Access to and experience of English-medium instruction in higher education in Germany: A study into English language entry requirements and their relevance

Simone Stuers
MEd, MBA

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Approved by:
Dr. A. Kristina Hultgren
Professor Dr. Regine Hampel
Abstract

There is an increasing number of English-medium programmes offered at universities and universities of applied sciences (polytechnics) in Germany. While research has focused on various issues surrounding this phenomenon, there is a dearth of research into the English-language entry requirements for English-medium programmes. This research investigated the usage, role and perceived relevance of English language entry requirements for English-medium programmes.

The study used a variety of methods. First a website survey was conducted of 426 institutions in Germany’s higher education sector. Institutional homepages were scrutinised for English-medium programmes and their English language entry requirements. Then, questionnaires and interviews explored domestic students’ experiences of their English-medium studies with a view to determine the appropriacy of English-language entry requirements. Relevant programme leaders were also surveyed and the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Research in NRW was contacted to provide information about state level policies.

The website survey suggested that at both bachelor’s and master’s level, the majority of English-medium programmes specify English language entry requirements; however, it is noteworthy that in many cases none are stated. In terms of cut scores, significant variation was found. However, the most frequently requested score for entry into EMI programmes at bachelor’s level is 575 for the paper-based, 213 for the computer-based and 90 for the internet based TOEFL and 6.5 for IELTS. At master’s, it is slightly lower at 550 for the paper-based, 213 for the computer-based and 90 for the internet-based TOEFL and 6.5 for IELTS. In all cases, this equates to B2 (CEFR).

The survey of programme leaders suggested that despite an apparent lack of evidence for setting English language entry requirements at specific levels, institutions are generally convinced of the usefulness of English language entry requirements. In the student questionnaire and interviews, the vast majority of
participants reported that their English proficiency enabled them to participate successfully in their EMI programme. This appeared to be the case whether or not they recall having had to show proof of their English language proficiency upon enrolment. This study found that general recommendations by the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Research in NRW, which considers English proficiency obtained through secondary school education as sufficient for entry to bachelor studies, were followed.

Thus, this thesis gives a detailed account of English-medium programmes and their English language entry requirements at higher education institutions in Germany, providing useful knowledge for institutions and policy makers.

**Key words**

English-medium instruction, EMI, English language entry requirements, Internationalisation, Englishisation
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As a non-native speaker of English, it is a challenge to write academically in English, so I comprehend how students and staff in EMI contexts feel. Without my friend Christine this project would not have been possible. I am thankful for her patience to check my writing. Over time, my linguistic support network expanded, and I also owe many thanks to my friend Sneha, who supported me despite many own commitments.

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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AE</td>
<td>American English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BE</td>
<td>British English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEFR</td>
<td>Common European Framework of Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLIL</td>
<td>Content and Language Integrated Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAP</td>
<td>English for Academic Purposes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFL</td>
<td>English as a Foreign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELE</td>
<td>English Language Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELT</td>
<td>English Language Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMI</td>
<td>English as a medium of instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMP</td>
<td>English-medium programmes</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>English for Specific Purposes</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETP</td>
<td>English-taught programmes</td>
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<tr>
<td>ETS</td>
<td>Educational Testing Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMAT</td>
<td>Graduate Management Admission Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRE</td>
<td>Graduate Record Examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HE</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEI</td>
<td>Higher Education Institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICLHE</td>
<td>Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS</td>
<td>International English Language Testing System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>First language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>Second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRW</td>
<td>North Rhine-Westphalia (a German federal state)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL</td>
<td>Test of English as a Foreign Language</td>
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</table>
TOEPAS  Test of Oral English for Academic Staff
TOPTULTE  Test of Performance for Teaching at University Level through the Medium of English
IV. Glossary

Abitur
A German qualification which students obtain having passed a set of examinations after twelve or thirteen years of school education. The Abitur is needed to enrol in university programmes.

EMI programmes
When referring to English-medium programmes here, English/German bilingual programmes are included.

Federal states
An administrative unit of governance in Germany. Germany is divided into 16 federal states (Bundesländer).

Federal system
A system of government that divides the power between the national government (which in Germany is responsible e.g. for foreign affairs or security) and the federal state governments (which in Germany are responsible e.g. for schooling and education).

Foreign language
Any language other than the first language of the speaker. In Germany domestic students generally have German as their first language. Any other language is regarded as a foreign language, including English.

GMAT
A standardised test for maths and essay writing as entry test for a master’s degree.

GRE
A standardised test for maths and essay writing for entry in a graduate or business school.

Numerus clauses
Entry threshold for particular university subjects or programmes.

Programme leaders
The term is used here to cover programme leaders and one respondent from the international office.

Students
When referring to students here, these are domestic university students who hold a German secondary school-leaving certificate (Abitur). Where international students are meant, this is explicitly stated.
School-leaving certificate
When referring to school-leaving certificates here, the certificate obtained after having successfully passed the *Abitur* exams is meant.

University
This term is used here to cover universities and universities of applied sciences. It needs to be noted that German universities of applied sciences do not necessarily have the right to award a degree, but universities do.
1. **Introduction, background and context**

1.1 **Introduction**

This chapter begins by giving important background information on the rise of English-medium education in Germany in particular, stating the aim of the research and describing how the idea for this study emerged. It then sets out the context in which this study is situated. It introduces the concept of English language entry requirements and portrays the German educational system. The chapter ends with an account of the language regulations in Germany for English-medium programmes with a view to explore, in subsequent chapters, how these regulations are implemented in practice and viewed by students.

1.2 **Background**

The process of the European integration has changed higher education institutions (HEIs) in Germany significantly. The Bologna Declaration, which was signed in 1999, aimed at standardising degrees and study periods across Europe and affiliated countries. It was a major touchstone in the process of standardising European higher education.

Initially, the primary goal of the Bologna declaration was to enhance student mobility. The introduction of the bachelor/master structure in Germany and elsewhere facilitated student mobility. With a standardised system of transferable credits, student mobility became easier. The ECTS, European Credit Transfer System, was established to make modules comparable and transferable so that institutions no longer have to struggle with recognition of performance and accreditation. The HEIs in Europe, including in Germany, prepared themselves to host international students and many started to introduce programmes taught through the medium of English.
However, since enrolment in English-medium instruction (EMI) programmes is not restricted to international students, German students started to enrol in such programmes too for various reasons. Some have also pointed to the paradox that despite setting out to facilitate international mobility, the standardisation of degree structures into 6-semester bachelor programmes and 4-semester master programmes might have hindered mobility because it is not easily possible to spend a semester abroad in this highly structured study programme (Rutert, 2014; Richter, 2011). So, this acted as an additional incentive for domestic students to enrol in programmes which are taught in English (Crowther et al., 2000). To benefit from a different language of instruction, programmes, which were initially set up for international students, became attractive for domestic German students.

English-medium instruction programmes are often labeled as ‘international programmes’ (Internationale Studiengänge) in Germany. But what exactly is an international programme? According to Motz (2005), initially there was no commonly accepted definition nor was there any authority which monitored the compliance of international programmes in Germany in terms of standards. Recommendations were available from the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the German states (Länder) in the Federal Republic of Germany (Kultusministerkonferenz), the Conference of University Rectors (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz) and the Council of Science (Wissenschaftsrat), three important bodies in the German educational landscape. The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the German states (Länder) in the Federal Republic of Germany is a decisive meeting, which the ministers of culture of all 16 German states attend. The Conference of University Rectors is a key body at national level, bringing together all rectors of educational institutions. The Science Council is a high-ranked educational committee, which gives advice to the Conference of University Rectors.
The Conference of University Rectors recommended using the following criteria when setting up and accrediting international programmes (Motz, 2005, p. 19):”

- A minimum of 40% of the programme is conducted in a foreign language
  or
- It is obligatory to study a minimum of 2 semesters abroad
  or
- A double diploma (in cooperation with another foreign partner institution) is issued
  or
- Common curricula are developed together with a foreign partner institution.”

If a programme fulfilled one single criterion in the above list, in 2002 it was categorised as international (Motz, 2005).

Crowther et al. (2000) investigated the phenomenon of ‘internationalisation-at-home’ in the context of Germany. Internationalisation-at-home means providing local students with the advantages of a stay abroad where lectures are offered in another language, mostly English. Crowther et al. defined internationalisation-at-home as “any internationally related activity with the exception of outbound student and staff mobility” (2000, p. 6). The internationalisation of the German HEIs has provided a platform for local students to benefit from being educated in English, although the target group for these programmes were initially international students. Thus, the enrolment of domestic students seems to be a by-product, not an intentional development.

To ensure that students have the appropriate English language proficiency to participate in EMI programmes, institutions often use instruments such as English language entry requirements to assess the English proficiency level of their students.
However, there is little research on what these English language entry requirements might be and the extent to which they are appropriate for EMI environments.

1.3 The research aim

My research aim is twofold. Firstly, I seek to contribute to the academic body of literature on EMI by generating new knowledge. Specifically, my study will explore the existence of English language entry requirements for EMI programmes at German HEIs, the extent to which these are influenced by the federal state administration, and how they are operationalised by programme leaders and perceived by domestic students. Secondly, the study aims at contributing to educational policy and practice by documenting the existence of English language entry requirements, how they were set up, as well as students’ view of their relevance for successful EMI participation.

To achieve its aims, the study will use a variety of methods:

1) A website survey will be conducted on all Germany’s HEIs to document the current state of the art in respect to English language entry requirements.
2) Leaders of EMI programmes at HEIs in North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) will be surveyed about their rationales for setting English language entry requirements at specific levels.
3) A questionnaire will be administered to domestic students enrolled in EMI programmes at seven institutions in North Rhine-Westphalia, and interviews will be conducted with a subset of those, to explore students’ views of EMI programmes in general and of English language entry requirements in particular.

In the next section, I describe my personal motivations for undertaking this research.
1.4 Personal and professional motivations and interest

My interest in examining English as a medium of instruction developed over time. I was consistently exposed to the English language during a high school year in the U.S. and then through job tasks requiring the use of English. I finished my MBA at the Open University Business School in 2007, which gave me my first academic study experience through the medium of English. Since I was very confident with the professional application of the language, I decided in 2008 to work for a company in Germany which operates in English and I became immersed in a different culture while being in my home country.

During my studies, I was able to see how many non-native students struggled with writing assignments in English. My MBA group was an international cohort with students mostly from Germany and the bordering countries, including Eastern Europe. I had the chance to read a few assignments from my fellow students and was astonished at the differences in terms of their English proficiency. Some students wrote excellent English, others had English that in my view was not at the appropriate level for academia. I was surprised at the low linguistic proficiency of some fellow students despite established entry requirements for English.

After having finished the Master of Education at the Open University in 2010, I noticed that more and more German universities seemed to be shifting their teaching language to English. Private universities in particular used this feature in advertisements in the newspapers and on posters. Although, I noted that many German universities stated the English language entry requirements for studying in their English-medium programmes on their homepage, a preliminary literature search suggested that there is currently little research on the English language requirements for entry into EMI programmes. Therefore, I concluded that although EMI is a growing phenomenon in Germany, little attention has been paid specifically to the English language entry requirements.
I currently work for a multinational corporation which uses English as its official language. Being immersed in an English-speaking work environment has made me sensitive to the linguistic challenges of operating on a day-to-day basis in a foreign language. Initially, I had hoped to conduct my research in a corporate environment where English is the official language, but after much deliberation, I decided not to pursue this idea further because commercial sensitivities might have made access difficult. Instead I decided to focus on English as a vehicular language in academia. Although an academic context is admittedly very different from a corporate one, there is arguably some merit in examining English-medium university programmes that newly graduated appointees may have completed, particularly in relation to their English proficiency. Thus, despite being an outsider to academia, I decided to focus my research on this setting. Before going on to discuss English language entry requirements, I turn to an overview of the German educational system.

1.5 The German educational system

The educational landscape in Germany is vast; there are not only different routes within education, but also the types of schools or number of study years might differ between federal states. In what follows, a simplified picture of the educational landscape in NRW, the main focus of my study, will be provided.
Before the age of six, which usually signals the entry to elementary school, children often attend a day nursery and thereafter a kindergarten, as shown in Figure 1.1. After four years of elementary school, the child attends one of several kinds of school depending on his/her performance and the teacher’s recommendation. Secondary modern schools (*Hauptschule* or *Realschule*), grammar schools (*Gymnasium*) and other forms of schools with two or three different types of parallel educational streams (*Gesamtschule*), all lead to a certificate after 9th grade (*Hauptschulabschluss*) or 10th grade (*Mittlere Reife*). After 10th grade, it is then possible to continue at *Gesamtschule* or *Gymnasium* to sit the *Abitur* exams, which are a prerequisite for entering the tertiary level.

Universities offer general education; universities of applied sciences (similar to the former polytechnics in the UK), are more specialised. There are also colleges of art, conservatories, universities of cooperative education (*Berufsakademie*), civil service
universities of applied sciences (Verwaltungsfachhochschule) or private academies which are highly specialised and offer a restricted number of programmes in a particular area. These are not included in this simplified view.

Previously, degree programmes in Germany were made up of foundation courses (Grundstudium) and a so-called main study period (Hauptstudium), resulting in a Magister (equivalent to an MA degree), a Diplom (equivalent to an MSc degree) or a Staatsexamen (in law or medicine, or in any subject as part of a teaching degree). As a result of the Bologna process this structure was replaced with the bachelor/master structure. In 2013, 87 per cent of all programmes followed the new structure (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, 2013). In particular, the Bologna declaration standardised the study periods for bachelor and master programmes as well as the accreditation of such programmes. This was done to make it easier for students to study at different universities, domestic and abroad, and to transfer their credits from one institution to another.

The level of English (or French in border areas with France) which pupils obtain in schools in Germany has varied. Pupils who started elementary school prior to 2003 had to wait until 5th grade in secondary school to receive English or French lessons. In 2003, second language lessons were introduced in the 3rd grade of elementary school; in 2009 they started to be offered in 1st grade (Bildungsportal, 2017). In 1st grade pupils are usually 6-7 years old, in 3rd grade they are 8-9 years old and in 5th grade 10-11 years old. In elementary school, pupils have 2 English lessons per week; in Gymnasium, it is 4-5 hours per week during the lower grades and 3-5 hours per week in the senior classes. The main route to the Abitur is attending a Gesamtschule or Gymnasium for the full duration of eight to nine years. The number of years depends on the school; some schools offer the so-called ‘Turbo-Abitur’ after eight years. This was the result of a reform in 2005 which came into effect in 2013. Students who were part of the old system will have had one more year at school and with that more experience, practice and confidence to use English.
1.6 EMI and English language entry requirements in German higher education

This section will firstly report on the extent of EMI programmes in German higher education, and then focus on who has formal responsibility for English language entry requirements and explain the existing federal state policies in this regard. This policy context will be compared, in subsequent chapters, with institutional practice.

1.6.1 German federal states and English-medium instruction

Germany is divided into sixteen federal states and English-medium instruction is available in each; nonetheless not to the same extent nor degree.

![Figure 1.2: EMI programmes offered per federal state in Germany (based on my website survey)](image)

Figure 1.2 shows the percentage of EMI programmes offered in each federal state in Germany, according to the data collected for this study. The extent of offered
programmes depends on the existing number of institutions in the particular federal state and the state’s history. Former East German states have a different history regarding foreign language learning; the first foreign language to be there learnt was Russian. Also federal states bordering to France do so; their first foreign language to-be-learnt was French. The three biggest federal states, Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria and North Rhine-Westphalia account for almost half of all programmes offered (49.7 per cent), with North Rhine-Westphalia heading the list (20.9 per cent). Two parts of my research will be carried out in North Rhine-Westphalia, due to the fact that this is where the majority of EMI programmes are.

1.6.2 Policies regulating entry into higher education generally and foreign language programmes specifically

Germany is run by a government encompassing fourteen ministries, each of which is responsible for a specific sector. However, not everything is centrally managed; a lot of responsibility is given to the governments in the federal states, which also feature ministries. There are matters which are dealt with at national level such as foreign policy or defence; others are owned by the federal states such as culture or education. At national level the ministry of education gives recommendations and, in some cases, mandatory policies to the states. Each federal state also has its own ministry which is in charge of education. In some federal states one single ministry is in charge of education, in other federal states, higher education and schooling are separate and the responsibility is shared by two ministries.

Higher education in Germany is regulated by a Higher Education Act, which exists for every federal state. Each state has its own Higher Education Act since most issues in education are decided at federal level and not at national level. The Higher Education Acts all specify that the Abitur is mandatory for access to German higher education, no matter if the language of instruction is German or English. Also, the federal states
have the power to introduce additional regulations, which can include entry requirements to university programmes.

All states have additional separate regulations concerning access to university programmes regarding arts, music, sports or languages. Most states have a broad wording of the regulation to make it fit for many contexts, only four federal states that is Bremen, Lower Saxony, North Rhine-Westphalia and Schleswig-Holstein, explicitly mention proof of proficiency in a foreign language as special admission requirement. This applies to any language. A precise equivalent, for example in terms of the Common European Framework of References (CEFR) is not given, nor are any proficiency tests mentioned. Four states explicitly distinguish between bachelor’s and master’s level, two have separate regulations for master’s level only. Most policies either point to a specific process evidencing suitability (Eignungsfeststellungsverfahren) of a prospective student or to a complementary institutional regulation (Zusatzsatzung) where this is determined, or to programme-specific examination regulations. As this thesis focuses on the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia, its policies will be scrutinised more closely in section 5.2.

1.7 Overview of thesis

Chapter 1 described how the idea for this study emerged and the research rationale. It provided the background for this study, that is, the internationalisation of HEIs in Germany and connected to it, the rise of EMI, which has contributed to changes in the German academic landscape. It depicted the German educational system. Furthermore, it provided an introduction to English language entry requirements and described the German context. It also discussed the regulations for English language entry requirements in Germany.
Chapter 2 starts by defining EMI and reviews the literature on EMI at bachelor’s and master’s level. It gives an account of the existing literature on English language entry requirements and explores the literature on the most common English admission tests and the CEFR. The chapter closes with the research questions.

Chapter 3 discusses the methodology and the methods adopted in this study. It will describe, in detail, the mixed-methods approach consisting of a website survey, two questionnaires (targeting programme leaders and students) and student interviews was used to investigate access to and experience of English language entry requirements at the institutions of higher education. Ethical considerations are described. Finally, the approach to data analysis - a combination of thematic analysis and descriptive statistics - is presented.

Chapter 4 presents and discusses the findings of the first part of the study, the website survey. It reports on the specific English language entry requirements that are in place across German HEIs. The chapter concludes by answering the first research question.

Chapter 5 presents and discusses the findings emerging from the survey of EMI programme leaders in NRW. It explores the views of the programme leaders and their approaches to English language entry requirements. The chapter concludes by answering the second research question.

Chapter 6 presents and discusses the findings of the enquiry into student views of English language entry requirements on EMI programmes in NRW, based on a questionnaire and interviews. It closes by answering the third research question.

Chapter 7 begins by answering the main research question. It then states the contribution to the academic field and to educational policies and practices.
Furthermore, the limitations of the study are identified. The chapter closes with highlighting the potential for future research.
2. Literature review

2.1 Introduction

In seeking to contribute to the growing literature of ‘English as a medium of instruction’, this chapter begins by defining ‘EMI’ before going on to review relevant research. I will argue that despite a recent surge in research into EMI, there is a gap in understanding of how English language entry requirements are employed, set and viewed by different stakeholders. The review paves the way for raising the research questions at the end of this chapter.

2.2 Defining EMI

EMI has been defined as “an increase in the use of English at universities of nation states where English is not the official language” (Hultgren, 2014, p. 389). For the purposes of this thesis, EMI is understood as follows: Firstly, EMI is not about teaching English to students. Rather, it is the teaching of an academic subject through English, a language which in most cases is not the first language (L1) of the students or the teachers. Mauranen, preferring the term “academic English” puts it as follows: “academic English is mostly used by non-native speakers” (2008, p. 199). The fact that EMI is about content, not language, differentiates it from CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) (Coyle et al., 2010). CLIL is a didactic way of learning and teaching a subject (Coyle et al., 2010) or, as Dearden says, CLIL has a “dual educational objective” (Dearden, 2014, p. 7). In CLIL classes, language and content are ideally equally weighted, taught and assessed. In contrast, EMI is not a teaching method (Dearden, 2014) and in EMI courses, the content, not the language, is typically in focus.
Secondly, the language in EMI courses is necessarily English, as reflected in the first letter of the acronym ‘EMI’. Courses conducted in another language have been referred to as ‘foreign-language medium instruction’ (FLMI) (Gürtler and Kronewald, 2015), and are not growing to the same extent as EMI courses. This is another feature distinguishing EMI from CLIL, in that in CLIL courses, the language does not necessarily have to be English, although in practice it often is (Fortanet-Gómez, 2013). In Canada, for example, there are CLIL classes conducted in French due to the bilingual nature of the country (Coyle et al., 2010).

Thirdly, ‘EMI’ as a term is not restricted to any geographical area, nor to any educational level, being used to designate the teaching through English in both primary, secondary and tertiary education as well as in many ex-colonial contexts (Dearden, 2014). In contrast, CLIL is usually applied to secondary education, that is, with relatively young students (Coyle et al., 2010). However, Fortanet-Gómez (2013) talks of CLIL in higher education. Moreover, the term ‘Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education’ (ICLHE) emerged a few years ago as a pedagogical strategy akin to CLIL for the teaching through English in higher education (Costa and Coleman, 2013).

For this study, I adopt the following simplified definition of EMI: “EMI is the teaching of subject content through English”. With this definition in mind, EMI is clearly distinguishable from concepts that have to do with teaching English as a subject, such as English as a Foreign Language, (EFL), English language education (ELE) or English Language Teaching (ELT), where the language itself is in focus. In my thesis the terms ‘English-medium instruction’, ‘English as a medium of instruction’ and ‘English as the medium of instruction’ will be used interchangeably.

English-medium instruction can be delivered 100 per cent in English or in a mix of the local language (in this case, German) and English. It should be noted, however, that language practices are often a lot more hybrid and cannot be categorised in a
straightforward manner (Mortensen, 2014). Nonetheless, in this thesis, ‘EMI’ will be used to refer to programmes in which the student is fully immersed in a discipline in English and also covers programmes, which are conducted bilingually English/German.

2.3 The rise of English as a medium of instruction

It is widely agreed that the use of EMI in non-English-dominant higher education is growing. Wächter and Maiworm found in their studies, which encompassed 28 European countries, that the number of English-medium programmes has significantly increased from 725 in 2001 to 2,389 in 2007 and 8,089 in 2014 (Maiworm and Wächter, 2002; Wächter and Maiworm, 2008; 2014). Likewise, the proportion of HEIs offering English-medium programmes has risen from 18.1 per cent in 2007 to 26.9 per cent in 2014 and the proportion of students enrolled in English-medium programmes has increased from 0.7 per cent in 2007 to 1.3 per cent in 2014 (Wächter and Maiworm, 2014).

Despite the growth, it is important to note that there is a north-south divide in Europe, with the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden heading the list and Southern and Eastern European countries being located further down; Germany ranks in the middle. Research into the causes of EMI tends to point to ‘internationalisation’ as one of the key drivers, with institutions increasingly opening up to international staff and students (Teichler, 2007). As Gnutzmann and Intemann put it: “academic education [is] an international market, [where] universities from all over the world try to attract students with English-medium study programmes” (2008, p. 18). Englishisation is the linguistic concomitant of globalisation (Dor, 2004).


2.4 The rise of English as an academic language in Germany

For Germany, the national context of this thesis, scholars have pointed to the particular upheaval caused by EMI since German used to be a powerful language of science and academic knowledge. During 1900 and 1940, it was hard to study chemistry or medicine without being able to read German (Spolsky, 2004). German was the language of scientific publications, not only in Germany, but also in most other European countries (Spolsky, 2009). However, after World War I German was discredited; a sentiment that peaked after World War II (Ammon and McConnell, 2002). Also many scientists migrated to the U.S. and started to publish in English (Ammon and McConnell, 2002). As a result, many journals changed their titles from German to English, for example ‘Archiv für Kreislaufforschung’ turned into ‘Basic Research in Cardiology’, ‘Zeitschrift für Kinderheilkunde’ into ‘European Journal of Pediatrics’, [...], ‘Zeitschrift für Tierpsychologie’ into ‘Ethology’, ‘Psychologische Forschung’ into ‘Psychological Research’ (Ammon and McConnell, 2002, p. 19). With respect to research as well as teaching, international recognition is of high value for scientists (Lillis and Curry, 2010) which can only happen if their articles reach a wide international audience. This, of course, is a driver of English as an international academic language.

In the winter semester of 1997/98 the first international study programmes were introduced in Germany (Ammon and McConnell, 2002) to attract foreign students to German HEIs (Coleman, 2006). The initial reasons for doing so were a need for increased international cooperation and reputation and a desire to expand the competitive position of universities (Teichler, 2007); later it was about making domestic students ‘fit’ for the international labour market (Wächter and Maiworm, 2008). Ammon and McConnell counted 43 German EMI programmes in their 2002 study. Six years later Wächter and Maiworm already reported 415 EMI programmes (Wächter and Maiworm, 2008). In 2014, the German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst or DAAD) reported 860 English-language
bachelor and master programmes on their website (DAAD, 2014). The number of students is still small, compared to 2.6 million students who were enrolled for the winter semester 2013/2014 in university programmes in Germany (Federal Statistical Office, 2014). Gürtler and Kronewald (2015) noticed that 98.3 per cent of foreign-language-medium instruction in Germany is conducted in English.

Although English is still a foreign language to many people in Germany, it is gaining importance in many other areas of society, too. Germany is in the so-called ‘expanding circle’ of countries in which English is on the rise. Kachru (1985) depicted in three circles how many people make use of English. The inner circle encompasses the native speakers (UK, U.S., Canada, Australia and New Zealand). Today, they make up 6.3 per cent of the world’s population (percentage based on figures from Statista, 2017). The outer circle encompasses countries where English is used as official language and represents the speakers of English as a second language, who amount to approximately 508 million (Ostler, 2006). The expanding circle, which encompasses Germany, includes countries where English is used as a foreign language, which amounts to approximately one billion people (British Council, 2014). Of course, it is important to point out that there are different levels of English proficiency within each of these circles.

2.5 Domestic students and English as a medium of instruction

Much of the research on English as a medium of instruction has focused explicitly on international students (Gürtler and Kronewald, 2015; Earls, 2013). For this study, I decided to concentrate on domestic German students, defined here as students who, prior to entering university, have passed the German Abitur, which is equivalent to the A-levels in the UK. The rationale for focusing on domestic students has to do with my interest in English language requirements. For this purpose, it seems appropriate to look into a group of people who might be comparatively homogeneous regarding
their starting point of English language proficiency, as they have gone through the same educational system.

Whilst EMI programmes in Germany were probably primarily created with international students in mind, domestic students “who wish to receive a more ‘international’ education, i.e. to study in a multi-cultural environment and improve their English skills and cultural awareness” may also benefit (Hultgren et al., 2014, p. 14). Ammon and McConnell (2002) remind us that a considerable number of students in EMI programmes are domestic German students. The authors reported on a survey, conducted during the 2000 summer semester by the German Student Exchange Service which found that 40 per cent of all students enrolled in EMI programmes were German students (DAAD, 2000, as in Ammon and McConnell, 2002). My search for more current numbers of domestic students in international programmes across Germany was not successful, even though I did not restrict it to an internet search but also phoned the German Student Services (Deutsches Studentenwerk) to check if the data was available on request and also contacted the German Student Exchange Service. However, neither of the organisations provided me with any data. This might be because domestic students are often not a target group for their international programmes (Hultgren, 2014).

In terms of international students, their number has risen to about 205,000 (Barthelt et al., 2015) by 2013. In North Rhine-Westphalia, the focus of this thesis, about 50,000 foreign students, who hold a foreign university entrance qualification, were enrolled (Bildungsausländer) (Information und Technik Nordrhein-Westfalen, 2014). This is about 7 per cent of all students studying in NRW. I did also manage to secure data on the proportion of domestic students on EMI programmes in some of the higher education institutions in NRW.
Table 2.1 shows that the numbers of students enrolled in English programmes vary considerably. At institution 1 there are 1,540 students enrolled in English-medium programmes, whereas in institution 4 the numbers are much lower. Also, the number of German students enrolled in EMI programmes varies considerably. At institution 1 only a quarter of the students are German whereas in institution 4 and 5 it is over 40 per cent. Institutions 2, 3, 6, and 7 did not provide any numbers. The findings at institutions 4 and 5 echo the results of the German Student Exchange Service, that around 40 per cent of the students enrolled in EMI programmes are domestic students.

There might be a difference between the labels ‘German student’ and ‘domestic student’; however, the difference is likely to be minor and can be neglected for my thesis. For my thesis I will work with the definition that a German student should have a German passport. A domestic student, however, could have a Turkish passport, but have lived all their life in Germany and studied in Germany and thereby has a German Abitur. For my research it was important that students have a German Abitur, which ensures that they have a good level of German and learned English for several years in secondary school. I use the terms ‘German student’, ‘local student’ and ‘domestic student’ interchangeably.
2.6 EMI at bachelor’s and master’s level

English-medium instruction programmes exist at bachelor’s level and at master’s level, but the vast majority tends to be at master’s level (Wächter and Maiworm, 2014). One reason for the greater proportion of EMI programmes at master’s level may be that there is greater competition for students at this level. It is also the case that the more specialised a subject becomes, the greater the need to attract students from overseas. Because both bachelor’s and master’s level are in scope for this thesis, it is useful to consider the difference between them.

A bachelor programme targets comprehension, learning and application of basic methods (Wewel, 2011) for professional use. A bachelor degree allows graduates to enter the labour market. The students are provided with essential information regarding their subject (Harmsen, 2014). In contrast, master studies prepare for scientific competence, which enables the young researcher to conduct research. The element of research comes in at master’s level, especially at universities. Universities of applied sciences are more focused on practical preparation of their students for the labour market.

Graddol (2006) suggests that IELTS 6.0 might be appropriate to follow an undergraduate university programme taught in English; however, he concedes that many students rarely do better than 5.0.

Doing one’s studies in English in Germany may be different for bachelor and master students, with master’s study possibly requiring greater linguistic skills (Ammon, 1998). This may mean that it would be appropriate to have different English language entry requirements in place at master’s and bachelor’s level and also that students’ views on the appropriateness of English language entry requirements might depend on whether they are at studying at bachelor’s or master’s level. Part of the aim of this thesis is to find this out.
2.7 **EMI as a field of study**

EMI has become a vast field of study for researchers who focus on various topics, such as whether English is a threat or an opportunity (Jenkins, 2014; Seidlhofer, 2011; Phillipson, 2009), whether learning will be hampered by taking place in a non-native language (Airey and Lindner, 2006; Airey, 2011; Hellekjaer, 2010) or how EMI policy compares with practice (Soler-Carbonell, 2014; Björkman, 2013; Costa and Coleman, 2013) to name but a few.

EMI is to some a controversial concept. There are purported benefits to institutions and individuals: if institutions open up through increased use of English, they can attract good staff, gain more reputation and increase their financial standing (Coleman, 2006; Dimova et al., 2015). There are also said to be benefits for students in that they will have a wider range of programmes to choose from if they are willing to study abroad, and they can also acquire greater knowledge of English which prepares them for an international career in the globalised world (Teichler, 2007). In contrast, Phillipson views internalisation rather critically, viewing it as an affirmation of U.S. and British hegemony and a potential threat to other languages and cultures. He also suspects a “drop in academic standards” (2009, p. 85) if subject content is brought to students in English while neglecting the fact that the students might have “a radically different cultural and linguistic starting-point” (Phillipson, 2009, p. 85). Gürtler and Kronewald (2015) criticise English-medium instruction in German higher education institutions for its potential threat to the continuing spread of foreign language medium teaching, while Earls sees it as encroaching on the status of the German language in higher education (Earls, 2013).

There are few systematic reviews of EMI; however Macaro et al. (2018) offer a notable exception. In an extensive review of 285 studies on EMI, 83 of which focused in depth on EMI at tertiary level, the authors explore the literature’s coverage of key issues, including how EMI is defined and labelled; how and why it spreads across the
world; the attitudes of students’ and lecturers’ to it and its effect on both language and content learning. Each of these topics is summarised in the following.

With regard to terminology, Macaro et al. observe considerable variation in the labelling of the phenomenon of EMI. The majority of studies (62 of 83) refer to the phenomenon as ‘English medium instruction’, or variations thereof; however, mostly without any clear explanation as to what this term covers more precisely. The second-most favoured label is ‘content and language integrated learning’ (12 of 83 studies); despite no rationale being provided for using this label. In other words, it was not clear to what extent the teaching staff did seek to combine language and subject content. Furthermore, other labels such as ‘parallel-language education’, ‘English as a lingua franca’, ‘partial English medium’, ‘English content-based instruction’, ‘English medium and Spanish as a first language’, and ‘English taught programmes’ were also used (Macaro et al., 2018, p. 37).

The authors note that this terminological inconsistency and imprecision applies not only to the literature but also to institutional practice. For instance, it is rarely clear if EMI means that all programmes are taught in English, or only some; or whether EMI “is entirely dependent on the profile of the teacher in question” (Macaro et al., 2018, p. 47). The authors themselves propose the following, increasingly well-established definition, of EMI as “[t]he use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions where the first language of the majority of the population is not English” (Macaro et al., 2018, p. 37).

In terms of growth, the authors note that studies of EMI have been undertaken across all continents, testifying to its global expansion. The exceptions to this are Africa and South and Central America where no or comparatively fewer studies have been undertaken. With a few exceptions (Dearden, 2014; Brenn-White and van Rest, 2012; Hellekjaer, 2010), studies tend to focus on a single country, with Spain being the most studied country in Europe and Korea the most studied in Asia. Whilst number of
studies per region should not be conflated with actual growth, the main drivers of the global spread of EMI in higher education seem to be a perceived need to “internationalise” (Macaro et al., 2018, p. 37), or, in some countries “modernise” (Macaro et al., 2018, p. 51), the university. The status and ubiquity of English as a language of research publications also seems to be a driver, whether covert or overt, of EMI. EMI may also be driven by a perceived need to attract foreign students, whether this is due to decreasing numbers of domestic students or “cuts in HE investment” (Macaro et al., 2018, p. 37).

Macaro et al. showed that students and staff have mixed views across and even within studies reviewed. Both students and lecturers see clear cultural and financial benefits of EMI, naming the ability to attract staff and students from overseas, the high value and communicative reach of English, and, more indirectly, career prospects and international trade opportunities. Whilst participants mostly had an instrumentalist view of English, a minority emphasised the benefits brought by an increasing intercultural understanding in that English enables students from across the world to be brought together and learn from one another. Prevalent throughout the studies was a perceived “inevitability” (Macaro et al., 2018, p. 36) of English; participants across several studies appeared to adopt an unquestioning approach in which English has become ‘naturalised’ and taken for granted. Negative views tended to focus on insufficient English proficiency either in students or lecturers or both, a concern that appeared to be particularly pronounced in some countries. Some studies highlight a reduced capacity for interaction and spontaneity when teaching and learning occurs in a language that is not the first of the majority of speakers whilst others report on fears for the local culture and language.

Moving on to address one of the key concerns expressed by both stakeholders and scholars in the field, that is whether EMI hampers learning and whether EMI leads to improving English skills, the review did not find evidence for either. As the authors put it: “the research evidence to date is insufficient to assert that EMI benefits
language learning nor that it is clearly detrimental to content learning” (Macaro et al., 2018, p. 36). This may come as a surprise in that it might have been assumed that the mere exposure to a foreign language would help students pick up the language in question, through a form of implicit language learning. Similarly, it may seem surprising that no study has been able to verify a loss of content learning when teaching and learning takes place in a language that is not the first of the majority of speakers. Perhaps one reason for the absence of such evidence is the methodological challenge involved in designing a study that would accurately measure whether learning does or does not take place. Learning is a notoriously complex concept influenced by a myriad of psychological and sociological factors, so any study setting out to document the extent to which it occurs would face numerous challenges in teasing out confounding from independent variables. Commenting on the methodological rigour of the EMI studies reviewed, Macaro et al. (2018) noted that 37 studies (5 quantitative, 19 qualitative, 13 mixed methods) were not transparent about the sample size.

### 2.8 English language requirements for admission to EMI programmes

Whilst the rise of English as a medium of instruction is well-documented (Ammon and McConnell, 2002; Maiworm and Wächter, 2002; Wächter and Maiworm, 2008; 2014), there is a scarcity of studies on English language requirements for entry into EMI programmes, though see e.g. Erling and Hilgendorf (2006), Unterberger (2012) or Wächter and Maiworm (2008; 2014), which are reviewed under section 2.9.1. Indeed, it is not well documented if English language requirements are even consistently in place for admission to EMI programmes.

By English language entry requirements, I refer to the idea that institutions may request a certain level of English proficiency of students who wish to enrol in an EMI programme. In principle, if the student’s English proficiency is deemed to be below a
certain threshold, they may be rejected whereas if it is above the threshold, they may be admitted. Language entry requirements rest on an assumption that language proficiency can and should be measured in some way. In the following section, I review some studies on language assessment.

2.8.1 Language assessment

Language tests are gatekeepers for “promotion, employment, immigration, citizenship or asylum” (McNamara, 2013). One type of English assessment tests is placement tests (also called achievement tests) (McNamara, 2000). The purpose of placement tests is to allocate students to the right level in English as a second language (ESL) classes (Kokhan, 2013). Proficiency tests, in contrast, test the proficiency of the test taker, and they may serve certain gatekeeping processes. English admission tests, for instance, may be used to regulate entry into academic programmes, which are taught in English, particularly for second- or foreign-language speakers of English (Jenkins, 2015).

As described by Bachmann and Palmer proficiency is not only “language competence” (2010, p. 44) but covers also linguistic fluency which they describe as strategic competence “to create and interpret discourse” (Bachmann and Palmer, 2010, p. 44). For Read, linguistic fluency competence “covers implicit knowledge that is acquired by native speakers and underlies their intuitions about what is correct and appropriate usage in the language” (2015, p. 111). Bachman and Palmer (1996) argue that language assessment tests monitor organisational knowledge such as grammatical, textual knowledge and pragmatic knowledge which is divided in propositional knowledge, functional knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge. Textual knowledge is used to draft a text. Propositional knowledge relates to content; functional knowledge relates to language use and sociolinguistic knowledge relates to embedding the text in a broader context.
2.8.2 English language proficiency tests

An English language proficiency test usually consists of a speaking, reading, writing and listening section. The speaking section is often perceived as the most difficult section to assess from the raters’ point of view since the assessment is time-consuming and students’ pronunciation may be difficult to understand (Roca-Varela and Palacios, 2013). Testing techniques for the oral section could be discussion, oral report, role play, interview or picture story (Underhill, 2004). Speaking may be assessed using several categories such as range, accuracy, fluency and coherence (Roca-Varela and Palacios, 2013).

Overall, six major categories have been identified to assess tests: reliability, validity, impact, practicality, authenticity and interactivity (Kokhan, 2013). In the testing literature, validity is often regarded as the most important criterion to assess tests (McNamara, 2000). Face validity is one element that determines how developers are able to handle the test. Content validity looks at the appropriateness of content for the test takers (McNamara, 2000). Roever and McNamara (2006) add that test assessment has a social dimension in terms of how the test taker reacts in a social situation. Furthermore, tests have also an effect back on the educational system, a phenomenon which is called the ‘washback effect’ (Green, 2007).

There is a large body of literature on English language proficiency tests (Hamid, 2014; Paribakht and Webb, 2016; Wette, 2011). Many studies have challenged their practical application (Hamp-Lyons, 2016; Liu and Stapleton, 2015), others their psychological or mathematical construction (Zahedkazemi, 2015; Harsch et al., 2017). In contrast, my study will explore how English language proficiency tests are (or are not) implemented by higher education institutions in Germany and how they are perceived by domestic students.
2.8.3 The variety of English used in language assessment tests

With respect to the variety English used as a target norm in these tests, there might be said to be two schools of thought. Kachru (1997), Canagarajah (2006) and Jenkins (2006; 2014) argue for the recognition of different varieties in these tests; Davies et al. (2003) and Phillipson (2009) debate the British or American norms in these tests. The Educational Testing Service (ETS) has integrated some varieties in its TOEFL (ETS, 2015a). The CEFR classifies proficiency levels without considering native speaker norms (Hamid, 2014). Also, in Hamid’s study participants criticised IELTS and TOEFL for emphasising native-speaker norms and leaving out the other varieties of World Englishes with their different and unique aspects. Whilst the question of which varieties on which to base English language tests are certainly important, it will not be explicitly addressed in this study.

2.8.4 English language proficiency tests and the CEFR

The following section reviews the literature on some well-known and some lesser known language tests and frameworks with a view to exploring, in the following chapters, the extent to which these are in place in German higher education institutions. This is relevant knowledge to my study because these language tests and the CEFR could be used as English language entry requirements for access to higher education.

2.8.4.1 TOEFL

This section will describe and discuss the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), which appears to be one of the most commonly used tests for EMI programmes (Unterberger, 2012). It is normally used as an initial screening measure.
The TOEFL is not only used in English-dominant countries to ensure that foreigners who want to enrol in an institution have the appropriate language proficiency, but also in Germany for both international and domestic students who want to enrol in an EMI programme (Wächter and Maiworm, 2014).

The TOEFL was created by ETS in Princeton, New Jersey, USA. The TOEFL was first developed in 1963 and first administered in 1964 (Alderson, 2009). It assesses the English proficiency of test takers who are not native English speakers (Peirce, 1992). The purpose of the test is to verify the right level of English proficiency for general university admission (Farnsworth, 2013). The TOEFL measures the ability of non-native speakers of English to cope with spoken and written English (Alderson, 2009). The test does not have pass or fail scores, instead, results are given on a scale ranging from 0-677 (for the paper-based test), 0-300 (computer-based test) and 0-120 (internet-based test). The TOEFL is accepted at 10,000 institutions in over 130 countries (ETS, 2017a). The paper-based test (pBT) is still administered in locations where the internet-based test (iBT) is too difficult to administer. The computer-based test (cBT) was introduced in 1998 and terminated in 2006. The internet-based test has taken its place (Alderson, 2009). However, any English language entry requirements are set up by the higher education institutions, not by ETS (Peirce, 1992).

The TOEFL has advanced over time and now encompasses more English varieties in its current form than it did in the past when only North American accents were accepted (Alderson, 2009). ETS states that in March 2017, tests include varieties from the UK, New Zealand and Australia (ETS, 2017b). However, it is limited to native varieties of English; the test does not include varieties from the outer or expanding circle yet (Jenkins, 2015).

The test is divided into four sections: reading, listening, speaking and writing, which will be briefly explored below. The test duration is about 4-5 hours. The scores from
each section range from 0-30, adding up to a total score of 120 (Kokhan, 2013) for the internet-based test. The passages for the reading comprehension section come from academic magazines, books, newspapers and are not separately written for testing purposes. The aim of the test is to expose the candidate to authentic English and “not customised TOEFL English” (Peirce, 1992).

The speaking module is based on competencies such as mastering phonological, syntactic and semantic aspects of oral performance (Zahedi and Shamsee, 2012). Teachers of preparatory courses are requested to distinguish between English for Academic Purposes and English, which is needed for communication in academic settings (Zareva, 2005; as in Zahedi and Shamsee, 2012). The speaking module encompasses six tasks. Two are independent, for example the candidate expresses an opinion on a familiar topic; four tasks are integrated, that is the candidate reads or listens first before they answer orally (Alderson, 2009).

Each task is evaluated using four criteria: 

- general (including intelligibility, task fulfilment and coherence)
- delivery (clarity, fluency, pronunciation, intonation, stress)
- language use (range and control of grammar and vocabulary)
- topic development (relationship and progress of ideas, relevant content)"


The listening module requires skills in basic comprehension (main idea and important points), pragmatic understanding (speaker’s attitude, degree of certainty, purpose) and connecting and building on information (understanding relationships and drawing conclusions) (Alderson, 2009). The listening module contains 4-6 lectures, each with 500-800 words. Manual skills such as typing or computer familiarity are no longer included in the TOEFL iBT (Alderson, 2009).
The writing section encompasses one independent task and one integrated task. For the independent task, the candidates have to produce an essay with their opinion and views. For the integrated task, they have to read a short text first, before a speaker tells the story from a different perspective and the candidates have to answer questions around it. The integrated task is rated manually only; the independent task is rated electronically and then manually by an individual (Alderson, 2009).

According to the ETS website (2016b) taking a TOEFL in Germany costs 245 USD. For a student this might be expensive; however, not taking the test would result in not being admitted to an EMI programme which uses the TOEFL as English language entry requirement.

### 2.8.4.2 IELTS

This section will portray and discuss the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) test, which is also one of the most commonly used tests (Seedhouse, 2013). Like the TOEFL, it is used as an initial screening measure for EMI programmes. The IELTS test is not only used in English-dominant countries for testing foreigners who want to enrol in an institution, but also in Germany for both international and domestic students (Wächter and Maiworm, 2014).

The IELTS test is a proficiency test, which was developed in the UK. It was regarded as unique for a long time for assessing English as an international language. Today TOEFL has followed suit. No pass or fail scores are given, the scale ranges from 0-9 in half point steps (0.5). The IELTS exists in two different formats, as an academic test or as a general skills text. The sections on speaking, listening and writing in English are assessed on the same day.
Uysal (2010) argues that it is not transparent how the results, in particular for the writing sections, are arrived at as this depends on the local test raters. However, there is some standardisation in that a certain proportion of tests are sent in to a second marking team of senior IELTS examiners. One of the major difficulties is that the results can never be objective and will include the examiners’ cultural background, thinking and subjective judgement (Zahedi and Shamsee, 2012). One obvious solution to human bias would be to rely on computerised marking; however, this would only be appropriate for item types that have a clear right or wrong answer, such as multiple-choice items. It would be less suitable to the assessment of speaking and writing skills. So having some involvement of human examiners seems inevitable.

IELTS tests international English and incorporates varieties not only from the UK, but also from Australia and New Zealand. Additional social and regional language variations are included as well as ratings from non-native speakers to native speakers for the writing and speaking sections (Taylor, 2002; as in Uysal, 2010), as mentioned before. The international English of the IELTS test ignores the varieties from the outer or expanding circle, since it features English from the inner circle only. Furthermore, stylistic or rhetorical conventions other than from the inner circle are also excluded for the writing section.

IELTS test participants tended to prepare themselves for academic careers in Australia, Canada, New Zealand or the UK, and therefore they are tested in these native varieties (Hamid, 2014). However, the sociolinguistic landscape has changed due to flows of immigrant populations (Hamid, 2014). Test takers often do not have “a clear understanding of the content and process of the IELTS test” as found by Hyatt (2013, p. 855). He furthermore argues that admission officers lack knowledge of the interdependencies of band levels and test takers’ oral competence.
Taking an IELTS test in Germany costs 215 EUR. For a student this might be expensive; however, not taking the test might result in not being admitted to an EMI programme, where IELTS is used as English language entry requirement.

2.8.4.3 The Cambridge English Certificates

This section will describe and discuss the Cambridge English Certificates which may also be used as a screening criterion for EMI programmes in Germany (Cambridge Assessment, 2018). Due to the closeness of the UK and Germany and the UK being a role model for nativeness (Kachru, 1985), these tests are well-known in Germany.

The Cambridge English Certificates are provided by a joint body: Cambridge English Language Assessment, which is a department of the University of Cambridge and operates in the field of language assessment, and Cambridge University Press more in the background, which operates as a publisher for scientific publications (Cambridge Assessment, 2015).

These tests are British assessment tests for English. A variety of English language tests for pupils, adult learners and teachers is offered. In their mission statement Cambridge English Language Assessment claims to “be the experts in the field of language assessment due to outstanding performance and innovation” (Cambridge Assessment, 2015).

Cambridge English Certificates are widely accepted as high-quality proof of language ability. The first certificate developed was the Cambridge English Proficiency (CPE) in 1913. In 1939, the Lower Certificate of English (LCE) exam was developed which is today known as Cambridge English First (FCE). The Cambridge English Preliminary (PET) was created next in 1980. Financiers enabled in the 1980s to develop the Cambridge English KEY (KET). In 1991, the Cambridge English Advanced (CAE)
Certificate reduced the differences between the FCE and CPE. Today, the different levels of certification are labelled from beginner’s level to master’s level Key (KET), Preliminary (PET), First (FCE), Advanced (CAE) and Proficiency (CPE).

Today there are many other certifications available such as Cambridge English Certificates in ESOL Skills for Life (Skills for Life Certificates) which tests the English of individuals over the age of 16 who live, work or study in England, Wales or Northern Ireland. Tests with discipline-specific focus are also offered, for example for legal purposes (ILEC), finance (ICFE) and business (BEC)(Cambridge Assessment, 2015).

The Cambridge English Certification system was established as a system of well-known accreditation. Quality assurance is paramount to Cambridge English Language Assessment; they claim to guarantee accuracy, fairness and reliability as their uncompromising quality commitment. The system was the initial stepping-stone for a framework of reference levels for English language education, teaching and assessment which was then taken on by the European Council in their CEFR project.

2.8.4.4 UNIcert

This section will describe and discuss UNIcert which is used as a screening criterion for EMI programmes in Germany (Hahn, 2004). UNIcert is a German certification system which certifies knowledge in a foreign language. UNIcert aims to provide standardised levels of foreign language education in higher education and outside. The certificate is only awarded with previous course attendance; to sit the exam without enrolling in a course is not possible. The system was established in 1992.

UNIcert is led by AKS (Arbeitskreis der Sprachzentren, Sprachlehrinstitute und Fremdspracheninstitute), the association of language centres, language teaching institutes and institutes of foreign languages. AKS is a platform for exchange and
support for all institutions and teaching staff working in the fields of practical language teaching in HE, language teaching and training and further education and research in language learning and teaching (UNIcert, 2015).

An institution has to be accredited by UNIcert to be able to offer preparatory classes. Accreditation has to be repeated every three years. Members of UNIcert are made up of both private and public institutions in Germany and Europe. In total 50 institutions are currently accredited. Classes consist of at most 25 participants and the teacher has to provide interactive instruction in small groups. The UNIcert framework has explicitly excluded learning formats such as distance education and lectures.

UNIcert is currently accredited for 29 languages; over 100,000 certificates have been awarded so far, with nearly equal numbers for UNIcert I (34 per cent), UNIcert II (29 per cent), UNIcert III (34 per cent). The certificates include information about the grades and a detailed description of the level of knowledge of the candidate.

There are five levels of UNIcert as shown in Table 2.2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNIcert Basic</td>
<td>Basic knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIcert I</td>
<td>Extendible basic knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIcert II</td>
<td>Advanced knowledge (necessary for studying abroad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIcert III</td>
<td>Knowledge to meet study requirements outstandingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIcert IV</td>
<td>Knowledge comparable to native norms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.2: The UNIcert levels

The certificate is awarded for UNIcert Basic after the completion of the course and taking course-related tests; for level I – IV after successful completion of the course, which includes course-related tests and a final exam. The final exam tests foreign language knowledge in speaking, listening, reading and writing. UNIcert claims to contribute to European standardisation, since it links to the CEFR.
To sum up, the UNIcert certification is different from TOEFL and IELTS, since it is linked to mandatory course attendance. Furthermore, while IELTS and TOEFL target the English language, UNIcert is a system for a number of languages, not only focusing on English. The question is whether UNIcert has been developed to a similar level as the tests that focus purely on English, since it is available in many languages and preparations efforts to UNIcert are spread to 29 different languages and cultural backgrounds. This may imply challenges, but also benefits.

2.8.4.5 Other tests

GMAT, TOEIC or GRE may also be required for university access (ETS, 2015b). The GMAT is a test for entry to a MBA or master’s degree. Maths and essay writing are the main fields which are tested. The TOEIC is designed to assess English skills for the workplace (ETS, 2015c). The GRE is similar to the TOEFL; it however focuses explicitly on people who want to enrol in a graduate or business school. It is also designed by ETS (2015d). Apart from standardised industrial tests, oral interviews or written essays arranged by the institution can also serve as English language entry requirement.

2.8.4.6 The CEFR

This section explores the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages which may be used as a screening criterion for EMI programmes in Germany. This section will give a general introduction and provide more details on the different result categories.

The CEFR was developed by the Council of Europe in 1991 to provide recommendations for acquiring knowledge in a foreign language, standardise
teaching materials and assess proficiency knowledge of foreign languages in Europe. Currently, it is used for 39 languages. The CEFR provides a common basis for the development of curriculum and guidelines, teaching material and award certificates and enables European comparability. It assumes that language learners are social actors who act in social contexts. By supporting plurilingualism and individual multilingualism, the CEFR contributes to the enhancement of international collaboration in the field of modern languages (Council of Europe, 2001). Even though the CEFR has its benefits, there is a disadvantage in that CEFR lacks scientific rigour since it is not sufficiently tested on validity and reliability by external neutral institutions (Coste, 2007; as in Martyniuk, 2012).

The reference levels are differentiated into three categories A, B, C, each with two sub-levels, 1 and 2. Three plus levels also exist (A2+, B1+, B2+). A reason to introduce a normed scale of language ability was based on the need to provide a better comparison of language skills among the European member states and hence to serve students mobility. In 2018, the descriptors were revised (Council of Europe, 2018). I am not using the revised descriptors, because my study was undertaken in 2014 – 2016.

The levels are described as follows (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 24):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Breakthrough or beginner</td>
<td>Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details [...]. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Way stage or elementary</td>
<td>Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. [...].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>Threshold or intermediate</td>
<td>Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. [...].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>Vantage or upper intermediate</td>
<td>Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint [...].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>Effective operational proficiency or advanced</td>
<td>Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. [...].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>Mastery or proficiency</td>
<td>Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources [...]. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.3: Language levels of the CEFR

Summarising Table 2.3, A1 and A2 are “basic users”, B1 and B2 are “independent users”, C1 and C2 are “proficient users (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 24). According to Milton (2010) learners have a receptive vocabulary of:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CEFR level</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>&lt;1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>&gt;1,500 – 2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>&gt;2,500 – 3,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>&gt;3,250 – 3,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1</td>
<td>&gt;3,750 – 4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2</td>
<td>&gt;4,500 – 5,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2.4: Receptive vocabulary of learners according to Milton (2010)*

For comparison, a person whose first language is English at graduate level has in general a receptive knowledge of 23,000 words (McCrum et al., 2011) passive vocabulary. Drawing on the study of Erling and Hilgendorf (2006) as described in section 2.9.1, B2 was mentioned as English language entry requirement for university access. This equals a vocabulary of about 3,250 to 3,750 words according to Milton (2010). It is striking that this size of vocabulary should be sufficient for academic education, even if it is for an entry qualification such as a bachelor’s degree.

### 2.8.4.7 Comparison of English assessment tests and the CEFR

This section will compare the English admission test IELTS, TOEFL, Cambridge English Certificate (CAE) and UNIcert III according to the skills, tasks and time set for completing the section.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>IELTS</th>
<th>TOEFL</th>
<th>Cambridge Certificate (CAE)</th>
<th>UNicert III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading tasks</td>
<td>40 questions. Total text length is 2,150-2,750 words, written for a non-specialist audience, academic topics of general interest.</td>
<td>36–56 questions, reading of 3-4 passages from academic texts.</td>
<td>Understanding from text (publications)</td>
<td>Read text and answer 4 questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>60 min</td>
<td>60–80 min</td>
<td>90 min</td>
<td>45 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening tasks</td>
<td>40 questions, 4 sections: conversation and monologue in an everyday social context conversation and a monologue on an academic subject.</td>
<td>34–51 questions, Listen to lectures, classroom discussions &amp; conversations.</td>
<td>Follow and understand spoken material</td>
<td>no explicit information was found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking tasks</td>
<td>3 parts, face-to-face oral interview with an examiner</td>
<td>6 tasks, expressing an opinion on a familiar topic.</td>
<td>Face-to-face with 1-2 other candidates; every-day life situations are tested.</td>
<td>no explicit information was found</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>11 - 14 min</td>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>15 min</td>
<td>20 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing tasks</td>
<td>2 tasks, task 1 (at least 150 words) requires a description, summary or explanation of a graph, table, chart or diagram. Task 2 (at least 250 words) asks to write an essay.</td>
<td>2 tasks, writing of an essay, responses based on reading and listening tasks.</td>
<td>2 tasks, essay and general task</td>
<td>2 tasks, writing a summary of 230 words and an essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>60 min</td>
<td>50 min</td>
<td>90 min</td>
<td>105 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2.5: Comparison of test duration and content (based on the information available on the relevant homepages)*

As Table 2.5 shows, all four tests are similar in their set-up. Reading, listening, speaking and writing skills are assessed in almost the same format. The major language tests are standardised to minimise random error (Bachmann and Savignon,
Since there are commercial companies behind these tests, the similarity may also be a result of competition (Alderson et al., 1995).

In terms of levels, the English admission tests and the CEFR can be compared as follows (Papageorgiou et al., 2015; UNIcert, 2017; Cambridge English, 2015; ETS, 2017c):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOEFL pBT</th>
<th>TOEFL cBT</th>
<th>TOEFL IBT</th>
<th>IELTS</th>
<th>UNIcert</th>
<th>Cambridge Certificate</th>
<th>CEFR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-397</td>
<td>0-93</td>
<td>0-31</td>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>KEY</td>
<td>A1, A2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400-413</td>
<td>97-103</td>
<td>32-34</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>UNIcert basic</td>
<td>PET</td>
<td>A2, A2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>417-450</td>
<td>107-133</td>
<td>35-45</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>UNIcert I</td>
<td>FCE</td>
<td>B1, B1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>453-497</td>
<td>134-170</td>
<td>46-59</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>UNIcert II</td>
<td>CAE</td>
<td>B1, B2, B2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500-547</td>
<td>171-210</td>
<td>60-78</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>UNIcert III</td>
<td>CPE</td>
<td>B2, B2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>550-583</td>
<td>213-237</td>
<td>79-93</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>UNIcert IV</td>
<td>UNIcert IV</td>
<td>B2, B2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>587-607</td>
<td>240-253</td>
<td>94-101</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>UNIcert III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>610-633</td>
<td>254-267</td>
<td>102-109</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>UNIcert II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>637-650</td>
<td>270-280</td>
<td>110-114</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>UNIcert I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>653-663</td>
<td>281-287</td>
<td>115-117</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>UNIcert basic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>667-677</td>
<td>290-300</td>
<td>118-120</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>UNIcert II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.6: My comparison table of English admission test scores/levels and the CEFR

Table 2.6 provides an overview of score comparisons from different tests/systems, which I have created by compiling different sources. The three TOEFL test-formats, IELTS, UNIcert, the Cambridge Certificates and the CEFR are described with their levels or corresponding scores. It must be acknowledged that any comparison across assessment frameworks is always going to be open to interpretation. ETS (the producers of TOEFL) do not endorse using comparative tables as a basis for setting institutional cut scores. Instead they recommend that institutions wishing to set cut scores should do so by closely considering the test content against their requirements (ETS, 2018; Papageorgiou et al., 2015).

In a study conducted by the TOEFL vendor (ETS, 2007), the paper-based version was compared to the computer-based version for various countries between 07/2005 and 06/2006. German test-takers scored on average 599 out of 677 on the paper-based
test and for the computer-based version 251 out of 300 on average results. This result on the TOEFL scale equates to 7.0 on the IELTS scale or B2/C1 in the CEFR, as is seen above. This study is potentially illuminating for my study since it gives an indication of the English language proficiency currently held by many Germans. Thus, if institutions want to set realistic entry language requirements, they should bear in mind the current state of proficiency by Germans along with any institutionally specific needs.

In summary, the review above shows the breadth of language assessment frameworks in existence. Although all of the frameworks in one way or another measure academic English, their purpose and methodology varies, including the extent to which they focus specifically on academic English, whether they target native speaker varieties and/or have raters with BE or AE background. A key aim of this research is to document the English language assessment frameworks that may or may not be in place at German universities to regulate access to EMI. The next section reviews some key studies in this area.

2.9 Standardisation and variation in English language entry requirements

Drawing on Duchêne and Heller’s (2012) model of the dichotomy of standardisation and flexibility, there seem to be two opposite approaches for handling English language entry requirements. That this is not uncommon becomes clear if we look beyond Germany. In the U.S., we can observe a system which clearly favours variation. Some institutions might want to have higher entry requirements because they target higher achieving students and consider themselves as prestigious.
Figure 2.1: Examples of required TOEFL scores (internet-based) in the U.S. (based on Magoosh, 2014)

As Figure 2.1 shows, the American system seems to reflect the reputation and wealth of an institution. The well-known institutions seem to request a far higher score than the less well-known universities. For instance, for bachelor’s and master’s level programmes the Massachusetts Institute of Technology asks for a TOEFL iBT score of 100 out of a total of 120 which equals C1 on the CEFR whereas the Illinois Institute of Technology requires 70 points out of 120 for master’s level which is B1 on the CEFR scale.

In the Netherlands, there have been attempts at creating national recommendations for the English proficiency required at EMI programmes.
Table 2.7: Overview of Dutch entry requirements for EMI programmes (based on Eurogates, 2017)

Table 2.7 above displays the TOEFL and IELTS scores for access to EMI programmes in the Netherlands as recommended by Eurogates, an educational portal for international students. It is visible that the more advanced the level of study is, the more advanced is the required level of English. There is a permanent development in English necessary to meet the linguistic targets. In the next section, some studies exploring the existence of English language entry requirements for EMI programmes will be reviewed in more detail.

2.9.1 English language entry requirements in use

In their 2008 study, Wächter and Maiworm found that 86 per cent of all programmes in Europe require TOEFL and IELTS, 30 per cent require an entry exam and 34 per cent require non-language related characteristics such as work experience or a special skill. 48 per cent of universities are satisfied with letters of reference and recommendations. The mean cut score for bachelor programmes was 538 points in the TOEFL pBT and 79 TOEFL iBT and for master programmes 563 in the TOEFL pBT and 86 in the TOEFL iBT (Wächter and Maiworm, 2014). It is worth noting here that the entry level requirements are apparently lower for master’s level than for bachelor’s level. This may be attributable to the greater inter-institutional competition at master’s level. Whilst Wächter and Maiworm’s studies focus on the whole of Europe, there are fewer in-country institutional comparisons. Erling and
Hilgendorf (2006) is one of very few studies focusing specifically on the German context.

Erling and Hilgendorf (2006) examined the English language entry requirements in place at EMI programmes at the Freie Universität (FU) in Berlin. For bachelor programmes, they found that in the majority of cases, none were explicitly mentioned besides applicants needing to have an English level which equals B1 or B2 in the Common European Framework of Reference (see section 2.8.4.6 for a description of the CEFR levels). According to the university regulations at the FU, B1 equates to five years of English at school and B2 to seven years of English at school. Only two bachelor programmes asked for an English entry test to be taken at the university’s Language Centre. At master’s level, the English language entry requirements were diverse: they ranged from a TOEFL paper-based test result of 550, a Cambridge Certificate (but with no further details about which one) to a simple statement that English knowledge had to be obtained during previous education. Different programmes had different English language entry requirements. The authors conclude that despite some apparent attempts at regulating access, in general, no attempt was made at ensuring that students’ English was appropriate for academic study, that is “understand[ing] English academic text and follow[ing] lecturers” (Erling and Hilgendorf, 2006, p. 279). This study is useful in that it distinguishes between bachelor’s and master’s level; however, since it focuses only on one single institution, it is limited in scope. My own study will extend knowledge by including all universities in Germany.

Unterberger (2012) depicts the situation at the Vienna University of Economics and Business in Austria. Drawing on a survey of bachelor and master level programmes, as well as interviews with programme managers, she found out that IELTS band 7 was required for almost 80 per cent of the English-medium programmes. This corresponds, to her understanding, to level C in the CEFR which confirms high level proficiency. For the rest of programmes, no evidence of language proficiency was
required at all. These findings suggest a rather polarised picture in terms of English language entry requirements in Austria, from advanced proficiency to none at all. So the question arises as to whether such variation exists in Germany too. A key aim of my study is to explore this question.

### 2.9.2 Certifying the English proficiency of EMI teaching staff

In addition to policing students’ access to EMI programmes through English language proficiency frameworks, some institutions have begun to certify the English proficiency of EMI lecturers and teaching staff. Two examples are the TOPTULTE at the University of the Basque Country and the TOEPAS at the University of Copenhagen. The TOPTULTE (Test of Performance for Teaching at University Level through the Medium of English) is a measurement to ensure an appropriate level of English proficiency for lecturers at the University of the Basque Country whose L1 is Spanish or Basque (Ball and Lindsay, 2005; 2011; as in Ball and Lindsay, 2013; Doiz et al., 2011; Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2002). At the University of Copenhagen, the TOEPAS (Test of Oral English for Academic Staff) was developed to measure the teaching staff’s oral English proficiency for the “teaching demands of English-medium instruction” (Kling and Dimova, 2015, p. 247). Previously, C1 of the CEFR was seen as appropriate English proficiency for content teachers at the University of Copenhagen. However, it gradually became clear that this level was not sufficient to meet the needs and demands of EMI teaching (Kling and Dimova, 2015). This prompted the development of their own English language certification procedure for teaching staff. Of course, irrespective of whether students’ or lecturers’ English proficiency is measured, a question remains as to whether specific thresholds are valid predictors of successful participation in EMI programmes. The next section reviews studies on this topic.
2.9.3 To what extent do language proficiency frameworks ensure successful learning in EMI programmes?

Successful participation in an EMI programme may not depend on test results. Light et al. (1987) - who investigated at the State University of New York at Albany (SUNYA) the relationship between grade point average (GPA) and TOEFL pBT scores - found that the usual admission threshold of a TOEFL pBT score of 550 cannot be backed by research because many international students who were admitted with TOEFL pBT scores lower than 550 finished their studies successfully. Apart from these findings, they also noticed that if the students liked their subject, there is a higher chance of academic success. It would have been interesting to explore the relationship between students’ entry-level English proficiency and their study success; however, this is beyond the scope of this study.

It has, however, been claimed that students need to have a certain fluency in English at the beginning of their studies to ensure success (Hellekjaer, 2010). Hellekjaer (2006) surveyed 217 senior Norwegian students from upper secondary level, 39 in a CLIL class and 178 of an EFL class for their academic reading proficiency. He infers from his data, that

“deceptively and linguistically confident in everyday conversation and situations, they were, nevertheless, all-too-often unable to cope with cognitively and linguistically demanding academic subjects [...] It is taken for granted that upper-secondary English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction develops the academic English proficiency required for higher education [...] This study shows that many Norwegian beginner students do not have the academic language proficiency needed to manage English-medium instruction, and that screening for admission to English-medium programmes [...] should be considered” (Hellekjaer, 2010, p. 44-45).

66 per cent of the EFL class was not able to score 6.0 or more in the IELTS reading module as compared to 26 per cent of the CLIL class. He concluded that to be able to read well, a student needs to have good vocabulary. Also, between 30-40 per cent of the students struggled with reading texts and textbooks. It is perhaps not surprising that there seems to be somewhat of a mismatch between the English proficiency
many students will have achieved through high school and that which is required in EMI programmes at university level. Not only do university studies require engagement with more specialised topics and more complex vocabulary than at secondary level; if the university studies are conducted in what is a second or foreign language for most students, then this may well present significant challenges. For this reason alone, it seems worthwhile to explore if the English language requirements for entry into EMI programmes at German universities are set at appropriate levels.

School-leaving exams in the Netherlands were not regarded as adequate in general for entering English-medium programmes in higher education by Wilkinson and Zegers (2006). The language proficiency of one student having a pass grade in English could vary significantly from another student from another school with the very same pass grade. Screening tests for English for entering EMI programmes are therefore mandatory. Wilkinson and Zegers (2006) focussed on the academic writing skills of students and explained that the CEFR is not a good measurement for categorising student’s English knowledge. As per the description, students should be able to write at the level of C1. However, as students need disciplinary knowledge and this is not covered by the CEFR, the students writing skills are often not sufficient for B2. After, they stated that student’s English proficiency will rise throughout the programme, however “little information is available about the assessment of English skills after this initial assessment” (Wilkinson and Zegers, 2006, p. 69). They moreover observed that “all teaching is supposed to take place in English. In reality, however, most teaching takes place in Dutch. Only when there is an exchange student in the group, the lectures or small group tutorials will be conducted in English” (Wilkinson and Zegers, 2006, p. 71).

Daller and Phelan claim that study success is dependent on “cultural factors, motivation and familiarity with the subject area” (2013, p. 173). In a study of 74 participants they came to the conclusion that study support for non-native students is essential to ensure their study success. In particular, there is emphasis on
vocabulary knowledge, which was identified as the driver of study success. Staehr (2009) found that listening comprehension highly depends on the knowledge of vocabulary. English-medium instruction implies that teaching the language is not a task of the teacher as it is with CLIL. However, non-native speakers of English might face difficulties in applying the language to an academic context. Technical English is different from everyday English. This study is backed by another study which was undertaken at an U.S.-accredited university in the United Arab Emirates, where Wait and Gressel (2009) evaluated enrolment data from 6,515 students. They were interested in particular if the study performance and English knowledge and fluency are linked. They found that linguistic knowledge in English did not play any role for the engineering students, unlike for other disciplines which rely more on languages such as economics and the arts (Wait and Gressel, 2009, p. 396).

Oliver et al. (2012) found in a study of 5,675 Australian international and domestic students from non-English speaking backgrounds that standardised tests are the most reliable measurement to determine possible study success compared to other means of verifying linguistic proficiency that is completion of an EMI course. This is despite taking account of potential individual characteristics which could impact test performance, ranging from age and gender, personal background and history to engagement with the studies, motivation, time management and discipline (Andrade, 2006; Fox, 2004; Phakiti, 2008; as in Oliver et al., 2012).

Deygers (2017) conducted an investigation into Dutch language requirements for entry into Dutch-medium programmes at Flemish universities. He observed that whilst students with a leaving certificate from a Flemish high school were not required to show proof of their Dutch language skills, international students with Dutch as their L2 were. The level that was required was CEFR B2. Deygers was interested in whether B2 is an adequate threshold for entry into Flemish higher education and whether the two most commonly applied language testing frameworks, ITNA (Inter University test of L2 Dutch) and STRT (ready to start higher
education), are valid measurements. Deygers’s conclusion was that the test constructs deviate from “real-life-language demands” (Deygers, 2017, p. 76). For example, the oral tasks in the tests are weighted too heavily considering how relatively insignificant (compared to reading and writing) speaking is at university level. Deygers suggests undertaking proper needs analysis so that test developers can ground their tests in actual university requirements. Another recommendation made by Deygers on the basis of his findings is that entry level testing is no guarantee for study success. Study support needs to continue throughout the students’ studies and may take a range of different forms.

It has to be kept in mind that Deygers’s study was carried out on Dutch-medium programmes whereas mine is carried out on English-medium programmes. It may be difficult to compare results for ITNA and STRT to results for TOEFL and IELTS. The latter are well-discussed in the literature and have a long history of amelioration. As will become clear, the German situation is also different in that there are a greater variety of assessment frameworks in use than the two used in the Flemish context.

Whilst Deygers used a combination of methods in his study, such as structured interviews with 30 test developers, focus group interviews with university staff, and 15 semi-structured interviews with policy makers, a clear strength of his research is that it includes the test scores achieved by students in the ITNA and STRT. This enabled Deygers to support his argument with hard evidence in the form of student grades. Obtaining student grades has not been possible in my study given data protection acts. Instead, my study relies on students’ self-reported English language proficiency levels. The drawback of self-reports is that they are a subjective construct. However, it could be argued that despite test scores being a more objective indicator of proficiency, they reveal little about students’ perceived impressions of coping in an EMI environment, a perspective that is arguably also valuable.
To sum up, some research has found that university entrance language test may not be reliable when it comes to predicting study success. This raises questions about the evidence that is used to set English language entry requirements at specific levels. In the next section, I review relevant studies on this.

2.9.4 Determining English language entry requirements

How and why are English language entry requirements set at specific levels? Graham (1987) suggests that it may be a question of an educated guess: the professional needs to estimate the English knowledge which students should have for the particular EMI course. She argues that without making further investigations, a programme leader would not know which degree of fluency the teaching staff has, which degree of fluency is required to master the subject, how the content will be presented and how much time is left for the students to work on linguistic limitations instead of the content. Although Graham’s study was conducted 30 years ago, it has not lost its validity. Today the problem persists - how does a programme leader assess which level of English is adequate for a particular programme? Graham furthermore points out that passing a multiple-choice language test does not imply that a student has communicative skills. She also remarks that in a 1985 brochure of ETS, the TOEFL vendor even asked universities not to rely on test results as the only measurement for giving access to a programme and not to set minimum scores that are too high. Today, such advice is not to be found on the ETS webpage (ETS, 2016a). Graham (1987) has a point in criticising multiple-choice tests for being unsuited are not appropriate for assessing communicative skills. However, TOEFL, as other English proficiency tests, has a mandatory section where candidates have to write an excerpt and also an oral section, which will give an indication of the candidate’s ability to express content.

It has been argued that language entry requirements should be thoughtfully set up and revised at intervals (Oliver et al., 2012) since the content of a programme can
change over time. The English language entry requirements for students should be no higher than those of the teaching staff (Fandrych and Sedlaczek, 2012). In Chapter 5, I will explore the process for setting up English language entry requirements in some higher education institutions in North Rhine-Westphalia.

2.10 English proficiency in EMI contexts

A particularly salient theme to emerge from the EMI literature is the extent to which the English proficiency of students and teaching staff is sufficient for successful participation in EMI programmes (Hellekjaer, 2010; Ljosland, 2010; Floris, 2014). Although some students claim that there is no difference if the language of instruction is the mother tongue or English, studies, to be reviewed in what follows, have documented difficulties (Airey and Lindner, 2006). Although the concept of ‘linguistic proficiency’ is a problematic notion, as are labels such as ‘L1’ and ‘L2’, it has been conceptualised in terms of four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking (Baker and Prys Jones, 1998).

2.10.1 Reading, writing, listening and speaking skills

Reading, writing, speaking and listening are skills which are needed in every-day life. These skills are also needed for academic discourse but at a higher level (Dafouz and Camacho-Miñano, 2016). Applying them in a foreign language is even more difficult than in one’s first language (Hellekjaer, 2010). The competence level of the four skills is highly debated in the EMI literature (Wilkinson and Zegers, 2006; Hellekjaer, 2006). If one or more skills are poorly developed, students might experience significant difficulties, which can be a hindrance to successful participation in EMI classes (Airey and Lindner, 2006). It would be useful to know as to whether or not such difficulties are also reported in German higher education.
Reading is firstly about decoding a text, knowing the letters and their sound. Then, the reader needs to comprehend what is written, and finally it needs to be stored in his/her memory (Lopez, 2012). When reading in a foreign language, knowing words, the vocabulary, plays an essential role (Kramsch, 2009).

Writing is not just about using letters to compose meaning. Hyland sees the writing skill as “fundamental to both, writing and the thought itself” (2006, p. 252). Vijayalakshimi argues that “it involves many sub-skills like writing legibly, spelling correctly, using good expressions, constructive grammatical sentences and putting them together into paragraphs, arranging arguments logically [...]” (2017, p. 6). Writing in one’s first language demands a certain level of coordination of these sub-skills; in a foreign language, it can be much more complicated (Hyland, 2006).

Listening skills are said to be composed of hearing, understanding and judging (Richards, 1983). Firstly, it is important that the recipient is able to hear what is said. Secondly, the sounds that have been heard have to be translated into meaning that is the listener has to understand the meaning of the sounds. Finally, the recipient has to decide how to react to the sounds that they have heard appropriately. Children are trained in listening comprehension in their first language from early childhood by interacting and communicating with the people around them (Klinke, 2009). Listening in a foreign language is a skill that needs to be trained. Foreign tones need to be learnt and attached with meaning (Richards, 1983).

A person is naturally by birth equipped with speaking skills, although these need to be trained and developed over the years (Wiersing, 2015). Speaking in a foreign language might also be difficult in that the language-to-be-learnt might have sounds, which do not exist in the speaker’s first language and are difficult to form (Kramsch, 2009). When speaking English, Germans, for example, may find the ‘th’ difficult as it is a sound which does not exist in the German language and has to be acquired and practised by the learner. Paramount to developing speaking skills in a foreign
language is not only phonology, grammar and vocabulary knowledge, but also how to “use the language” (Baker and Westrup, 2003, p. 5) to “reinforce the learning of new vocabulary” (Baker and Westrup, 2003, p. 5) and “to experiment with language” (Baker and Westrup, 2003, p. 5). In the next section, I review studies focusing on different aspects (reading, writing, listening and speaking) of English proficiency in EMI contexts.

2.10.2 Reading, writing, listening and speaking skills in EMI contexts

Perhaps surprisingly given the acceleration of researcher into EMI, not many studies have examined the challenges students face with EMI (Soruç and Griffiths, 2017). One recent study drawing on questionnaires with 100 students and interviews with 10 of those studying at an EMI university in the United Arab Emirates sheds light on students’ self-perceived English language skills (Wanphet and Tantaway, 2018). The researchers found that 83 per cent reported having no difficulties in taking notes in English. 83 per cent had no difficulties in taking written assignments in English; 83 per cent experienced no difficulties in reading English textbooks and materials, but 53 per cent needed extra time to do so. 70.6 per cent felt fine with their reading skills, 81.3 per cent with their writing skills and another 75 per cent with their listening skills. In particular 64 per cent used their L1 for talking to class-mates and 54 with lecturers. 75 per cent self-reported having no difficulties in taking part in classroom discussion.

These largely positive self-evaluations are interesting, not only because they come from a context in which English proficiency levels are known to be generally lower than in Germany (EF, 2018). The generally favourable attitudes may be partially explained by these UAE students’ previous exposure to English-medium education, something which is not likely to be the case in Germany. It also, of courses, raises questions about methodological issues, such as how questions are asked and
interpreted, an issue that will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 7. Despite this, however, the study authors note that “[p]olicy makers may permit enrolment of students lacking the necessary proficiency level into English medium programmes” (Wanphet and Tantaway, 2018, p. 162), suggesting that students’ self-assessed proficiency may be inflated, at least as far as the policy makers are concerned.

Knapp and Münch claim that insufficient English knowledge, whether from the teaching side or the learning side, can result in a “loss of detail and profoundness of lectures” (2008, p. 174). Spontaneous elaborations may not be possible due to linguistic restrictions that lie with both the teacher and the student (Klaassen and Bos, 2010). Airey and Lindner undertaking a study on 22 undergraduate physics students at two universities in Sweden on their learning experience in an EMI class, showed that students “reported being less able to follow the lecture and take notes at the same time” (2006, p. 558). Also, the students’ involvement in classroom discussions was at a lower level. Nevertheless, this study gives insights into how students cope with EMI at bachelor’s level. I consider it necessary to focus on bachelor and master students separately, because students in different stages of their English or bilingual programmes might have different needs. As we have seen above bachelor students may sometimes struggle with the English language. At master’s level, one might expect a better command of English; however, this might also depend on whether or not the first degree was done through the medium of English.

Hellekjaer (2010) investigated 391 Norwegian and 47 German students on their activities to manage comprehension in a programme where instructions are given in English. He found out that 72 per cent of the students had to invest more work on an EMI programme than it would have been in the L1. Also, on a scale from one to four with one as very difficult and four not difficult at all, the item “to what extent can you follow the lecturer’s line of thought” (Hellekjaer, 2010, p. 17) was answered by the German students with an average of 2.9, meaning somewhat difficult. The item “how
difficult do you find taking notes during the English lectures” (Hellekjaer, 2010, p. 17) was answered on average with 2.7, stating a higher degree of perceived difficulties. The author furthermore compared activities in the L1 and in English. For the item “How important are the lecturer’s transparencies/Po
er Point slides or other visual aids for your understanding of the lectures?” (Hellekjaer, 2010, p. 19), 18 per cent of the Germans think it is very important in the L1, but 42 per cent in an EMI class. This is one of a few studies which includes German students, but unfortunately it is not clear where the study was conducted. Different German states have different histories following WWII which have had an impact on people’s familiarity with English. Especially people in the Eastern states are less familiar with English and results there might be significantly different compared to results in West German states.

Earls (2013) has drawn attention to different English fluency skills of international students who might have different accents and perhaps grammatical peculiarities which might cause problems in every day communication. He also touches on the topic of English as lingua franca. Many students see native speaker norms as the ne plus ultra; not valuing English varieties or English as a lingua franca with its own grammar and corpus as a global form of English (Jenkins, 2014). “The native English speaker continues to be used as a yardstick of competence in the language, despite the fact that English has now become a global language” (Galloway and Rose, 2014, p. 387). Klaassen and Bos (2010) found that the reading or listening skills of students are better developed than their oral skills, which suggests that it is useful to distinguish between different types of skills when assessing English language proficiency for EMI context. My study will take these results into account and examine reading, writing, speaking and listening skills separately.

In terms of understanding lecturers and fellow students, native or non-native might be a factor. First of all, it is important to understand the lecturer in real time since he/she teaches the contents which are relevant for possible exams. Secondly, also
central to studying, is being able to understand fellow students. McCambridge and Saarinen (2014) conducted a study regarding native versus non-native speakers at three Finnish institutions of higher education. Students and staff were questioned on their attitude towards a native/non-native style of speaking. Native speakers were seen as an unreachable ideal in the eyes of foreign students and resentments concerning their own English proficiency appeared. For the teaching staff, the picture is a little different, because specialised professional knowledge has more importance than native-like talking (Klaassen et al., 2006). In my research, students will be asked how they rate their skills to follow a lecture, and to understand their fellow students.

Students’ ability to follow a lecture may be affected by the English proficiency of their lecturer. Klaassen and Bos (2010) surveyed around 1,600 staff members of Delft University of Technology on English proficiency for English-medium instruction, with younger staff are more capable in English than the older staff. Werther et al. (2014) surveyed the Copenhagen Business School (CBS) to gain insights in students’ ability to understand lecturers. Audio recordings were conducted with 33 lecturers, 17 interviews and a questionnaire was rolled out to 1,800 students. The researchers found a correlation between students’ assessment of their lecturers’ English proficiency and their subject knowledge. In other words, the lower the students rated their lecturer’s English proficiency, the lower they rated their subject expertise.

2.11 Formal and informal support in EMI programmes

Some studies have explored the types of study support which might be helpful to overcome barriers in EMI. One obvious type of formal support is the introduction of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses at EMI-providing institutions.

EAP has its roots in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the 1960s (de Chazal, 2014), an approach originally used in professional settings. From there it developed over
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time as an own field of theory and practice. A strong enabler for EAP was the internationalisation movement of the universities in the 1980s and 1990s (Fortanet-Gómez, 2013). According to Smith (2013), the term English for Academic Purposes was coined in 1974 by Tim Johns. EAP started in the major English-speaking countries such as Australia, USA, Canada, the UK and Ireland. It is a concept relevant mainly to English-dominant university contexts, though some EMI-providing institutions in non-English-dominant contexts are beginning to implement EAP-type courses, such as the Humboldt University in Berlin introduced (Humboldt University in Berlin, 2018). EAP is needs-based: the English proficiency of many students as well as their understanding of habits and procedures in Anglophone academia was considered not to be sufficient (de Chazal, 2014), so courses were created to improve the students’ language for their field of study, in short to provide special English training for their academic needs (de Chazal, 2014). EAP helps students to develop language skills and moreover “tasks and competencies” (de Chazal, 2014, p. 6) so they can cope with academic studies. EAP provides academic literacy, i.e., the skills and competencies which students need to study successfully. EAP does so in English to train academic vocabulary, sentence structures and phrases. Hyland (2006) stresses the importance of developing expertise of content by practicing academic skills. He argues for disciplinary-specific English language courses to facilitate the students coping with their studies.

Alongside such formal, institutional support, other studies have pointed to more teacher/student-driven support strategies. Doiz et al. (2011) have suggested that prior access to resources of study materials and literature in English is beneficial for students. Airey and Lindner (2006) argue similarly that it is an advantage to become familiar with the content before the lecture. This could be reading through a textbook or “lecture notes that students have already access to” in advance of the class (Airey and Lindner, 2006, p. 557). Airey (2015) recommends that teachers make use of visual aids for their session, that they encourage students to actively participate, and that they repeat any unfamiliar vocabulary used and allow time for digestion. All these
strategies may be beneficial for L1 teaching too; however, when learning in a foreign language they could become pivotal for progressing.

A study in the Turkish context explored the difficulties EMI students have and which strategies they employ to overcome these difficulties (Soruç and Griffiths, 2017). The researchers investigated 39 bachelor students enrolled in International Relations and Psychology courses at a private EMI university in Istanbul. Drawing on qualitative methods, such as video recorded observations, open-ended questionnaires and stimulated-recall interviews, the authors categorised challenges into four types: “difficulties with speaking and listening”, e.g. interacting with other students; “difficulties related to the teacher/class”, e.g. understanding the teacher; “difficulties with vocabulary”, e.g. understanding the vocabulary used in class; and “affective/cognitive difficulties”, e.g. feeling shy about speaking (Soruç and Griffiths, 2017, p. 41). Whilst students reported difficulties with all of them, challenges with vocabulary were the most frequently reported. In any study of this kind, it must be borne in mind that a research design that sets out to identify difficulties is likely to find difficulties. In other words, it may be that the difficulties reported by participants, while quite possibly genuinely felt, may be partly a product of the researcher asking the question in the first place.

Despite such challenges, students also report on the strategies they draw on to overcome them. Strategies reported were numerous (36 different ones from a sample of 39 participants) and varied. They appeared to be mainly cognitive strategies to interact mentally with the material to be learnt and included “asking questions, visualizing, using prior experience, being specific, clarifying” (Soruç and Griffiths, 2017, p. 45) and others. The authors pose the question as to whether English language entry requirements have to be set to increase the chances of students successfully participating in their studies, pointing to the fact that there currently are no binding recommendations regarding the entry threshold.
2.12 The research questions

To sum up, it appears that no systematic investigation has been carried out into English language entry requirements for access to EMI programmes in German higher education. Thus, there appears to be a need to investigate this, more specifically the extent to which English language entry requirements are in place, and if so, how they are determined by the institutions in question. In addition, it seems pertinent to ask if students regard them as having any bearing on the extent to which they are able to successfully participate in EMI contexts. The research presented in this thesis will therefore scrutinise the following main research question:

What are the English language requirements for admission to English-medium degree programmes at German higher education institutions and how are these requirements determined by institutions and viewed by domestic students in North Rhine-Westphalia?

This question is broken down into three sub-questions, each of which is addressed in its own chapter:

1. What are the English language entry requirements for EMI programmes in higher education in Germany?

2. How and why are English language entry requirements set at specific levels?

3. What are the students’ experiences of their EMI programmes?
   a) What background do students have and what are their reasons for choosing EMI programmes?
   b) What is the students’ awareness of the English language entry requirements on their programme?
c) What are students’ views of their own English language proficiency and their ability to participate in their EMI programme?

The findings of each sub-question will contribute to answering the main research question and helping to shed light on the concept of English language entry requirements for English programmes in institutions of higher education in Germany.
3. Methodology, research design, methods and analysis

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the methodological aspects of the research. It starts by setting out the philosophical and epistemological position of the research. It then describes the research design and the methods used for data collection and data analysis. Obstacles that arose in the context of data collection and analysis will be discussed along with ethical considerations.

3.2 Methodology and research design

3.2.1 Methodology

King and Horrocks define methodology as “a process where the design of the research and choice of particular methods, and their justification in relation to the research project, are made evident” (2010, p. 6). In this study, I adopted a pragmatic approach and combined quantitative and qualitative methods as appropriate. The pragmatic world-view, as defined by Teddlie and Tashakkori “debunks concepts such as ‘truth’ and ‘reality’ and focuses instead on ‘what works’ as the truth regarding the research questions under investigation” (2009, p. 8). Pragmatism combines approaches and methods used in quantitative and qualitative research for the benefit of the particular research project, but it is not “an ‘anything goes’, sloppy unprincipled approach; it has its own standards of rigour and these are mandatory for the research questions to be answered [...]” (Cohen et al., 2015, p. 23). Not having to operate with solely one paradigm but integrating the qualitative and quantitative schools of thought where appropriate, will allow me to present a richer picture of my research. As Creswell (2014) summarises, pragmatism provides the researcher with a choice to use what they think is appropriate for their research and especially what
works in the particular context. My research spans a range of methods from a survey to questionnaires and interviews, thus requiring a holistic approach for the latter and a numeric approach for the former. Creswell (2014) highlights that in contrast to other philosophical stances, pragmatism is highly context dependent. He talks of pragmatism being “problem-centred” (Creswell, 2014, p. 6). For my research, this approach works well, because it encompasses four different sub-studies, each requiring their own approach: a website survey, a student questionnaire, student interviews and a survey with programme leaders.

Epistemology is a philosophical term which refers to the idea of investigating the nature of knowledge and what accounts for suitable knowledge in a particular field of study (Saunders et al., 2009). An epistemology derives from the corresponding ontology, which can be briefly glossed as ‘the way things are’, ‘the nature of being’. Researchers often contrast interpretivism (or constructivism) with positivism or the qualitative with the quantitative paradigm. According to Creswell (2014) constructivism is a point of view which builds up meaning from participants’ standpoint with each participant being allowed a voice. Positivism, in contrast, is purportedly neutral and detached from the observer.

Whilst Lincoln and Guba (1985) see interpretivism and positivism as conflicting approaches, I would argue that this dichotomy is not helpful. In contrast, I situate my research between the two to allow me to draw on both paradigms as that works best in my study. On the one hand, I am interested in the number of institutions that have English language entry requirements in place, what they are, the mean, mode and standard deviation; on the other hand, I want to explore students’ perceptions, thus gaining an in-depth understanding of the meaning which the individual student associates with the phenomena in this study. These are two very different interests, requiring different methodologies. The data acquired will be very different, so neither a purely qualitative epistemology nor a quantitative epistemology would be suitable. Hence, the epistemology that works for this study is pragmatism. It allows me to
explore meanings, for example opinions of and reasons for setting up particular English language entry requirements, and provides a contextual understanding of students’ perceptions. At the same time it allows me to collect numerical data on entry requirements for EMI programmes in Germany, thus giving information about the larger German setting. Selecting one single paradigm would limit my research.

3.2.2 Research design: a mixed methods study

The research design needs to be in line with my philosophical stance and reflect what works best for my research project. A research design “considers the range of methods of data collection [and] makes sure that the methods are appropriate” according to Silverman (2014, p. 43). Different research designs are discussed in the literature, such as the longitudinal design, a cross-sectional approach or a case study, all of which I had to reject. I will discuss the reasons for rejecting the above designs, before I move on to present my mixed methods design. This mixed methods study will address English language entry requirements from three angles: which institutions set them at; why they are set at particular levels; and how EMI students perceive them. A mixed methods design will be used to combine a quantitative investigation of institutional websites and quantitative questionnaires of students with qualitative in-depths interviews with students as well as programme leaders.

Intended to depict dynamic developments (Dörnyei, 2007), a longitudinal design was rejected due to time constraints. My research project had to fit in a certain timeframe. Many longitudinal studies, for example in the clinical sector, last for years. Although it would be interesting to see whether the institutions change their English language entry requirements over time, my time constraints did not allow me to research this over time.
The cross-sectional design as described by Dörnyei (2007) was initially attractive to me due to its characteristics. The design is applicable for research done at multiple sites (Saunders et al., 2009) at a single point in time. It seemed to fit with my research because I planned to survey participants at multiple sites at a single point in time. When acquiring more knowledge about the cross-sectional design, I had to reject it, because it would have required much more data than I would have been able to collect. Cohen et al. call the cross-sectional design “an epitome of the national census” (2015, p. 267) which I will not be able to deliver due to my intended sample size and sample method.

A case study is an in-depth study of a site or a context (Bryman, 2008). According to Yin, a case study examines “a contemporary phenomenon (the ‘case’) in depth and within its real-world context” (2014, p. 16). It “relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulated fashion [...]” (Yin, 2014, p. 17). Often studies of organisations are treated as case studies. Viewed in its entirety, my study does not fit neatly into a ‘case study’ design because the website survey focuses on the whole of Germany and the questionnaires and interviews on several institutions in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia.

Given the pragmatic philosophical stance adopted in this research, the mixed methods approach seemed to be a usable strategy to carry out my research. Dörnyei suggests that a mixed methods approach “legitimizes findings” (2007, p. 62) more thoroughly than solely quantitative or qualitative methods could do. In other words, findings emerging from one data set can be validated (or not) by findings emerging from other data sets. Shortcomings of one method can be offset by the strength of another method. Saunders et al. (2009), view it slightly differently, arguing that using mixed-methods offers the opportunity to illuminate one problem from different angles. In particular, qualitative methods can help to interpret findings based on research using quantitative methods (Friedrich, 1990). They can help explain the primarily quantitative data, which usually “looks at macro aspects” (Saunders et al.,
2009, p. 154). As Dörnyei (2007) states there are two main advantages of applying a mixed-methods approach. Firstly, one acquires an in-depth view of the research problem and secondly the different methods will be useful for triangulation. Cohen et al. define triangulation as the application of “two or more methods of data collection in a study [...] which contrasts with [...] the vulnerable single-method approaches” (2015, p. 195). The larger the variety of methods applied, the higher the level of “confidence” in the findings (Cohen et al., 2015, p. 195) since effects such as researcher bias, confirmation bias, reactivity or effect sizes will be reduced or eliminated (Cohen et al., 2015).

For my study a certain amount of data from different sources was necessary. My research targets two key stakeholders: higher education institutions and the students within them. In addition to this, information from the federal ministry provide additional context. Every stakeholder is expected to have a particular perspective on the English language entry requirements. For the programme leaders, they might be a more formal means of regulating academic programmes; for the students they could be everything from a hurdle to an unimportant detail depending on their previous knowledge of English.
Figure 3.1: Summary of stakeholders and methods

Figure 3.1 gives an overview of the stakeholders from whom data was collected. The Ministry of Innovation, Science and Research of NRW was a source for important contextual information, providing the frame in which the institutions and students act. I will survey the institutions through a search of English language entry requirements as posted on their websites and in detail with a questionnaire sent to selected individual programme leaders. Finally, I will focus on students, whom I will also survey broadly with a questionnaire and in detail by interviewing volunteers from the sample of respondents.

3.3 Methods

My pragmatic approach allows for application of various methods in my study. Website survey, questionnaires and interviews seems to be appropriate to collect data for finding answers to my research questions.
What are the English language requirements for admission to English-medium degree programmes at German higher education institutions and how are these requirements determined by institutions and viewed by domestic students in North Rhine-Westphalia?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research question</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Data source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the English language entry requirements for EMI programmes in higher education in Germany?</td>
<td>Manual search of public websites of universities</td>
<td>Publicly accessible information</td>
<td>Institutional homepages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How and why are English language entry requirements set at specific levels?</td>
<td>Email questionnaire to identified people from higher education institutions</td>
<td>Email communication</td>
<td>Programme leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the students’ experiences of their EMI programmes? a) What background do students have and what are their reasons for choosing EMI programmes? b) What is the students’ awareness of the English language entry requirements on their programme? c) What are students’ views of their own English language proficiency and their ability to participate in their EMI programme?</td>
<td>Questionnaire and semi-structured qualitative interviews</td>
<td>Questionnaire, oral interview</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: Summary of my research

The summary of my study as in Table 3.1 breaks my research project down into its core elements, covering the research questions, the methods which I will apply, the data to be collected and the data sources.

Closely linked to the choice of methods is the question of the validation of findings. Validity - defined as measuring accurately what is given - is one of the core measurements in research (Creswell, 2014) alongside reliability, which has common traits with repeatability and other means of receiving consistent results. Instead of using the notions of validity and reliability, qualitative researchers tend to use ‘credibility’ for internal validity, ‘transferability’ for external validity and ‘dependability’ for reliability (Bryman, 2008). In my study, I aim to deliver results that are authentic and credible, but they are not necessarily reliable because some
methods will produce qualitative data, which is by nature not necessarily replicable. There are also other validity strategies which are considered to strengthen the accuracy of the findings (Creswell, 2014). I will employ triangulation, which is defined as validating findings using a qualitative approach with data using a quantitative approach or vice versa (Saunders et al., 2009). As Creswell suggests, providing “a rich, thick description to convey the findings” (2014, p. 202) and self-reflection of the researcher to let the reader know how the background of the researcher has shaped their research also helps to improve the accuracy of the research. The former will be reflected in the way I write my findings chapters; the latter is addressed in a section of its own (see section 3.6.2).

3.4 Data collection

This section describes the methods of data collection for my study. The methods have to be in line with the philosophical stance. On the basis of a pragmatic world-view I chose a mixed-methods approach to answer my research questions, using both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. These are questionnaires, interviews and a website survey. Since this research is concerned with investigating English language requirements from the view of three different types of stakeholders, data from all these stakeholders was collected. Table 3.2 provides an overview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographical area</th>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Degree of participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Higher education institutions</td>
<td>Website survey</td>
<td>All institutional websites searched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia</td>
<td>Higher education institutions</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRW</td>
<td>Ministry of Innovation, Science and Research</td>
<td>Email interview</td>
<td>One ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRW</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRW</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Sample</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2: Detailed overview of the methods applied
Data from the institutions will be collected through the website survey and through the questionnaire to programme leaders. The website survey was done across all institutions of higher education in Germany listed officially; the questionnaire to the programme leaders was delivered to a subset of the sample institutions in NRW; also the central registries at these institutions were asked for student numbers. The NRW Ministry of Innovation, Science and Research was approached as indicated in section 5.2. A subset of the students was researched using a questionnaire and interviews. The data collection procedures from each group of stakeholder are described in detail below.

### 3.4.1 The website survey

Data was collected on 426 German institutions of higher education between July and October 2014. A list of the institutions was retrieved from Wikipedia (2014) and cross-checked with data from the German Federal Statistical Office (2014). Since I recorded information on all HEIs in Germany, this method can be described as a census (Bryman, 2008). The institutions are public, private and church-run, and include universities and universities of applied sciences.

The following data was retrieved by viewing the institutions’ websites:

- the number of English-medium programmes that are offered (purely English or bilingual English-German programmes)
- if the programmes in question had English language entry requirements in place; if so, which types they use (TOEFL, IELTS, the Cambridge Certificates, UNIcert, CEFR, other)
- their cut scores/levels
- the study level (bachelor, master)

Each institutional website was accessed in the German version first. If there was a link to an English version, the English version was used. In quite a few cases, this did
not exist or was under development. Programmes, where the content matter was English or American language, literature or history were excluded as they are not within the scope of this study.

Some universities offered a user-friendly overview of programmes, indicating if programmes are available only in German or in English and placing the overview conveniently at the top level of the homepage. In contrast, other institutions placed the overview at a lower level, which means that the user has to click through different pages to reach the overview. There were also institutions which do not offer an overview but list their English programmes per faculty or department, which I then investigated. I went to each separate faculty/departmental homepage to retrieve the English admission requirements. Most of the institutions had only one section for English entry requirements; where there were two separate sections, one for domestic students and one for international students, I accessed the one for domestic students only as international students were not part of my study.

### 3.4.2 Research sites

For the inquiry into the attitudes and perceptions of institutional programme leaders and students, I had to create a sample which had to be realistic considering the time frame of my study and the fact that the research had to be done by one person – me. I therefore decided to focus on the institutions in North Rhine-Westphalia, the federal state in which I live. NRW is the most populated state in Germany and has the highest number of universities – 69 out of a total of 426 HEIs in Germany (cf. Syrbe and Rose, 2018). 27 institutions offer EMI programmes. While I needed to make the number of higher education institutions within the state manageable for one researcher, I also had to ensure that the institutions had different profiles in terms of entry requirements. The resulting sample includes the following seven HEIs:
- 2 institutions, which offer programmes requiring TOEFL and IELTS as admission requirement
- 2 institutions, which offer programmes requiring other English language proficiency tests or use a framework such as the CEFR
- 2 institutions, which offer programmes without admission requirements in terms of English language proficiency
- 1 institution as convenience sample

Other criteria were also taken into consideration. For instance, I included institutions with the highest number of English-medium programmes. The locations of the institutions were equally important, since one collection stage included oral interviews, and it was practical to do these on campus. Table 3.3 depicts the institutions chosen alongside information on the number of EMI programmes and the English language entry requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Number of English programmes</th>
<th>Number of bilingual programmes</th>
<th>English language entry requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institution 1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>IELTS, language certificate, TOEFL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution 2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>CEFR, IELTS, TOEFL, unspecified description, not stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution 3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>CEFR, unspecified description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution 4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>CEFR, IELTS, TOEFL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution 5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>CEFR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution 6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>CEFR, TOEFL, unspecified description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution 7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>CEFR, IELTS, TOEFL, unspecified description</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3: Selected institutions of higher education for the survey

### 3.4.3 Piloting studies

#### 3.4.3.1 Piloting the questionnaire to the programme leaders

For the questionnaire to the programme leaders there was no pilot since the sample size was so small to begin with. In hindsight it would have been better to have
included one (Oliver, 2003), especially as it became clear in the study that not all questionnaire respondents were the ones who had set up the English language entry requirements or were at least involved in that process. However, a pilot with one or two programme leaders might not have thrown up this issue.

3.4.3.2 Piloting the student questionnaire

A problem with questionnaires is that respondents might “interpret the same words differently” (Cohen et al., 2015, p. 384). As a way of mitigating this disadvantage, the questionnaire was tested with a small number of respondents – not from the selected institutions – for manageability and understanding prior to the rollout to the chosen institutions. The pilot testing started in May 2015 and ran for two weeks. The respondents gave valuable feedback about the order of questions and the wording of some questions. Improvements were made before the final version of the questionnaire was rolled out to the students online from June until November 2015.

3.4.4 The programme leader inquiry

The questionnaire for the programme leaders contained 6 questions (see Appendix A). An email questionnaire was chosen for practical reasons and was sent out in February 2016. Two reminders were sent to the prospective participants, where necessary.

A total of 56 possible contact persons was identified from the seven universities in the sample, most of them via the faculties’ website. They were in the role of programme chair or listed by the institution as the contact person. In some cases, the programme leaders forwarded my questionnaire to their assistants. These responses were also accepted. In the end, 8 replies were received from four institutions. One
reply had to be discarded because the respondent only sent their English language entry requirements without further explanation and did not provide any answers to my questions. This makes a total of 7 valid responses. Three institutions did not provide any data.

The respondents covered six programmes; one reply came from the international office of one institution. This reply was not discarded as it showed expert knowledge, and it is likely that the responsibility for setting up the English language entry requirements for that particular programme lies with the international office. For the study, I kept the term ‘programme leader’ because it signals programme responsibility and the majority of respondents were programme leaders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Answers received</th>
<th>Discarded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3.4: Number of respondents of programme leaders*

Table 3.4 summarises the replies received from the institutions. One institution was extremely reluctant in dealing with my request. An initial approach to the programme leader generated the reply that the particular professor did not teach through the medium of English, although they were mentioned on the webpage as giving lectures only in English. Friendly reminders did not generate any further answers. I then decided to directly contact them by phone. Two phone calls to the central application office were also unsuccessful but I was reassured that my request would be forwarded to the programme chairperson. However, I never received an answer from this institution. Since the programme leaders, who were often also the lecturers teaching on the EMI programmes, acted as gatekeepers to reach the students (for a
more detailed description see section 3.4.5), I was unable to include any students at this institution either in the student questionnaire or the interviews.

3.4.5 The student questionnaire

A student questionnaire was conducted to explore the views of students regarding the English language entry requirements of the English-medium programmes and the relevance of these requirements for successful participation in these programmes. The advantage of a questionnaire is to enable the researcher to collect data in a short time period and reach people who are geographically apart (Bryman, 2008). The disadvantage is that the respondent is restricted to a certain approach to the problem, an approach which the researcher has created with the nature and order of the questions.

The questionnaire contained 37 questions (see Appendix B). All questions were ‘closed’, i.e. listed a range of predetermined response options, except for six, which were ‘open-ended’, allowing for free-text responses. The questionnaire began with factual questions to build up confidence and trust and to encourage students to answer the remaining questions (Dörnyei and Taguchi, 2010). Respondents tend to be more willing to engage when they realise that the questionnaire is neither too complicated to complete nor the topic too abstract (Bernard, 2006). The questionnaire took approximately 15-20 min to complete, and I used Survey Monkey to develop and run it. The questionnaire – which was conducted anonymously to protect the privacy of the respondents – was set up so that for each IP address the questions could only be answered once. This was done to prevent students from answering the questionnaire multiple times (Schnell et al., 2011).

Crucial to my survey is the fact that the respondents need to hold a German school-leaving certificate (Abitur) as my study focuses on domestic students who enrol in
English programmes. My study does not focus on international students who do a semester abroad in Germany or currently study in Germany for other reasons. Having a German school-leaving certificate was thus an eligibility criterion for participating in the study, as addressed in section 2.5. The introductory letter used for the student survey (see Appendix C) was addressed clearly to this target group, domestic German students.

The course lecturers were sent information about the questionnaire via email which also included an online link to Survey Monkey. They had been identified via the institution’s homepages. Where more than one name was given, all lecturers were approached and asked to distribute the link to the survey by email. Two reminders were sent. Since I live close to the University of Duisburg-Essen, I preferred to visit in person to distribute the online link to the questionnaire. I was allowed to go into a couple of classes and share the link to the questionnaire.

The fact that I had to go via course lecturers to access the students raises issues around gatekeeping. Gatekeepers can prevent access to potential participants or can influence the respondents in their favour, thus leading to biased answers (Bell and Bryman, 2007). It also meant that I was unable to identify the response rate, as I had no information about the total number of students who received the questionnaire. However, the advantage was that I was able to target the exact students who were enrolled in an English-medium programme.

The approach was a formal process and transparent (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008). The majority of gatekeepers in my study were helpful; however, at one institution they were not willing to support my study and so, no responses were received from institution 7.
Table 3.5: Number of student responses received

Table 3.5 depicts the number of responses received. 121 replies were received, most of them in June 2015. 21 responses were discarded because it was not clear that they were affiliated to one of the institutions that I was targeting. In my sample, 2 students commented explicitly on why they had not given the affiliation and it was because they were students from other universities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Valid/ discarded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample institutions</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>valid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other universities</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>discarded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliation not ticked</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>discarded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>121</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.6: Student’s participation in the online survey per institution

Table 3.6 provides a detailed overview of the replies received and their validity per institution. A total of 98 valid responses were received for analysis from students who hold a German school-leaving certificate and study at institution 1 to 7. The majority (i.e. 52 per cent) came from institution 3, 19.4 per cent from institution 4, 16.3 per cent from institution 3, 7.1 per cent from institution 2, 4.1 per cent from institution 6, 1 per cent from institution 5 and none from institution 7. As discussed above, the gatekeepers there were reluctant to forward my request. I was not able to find out the reason why.
Figure 3.2 depicts the different disciplines in which the student respondents were enrolled. Politics (28.6 per cent), informatics and computer sciences (18.3 per cent), agricultural sciences (13.3 per cent) and management (13.3 per cent) are heading this list. In total, the students were enrolled in ten different categories of disciplines.

3.4.6 The student interviews

As Dörnyei states, a survey questionnaire followed by interviews is considered “easy to implement and analyse, yet [...] enriches the final findings considerably” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 171). In my study, students were identified through the student questionnaire which I have just described and which included a tick box for respondents to indicate availability for an interview on the topic and space for them to leave their email address.

Each interview took around 20 minutes and was semi-structured. A semi-structured frame was chosen to allow the respondent to talk openly about the topic and not have to stick to a fixed framework on the one hand and on the other hand to guide
the interviewer and ensure comparability of interviews. The generic set of interview questions can be found in Appendix D. However, due to the flow of the interview, there were variations.

All interviews were carried out face-to-face at the university that the student was associated with or via Skype. Before the interview, the respondent was asked to fill out a consent form (see Appendix E). The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed afterwards. The interviews took place in September and October 2015. 12 questionnaire respondents had left their contact details to volunteer for an interview. 9 respondents agreed to an interview date. 8 attended the interview but 1 had to be excluded because he/she studied English. None of the questionnaire respondents from institution 1 and institution 5 volunteered for an interview. As none of the students of institution 7 responded to the questionnaire, there were no volunteers for the interview from that institution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Master/Bachelor</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Consent form signed</th>
<th>Code name</th>
<th>Student's discipline</th>
<th>Data set</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>01.09.2015</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Melissa</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>okay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>01.09.2015</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Ed</td>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>okay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>08.09.2015</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Kate</td>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>okay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>09.09.2015</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Linda</td>
<td>Management, Politics &amp; Law</td>
<td>okay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.09.2015</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Heidi</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>okay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>11.09.2015</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>okay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>14.09.2015</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>English studies</td>
<td>discarded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>19.10.2015</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Selena</td>
<td>Politics</td>
<td>okay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>19.10.2015</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>did not attend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>discarded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.7: Overview of interviews

Table 3.7 gives an overview of the interviews. Due to data protection, as described in the ethics section 3.6, each individual interviewee was given a pseudonym.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Questionnaire</th>
<th>Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3.8: Participation rate by institution in per cent*

Table 3.8 provides an overview of the participation rate per institution. The questionnaire response rate has already been reported in section 3.4.4.2, but is given here again for a comparison with the response rate for the oral interviews. A total of 98 student questionnaire responses were considered and 7 student interviews. 16.3 per cent of the students who took part in the questionnaire came from institution 1, but no one was willing to volunteer for the interview. 7.2 per cent of the questionnaire respondents were enrolled in institution 2, around a third of the interviews were conducted there. The majority of the online survey and the interviews were conducted at institution 3 with 52 per cent and 42.9 per cent respectively. Institution 4 contributed 19.4 per cent to the questionnaire and 28.6 per cent to the interviews. 1 per cent of the questionnaire respondents were based at institution 5 and a further 4.1 per cent at institution 6. No students from institutions 5 and 6 volunteered for the interviews. Last but not least, no students from institution 7 took part despite various emails and phone calls to the gatekeepers.

### 3.4.7 Methodological limitations of the data collection process

Even before I started the data collection, some methodological issues arose. The methods used in my study have pros and cons which I had to weigh to come to my decision.
A website survey makes use of internet pages which are publicly accessible. This has the advantage of yielding large amounts of data and potentially revealing patterns, which are key strengths of quantitative methodologies (Bryman, 2008; Cohen et al., 2015; Creswell, 2014). There is no problem with gatekeeping and costs are low. A website survey also allows for retrieving data which is already digital, for example by downloading lists of programmes in Excel format. This helps to ease the data collection process. A key limitation of the method is that the information displayed on webpages may not be accurate or up to date. Previous research has shown that even if a course is listed as English-medium in course catalogues, the reality is often more complex with a range of languages being used (Macaro et al., 2018; Söderlundh, 2012). Another disadvantage of this method is that questions of clarifications are not possible. This is why it is useful to complement website surveys with other more qualitative methodologies (Dörnyei, 2007; Patton, 2002; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009), in my case direct contact with the institution.

Questionnaires are usually deployed to try to find answers “in a systematic and disciplined manner” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 101). Questionnaires also help gathering information in a short period of time and allow for generalisations to be made (Dörnyei and Taguchi, 2010; Cohen et al., 2015; Creswell, 2014). However, there are disadvantages as the question wording may have a significant influence on the responses (Dörnyei and Taguchi, 2010). Moreover, the order of questions could have an impact on the answers, known as ‘order effect’ (Schuman and Presser, 1996). Additionally, questionnaires have the same disadvantage as website surveys in that it is not possible to ask for clarifications (Dörnyei, 2007; Patton, 2002). Furthermore, according to Dörnyei (2007), the richness of the answers might be restricted, particularly if the respondents are less willing to devote too much time to answering; however, this may vary depending on their interest in the subject.

In contrast to questionnaires, interviews typically allow for richer, more in-depth, participant-driven data (King and Horrocks, 2010; Silverman, 2014). Interviews have
the advantage that participants have the opportunity to clarify; however the problem with researcher-imposed themes partly applies to interviews too (Bryman, 2008). As Denzin puts it, interviews are “[...] not a method of gathering information, but a vehicle for producing performance texts and performance ethnographies about self and society” (2001, p. 24). Participants’ responses inevitably follow the researcher’s agenda. And the researcher’s agenda, in turn, is itself a product of discourses that circulate in society. Usually, experts recommend semi-structured interviews which allow for both researcher- and participant-generated themes to emerge (Dörnyei, 2007). Some structure must usually guide the interview process to make responses comparable and relevant to the research question; however too much structure can cause problems because it may curb spontaneity and rapport-building which is crucial to making respondents feel at ease (Bryman, 2008).

Like questionnaires, interviews can only elicit participants’ views of the object of inquiry. Where, in the case of the present study, they may shed light on such things as participants’ self-assessed language proficiency and their views on being enrolled in an EMI programmes, they will reveal little about their actual proficiency or behaviour in the context in question. Just as actual scores of language proficiency would provide useful supplementary data (see further section 2.9.3), classroom observations would also have been useful. However, it was not possible to observe EMI classes, nor to obtain actual test scores or levels of proficiency, but future researcher could usefully do so.

Email interviews were used for surveying the views of the programme leaders. Email interviews offer a relatively straightforward way of clarifying certain issues (Cohen et al., 2015). However, due to the medium, it is often not practical, desirable or possible to engage in too much interaction with the participants. Nevertheless, an advantage over oral interviews is that respondents have time to think the questions over and prepare the answers in a better way (Cohen et al., 2015). Of course, sometimes interviewers look for spontaneous answers, which are honest and have not been
subject to too much reflection (Silverman, 2014). Another disadvantage of email interviews is that the interviewer has little control over who actually replies to the email. For instance, it may be sent on to someone who is not sufficiently equipped to answer the questions (Bryman, 2008).

### 3.5 Data analysis

This section describes the analysis of each of the above datasets. Due to the pragmatic approach that I had chosen for the data collection, my methods of analysing also draw on the pragmatic paradigm. I utilised the method which was for me the most appropriate way to answer the particular research question and which suited the data. The data from the website survey requires a more quantitative approach due to its amount and nature; the data from the students’ interviews need a qualitative approach to the analysis. The student questionnaire consists of open and closed questions; for the closed questions, a statistical, quantitative approach is best for analysis; for the open questions, a qualitative method of analysis is most useful to maintain the student’s voice.

Having a certain amount of data within my three data sets, I also had to decide which of the pieces of information was important and which was not. This was one of the choices I had to make as a researcher, so the outcome of the analysis was shaped by my understanding and interpretation of the data. Nevertheless, it was advantageous to have quantitative and qualitative data since one could inform one another (Mayring, 2015).

Where I deployed descriptive statistics, this was done with Microsoft Excel 2013. For the qualitative data, I applied thematic analysis (see below).
3.5.1 The website survey

In the data collection process of the universities’ websites, I created an Excel spreadsheet which included the name of the institution, the name of their EMI programme, if the language of the programmes was purely English or English and German, the discipline, the type of degree and the language entry requirements. Background data was collated as well (founding year of the university, type of institution university/university of applied sciences etc.) in case this turned out to be relevant.

Since most of the retrieved data was quantitative in nature, the analysis was conducted via Microsoft Excel, applying descriptive statistical operations. For the English language admission tests the nominal scale was used. The raw data shows the test (TOEFL, IELTS etc.) and the minimum score requested by the institution in question. The data gathered regarding the level of language entry requirements was interval scaled. An ordinal scale would have been inappropriate because a student who scores 4.0 in the IELTS test is not half as capable in terms of his/her English proficiency compared with one who scores 8.0. An interval scale is used for data with greater-or-less relations (Bortz and Schuster, 2010). For nominally scaled data, I calculated the mode as a measure of central tendency. The mode is the indicator of which value is most frequently used. It allows for statements which English admission test is favoured by institutions and which cut scores they require the most. For interval-scaled data, I calculated the mode, the minimum value, the maximum value and the arithmetic means as measures of central tendency. The arithmetic means is often used as a comparison to the mode and shows the middle value.

The above statistical measurements allow for statements which show the range the English language entry requirements have and whether the middle value is far from the most frequently used value or not. To identify the dispersion, the variance and the standard deviation are calculated. Measures of dispersion allow for statements
how the values are scattered; so preferences might become visible. Descriptive statistics helped me to interpret my findings.

3.5.2 The questionnaire to the programme leaders

The responses to the programme leader questionnaires were analysed using qualitative thematic analysis as described in King and Horrocks (2010). Thematic analysis is a slow process which requires going back and forth within the data. Boyatzis “described the process of thematic analysis as a way of ‘seeing’” (1998; as in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p. 252). The answers from the institutions’ administration which is concerned with policy (‘as-is’) was then compared with the strategy set out by the ministry (‘to-be’) to find out how these English admission requirements were put into practice.

Following a request to make the name of one institution anonymous, I had to anonymise all data sets so that no conclusions could be drawn regarding the identity of this particular institution. The findings will therefore be reported for institution 1, institution 2, etc.

3.5.3 The student questionnaire

The data collected through the student questionnaire encompassed data from closed questions and from open-ended questions, with text as the major type of data. The data from the closed questions can be classified as nominal and ordinal data (Cohen et al., 2015). Nominal data included information about gender, semester of study, the name of the institution and answer categories. Possible answer categories had been provided for most of the closed questions to facilitate the answer process. The
last option given for some of the closed questions was ‘other’ to enable the respondents to give comments.

Likert-type items such as those used in question 11 – ‘Is the language of instruction of your programme ...?’ – with the answer categories ‘predominantly English, predominantly German, fifty-fifty, only English, only German’, are classified as ordinal. I used Likert-type items although I am aware of the criticism that the numbers or categories might have a different meaning for different people. Where one person might use a ‘4’ on a 5-point scale, somebody else would rather use a ‘3’ for the same meaning (Cohen et al., 2015). I decided to employ a 5-point scale instead of 7-point or even 9-point scale in order to offer participants some variance while not giving them too much room for interpretation. While the problem that people’s perceptions and ratings are different remains, the responses show up some trends.

For the analysis of the student questionnaire, descriptive statistics were applied. For nominal data, I calculated the mode as a measure of central tendency. It allows for statements on preferred views on issues. For ordinal-scaled data the minimum and maximum value are important and the calculation of dispersion as conducted through variance and standard deviation. This permits the researcher to draw conclusions on preferences. It does not make sense to calculate arithmetic values either for nominal or for ordinal-scaled data. The mode gives an indication of which value was frequently chosen and might point out a trend. Means and modes are commonly presented by percentages in bar and/or pie charts (Bortz and Schuster, 2010).

The answers of the open questions were analysed using thematic analysis. This is a qualitative approach of analysing texts; more information is provided in the next section.
3.5.4 The student interviews

The data collected in the student interviews were oral accounts (in German) that had been recorded. These were then transcribed (for an example see Appendix F). In a first step of the analysis, the transcripts were prepared by eliminating filler words such as um, uh, em, sighs and pauses, where these impacted on legibility. I do not consider these relevant because I am not researching a sensitive topic, where hesitations, sighs, etc. have a deeper meaning. I assume that my respondents were simply looking for words, how to express the things they wanted to say. After the transcripts were prepared, a thematic analysis was performed (for an example see Appendix G). I went through the transcript question by question to see which categories were visible, using different colours to highlight different themes as shown in Table 3.9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>View on EMI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Previous student experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>View on English language entry requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student’s linguistic proficiency in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>View on study support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3.9: Colour codes for the thematic analysis*

I did several rounds of going through the transcript and checking if the statement belonged to a category already determined or whether a new category needed to be added. This resulted in a list of themes, which I used for interpretation and discussion. In the findings chapter I linked the qualitative data from the student questionnaire with qualitative data from the student interviews. The student interviews thus served the purpose of substantiating and enriching the findings of the student questionnaire. The German original text of the quotes is to be found in Appendix H.
3.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are an important element of any research. The Open University has established regulatory processes and structures, which are documented in the Code of Practice for Research at the Open University: the OU Ethics Principles for Research involving Human Participants and they draw on British standards as outlined in the Guidelines from British Educational Research Association (BERA). This piece of research received approval by the OU Ethics committee under the file number HREC/2014/1764/Stuers/1, dated 13 August 2014 (see Appendix I).

3.6.1 Ethical approach to data collection and storage

The website survey encompassed public data only, extracted from each institutional website. The questionnaire and especially the interviews needed more consideration in terms of ethics, because they do not present data that exists in the public domain. The introductory letter informed the respondents about the background and scope of the survey and asked for their consent to take part. No respondent was forced to take part. The questionnaire was conducted anonymously to protect the privacy of the respondents. The data were stored in a way that assures the respondents that no misuse of data is possible, in particular, for those questionnaire responses, which include participants’ names and email addresses. The computer files (whether stored on PC or USB stick) were password-protected.

The data gathered from the institutions encompassed not only the English language entry requirements, and programme leaders’ views, and opinions, but also student numbers in EMI programmes. Following a request from one institution to anonymise the data retrieved, I decided to report the findings as institution 1, institution 2, as mentioned in section 3.5.2. I used this nomenclature throughout my study to protect the institutions’ identity.
The students, who took part in the study were over 18 years old and participated on a voluntary basis. The aim of the research was to give them the opportunity to voice their opinions on English admission tests and how they have managed to conduct their studies through the medium of English. Cameron et al. (1992) talk of empowerment research in this regard. My study aims at contributing to the views of the students being heard. This is particularly important since they are not in the position to influence the way in which English language requirements are set up.

I did not give incentives to the participants. Bryman (2008) confirms that incentives can lead to a biased completion of the questionnaire in favour of positive answers.

In a second step following the questionnaire, participants who wanted to volunteer in an oral interview could do so. Before they did so, the participants had to fill out a consent form which explained the research, the interview and the possibility of withdrawal, in case a participant wanted to terminate its participation. It is possible during interviews that participants feel psychologically intimidated or offended or that they develop certain emotions which are not intended. If this had occurred, those interviews would have been immediately terminated and the material would not have been used for analysis or further work. I am interested in true answers and I respect and treat every participant in an ethical way. The recruitment of participants for the student interviews was manageable, as well as the inquiry that I carried out with the ministry. Nonetheless, it has to be mentioned that to reach the students I had to make use of gatekeepers, their lecturers, who decided whether to forward my request or not as mentioned in section 3.4.5.

The debriefing is also an important element of research. It provides the participants not only with information but it is also the closure to the activity. The debriefing of the study takes place in 2018 and will be conducted by email.
3.6.2 Researcher reflexivity

Ethics is not just about following a fixed set of procedures and guidelines. It is highly important for a researcher to continually reflect on his or her own activities and behaviour in the field. Reflexivity in research is a deliberate approach to review one’s steps taken. Reflexivity is not only concerned with the technical proceedings, but also with how the researcher develops, feels and influences their research (King and Horrocks, 2010). I conducted my research from an external position. This was not a deliberate choice, but the only option I had, since I am neither a student at the universities discussed nor a lecturer. Since I was on the outside I had the advantage that the participants were able to talk quite freely (Bernard, 2006) and seemed to be relaxed in their interactions with me. Furthermore, some students mentioned during the interview that they were happy to help me because they themselves rely on help from other students during their studies.

To persuade programme leaders to participate in my questionnaire was more difficult due to my outsider position. I approached them by email or in some cases by phone; I am aware that I am not the only person who approaches them with a request that goes beyond their daily work, and I acknowledge that this may have added to their workload and also that they may not have been interested in my research. Nevertheless, the low return rate to the questionnaire was frustrating. In a study of university professors Cobanoglu et al. (2001) report a response rate of 26 per cent; Baruch and Holtom (2008) even report a response rate of 35.7 per cent from organisations. My response rate was about 14 per cent. My initial estimation had been a lot higher, possibly because the student questionnaire and the student interviews had been well received. I assumed that the programme leader inquiry would be just as successful as the students’ interviews.
3.7 **Summary and conclusion**

This chapter presented the ontological position and epistemological approach taken in the research. It then described the research design and the methods used for data collection and data analysis. Four data sets were obtained from three sources; the quantitative data sets were analysed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis was used for the quantitative sets of data. Obstacles in terms of data collection and analysis were discussed as well as ethical considerations.
4. Findings and discussion I: English language entry requirements for higher education institutions in Germany

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings emerging from a survey of the websites of HEIs in Germany with regard to admission requirements for English programmes. Because English language admission requirements are only relevant in degree programmes taught in English, I begin by giving an account of the number of institutions offering EMI programmes. Then, the focus shifts to the programmes, examining bachelor’s and master’s level separately.

4.2 Institutions offering EMI in Germany

This section gives an overview on German HEIs offering EMI programmes. In Germany 149 institutions of higher education offered EMI programmes in 2014. These can be grouped according to their funding body.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Run by</th>
<th>Total number of institutions</th>
<th>Number of institutions which offer EMI programmes</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>41.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4.1: Number of institutions offering EMI programmes in 2014*

As Table 4.1 shows, 2 institutions out of 42 church-run institutions offer EMI programmes, that is 4.8 per cent of all church-run institutions. 34 private institutions out of 110 offer EMI programmes which amounts to 30.9 per cent. From 274 state-run institutions 113 offer EMI programmes which equals 41.2 per cent. In total 35.0
per cent of all 426 institutions offered EMI programmes in 2014. 1,093 EMI programmes were identified for the whole of Germany. With the first EMI programme in Germany being launched in 1997/98, almost twenty years later the website survey suggests that one third of the institutions of higher education offer English-medium instruction.

4.3 Distribution of EMI programmes per study level

This section will provide information on the extent of EMI programmes offered per study level.

![Figure 4.1: Percentage of EMI programmes per study level](image)

As shown in Figure 4.1, the largest number of EMI programmes are offered at master’s level, namely 83 per cent. Thus 17 per cent of all offered EMI programmes are at bachelor’s level. The high number of EMI programmes at master’s level can probably be explained by a higher proportion of international students at master’s level.
4.4 Distribution of EMI programmes per institution

This section will provide information on how many programmes were offered per institution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of EMI programmes offered at the institution</th>
<th>Number of institutions which offer these programmes in per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>0.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100

*Table 4.2: Number of EMI programmes offered at the institutions*
As Table 4.2 shows, the majority of institutions offers between one and four programmes. However, some institutions offer a large number of EMI programmes. The largest share of programmes was offered by the Technical University of Munich (TUM) with 62 EMI programmes; the Jacobs University Bremen offers 37 programmes. These two account for almost ten per cent of all programmes found.

4.5 English language entry requirements in Germany

This section provides an overview of the English language requirements for entry into EMI programmes in German HEIs. The following English language entry requirements were identified in the context of this study:

- Authenticated copies of language certificates
- Cambridge Certificates
- IELTS
- TOEIC
- TOEFL pBT, cBT, iBT
- UNIcert
- GMAT
- GRE
- CEFR
- In-house test
- Interview in English
- Proof of language proficiency
- Unspecified descriptions such as ‘good command of English’, without further details how this would be assessed (other phrases: ‘excellent English skills’, ‘excellent command of English’, ‘English proficiency required’ etc.)
- School-leaving certificate

Some had no entry requirements, or if they did, they did not state them.
Figure 4.2: Entry requirements for EMI programmes (in per cent per study level)

Figure 4.2 gives an overview of the most commonly used English language entry requirements at bachelor’s and master’s level. As can be seen, TOEFL and IELTS were the most frequently named English language requirements for access to EMI programmes at German HEIs at both study levels. A total of 42.5 per cent state that English language tests such as TOEFL or IELTS are mandatory to gain entry for bachelor’s level; it is 55.5 per cent for master’s level. These findings differ from Wächter and Maiworm’s results (2008) which showed that 86 per cent of all programmes in Europe require TOEFL and IELTS. However, they investigated Europe and I am focussing on Germany only.

At bachelor’s level English language entry requirements other than TOEFL and IELTS were found as follows: for 21.5 per cent of all programmes no requirements were stated, a school-leaving certificate was requested in 11.7 per cent, an unspecified description was given in 7.3 per cent, the CEFR was required in 6.8 per cent, proof for
6.3 per cent and for 2.9 per cent it was explicitly stated that no proof of linguistic proficiency was required. The Cambridge Certificates and other English language entry requirements, which will be examined in the next section, were mentioned for 0.5 per cent of the programmes. UNIcert does not appear at all in the context of bachelor programmes. The umbrella term ‘no proof required’ refers to programmes where the institutional websites stated explicitly that no proof was required (e. g. ‘no evidence needs to be presented’, ‘no certificate required’ etc.). The category ‘proof required’ refers to programmes, where ‘proof has to be provided’ or ‘proof of sufficient English proficiency has to be provided’, but without giving details on what evidence should be used. I used the term ‘not stated’ for websites which do not show any linguistic entry requirements.

At master’s level English language entry requirements other than TOEFL and IELTS were found as follows: for 14.2 per cent of the master’s programmes no English language entry requirements were stated, the CEFR was requested for 9.9 per cent, an unspecified description was given for 6.5 per cent, Cambridge Certificates were requested for 3.9 per cent, a proof was required for 2.7 per cent, a school-leaving certificate was requested for 2.6 per cent, other English language entry requirements were stated for 2.6 per cent, UNIcert appeared for 2 per cent and 0.1 per cent of the homepages explicitly stated that no proof of linguistic proficiency was required for the master programmes.

The ‘other’-option of Figure 4.2 comprises the following information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Bachelor (in per cent)</th>
<th>Master (in per cent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GMAT</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRE</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-house test, interview</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEIC</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4.3: Other English language entry requirements in per cent per study level*
As Table 4.3 illustrates, at master’s level GMAT (0.6 per cent), GRE (0.7 per cent), TOEIC (0.4 per cent) and individual solutions (0.9 per cent) were required, whereas at bachelor’s level only the TOEIC appeared for 0.5 per cent of the programmes.

4.5.1 Range of TOEFL and IELTS test scores required

This section reports on the range of test scores required for TOEFL and IELTS, given that these two tests were found to be the most commonly used. It then compares the cut scores of TOEFL and IELTS to the CEFR.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Test specific min and max scores</th>
<th>Range of test scores identified in my study</th>
<th>CEFR equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>Master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL pBT</td>
<td>0-677</td>
<td>407-605</td>
<td>300-650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL cBT</td>
<td>0-300</td>
<td>100-237</td>
<td>130-300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL iBT</td>
<td>0-120</td>
<td>61-110</td>
<td>57-110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS</td>
<td>0-9.0</td>
<td>4.0-8.0</td>
<td>3.5-8.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4: Test scores for TOEFL and IELTS from the website survey for bachelor’s and master’s level

Table 4.4 depicts the programme requirements with regard to TOEFL and IELTS separated into bachelor’s and master’s level. At bachelor’s level, programmes asked for TOEFL pBT scores between 407 and 605 points which equals A2-C1 (CEFR). For the TOEFL cBT programmes asked for scores between 100 and 237, which equals A2-B2 (CEFR) and for TOEFL iBT programmes asked for scores between 61 and 110, which equals B1-C1 (CEFR). The IELTS test was accepted with scores in a range from 4.0 to 8.0, which encompasses the CEFR levels from A2-C1.

At master’s level, programmes asked for TOEFL pBT scores between 300 and 650 points which equals A1-C2 (CEFR). For the TOEFL cBT programmes asked for scores between 130 and 300, which equals B1-C2 (CEFR) and for TOEFL iBT programmes
asked for scores between 57 and 110, which equals B1-C1 (CEFR). The IELTS test was accepted with scores in a range from 3.5 to 8.0, which encompasses the CEFR levels from A1-C1. Regarding the identified range of test scores, the span of scores for master programmes is larger than at bachelor’s level and often starts at a lower level than the bachelor’s programmes. This could be because there is more competition at master’s level (comp. Fig 4.1).

Overall, I found extensive variation between programmes in terms of the English language thresholds they set, ranging from 300 to 650 for the TOEFL pBT, 100 to 300 for the TOEFL cBT and 57 to 110 for the TOEFL iBT. The minimum IELTS score requested for a programme was 3.5 and the maximum score 8.0. According to the CEFR the types of competencies required are very different ranging from beginner’s level (A1) who can “introduce him/herself” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 24) to a mastery level (C2) where a speaker is able to “understand with ease virtually everything heard or read” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 24).

4.5.2 Mode and mean for TOEFL and IELTS

This section reports on the mode and mean calculated for TOEFL and IELTS. This makes my findings comparable to Wächter and Maiworm and it verifies my claim that English language entry requirements differ from programme to programme within and also probably across institutions. The mean shows the average value of a data set; the standard deviation the distribution around the mean (Bortz and Schuster, 2010).
Table 4.5 displays the modes and means of the test scores required at different programmes across HEIs in Germany for the three TOEFL test-formats and IELTS, separated in bachelor’s and master’s level. The table shows mode and mean in absolute numbers, mode in per cent and the standard deviation.

At bachelor’s level the TOEFL pBT has an average score of 563 and a mode of 575, which was found in 56.8 per cent of the cases. The TOEFL cBT has a mean of 212 and a mode of 213 points. The latter appeared in 36.4 per cent of the cases. The TOEFL iBT had a mean of 86 and the mode at 90, which appeared in 40.2 per cent of the iBT. IELTS has a mean of 6.1 and a mode of 6.5, the latter occurred in 60.3 per cent of all IELTS cases. The standard deviation tells us that the different TOEFL cut scores that institutions require are quite disperse. For the TOEFL pBT the standard deviation is 61.3, for the TOEFL cBT it is to 44.3, for the TOEFL iBT it is as low as 9.3 and IELTS seems to have almost no variations with a standard deviation of 1.1. The variation regarding the TOEFL may be attributable to there having been different versions in place over time, as discussed in section 2.8.4.1.

At master’s level the picture is not much different. The TOEFL pBT has a mean at 552 and the mode at 550. The latter appeared in 46.3 per cent. The TOEFL cBT has with a mean at 221 and a mode at 213. The TOEFL iBT had a mean at 85 and a mode at 80. The most frequent score was only required by just under a quarter of all TOEFL iBT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Most frequently requested score (mode)</th>
<th>Mode in per cent</th>
<th>Average score (mean)</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>Master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL pBT</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL cBT</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL iBT</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>51.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5: Test scores for TOEFL and IELTS from the website survey at bachelor’s and master’s level
cases (24.5 per cent). IELTS has a mean at 6.2 and a mode at 6.5. The latter was set by 51.3 per cent of all IELTS cases. The standard deviation for the TOEFL pBT is 75.1, for the TOEFL cBT it is 35.8, and for the TOEFL iBT it is 12.8. IELTS, by contrast, seems to have almost no variations with a standard deviation of 1.5. Especially the findings for the TOEFL pBT signal a wide dispersion around the mean. In sum, the variation in English language entry requirements across programmes and probably across institutions may be especially significant for the TOEFL pBT and cBT. There seems to be less variation for the iBT and still less for IELTS.

Wächter and Maiworm (2014) identified similar mean values at master’s level: TOEFL pBT 563, TOEFL iBT 86 and IELTS 6.0. For the bachelor’s level their findings were different: TOEFL pBT 538, TOEFL iBT 79 and IELTS 6.0. It also needs to be mentioned that Wächter and Maiworm’s data refers to Europe; I am looking at Germany.

To sum up, the most frequently requested scores are 575/213/90/6.5 (TOEFL pBT/cBT/iBT/IELTS) for bachelor’s level and 550/213/80/6.5 for master’s level (TOEFL pBT/cBT/iBT/IELTS), which in all cases equate to B2 (CEFR).

4.5.3 A closer look at the CEFR as English language entry requirement

This section reports on the CEFR as English language entry requirement as, after TOEFL, IELTS and the absence of any explicit statement, this is the third most commonly used framework for admission.
Table 4.6 shows the proportion of programmes at bachelor’s and master’s level requesting different levels in the CEFR. As can be seen, the most commonly requested level, at both bachelor’s and master’s level is B2, which applies to 57.1 per cent of bachelor programmes and at 71.4 per cent at master programmes. The findings for the CEFR are similar to those for TOEFL and IELTS, which also require scores equivalent to B2 on the CEFR. There is an interesting difference, however, in that 24.5 per cent of master programmes compared to only 14.3 per cent at bachelor level require C1, which means that the requirements for master level are set at a higher level for the CEFR than for TOEFL and IELTS. It is remarkable that C1 is requested for some programmes at bachelor’s level, since first degrees should not have a higher threshold than B2, the level of English proficiency that students are assumed to have obtained at the Abitur in NRW. However, it needs to be reminded that the website survey targeted at the whole of Germany and with that, different federal states with different federal policies.

To sum up, institutions mostly used TOEFL, IELTS and the CEFR to set their English language entry requirements. Usually they use TOEFL and IELTS; however, in many cases institutions preferred to use the CEFR for requesting higher proficient levels from students entering an EMI programme. If the institutions were to set TOEFL or IELTS at a proficient level which equates to C1, they would have to set at least 610 for the TOEFL pBT, 253 for the TOEFL cBT, 102 for the TOEFL iBT and 7.5 for the IELTS.
Nevertheless, I am aware that these findings are not representative with 24.5 per cent in the C1-category of the CEFR and a lot more in absolute numbers for TOEFL or IELTS.

4.6 An answer to research question No. 1

This section tries to answer the research question regarding the general landscape for English language entry requirements at HEIs in Germany:

What are the English language entry requirements for EMI programmes in higher education in Germany?

My website survey regarding the existence and extent of EMI programmes in Germany, which served as a basis to answer this research question showed that 35 per cent of all HEIs offer these programmes. In 2014, these 149 institutions offered a total of 1,093 EMI programmes; 17 per cent at bachelor’s level, the remaining 83 per cent at master’s level. The majority of institutions offer between one and four programmes.

The findings in this chapter suggest that higher education institutions in Germany adopt a broad range of frameworks to regulate admission into EMI programmes. The most commonly used frameworks are the TOEFL and the IELTS test, testifying to the market dominance of these two well-established test providers. Notably, however, it is also very common for universities not to specify any admission requirements at all. This may reflect the relative novelty of EMI programmes. In other words, EMI programmes are being offered without institutions necessarily considering that particular English language requirements may be needed for participating successfully in these programmes. At bachelor’s level, the third most commonly named requirement was the school-leaving certificate, which follows the federal
policies. The school-leaving certificate is mandatory in any case, since prospect students need to have passed the Abitur exams. Finally, reference to other more or less established frameworks, such as the Cambridge Certificate, the CEFR and UNIcert was also made, but these are less common.

The scores required for TOEFL and IELTS vary between faculties and programmes and also across institutions. There are outliers at the minimum and maximum end of the scale; however, a trend is visible. For the three TOEFL test-formats, it seems to be the norm to require 575 points for the pBT, 213 points for the cBT and 90 for the iBT at bachelor’s level. At master’s level it seems to be the norm to require 550 points for the pBT, 213 points for the cBT and 80 for the iBT. For IELTS the picture is even more standard – 6.5 seems to be a popular threshold for English language entry tests for both study levels. Looking at the average score for IELTS, the study of Wächter and Maiworm (2014) comes to a similar result (6.0). Deviations from the study of Wächter and Maiworm (2014) exist for the TOEFL test-formats pBT and iBT especially at bachelor’s level. My findings show higher scores which could be because one institution had the same TOEFL cut scores for bachelor’s and master’s level.

In terms of the CEFR, the most commonly required levels are B2 (upper intermediate) or C1 (advanced) for bachelor and for master studies. It needs to be highlighted that when the CEFR is required, in a number of cases the level is higher than institutions would have asked for by employing TOEFL or IELTS. Further research needs to shed light on the seemingly different application by institutions of English proficiency tests such as TOEFL or IELTS in contrast to the CEFR.

To conclude, the field of English language entry requirements is diverse. English language entry requirements seem to vary from programme to programme and also across a single institution. It is currently not clear what entry level of English is most appropriate for successful participation in EMI programmes, which might explain the variation observed. In the case of teachers, Kling and Dimova (2015) report that C1
was viewed at the University of Copenhagen as appropriate linguistic fluency. Klaassen and Bos (2010) screened teachers at Dutch universities and found that 55 per cent of teachers had reached C1. For students, however, C1 is likely to be an unrealistic target, as they cannot, at entry level, be expected to have the same level of academic English as that of their teachers. There is also the question of whether different requirements should apply to different disciplines. Arts and humanities subjects have a greater focus on language, and it has been suggested that they therefore require a higher score in English language entry tests (often IELTS 7.0 which equals B2/C1) than science or business programmes which can be studied with a knowledge of IELTS 6.5 (which equals B2) (de Chazal, 2014). On the whole though, it is interesting to speculate on the underlying reasons for setting the English language entry requirements at specific thresholds.

4.7 Summary and conclusion

This section reported on the language entry requirements for English-medium programmes at HEIs in Germany, as they are communicated on the institutional homepages. Whilst variations were found, there was an observable trend towards a standard usage of TOEFL and IELTS as entry requirement. The CEFR is in some cases used with higher scores than those for TOEFL or IELTS, which points towards a gap in the coherent setting of English language entry requirements. In the next chapter, I will delve deeper into the admission requirements at some specific institutions in NRW in order to explore the underlying motivations for setting them at particular levels.
5. Findings and discussion II: Setting English language entry requirements

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explore how and why policies for English language entry requirements are set at particular levels, and what the perceptions of programme leaders are regarding their usefulness. This part of the study is taken from NRW only. For that reason the policies of NRW in this regard are depicted and discussed in depth. The chapter then relates these findings to the second research question which is “How and why are English language entry requirements set at specific levels?”. This question is particularly significant in my research since the programme leaders actively shape and define, or at least help to shape and define, the English language entry requirements of their programmes. Thus, surveying their motivations and views might provide insights into why English language entry requirements are set at a particular level.

5.2 Regulations for North Rhine-Westphalia

North Rhine-Westphalia is one of sixteen federal states and the most populated state in Germany with 17.6 million inhabitants (Statistical Office of NRW, 2015); that is approximately 22 per cent of the German population (Statista, 2015). Since NRW was the former British occupation zone after World War II, the German population of NRW became accustomed to English, in contrast to people in the Saarland, for example, where speaking French is still more common today due to the former French occupation and the proximity to the French border.

In North Rhine-Westphalia, the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Research is in charge of institutions of higher education, so they were the main target of this part
of the study. I approached the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Research for this study to find out if there are any official policies that govern the English language entry level for EMI programmes across the state.

Overall, for bachelor programmes, the entry requirement for university access should be the *Abitur* as stated in § 49, section 1, Higher Education Act NRW, (*Hochschulgesetz*, NRW, dated 16.09.2014) below. This encompasses both programmes taught in German as the medium of instruction and programmes taught in a foreign language. § 49, section 1, of the Higher Education Act states the following (my translation; original available in German only, see Appendix J):

Access to academic study at universities or universities of applied sciences is given to those who obtained the general qualification for university entrance or the subject-restricted qualification for university entrance. The general qualification for university entrance gives unrestricted access to academic study; the subject-specific qualification for university entrance qualifies only for access to those programmes which are specified in the school-leaving certificate.

§ 49, sections 2 to 6 of the Higher Education Act describe additional routes to gaining access to university or different levels of study and are not relevant in the context of my thesis.

The ministry official explained that § 49, section 8 (Access to University Education) of the Higher Education Act is mandatory in this matter as it provides the judicial framework for HEIs in NRW regarding language entry requirements for foreign-language-medium instruction. § 49, section 8, of the Higher Education Act reads as follows (my translation; original available in German only, see Appendix J):

The [university] examination regulations can determine that for a programme which is conducted fully or partially in a foreign language, an appropriate knowledge of the language has to be evidenced above and beyond the entry requirements described in paragraph 1 to 7. In a university programme which leads to a first degree, the level of language proficiency required must not exceed the possibilities of school education.
Although the document does not state any language entry requirements explicitly, the official interpreted it as equating to B2 in the CEFR (upper intermediate level). Section 2.8.4.6 presented in more detail the proficiency levels of the CEFR. Learners at B2 or upper intermediate level, should be able to “understand the main points of clear standard input” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 24). They are seen as independent users, who can act independently in an English-speaking environment.

It must be stressed, however, that B2 is not referred to explicitly anywhere in any of the official documentation. It appeared to be the particular interpretation of the official approached. The extent to which this interpretation is more generally made is something that could usefully be explored in future research. Erling and Hilgendorf (2006) found in their study at the FU Berlin that the institution equated five years of school English to B1 and seven years to B2. By the time of the Abitur the students have at least had seven years of English at school, irrespective of the federal state. In some federal states where English is favoured for historical reasons, it could be nine years of English until the Abitur. For my study it is important to note that the legal framework for NRW (§ 49 section 8, Higher Education Act NRW) clearly states that the linguistic proficiency in a foreign language cannot be higher than what could be learnt in school. Also, the legal text does not specifically focus on English and keeps it open to every language.

While the policies try to give practical advice (“the level of language proficiency required must not exceed the possibilities of school education” as stated in § 49 section 8), they also raise some issues. What about those students who only score a bare pass (i.e. ‘ausreichend’ in Germany)? Are they capable of using English at an appropriate level for English-medium studies?

For master level studies, the official at the Ministry explained that the institutions are free to set their own foreign language entry requirements in their examination regulations, which they think best serves their needs. § 49 section 8 of the Higher
Education Act, which stipulates language requirements for entry into university programmes taught in other languages than German, does not specify any English language entry requirements for master studies.

With the absence of state level guidance at master’s level, institutions are free to set any language entry requirements. It can be discussed if it would be beneficial to have tighter regulations. On the one hand, standardised entry requirements may mean less bureaucracy for the institutions, on the other hand it might also limit their opportunity for creating a strong institutional profile.

To sum up, the state of NRW stipulates that the Abitur is mandatory for accessing bachelor studies. A bachelor’s degree is then necessary to access master studies. In terms of English language proficiency to access EMI programmes, a proficiency higher than that obtained at secondary cannot be requested. At master’s level institutions are free to set their own English language requirements. Also, no maximum restriction exists at master’s level; the minimum is implicitly given by the fact that the Abitur is necessary for the first degree.

Having established that federal state regulations in NRW allow relative flexibility for institutions to set their own English-language requirements for entry into programmes, the next section goes on to explore how programme leaders respond to this.

5.3 Survey results of the programme leaders

The purpose of this section is to present the findings of the survey of the institutional programme leaders at the participating institutions. The aim of the survey was to explore how the English language entry requirements are set and perceived and what they mean to the programme leaders. The survey was sent out in March 2015 to 56 contacts at seven universities in NRW. The programme leaders had either been
identified via the programme webpage or suggested by an internal as a contact. For some institutions, the questions were answered by more than one programme leader. The person was then sent a short catalogue of six questions regarding the English language requirements of the programme (or programmes) that they were in charge of (see Appendix A). The return rate was about 14 per cent from four institutions. One reply had to be discarded due to the fact that the programme chair had forwarded the survey to the administrative office, which did not answer my questions, but instead sent their English language entry requirements without any further explanation. Baruch and Holtom (2008) found that the average response rate from individuals was 52.7 per cent and from organisations 35.7 per cent; a study of Cobanoglu et al. (2001) reports a return rate of 26 per cent as indicated in section 3.6.2, which is closer to mine. That my response rate is below what I had assumed is due to the point in time when the programme leaders received my request: it was exam time and just before the holidays, so many people were busy. However, I had no choice to shift that point of time due to the other work pieces.

The discussion which follows is organised according to the following themes: the English language entry requirements, the policies that underpin these entry requirements, responsibilities for setting the entry requirements, the rationale for regulating access through English language entry requirements, and the views of the programme leaders on English language entry requirements.

### 5.3.1 English language entry requirements of the programmes

Since English language entry requirements are my core interest, I began by asking the programme leaders about the extent to which these were in place for their programme. As can be seen in Table 5.1, programme leaders reported accepting a wide range of proofs of English language proficiency.
As shown in Table 5.1, respondent 1 of the international office of institution 1 reported that prospective master’s students had to prove their level of English knowledge if they did not have English as their first language or had not studied at an English-medium institution. The following are the accepted thresholds: 90 points in the TOEFL iBT, 577 in the TOEFL pBT, IELTS 5.5, B2 (CEFR) or Cambridge Certificate CAE or FCE. Another programme representative from institution 1 pointed to the institution’s overall examination regulation (übergreifende Prüfungsordnung), where general information on English language entry requirements could be found. The respondent from institution 2, which offers a master’s programme, stated that they accept TOEFL and IELTS or substantial work experience. Further details on TOEFL and IELTS were not given. At institution 3 the two respondents in charge of managing EMI bachelor’s programmes were in agreement that TOEFL pBT 550, TOEFL cBT 213 and TOFL iBT 80, IELTS 5.5 and B2 of the CEFR are acceptable. Institution 4 appeared to have different cut scores for different programmes. Respondent 6 reported the

![Table 5.1: English language entry requirements and its scores named by the respondents](image)

As shown in Table 5.1, respondent 1 of the international office of institution 1 reported that prospective master’s students had to prove their level of English knowledge if they did not have English as their first language or had not studied at an English-medium institution. The following are the accepted thresholds: 90 points in the TOEFL iBT, 577 in the TOEFL pBT, IELTS 5.5, B2 (CEFR) or Cambridge Certificate CAE or FCE. Another programme representative from institution 1 pointed to the institution’s overall examination regulation (übergreifende Prüfungsordnung), where general information on English language entry requirements could be found. The respondent from institution 2, which offers a master’s programme, stated that they accept TOEFL and IELTS or substantial work experience. Further details on TOEFL and IELTS were not given. At institution 3 the two respondents in charge of managing EMI bachelor’s programmes were in agreement that TOEFL pBT 550, TOEFL cBT 213 and TOFL iBT 80, IELTS 5.5 and B2 of the CEFR are acceptable. Institution 4 appeared to have different cut scores for different programmes. Respondent 6 reported the
following for their master’s programme: TOEFL iBT 100, UNIcert III, Cambridge Certificate CAE level C and IELTS 7.5. No proof is required when the applicant’s first language is English or when previous studies were conducted at an English-medium institution. Respondent 7 from institution 4 stated the following requirements for their master’s programme: TOEFL pBT 550, TOEFL cBT 213, TOEFL iBT 80, IELTS 6.5, Cambridge Certificate CAE or CPE pass grade C. Prospective students whose first language is English are exempt. In individual cases, previous studies at an English-medium institution is accepted. The third respondent stated that IELTS 4.0 or B2 is needed to enter their English master’s programme. However, the third respondent was discarded, because they did not answer any other question in my set of questions.

Recognising that programme leaders may report inaccurately, it is useful to verify their reported scores against those obtained through the website survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entry requirements</th>
<th>The website survey</th>
<th>The programme leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge Certificates</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEFR</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No proof required</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proof required</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-leaving certificate</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
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<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified description</td>
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<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 5.2: Proficiency tests accepted according to website survey and programme leaders*

Table 5.2 compares the types of entry requirements that are accepted according to the website survey on the one hand, and, on the other, the interviews with programme leaders (see p. 96 for a description of what these categories cover). As can be seen, there is by and large agreement between the two data sources; however, a mismatch was found in three cases. It is not known which of the sources is most reliable and/or if the mismatch might be a case of overreporting on the
websites, underreporting by the programme leaders or both. The mismatch does suggest that future research needs to carefully consider the methodology used to establish which types of proficiency tests are used by an institution. Moreover, this data does not yield any information as to what happens in practice.

Table 5.3: Range of English language entry requirements according to website survey and programme leaders

Table 5.3 compares the range of scores accepted for the most commonly used tests or frameworks. As can be seen, all of the reported scores are within the range identified through the website survey. This suggests that the targeted programme leaders may be able to accurately recall the scores needed to gain entry into their programme. Despite this, however, the methodology used here to survey programme leaders has limitations which will be discussed further in Section 5.4.

A key finding to emerge is that programme leaders repeatedly mentioned that the German school-leaving certificate, the *Abitur*, is sufficient as an entry qualification. Work experience also seems to be a criterion for acceptance on an EMI master programme. With regard to the proficiency tests, the required scores vary, sometimes quite significantly. It is surprising to see that the threshold for a master programme at one institution is the same as the threshold for bachelor studies at another institution. For instance, respondent 7 of institution 4 reported that their programme required a TOEFL cBT of 213 for master studies, which was the requirement for bachelor studies at institution 3. Equally interesting was the observation that entry requirements appear to vary within institutions, depending on
the programme. This is further evidence of the considerable programme-level variation observed in Chapter 4.

5.3.2 Institutional policies for English language entry requirements

This section explores the existence of any institutional policies or guidelines stipulating the setting of English language entry requirements. These can be summarised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respondent</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 5.4 shows, German institutions have, or at least should have, programme-specific examination regulations (Prüfungsordnungen) in place. Moreover, they often have university-wide examination regulations (übergreifende Prüfungsordnungen) in place. The latter is also referred to as the general examination policy document (Rahmenprüfungsordnung), depending on the terminology used at the institution.

Respondents 1 and 2 of institution 1 referred to the programme-specific examination regulations. The respondent of institution 2 did not answer the question so it is unclear if they have no regulations in place or whether the respondent simply skipped
the question. In institution 3 it seems to differ from faculty to faculty. Respondent 4 answered that the general examination policy document (Rahmenprüfungsordnung) contained the necessary regulations to adhere to. Respondent 5 pointed to the Student Service Center for further guidelines on this topic. The respondents at institution 4 mentioned the faculty-specific examination regulations, but also the overall examination regulations.

To sum up, the programme-specific examination regulations are most frequently quoted when it comes to determining a source for the English language entry requirements. It is frequently a single paragraph in this document. A separate document does not seem to exist at any of the institutions, which may hint at the minor importance of the English language entry requirements. As Björkman points out, “university language policy documents do not tend to be long and detailed documents; they often provide general guidelines [...] leaving implementation to lower level actors” (2013, p. 356).

5.3.3 Responsibilities for setting the English language entry requirements

After having reported on the English language entry requirements and the policies that may lie behind them, the third theme which I explored was where exactly the responsibility lies for establishing the English language entry requirements.
Table 5.5: Institutional processes of determining the English language entry requirements

As Table 5.5 shows, respondent 1 (institution 1) mentioned the existence of a board responsible for the development of a framework for an examination regulation policy, whereas respondent 2 pointed to the faculty itself. Institution 2 did not reply to this question. Respondent 4 at institution 3 mentioned the programme-specific examination regulations which are ratified by senate, respondent 5 of the same institutions pointed to the faculties and an internal faculty body (Fakultätsrat). Respondent 6 at institution 4 stated the examination board (Prüfungsausschuss) and according to the other respondent at institution 4, it is the faculty which is in charge of determining the English language entry requirements.

To sum up, the responsibility for setting up a policy regarding the English language entry requirements, seems to be faculty-based.
5.3.4 Reasons for introducing the English language entry requirements

It was also felt necessary to ask about the rationale of regulating access to EMI programmes through the English language entry requirements. The first respondent at institution 1 explained that only certificates guarantee a certain standard, because the differences in English language knowledge among the students are substantial. The second respondent at institution 1 pointed out that the language entry requirements are “necessary” to ensure that the students can follow the lectures. The respondent from institution 2 aired a similar opinion; they are needed so that “the students are able to work on the material, understand contexts and sit examinations”. The respondents at institution 3 called the language entry requirements an appropriate standard and a means of quality assurance so that the students are able to participate successfully. One respondent at institution 4 answered “don’t know”; the other respondent outlined that a certain minimum in terms of language knowledge, which is ensured via the English language entry requirement, is important to study successfully.

To sum up there is a strong belief that the English language entry requirements ensure a certain standard to facilitate students’ success. The programme representatives were convinced that a threshold is the right measurement to ensure a certain level of proficiency from the students. The respondent from institution 2 justified the linguistic threshold by saying that it enabled greater participation in the classroom as well as greater engagement with the material. Nevertheless, except for one respondent (from institution 2), no programme leader gave a rationale for setting up their English language entry requirements at a particular level. In other words, while programme leaders were generally in favour of having some sort of English language requirement in place, they rarely had anything to say about the specific level at which this requirement should be set. This could be an indicator that the participant in question was not in charge or even involved in the process of setting up the English language entry requirements and thus might have little to say about
it. Alternatively, it might be that English language entry requirements are seen more as a gatekeeping mechanism in higher education, while the specific details of it are seen as less important.

5.3.5 Views of English language entry requirements

I also wanted to learn about the extent to which programme leaders had any particular views on the English language entry requirements. A respondent from institution 1 reported that students who meet the English language entry requirements can cope successfully with their studies. The second respondent mentioned that interviews are conducted to access the level of English. Since one member of this board is a professor of English, it is easy for her/him to determine the students’ level of English. This is the first programme, which I encountered in my inquiry, which ensures the level of English via interviews instead of certificates. The respondent from institution 2 reported that so far, no student had to give up their studies due to difficulties with the English language. The respondents from institution 3 explained that in terms of English language skills international students have an advantage at the beginning of the programme, but that it levels out after a couple of semesters. Furthermore, a respondent reported that level B2 does not ensure that the student is capable of operating appropriately in English. The respondents at institution 4 mentioned that a TOEFL iBT of 90 is sufficient to study successfully and that they never had any contrary experience.

One respondent from institution 1 was fully convinced of the appropriateness of certificates. The other respondent from institution 1 pointed out that the tests do not cover specialist terminology, which the students need to know in order to follow the particular programme. Also in a small number of cases the certificates had been falsified by student applicants. The respondent from institution 2 stipulated that the students have to have work experience so that they are familiar with content of the
course and with specialist terminology. One respondent from institution 3 did not answer the question but reported that abstract concepts are more difficult to convey and that the students have more difficulties with these. The other respondent from institution 3 stated that the English “language requirements make sense to communicate expectations” and “to make sure that students meet these expectations”. In a small number of cases “certificate and reality don’t seem to match” (respondent 2, institution 3). They are aware that the level of English certified and its application in the classroom might vary significantly. The respondents of institution 4 pointed to the previous experience which they had had. The second respondent of institution 4 pointed out that English is the main language in their subject and that the English language entry requirements do ensure an appropriate command of the language.

To conclude, there appears to be variations among programmes leaders as to whether the required English language proficiency level is a good measure of participation and success in an EMI programme. However, it is apparent that the thresholds and the ways that they are set are not consistent and vary even from programme to programme within the same institution.

5.4 An answer to research question No. 2

This section summarises the views of the programme leaders:

How and why are English language entry requirements set at specific levels?

The English language entry requirements reported by the programme leaders varied in a similar way as what the website survey revealed, however, the same trends were visible. At bachelor level, the threshold for admission was reported to be 550 for TOEFL pBT, 80 for TOEFL iBT, 6.0 on IELTS, B2 (CEFR) or a school-leaving certificate.
This could be interpreted as a level of English language proficiency that will reasonably be obtained with the German *Abitur*, which reflects the policies set by the Ministry of NRW. However, it is worth bearing in mind that there is no guarantee that this level will actually have been obtained in practice. At master’s level, there was greater variation, which could also be seen as reflecting the federal policies that institutions are free to set their own English language entry requirements at this level. Thus, the replies from the institutional programme leaders were generally in line with the policies of the NRW Ministry of Innovation, Science and Research.

The majority of respondents were convinced of the appropriateness of the English language entry requirements. Some programme leaders seemed to be quite clear about the rationale behind the requirements, citing a belief that the level at which they were set would enable students to successfully participate in their EMI programme. However, others did not seem capable of or willing to explain why the English language entry requirements were set as they are. Of course, the extent to which the English language entry requirements are actually set at a level that ensures students successful participation is unclear.

To sum up, the survey of programme leaders has revealed not only institutional variation in the English language entry requirements but also that the level at which they are set may not be based on evidence. However, it is important to consider if the methodology employed here may be at least partly responsible for this apparent lack of evidence. It is important to note that the person who responded to my requests was not necessarily the person who had initially set up the English language entry requirements and so they may have limited knowledge of the process. For better quality of data, it would have been useful to have the input from the person or committee initially responsible for or involved in setting up the English language entry requirements. Future studies might usefully attempt to track the process of any such decisions from a multi-level perspective, ranging from state, federal, institutional, faculty, departmental, and individual level. Also, future researchers
could usefully try to obtain internal policy documents and compare these to the respondents’ interview answers.

5.5 Summary and conclusion

This chapter explored how and why English language admission requirements are determined, according to programme leaders on EMI programmes in North Rhine-Westphalia. Programme policies appear to vary a lot according to EMI programmes, even within the same institution. The policy is usually an openly accessible document, which states in more or less detail the language entry requirements for the particular EMI programme. However, why certain test scores are required and which results allow for a successful participation in the programme etc., could not be sufficiently determined.

The inquiry of the institutions revealed a top-down application of English language entry requirements. Policies do exist at state level. First of all, the Abitur is mandatory to access bachelor studies. A bachelor’s degree is then necessary for access in master studies, no matter what the language of instruction is. Speaking of the legal linguistic restrictions, any proficiency in a foreign language cannot be requested at a higher level than provided by a secondary school for bachelor’s level. At master’s level the institutions are free to set the foreign language requirements for their programmes. No maximum restriction exists; the minimum is implicitly given by the fact that Abitur was necessary for the first degree.
6. Findings and discussion III: The students’ experience

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the students’ perceptions of English language requirements at the sample institutions in North Rhine-Westphalia. It draws on the student questionnaire and the student interviews. The results will be presented together, since the interview data helps to explain what was found in the survey data. The questionnaire data encompasses 67 bachelor students and 31 master students; the interview data 4 bachelor students and 4 master students.

This chapter is divided into three parts: ‘background’, ‘awareness’ and ‘views’, each of which is relevant to gain an understanding of English language entry requirements. ‘Background’ relates to students’ previous exposure to EMI, their reasons for choosing to enrol in an EMI programme and the extent to English used on their programme. ‘Awareness’ seeks to establish whether students are aware of the English language entry requirements that may be in place at their institution. ‘Views’, finally, explores students’ perceptions of their own English proficiency and the extent to which they believe it enables them to participate successfully in the EMI programme. It also probes into students’ strategies for coping and the extent to which they have or would like to have access to institutionalised language support. The relevance of each section to English language entry requirements will be explained further below.

6.2 Background

6.2.1 Language of instruction as reported by students

I begin by providing an account of the language of instruction as reported by the students in the sample. This is necessary because students enrolled in English-only
programmes might face different challenges, and potentially be in need of different English language entry requirements, than students on bilingual programmes. This could go either way in that the higher exposure to English on English-only programmes might lead to a quicker acclimatisation and, consequently, an experience of facing fewer challenges. Conversely, it is also possible that the greater exposure may lead to overload and make students in English-only programmes experience more challenges.

Figure 6.1: Language of instruction, as reported by the respondents

As Figure 6.1 displays, for 61.2 per cent of the respondents, the language of instruction in their English programme was purely English. For an additional 19.4 per cent of participants, the language is reported to be predominantly English. Only 1 per cent of the respondents stated that their bachelor programme was taught in German although the programme description on the university website stated that the language of instruction was English or at least a mix of English and German. The discrepancy between official and actual course language has been documented in the literature (cf. e.g. Söderlundh, 2012). It is noteworthy, however, that the majority (61.2 per cent) of students reported to be taught fully in English.
Figure 6.2: Language of instruction split in bachelor and master students

The above graph, Figure 6.2, depicts the overall results split between bachelor and master students. 74.2 per cent of the bachelor students reported that their teaching was fully or predominantly in English; for master students, the corresponding figure is 83.5 per cent. It is to be expected that a higher proportion of English is reported at master’s level, given the often greater proportion of international students at this level. At bachelor’s level the vast majority are taught in English only. This might be due to the fact that most of the bachelor respondents come from institution 3, where the majority of courses are taught in English. However, at bachelor’s level, I would have expected to see more programmes offered in a mix of English and German.

6.2.2 Reasons for choosing EMI programmes

In this section, I report on students’ reason for choosing to study in an EMI programme. This is relevant as it might influence their satisfaction with the programme and, consequently, their impressions of coping. Some students may well have deliberately chosen to enroll in an English-medium programme whereas others may not have had the option.
As Figure 6.3 shows, for the bachelor students the primary reasons for enrolling were that the challenge of studying in English appealed to them (20.4 per cent), to increase their chances on the German labour market (18.8 per cent) and to be able to work abroad (18.3 per cent). ‘This programme is not available in German’ seems to be a minor reason since it was ticked by only 3.8 per cent of the bachelor students. This is in contrast to master students, whose top reason chosen was that the programme they wanted to study was not available in German (20.6 per cent). This reflects the greater concentration of EMI programmes at master level (Wächter and Maiworm 2014). In the middle field are the answer options ‘To receive a good education with good teaching staff’ (8.1 per cent) and the ‘other’-option (8 per cent). ‘To be attractive for Germany’s best employers’ was selected by 6.5 per cent, reinforcing the concern students appear to have with their career prospects.

Like bachelor students, master students are also of the opinion that an EMI programme will give them better chances in the German labour market and enable them to work abroad (16.2 per cent). A view more rooted in the present is aired by 10.3 per cent of the master students who report that the challenge of studying in
English appeals to them and that they would like to gain more English proficiency. The ‘other’ option generated answers such as an interest to study on an international platform and content-related reasons. 8.8 per cent of master students wished to receive a good education with good teaching staff and 7.3 per cent stated that they wanted to be attractive for Germany’s best employers, again reiterating the concern with their career prospect.

The interview data confirmed that studying and working in an international environment with people from other countries was viewed as desirable by both bachelor and master students. Emma, a 3rd semester bachelor student, commented: “Engineering is a much globalised area; one needs to be able to communicate in English. […] but English makes a real difference.” 16.1 per cent of bachelor student chose the programme to gain more English proficiency. The professional life and the language fluency were two themes also present in the oral interviews. Thus Linda, a 2nd semester master student, stated: “When I want to discuss matters related to my discipline with other people, I can’t avoid [English, my amendment]. What you do, it always looks a little more important, if you say it in English.” Linda is aware that linguistic fluency will be beneficial for her professional life. From the context of the interview it became clear that she saw the need to utilise English as the language of sciences for communication in her field.

6.2.3 Student’s previous experience of EMI studies

This section presents findings relating to students’ previous experience of EMI studies. Previous exposure to EMI studies could have an impact on students’ existing proficiency level of English and thus be relevant for English language entry requirements.
Figure 6.4: ‘Have you studied in English before?’

As Figure 6.4 shows, 50 per cent of the bachelor students have not studied through the medium of English before. Some spent a year in an English speaking country, for instance in the UK, the U.S., Australia, or in Asia (19.4 per cent, as mentioned under ‘other’). They furthermore reported prior exposure to English-medium education because their school education had either been bilingual (15.3 per cent), they had received extra English classes (8.3 per cent), their school education had been in English (4.2 per cent) or they had received extra English tutorials (2.8 per cent).

40.7 per cent of the master students had not studied in English before. This rather low result for the master students can be explained by the fact that the use of CLIL is a recent phenomenon in secondary education in Germany (Breidbach and Viebrock, 2012) as the number of English-medium programmes at bachelor’s degree has been increasing. Only 14.8 per cent of the master students had prior experience of English-medium education because their school education was either bilingual or in English (7.4 per cent each). Extra English lessons or English tutorials played only a minor role (3.7 per cent each) for master students. It also needs to be mentioned that the respondents were only able to tick one option, so if respondents have had their school education in English and received extra English lessons, it was not captured in
the data. This is clearly a limitation of the questionnaire, which only became clear after I received the answers. The pilot group did not find the answer options for this question problematic.

To sum up, the majority of students at both bachelor and master level study fully or predominantly in English (see Figure 6.2). Their reasons for choosing to enrol in an EMI programme are primarily because of the career prospects it offers and because the challenge appeals them. Master students to a greater extent than bachelor students report that their programme of choice was only available in English. It is to be expected that master students will have less choice in terms of medium of instruction given that the vast majority of English-medium programmes are at master level (Wächter and Maiworm, 2014). Studying in English was new to nearly half of all respondents (46.1 per cent, bachelor and master students combined and weighted). The fact that there were only minor differences between master and bachelor students in this respect – with 40.7 per cent of master and 50 per cent of bachelor students not having studied in English before – suggests that many masters students may have come from a non-English-medium programme at bachelor level.

### 6.3 Awareness

This section reports on students’ awareness of their institution’s English language entry requirements. This will give an indication of institutional practice, or at least students’ views thereof, in relation to these requirements. In other words, although the existence of English language entry requirements has been documented through both the website survey (Chapter 4) and the survey of programme leaders (Chapter 5), it should not be automatically inferred that students will have had to go through the process of providing proof of their English language requirements. Institutional policy may be different from institutional practice.
6.3.1 Students’ awareness of English-language entry requirements

Students were asked if they were aware of their institution having English language entry requirements in place. A total of 69.0 per cent of the respondents (bachelor and master results combined and weighted) stated that their institutions had an entry threshold concerning the English language level of their students for one or more English programmes. 29.0 per cent of all respondents believed that their institutions did not have any English entry requirements; this mostly related to the bachelor programmes (28.0 per cent).

Figure 6.5: ‘Has your university set up English language admission requirements?’

Figure 6.5 shows the difference between bachelor and master students. Only 58.2 per cent of the bachelor students stated that English language entry requirements were in place, whereas an overwhelming 96.8 per cent of the master students reported that English language entry requirements existed. This raises the question whether it is more common for master than bachelor level programmes to feature English language entry requirements. Comparing the students’ reports with the findings from the website survey (Figure 4.2), it does indeed appear that there is a greater number of master programmes with English language entry requirements than at bachelor’s level. This is particularly the case for the established frameworks,
TOEFL and IELTS, with 55.5 per cent of such being in place for master level, compared to 42.5 for bachelor level.

6.3.2 Students’ awareness of the threshold of English language entry requirements at their institution

The question if they know their programme’s English language entry requirement was affirmed by a total of 58.0 per cent of all respondents (bachelor and master results combined and weighted); 42.0 per cent of all respondents did not remember.

![Figure 6.6: 'Do you know the English language admission requirements for your bachelor’s or master’s programme?'](chart)

In detail, Figure 6.6 shows that a greater proportion of master than bachelor students were aware of the specific English language entry requirements that apply on their programmes (77.4 per cent at master’s level compared to 50.7 per cent at bachelor’s level). This is consistent with the finding that more students at master level appeared to be aware of the existence of English language entry requirements (see Figure 6.7).
6.3.3 Students’ awareness of the type of admission test accepted

I also sought to uncover students’ awareness of and views on the types of admission requirements that were accepted at their institution.

![Figure 6.7: English language admission mechanisms](image)

Figure 6.7 depicts the admission requirements accepted as reported by students at bachelor’s and master’s level respectively. At bachelor’s level the ‘other’-category was the most chosen category, 40.8 per cent ticked the box. Students mentioned the CEFR levels various times in the free text field. In the closed questions, the answer option ‘CEFR’ was ticked only by 1.3 per cent. Two interesting answers were given both by bachelor students as free text responses. The first student (respondent 507) mentioned B2 as a requirement for entering a bachelor’s programme; they seemed
to replicate the interpretation that this equates to having had seven years of English lessons in school and a final grade of a D (in German: *ausreichend*). The other student (respondent 469) mentioned that their institution asked for participation in a mandatory English test, which had been developed by the institution itself and the result had to be at level C1 or above. This is quite a contrast, which may be indicative of relatively varied student experiences. Several master students also stated that the CEFR level B2 was sufficient to allow them to enter their English programme. Also, many bachelor students pointed to the school-leaving certificate in the ‘other’-option.

Furthermore, 28.9 per cent of the students report that at bachelor’s level no English language entry requirements were in place. Besides the TOEFL test not many other proficiency tests were mentioned. TOEFL was requested for 15.9 per cent whereas the IELTS test was only requested for 6.6 per cent. A reason for this could be that TOEFL is better known than IELTS in NRW or the TOEFL scores are seen as being more detailed than the IELTS bands. Cambridge Certificate received even lower percentages, 2.6 per cent. GMAT, TOEIC or UNIcert did not seem to be in use (0 per cent). Interestingly, 3.9 per cent of the bachelor students reported that oral interviews were mandatory to gain access to the programme.

At master’s level the picture is a little different. Here the ‘other’-option was also the preferred one (25.4 per cent). Many students mentioned prior academic study experience in English, other master students answered that the school-leaving certificate was accepted, which is surprising at master’s level. English proficiency tests were reported to be in use: TOEFL with 47.6 per cent (TOEFL test-formats combined) and IELTS with 15.9 per cent. Cambridge Certificates were mentioned for 6.3 per cent and UNIcert for 3.2 per cent. 1.6 per cent of the master students reported that oral interviews were mandatory to gain access to the programme.
After having focused on the types of admission tests accepted, I asked for details on whether the students remembered the exact entry score needed to gain access to their EMI programme.

As is seen in Figure 6.8, 17.9 per cent of the bachelor students report that they remembered their exact score. The vast majority however, did not remember (74.6 per cent). This question was not answered by 7.5 per cent. I assume that many bachelor students are not aware of their cut score, because there was no admission test and the school-leaving certificate is supposed to be sufficient for entry at bachelor’s level.

The results are different at master’s level. Nearly half of the students were able to recall the exact cut score (45.2 per cent), the other half was not able to do so (48.4 per cent). This question was not answered by 6.4 per cent. This could mean, that there was no English language entry requirement. The master students remembered their cut scores better than bachelor students.

Figure 6.8: ‘Do you remember the score which was needed to gain access to your programme? If yes, which test score was required?’
6.3.4 Students’ awareness of their own test results

The final sub-section in this section reports on students’ awareness of – or willingness to disclose – their own test result, in case they have any. The extent to which this knowledge is readily available to them may give an indication of the significance and relevance of English language entry requirements in this context.

![Figure 6.9: ‘What was your result?’](image)

As seen in Figure 6.9, 44 per cent skipped the question, another 22 per cent of the respondents did not wish to disclose their results. This makes up for two-thirds of the respondents who refused to provide information. 34 per cent provided their test scores. In Table 6.1 below, we look in more detail at the group of students who chose to provide this information.
Table 6.1: Reported scores in the ‘other-option’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment means</th>
<th>Study level of student(s) who reported</th>
<th>Students reported their score/outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL score</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>Nothing reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL iBT score</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>90, 97, 98, 103, 106, 108, 110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS score</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS score</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge Certificates</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>CAE, CAE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEFR</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>B2, C1, C1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous bachelor degree in English</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Twice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-leaving certificate</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>3 times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Phrases such as ‘successful’, ‘positive’, ‘satisfying’ etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 6.1 shows, the reported admission means varied significantly from proficiency test certificates, the CEFR, school-leaving certificate, previous English-medium education to more unspecified admission requirements. At bachelor’s level no TOEFL score was reported and only one IELTS score at 6.0 to gain admission to an EMI programme. Cambridge Certificate was reported twice with the CAE certificate; the reported CEFR level was B2 and C1 in two cases. Access obtained due to the school-leaving certificate was reported three times. Some respondents answered the question with a vague phrase such as ‘successful’, ‘positive’ etc., which does not allow drawing further conclusions.

At master’s level, seven TOEFL iBT test scores were mentioned which correspond to the categories B2 and C1 on the CEFR. One IELTS scores was reported at 8.5, which corresponds to C2 (CEFR). Furthermore, access to master studies was given by providing evidence that the bachelor’s degree had been completed through the medium of English. Also, in the ‘other’-category unspecified descriptions occurred.
The above findings were echoed in the students’ oral interviews. Most of the bachelor students reported that the school-leaving certificate indicating their level of English reached in secondary school had been sufficient. One participant from institution 3 stated that a Cambridge Certificate was requested for entering bachelor’s level and that all students had to take a language test, either in German or English, depending on their linguistic background. One bachelor student added: “If B2 is really defined in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia as having Abitur, I then think it is clearly not enough”. The student expressed their concern that the level of English obtained by the time they sit the Abitur exams is not sufficient for academic study.

In the interviews students were also asked if they thought that the set cut score was appropriate for their study programme. Here the views differ. While for one master student it seemed to be just right, the other two master students reported the contrary. Melissa, master student, 4th semester, commented as follows: “Well, in principle it should be a test, which to a certain extent shows the vocabulary for the particular study programme. […] First of all, one needs to get used to it”. Melissa pointed out that during their studies, students develop and their English knowledge develops alongside it. Linda, master student, 2nd semester, puts it in other words:

I was annoyed somehow, because I don’t understand the purpose of the test. Either I know that I have the [required] English level and feel confident, and even if perhaps I am not quite there at the very beginning, it will develop over time and why should I enrol in a study programme, where I don’t know the language?

A student learns technical terms in their field, whereas TOEFL or IELTS seems to measure the ability to master general situations and is not tailored to the students’ needs. Linda believes that potential students should be trusted in terms of their own assessment of their knowledge of English and their ability to develop it further over time if necessary, once enrolled in an EMI programme and exposed to English.
To sum up, 69.0 per cent of the respondents (bachelor and master results combined and weighted) reported being aware of their institution having a threshold for entry onto their EMI programme. A greater proportion of master’s students reported being aware of their institution’s English language entry requirements. This appears to reflect the findings of the website survey in which master’s programmes are more likely than bachelor’s programmes to have English language requirements in place (see Figure 4.2). Moreover, only 58.0 per cent of all respondents (bachelor and master results combined and weighted) reported knowing the English language entry requirements. At bachelor’s level the ‘other’ category was the most chosen answer and at master’s level TOEFL headed the list of English language entry requirements. 74.6 per cent of the bachelor students and 48.4 per cent of the master students do not remember the exact score needed to gain access to their programme. Only 34 per cent of the students were able to or chose to disclose their test results, which seemed to be quite good.

6.4 The students’ views

In order to establish the level at which English language entry requirements could be set – if indeed they should be set at all – this section explores students’ views. It begins by considering students’ overall satisfaction with their EMI programme before it delves into the extent to which they believe their existing level of English language proficiency enables them to participate successfully in their programme of study. It finishes by considering the strategies students draw on to participate successfully in their EMI programme as well as any needs they might have for additional language support.
6.4.1 Students’ satisfaction with English as a medium of instruction

In the following I will report on students’ satisfaction with English as a medium of instruction.

Figure 6.10: ‘Are you happy with English-medium instruction?’

Overall, the students report feeling comfortable with English-medium instruction. Figure 6.10 illustrates students’ satisfaction in terms of studying in English. 71.6 per cent of the bachelor students and 77.4 per cent of the master students reported that they were satisfied with English as the medium of instruction, and another 20.9 per cent of the bachelor students and 22.6 per cent of the master students said that they managed well.

In the oral interviews, students were asked whether they knew of fellow students who had dropped out due to linguistic difficulties in English. They did not. It may be that students’ motivation and determination is high enough to overcome possible linguistic obstacles. For Heidi, master student, 4th semester, the use of English as a medium of instruction even appeared to be an added bonus. Asked why she had chosen her particular programme, she replied: “Well, I previously studied engineering, bachelor studies, and I wanted to specialise in my subject. And the
English language was the icing on the cake [...]"). For Heidi, having English as the medium of instruction was not only seen as beneficial for her professional career, but also added to her motivation.

Another way of probing into students’ satisfaction of their EMI programme is to ask if they would choose the same programme again.

Figure 6.11: ‘If you choose again, would you choose the same programme?’

Figure 6.11 depicts the proportion of students who said that they would choose the same programme if they were faced with having to make the choice again. The answers of the master students were quite clear; 96.8 per cent said they would choose to enrol in their programme again. None of the master students reported regretted studying in English. For bachelor students too, the vast majority (88 per cent) also said they would choose the same programme again. These findings are supported by a study by Aguilar and Rodriguez (2011) who also found that students and staff in EMI programmes are in general content with their situation despite recognising some challenges. Only 7.5 per cent of the bachelor students would not select the same programme again, which might suggest a certain level of dissatisfaction. However, it is not clear if this has to do with the English language or other factors, for example because expectations regarding the content were not met.
Following this up with an open-ended question many of the answers reported under 6.2.2 were repeated. 30 per cent of the students mentioned increasing their opportunities on the labour market. One bachelor student reported: “English is a prerequisite today”. One master student put it in different words: “On the one hand, having English skills is essential today, so that a study programme in English is a perfect opportunity for practicing. On the other hand, it is another challenge, which needs to be met besides the purely subject-related academic demands.” Students acknowledged English as a global language and that English was essential in academia. For those oriented towards future work in academia, it is essential to have experience in their subject in English (master student): “It enables me to communicate internationally in my subject, for example at conferences.”

6.4.2 Students’ views of their English proficiency

The emphasis in this section is on students’ self-reported views of their English proficiency. This should provide an indication of the extent to which any English language entry requirements are set at an appropriate level, if indeed they need to be set at all. More specifically, if students report having low levels of proficiency, this might suggest a need to raise the English language entry requirements. Conversely, if students report believing that their English proficiency is adequate, this might suggest that current English language entry requirements are at appropriate levels.

By and large, the respondents reported being satisfied that their level of English was sufficient to participate in their EMI programme. Nearly identical results were received for bachelor and master students, as Figure 6.12 shows. 91.1 per cent of the bachelor students and 90.3 per cent of the master students think that their English is sufficiently proficient to allow them on the whole to participate in an EMI programme (categories ‘very good’ and ‘good’ combined). The students’ predominant belief that their English proficiency allows them to participate in their EMI programmes might
suggest that the English language entry requirements as currently set are indeed appropriate.

Figure 6.12: ‘My English proficiency allows me on the whole to participate in my EMI programme.’

6.4.3 Students’ views of their English proficiency in terms of specific language skills

In the following section, a more detailed account of students’ views of their English proficiency is provided, divided into the four areas of listening, reading, writing and speaking. This was deemed necessary because some areas may present greater challenges than others. This, in turn, might have implications for designers of entrance tests, such as TOEFL and IELTS. Indeed, the testing literature tends to divide skills into these basic four types.

6.4.3.1 Listening skills

The students were asked to rate their listening skills, both in relation to understanding lectures and in relation to understanding fellow students. These will be reported in turn.
6.4.3.1.1 Understanding lectures in English

Being able to understand and follow a lecture in English is crucial in English-medium programmes for study success.

As Figure 6.13 illustrates, 73.1 per cent of the bachelor students reported to be able to follow a lecture easily. A further 23.9 per cent of the bachelor students expressed that they did not experience significant problems in understanding the lecturer. The numbers were similar for master students with 67.7 per cent and 22.6 per cent respectively. My findings are different from Hellekjær’s (2010). He reported that because German students are less exposed to English, they face more problems with “lecture comprehension” than they would do if they were taught through their first language (2010, p. 17). In his study (master students only) 72 per cent experienced difficulties in English in comparison to 44 per cent in German. On a scale of 1-4 with 1 referring to having high difficulties and 4 to having no difficulties, the mean for the German students was at 2.9 for lectures in English and 3.1 for lectures in German. Whilst comprehension issues may well exist in the first language as well; they may be worse in a foreign language. The question arises why my study shows better results than his. One possible reason could be the location of the institutions. It is possible...
that those Hellekjaer focused on were in a different German federal state, where
English is not as common in business and education as in North Rhine-Westphalia
which has a long tradition of having English as the first foreign language, or they could
have been spread over the whole of Germany. Another reason might be that with
increasing globalisation German students have become more comfortable with EMI;
Hellekjaer’s data was collected in 2008. Also, it might be a methodological issue how
the questions in my study are phrased and interpreted, both by the respondents and
me.

One student (bachelor) reported: “During the first semester it was harder to follow
the lecturer on such a high level of language, but with time it comes naturally when
one studies for a semester in English and reads the mandatory literature in English, it
comes automatically”. Another student states to have a „bilingual life“: “I am living a
bilingual life, that is, I undertake as many leisure activities as possible in an English
environment. For example, watching films and TV series, meeting international fellow
students or traveling to countries where other languages are spoken”.

Emma, a 3rd semester bachelor student, voices a similar opinion: “I often sat in front
of the television and watched British and English TV, which helped me a lot. And for
less common vocabulary, which you do not discuss at school, I read mainly technical
textbooks and all in English and in the original version”. The first student described
the incremental augmentation of linguistic knowledge which he experienced; the two
latter ones highlighted the impact of receiving education in English and that they
made sure that they used English more widely so they were well-prepared for it. So
studying in English is not restricted to their academic career, but also impacts their
social life.
6.4.3.1.2 Understanding fellow students

The vast majority of bachelor or master students rated their ability to understand fellow German students who speak English as very good or good, as can be seen in Figure 6.14.

![Bar chart showing understanding of German fellow students]

*Figure 6.14: Understanding German fellow students who talk English*

76.1 per cent of the bachelor students rated their ability to understand German fellow students as ‘very good’; the ‘good’-option received 19.4 per cent. 4.5 per cent of the bachelor students rated their ability as average. For the master students the results were similar: 77.4 per cent rated their ability to understand German fellow students as ‘very good’ and 16.1 per cent decided for the ‘good’-option. Average was chosen in 6.5 per cent of the master students.
When it comes to understanding fellow international students the picture is different, as Figure 6.15 illustrates. Only 52.2 per cent of the bachelor students rated their skill to understand fellow international students who speak English as very good. Another 32.8 per cent choose ‘good’. 12 per cent rated their abilities as average and 3 per cent chose ‘poor’. For the master students it is similar, 51.6 per cent rated their level of understanding fellow international students as very good. 32.3 per cent decided for the ‘good’-option. 12.9 per cent rated their abilities as average and 3.2 per cent chose ‘poor’.

The level of understanding fellow international students is still high, but significantly lower than understanding fellow German students. The reason is likely to be the different pronunciation which causes difficulties for German students. These findings are backed, at least in parts, by McCambridge and Saarinen (2014), who investigated native versus non-native speakers at three Finnish institutions of higher education. Also, these findings were echoed in the student interviews, that I did. Kate, a 3rd semester master student, indicated the following: “There are many of us, international students from very many countries, who have very different accents in English, for example from Asia, Nepal, India. Sometimes it is hard to follow the
comments of the fellow students.” Kate identified that the sound of the spoken language is paramount for communication and different accents might make it hard to understand each other.

To sum up, listening to a lecture does not cause difficulties for the vast majority of students nor listening to other German students. Fellow international students seem to be harder to understand.

6.4.3.2 Reading skills

Reading skills are essential for success in academic studies (Upton, 2004). I therefore asked how the students rated their ability to read an academic article and a textbook in English. These will be reported in turn.

6.4.3.2.1 Reading an academic article in English

Studying at a university is not possible without reading academic articles therefore it was of interest to me how students get along with reading these in English.
Figure 6.16: Reading an academic article in English

Figure 6.16 displays the students’ perception of reading an academic article. 82.1 per cent of the bachelor respondents viewed their reading skills as very good or good. 17.9 per cent reported having average skills. The percentage for the master students is about the same with 87.1 per cent. A further 9.7 per cent reported having average skills, 3.2 per cent chose ‘poor’. It seems as if the vast majority of students has no or only marginal problems with reading an academic article. Similar findings were also reported by Klaassen and Bos (2010) who found that reading and listening skills are better developed than oral skills, as mentioned in section 2.10.2. However, when looking at the lower skills levels my study shows differences between bachelor and master students. 17.9 per cent of the bachelor students chose ‘average’ for reading an academic article in contrast to 9.7 per cent of the master students. The reason may be that by the time the students have reached master studies, their English knowledge has improved in general. Many academic publications are written in English. 3.2 per cent of the master students indicated that they do poorly when it comes to reading academic articles in English. The reason for that could be that master students have to read more academic publications or they are simply more honest or there is a very weak student in the survey sample.
6.4.3.2.2 Reading an English textbook

Academic studies may involve reading textbooks; therefore it was also of interest to me how students get along with reading these in English.

![Reading an English textbook](image)

As Figure 6.17 exhibits, 89.5 per cent of the bachelor students reported having ‘very good’ or ‘good’ skills to read a textbook. 10.5 per cent of the bachelor students reported average skills. From the master students 90.3 per cent rated their skill as ‘very good’ or ‘good’, 6.5 per cent as average and another 3.2 per cent as poor.

Both bachelor and master students indicated that reading an academic article in English is more difficult than reading an English textbook. The reason might be that more technical terms are used in articles, since they might be more conceptual and are usually written for an expert audience of researchers, while textbooks target learners. Nevertheless, the figures show that students’ English proficiency has generally risen by the time they are at master’s level – even though, as above, a fraction reported having poor reading skills. The last option ‘very poor’ was not
chosen by any bachelor student or master student for either of the two items ‘reading an academic article’ and ‘reading a textbook’.

6.4.3.3 Writing skills

Written communication is essential in academia and so I asked how the students rated their writing skills for writing an assignment in English, taking notes during the lecture in English, and taking a written exam in English. These will be covered in turn below.

6.4.3.3.1 Writing an assignment in English

Studying often encompasses assignment writing; for EMI programmes this might be done in English.

![Figure 6.18: Writing an assignment in English](image)

As Figure 6.18 indicates, at bachelor’s level 40.3 per cent have chosen ‘very good’, another 37.3 per cent ‘good’ and a further 17.9 per cent rate their skills as ‘average. Most master students rated their ability to write an assignment as ‘good’ (41.9 per
cent). Only 3.2 per cent of master students chose ‘poor’, however, more students ticked the option ‘good’ rather than ‘very good’ – contrary to the responses to the questions regarding listening and reading skills. This may suggest that students on the whole perceive writing as a more challenging task than reading in EMI programmes. The middle option (‘average’) was chosen by 17.9 per cent of the bachelor students and 22.6 per cent of the master students.

Since 40.3 per cent of the bachelor students compared to 32.3 per cent of the master students reported their writing skills to be ‘very good’, this might be a good example of respondents having a different understanding of the question as addressed in the methodology section 3.5.3. It seems that postgraduate students have a more realistic view of their language skills compared to undergraduates. This could be because of the higher linguistic demands of the postgraduate course where students are required to produce a thesis.

6.4.3.3.2 Taking lecture notes

During lectures, students like to take notes; for EMI programmes this might be done in English.

![Figure 6.19: Taking notes during lectures in English](image-url)
Figure 6.19 illustrates the students’ perception of their note-taking skills in English during lectures. A total of 92.5 per cent of the bachelor students and 87.1 per cent of the master students rated their skills as either ‘good’ or ‘very good’. These findings can be compared with those of Airey and Lindner who found that students “reported being less able to follow the lecture and take notes at the same time” (2006, p. 558). A further study should explore if this depends on the discipline.

### 6.4.3.3.3 Taking a written exam in English

University courses often terminate with a written examination; for EMI programmes this might be done in English.

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Figure 6.20: Taking an exam in English

Figure 6.20 indicates the students’ perception of taking an exam in English. A total of 88 per cent of the bachelor students and 83.9 per cent of the master students rated their skills as either ‘good’ or ‘very good’. Master students reported higher skills for ‘taking an exam in English’ than for writing in general. I assume this is because by the
time they have advanced to master studies they know which task is important and focus on it. Bachelor students might find a written exam challenging – especially first semester students.

To sum up, self-reported writing skills were generally high for both bachelor and master students. The vast majority of students at both levels generally reported their writing skills as being ‘very good’ or ‘good’. There is some variation depending on the task. Students appeared to feel more comfortable with informal tasks such as taking notes during a lecture in English. Formal tasks such as writing an assignment in English or taking an exam in English were rated lower, but the majority still opted for ‘very good’ or ‘good’.

6.4.3.4 Speaking skills

The results for English speaking skills are similar to those related to the writing skills in that the vast majority of students at both bachelor’s and master’s level reported that they had ‘very good’ or ‘good’ speaking skills. I asked the students how they rated their speaking ability for formal and informal tasks such as taking part in classroom discussions in English, giving a presentation in English and taking an oral exam. These will be covered in turn below.

6.4.3.4.1 Taking part in classroom discussions

Discussion and interaction is an important element in academic study; for EMI programmes this might take place in English.
Figure 6.21 illustrates the skill of taking part in classroom discussions in English. At bachelor’s level 46.3 per cent report to have ‘very good’ English skills for taking part in classroom discussions. ‘Good’ was reported by 34.3 per cent and the ‘average’ option was chosen by 16.4 per cent; the remaining 3 per cent ticked ‘poor’. At master’s level the ‘very good’ and ‘good’ received equal results of 35.5 per cent; ‘average’ was chosen by 25.8 per cent. As little as 3.2 per cent ticked the ‘poor’-option. What is striking here is that most bachelor students perceive their skills to involve in a classroom discussion as being ‘very good’, whereas over 10 per cent fewer master students do so. The reason could be twofold: on the one hand the master students are more realistic in judging their skills, on the other hand the bachelor students could be more enthusiastic in using English, especially if it is their first experience of having a foreign language as medium of instruction.

My findings are partly echoed in Airey and Lindner’s study who reported that there is a “reduction in asking and answering questions” (2006, p. 556); students participate in classroom discussions to a lesser degree if they take place in English. The authors explain that there is “students uncertainty about whether they have
understood the question correctly, fear of revealing lack of understanding to the lecturer and a fear of speaking English” (2006, p. 558).

6.4.3.4.2 Giving a presentation in English

Giving a presentation is a commonly used method for learning; in EMI programmes, this might take place in English.

Figure 6.22: Giving a presentation in English

Figure 6.22 displays the results in terms of students’ skill of giving a presentation in English. 79.1 per cent of the bachelor students chose ‘very good’ or ‘good’. 17.9 per cent chose the ‘average’ option and 3 per cent view themselves as ‘poor’. This picture looks different for the master students. Although 61.3 per cent believe that their skills are ‘very good’ or ‘good’, a significantly larger share regards their skills as average (29 per cent), poor (6.5 per cent) or even very poor (3.2 per cent). These findings might
suggest that master students are more aware of their own limitations since they may attend external conferences, seminars etc. whereas bachelor students usually give their presentations in front of people, with whom they are familiar. Also, it is expected from master students to use a more academic style when expressing their ideas. For bachelor students, basic school English might work for presenting their work, but master students have to prove themselves in the academic world.

6.4.3.4.3 Taking an oral exam in English

University studies can include mandatory oral exams which in EMI programmes might be conducted in English.

As Figure 6.23 illustrates, at bachelor’s level most of the students report having ‘very good’ skills (41.8 per cent). ‘Good’ skills were reported by 26.9 per cent. The ‘average’ option was chosen by one fifth (20.9 per cent). 7.4 per cent view their skills as ‘poor’
and another 1.5 per cent as ‘very poor’. This is in contrast to the previous items where the ‘very poor’ option was never chosen by bachelor students. Having to spontaneously answer questions by an examiner is stressful in one’s first language, and even more so in a foreign language. No answer was provided by 1.5 per cent. The master students view their skills slightly different: 35.5 per cent chose ‘very good’, 25.8 per cent ‘good’, 29 per cent ‘average’, 6.5 per cent ‘poor’ and 3.2 per cent as ‘very poorly’ developed.

In this figure it is striking that the ‘very good’ option was chosen by fewer master students than bachelor students. This may be because expectations are higher at master’s level, making it potentially more challenging to talk about contents. Furthermore, it is interesting that the ‘average’ option was ticked by 20.9 per cent of the bachelor students, but 29 per cent of the master students. I assume that bachelor students view their limited vocabulary at that point in time higher than master students do, because of the fact that they have passed an oral exam in English. For master students the contents is more in the foreground and as issues become more complex, they need more vocabulary and phrases to depict their ideas. Moreover, the teaching staff might be stricter with master students than bachelor students with their English knowledge.

The vast majority of the students appear to perceive their English language skills as adequate for participating in an English-medium programme. Broken down into the four skills of reading, listening and writing, students consistently reported these as either ‘good’ or ‘very good’, though the speaking skills were perceived to be the toughest to be mastered. In the light of these findings, it might be argued that English language entry requirements, where they exist and are employed, seem to be set at appropriate levels. At least, there is little evidence to suggest that students feel that they do not have the necessary English proficiency to participate in their programme. Perhaps the one exception to this is when it comes to speaking, which was the one skill among the four skills in which students appeared to feel least confident.
6.4.4 Student strategies and institutional language support

This sub-section reports on students’ views of their own study strategies and their institution’s language support. More specifically it looks into the self-reported strategies students draw on to get by in their EMI programme. It also seeks to identify any needs they might have for more institutionalised language support. These two aspects offer an understanding of any more long-term support mechanisms that might usefully be implemented alongside English language entry requirements. Where English language entry requirements may serve as useful gatekeepers to ensure that only students with the right English skills gain entry to an EMI programme, they do little to ensure the continued language skills development of those students who have gained entry.

6.4.4.1 Student strategies

Students report using a wide range of informal strategies to get by in their programme.
Figure 6.24: ‘What strategies do you deploy to get by in your EMI/bilingual programme?’

Figure 6.24 displays the given answer categories and their values, split in bachelor and master students. At bachelor’s level the strategy that is most used to get along is ‘I take notes in English’ (37.2 per cent). The second most chosen was ‘I google a term’ (27.1 per cent). These two strategies make up almost two-thirds of the answers (64.3 per cent). Bachelor students also reported to ‘I frequently ask questions’ (7.8 per cent) and to ‘take notes in German’ (6.2 per cent). 5.4 per cent of the students used the ‘other’-option, for example they stressed that it makes no difference to study in German or English. ‘I try to prepare the lecture beforehand’ and ‘I compensate language deficiencies by working harder’ also received equals marks with 4.7 per cent. 2.3 per cent chose the option ‘I ask the teacher to repeat’, ‘I email the teacher afterwards, if I have not understood some contents properly’ and ‘If notes are distributed, I have read them carefully beforehand’. 
At master’s level the most applied strategy to get along is ‘I take notes in English’ (32.8 per cent). The second most chosen was ‘I google a term’ (22.9 per cent). These two strategies make up 55.7 per cent of the answers, which is over a half. The remaining answers are distributed across the following options: ‘I take notes in German’ (8.6 per cent), ‘I frequently ask questions’, ‘I ask the teacher to repeat’ (7.1 per cent each) and ‘I compensate language deficiencies by working harder’ (5.7 per cent). 4.3 per cent each received ‘I try to prepare the lecture beforehand’, ‘I email the teacher afterwards, if I have not understood some contents properly’ and the ‘other’-option. The students aired that they feel that their English proficiency level is appropriate to succeed in English-medium. Strategies such as ‘If notes are distributed, I have read them carefully beforehand’ seem to be of minor importance with 2.9 per cent.

The option ‘I ask the teacher to slow down’ was not chosen either by bachelor or master students. The reason for this could be the respect which students have for their lecturers or simply the fact that they do not want to admit in class that they have difficulties in understanding.

As argued in a previous section, it is not surprising that the results for the option ‘I frequently ask questions’ are at a low 7.8 per cent for the bachelor students and 7.1 per cent for the master students. It is likely that students do not have the courage to pose a question in front of their study group in class for the reasons mentioned above. They do not want to lose face. However, as Airey and Lindner (2006) have shown, students often ask the lecturer questions after the class.

Having study groups among students was a theme which only occurred in the oral interviews. Melissa, a 4th semester master student, Melissa points out that using fellow students is a valuable source for getting along: “You adjust things as you need them, [...] since you have no [support; my amendment], you mutually help each other, you help each other studying, [...] but you mutually help each other”.

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To sum up, students draw on a wide range of strategies to get by in their EMI programme as shown in Figure 6.24. Strategies such as ‘I take notes in English’ and ‘I google a term’ were chosen by far as most commonly applied strategy. However, it seems to be a personal decision which strategy to deploy and seems not to be related to subject contents that one works better than the other. Students use informal student strategies to progress through their programme.

6.4.4.2 Translating into German

Technical terms are crucial in academic disciplines, and so the students were explicitly asked if they translated technical terms into German to themselves, for instance that a ‘valve cap’ is translated with ‘Ventilkappe’. In a similar vein, Airey (2015) suggested that the teacher repeats unfamiliar vocabulary and allows time for students to digest. It has been argued that this action might be helpful in EMI education, and so it is of interest to me how the students in my sample view it.

Figure 6.25: ‘Do you translate technical terms for yourself to German?’
The results can be seen in Figure 6.25. Half of the bachelor students translate technical terms into German (50.8 per cent) either always, often or at least sometimes and so do 61.3 per cent of the master students. ‘Rarely’ was chosen by 31.3 per cent of the bachelor students. It looks as if the bachelor students are more willing to accept the English translation of a technical term or if they are simply not able to translate these terms.

### 6.4.4.3 Speaking English with fellow students

The students were also asked if they speak English with their fellow students. This might be a strategy employed by some to increase their English skills.

![Figure 6.26: ‘Do you speak English with your fellow students during the breaks?’](image)

Figure 6.26 illustrates the language used by students for social interaction. About four fifth of both bachelor students (79.1 per cent) and master students (83.9 per cent) choose English for social interaction with other students, at least sometimes. Since
the classes consist of German and international students, communication in English works best with the fellow international students. The answer options ‘no, rarely’ and ‘no, never’ account for 16.4 per cent (bachelor students) and 16.1 per cent (master students), which is quite a high number. It is possible that the students are not aware that informal chats help to improve their fluency, even with other German students. As van Lier proposes “[l]anguage does not arise from input that is processed, but from affordances that are brought forth by active engagement, and which enable further action and interaction” (2002, p. 146).

6.4.4.4 Institutional language support

In the following my study compares existing institutional support with requested language support.

6.4.4.4.1 Existing language support

This section explores the existing level and type of language support offered by the institution as viewed by the students.

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*Table 6.2: Percentage of respondents declaring that their institution offers English language study support*

Table 6.2 displays the results on existing study support for the English language in their study programme. 59.7 per cent of the bachelor students indicated that study support for English is offered. At master’s level, the picture is different, with only 32.3 per cent stating that English support is offered at their institution. If these views
reflect actual levels of support, it appears that institutions make an effort to ensure that bachelor students have a smooth start in an EMI programme; at master’s level – after 3 years of studying in English – it looks like the institutions decrease their effort. But what do students report more specifically on the type of study support provided? This was an open-ended question and the students were free to report on their experiences.

As Figure 6.27 illustrates, 92.5 per cent of the bachelor students and 90.9 of the master students indicated that their institution offered English language courses. These are taught classes with a teacher, mostly taking place after regular lecture hours. One master student participating in the oral interview explained that language classes are time intensive and hard to manage on top of a full study schedule. Other answers given in response to the above question hint at informal type of support such as ‘talking to classmates’ or ‘tutorials in English’. ‘Talking to classmates’ may include informal checking of vocabulary or contents: ‘tutorials in English’ seem to focus on extra trainings for presentations. Having support for ‘non-technical subjects’ was also mentioned. The answer was given without any further explanation.

Figure 6.27: ‘What type of support is offered?’

As Figure 6.27 illustrates, 92.5 per cent of the bachelor students and 90.9 of the master students indicated that their institution offered English language courses. These are taught classes with a teacher, mostly taking place after regular lecture hours. One master student participating in the oral interview explained that language classes are time intensive and hard to manage on top of a full study schedule. Other answers given in response to the above question hint at informal type of support such as ‘talking to classmates’ or ‘tutorials in English’. ‘Talking to classmates’ may include informal checking of vocabulary or contents: ‘tutorials in English’ seem to focus on extra trainings for presentations. Having support for ‘non-technical subjects’ was also mentioned. The answer was given without any further explanation.
6.4.4.2 Requested language support

Having established above the students’ view of institutional language support currently offered, this section rounds off by exploring any additional language support that students might find it useful for the institution to offer.

Figure 6.28: ‘Would you like to have (more) support for English?’

Figure 6.28 illustrates the answers whether students would you like to have (more) support for English. At bachelor’s level, 25.4 per cent wanted more support, if the answer categories ‘I strongly agree’ and ‘I somewhat agree’ are combined. In contrast, 44.8 per cent did not, if the answer categories ‘I strongly disagree’ and ‘I somewhat disagree’ are combined. The middle option ‘I am not sure’ was preferred by 25.3 per cent of the bachelor students. ‘No answer’ was given by 4.5 per cent of the bachelor students.

At master’s level, 22.5 per cent wanted more support, if the answer categories ‘I strongly agree’ and ‘I somewhat agree’ are combined. This is in contrast to 38.8 per cent who did not, if the answer categories ‘I strongly disagree’ and ‘I somewhat disagree’ are combined. The middle option ‘I am not sure’ was preferred by 38.7 per
cent of the master students, which is quite a large proportion. I did not expect a large group of students not having a clear view on whether they wanted to have more support or not, but this may be due to uncertainty over what type of support the question refers to. Also, more bachelor students than master students stated that they did not want more support for English, despite some of the skill gaps as previously described. A further study could usefully clarify whether the students simply have no time for additional help or if they do not find existing support useful and thus do not want more of the same.

The results for the next question painted a different picture regarding support: students know what could help them to advance in their studies.

Figure 6.29: ‘Please specify what type of support you would suggest.’

Figure 6.29 describes the type of support which students would like to receive. This is in contrast to Figure 6.27 where students reported on the support options currently available at their institution. Figure 6.29 highlights that 34.8 per cent of the bachelor students preferred the teacher to give the German equivalent of a technical term. With 21.2 per cent the ‘other’-option was the second choice of the bachelor students. They highlighted that at best they would like to go abroad to an English-speaking
Simone Stuers, EdD thesis

country to enhance their English proficiency. The answer-option ‘The teacher distributes scripts beforehand’ was chosen by 16.7 per cent of the bachelor student. 15.2 per cent favour that ‘the teacher distributes vocabulary lists’ and a further 12.1 per cent that ‘extra English lessons should be available’.

The master students favoured instead that the teacher should distribute scripts beforehand (30.8 per cent). This was also found by Airey and Lindner (2006) as having a positive effect on studying through the English medium. To an equal degree they then favoured ‘the teacher gives the German equivalent’ and ‘the teacher distributes vocabulary lists’ (23.1 per cent each). ‘Extra English lessons should be available’ was attractive to 11.5 per cent. 11.5 per cent also chose the ‘other’-option and highlighted either that going abroad would give them an edge or that they do not perceive to need further help. These findings illustrate that bachelor and master students favour different means of support, possibly due to where they are in their studies or due to the nature and the focus on their activities.

The topic of translating technical terms to German seems to be central and also occurred in the ‘other’-option. It seems to be something that bachelor students do not agree on. In an open-ended comment, one bachelor student commented as follows: “Translating into German makes sense, in order also to be able to work in Germany. [But] basically it is the task of the students to learn the vocabulary”. The student emphasised the importance of knowing the technical terms not only in English, but also in German since it is their first language and it is most likely that not all graduates will find a job abroad and will stay in the country. For Ed, a 5th semester bachelor student, it is a problem to describe subject issues in his first language: “[...] I have no clue how to express this in German.” Other students see translating into German as quite controversial. Thus another bachelor student aired the following opinion:

Technical terms should not be translated into German, except in extreme cases. Translating frequently excludes non-German fellow students from the
lecture und diminishes the necessity for students to look up words and to develop a HABIT. Additionally, terms could be explained in English. A translation is necessary for students with low English language skills (A1/A2), which however should not be the case in a study programme at B2 level. The difference is that from a certain level onwards, much can be concluded from the context and if necessary, single words can be checked out afterwards. This enables having a lesson, which is less disturbed by frequent student questions.

The students favour not to translate from German to English so that they are forced to develop their own way of learning the English equivalent. Also frequent questions could disrupt the flow of the class and possibly exclude those students who do not have German as their first language. A master student was more concerned with writing. They reported: “It is more important, [to receive, my amendment] a correction of the submitted assignments in English. Since they are marked by German lecturers, the correctness regarding the language, as long as it is at a certain level, is unfortunately only of minor importance.” The student appreciates not only comments on the contents but also corrections of their usage of English. However, they acknowledge the difficulty for non-native speakers of English and also express that the level of English of teaching staff could be higher.

The replies made it clear that many students have ideas about which types of support would help them in their studies, and they provided a wide range of suggestions. However, there were also students who do not want more support. In addition students suggested that support should be available for some teaching staff to help improve their perceived low level of English. As one student puts it: “There should not only be support offers for students, but also for professors/lecturers who want to improve their English.” This is what was also suggested by O’Dowd (2018). Another master student reports: “The pronunciation of German lecturers in English lectures is sometimes extremely entertaining.” A bachelor student sums up the criticism: “It is important for the teaching staff to speak English very well, because this is essential for the quality of their lectures.” Students appear to be concerned with their lecturers speaking English well as this could potentially impact on their learning.
To sum up, students have developed their own strategies to progress in their EMI programme. They like to ‘[…] take notes in English’, which was the preferred option by bachelor and master students. 50.8 per cent of the bachelor students and 61.3 per cent of the master students translate in class technical terms into German either always, often or at least sometimes; both groups state that they use English as language for social interaction (Fig. 6.26).

In terms of institutional language support, there are clear differences between bachelor and master level. The majority of bachelor students (59.7 percent) report that their institution offers language support whereas a minority (32.3 per cent) of master students report that this is the case. The most often reported type of support reported at both levels was English courses. In terms of what institutional language support students would like to see, and indeed if they felt they needed it at all, their views were. Nearly half of the bachelor students and over one third of the master students reported not needing support in addition to the current offerings. A further quarter of the master students and over a third of the bachelor students were undecided whether they would like more support or not. As for those who reported needing additional support, students tended to be quite clear as to what type would be most useful. These included the teacher giving the German equivalent or distributing vocabulary lists or scripts beforehand.

### 6.5 An answer to research question No. 3

This section tries to answer the research question regarding the student experience of EMI:

**What are the students’ experiences of their EMI programme?**

- **a) What background do students have and what are their reasons for choosing EMI programmes?**
- **b) What is the students’ awareness of the English language entry requirements on their programme?**
c) What are students’ views of their own English language proficiency and their ability to participate in their EMI programme?

The findings relating to each sub-question are summarised below: The main reason why bachelor students enrol in an EMI programme seems to be that the challenge of studying in English appeals to them. Master students reported this too but also that the programme they wanted to study was not available in German. However, given that half of the bachelor students and 40.7 per cent of the master students reported that studying in English was new to them, combined with the fact that the teaching takes place wholly or predominantly in English, one might have expected certain challenges arising from studying in English. However, these were largely unconfirmed by this research. Student satisfaction with their English-medium programmes is high (71.6 per cent for bachelor students and 77.4 per cent for master students), and 88 per cent of the bachelor students and 96.8 of the master students would choose the same programme again. Of course, these results need to be treated with caution as overall high levels of satisfaction do not preclude that students might also experience challenges with studying in EMI.

In terms of the institutional visibility of the English language entry requirements, the majority of students at both master and bachelor level reported that English language requirements were in place for entry into their programmes. This reinforces the findings reported in Chapters 4 and 5 which also provide evidence of the existence and use of English language entry requirements. Mainly, according to students, this appeared to consist of a request for TOEFL or IELTS certificates, in some cases, benchmarked to the CEFR. Some of the master students reported that they had gained access to the programme by documenting their prior study experience in English or also, occasionally, the school-leaving certificate.

Overall the students appear to perceive both their general and skill-specific English proficiency as appropriate to enrol and succeed in an EMI programme. The overwhelming majority of students report being happy with their choice of
programme and, overall, rate their own English proficiency as adequate for successful participation. However, whether this perceived adequacy is attributable to the existence of English language requirements being in place is unclear. In other words, the research has been unable to establish whether it is precisely because there are English language entry requirements in place that students appear to cope so well or whether they would have coped equally well without any such English language entry requirements.

There is, however, sporadic evidence (gained through interviews) to suggest that the English language entry requirements may be of little relevance for predicting how students will cope with their studies. As Linda, master student, 2nd semester, reported: “[...] when I have confidence to do so, I’ll make it, and when I really want it, I’ll make it, and then the exact score, if I have 79 or 80 points, is irrelevant.” From a certain English proficiency onwards, it may be that what really counts for study success is motivation and perseverance.

In view of the largely positive views students have of their own English language proficiency, it is perhaps not surprising that a large number of students (around 40 per cent at both master and bachelor level) feel that further support by the institution or the programme is not necessary. One might speculate whether this is because students genuinely feel that they do not need it (certainly their high opinions of their own proficiency level might suggest this), or whether it is because the institution already offers high quality English language support.

Despite many students not seeing a need for institutional language support, however, other students nevertheless have views of what additional support might be helpful to them during their studies. When asked which type of study support the students favour, the bachelor students reported that the lecturers should translate technical terms into German, whereas the master students suggested that the lecturers should hand out scripts beforehand. The difference might derive from the
different levels of English; the bachelor students might have a lower level of English knowledge than the master students who might be more experienced in English. Airey (2015) has shown, that among other means of support and accompanying material helps to understand the content.

6.6 Summary and conclusion

This chapter summarised and discussed the findings from the student questionnaire and the student interviews. It explored student perceptions on various topics such as previous experience with EMI studies, English language entry requirements, necessary skills, study support, strategies to cope with studying through the medium of English, and the level of student satisfaction with studying in English or bilingually. Although students reported on some challenges, such as understanding German lecturers’ English, understanding fellow international students or having less developed speaking skills in contrast to the listening skills, they appear to view studying in English as a positive challenge, as something that gives them advantages and opens up possibilities. The English entry requirements were perceived as having little importance and meant little to students, apart from being an administrative necessity to enter a programme.
7. Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into four parts: it begins by answering the main research question. It then explains the contributions to the EMI field of research as well as educational policy and practice. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations and gives recommendations for further work.

7.2 Answering the main research question

This section brings together the findings that have emerged from all the different data sets in order to answer the main research question:

What are the English language requirements for admission to English-medium degree programmes at German higher education institutions and how are these requirements determined by institutions and viewed by domestic students in North Rhine-Westphalia?

My study brought together three different perspectives to answer this question: institutional practice, as gleaned through the information on the institutional websites, the motivations and rationales of EMI programme leaders and the student perspective.

I begin by summarising the institutional practices as reflected on the universities’ websites. 20 years after their introduction in Germany, 1,093 EMI programmes were found through the institutional websites. 35 per cent of all 426 institutions which existed in 2014 offer EMI programmes; the largest proportion of these are located in the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia (20.9 per cent). The vast majority of EMI programmes offered were master programmes (83 per cent). Most of the EMI
programmes appear to have English language entry requirements in place. These include authenticated copies of language certificates, the Cambridge Certificates, the CEFR, GMAT, GRE, IELTS, in-house tests, interviews in English, the school-leaving certificate, TOEIC, TOEFL pBT, cBT, iBT and UNIcert. The use of interviews as an admission test was uncovered also in the survey of programmes leaders and the website survey. There are also a considerable number of programmes that have no English language entry requirements or do not state them. Some programmes ask for a ‘good command of English’, with no further explanation on how it will be assessed. Other phrases include ‘excellent English skills’, ‘excellent command of English’, ‘English proficiency required’ etc. At bachelor’s level the list was headed by TOEFL and IELTS, the second most common approach was not to state what the requirements were, and the third most common approach was to ask for a school-leaving certificate. At master’s level TOEFL and IELTS were requested in over a half of all cases, followed by the CEFR.

The most frequently requested score at bachelor’s level was 575/213/90/6.5 (TOEFL pBT/cBT/iBT/IELTS) and 550/213/80/6.5 (TOEFL pBT/cBT/iBT/IELTS) for master’s level which in both cases corresponds to B2 on the CEFR. When it comes to the slightly lower English language entry requirements at master level, at least where the pBT and iBT are concerned, this may be due to greater competition, which acts as an incentive for lower entry requirements.

In terms of assessment frameworks at master’s level, besides TOEFL and IELTS, the most commonly used one is the CEFR. Usually the entry requirement for the CEFR reflects the requirements set by TOEFL or IELTS. In a few cases, a lower threshold is required for TOEFL and IELTS than for the CEFR. It needs to be noted that TOEFL and IELTS are proficiency tests and certify the actual language knowledge of a person, whereas the CEFR is a framework, which suggests levels of proficiency, which in reality are not formally assessed. Although UNIcert is a German testing system, it is
rarely applied. It seems that not only do the English language entry requirements vary from programme to programme, but they are also inconsistent in their variations.

When we look at the inquiry of the EMI programme leaders, the focus changes from the national perspective to the federal perspective – this part of the study took place in the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia only. Prior to summarising the views of the programme leaders, it is important to mention that federal state legislation is in place to determine the English language entry requirements in North Rhine-Westphalia. § 49 section 8 of the Higher Education Act (Hochschulgesetz NRW, dated 16.09.2014) states that for bachelor entry the language proficiency requested must not be higher than ordinary secondary school education can provide. For master studies the level is not set by the ministry but it is explicitly left to the institutions, meaning that the English language entry requirements can be defined in the institutions’ examination regulation. The Higher Education Act does not state explicitly a level of English proficiency, neither for bachelor study or master study. Since the Abitur certificate is necessary to enrol in a bachelor programme, this means that implicitly the English proficiency obtained in school by the time of the final exams is regarded as appropriate for academic studies.

The picture gained from the inquiry of the programme leaders largely replicated those of the website search. The English language entry requirements were different for the different programmes, although the same trend was visible: 550/213/80 for the three TOEFL test-formats and 6.5 for IELTS for both levels of study which equates to B2 (CEFR). The institutions claim to be familiar with English language entry requirements, though it seems that they are not aware of what is actually meant to use TOEFL, IELTS etc. as English language entry requirements. My investigation backs, at least in parts, the research of Erling and Hilgendorf (2006) (as in section 2.9.1), who described that B2 equals seven years of English at school and is certified in the school-leaving certificate. Also, these authors explicitly mentioned the TOEFL result for the paper-based test with 550, which I also found, as stated above. If the CEFR was named
as the English language entry requirement, in some cases the requested level of C1 is higher than what is usually requested for TOEFL or IELTS.

Programme-specific examination regulations are the documents that are most frequently quoted when determining a source for the English language entry requirements on institutional level. It is frequently a single paragraph in the examination regulations. A separate document does not seem to exist at any of the institutions involved in this study, which hints at the minor importance of the English language entry requirements within the institutions targeted.

The process of how the English language entry requirements are determined also varies across institutions and from programme to programme. They, however, appear to be faculty-based. There is a strong belief that the English language entry requirements ensure a certain standard to facilitate students’ success in terms of being able to make use of provided material, understanding contents and passing exams. The programme representatives were convinced that English language entry requirements are the right methods to ensure a certain level of proficiency of the students. It was reported that no student had given up their EMI studies due to difficulties with the English language. These findings were also backed by the student interviews, which we will turn to below. One programme leader was aware that proficiency tests do not cover the specialist terminology which students learn in their discipline. Also, it was recognised that the certified level of English proficiency may not correctly reflect the actual ability of a student to speak and write in English. Despite the recognition of such complexities, on the whole, the English language entry requirements were seen as appropriate to ensure a sufficient command of English to master an EMI programme. However, it remained unclear how the specific English language entry requirements had been determined in detail.

From the student perspective, the picture is rather different. The students perceive English language entry requirements as less important for entering English
programmes; it is a hurdle which they have to surmount to be registered for the programme. The main reason why the bachelor students enrol in an EMI programme is the challenge of studying in English (20.4 per cent); for the master students it is that their programme is not available in German (20.6 per cent). There is a strong will to embark on these programmes; an entry threshold does not seem to deter prospective students. However, further work should focus on those students who did not succeed in enrolling in an EMI programme. It should be clarified whether the English language entry requirements were the cause or some content or administrative issue. Master students might have previous experience with studying in English; however, bachelor students have only their experience of school English. 71.6 per cent of the bachelor students and 77.4 per cent of the master students report being content with their English-medium studies.

The existence of English language entry requirements was reported by 58.2 per cent of the bachelor students and 96.8 per cent of the master students. At bachelor’s level they range from having to provide their school-leaving certificate to having English knowledge that equates to the medium or upper categories of the CEFR; in a few cases a certificate of an admission test is requested. At master’s level the range is even broader. This ranges from job experience to a certificate of an English proficiency test such as TOEFL, IELTS, UNICert or a Cambridge Certificate. However, 49.3 per cent of the bachelor students and 22.6 per cent of the master students do not remember the type of English language entry requirements of their programme. And 74.6 per cent of the bachelor students and 48.4 per cent of the master students do not remember the exact score which was mandatory to gain entry for the particular programme. A further 7.5 per cent of the bachelor students and 6.4 per cent of the master students did not answer the question.

The students aired different opinions about whether the entry score was appropriate for their study programme or not. On the one hand, it was seen as appropriate in some cases; on the other hand, there was also the view that during the time of their
studies, a student learns technical terms in their field, whereas TOEFL or IELTS seems to measure the ability to master general situations and is not tailored to the student needs.

The students self-rated their listening, reading, writing and speaking skills in a positive way, however, as a skill is more demanding in a foreign language than the other, the self-rated results were different for the four skills. The listening skills were rated as ‘very good’ by about 75 per cent of the bachelor students and 68-77 per cent of master students depending on the task and on study progress. When it came to understanding international fellow students, the numbers were significantly lower, 52.2 per cent for the bachelor students and 51.6 per cent for the master students. A further study should look into this. Reading skills were rated as ‘very good’ from 45-55 per cent of the bachelor students and equally 45-55 per cent for the master students, also depending on the task and on study progress. The writing skills vary more according to the task. Around 40-61 per cent of the bachelor students and 32-58 per cent for the master students chose ‘very good’. An explanation here might be the previous academic experience that the master students have and a higher perceived level of difficulty for master studies. The speaking skills received the lowest marks with around 46-54 per cent of the bachelor students and 32-36 per cent for the master students, who chose the option ‘very good’; usually the master students have better knowledge due to more experience throughout time and a more realistic evaluation of their oral skills. These skills were rated according to the students’ self-perception.

Having mastered the English language entry requirement, the English language itself appears to be of great importance to the students and they seem keen to receive support to improve their level of English. But as to how this support should look, students’ views vary. Separate English courses are offered by the majority of institutions, but students do not seem to be particularly content with this offer; it was expressed that it is too time consuming to make use of this type of support. Bachelor
students prefer that the lecturer gives the German equivalent and master students would favour receiving scripts beforehand. The students developed their own strategies. Both, bachelor students and master students reported taking notes in English and googling unfamiliar vocabulary. Also, peer help was appreciated. Asked explicitly about their attitudes to translating technical terms into German, the students’ views varied; a large share do not appreciate doing so. However, over half of the bachelor and master students do translate into German, at least sometimes. The requested support mechanisms were different depending on the study level. It seems that students have different needs depending on where they are with their study.

To conclude, it might be said that for the institutions the English language entry requirements are considered as relatively important, albeit not without their problems, but they are perceived as relatively unimportant by the students.

### 7.3 Contributions to research

This study contributes to existing knowledge in the field of EMI and develops it further; in particular, it sheds light on the use of English language entry requirements in Germany and on how these are perceived by domestic students. My study provides a multi-perspective picture on English language entry requirements having given voice to local government, programme leaders and domestic students. The unique website survey provides for the first time a complete picture of English language entry requirements at German HEIs. My study encompasses all institutions of higher education which existed in 2014 and were listed at the German Statistical Federal Office; in this respect it constitutes a census. It also provides a more detailed number of English language entry requirements than the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD, 2010).
The findings from the website search contribute to the EMI literature by identifying the most frequently applied cut scores of the English language entry requirements across German higher education institutions. They are 575/213/90 for the three TOEFL test-formats (pBT/cBT/iBT) and 6.5 for IELTS at bachelor’s level and 550/213/80 (pBT/cBT/iBT) for the three TOEFL test-formats and 6.5 for IELTS at master’s level which equates in all cases to B2 (CEFR).

My study also supports Duchêne and Heller’s (2012) model of standardisation and flexibility. The NRW ministry recommend certain English language entry requirements: for bachelor’s level the English language proficiency should not exceed that which can be obtained at school leaving level (standardisation). However, the institutions respond to this in different ways (flexibility). With the absence of tight regulations and enforcement practices, the institutions are free to determine the English language entry requirements as their resources permit. This would be potentially beneficial for institutions with difficulties recruiting appropriate staff to conduct EMI programmes (Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2002; Ball and Lindsay, 2013; Kling and Dimova, 2015).

My study also contributes to knowledge about the perception of EMI in general and the perception of English language entry requirements by domestic students in particular. EMI is often researched in the context of international students (Earls, 2013; Teichler, 2007); however I wanted to explore how local students feel about and perceive the English language entry requirements, as addressed in section 2.5. If they are unable to study in an English-speaking country and gain the experience of being immersed in a British or American HEI, they are still keen to take the opportunities available in-country. Another feature of my study is the distinction between in bachelor and master students; it has become clear that the two groups have different needs due to study progress and experience.
7.4 Contributions to educational policy and practice

My study allows for several contributions to educational policy and practice, especially in the context of institutional processes, the use of TOEFL, IELTS and other English language entry requirements, and around study support in the context of bachelor and master level studies.

7.4.1 Institutional processes around English language entry requirements

Institutional variation might be reduced if the ministry in charge were more explicit about the English language entry requirements. The reason for the lack of specific regulation in English language entry requirements which I found might be that the ministry are happy with a wide range of English language entry requirements. There are two ways of handling the English language entry requirements: if the institutions do not consider them an important element in selecting students with appropriate skills for their programmes, they can be discarded. If they are important to ensure that the right students have access to EMI programmes, they need to be carefully set up, taking account of the proficiency of university entrants. That also means that they should take account of the material used in class, written or spoken.

Students who enrol in a programme and do not have the required level of English are most likely to drop out during the first semesters (Heublein et al., 2017). From the institution's point of view, it is a waste of resources to give students access to university places which are not qualified for the programme. If the institutions do consider the English language entry requirements an important element in selecting students with appropriate skills, they have to realise that the beginning of the programme is just the starting point for students. They might need study support for English, including formal support such as letting the lecturer distribute scripts beforehand or a more CLIL approach to instruction, at least at bachelor’s level, or informal support such as peer help. Adopting a presumed standard for English
language entry requirements or simply to copy the competitors because their policy looks adequate might not ensure that every stakeholder is content with English-medium instruction. The English language entry requirements have to be thoughtfully set up and monitored; clear governmental guidelines would be helpful. Moreover, as Oliver et al. (2012) postulated, language entry requirements should be revised regularly to see whether they fit to the material used in class and the English proficiency of the lecturer.

7.4.2 The appropriateness of TOEFL and IELTS as entry requirements

My study found that English language entry requirements are assessed in most cases using TOEFL and IELTS. TOEFL measures standard American English and IELTS standard British English with all the linguistic subtleties and particularities of either American or British English. A test score gives information about the extent to which a student is able to speak, to write, to read and to understand American or British Standard English. But is this appropriate for academic education in Germany? TOEFL and IELTS are often criticised for not being appropriate measurements for English proficiency for access to EMI programmes, but at the moment there is no better solution. I agree with Hellekjaer (2006) that established tests such as IELTS and TOEFL are somewhat appropriate to assess suitability for EMI studies in Norway. My findings seem to suggest this for Germany, too. A test which also assesses disciplinary knowledge does not exist at this point in time; also it would be difficult to employ because students would have to determine prior to enrolment which discipline they want to study. To change the discipline then would not be so easy. Other English language proficiency tests such as Cambridge Certificates or UNIcert could also be a viable measurement, although it seems that the institutions themselves prefer TOEFL and IELTS, trusting them more. The best solution of course would be the development of a test of academic English, which is universal to most disciplines.
For sure, EMI is a gradually rising phenomenon in Germany and hence, English language entry requirements need to be in place to have a minimum threshold to ensure a smooth learning experience in English. Further research needs to investigate if these thresholds should not only be valid for students, but also for lecturers. Although “traditionally a university lecturer qualifies for the job on the basis of his achievements as a researcher” (Klaassen et al., 2006, p. 1), in an EMI class the teacher has a dual function as an expert of content and language. In Germany English is a foreign language and should be treated as such. Further research needs to clarify if English language tests for lecturers such as the TOPTULTE or TOEPAS, which are in use elsewhere in Europe could be introduced to ensure a certain standard.

7.4.3 Different implications per study level for student support

My study identified that students want study support for English, thus backing the findings of Daller and Phelan (2013). But the support which they ask for is not necessarily what institutions currently offer, namely English courses. However, the type of support requested by students is actually different depending on where they are in their studies.

Bachelor students in my study preferred that the lecturer gives the German equivalent and distributes vocabulary lists. This can be treated as active support for active learning of English. Bachelor students are not only focused on content learning, but also on language development. The latter seems to be equally important to them at this stage and supports Light et al. (1987) who found that linguistic competence and academic success seem to be interrelated. Interpreting the results of my study, it seems that the bachelor students would favour a CLIL approach to their EMI programmes, or at least include elements of CLIL teaching. Dearden describes it as “dual educational objective” (2014, p. 7).
As it seems, the students at both levels want to enhance their level of English and learn their disciplinary-specific terms in English. This would match the definition of Fortanet-Gómez (2013) who talks of CLIL in higher education and does not use the term EMI. English clearly does not seem to be an easy tool to convey content for bachelor students, but it is another challenge to master.

Master students not only preferred to receive scripts beforehand, but also vocabulary lists. They seem to be more focused on content, but are still willing to enhance their vocabulary. Further research has to clarify for both, bachelor and master students at what points they need to focus more on every-day English language and when on disciplinary-specific discourse. However, as Daller and Phelan (2013) proposed, vocabulary knowledge is the driver for non-native speakers to succeed in their studies.

Furthermore, in my study the listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills were reported as surprisingly well developed, with no single skill scoring below 70 per cent if the categories ‘very good’ and ‘good’ are conflated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Bachelor students in per cent</th>
<th>Master students in per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>90.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>74.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.1: Development of English skills per study level

As Table 7.1 displays, bachelor students reported their listing skill to be almost at mother tongue level. The other skills were also reported to be well developed. This is in contrast to Nordic authors such as Airey and Lindner (2006) and Hellekjaer (2010), which surprises me since the people in Nordic countries tend to be more fluent in English. One reason might be that a certain type of student enrols in EMI programmes in Germany who are hard-working and/or who already have relatively high levels of
English proficiency, for example because they spend a year in the UK or the U.S. during secondary school or for other reasons. They are pioneers in their field, since 99 per cent of education in higher institutions in Germany is offered in German. In my study the students reported on having a strong will to succeed at programme entry, to progress in their programme and to find a decent job. Another reason could be that the Nordic researchers asked slightly different questions.

Programme leaders can learn from the views and attitudes of students and provide appropriate support to let them excel even more. Also, they might consider students who are weaker in English but content-wise perfectly capable (Dearden and Macaro, 2016) and establish a separate programme with lower English language entry requirements. If EMI starts to become more common in Germany, less gifted students – who will have different needs to progress in their programme – might want to enrol and participate in order to stand a good chance in the labour market. Further research is needed to shed light on this.

To sum up, EMI is still in its infancy in Germany, although it has been around for 20 years. Around 52 per cent of all institutions offer only 1-4 programmes. These have helped institutions, programme leaders, lecturers and students to gather first experiences. My study provides hard data on the state-of-the-art of EMI in Germany in general and in North Rhine-Westphalia in particular. Hopefully it will encourage institutions, especially programme leaders, to evaluate the situation and implement changes. EMI is far from being mature in Germany. An open discussion and a mutual exchange of institutional experiences could be beneficial to EMI programmes, so that the English language entry requirements start to be a supportive tool for students and an effective tool for institutions to manage the starting point of their EMI programmes.
7.5 Limitations of the study

Whilst this study has made a contribution to our understanding of English language entry requirements at EMI programmes at German universities, like any study, it has limitations.

Firstly, it is important to note that whilst the website survey included institutions across the whole of Germany, the survey of programme leaders and students was restricted to one single federal state of Germany, North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). This raises questions about generalisability (Bryman, 2008; Creswell, 2014). In other words, the findings from NRW may be linked to local peculiarities and so cannot easily be generalised to other federal states or countries. Nevertheless, in terms of English language teaching approaches at least, Syrbe and Rose (2018) suggest that NRW is the most representative of Germany. Of course this does not mean that it should be assumed that the views expressed by staff and students in this state are necessarily representative of the whole of Germany. The study has revealed that NRW offers by far the largest number of EMI programmes in Germany. The higher exposure to EMI in NRW than in other German states might affect the responses given by staff and students.

Another limitation concerns the small number of participants who took part in the survey of the programme leaders and in the student interviews. Small sample size is a potential problem not only in quantitative but also in qualitative research (Patton, 2002; Bernard, 2006; Creswell, 2014). For the inquiry of the programme leaders this is problematic because those who agreed to take part might have well-set up EMI programmes with no or little problems around. For the oral interviews of the students it is problematic because a small sample could mean that I happened to get hold of only those students who were happy with EMI courses which could mean that might have received an overly positive account of EMI programmes. A larger sample would enable greater generalisation of the findings.
Another limitation of this research concerns the reliability of students’ self-report in the questionnaire and during the interviews, a well-known issue in interview methodologies (Silverman, 2014). Besides memory being wrong or incomplete, the data should be treated as subjective. Subjectivity is an unavoidable component in qualitative research, since it sets out to explore the views of respondents (Patton, 2002). As mentioned, it would have been useful to obtain course assignment marks to triangulate them with the students’ self-report. However, it was not possible to obtain this because data protection does not allow institutions in Germany to publish personal data, not even for academic research purposes. Also, for the same reason I did not seek employment statistics for students qualifying with an EMI course in their portfolio which would have allowed me to compare my results with objective data. The employment statistics would have allowed me to get an idea of whether the self-report of students’ skills as in section 6.4 might have had an effect on their employment prospects.

In the inquiry to the programme leaders, it would have been useful to establish whether respondents had been involved in the development of the English language entry requirements and the respective guidelines. This would have added to the level of detail of their statements. Since I missed out to do so, the programme leaders’ answers lack of depth and detail.
7.6 Further research

This research has taken a first small step towards our understanding of English language requirements for entry into EMI programmes in German higher education. However, there is ample scope for further research in the area. A follow-up study could usefully complement students’ self-reports on their skills with objective data on test scores and proficiency levels. Similarly, their reports on the strategies on which they draw could usefully be complemented with classroom observations to verify the extent to which reported strategies are reflected in actual practices. The interview methodology used to understand programme leaders’ views of English language entry requirements could usefully be complemented by documentary and policy analysis to better understand how the setting of entry level requirements is done. Ideally, such analyses would be conducted across multiple levels to explore how supra-national, national, institutional and unit levels interact.

It would also be useful for future research to examine in more depth the appropriacy and suitability of the test constructs used in established tests such as TOEFL, IELTS, etc. with the actual needs of the students in this particular domain. For example, does the current balance of the four skills reading, writing, speaking and listening accurately reflect the relative importance of these skills in EMI contexts? Furthermore, given that TOEFL and IELTS were originally developed for Anglophone contexts, it would be useful to examine the extent which they need to be adapted for the particular characteristics of EMI contexts.

Future research might also attempt to assess whether different disciplines should have different English language entry requirements in place. Kuteeva and Airey (2013) have suggested that science disciplines may be less language-dependent in that they have agreed and commonly used methods to explain nature, whereas humanities are concerned with the interpretation of human society and culture and
may therefore be more language-dependent. This might mean that different proficiency levels might be suitable in different disciplines.

7.7 Summary and conclusion

This chapter provided an answer to the main research question, summarised the contributions to the field and educational policies and practices, outlined the limitations and gave recommendations for further work.
8. References


Björkman, B. (2013) *English as an academic lingua franca (Developments in English as the lingua franca)*, Boston, Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter.


DAAD (2014) *Hochschulkompass* [Online]. Available at https://www.daad.de/deutschland/studienangebote/studiengang/de/?a=result&q=&degree=&subjects%5B1%5D=1&subjects%5B17%5D=1&subjects%5B56%5D=1&subjects%5B146%5D=1&subjects%5B381%5D=1&subjects%5B193%5D=1&subjects%5B255%5D=1&subjects%5B380%5D=1&courselanguage=2&locations=&admissionsemester=&sort=name&page=1 (Accessed 28 June 2014).


ETS (2015a) *TOEFL iBT Test Content* [Online]. Available at https://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/about/content/ (Accessed 05 February 2015).


Leeuwen, C. (eds.) *Bridging the Assessment Gap in English-medium Higher Education*, Bochum, AKS, pp. 61-76.


Appendix

A. **List of questions to the programme leaders and their English translation**

1. Welche Zulassungsvoraussetzungen für Englisch gibt es für den von Ihnen betreuten o. g. Studiengang (TOEFL, IELTS, CEFR etc.)?

   What are the English language entry requirements for the EMI programmes that you oversee (TOEFL, IELTS, CEFR etc.)?

2. Gibt es bei Ihnen grundsätzliche Richtlinien, die Zulassungsvoraussetzungen für Englisch regeln? Falls ja, welche?

   Are there general policies at your institution, which govern the English language entry requirements for study at EMI programmes? If so, what are they?

3. Welche Person bzw. welche Abteilung/ welches Institut ist dafür verantwortlich, die Zulassungsvoraussetzungen für Englisch zu entwickeln?

   Which department/institute is responsible for developing the English language entry requirements?

4. Warum wurden die Zulassungsvoraussetzungen für Englisch in der jetzigen Form eingeführt?

   Why were the English language entry requirements introduced in their current form?

5. Wie sind Ihre Erfahrungen, ob sich die Zulassungsvoraussetzungen für Englisch als geeignet erwiesen haben, um sicherzustellen, dass Studenten mit dem Studium klarkommen?

   In your experience, have the English language entry requirements proved to be appropriate to ensure that students can study successfully?
6. Sind Sie der Meinung, dass die Zulassungsvoraussetzungen für Englisch sicherstellen, dass ein Student den englischsprachigen Vorlesungen folgen kann? Weshalb?

Are you of the opinion that the English language entry requirements ensure that a student can follow the English lectures? Why?
### B. The student questionnaire

The English version of the student questionnaire:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Possible answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Are you enrolled in an English or bilingual programme?</td>
<td>yes/no (if no, questionnaire ends)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Are you doing a bachelor’s or master’s programme?</td>
<td>bachelor, master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>At which institution are you studying?</td>
<td>list of institutions given; not displayed here due to a request to anonymise the names of the institutions as explained in the ethics section 3.6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Which semester are you currently in?</td>
<td>open answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>What is your area of study/specialisation?</td>
<td>my list of disciplines based on Wächter &amp; Maiworm, adapted by me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>male, female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 7  | Do you hold a German school-leaving certificate?                         | 1.) Yes, I do (Abitur)  
2.) No, I have a foreign school-leaving certificate (Message will be displayed: Thank you for participating in this survey. Since we are looking only for students with a German school-leaving certificate, this survey can end here.) |
| 8  | What is your first language? (The language which you speak most competently). | 1.) German  
2.) other _________________                                                                                                                  |
| 9  | What is your second language? (The language which you speak second most competently). | 1.) English  
2.) other _________________                                                                                                                  |
| 10 | Do you speak any other language? (Please list all other languages which you speak in the order of your proficiency) | open answer                                                                                                                                   |
| 11 | Is the language of instruction of your programme ...?                    | 1.) predominantly English  
2.) predominantly German  
3.) fifty-fifty  
4.) only English  
5.) only German                                                                                                                                |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Possible answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 12 | Why did you choose to enrol in this programme? (multiple answers are possible) | 1.) This programme is not available in German  
2.) To have better chances in the German labour market  
3.) To gain more English proficiency  
4.) To be able to work abroad (e.g. UK, U.S. etc.)  
5.) To be attractive for Germany’s best employers  
6.) To receive a good education with good teaching staff  
7.) I liked the challenge of studying in English  
8.) other: _______________________

| 13 | Have you studied in English before? | 1.) Yes, my school education was bilingual  
2.) Yes, my school education was English  
2.) I have received extra English tutorials  
3.) I have received extra English lessons (taught classes)  
4.) No, I haven’t studied in English language before  
5.) Only if you are a master student: Yes, the bachelor’s programme was given in English  
6.) other _____________________

| 14 | Does your university have admission requirements for English language programmes? | yes/no |

| 15 | Do you know the English language admission requirements for your bachelor’s/master’s programme? | yes/no |

| 16 | What kind of test for English as foreign language was required to gain entry into this programme? (multiple answers are possible). | 1.) TOEFL test  
a.) paper based  
b.) computer based  
c.) internet based  
2.) IELTS test  
3.) UNIcert  
4.) Cambridge Certificate  
5.) GMAT  
6.) TOEIC  
7.) CEFR  
8.) oral interview  
9.) other _____________________  
10.) no English admission requirement at all |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Possible answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Do you remember the score which was needed to gain access to your programme? If yes, which test and score was required?</td>
<td>yes/no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If yes, the required score was ________________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>What was your result?</td>
<td>My score was ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I do not wish to disclose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>My English proficiency allows me on the whole to participate in my EMI/ bilingual programme.</td>
<td>1 - Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 - Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 - Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 - Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 - Very poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>How do you rate your reading skills for the following activities? A.) Reading an academic article in English B.) Reading a textbook in English</td>
<td>For each item separately:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 - Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 - Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 - Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 - Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 - Very poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>How do you rate your writing skills for the following activities? A.) Writing an assignment in English B.) Taking notes during the lecture in English C.) Taking an exam in English</td>
<td>For each item separately:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 - Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 - Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 - Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 - Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 - Very poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>How do you rate your speaking skills for the following activities? A.) Taking part in classroom discussions in English B.) Giving a presentation in English C.) Taking an oral exam</td>
<td>For each item separately:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 - Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 - Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 - Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 - Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 - Very poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>How do you rate your listening skills for the following activities? A.) Following the lecture in English B.) Understanding German fellow students who speak English C.) Understanding International fellow students who speak English</td>
<td>For each item separately:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 - Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 - Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 - Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 - Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 - Very poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Are you happy with English as the medium of instruction?</td>
<td>yes, partially, no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Possible answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Is there any means of support for the English language in your study programme?</td>
<td>yes/no (If no is selected, participants are forwarded to No 25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>What type of support is offered?</td>
<td>open answers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 27 | Would you like to have (more) support for English?                       | 1 - I strongly agree  
2 - I somewhat agree  
3 - I am not sure  
4 - I somewhat disagree  
5 - I strongly disagree |
| 28 | Please specify what type of support would you suggest?                   | 1.) the teacher gives the German equivalent  
2.) the teacher distributes vocabulary lists  
3.) the teacher distributes scripts beforehand  
4.) extra English lessons should be available  
5.) other ________________ |
| 29 | Do you use more examples, if you explain something in English?           | 1 - Yes, always  
2 - Yes, sometimes  
3 - Partly  
4 - No, rather seldom  
5 - No, never |
| 30 | Do you translate technical terms for yourself to German?                | 1 - Yes, always  
2 - Yes, sometimes  
3 - Partly  
4 - No, rather seldom  
5 - No, never |
| 31 | Do you speak English with your fellow students during the breaks/outside the lesson? | 1 - Yes, always  
2 - Yes, sometimes  
3 - Partly  
4 - No, rather seldom  
5 - No, never |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Possible answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 32 | What strategies do you deploy to progress in your EMI/bilingual programme? | 1.) I try to prepare the lecture beforehand  
2.) I google a term  
3.) I email the teacher afterwards, if I have not understood some content properly  
4.) I ask the teacher to slow down speaking  
5.) I ask the teacher to repeat  
6.) I frequently ask questions  
7.) If notes are distributed, I have read them carefully beforehand  
8.) I take notes in English  
9.) I take notes in German  
10.) I compensate language deficiencies by working harder  
11.) other: ________________________ |
| 33 | If you could choose again, would you choose the same programme? | yes/no  
If yes, please continue with Q33, if no, please continue with Q34. |
| 34 | For what reason would you choose an EMI/bilingual programme again? | open answer |
| 35 | Is there anything you’d like to add to the topic of this questionnaire? | open answer |
| 36 | Would you like to participate in a short interview on this topic? (approx. 20-30 min) | yes/no |
| 37 | If you like to participate in a short oral interview, please leave your name, email address and phone number here. | open answer |
The German version of the student questionnaire:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr.</th>
<th>Fragen</th>
<th>Antwortmöglichkeiten</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sind Sie in einem englischen oder bilingualen Studiengang eingeschrieben?</td>
<td>Ja/ Nein (bei Nein endet die Umfrage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Studieren Sie in einem Bachelor- oder Masterstudiengang?</td>
<td>Bachelor, Master, Other:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Wo studieren Sie?</td>
<td>Liste der Institutionen; aufgrund von einer Bitte die Namen der Institutionen zu anonymisieren, werden diese hier nicht angezeigt, wie in Abschnitt 3.6.1 beschrieben.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>In welchem Semester sind Sie in Ihrem jetzigen Studiengang?</td>
<td>freie Angabe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Welches Fach studieren Sie?</td>
<td>Liste der Disziplinen nach Wächter &amp; Maiworm, angepasst von mir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sind Sie ein/eine ...</td>
<td>Mann, Frau</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 7   | Haben Sie einen in Deutschland erworbenen Schulabschluss?              | 1.) Ja (Abitur, mittlere Reife)  
2.) Nein, ich habe einen ausländischen Abschluss. (Nachricht: Vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme. Unsere Zielgruppe sind Studierenden mit deutschem Abiturzeugnis, daher kann Ihre Teilnahme hier beendet werden.) |
| 8   | Welche Sprache ist Ihre Muttersprache? (Die Sprache, die Sie am besten sprechen.) | 1.) Deutsch  
2.) anderes:                     
______________________________ |
| 9   | Was ist Ihre Zweitsprache? (Die Sprache, die Sie am nach Ihrer Muttersprache am besten sprechen.) | 1.) English  
2.) anderes:                      
______________________________ |
| 10  | Sprechen Sie eine weitere Sprache? (Bitte geben Sie alle weiteren Sprachen in der Reihenfolge Ihrer Kenntnisse an.) | freie Angabe |
| 11  | Ist die Unterrichtssprache Ihres Studiengangs ...                     | 1.) Überwiegend Englisch  
2.) Überwiegend Deutsch  
3.) Halb-halb  
4.) Nur Englisch  
5.) Nur Deutsch |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr.</th>
<th>Fragen</th>
<th>Antwortmöglichkeiten</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 12  | Warum haben Sie sich in diesen Studiengang eingeschrieben? (Mehrfachnennungen möglich) | 1.) Dieser Studiengang wird nicht auf Deutsch angeboten  
2.) Um bessere Chancen auf dem Arbeitsmarkt zu haben.  
3.) Um bessere englische Sprachkenntnisse zu erlangen  
4.) Um im Ausland zu arbeiten  
5.) Um für Deutschlands "Beste Arbeitgeber" attraktiv zu sein  
6.) Um eine gute Ausbildung bei guten Professoren zu erhalten  
7.) Auf Englisch zu studieren, hat mich gereizt.  
8.) Sonstiges: __________________ |
| 13  | Haben Sie vorherige Erfahrung mit Englisch als Unterrichtssprache?     | 1.) Ja, meine Schulausbildung war bilingual (Deutsch + Englisch)  
2.) Ja, meine Schulausbildung war auf Englisch  
2.) Ich war in einer Englisch-AG oder ähnliches  
3.) Ich hatte extra Englischstunden  
4.) Nein, ich habe vorher nicht auf English studiert  
5.) Nur für Masterstudenten: ja, die Unterrichtssprache in meinem Bachelorstudiengang war Englisch  
6.) Sonstiges: ________________________ |
| 14  | Gibt es an Ihrer Universität Zulassungsvoraussetzungen für englischsprachige Studiengänge? | ja/nein |
| 15  | Kennen Sie die sprachliche Zulassungsvoraussetzung, die für Ihrem Studiengang verlangt wurde? | ja/nein |
| 16  | Welche Art von Zulassungsvoraussetzung wurde verlangt um in Ihren Studiengang zugelassen zu werden? (Mehrfachnennungen möglich) | 1.) TOEFL PBT (schriftlich)  
a.) TOEFL CBT (Computergestützt)  
b.) TOEFL iBT (Internet-basiert)  
2.) IELTS Test  
3.) UNIcert  
4.) Cambridge Certificate  
5.) GMAT  
6.) TOEIC  
7.) CEFR  
8.) mündliches Interview  
9.) sonstiges ___________________  
10.) Es gibt keine Zulassungsvoraussetzung für Englisch |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr.</th>
<th>Fragen</th>
<th>Antwort-möglichkeiten</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Erinnern Sie sich an die genauen Zulassungsvoraussetzungen für das Englische? Welcher Test, Punktzahl etc. wurde gefordert?</td>
<td>Ja/Nein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wenn ja, folgende Zulassungsvoraussetzung gab es:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Was war Ihr Ergebnis?</td>
<td>Mein Testergebnis war …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ich möchte es nicht sagen.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Meine englischen Sprachkenntnisse ermöglichen mir im Großen und Ganzen eine Teilnahme an meinem englischen/bilingualen Studiengang.</td>
<td>1 - Sehr gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 - Gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 - Durchschnittlich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 - Schlecht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 - Sehr schlecht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Wie schätzen Sie Ihre Lesefähigkeiten auf Englisch für die folgenden Aktivitäten ein? Renikungen auf Englisch lesen</td>
<td>Je Punkt separate Einschätzung:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.) Einen akademischen Artikel auf Englisch lesen</td>
<td>1 - Sehr gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B.) Ein Lehrbuch auf Englisch lesen</td>
<td>2 - Gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 - Durchschnittlich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 - Schlecht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 - Sehr schlecht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Wie schätzen Sie Ihre Schreibfähigkeiten auf Englisch für die folgenden Aktivitäten ein? Eine Hausarbeit auf Englisch verfassen</td>
<td>Je Punkt separate Einschätzung:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.) Eine Hausarbeit auf Englisch verfassen</td>
<td>1 - Sehr gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B.) Während der Vorlesung/Seminar auf Englisch mitschreiben</td>
<td>2 - Gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.) An einer Prüfung teilnehmen</td>
<td>3 - Durchschnittlich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 - Schlecht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 - Sehr schlecht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Wie schätzen Sie Ihre Sprechfähigkeiten auf Englisch für die folgenden Aktivitäten ein? An Diskussionen teilnehmen/ sich am Unterricht beteiligen</td>
<td>Je Punkt separate Einschätzung:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.) An Diskussionen teilnehmen/ sich am Unterricht beteiligen</td>
<td>1 - Sehr gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B.) Eine Präsentation halten</td>
<td>2 - Gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.) An einer mündlichen Prüfung teilnehmen</td>
<td>3 - Durchschnittlich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 - Schlecht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 - Sehr schlecht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Wie schätzen Sie Ihre Hörfähigkeiten auf Englisch für die folgenden Aktivitäten ein? Einer Vorlesung/Seminar auf Englisch folgen</td>
<td>Je Punkt separate Einschätzung:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A.) Einer Vorlesung/Seminar auf Englisch folgen</td>
<td>1 - Sehr gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B.) Deutsche Mitstudierende verstehen, die Englisch sprechen</td>
<td>2 - Gut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.) Internationale Mitstudierende verstehen, die Englisch sprechen</td>
<td>3 - Durchschnittlich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 - Schlecht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 - Sehr schlecht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nr.</td>
<td>Fragen</td>
<td>Antwortmöglichkeiten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Sind Sie mit Englisch als Unterrichtssprache zufrieden?</td>
<td>ja, teils-teils, nein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Gibt es innerhalb Ihres Studiengangs Angebote, um das Englische zu verbessern?</td>
<td>ja/nein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Welche Angebote gibt es?</td>
<td>freie Angabe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Hätten Sie gerne (mehr) Unterstützung für das Englische?</td>
<td>1 - Ich stimme voll zu 2 - Ich stimme teilweise zu 3 - Weiß nicht 4 - Ich stimme teilweise nicht zu 5 - Ich stimme gar nicht</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 28  | Welche Maßnahme würden Sie vorschlagen, um Ihre Sprachfähigkeiten zu verbessern? | 1.) die Lehrperson übersetzt Fachbegriffe ins Deutsche 2.) die Lehrperson verteilt Vokabellisten 3.) die Lehrperson verteilt Vorlesungsskripte 4.) in einer gesonderten Englischstunde werden englische Fachbegriffe eingehend erklärt 5.) sonstiges ___________________
<p>| 29  | Benutzen Sie mehr Beispiele, wenn Sie etwas auf Englisch sagen?       | 1 - Ja, immer 2 - Ja, manchmal 3 - Teils-Teils 4 - Nein, eher selten 5 - Nein, gar nicht |
| 30  | Übersetzen Sie englische Fachbegriffe für sich selbst auf Deutsch?    | 1 - Ja, immer 2 - Ja, manchmal 3 - Teils-Teils 4 - Nein, eher selten 5 - Nein, gar nicht |
| 31  | Sprechen Sie mit anderen Studierenden außerhalb des Unterrichts Englisch? | 1 - Ja, immer 2 - Ja, manchmal 3 - Teils-Teils 4 - Nein, eher selten 5 - Nein, gar nicht |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr.</th>
<th>Fragen</th>
<th>Antwortmöglichkeiten</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Welche Strategien wenden Sie an, um in Ihrem englischen/bilingualen Studiengang klar zu kommen?</td>
<td>1.) Ich versuche mich vorher auf die Vorlesung/Seminar vorzubereiten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.) Ich google anschließend nach einem Fachbegriff, der im Unterricht benutzt wurde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.) Ich maille die Lehrperson an, wenn etwas unklar ist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.) Ich bitte die Lehrperson, langsamer zu sprechen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.) Ich bitte die Lehrperson, Gesagtes zu wiederholen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6.) Ich stelle während der Vorlesung/Seminar häufig Fragen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7.) Wenn Vorlesungsskripte verteilt werden, lese ich diese eingehend vorab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.) Ich mache mir Notizen während der Vorlesung auf Englisch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9.) Ich mache mir Notizen während der Vorlesung auf Deutsch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10.) Ich arbeite härter um sprachliche Defizite auszugleichen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11.) Sonstiges:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Wenn Sie nochmal wählen könnten, würden Sie erneut einen Studiengang mit Englisch als Unterrichtssprache wählen?</td>
<td>ja/nein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wenn ja, weiter mit Frage 33.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wenn nein, weiter mit Frage 34.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Aus welchem Grund würden Sie einen englischsprachigen/bilingualen Studiengang erneut wählen?</td>
<td>freie Angabe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Gibt es noch etwas, was Sie zu dem Thema der Umfrage hinzufügen möchten?</td>
<td>freie Angabe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Würden Sie an einer kurzen mündlichen Umfrage zu diesem Thema teilnehmen? (ca. 20-30 min)</td>
<td>ja/nein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Wenn Sie an einem kurzen Interview teilnehmen möchten, können Sie hier Ihren Namen, Ihre Emailadresse und Ihre Telefonnummer zur Kontaktaufnahme angeben.</td>
<td>freie Angabe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C. Introductory paragraph of the student questionnaire

Dear students,

The English language is gaining more importance for higher education in Germany. In 2014 there were over 1,000 programmes offered either in English or bilingually (in English and German) in the tertiary sector. If you are enrolled in such a programme, and do hold a German school-leaving certificate, please feel free to participate in this survey. We are interested in surveying students who hold a German school-leaving certificate and have decided to take English as medium of instruction or bilingually (in English and German) in their university programme.

The following questionnaire will be conducted within the scope of my doctoral thesis at The Open University, Milton Keynes, England, Faculty of education and language studies, supervised by Dr. Kristina Hultgren and Professor Regine Hampel. The aim is to find out how significant the English admission requirements are for students’ to be able to participate successfully in the programme. This questionnaire is sent out to 6 institutions of higher education in North Rhine-Westphalia. Your help will be of fundamental support to the study.

This questionnaire is not a test, so there are no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers and you are not obligated to write your name on it. We are interested in obtaining your personal opinion. By participating in the survey, you agree that we can use your answers anonymously for further research and evaluation, such as my EdD thesis and possible academic publications. If you do decide to leave your name and email address, we can provide you with the results afterwards. You could also decide to participate in a follow-up oral interview.

The data will be handled with the greatest confidentiality.

If you need more explanation or for any kind of feedback, please don’t hesitate to contact me: Simone Stuers, s.stuers@open.ac.uk

Your help is highly appreciated.
D. **Student interview questions (translated from German)**

1. At which university are you studying, which discipline, which semester, which level (bachelor/master)?

2. Why did you choose your given programme of study?

3. Did it make any difference to your decision that the programme was in English?

4. Did your university require proof of English proficiency before starting on your programme of study? If so, which one?

5. Did you apply at different universities? And did these universities require proof of English proficiency and how did that affect your decision to apply?

6. If you applied at different universities, did you have to take any language test? If so, did you have to take different language tests at different universities e.g. the TOEFL at one university and the IELTS test at another university? In what ways were the tests different? What are your thoughts on the pros and cons of each test?

7. Did you have to take an English language test and if so, how did you prepare for it?

8. Do you think that the English test minimum score is adequate in order to participate successfully in your programme? What is your impression? What are the challenges and benefits of studying in an English-medium programme? (Bachelors: Do you think it is adequate that there is a national level policy, which defines B2 as entry requirement at bachelor’s level? Please comment).

9. Which activities do you find most challenging in English-medium instruction, e.g. writing assignments, taking part in classroom discussions, following lectures? And which do you find least challenges?

10. What kinds of support, if any, are currently in place at your university for participating in EMI programmes? What mechanisms do you believe might be helpful?

11. Where will you be in 5 years’ time? Will it have helped you to study through the medium of English?
E. Consent form

Informed Consent Form
Working title of project: Language, globalisation and identity: An enquiry into English as the language for academic education in Germany

Introduction
The English language is gaining more importance for higher education in Germany. In 2014 there were over 1,000 programmes offered either in English or bilingually (in English and German). I am interested in interviewing students who hold a German school leaving certificate and who are enrolled in English-medium or bilingual study programmes.

Purpose of the research
The interview will be conducted within the scope of my doctoral thesis at The Open University, Milton Keynes, England, Faculty of Education and Language Studies, supervised by Dr. Kristina Hultgren and Professor Regine Hampel. An overall aim is to find out how significant the English admission requirements are for students to be able to participate successfully in their programme.

Voluntary Participation
Your participation in this interview is voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not.

Reimbursements
You will not be given any money or gifts to take part in this interview.

Confidentiality
The information that we collect from this interview will be kept confidential. Any information about you will have a number or alias on it instead of your name. The data will be stored confidentially.

Sharing the Results
By participating in the interview, you agree that we can use your answers anonymously for further research and evaluation, such as my EdD thesis and possible academic publications.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw
You may also stop participating during this interview at any time you choose.

Whom to Contact
If you have any questions you may ask them now or later, even after the interview has started. If you wish to ask questions later, you may contact me, Simone Stuers, Simone.Stuers@open.ac.uk

This proposal has been reviewed and approved by The Open University Human Research Ethics Committee, which is a committee whose task it is to
make sure that research participants are protected from harm. If you wish to find out more about The Open University Human Research Ethics Committee, please contact Duncan.Banks@open.ac.uk.

You can ask me any questions about any part of the research study, if you wish to. Do you have any questions?

**Consent form**

I have read the above information. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it and any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to participate in this interview.

**Print Name of participant**

_____________________________________________

**Signature of participant**

_____________________________________________

**Date**

_____________________________________________

  day/month/year
F. Example of an interview transcript

All interviews, conducted in German, were transcribed and translated into English. One is shown below for illustrative purposes.

Interview No 1, 01.09.2015, Code name Melissa

_Herzlich willkommen zu unserem Interview. Vielen Dank, dass Du da bist. An welcher Universität studierst Du?_

_Welcome. Many thanks for your participation. Which University do you study at?_

_Ich studiere an [wird nicht angezeigt, siehe Abschnitt 3.6.1]_

_I study at [not displayed, please see ethics section 3.6.1]_

_Und welches Fach?_

_Which subject?_

_International Management and Psychology._

_Und welches Semester bist Du?_

_In which semester are you?_

_Ich bin jetzt im dritten Semester. Im dritten Semester? Also, viertes jetzt, Anfang viertes._

_I am in the third semester. Third semester? Well, now in the fourth, the beginning of the fourth._

_Das heißt, du machst einen Master, bist eine Masterstudentin? Dann bist Du durch und fertig?_

_That means that you study for your master’s level, you are a master student? Are you done then?_

_Jo, nur noch die Masterarbeit. Ziellinie?. Ja. Schon mal viel Glück dafür._
Yep, only the master thesis is left. Targetline? Yes. Good luck for it.

Warum hast Du denn dien Studiengang gewählt, den Du jetzt gewählt hast?

Why did you choose the study programme, which you have chosen?

Ja, also ich hab hier den Bachelor auch schon gemacht, Arbeits- und Organisationspsychologie noch auf Deutsch, und danach habe ich mich umgeguckt, was gibt es für Master danach ahm, und was hier sehr schön war, dass zum einen der Master anschloss, also direkt angeschlossen werden konnte, das heißt, man hatte kein Semester dazwischen Pause und er hatte die Fächer, die mich wahnsinnig interessiert haben, also nochmal Vertiefung von Wirtschaftsthemen, die wir im Bachelor noch nicht hatten. Und das Englische da noch dabei war das I-Tüpfelchen sozusagen, weil es einfach wichtig ist, auch Englisch zu sprechen, gerade wenn man International Management macht, muss man einfach Englisch sprechen. Und warum war es Dir wichtig, einen Master zu machen? Ich fand mich noch nach dem Bachelor nicht genug qualifiziert für die Firmen, ich dachte, da muss es irgendwie noch mehr sein, was ich können muss, bevor ich sage, ich möchte jetzt hier arbeiten. Deswegen habe ich den Master gemacht.

Yes, I have already completed my bachelors level, work and organisational psychology was in German, and afterwards I looked around, what kind of master studies [were offered] and what was nice here was that the masters followed consecutively, that means it could be continued directly, without a break inbetween and it offered the subjects which I was really keen on studying, so learning in more detail about economics which we did not have during our bachelor’s studies. And the English language was the icing on the cake, so-to-speak; if you do International Management you simply have to be fluent in English. Why was it important for you to do a master’s? I thought I was not qualified enough for the companies, I thought, there should be more, which I need to know, before I say, I want to work here. This is why I have done the master’s.

Und, hat es für Dich einen Unterschied gemacht, dass Dein Studiengang auf Englisch angeboten wurde?

Did it make any difference to you that your study programme was offered in English?

What is meant by ‘difference’? I mean, you could have done the study programme in German at a different university? That’s right, but I found English very nice, because this is the language used worldwide. In psychology at the bachelor’s level, you have to anyways study in English and when you want to work internationally, it is very handy, when you have studied in English. You can hear it over and over, that you need to know the business vocabulary.

_Hat die Universität hier einen Nachweis verlangt von den Sprachkenntnissen?_  

_Did your university request a proof on the language level?_

Das war sehr nett, hier geht es auch, dass man mit seinem Abitur im Prinzip, neun Jahre lang, glaub, ich, Englisch gehabt haben muss und dann da mitgenommen wurde, also B2-Kenntnisse nachweisen muss. _Nicht nur für den Bachelor, auch für den Master?_ Bachelor brauchte ich keinen Nachweis, der war noch auf Deutsch. _Ah, so, okay._

That was very nice, here it works with the Abitur, that in principle you had, I think, nine years of English, and then you had to prove a level of B2. _Not only for bachelor’s level, also for master’s level?_ For the bachelor’s level, I did not need any proof, it was given in German. _Okay, I see._

_Hast Du Dich vorher an verschiedenen Universitäten beworben?_  

_Did you previously apply at different universities?_

Nein. Ich bin … hab direkt nur mich hier beworben, weil die anderen Universitäten erst im Wintersemester wieder angeboten hätte, ich hab aber im Sommersemester hier angefangen.

No. I am … applied here directly because the other institutions offered [it] only in the winter semester again, but I already started here in the summer semester.

_Musstest Du jemals den TOEFL oder IELTS-Test machen?_ Nein. Glück gehabt.

_Did you ever have to take either the TOEFL or IELTS test?_ No. Lucky me.

_Ja, die Frage acht kann ich Dir aber trotzdem stellen, denn bei dem TOEFL- oder IELTS-Test gibt es eine Mindestpunktzahl. Meinst Du dass das adäquat ist, um diesen Studiengang zu studieren?_  

_Yes, I can give you this question: there is a minimum test score for TOEFL and IELTS. Do you think it is appropriate to study in your study programme?_

Ich weiß jetzt nicht genau, was wie hoch die Mindestpunktzahl ist und was die jetzt ausweist, aber, ich bin jetzt auch gut mit meinem Abiturenglisch durchgekommen,
also ich finde nicht, dass man C1-Kenntnisse haben muss, also, ich meine, man entwickelt sich ja noch weiter, man entwickelt seine Vokabel noch weiter, außerdem, nur wenn ich mich über irgendwas unterhalten kann, heißt es nicht, dass ich mich auch gut über Psychologie oder Wirtschaftsthemen unterhalten kann. Das stimmt, ja, ja. Also müsste es ja im Prinzip schon ein Test sein, der speziell für den Studiengang auch ein bisschen die Vokabel ausweist, weil sonst kann ich mich vielleicht über Tiermedizin unterhalten, aber nicht über Wirtschaftsthemen.

Actually I don’t know the minimum test score and what this describes, but, I got through with my Abitur knowledge of English; I don’t think, that you need to have C1-knowledge of English, I mean, you develop, you also develop your vocabulary further, besides, if I can talk about something, it doesn’t mean that I can talk easily about psychology or economic topics. That’s right, yes, yes. Well, in principle it should be a test which to a certain extent shows the vocabulary for the particular study programme, because then I can discuss veterinary medicine but not economic issues.

Was sind für Dich die Vor- und Nachteile auf Englisch zu studieren?

What are the pros and cons to study in English for you?

Was wir jedoch haben, ist, dass wir nicht nur einfach auf Englisch studieren, sondern wir haben auch noch ausländische Studierende, das heißt, man kommt da auch nicht so in die Schiene, dass man doch wieder Deutsch redet untereinander, sondern weil auch die anderen dabei stehen, spricht man Englisch, man tauscht sich aus, man entwickelt seine Vokabel weiter. Also auch in den Pausen sozusagen? Genau, und auch in den Projekten. Also, man arbeitet ... wir haben ein großes Projekt gehabt, man ... wir haben alle zusammen in dem Projekt gearbeitet haben, da ging’s nicht auf Deutsch. Und deswegen das war sehr schön, weil die bringen nochmal andere Vokabel mit, die wir nicht kennen, wir vertiefen nochmal Themen, die kommen aus Marketing zum Teil, wir aus Psychologie Richtung und das ergänzt sich alles sehr schön und es macht sehr viel Freude mit gaps zu arbeiten.

What we have got, is, that we don’t simply study in English, but we have foreign fellow students, that means that you don’t have the problem so much, that you talk German among each other, because when the others are around, you talk English, you exchange, you develop your vocabulary further. Also during the breaks? Right, also during project work. Well, you work ... we had a large project, you ... we all worked together in the project, and it was not in German. And this was nice, because they bring different vocabulary, which we don’t know, we deepen our knowledge on the topics, they come partially from the marketing area, us from psychology and this complements each other nicely and it is fun to work with gaps.

Gibt’s auch irgendwelche Nachteile auf Englisch zu studieren?

Are there any disadvantages to study in English?
Yes, disadvantages not directly, but first of all, one need to get used to it. You haven’t talked English so much, you read an English text, okay, you have to look up the words, that’s all fine, but that you have to talk English with another person constantly and the lecture is in English, too, this is first of all something you need to get used to.

Was war dann für Dich am Herausforderndsten bei diesen englischen Aktivitäten: einer Vorlesung folgen, eine Hausarbeiten schreiben, an Diskussionen teilnehmen?

What was the biggest challenge for you in English: following a lecture, writing an assignment or taking part at a discussion?

Ich sag mal ganz klar die Hausarbeiten, also einer Vorlesung folgen, ist eigentlich gar nicht so schwierig. Man muss ja aktiv nicht unbedingt dran teilnehmen, man kann lieber zuhören, man kann auch mitlesen zum Teil, was auf den Folien steht, man kann sich selber Notizen machen, Diskussionen, Präsentationen war jetzt auch nicht so das Problem, irgendwie, das geht. Die Hausarbeiten sind da schon auch noch herausfordernder, weil man dann schreiben muss, also im Englischen sprechen, wie im Deutschen ja auch, man spricht halt gerade, wie man das so sagt, aber wenn man dann perfekt formulieren muss, dann erinnert man sich, oh, wie war das denn nochmal, wie schreibt man das nochmal, geht aber auch.

Clearly, the assignments, to follow a lecture, is not so difficult. You don’t need to actively participate, you can just listen, partially it is possible to read the slides, you can take notes, discussions, presentations were also not a problem, it works out, somehow. The assignments are more of a challenge, because you have to write, that means to talk in English, like in German, you simply talk, like you say, but if you have to phrase it perfectly, you try to remember, oh, gosh, how was it, how to write, but in the end it works out.

Gibt es denn hier für die englischsprachigen Studiengänge an der Universität auch Unterstützung, die man bekommen kann?

Is there any support available here for the EMI study programmes, which you could receive?

Hm, nicht so direkt, also es gibt Sprachkurse, nebenbei kann man immer auch Sprachkurse belegen, also Business Englisch, normales Englisch, klar, aber so richtig Unterstützung gibt es nicht.
Not directly available, that means there are language courses; additionally you can always enrol to a language course, that means Business English, Standard English, of course, but a tailor-made support is not available.

Gibt es etwas, was für Dich hilfreich wäre? Oder wo Du denkst, Deine Kommilitonen würden das begrüßen?

Also, wir haben es bisher immer so hingekriegt, man biegt sich das ja, dann so wie man es braucht, ich wüsste gerade nix, was man an Hilfe bräuchte, weil dadurch das man keine hat, unterstützt man sich halt gegenseitig sehr gut, man hilft sich beim Lernen, man guckt ... man hat die Bücher hier zum Lesen auch, aber man hilft sich halt gegenseitig, wenn man Fragen hat, deswegen bisher wüsste ich nix. Wir hatten jetzt auch nochmal einen wissenschaftlichen Schreibkurs, der ist im Semester auch fest verankert, da für uns, die Psychologie studiert hatten, jetzt nicht so wichtig, eher für die, die aus dem Ausland kamen, wichtiger, weil die nämlich zum Teil gar nicht wissenschaftlich geschrieben haben bisher. Ach so, okay. Die können ihre Bachelorarbeiten auch ohne Bachelorarbeit, ... also ihren Bachelor machen auch ohne Bachelorarbeit, die machen einfach nur eine Prüfung zum Teil im Ausland. Aber ... sonst wüsste ich jetzt gerade nix, was man zur Unterstützung braucht.

Well, we have always made it in the past; you adjust things as you need them, nothing comes to my mind which support is exactly needed, since you don´t get (support) you mutually help each other, you help each other studying, you look around ... you got books to read, but you mutually help each other, if questions arise, therefore nothing comes to my mind. We just had a scientific writing class, which is fixed for the semester, which is actually not of importance for us, who studied psychology, but more for those, who came from foreign countries, because they have partially not written academically. I see, okay. They can do their bachelor degree without a bachelor thesis, ... that means they can do their bachelors without a bachelor thesis, they simply sit an exam in these foreign countries. But ... nothing will come to my mind which I would favour as support.

Was meinst Du, wo Du in 5 Jahren stehen wirst? Wird Dir dabei der englischsprachige Studiengang dann geholfen haben?

What do you think, where will you be in 5 years´ time? Will the EMI study programme have helped you?


I sincerely hope so. I hope to be at an international company, to work internationally and, yes, have lot of contacts with English, speakers of English or perhaps a little
French, French I know also, but I think that the business language is simply English and it is in this direction that I’d like to work.

Okay, dann sage ich ganz recht herzlichen Dank für das Interview.

Okay, then thank you very much for the interview.

Ja, gerne.

You are welcome, was a pleasure.
G. Example of thematic analysis of a student interview (extract)

As stated in section 3.5.4, interviews were coded according to following key below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>View on EMI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Previous student experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>View on English language entry requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student’s linguistic proficiency in English</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>View on study support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extract from the interview with Melissa

*Ja, die Frage, die Frage acht kann ich Dir aber trotzdem stellen, denn bei dem TOEFL- oder IELTS-Test gibt es eine Mindestpunktzahl. Meinst Du dass das adäquat ist, um diesen Studiengang zu studieren?*

Ich weiß jetzt nicht genau, was wie hoch die Mindestpunktzahl ist und was die jetzt ausweist, aber, ich *bin jetzt auch gut mit meinem Abiturenglisch durchgekommen*, also ich finde nicht, dass man C1-Kenntnisse haben muss, also, ich meine, man entwickelt sich ja noch weiter, man entwickelt seine Vokabel noch weiter, außerdem, nur wenn ich mich über irgendwas unterhalten kann, heißt es nicht, dass ich mich auch gut über Psychologie oder Wirtschaftsthemen unterhalten kann, *Das stimmt, ja, ja.* Also müsste es ja im Prinzip schon ein Test sein, der speziell für den Studiengang auch ein bisschen die Vokabel ausweist, weil sonst kann ich mich vielleicht über Tiermedizin unterhalten, aber nicht über Wirtschaftsthemen.

*Was sind für Dich die Vor- und Nachteile auf Englisch zu studieren?*

Was wir jedoch haben, ist, dass wir nicht nur einfach auf Englisch studieren, sondern wir haben auch noch ausländische Studierende, das heißt, man kommt da auch nicht so in die Schiene, dass man doch wieder Deutsch redet untereinander, sondern weil auch die anderen dabei stehen, spricht man Englisch, man tauscht sich aus, man entwickelt seine Vokabel weiter. *Also auch in den Pausen sozusagen?* Genau, und auch in den Projekten. Also, man arbeitet ... wir haben ein großes Projekt gehabt, man ... wir haben alle zusammen in dem Projekt gearbeitet haben, da ging’s nicht auf Deutsch. *Und deswegen das war sehr schön, weil die bringen nochmals andere Vokabel mit,* die wir nicht kennen, wir vertiefen nochmal Themen, die kommen aus Marketing zum Teil, wir aus Psychologie Richtung und das ergänzt sich alles sehr schön und es macht sehr viel Freude mit gaps zu arbeiten.
**Gibt’s auch irgendwelche Nachteile auf Englisch zu studieren?**

Ja, Nachteile nicht direkt, aber man muss sich natürlich erst mal dran gewöhnen. Man hat natürlich lange nicht mehr so am Stück Englisch gesprochen, man liest einen englischen Text, okay, man kann die Vokabel nachgucken, auch alles gut, aber dass man jetzt dann sich so lange mit jemanden auf Englisch unterhält und auch die ganzen Vorlesungen auf Englisch hat, ist erst einmal eine Gewöhnungssache.

**Was war dann für Dich am Herausforderndsten bei diesen englischen Aktivitäten: einer Vorlesung folgen, eine Hausarbeiten schreiben, an Diskussionen teilnehmen?**

Ich sag mal ganz klar die Hausarbeiten, also einer Vorlesung folgen, ist eigentlich gar nicht so schwierig. Man muss ja aktiv nicht unbedingt dran teilnehmen, man kann lieber zuhören, man kann auch mitesen zum Teil, was auf den Folien steht, man kann sich selber Notizen machen, Diskussionen, Präsentationen war jetzt auch nicht so das Problem, irgendwie, das geht. Die Hausarbeiten sind da schon auch noch herausfordernder, weil man dann schreiben muss. [...] 

**Gibt es denn hier für die englischsprachigen Studiengänge an der Universität auch Unterstützung, die man bekommen kann?**

Hm, nicht so direkt, also es gibt Sprachkurse, nebenbei kann man immer auch Sprachkurse belegen, also Business Englisch, normales Englisch, klar, aber so richtig Unterstützung gibt es nicht.

**Gibt es etwas, was für Dich hilfreich wäre? Oder wo Du denkst, Deine Kommilitonen würden das begrüßen?**

Also, wir haben es bisher immer so hingekriegt, man bietet sich das ja, dann so wie man es braucht, ich wüsste gerade nix, was man an Hilfe bräuchte, weil dadurch das man keine hat, unterstützt man sich halt gegenseitig sehr gut, man hilft sich beim Lernen, man guckt ... man hat die Bücher hier zum Lesen auch, aber man hilft sich halt gegenseitig, wenn man Fragen hat, deswegen bisher wüsste ich nix. Wir hatten jetzt auch nochmal einen wissenschaftlichen Schreibkurs, der ist im Semester auch fest verankert, da für uns, die Psychologie studiert hatten, jetzt nicht so wichtig, eher für die, die aus dem Ausland kamen, wichtiger, weil die nämlich zum Teil gar nicht wissenschaftlich geschrieben haben bisher. *Ach so, okay.* Die können ihre Bachelorarbeiten auch ohne Bachelor-Arbeit, ... also ihren Bachelor machen auch ohne Bachelorarbeit, die machen einfach nur eine Prüfung zum Teil im Ausland. Aber ... sonst wüsste ich jetzt gerade nix, was man zur Unterstützung braucht.
H. **German original text of quotes**

This appendix shows the original German text of any free text responses in the questionnaire as well as the interviews.

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The second respondent, institution 1:

Necessary.

Notwendig.

The respondent from institution 2:

[...] the students are able to work on the material, understand contexts and sit examinations”.

[...] die Studenten können am Material arbeiten, verstehen Sachzusammenhänge und nehmen an Prüfungen teil.

One respondent at institution 4 answered:

Don’t know

Weiß nicht.

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The other respondent from institution 3 stated:

[[l]anguage requirements make sense to communicate expectations.
Zulassungsvoraussetzungen machen Sinn um Erwartungen zu kommunizieren.

to make sure that students meet these expectations.

um sicher zu gehen, dass die Studenten die Erwartungen erreichen.

Respondent 2, institution 3:

[...] certificate and reality don’t seem to match

[...] Zeugnis und Realität passen nicht zusammen.

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Emma, bachelor student, 3rd semester:

[...] Engineering is a much globalised area, one needs to be able to communicate in English.[...] but English makes a real difference.

[...] Ingenieurwissenschaften sind nun mal was sehr Globalisiertes, da muss man Englisch können. [...] aber Englisch macht schon deutlich einen Unterschied.

Linda, master student, 2nd semester, stated:

When I want to discuss matters related to my discipline with other people, I can’t avoid [English, my amendment]. What you do, it always looks a little more important, if you say it in English.


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Ed, bachelor student, 5th semester:

If B2 is really defined in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia as having Abitur, I then think it is clearly not enough.
Wenn B2 wirklich definiert ist zumindest im Land NRW als Abitur, dann finde ich es deutlich zu wenig.

Melissa, master student, 4th semester:

Well, in principle it should be a test which to a certain extent shows the vocabulary for the particular study programme. First of all, one needs to get used to it.

Also müsste es ja im Prinzip schon ein Test sein, der speziell für den Studiengang auch ein bisschen die Vokabel ausweist. Man muss sich natürlich erst mal dran gewöhnen.

Linda, master student, 2nd semester, puts it in other words:

I was annoyed somehow, because I don’t understand the purpose of the test, either I know that I have the [required] English level and feel confident, and even if perhaps I am not quite there at the very beginning, it will develop over time and why should I enrol in a study programme, where I don’t know the language?

Ich hab mich irgendwie geärgert, weil ich versteh den Sinn des Tests nicht, entweder ich weiß, dass ich das Englischsniveau habe und ich trau mir das zu, und selbst wenn ich vielleicht am Anfang noch nicht ganz auf der Höhe bin, kommt das dann mit der Zeit und warum solle ich mich für einen Studiengang einschreiben, wo ich die Sprache nicht kann?

Heidi, master student, 4th semester, identified:

Well, I previously studied engineering, bachelor studies, and I wanted to specialise in my subject. And the English language was the icing on the cake …

Also ich hab vorher halt ganz normal Bauingenieur studiert, also Grundlagenfach und wollte mich halt spezialisieren in die Wasserrichtung ...und das Englisch war noch ein i-Tüpfelchen drauf …

One bachelor student (respondent source code 4024553816) reported:
English is a prerequisite today.

Englisch wird heutzutage vorausgesetzt.

One master student (respondent source code 4017453469) put it in different words:

On the one hand, having English skills is essential today, so that a study programme in English is a perfect opportunity for practicing. On the other hand, it is another challenge, which needs to be met besides the purely subject-related academic demands.

Zum einen sind gute Englischkenntnisse heutzutage unerlässlich, sodass ein Studiengang auf Englisch eine perfekte Möglichkeit zum Üben darstellt. Zum anderen ist es auch eine weitere Herausforderung, die man neben den rein fachlichen Anforderungen meistern muss.

One master student (respondent source code 4021447383) stated:

It enables me to communicate internationally in my subject, e. g. at conferences.

Er versetzt mich direkt in die Lage, mich in meinem Fachgebiet international auszutauschen, z.B. auf Konferenzen.

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One bachelor student reported (respondent source code 4024503219):

During the first semester it was harder to follow the lecturer on such a high level of language, but with time it comes naturally when one studies for a semester in English and reads the mandatory literature in English, it comes automatically.

Im ersten Semester war es schwerer, auf einem solch hohen Sprachniveau dem Unterricht zu folgen allerdings kommt das einfach mit der Zeit von alleine wenn man ein Semester auf Englisch [s]tudiert und die dazugehörige Literatur auf [E]nglisch liest da kommt das ganz automatisch. Spelling corrections from me.)
Another bachelor student (respondent source code 4024225328) states to have a „bilingual life“:

I am living a bilingual life, that is, I undertake as many leisure activities as possible in an English environment. For example watching films and TV series, meeting international fellow students or traveling to countries where other languages are spoken.


Emma, bachelor student, 3rd semester, said:

I often sat in front of the television and watched British and English TV, which helped me a lot, and for less common vocabulary, which you do not discuss at school, I read mainly technical textbooks and all in English and in the original version.

Ich hab mich einfach oft vor den Fernseher gesetzt und britisches und englisches Fernsehen gesehen und das hat mir einfach sehr viel geholfen und für das Sprachwissen ungewöhnliches Vokabular, was man nicht in der Schule durchspricht, und ich lese vor allem Fachbücher und alles auf Englisch und im Original.

Kate, master student, 3rd semester, indicated the following:

There are many of us, international students from very many countries, who have very different accents in English, for example from Asia, Nepal, India. Sometimes it is hard to follow the comments of the fellow students.

Melissa, master student, 4th semester, reported:

You adjust things as you need them, [...] since you have no [support, my amendment]), you mutually help each other, you help each other studying, one looks around ... [...] but you mutually help each other.

[M]an biegt sich ja, dann so wie man es braucht, [...], weil dadurch das man keine hat, unterstützt man sich hält gegenseitig sehr gut, man hilft sich beim Lernen, man guckt ... [...] aber man hilft sich hält gegenseitig.

One bachelor student (respondent source code 4029390837) reported:

Translating into German makes sense, in order also to be able to work in Germany. [But] basically it is the task of the students to learn the vocabulary.

Die Übersetzung ins Deutsche halte ich für sinnvoll, um auch in Deutschland arbeiten zu können. Grundsätzlich ist es natürlich die Aufgabe der Studierenden sich Vokabeln anzueignen.

Ed, bachelor student, 5th semester, objected:

 [...] I have no clue how to express this in German.

[We]il ich keine Ahnung hab, wie ich das auf Deutsch ausdrücken soll.

Another bachelor student (respondent source code 4063725774) aired the following opinion:

Technical terms should not be translated into German, except in extreme cases. Translating frequently excludes non-German fellow students from the lecture und diminishes the necessity for students to look up words and to
develop a HABIT. Additionally, terms could be explained in English. A translation is necessary for students with low English language skills (A1/A2), which however should not be the case in a study programme at B2 level. The difference is that from a certain level onwards, much can be concluded from the context and if necessary, single words can be checked out afterwards. This enables having a lesson which is less disturbed by frequent student questions.


A master student (respondent source code 4021447383) was more concerned with writing. They reported:

It is more important, [to receive, my amendment] a correction of the submitted assignments in English. Since they are marked by German lecturers, the correctness regarding the language, as long as it is at a certain level, is unfortunately only of minor importance.

Wichtig erscheint mir eher, die Korrektur der auf Englisch eingereichten Texte. Da diese von deutschen Dozierenden korrigiert werden, spielt die sprachliche Korrektheit, solange sie ein bestimmtes Niveau hat, leider nur eine untergeordnete Rolle.

As one student (respondent source code 4022536836) puts it in own words:

There should not only be support offers for students, but also for professors/lecturers who want to improve their English.

Es sollten nicht nur Angebote für Studierende angeboten werden, sondern auch für Professoren, die ihr Englisch verbessern möchten.
Another master student (respondent source code 4021355351) reports:

The pronunciation of German lecturers in English lectures is sometimes extremely entertaining.

Die Aussprache deutscher Dozenten in englischen Vorlesungen ist manchmal äußerst unterhaltsam :-)

A bachelor student (respondent source code 4019656416) sums up the criticism:

It is important for the teaching staff to speak English very well, because this is essential for the quality of their lectures.

Es ist sehr wichtig, dass die Lehrenden sehr gutes Englisch sprechen denn das ist ausschlaggebend für die Qualität der Vorlesungen.

As Linda reported (master student, 2nd semester):

[...] when I have confidence to do so, then I’ll make it, and when I really want it, I’ll make it, and then the exact score, if I have 79 or 80 points, is irrelevant.

[...] wenn ich mir das zutraue, dann schaffe ich das, und wenn ich das will, dann schaffe ich das auch, und dann ist die genaue Punktzahl, ob ich jetzt 79 oder 80 hab, irrelevant.
I. Ethics approval

From: Dr Duncan Banks  
Chair, The Open University Human Research Ethics Committee  
Email: duncan.banks@open.ac.uk  
Extension: 59198  

To: Simone Stuers, CREEET  

Subject: “Language, globalisation and identity: An enquiry into English as the academic language in Germany.”  
Ref: HREC/2014/1764/Stuers/1  

AMS Submitted: 26 July 2014  
Date: 13 August 2014  

Memorandum

This memorandum is to confirm that the research protocol for the above-named research project, as submitted for ethics review, has been given a favourable opinion by the Open University Human Research Ethics Committee. Please note that the OU research ethics review procedures are fully compliant with the majority of grant awarding bodies and their Frameworks for Research Ethics.

Please make sure that any question(s) relating to your application and approval are sent to Research-REC-Review@open.ac.uk quoting the HREC reference number above. We will endeavour to respond as quickly as possible so that your research is not delayed in any way.

At the conclusion of your project, by the date that you stated in your application, the Committee would like to receive a summary report on the progress of this project, any ethical issues that have arisen and how they have been dealt with.

Regards,

Dr Duncan Banks  
Chair OU HREC
J. **Higher Education Act § 49 (German version)**

Law on Higher Education § 49 (in German version available only)

German Law on Higher Education (Hochschulgesetz NRW) § 49 (as of 16.09.2014), sec. 1 and 8:

§ 49

**Zugang zum Hochschulstudium**

(1) Zugang zum Studium an Universitäten und Fachhochschulen hat, wer die allgemeine Hochschulreife oder die fachgebundene Hochschulreife nachweist; die allgemeine Hochschulreife berechtigt dabei uneingeschränkt zum Studium, die fachgebundene Hochschulreife nur zum Studium der im Zeugnis ausgewiesenen Studiengänge. [...]

(8) Die Prüfungsordnungen können bestimmen, dass für einen Studiengang, der ganz oder teilweise in fremder Sprache stattfindet, neben den Zugangsvoraussetzungen nach den Absätzen 1 bis 7 die entsprechende Sprachkenntnis nachzuweisen ist. In einem Studiengang, der zu einem ersten berufsqualifizierenden Abschluss führt, darf keine Sprachkenntnis gefordert werden, die über eine mögliche schulische Bildung hinausgeht.