New Challenges for EAP in Japan: English-medium Instruction and the Emerging Blended Classroom Culture
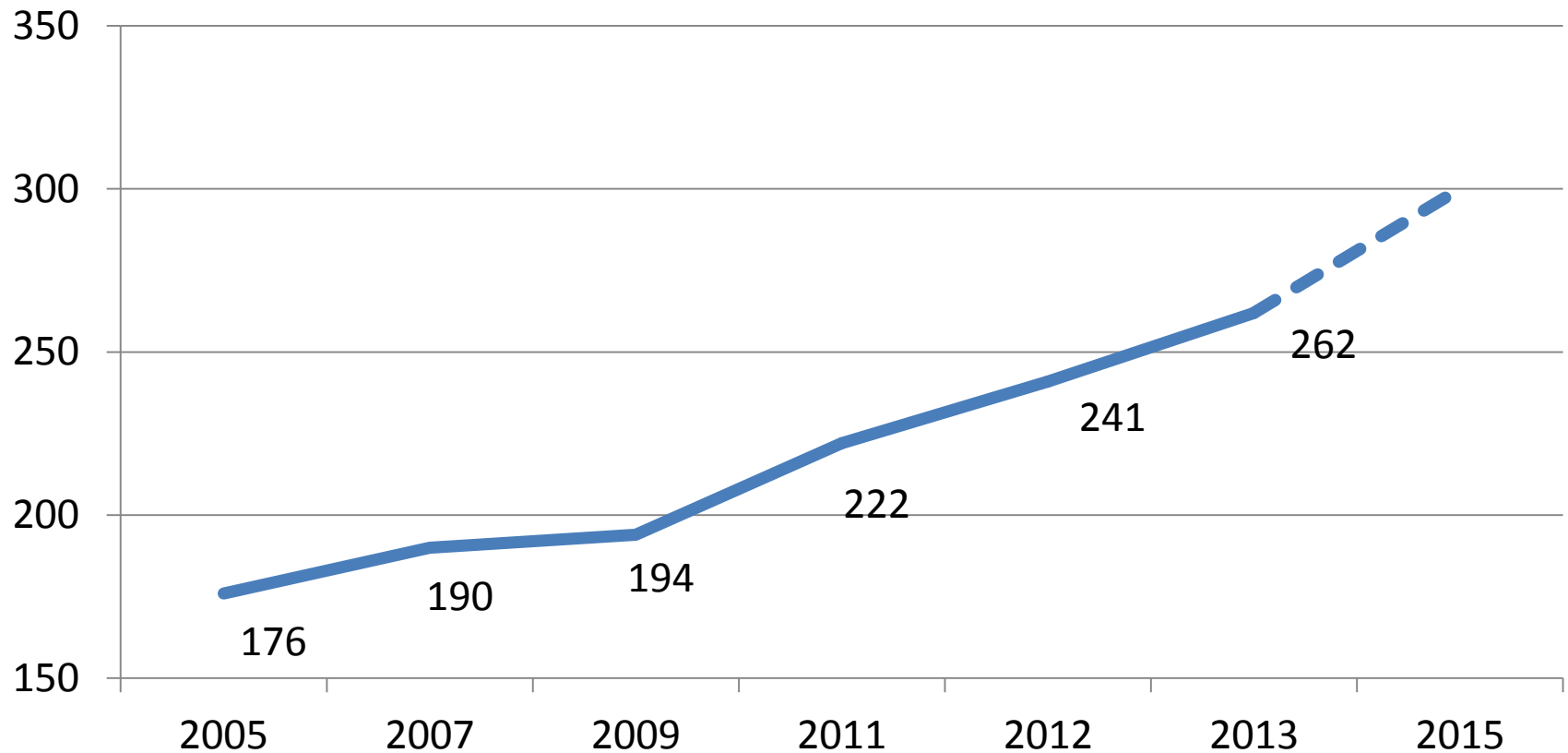
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Overview

- The context of EMI in Japan
- An emerging blended academic culture in EMI
  - Possible implications for teaching & learning in EAP
- Call for a new research agenda
  - One approach

The Extent of EMI

Number of universities offering EMI (undergraduate)

MEXT (2013)

Program Structures

- Small Programs
  - 77% of programs serve less than 10% of the student body
  - 2/3 ad hoc delivery
- Very few ETPs (approximately 30 universities as of 2015)
  - 91% of programs are part of or complement to JMI program
- Strong focus on humanities and social sciences
  - 70% of programs teach humanities / social sciences
- Students / faculty predominately domestic
  - 2/3 of programs have all or mainly domestic students
  - Faculty also predominately domestic

(Brown, 2015)

EMI and EAP

- Currently very little interaction between EMI and EAP in Japan
  - 8% of EMI programs require EAP classes
  - No language proficiency benchmarks at 70% of EMI programs
  - 51% of EMI programs have little or no communication between EMI faculty and language teachers

(Brown, 2015)

EMI and Study Abroad

- 69,869 Japanese students studying abroad (as of 2013)
  - 69% in short-term language programs (less than 3 months)
  - 51% in identifiably Anglophone contexts
  - **About** 11,000 in academic programs in English

- **About** 22,000 estimated students with some EMI

EMI and EAP

- EMI = new, legitimate need for EAP
  - Limited but growing

- Students' needs / experiences largely unexplored
  - Language teachers unaware / acting on instinct and assumptions

Understanding Students' Needs in EMI

- Understanding students' needs in EMI means understanding the classroom culture of EMI

Influences on EMI Classroom practice

- Teachers' experiences
- Notions of western pedagogy
- Students' experiences
- Evolving Japanese academic culture
- Disciplinary Norms
- FD for EMI dominated by language teachers

Teachers' Experiences in EMI

- L2 teaching = less flexibility, less interaction
  - Simpler presentations
  - More tied to lesson plans
  - Less able to handle Q&A and discussion
  - Less improvisation
  - Fewer examples and definitions

  (Sullivan & Enever, 2009; Tange, 2010; Wilkinson, 2005; Vinke,)

Teachers Experiences Abroad

- Most Japanese faculty teaching EMI have overseas degrees (center scholarship)
  - Apprenticeship of observation
  - Teaching in English = western pedagogy
  - Notions of western pedagogy

  (Lortie, 1975; Hashimoto, 2005; Manakul, 2007; Ishikawa, 2009; IHEP, 2009)

- cf. Bradford (2015, 2016). EMI faculty change the classroom language but maintain Japanese pedagogy.

Students' Experiences with EMI

- Shorter attention span
- More time to complete task
- More need for concept checking
- Double cognitive load
- Problems with content-specific vocabulary
- Language anxiety
- Tendency to more concrete thinking

Pushing EMI teachers to try new approaches

Traditional Japanese Academic Culture

- University as an umbrella organization
  - Membership more important that activity
  - University as a time of personal growth
- Which university (and which department) more important than learning outcomes
  - Job recruitment before graduation
    - Based on status of school rather than individual accomplishments
- University entrance more difficult than graduation
- Faculty focused on research and administration
  - Little integration of research and teaching
- Teaching based on transmission of knowledge

(Altbach, 1996, Arimoto & Ehara, 1996; Ritschev & Cole, 2003; Arimoto, 2009)

Evolving Japanese Academic Culture

- Greater focus on teaching and learning
  - Integration of research and teaching
- Higher priority on learning outcomes
- Quality assurance for learning outcomes
- Faculty Development (FD)
- Recent drive towards "active learning"
  - The student as an active participant in learning
  - Teaching based on knowledge creation
- Changing expectations from potential employers

(Kitamura, 1997; Arimoto, 2009; Yamada, 2012; Fink, 2013; Suzuki, 2013)

Disciplinary Norms

- Notions of a global standard

- Images of how the discipline is taught and learned

- Certain ways of thought / expression valued
  - Academic literacies

- Certain learning experiences deemed key

(Lea & Street, 2006; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008; Kapp & Bangeni, 2009)

Internationalization cum Westernization

- Internationalization of higher education is really westernization?
  - Push to be "world class"
    - As defined by current British, American leading institutions
  - Concern with international rankings
  - Dominance of English
  - Influence of American models

(Jon & Kim, 2011; Gharzarian, 2011; Wong & Wu, 2011)

EMI FD Dominated by Language Teachers

- British Council, language support centers, content – language teaching partnerships, etc.
  - Understand students L2 proficiency
  - Experience working with L2 students
  - Sensitive to L2 students' needs

  - Influence on pedagogy, classroom practice?
  - Assumption that EMI teachers have to adapt and become more like EAP teachers

Implications of a Blended Academic Culture

- Definitions of "good" student / "good" teacher
- Expectations for student performance
- Types and volume of assignments
- Assessment criteria
- Patterns of classroom interaction
- Rhetorical style
- Definitions of plagiarism, cheating
- Value of collaboration
- Etc.

Can and should be addressed by EAP programs

Questions about Students' Needs

- What proficiency level is "enough"?
  - TOEFL 550, CEFR B2, IELTS 5.5?
- Where are the gaps between high school preparation and EMI needs?
- What skills need to be prioritized?
- What standards need to be met?
- What support is needed?
- Etc.

Finding Answers:
How does EAP need to Adapt to EMI?

- Broad-based research on classroom practices and students' needs
  - Classroom observation
  - Faculty interviews
  - Survey / diary studies
  - Analysis of teaching materials

Investigating Implications

- Research project by EAP faculty
- Small, rural university with new EMI program
  - Typical: small (<10% of students), all domestic students and mainly domestic faculty, social sciences
  - Atypical: Link to EAP, 20% of department faculty are international, 25% international credentials

Investigating the Implications

- Surveys, interviews, observations with EMI faculty to understand their expectations for student performance
  - What do they want EMI students to be able to do?
  - What strengths / weaknesses do they see in EMI students?
  - Where do EMI students have trouble?
  - How are EMI students assessed?

Investigating the Implications

- Some elements of "standard" EAP practice valued
  - Coherent writing & formal presentations
  - Summary (including multimodality & intertextuality)
  - Class discussion, peer feedback, reflective self-evaluation

- Implications for change in EAP practice
  - longer-term focus on a single topic
  - more one-on-one interaction with students
  - a larger role for the students' L1
  - fundamental academic skills missing in L1

- Need for localized ESAP

(Brown & Adamson, 2011; 2012a; 2012b)

Adapting the EAP Program

- a role for translanguaging and plurilingual goals
  - Essays and assignments based on both L1 and L2 sources.
  - Class work to compare L1 and L2 sources on same topic.
  - Training on search skills for finding both L1 and L2 sources.
  - Teacher sourced L2 texts vs. student sourced L1 texts.
  - Instruction on differences in rhetorical style, outlook, etc.

- the use of CLIL to bridge language and content classes
  - Semester-long sustained contact with content.
  - Content chosen to reflect later EMI contents.
  - CLIL as a bridge between EAP and EMI.
  - CLIL as a sheltered space for students to explore EMI.
  - Shift from initial soft CLIL to later hard CLIL.

- **E**AP reconceptualized as E**A**P
  - EAP as part of the First Year Experience (FYE)
  - Greater focus on skills, less language
  - Work towards academic skills transferable to L1.
  - EAP, EMI & L1 faculty develop Core Shared Objectives
    - Summary, Critical reading, Making Inferences, Reading charts and graphs, Time management, Process writing, Goal setting

Adapting the EAP Program II

- Needs analysis focused on students
- Sing the pendulum back to language proficiency
- Parallel L1 courses in writing & academic literacy

EAP and EMI

Questions   Answers