

Article

Translanguaging in English Language Teaching: Perceptions of Teachers and Students

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Abstract: The wide spread of English as the dominant language in higher education around the world due to the processes of globalization and internationalization, opposed to the emerging trend for ‘nationalism’ or ‘de-globalization’, has recently led to new interest in the role of languages other than English in teaching and learning processes. This article investigates the beliefs and attitudes of Russian university students and teachers concerning the value of English language teaching and the language of instruction in ELT to explore their perceptions of ELT in a Russian monolingual university. The participants of this study were 581 students and teachers of two Russian universities. The research questions were approached from a quantitative perspective with the analysis of data obtained from a questionnaire. The main statistically significant findings include the following: the value of ELT, supported by English-medium instruction is high for all groups of respondents; translanguaging practices in ELT with the minimized use of Russian as the mother tongue are a top priority both for the students and the teachers; additional language learning experience makes students more committed to more intensive language studies and increases their confidence in their ability to study non-language subjects in English.

Keywords: multilingualism; translanguaging; English-medium instruction; English language teaching



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1. Introduction

The processes of globalization, internationalization and digitalization have changed the landscape of higher education in all the countries of the world, promoting academic student and faculty mobility, intercollegiate communication and joint research, distance learning and access to resources, independent of national boundaries. These respond, on the one hand, to the development of multiculturalism and multilingualism of the twenty-first century knowledge-based society, and on the other, to the dominance of English as a lingua franca and English medium instruction in educational settings. English has become the most widely used language in the field of education. However, the wide spread of English also means that globalization is not only beneficial for education, but it also poses a lot of questions related to language policy and the use of different languages for teaching and learning.

Globalization is having a great impact on Russia as well, though it used to be a monolingual country with the Russian language as the dominant official state language. At the same time, being a federation, Russia is a multicultural country, having more than 15 official languages of different republics in addition to Russian. English has always had the status of a foreign language in Russia. In the world's largest ranking of countries and regions by English skills (EF English Proficiency Index 2021), based on test results of 2 million adults in 112 countries and regions, Russia is in the group of countries with moderate proficiency, taking the 51st place in the rating and falling behind countries with high and very high proficiency such as Portugal, Sweden, Finland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Argentina and others [1]. At the same time, English is becoming more powerful as a

tool of attracting foreign students to Russia, promoting national research and entering the international academic community. There have appeared a number of English-taught degree programs and joint degree programs in the majority of Russian universities. Some universities have significantly increased the total workload of English language teaching as well as introduced English-medium instruction (EMI) in non-language courses in degree programs [2,3].

English gives Russian students an opportunity to communicate, read English sources and take part in lectures and discussions with visiting professors and representatives of different fields of foreign business without any translation, saving time and effort. A high level of language competence gives access to academic mobility programs and studying abroad. In this context research outputs concerning the most appropriate teaching methods and approaches, as well as debates on the use of L1 and L2 as core issue of multilingual education, are becoming more and more actual.

The pendulum of research in the field of multilingual education has been swinging from the Grammar translation method and intensive use of L1 in the English language classroom to the Direct method and Communicative approach with English-only instruction. The review of the English teaching literature of practically the whole 20th century shows that ‘the use of learners’ own languages in language teaching and learning was banned by ELT theorists and methodologists’ [4] (p. 8). The situation changed at the beginning of the 21st century when the monolingual assumption started to be challenged alongside a reassessment of the advantages of using learners’ native languages [5] (p. 272). Moreover, researchers claim the ‘multilingual turn’ in language education and education in general, based on a recognition of world societies as multilingual and diverse multilayer communities [6]. The term ‘multilingual turn’ emerged in a conference discussion in 2011 in connection with the notion of ‘multi-competence’ introduced by Cook as different from monolingual linguistic competence [7]. Conteh and Meier see two reasons for this turn. The first one deals with societies and people becoming multilingual. The second one concerns language frictions in mainstream education in relation to language diversity [6]. Thus, the multilingual turn presupposes a paradigm shift from a monolingual bias ‘towards the incorporation of multilingual and translingual perspective in foreign and second language learning environments’ [8] (p. 9).

Within the last two decades the use of major international languages in education has been gaining popularity among parents, educators and policymakers [9]. The use of more than one language for subject-matter instruction is growing [10]. Therefore, the multilingual turn makes it possible to re-conceptualize multilingualism in education and shift from the ‘ideal’ native speaker view to ‘additive bilingualism’ and a multilingual classroom or asset view with the focus on learners and their linguistic repertoires.

The multilingual turn in language pedagogy and research brings a variety of different terms that one can come across in the research literature on the use of the languages of teaching and learning activities. These are ‘multilingualism’, ‘plurilingualism’, ‘heteroglossia’, ‘linguaging’, ‘translanguaging’, polylingual languaging, hybrid language practices, flexible bilingualism and metrolingualism. They seem to compete with one another, with priority being given to ‘multilingualism’, ‘plurilingualism’ and ‘translanguaging’ [11] (p. 9).

Multilingualism is distinguished as a social phenomenon of the co-existence of language communities and, at the individual level, as a competence of language users [10] (pp. 58–59). In language pedagogy it is viewed as an umbrella-term, fostering bilingualism [12]. Re-conceptualization of multilingualism leads to a more holistic or ecological model of language learning [6] and gives an opportunity to consider multilingual speakers as an entity and not as monolingual speakers of separate languages. This approach investigates the way multilingual speakers learn and use their linguistic repertoire without comparing them with ideal native speakers of the target language. Multilingual speakers are believed to have a different type of linguistic competence compared with monolingual speakers, as well as to have different linguistic trajectories which influence the way they acquire the target language [13] (p. 15).

There is much debate about the differences in the notions of multilingualism and plurilingualism. According to Moore, multilingualism should be treated institutionally and plurilingualism at the level of pedagogical design and classroom interaction. The institutional understanding of multilingual education can be best described through two main goals—bringing in foreign students and helping local students develop their language skills, which is manifested in a curriculum design and classroom practice [14] (p. 25). Plurilingualism at the level of pedagogical design and classroom interaction makes a constituent element of a multilingual curriculum, and is often opposed to unilingual pedagogical design and classroom interaction [14] (p. 26). Ziegler differentiates between the terms in a similar way and views multilingualism on the social and institutional levels, relating plurilingualism to the individual's dimension as 'plurilingual repertoire' [15]. Unlike Moore and Ziegler, Conteh and Meier see no significant difference between the terms 'multilingualism' and 'plurilingualism'. They ascribe this difference to the French writing tradition to define 'multilingualism' as the existence of several languages in a given society, and 'plurilingualism' as the use of several languages by an individual [6]. Rubio-Alcala et al., defining multilingualism in the same way, emphasize the cultural dimension of plurilingualism as stated by the Common European Framework of Languages [16].

The notion of translanguaging is very similar to multilingualism and plurilingualism in that it presupposes the use of more than one language in the classroom. Translanguaging does not view the language systems of a bilingual speaker as distinct but as part of a single interconnected system [17]. Wei rightly stresses that the actual purpose of learning new languages is not to become another monolingual [11] (p. 16). The basic idea of translanguaging is that one language reinforces the other in order to improve understanding and intensify learners' involvement in class activities in both languages [12]. Translanguaging is epistemologically different from code switching though 'it also disrupts the traditional isolation of languages in language teaching and learning' [18] (p. 118). The main distinction of translanguaging is that it focuses on communication and not on language itself. Translanguaging refers to a multilingual learner's ability to 'shuttle' between the languages, using the integrated communicative repertoires [19] (p. 363). In other words, translanguaging provides opportunities to choose linguistic units and learner strategies to communicate meaning on the basis of the learner's experience of both L1 and L2 acquisition.

Furthermore, researchers introduce the notion of pedagogical translanguaging as a theoretical and instructional approach that is learner-centered and aimed at the support and development of the full range of linguistic performances used by multilingual learners [12,13]. They recognize two main types of pedagogical translanguaging—official and spontaneous [12,20]. Official translanguaging is planned and systematic, with explicit strategies. It fulfills three functions: epistemological (to enhance content and language knowledge), symbolic (to acknowledge and valorize different languages in mainstream education) and scaffolding (to acknowledge and use different languages in everyday teaching) [12] (p. 13). Different from official translanguaging, spontaneous translanguaging is natural in classroom interaction.

Translanguaging is effective in lesson presentation, conducting class discussions and managing learners' behavior [20]. Wei underlines the multimodal and multisensory nature of translanguaging and develops this theory by introducing the notions of 'translanguaging space' and 'translanguaging instinct' [11]. According to Wei, translanguaging presents a new transdisciplinary perspective in research that unites linguistics, psychology, sociology, etc., and moves the focus to how language users orchestrate their diverse and multiple meaning- and sense-making resources [11] (p. 27).

Several publications give a general overview of multilingualism and translanguaging in education [4,13,18,21]. An array of studies provide more specified data on how teachers and students draw on different plurilingual (and multimodal) resources at university lectures that help to scaffold academic task completion in a second language [22]; how to resolve local and international practical problems in concrete interactions [23]; the benefits of bilingual education [24,25]; a comparison of views of academic staff and students

on multilingualism [26]; the functional use of different languages within moments of official translanguaging and the potentials of using multilingualism for raising academic achievement [12]; and the principles and practices of translanguaging [17,24].

A special focus of the research is also on attitudes towards the advancement of English as a ‘hypercentral language’ of internationalization aspirations; on context-specific (e.g., geopolitical, sociodemographic, discipline-specific) factors of English-medium instruction [27,28]; on the self-perceived language proficiency of non-native English language teachers and foreign language anxiety [29–34]; on teachers’ perceptions and context-specific factors at universities in which English-medium instruction is rather limited in range [29,30]; and on teachers’ self-perception and anxiety about teaching English in the expanding circle countries [29–34]. The results of some attitudinal surveys show that the majority of teachers try to exclude or to limit L1 use, yet they make much greater use of it in their practice than they declare [4,21].

For example, a group of researchers investigated the attitudes to English-medium instruction in the officially bilingual University of the Basque Country in Spain where the multilingual policy is based on the interplay between Basque, a minority language, Spanish, the mainstream language, and English, a foreign language [32,35]. The results revealed an acknowledgement of the personal and academic gains from EMI by all the participants [32] (p. 1413). At the same time, the historically low importance attached to foreign language learning in Spain in general was designated as the reason for English language failures and insufficient command as well as for the “perception of English as an imposed language” [32] (p. 1413). An important finding concerned translanguaging or flexible bilingualism which is successfully used by teachers as “a strategy to build bridges for classroom participants between the social, cultural, community and linguistic domains” [35] (p. 356). The results of some other attitudinal surveys show that even the teachers who declare a complete separation of L1 and L2 for teaching and learning, in practice make much greater use of L1 than they declare, and cases of spontaneous translanguaging take place [4,21].

With reference to Russia as a monolingual country, the teaching and learning of English can be approached differently. On the one hand, the ongoing globalization and internationalization in higher education demand for a more intensive teaching of the English language and an increase in EMI to make students highly competent in English by the end of their university studies. On the other hand, the emerging trend for “nationalism” or “de-globalization” in higher education revealed by the experts of the EDUCAUSE [28] sets certain restrictions on such intensification. In Russia, this trend is backed up by the historically low importance of foreign language learning during the Soviet period when “the role of English was diminished due to the political reasons” [3] (p. 1115). The three decades following the Soviet Union collapse saw a period of integration into the global educational environment, with a demand for international partnerships, and, in general, increasing internationalization in higher education. However, the low English language proficiency of university professors in Russia was an obstacle to the wide spread of EMI. Research conducted by Murtazina shows that this obstacle had serious implications: “... because the academic staff make few English-language demands on their students, the students have little motivation to study English seriously or attain high levels of proficiency, and the ESP teachers often feel their efforts are frustrated” [3] (p. 1116). The current political situation when the new official Russia policy is guided by the principle of “isolating Russia internationally” [36] again poses great challenges to the internationalization processes in Russian universities and has a large impact on the perceptions and evaluation of ELT and EMI.

In this study we investigate the beliefs, preferences and attitudes of Russian students and teachers towards the use of EMI and the role of L1 in ELT. We consider the following three research questions:

1. How much do university students and teachers value the role of ELT and EMI in a monolingual university?

2. Which model of instruction in terms of language use—monolingual or bilingual\flexible translanguaging—is viewed as more preferable for ELT by students and the teaching staff?
3. Does the students' perception of ELT and EMI differ depending on their previous English learning experience—formal education or a combination of formal and informal education?

2. Materials and Methods

The study was conducted at two Russian universities: Peter the Great St. Petersburg Polytechnic University and Northern (Arctic) Federal University (NArFU) in Arkhangelsk, Russia, in the 2022–2023 academic year in collaboration with the Foreign Languages Departments of both universities. Both universities belong to the category of leading universities of the Russian Federation, which means that they participate in a number of national programs of excellence in higher education, aim to be integrated into the global educational space and set the objectives of internationalization. Both universities are officially monolingual which means that the official language of instruction and management is Russian; special university regulations are necessary to permit degree programs and courses to be delivered partly or wholly in a foreign language. However, their high status implies that such universities pay a lot of attention to language education and developing the communicative competence of students in a foreign, primarily English, language.

The sample of this study included 581 observations in total: 534 students and 47 teaching staff from both universities. Among the students there were 222 (41.6%) males and 312 (58.4%) females; 245 (45.8%) were first-year, 208 (39.0%) were second-year and 81 (15.2%) were third-year students. The sample of students differed in terms of their previous language learning experience: about half of respondents (52.4%) had studied English only in the system of formal education—at school and university, while 254 students (47.6%) had supplemented formal education courses with options of informal education (language courses in language centers, language summer schools or private individual training). All the respondents studied in non-linguistic degree programs. Among teaching staff, 45 (95.7%) were females and 2 (4.3%) were males, which is a very typical situation for the Russian education system where the vast majority of language teachers are females. In terms of the teaching staff age ranges: 17 respondents (36.2%) were in their 20s or 30s; while 30 teachers (63.8%) belong to older age groups. These numbers are very close to the years of teaching experience: 15 respondents (31.9%) have up to 10 years of teaching experience; 32 (68.1%) have more than 10 years. All teachers are English language instructors in non-linguistic degree programs.

The research questions were approached from a quantitative perspective. The data were obtained from a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire ranging from 1 to 5: 1—strongly disagree, 2—mostly disagree, 3—undecided, 4—mostly agree, 5—strongly agree. The questionnaire was designed in English in the electronic form. The students completed the questionnaire in class on request of English language instructors; teaching staff completed it individually. The survey was conducted on a voluntary and anonymous basis. Teaching staff and students were investigated by identical questionnaires.

The questionnaire was developed in keeping with the primary goals and research questions of the study and comprised 10 closed items in total: five items concerned the value of English language teaching and learning; and the other five items questioned the language of instruction in English language classes. Several items of the questionnaire refer to the survey of Doiz et al. [35] on language friction and multi-lingual policies in higher education. Internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire was measured by means of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Table 1 shows the results of the Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis: the "Value of English language teaching and learning" scale obtained the alpha coefficient of 0.667; the "Language of instruction" scale obtained the alpha coefficient of 0.624. The results for both scales are above 0.60 and can be considered satisfactory. Adequate scale coefficients of internal consistency allowed us to calculate the

average mean for each of the two research questions and compare the results obtained for each scale as a whole as well as for each individual item separately.

Table 1. Reliability analysis (Cronbach’s alpha).

| |
|--|
| Value of English language teaching and learning |
| Alpha = 0.667 (5 items) |
| Item 1. Every university graduate needs a high level of English language competence to become successful. |
| Item 2. The university should require students to become competent in English (Level B2 and higher) upon graduation. |
| Item 3. Students should be required to take a number of non-language courses taught in English. |
| Item 4. Using English to teach a non-English subject is not necessary (reverse scale). |
| Item 5. Students of this university are prepared to study non-language subjects taught in English. |
| Language of instruction |
| Alpha = 0.624 (5 items) |
| Item 6. English language classes should be conducted exclusively in English, without any use of Russian. |
| Item 7. Students should be “punished” (with a point system or lower grading) for the use of Russian in an English class. |
| Item 8. In teaching the English language, both English and Russian can be used without any restriction. |
| Item 9. In teaching English, the use of Russian should be strongly minimized. |
| Item 10. In English language classes, Russian can be used exclusively to introduce the most difficult language material or in translation exercises. |

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied for data analysis to see if there is statistical evidence that the means of two groups of respondents—teaching staff and students, as well as two groups of students with different language learning experience—are significantly different. For the calculation, the significance level is defined as 0.05.

3. Results and Discussion

Students and teaching staff were asked to assess the value of ELT and EMI and to define their attitudes concerning the language of instruction in ELT in a Russian monolingual university. The results were analyzed separately for each of the two scales for the whole cohort of student respondents and the group of teaching staff, and then for two groups of students depending on their previous learning experience.

3.1. Perception of Teaching Staff and Students

The “Value of English language teaching and learning” scale (Table 2) revealed the following.

Table 2. The value of English language teaching and learning scale: students and teaching staff.

| | | Students Mean (SD) | Teaching Staff Mean (SD) | ANOVA Results (<i>p</i> -Value) |
|--------|---|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Item 1 | Every university graduate needs a high level of English language competence to become successful | 3.81 (0.99) | 4.13 (0.99) | 0.03677 |
| Item 2 | The university should require students to become competent in English (Level B2 and higher) upon graduation | 3.65 (1.10) | 4.02 (1.01) | 0.02457 |
| Item 3 | Students should be required to take a number of non-language courses taught in English | 3.17 (1.04) | 3.43 (0.97) | 0.10379 |

Table 2. Cont.

| | | Students Mean (SD) | Teaching Staff Mean (SD) | ANOVA Results (<i>p</i> -Value) |
|---|--|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Item 4 | Using English to teach a non-English subject is not necessary | 2.89 (1.13) | 3.23 (1.13) | 0.04261 |
| Item 5 | Students of this university are prepared to study non-language subjects taught in English. | 2.97 (1.04) | 2.62 (0.95) | 0.02517 |
| Value of English language teaching and learning (whole scale) | | 3.30 (1.12) | 3.49 (1.14) | 0.0138 |

The teaching staff showed a slightly higher mean than the students for the whole scale. The difference in the means between the two groups is statistically significant.

Both students and teaching staff exhibited the highest means for two items: Item 1—every university graduate needs a high level of English language competence to become successful, and Item 2—the university should require students to become competent in English (Level B2 and higher) upon graduation, demonstrating the second-highest means in both groups. These two items refer to the significance of mastering the English language for the successful careers of university graduates, and the results were expected to reflect the strong beliefs of both students and teaching staff. However, neither students nor teachers demonstrated strong agreement with these statements, the means being close to the “mostly agree” response. This quite moderate result can probably be explained by the current political situation and the very fast shift from the internationalization strategies in Russian universities to the temporary isolation. In Item 5—students of this university are prepared to study non-language subjects taught in English, students exhibited the second lowest mean and teaching staff exhibited the lowest mean. This implies that both groups are rather pessimistic about the current level of the students’ English language competence. This result coincides with the findings of the study by Doiz et al. [35] on language friction and multilingual policies in higher education, conducted in a bilingual university (University of the Basque Country), where students were also quite uncertain about their readiness for being taught in a foreign language.

The means for Items 3 and 4 reveal that teaching staff are slightly more positive about the idea of teaching non-language courses in English than the students. Teachers tend to have more awareness of the usefulness of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) for the development of students’ English language competence. However, the statistical difference in Item 3 is insignificant.

The “Language of instruction” scale (Table 3) revealed the following.

The teaching staff again showed a slightly higher mean for the whole scale with a statistically significant difference between the two groups of respondents. Unlike the first scale, in the “Language of instruction” scale the highest scores always belong to the teaching staff, in all items without exception.

The most important and interesting finding concerning the language of instruction is based on the results obtained in Items 10 and 9. Both teachers and students exhibited the highest means in item 10 (*p*-value < 0.01)—“In English language classes Russian can be used exclusively to introduce the most difficult language material or in translation exercises”, and the second highest means in Item 9—“In teaching English the use of Russian should be strongly minimized”. These highest scores are followed by the results in Item 6—“English language classes should be conducted exclusively in English, without any use of Russian”, with no statistically significant difference between the two groups of respondents. Still lower are the means of both groups of respondents in Item 8—“In teaching the English language both English and Russian can be used without any restriction”, which are statistically significant.

Table 3. The language of instruction scale: students and teaching staff.

| | | Students Mean (SD) | Teaching Staff Mean (SD) | ANOVA Results (<i>p</i> -Value) |
|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Item 6 | English language classes should be conducted exclusively in English, without any use of Russian | 3.00 (1.26) | 3.04 (1.28) | 0.83228 |
| Item 7 | Students should be “punished” (with a point system or lower grading) for the use of Russian in an English class | 1.93 (1.18) | 2.09 (1.02) | 0.39545 |
| Item 8 | In teaching the English language both English and Russian can be used without any restriction | 2.48 (1.09) | 2.83 (1.13) | 0.03406 |
| Item 9 | In teaching English the use of Russian should be strongly minimized | 3.58 (1.07) | 3.94 (0.96) | 0.0294 |
| Item 10 | In English language classes Russian can be used exclusively to introduce the most difficult language material or in translation exercises | 3.81 (0.99) | 4.21 (0.69) | 0.00661 |
| Language of instruction (whole scale) | | 2.96 (1.32) | 3.22 (1.29) | 0.00369 |

These results indicate that translanguaging practices in ELT with a minimized use of Russian as the mother tongue are a top priority for both categories of respondents and preferred to two other models—unrestricted use of both languages and the use of English exclusively as the target language. Secondly, they demonstrate similar attitudes of both teachers and students regarding the language of instruction with the slightly higher means of teaching staff in all the items.

Teaching staff and students also share a similar viewpoint with no statistical difference in Item 7—“Students should be “punished” (with a point system or lower grading) for the use of Russian in an English class”. The means in this item show the disagreement of respondents with the idea to lower the grade for the use of the mother tongue in ELT. This is another supportive result for translanguaging practices in ELT that were questioned in Items 9 and 10 of this scale.

3.2. Perception of Students with Different Learning Experience

The third research question was approached in a similar way—with the analysis of data in two scales of the questionnaire but for two groups of student respondents. The whole group of student respondents was split into two approximately equal sub-samples depending on their previous English language learning experience. In total, 52.4% of students had acquired English language competence in the system of formal education—at school and university (we will call them F-group); and 47.6% of students had had additional training in the system of informal education—English language courses in language centers, language summer schools or private individual training with a tutor (we will call them FI-group).

The results allowed us to see if the differences in the previous learning experience of students influence their attitude to ELT and EMI in the university and their preferences concerning the language of instruction.

Both scales revealed a clear-cut trend: the students of the FI-group exhibited the highest means in all items without exception.

The most important findings in the “Value of English language teaching and learning” scale are based on the data obtained in Items 1 ($p = 0.0001$), 2 and 3 ($p = 0.000$). Table 4 shows that students of the FI-group are much more positive regarding the necessity to develop a high level of English language competence (Item 1) and the role of university in this

respect (Item 2), as well as the value of EMI (Item 3). These results indicate that additional language learning experience does not decrease the students' willingness to have more opportunities for English language learning in the university but, on the contrary, makes them more committed to more intensive language studies.

Table 4. The value of English language teaching and learning scale: students with different learning experience.

| | | F-Group | FI-Group | ANOVA Results (<i>p</i> -Value) |
|---|---|-------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| Item 1 | Every university graduate needs a high level of English language competence to become successful | 3.64 (1.02) | 4.01 (0.91) | 0.00001 |
| Item 2 | The university should require students to become competent in English (Level B2 and higher) upon graduation | 3.38 (1.13) | 3.94 (0.99) | 0.00000 |
| Item 3 | Students should be required to take a number of non-language courses taught in English | 2.97 (1.03) | 3.39 (1.01) | 0.00000 |
| Item 4 | Using English to teach a non-English subject is not necessary | 2.80 (1.13) | 2.98 (1.12) | 0.07658 |
| Item 5 | Students of this university are prepared to study non-language subjects taught in English. | 2.86 (1.03) | 3.09 (1.05) | 0.01068 |
| Value of English language teaching and learning (whole scale) | | 3.13 (1.12) | 3.48 (1.10) | 0.00000 |

The difference in the means in Item 5—"Students of this university are prepared to study non-language subjects taught in English" is also statistically significant and quite logically demonstrates that students with a greater learning experience feel slightly more confident about their ability to study non-language subjects in English.

The general picture of the value of ELT for the two groups of students is obvious in the means of the whole scale ($p = 0.000$). These results provide evidence to the higher level of support by students of the FI-group for ELT and EMI in the university context.

The findings in the "Language of instruction" scale (Table 5) demonstrate the same tendency with the high level of statistical significance in all the items but one (Item 7). Students of the FI-group favor the translanguaging model of instruction with the strongly minimized use of the Russian language (Items 10 and 9). The means of the two groups of respondents also demonstrate that there are no differences in their preferences concerning languages of instruction. The translanguaging model is preferred to the monolingual model with English as the language of instruction by both groups. An important finding in this respect is that the monolingual model is viewed positively by the students of the FI-group, while students of the F-group seem doubtful about this model and their mean is close to the "undecided" response. The least favorable option is the unrestricted use of two languages (Item 8) where both groups are far from being positive. On the contrary, they are either doubtful about the efficiency of this model (students of the FI-group) or even reject it (students of the F-group). Again, similar to the first scale, the means for the whole scale have a high level of statistical significance ($p = 0.000$).

Table 5. The language of instruction scale: students with different learning experience.

| | | F-Group | FI-Group | ANOVA Results (p-Value) |
|---------------------------------------|---|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| Item 6 | English language classes should be conducted exclusively in English, without any use of Russian | 2.68 (1.20) | 3.35 (1.24) | 0.00000 |
| Item 7 | Students should be “punished” (with a point system or lower grading) for the use of Russian in an English class | 1.88 (1.17) | 1.99 (1.18) | 0.28067 |
| Item 8 | In teaching the English language both English and Russian can be used without any restriction | 2.34 (1.03) | 2.63 (1.13) | 0.00256 |
| Item 9 | In teaching English, the use of Russian should be strongly minimized | 3.36 (1.10) | 3.83 (0.98) | 0.00000 |
| Item 10 | In English language classes Russian can be used exclusively to introduce the most difficult language material or in translation exercises | 3.62 (1.01) | 4.02 (0.92) | 0.00000 |
| Language of instruction (whole scale) | | 2.78 (1.28) | 3.16 (1.33) | 0.00000 |

4. Conclusions and Implications for English Language Teaching in the University Context

The teaching staff’s and students’ responses in this study demonstrate their awareness of the value of English language competence for the successful career of university graduates. The mission and role of the university in setting requirements for the significant results of students in mastering the English language and providing more opportunities for students to increase the level of English language competence are also perceived as crucial. This result contributes to the theory of pedagogical translanguaging with multilingualism as its core, which aims at developing language and content competences in university contexts by activating the learner’s linguistic repertoire in a flexible way [8].

One of the most optimal ways to support ELT in the university context is to increase the English-medium instruction in non-language courses. Both students and teaching staff are positive about the possibilities of studying English across the curriculum. The important implication for the university administration with regard to this finding is that a certain number of English-taught professional courses should be included in the curricula of non-linguistic degree programs. CLIL approach (Content and Language Integrated Learning) can be implemented in such courses for the integrated development of both professional and English language competences. However, concerns about students’ readiness for EMI, expressed by both teaching staff and students, especially by the group of students with formal education experience, might be seen as an obstacle or at least a restriction to such decisions. This study revealed that even students with the additional learning experience acquired in the system of informal education, do not feel that they are prepared for being taught in English in non-language courses. This result can be viewed as a contribution to the debate about multilingual policies in higher education internationalized contexts [6,9,10,15,16,25], which definitely require thoughtful and flexible decisions, taking into consideration students’ anxiety about EMI, undertaking measures to lower their fears and, at the same time, meeting their needs for a higher competence in English.

The statistically significant data indicate that students with different English learning experience have similar perceptions of the value of ELT and EMI, as well as the language of instruction in ELT. This study revealed the most preferable model of ELT in terms of the language of instruction, which is based on translanguaging or flexible bilingualism with a minimized use of Russian as the mother tongue. All groups of respondents strongly believe that in English language classes Russian should be used exclusively to introduce the most

difficult language material or in translation exercises. This finding has important theoretical and practical implications. It contributes to the academic debate about the coexistence of L1 and L2 in the classroom and supports translanguaging-based approaches in order to include several languages into mainstream multilingual education [7,14]. This finding provides arguments against the theories of teaching exclusively through L2 without any intersection with L1 [11,18].

The practical implications for the teaching staff are that the learners' mother tongue should not be ignored or banned in the English classroom; otherwise, it can reduce opportunities for skills transfers from one language to another, for teaching translation techniques and may result in much more time-consuming sessions of introducing and explaining difficult language material. However, the balance between the use of L1 and L2 in the classroom also requires a thoughtful approach. Giving the green light to L1—in our study this refers to the unrestricted use of Russian—is as unfavorable as teaching in English exclusively. The use of L1 (Russian) should be minimized; otherwise, it can be detrimental to the target language (English).

It should be noted that the study has certain limitations. First of all, only Russian students and teaching staff took part in the study. The findings were analyzed with reference to the context of Russia as a monolingual country which means that they might not be applicable to the educational situation in some other countries. Secondly, the group of teaching staff respondents included only English language teachers working in non-linguistic degree programs, and the results of the study show the attitudes of stakeholders who are directly involved in the process of ELT. It would be important to further investigate the attitudes of administrative staff of a monolingual university to ELT and EMI, as compared to the attitudes of teaching staff and students. Another issue for future research might be the motivation of students with different backgrounds of ELT (formal and informal education) to intensive English language studies including EMI.

To sum up, the findings of this study expand the understanding of students' and teaching staff's perceptions of English language teaching and learning in the university context, have revealed the preferences concerning the language of instruction and, at the same time, have opened the need for further empirical research of translanguaging practices in both ELT and EMI.

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