

## Conclusion

**Lynn Mastellotto – Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy**

**Renata Zanin – Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy**

The idea for this volume began with a panel organised by the editors for the European Educational Research Association (EERA)'s European Conference on Educational Research (ECER) at the Free University of Bolzano in September 2018, where several of the current contributors came together to present research on the theme “EMI and Beyond: Planning international curricula in higher education for multilingual and multicultural contexts”. The contributions to this collected volume present the state of the art on EMI/ICL in Italian higher education, drawing attention to different critical aspects of the teaching/learning experience and highlighting the perspectives of various educational stakeholders regarding the effectiveness of tertiary study in a second/additional/foreign language.

The chapters draw on a range of methodologies, from multimodal participant observation, to action research, to video-stimulated recall (VSR), to questionnaires and interviews, in presenting studies which examine language policies and practices across various educational settings in Italy and with Italian partner institutions abroad. Overall, the volume suggests that internationalisation of the curriculum – whether in tertiary studies or in school contexts – succeeds best when the *form* of lessons (the language which acts as a medium of instruction) and the *content* of lessons (the non-linguistic discipline-specific concepts) are aligned through a counter-balanced approach (Lyser, 2007) to curriculum planning and delivery. Such an integration of content and language (ICL) in planning learning aims and outcomes and in classroom practices requires the strategic support of lecturers through training and monitoring to guarantee the quality of learning in multilingual educational settings.

One-size-fits-all language policies are pedagogically limited and limiting for the creation of scientific knowledge, as revealed by many of the chapters here, as well as the scholarly works they refer to. Indeed, contributors to this volume raise questions about the predominant role of English in EMI/ICL/CLIL and as a lingua franca in European education. Internationalising curricula in higher education must reflect the diversity of learners and mobility of knowers and of knowledge in the twenty-first century (Smit & Dafouz, 2012) in order to assist the development of intercultural competence. The central role language(s) and culture(s) play in the process of generating and disseminating scientific knowledge, the core mission of universities, highlights the need for greater research into the ways form and content should be integrated for effective learning.

Changing the medium of instruction to include more than national or local languages in education has been one of the most significant aspects of internationalisation, a change process initiated with the Bologna declaration (1999) that has been unfolding over the past 20 years; the destabilisation it has created in the higher education sector and the innovative practices that have emerged can no longer be considered new. This process has, in many ways, been a positive disruption, one which has forced educators to reconsider how they teach; an opportunity to re-think and re-imagine ways of designing and delivering curricula (Wilkinson, 2016; Valcke & Wilkinson, 2017). Using other languages as a medium of instruction is not deterministic *per se*: educators still need to decide *how* to teach and, specifically, how to use language(s) in non-linguistic subject teaching. It is clear that university administration needs to support educators in creating the conditions for the optimal integration of content and language (ICL) in learning in order to guarantee quality.

As the papers in this volume demonstrate, language is inextricably entwined in the construction of disciplinary knowledge: sharing insights and research across disciplinary boundaries, cooperating across subject specialisms, communicating in different languages for distinct discourse communities, and collaborating across institutions in transnational educational contexts is how new knowledge is produced. The disruption to educational systems caused by learning in and through foreign languages is both necessary and

beneficial to the intellectual and cultural growth of all those involved in education.

As this volume goes to press in December 2020, we are struggling to make sense of the widescale disruption to education caused by the Covid-19 global pandemic and its multifaceted implications. Being forced outside our comfort zone as educators is a disruptive process that reveals fragilities (individual, institutional, social) but also resilience and creativity. All knowledge involves a rupture with the past, and change has always been a defining feature of universities, which must continually re-invent their role and re-assert their relevance in ever-changing global contexts. This process of change is simultaneously disorienting and re-orienting: being unmoored from normative educational practices is an opportunity to chart new pathways in teaching and learning. *Disruption* is perhaps the new lingua franca of this era; we must all learn its nuances and harness its power for positive transformation.

## References

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