research needs of staff.

....

Recommendation 10: All institutions, in locally appropriate ways, should take steps to celebrate language diversity and language learning more generally, as well as recognising cultural diversity as the reality of the globalisation and an enriching by-product of a commitment to international Higher Education.

....

Recommendation 11: The Ministry should undertake a review of the teaching and learning of English in the schools, and of ways to embed the academic skills necessary for successful EMI study beyond School more effectively in the School curriculum.

....

Recommendation 12: While following the general principles set out in this report, universities should recognise that EMI means different things in different learning environments and for different disciplines and so EMI provision should be developed and negotiated based on local conditions and local needs wherever possible.

....

Recommendation 13: A standard international test should be adopted, carried out and reported for all students, whether local or international, enrolling on EMI programmes.

....

Recommendation 14: Standard international test outcomes should form the basis for a nationally agreed programme of language support, through both the taught programmes and extra-curricular provision.

....

Recommendation 15: Universities should develop a language policy wherein it is formally recognised that the world of study and research is multilingual, and which values linguistic diversity and encourages language learning and language tolerance.

....

Recommendation 16: Universities should recognise and build on the prevalence of English in the wider society to demystify English-medium at university and to help to give students greater confidence in their English skills.

Recommendation 17: Universities should focus on the provision of practical resources rather than new infrastructure.

....

Recommendation 18: Substantial implementation of further EMI programmes should be based on convincing evidence that the students' language goals are being achieved by EMI rather than by EFL or ESP provision.

....

Recommendation 19: Some programmes could be developed where content is delivered in Armenian but alongside academic English language support.

....

Recommendation 20: Universities should be open about the challenges for teachers in developing and delivering EMI teaching, and peer-to-peer support groups should be enabled as well as more formal professional development, following consultation with staff to understand their particular needs.

....

Recommendation 21: The emphasis should be on Master's-level EMI, where the risk to the quality of the student experience is less.

....

Recommendation 22: Incentives to adopt innovative practice are a useful thing, but the principle of putting a price on EMI delivery should be resisted as it is likely to engender undesirable behaviours without a clear rationale for any salary differential.

....

Recommendation 23: Universities should capitalise on their experience of industry-relevant EMI programmes to explore the market for EMI Continuing Professional Development for Business and Industry locally and nationally.

....

Recommendation 24: Care and thought should be given to developing the EMI learning experience in the round, comprising an immersive and joined-up multimedia learning environment which does not just focus on the medium of instruction.

c. Further research

As we have commented several times, EMI in the Republic of Armenia and other countries of the region is an under-researched issue. Given this, any of the aspects touched on in the current report could benefit from further, fuller investigation. We would encourage agencies in Armenia to commit to an evidence-based approach to developing FLMI further as part of the push for increased internationalisation of HE. We found both students and staff in universities to be both interested in and committed to improving EMI, and local researchers could fruitfully be engaged in further research in this field.

We have focused on context, and the experience and attitudes of stakeholders and have not been able to go in more detail into the content of programmes or how the language skills are or are not being delivered. We have not explored or offered views on alternative pedagogies, so there is more detailed work to be done on these issues too.

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APPENDIX 1

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

English-medium instruction (EMI) in the South Caucasus and Uzbekistan

Researcher: ____Prof Andrew Linn_____

 ou are being invited to take part in a research study to explore options for English-Medium instruction in the universities of the South Caucasus and Uzbekistan. The research is funded by and carried out in partnership with the British Council. The project will involve a review of the existing literature on the experience of English-Medium Instruction in Higher Education as well as relevant documentation produced by ministries and universities. It will also involve a study of the experiences of teachers, students and administrators currently involved in English-medium teaching. The outcome of the project will be a report for the British Council which they may then share with relevant stakeholders, such as government ministries.

The study will involve you:

Participating in an open group discussion with me about your experiences of English in Higher Education. This will take about 1 hour and notes will be taken. The notes will be retained as part of the research archive for a period of three years.

Please note:

- Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary.
- You have the right to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.
- No personal data or information will be included in the notes.
- You do not have to answer particular questions either on questionnaires or in interviews if you do not wish to do so.
- Your responses will be anonymous, and will be kept confidential unless you provide explicit consent to do otherwise, for example if you explicitly state that you wish your own views to be made known.
- No individuals should be identifiable from any collated data, written report of the research, or any publications arising from it.
- All computer data files will be encrypted and password protected. The researcher will keep files in a secure place and will comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.
- All hard copy documents, e.g. consent forms, completed questionnaires, etc. will be kept securely and in a locked cupboard, wherever possible on University premises. Documents may be scanned and stored electronically. This may be done to enable secure transmission of data to the university's secure computer systems.
- Information on the results of the research will be made available after the research and communicated to your University.
- The researcher can be contacted during and after participation by email (X@Y) or by telephone (+44 XXYY).
- If you have a complaint about this research project you can contact the University of Westminster Director of Research for the Liberal Arts and Sciences, Prof. N. by e-mail (N@westminster.ac.uk).

CONSENT FORM

Title of Study:

English-medium instruction (EMI) in the South Caucasus and Uzbekistan

Lead researcher: _Professor Andrew Linn_____

I have been given the Participation Information Sheet and/or had its contents explained to me.	**YES**	**NO**
I have had an opportunity to ask any questions and I am satisfied with the answers given.	**YES**	**NO**
I understand I have a right to withdraw from the research at any time and I do not have to provide a reason.	**YES**	**NO**
I understand that if I withdraw from the research any data included in the results will be removed if that is practicable (I understand that once anonymised data has been collated into other datasets it may not be possible to remove that data).	**YES**	**NO**
I would like to receive information relating to the results from this study.	**YES**	**NO**
I wish to receive a copy of this Consent form.	**YES**	**NO**
I confirm I am willing to be a participant in the above research study.	**YES**	**NO**
I note the data collected may be retained in an archive and I am happy for my data to be reused as part of future research activities. I note my data will be fully anonymised.	**YES**	**NO**

Participant's Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

This consent form will be stored separately from any data you provide so that your responses remain anonymous.
_____

I confirm I have provided a copy of the Participant Information Sheet approved by the Research Ethics Committee to the participant and fully explained its contents. I have given the participant an opportunity to ask questions, which have been answered.

Researcher's Name: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX 2

Discussion questions on the experience of EMI - <u>students</u>

English in everyday life

    1. Does everyone need to learn English?
    2. Do people learn more English in school or outside school? – Is there a difference between the capital city and the regions?

English at University

    1. Do you think that your university could do more to support students with their language needs? If so, what would you like?
    2. Do you think that English only should be used in English-medium classes?
    3. Do you think that other languages (e.g. Russian or Chinese) should be taught and encouraged at University?
    4. Are you happy with the subject-specific English-language books and other materials you use?
    5. Why do you think your University wants to teach you in English?

Your own experience

    1. Do you think your own English is 'good enough' for your academic study?
    2. Do you think that your teachers' / fellow-students' English is 'good enough'?
    3. In the future will you use your English more within the country or overseas?
    4. Do you think that studying in English will make it easier for you to get a good job?
    5. Do you ever speak English outside class?

Is there anything else you'd like to tell me so that I can provide good advice about EMI in universities in your country?

_____

Discussion questions on the experience of EMI - <u>teachers</u>

English in everyday life

    1. Does everyone need to learn English?
    2. Do you and your students learn more of their English skills in school/university or outside school/university?

English at University

    1. Do you feel that you were ready to cope with teaching in English when you started doing it?
    2. Do you think that your university could do more to support teachers with their language needs? If so, what would you like?
    3. Do you think that English only should be used in English-medium classes? Does it matter if you 'code-switch'?
    4. Do you think that other international languages (e.g. Russian or Chinese) should be taught and encouraged at University?
    5. Are you happy with the English-language books and other materials you use?
    6. Why do you think your University wants you to teach in English?

Your own experience

    1. Do you think your own English is 'good enough' for your professional needs?
    2. Do you think that your fellow teachers' / students' English is 'good enough'?
    3. Do you publish scientific work in English? How does that compare with writing in your own language?
    4. Do you ever speak English outside class, either in the University or elsewhere?

Is there anything else you'd like to tell me so that I can provide good advice about EMI in universities in your country?

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APPENDIX 3

Overview of Questionnaire Questions:

Context

1. What University do you work/study at?
2. Which one of the following best describes your status?
3. If you are a lecturer, what subject do you teach?
4. What is your residency status?
5. If you are an international student/staff, what is your home country?
6. When did you start working/studying at your University?
7. What is your mother tongue?
8. What other languages do you know?
9. What languages do you use at your University?
10. What is the status of English at your University?

Experience

11. What do you think is your current level of English?
12. Do you use more than one language when at University?
13. If the answer to the previous question is Yes, what languages do you use in the following situations at university?
14. If you chose the "other" option in the previous question, please specify your answer.
15. What was the main reason for you to choose an English Medium Programme (EMP)?
16. How often are you exposed to English in your spare time (for example, through music, computer games, or films) compared to when you are at the University?
17. Have you ever taken an international test in English, such as TOEFL or IELTS?
18. If the answer to the previous question is 'Yes', what level did you achieve when you started your English-medium study/work at your university?
19. Since you started at your university, have you taken any courses specifically to improve your English?
20. If you were offered additional professional English support, how likely would you be to sign up?
21. How able are you to perform in the following situations?
22. How able are you to discuss your academic/professional interests (having to do with your area of study or teaching) in English compared to your native language?
23. How well does your proficiency (language skills) in English meet your needs at your university?

Attitudes

24. On a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 the most important and 5 the least important), please rank the most important factors in a good English-medium course.
25. What is your opinion of the following situations?
26. Does your university offer you sufficient support with English language development?
27. If the answer to the previous question is No, what additional support could be offered?
28. Please add any additional thoughts or comments on the above questions or on the issue of teaching and learning through the medium of English in the box below.