

**UNIVERSITY OF TARTU**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STUDIES**

**Estonian Native Speaker EFL Students' Views on English-  
Medium Instruction at the University of Tartu**

**MA thesis**

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## ABSTRACT

This master's thesis studies Estonian native speaker students' views on English-medium instruction (EMI) at the University of Tartu. The growth of EMI in higher education is a situation many countries face, including Estonia. It is accompanied by a set of problems ranging from societal to personal. The opinions of Estonian native speaker English as a foreign language (EFL) students at the University of Tartu on this topic have not been researched before. The aim is to answer three research questions:

1. What are Estonian native speaker EFL students' general attitudes towards EMI in Estonia and at the University of Tartu?
2. What do Estonian native speaker EFL students consider the benefits of EMI?
3. What challenges do Estonian native speaker EFL students experience in EMI?

The thesis consists of six parts: Introduction, two Chapters, Conclusion, List of references and two Appendices. The Introduction delves into the driving forces behind EMI becoming more widespread and serves as an insight into why this topic is necessary.

Chapter 1 of the thesis is theory based and divided into two parts. The first part gives an overview of the most cited benefits and challenges of English-medium education on the tertiary level. The second part goes into more depth about the state of language in higher education in Estonia, reasons for the rise in EMI in Estonia, and the discourse surrounding it.

Chapter 2 discusses the empirical study of students' views on English-taught courses and what they find beneficial and challenging about them. It is divided into four parts: research questions, method, results, and discussion. The respondents had to fill in a questionnaire which asked them about their attitudes towards EMI, and the benefits and challenges of EMI. The results were drawn from the responses.

The Conclusion completes the thesis by readdressing the most important points of the previous sections. The List of references contains references to all 59 resources consulted for writing this thesis.

Appendix 1 is a copy of the questionnaire used. Appendix 2 is a list composed of all the Estonian quotes from respondents that appear in the thesis because they were translated into English in the thesis text.

## Table of Contents

ABSTRACT .....	2
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....	4
INTRODUCTION .....	5
CHAPTER 1. English-Medium Instruction in Estonia and the World: An Overview .....	10
1.1. English-Medium Instruction in Higher Education: Benefits and Challenges .....	10
1.2. Discourse and Attitudes Surrounding Language of Higher Education in Estonia ....	15
CHAPTER 2. Study into Estonian native speaker EFL students' views on EMI at the University of Tartu.....	23
2.1. Methods.....	23
2.1.1. <i>Participants</i> .....	24
2.1.2. <i>Materials and design</i> .....	25
2.2. Results.....	33
2.2.1. <i>The profile of respondents</i> .....	33
2.2.2. <i>What are Estonian native speaker EFL students' general attitudes towards EMI in Estonia and at the University of Tartu?</i> .....	37
2.2.3. <i>What do Estonian native speaker EFL students consider the benefits of English-taught courses?</i> .....	41
2.2.4. <i>Additional thoughts about EMI</i> .....	47
2.3. Discussion .....	49
CONCLUSION.....	55
REFERENCES .....	59
APPENDIX 1: Questionnaire in Estonian .....	64
APPENDIX 2. Quotes from respondents in Estonian .....	68
RESÜMEE .....	71
Lihtlitsents lõputöö reprodutseerimiseks ja lõputöö üldsusele kättesaadavaks tegemiseks.	73
Autorsuse kinnitus .....	74

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AH	Faculty of Arts and Humanities
CLIL	Content and Language Integrated Learning
<i>DELFF</i>	<i>Diplôme d'études en langue française</i>
EFL	English as a foreign language
EMI	English-medium instruction
ESL	English as a second language
ETC	English-taught course
ETP	English-taught programme
HE	higher education
IT	information technology
Med	Faculty of Medicine
RQ	research question
UT	University of Tartu
SS	Faculty of Social Sciences
ST	Faculty of Science and Technology

## INTRODUCTION

Higher education (HE) becoming increasingly bilingual is a process which has been happening around the world. Already in 2000, Purser (2000: 451) stated that it is ‘almost universal’ for universities to educate their students and conduct research in more than one language with English being a front-runner among the second languages that are used in instruction. Hultgren et al (2015: 3) report that across Europe, there was a 38% growth in English-taught master’s programmes between 2011 and 2013, but they advise caution when interpreting these numbers as the total number of master’s programmes rose in that period as well.

Acquiring the English language while also learning the subject is considered useful as it helps students be more competent in the international community of their field of study (Li et al 2009: 231). In this thesis, the abbreviation ‘EMI’ is used in place of English-medium instruction. Macaro et al (2018: 37) state that EMI is ‘[t]he use of 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.’

Though its growth is documented across Europe, the acceptance of and reactions to EMI have been varied. Hultgren et al (2015: 2) report ‘fierce resistance’ from countries like Italy and France, where EMI is viewed as a threat to the established norms of the country’s academia. In the North, EMI has been integrated into HE with less hostility, but worries about national language next to the ever-growing English have still been raised (Hultgren et al 2015: 2). The situation is even more complicated in the countries that already deal with managing their own majority and minority languages. Hultgren et al (2015: 2) give examples of Basque and Catalan (minority) next to Spanish (majority) in Spain and Swedish (minority) next to Finnish (majority) in Finland. Estonia would be a suitable candidate here as well,

because Estonia has to manage the complex relationship between Estonian (native language to 68% of the population) and its minority languages, most notably Russian. However, the HE institutions in Estonia are no different than those in the rest of Europe and, similarly, have become more international as more EMI is introduced.

There are several reasons why the use of English has become more prevalent. It is not just one factor but different processes on different levels of society that influence the decisions, which are very tightly connected to each other (Hultgren et al 2015: 6). Hultgren et al (2015: 5) present a five-tier list of drivers of EMI in HE in Europe, pointing out that drivers exist on a global, an European, a national, an institutional, and a classroom level. Their system is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Drivers of EMI at different levels by Hultgren et al (2015: 6)

Level	Driver of EMI
Global	General Agreement on Trade in Services (1995)
European	Bologna Declaration (1999)
National	Internationalisation strategies
Institutional	Targets to recruit international staff and students
Classroom	Presence of non-local language speakers

On the global level, HE has become a service that can be traded, and universities compete for students from all over the world (Hultgren et al 2015: 5–6), same goes for Estonia (Soler-Carbonell 2018: 258). In Europe, the Bologna Declaration was the birth of the European Higher Education Area, which makes it easier for people to move between different institutions in Europe, which in turn influences changes on the national level. On the level of the institution, the universities then make changes to accommodate international students and more international staff. They also aim to prepare students for future employment in which English is increasingly important. Lastly, on the classroom level,

influenced by all of the processes above, there will be more international students in the room, in which case a *lingua franca* is used, and nowadays this will usually be English.

Naturally, this list is not conclusive and there can be many other reasons depending on the context. Macaro et al (2018: 64) conclude their systematic review of EMI in HE by stating that the relationship of these factors seems to be more top-down; global processes influence local policies and so all the way down rather than the teachers' and students' needs on the classroom level influencing the institutional policies and so all the way up. There have been calls for redirecting the flow so that the key stakeholders - the students and academic staff - are the beginning point of a bottom-up process of change (Phillipson 2015: 38–39).

High dependency on policy-driven changes is not the only problem of EMI in HE. The problems can be numerous and range from personal to societal (Macaro et al 2018: 38). There is the problem of linguistic competence and English proficiency of both students *and* instructors. On societal level, a pressing issue is what the 'Englishisation' will mean for the countries' local language(s). These challenges are further discussed in Chapter 1.1. of this thesis. A large part of the discussion of languages of education in Estonia has stemmed from the last problem.

Estonian is a small language with slightly under 900,000 people speaking it as a native language (Statistikaamet 2021: para 1). Owing to the history in which Estonian has been the language of HE for only some 100 years, a change where another language is heralded as the language of education makes Estonians cautious (Vihman 2017: 98). The thesis goes more in depth about the discussion on Estonia in Chapter 1.2.

There are a few reasons for writing a thesis on the topic of studying in EMI. First and foremost, the thesis was inspired by a personal interest in the assessment of content knowledge through English. The concept is a growing reality as multilingual studies are becoming an increasingly normal part of the educational systems around the world (De

Backer et al 2019: 426). It started with a fascination with an article by Annela Teemant about ESL (English as a second language) students' views on testing practices in the United States. This specific article inspired the author of the thesis to look into the assessment of content knowledge through English as a foreign language (EFL). Focusing solely on assessment, though, proved to be unproductive because the assessment can vary drastically from course to course and, therefore, not many generalisations on the topic could be made. A decision was made to broaden the subject of the thesis to a less limiting topic of 'studying on EMI courses'. Such personal interest and conversations with fellow students about the problems mentioned above constitute as the main reasons for this research. To the knowledge of the author, Estonian native-speaker EFL students' views on the challenges and benefits of studying on EMI courses at the University of Tartu (UT) have not yet been researched. Research published so far often reflects the opinions of the faculty and the academic staff (see for example Räs et al 2018). Yet, the student perspective is an important one since students are among the key stakeholders in the process.

With that in mind, this thesis aims to explore the attitudes, challenges, and benefits of Estonian native speaker students when it comes to EMI at the UT. The three research questions are:

1. What are Estonian native speaker EFL students' general attitudes towards EMI in Estonia and at the University of Tartu?
2. What do Estonian native speaker EFL students consider the benefits of EMI?
3. What challenges do Estonian native speaker EFL students experience in EMI?

The following two chapters attempt to answer these questions. First chapter of the thesis, the benefits and challenges of English-medium education on tertiary level as well as the state of language in HE in Estonia and the discourse surrounding it are discussed. The

first part of the first chapter relies on international experience and discusses some of the benefits and the challenges of EMI in HE. However, since no country's experience with EMI is the same, the second part focuses on Estonia and its complex relations with EMI in HE. The second chapter presents empirical research of students' views on courses taught in English and what they find challenging and beneficial about them. The chapter goes into detail about methodology and then reveals the results which are then interpreted to answer the research questions.

## **CHAPTER 1. English-Medium Instruction in Estonia and the World: An Overview**

The change in the language of instruction is accompanied by its own set of challenges and benefits. Many of them are shared by countries employing EMI in HE but some can be specific to the country. Estonia is a part of the European Higher Education Area and its universities are increasingly more Estonian-English bilingual, while students are expected to participate in more courses taught in English. In this chapter the benefits and challenges of EMI in HE are explored in the first part and the second part discusses the situation with the language of education in Estonia.

### **1.1. English-Medium Instruction in Higher Education: Benefits and Challenges**

As with the drivers of EMI in HE, the challenges of it exist on several levels and range from personal to societal. Problems such as the linguistic competence and English proficiency of both instructors and students, the inequality of opportunity or accessibility issues to those less skilled in English, the need for more accommodation for EMI students in comparison to those who learn in their first language, and what the ‘Englishisation’ will mean for the countries’ local language(s) are just some examples of difficulties that can be researched (Macaro et al 2018: 38). The benefits most often cited seem to be benefits to the culture, facilitating intercultural understanding, and finances (Macaro et al 2018: 51–52). There are also instrumental benefits to students who study content in English. It is proposed that EMI improves language skills and is beneficial to students’ future career prospects (Macaro et al 2018: 51–52).

Problems with the linguistic competence of instructors and students are acute. It is challenging to learn or teach a concept in a foreign language if the linguistic capacity to explain the concept is not there. The absence of qualified instructors can be an enormous

hindrance to offering EMI. Not to mention the fact that educators can easily fall prey to their own doubts about the correctness of their language use, especially if English is not their first language (Beaumont 2020: 97) and this is detrimental to their self-efficacy. Thus, HE institutions should invest in relevant training programmes for teachers (Kir & Akyüz 2020: 174) if they have English-taught programmes (ETP) or participate in offering EMI in any way. Beaumont's (2020) research into support for EMI lecturers identified several areas in which teachers would like to have more support; the most prominent of which were matters of pedagogy (practical techniques for conveying content) and speaking in English. When it comes to the latter, it is usually the specific language of lecturing which needs improvement, but a few teachers showed interest in general fluency support. Specific training for working EMI instructors could soothe the anxiety felt by the educators and be beneficial to students as well because they would have educators who can focus on the content instead of being concerned about their language.

As for the students who are restricted by their linguistic competence, studying on an EMI course can be an obstacle. EMI courses can create inequality of opportunity for those less well versed in English. A student who could pass the class with flying colours were it taught in their first language must now deal with the added stress of trying to make sense of the language as well as the content. Those who fail to understand the class as it happens will need to do more work in the form of self-study to compensate for the lack of clarity (Breeze 2014: 12); this makes their workload unfairly more intensive than their colleagues', which could be considered unfair. Students who struggle in EMI classes can benefit from having certain accommodations made. Instructors could make such accommodations as 'meet[ing] with students [for extra tutoring], provid[ing] study guides [and] vocabulary lists for tests, allow[ing] dictionaries, or additional time for completing tests /.../', as well as making a conscious effort to use more common vocabulary in place of less well known academic

language (Teemant 2010: 100). Teemant suggests that making these accommodations demonstrates that the faculty takes responsibility to offer a fair chance for all students despite their level of English. Even if making these accommodations is not mandated, lecturers often feel the need to rework the materials, content, and evaluation of students to make sure that the course content is acquired (Kir & Akyüz 2020: 158, 167) and students notice when such accommodations are implemented (Kir & Akyüz 2020: 169). However, meeting with students for extra learning time and remaking study materials is a considerable added workload, which may go unnoticed.

On a societal level rather than personal, there is fear surrounding Englishisation, the process by which English gains more power in the academia over the local languages and starts undermining their status (Macaro et al 2018: 38). Already now, if a researcher wants to publish their article in a journal, it will mostly have to adhere to the conventions of the ‘Anglo-English’ tradition (Phillipson 2015: 34). English may start to seem like a threat to the nation’s language(s) and even its citizens and their unity. Bold claims have been made about English replacing local languages in international, practical, formal situations with local languages becoming signifiers of cultural and local identity (Coleman 2006: 11). If that were to happen, an obvious succeeding fear is that academic and scientific discoveries may become inaccessible to the wider public (Phillipson 2015: 30), thus creating a divide between ‘the educated elite and the common people’. While it is true that we cannot look at any language as completely neutral or apolitical, only serving instrumental needs (Phillipson 2015: 23), Phillipson counters Coleman’s argument by stating that such language based identity switching is not possible as people do not have a whole separate identity for doing academic work (Phillipson 2015: 26).

Moving on to the benefits of EMI, it is said that EMI could help students become global citizens who can interact with problems on a wide scale. In a study conducted in

Turkey, students and faculty agreed that studying in English can help students start viewing the world from a global perspective and themselves as parts of it (Kir & Akyüz 2020: 169). Another benefit proposed is that EMI in HE is financially beneficial. Phillipson (2015: 23) claims that British universities rely heavily on international students who pay fees and the income is set to rise continuously. The revenue from international students being there far outweighs the expenses of educating them (Kreegipuu 2017: 1).

EMI is also claimed to improve students' language skills and thereby prepare students for future employment. It is, indeed, expected of HE that it aids students in becoming professionals in their field of choice, prepares them for 'life after school'. Light et al (2009: 47) use the term 'life-world'. It is expected from students to develop the skills to cope with the complexities of the 'life-world' as well as the skills that make them professionals (Light et al 2009: 78). HE has a role to play in furthering students' *employability*, which, according to the literature (Kane & Banham 2019: 101) is a concept which is difficult to define, yet it is expected to be fulfilled or implemented. Although it can vary from field to field, employers expect a level of competence in English (Räis et al 2018: 14). In Estonia, a representative of Tallinn University of Technology told Räis et al (2018: 21) that, for example, a cybersecurity specialist will have to cope in an international environment and deal with documentation written in English immediately after starting their career (Räis et al 2018: 21); it is a huge benefit for students of cybersecurity to go through their whole education in English, because this will be the reality of their 'life-world'.

Macaro et al (2018: 66) are unsure about students' language proficiency developing in EMI. The improvement of language proficiency from learning content in another language is much better documented on lower levels of study. Simply put, there is not a lot of empirical research that demonstrates a positive impact of EMI on language proficiency (Kir & Akyüz 2020: 156). English-taught courses at university level tend to be just that – courses in which

the content is presented in English – while at lower levels of education, there is more emphasis on implementing Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). In theory, CLIL must be designed so that both, content knowledge *and* language skills are developed (Jenkins 2019: 97). CLIL teachers also need training to be able to teach content as well as language as there are specifics for teaching any field. A faculty member interviewed in Kir & Akyüz (2020: 168) stated ‘I am not a language teacher. /.../ I cannot help them while they learn a new language.’ The same is echoed in Estonia, where Lukk et al’s (2017: 48) report of the status of the Estonian language claims that instructors lack sufficient training for CLIL. So, HE teachers understandably believe that students’ problems with *language* are not their responsibility (Macaro et al 2018: 67, Kir & Akyüz 2020: 168). Some do believe that simply the active use of English in class will help develop language proficiency (Breeze 2014: 2–3). A student in Kir & Akyüz (2020: 167) professed, ‘/.../ I believe that being engaged in English every day will enhance not only our listening and reading skills but also speaking and writing’. They believe that simply being exposed to the language in content class will be beneficial to their language skills. The teachers in the same paper did not echo the sentiment and expected the learners to be proficient enough to begin with (Kir & Akyüz 2020: 168). Therefore, the opinions on the topic are contradictory. There is not much empirical evidence to support the idea of EMI positively affecting language skills, but it seems that at least a fragment of students still feels that it does.

Language proficiency is often measured through the four basic skills which are reading and listening (receptive skills) and speaking and writing (productive skills) and most language examinations measure each skill respectively as well as the overall language proficiency. In the context of EMI courses, students rate their receptive skills better than their productive skills (Kir & Akyüz 2020: 165, Margić & Vodopija-Krstanović 2020: 50). Of the four, listening is identified as one of the skills most paramount for successful

completion of the course (Breeze 2014: 8). The tentative minimum listening level for faring comfortably in an EMI class would be a high B2 level on the Common Reference Scale but students with lower level listening comprehension ability can still obtain good grades on the course assessment (Breeze 2014: 12), presumably because they compensate with other learning strategies. This is more time and labour-intensive (Breeze 2014: 12) which may lead to stress, overworking and burnout. Lack of proficiency in language affects students' perceptions of their learning and satisfaction with the class negatively (Breeze 2014: 14) and can contribute to feeling overwhelmed.

## **1.2. Discourse and Attitudes Surrounding Language of Higher Education in Estonia**

As in other countries where the balance between English and the country's native language causes debates (Soler-Carbonell 2015: 252) and is sometimes perceived as a threat (Philipson 2015: 20), the discourse surrounding the language of education on the tertiary level is a point of contention in Estonia due to specific historical, political, and emotional reasons (Vihman 2017: 98). The topic of Estonian language of education has been discussed as the matter of significant national importance during quite a few sittings of the Riigikogu (Estonian Parliament). The latest of these took place in December 2019 when the issue was raised by the national-conservative Isamaa party. The language of HE is seen as a signpost of where language policy in general is headed (Vihman 2017: 98). Thus, the general public is continuously interested in the topic of Englishisation in Estonian-language HE. The interest is proved by many articles, think-pieces, discussions, and debates published in the media (see for example Trasberg 2017, Lehepuu 2018, Kirjanen 2019, Postimees 2021). These reflect the societal and personal anxiety surrounding the topic. There are personal

considerations of how learning content in English affects the learner, which parts are challenging for them and how EMI can support them, and discussions about what the increasing amount of EMI means for the languages in Estonia and its academia.

In 2019, the percentage of ETPs on the bachelor's and master's levels at the UT was 24% (University of Tartu 2019). In 2020, the UT had 29 programmes taught in English on the two first levels, three bachelor's programmes and 26 master's programmes. This was a total of 23% of all bachelor's and master's programmes at the UT (University of Tartu Statistics 2021). In 2021, the number of English based programmes open for admissions is one lower; three bachelor's programmes and 26 master's programmes (University of Tartu 2021). There has been a decline in the number of programmes in general (University of Tartu Statistics 2021).

The reasons for creating ETPs are multifaceted. In the final report of a study into the language of education in Estonian HE, Räs et al (2018: 14–15) present such reasons as the demographic changes, expectations of employers, being part of the international academic community, and political decisions. From the demographic point of view, there are simply not enough Estonians in the age group that would attend HE. The number of students at the UT has decreased by 24.4% in ten years, from 18,047 in 2011 to 13,641 in 2021 (University of Tartu Statistics 2021). ETPs give an incentive to international students to come and study in Estonian institutions (Räs et al 2018: 14). According to the linguist Birute Klaas-Lang on a sitting of the Riigikogu in 2018 (1:25:00–1:25:11), universities have no interest in closing programmes down; therefore, there is a considerable incentive to fill the vacant student places with students from abroad.

Employers expect the people they hire to have certain level of English (Räs et al 2018: 14–16, 22, 28) and as was discussed previously, it is one of the expectations set to HE that it prepares its students for the 'life-world'. Graduating from an ETP can prepare students

for their future employment where they have to use English every day. It is also an objective of the UT to '[ensure] the competitiveness of its alumni on the international labour market' (University of Tartu 2020: 7). As English is a *lingua franca* in many multinational companies, having a strong language base from studying on an ETP may give these students an edge on the competition.

Being part of the international academic community is a measure of quality for HE institutions (Vihman 2017: 99–100); it is one of the ways universities are assessed (Klaas-Lang at Riigikogu 2018: 1:24:11–1:24:54). Estonian universities receive additional funding through performance agreements for internationalisation and a high degree of internationalisation advances the institution's ranking in comparison to others. There are political and contractual incentives to be more international as an institution. An objective in the UT's strategic plan is to 'create an international learning environment for our students' (University of Tartu 2020: 7). To create such an environment, there must be a readiness to host international exchange students and international staff and to send Estonian students abroad. That is why it is necessary to have an array of international student friendly programmes and courses available (Räis et al 2018: 15).

Politically, the strive to make and keep HE institutions international is reflected in an array of development strategies as well. The Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020 considered it necessary to integrate international experiences and competences in HE to raise the quality and attractiveness of Estonian HE institutions (Republic of Estonia Ministry of Education and Research 2014: 14). Its successor, Education Strategy 2035, likewise finds it important to further internationalisation and mobility of students and academic staff (Republic of Estonia Ministry of Education and Research 2020: 14). The University of Tartu Strategic Plan 2021–2025 sets out to facilitate the university's international standing by supporting international academic staff, motivating students, offering them opportunities for

a diverse learning experience, and cooperating with partners from Europe (University of Tartu 2020: 7). According to Räs et al (2018: 14) the biggest push towards more ETPs came from the 2013 HE reform, which demanded that each programme only have one language as the language of instruction instead of the combinations of Estonian-English or Estonian-Russian that were allowed before. The programmes that were once defined by being bilingual had to specify one language of instruction. Due to the nature of some programmes, like a high number of international staff and the field of work being predominantly English, it was reasonable to assign English to be the main language of these programmes (Räs et al 2018: 21).

The 2013 HE reform brought about another important change. Estonian-taught programmes became free of tuition; this policy is still in force today (Riigikogu 2018: 1:24:56–1:25:00). If the student cumulatively completes 75% of their curriculum (i.e. studies full time on an Estonian-taught programme) they can study free of charge (European Commission 2020: para 13). English-taught programmes, however, can charge tuition fees. Therefore, creating ETPs is also said to have financial benefits. These can be explicit (paying tuition fees and consuming services in Estonia) and implicit (staying in Estonia and paying taxes in the future). Until now, the gains have not been large enough to consider finances as the main incentive of attracting students from abroad (Kreegipuu 2017: 1). Even the tuition fee set for ETPs is not always enough to cover the cost of teaching those who enrol because a large part of the places on the ETPs are still free of tuition (Räs et al 2018: 15). However, with the UT Strategic Plan 2021–2025's objective to strengthen the status and reputation of the Estonian language in HE and the Estonian academia (University of Tartu 2020: 6), the UT is considering abolishing tuition free places on ETPs (Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education 2019: 12). Based on the management agreement of 2019 made between the Ministry of Education and Research and the UT, the university has the

obligation to charge the tuition fee of at least 1,500 euros per semester from any student who comes from a country outside the European Union and European Economic Area (Haridus- ja Teadusministeeriumi ning Tartu Ülikooli vaheline haldusleping 2019: section 3.2.7).

However, ETPs are not the only programmes where Estonian students experience EMI. Programmes which officially state Estonian as the language of instruction can be up to 40% non-Estonian as §26 section 4 of the Language Act (2020) states that ‘Education is deemed to have been acquired in Estonian if at least 60% of the studies were carried out in Estonian.’ This effectively means that two out of every five courses taken can have English as the language of instruction or marked as the other language necessary to reach course aims. While the Higher Education Act (2020; §3) states that the language of instruction in HE is Estonian, a foreign language can be the language of instruction if the institution so decides ‘/.../ provided that it is necessary for ensuring the quality of the studies or the availability of specialists /.../.’ The UT Statutes of Curriculum state that bachelor’s, master’s, vocational university degrees, and bachelor’s and master’s combined programme curricula must include courses in ‘a foreign language’ (Senate of the University of Tartu 2020: points 18.1, 29.9, 32.1, 34.1). It does not necessarily mean the foreign language needs to be English. However, looking at trends it most likely is.

It is admittedly difficult for the institutions to monitor of how the 60% rule is implemented in real life, as it is the programme directors and teaching staff that have the authority over the best use of languages in their programmes (Räis et al 2018: 16). Often it is not even possible to know this because it is difficult to quantify the actual usage of one language over the other as students use them in independent learning or practical training (Räis et al 2018: 17). Most courses, regardless of the official language of instruction, necessitate some knowledge of English to interact with the course literature and academic texts in the field (Vihman 2017: 100).

As stated in the National curriculum for upper secondary schools (Gümnaasiumi riiklik õppekava 2020), Estonian students are expected to take a language-level based examination in a foreign language (either English, French, Russian, or German) at the end of their upper-secondary school studies. English is the most popular choice. In 2019, about 87.3% (6,574) of students took the State Examination in English (Kriisa 2019: 2), while 7.4% (556) chose the international *DELF scolaire* French examination (Lutsepp 2019: 2), 3% (229) of students chose the international Russian examination (Kasuri 2019: 2, 7), and 2.3% (176) of students chose the international German examination (Arro 2019: 2). Students are also allowed to take an international language examination in English and can appeal for their international examination result be counted as replacement for the State Examination. Though losing popularity against the international examinations, the State Examination in English is still popular and allows students to demonstrate their language proficiency at the level B1 or B2 (Republic of Estonia Ministry of Education and Research 2021). While it is not compulsory to reach the minimum points that grants the student level B1 (50 out of 100), and Estonian universities have not established a requirement of language competence for those who apply (Klaas-Lang & Metslang 2015: 173), the expectation still seems to be that the English language proficiency of students entering HE is at least on that level, preferably higher. The expectations are often not met; Räis et al (2018: 17) claim the examination results do not represent students' practical language skills. In academic contexts, these skills can consist of expressing and receiving information in a formal, academic register. Even the generally proficient upper-secondary school graduates could struggle with that (Ingvarsdóttir & Arnbjörnsdóttir 2020: 150). There is also a question of older learners, who graduated before the State Examination in a foreign language became a graduation requirement in 2014. In the opinion of the previous Minister of Education and Research Mailis Reps, such expectation disadvantages older students who did not have to learn

English in school (Kirjanen 2019: para 8) and makes it hard to implement lifelong learning (Vihman 2017: 98) since those who do not know English have a difficult time with re-entering education.

The discussion of the language of education in Estonia is an intriguing one. On the individual level, not knowing English can become an accessibility issue for students who might have excelled in the course were it Estonian-taught. On the political and societal levels, there are worries about the perseverance of Estonian-language HE as the number of ETPs and English-taught courses (ETC) is on the rise. Depending on the speaker, the views on English can be more positive or negative but the consensus seems to be that the existence of Estonian-language HE cannot be taken for granted and should be protected. In the above quoted Higher Education Act (2020; §3) Estonian is regarded as the language of education and foreign languages are relegated to the status of supporting languages. It is generally thought that English should be a tool to help Estonian research reach an international audience (Zabrodskaia & Kask 2017: 184). Being a promoter of the Estonian language and culture is stated as the very first function of the university in the UT's Strategic Plan (2020: 6). Universities appreciate Estonian-language HE and wish to strengthen the status of Estonian in HE and integrate the programmes of either language more in the future (Räis et al 2018: 5). If all is done right, English could coexist with Estonian or any other local language in the future filling an additive role, not a subtractive one (Phillipson 2018: 29).

To conclude, EMI is a cause for several troubles for students, instructors, institutions, and governments. The discussion of these problems in Estonia is very often concerned with the vitality of the Estonian language next to the ever-growing amount of English in the academia, but personal concerns are not cast aside either. However, EMI can also offer benefits to students in terms of future employment and to institutions and countries in terms

of finances and international relations. It seems that the UT has set sights on finding a balance between English and Estonian within itself; to value Estonian more and to employ English mindfully and with purpose.

## **CHAPTER 2. Study into Estonian native speaker EFL students' views on EMI at the University of Tartu**

The second chapter is concerned with the empirical study into Estonian native speaker EFL students' views on EMI and the challenges, and benefits that they experience on EMI courses at the UT. The research was conducted among 103 students at the UT. The aim of the research was to answer three research questions concerning the students' general attitude towards EMI, the benefits of EMI that they experience and the challenges of EMI that they face. The study has three research questions:

1. What are Estonian native speaker EFL students' general attitudes towards EMI in Estonia and at the University of Tartu?
2. What do Estonian native speaker EFL students consider the benefits of EMI?
3. What challenges do Estonian native speaker EFL students experience in EMI?

The author of this thesis devised an online questionnaire based on theory and had it filled in by Estonian native speaker EFL students at the UT. The questionnaire was based on several texts that were read and they are further discussed in section 2.1.2 Materials. The research took place in April 2021.

The following chapter presents the methods (including the participants, method, and design of research), results, and the discussion of results.

### **2.1. Methods**

In this section, the research method and participants are discussed. To answer the three research questions, a questionnaire was devised on Google Forms. A copy of it can be found as Appendix 1 of this thesis. The research participants were found through self-selection.

### *2.1.1. Participants*

The respondent was an Estonian native speaker student at the UT who has participated in one or more courses taught in English. International students who study on EMI courses at the UT were excluded because there is some research that suggests that there is a difference between how international students and ‘home’ students view EMI (Macaro et al 2018: 56). In addition to that, Estonian students whose native language is a local minority language were excluded because, in the mind of the author, the challenges and beliefs of the minority population deserve to be examined in a more detailed manner. The minority language native speakers’ experiences with languages are not always comparable to those of the majority language native speakers. For example, the State Examination results in English consistently seem to be better for students who acquire their upper secondary education in Estonian-medium schools when compared to students who do so in Russian-medium schools. There are different reasons for it (Honcharova 2019: 5) which are not delved into in this thesis. Thus, the results of this study cannot be expanded to describe all students at the UT or Estonia.

In the academic year 2019/2020, the UT taught 923 courses in English on all three levels; 305 (33%) in the Faculty of Social Sciences (SS), 293 (32%) in the Faculty of Science and Technology (ST), 254 (28%) in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities (AH), and 71 (8%) in the Faculty of Medicine (Med). The courses ranged from pure language courses (such as HVLC.01.044 English for Advanced Learners I, Level B2.2>C1.1) and field specific language courses (such as P2OG.04.056 Legal and Academic English 1) to compulsory content courses for specific curricula (such as MTAT.03.083 Systems Modelling) and elective courses that any student can choose to participate in (such as SVHI.08.003 Self-regulation). What is more, not all courses for which English is marked as the language of instruction are in the form of going to classes, learning, and getting assessed; some are

internships or thesis writing. With such variety, the experiences from ETCs can differ greatly. The courses aimed at learning language are excluded from this research as the aim was to find out about students' views on learning content through English. It is, likewise, important to note that each course has a syllabus connected to it and some courses may have several syllabi per year and a course can have both an Estonian and an English syllabus. Such is the case for Medicine programmes, for example, where the same courses are taught in Estonian and in English in parallel. Students are free to choose between the syllabi; it is not just international students who can take the English-taught courses. Estonian students can choose the English courses as well. The syllabi can have certain restrictions on who can participate, such as level of study, number of students, or whether the student has taken the prerequisite courses, but student's first language is not one of them. In essence, the information about course participants' first language is not available, therefore defining an exact population of Estonian native speaker students who have participated on an ETC for the thesis was quite impossible.

Owing to the richness of variety when it comes to ETCs, the fact that information about participants' first language is not collected, and to the justified strict protection of students' personal data, it was thought to be appropriate that only those who consent to give the information take part in the study. Therefore, the respondents were found through self-selection.

### *2.1.2. Materials and design*

The questionnaire is divided into five parts. The first part asks the respondents about their background to get an overview of the demographics of the respondents. The second part of the questionnaire is concerned with students' attitudes (A) towards EMI courses. In the third part, benefits (B) that students experience from EMI courses are explored and in the fourth the same is done with challenges (C). The final, fifth part, is an optional write-in

part where the respondents can express any other thoughts related to the topic. In the second, third, and fourth part, a set of statements is presented to the respondents. Each statement warrants a response on a rating scale with five values (1 - I disagree, 2 - I tend to disagree, 3 - Neither agree nor disagree, 4 - I tend to agree, 5 - I agree). The statements in second, third, and fourth part are based on different theoretical texts that were read. There were 13 statements about the general attitudes, five statements about the benefits and 10 statements about the challenges – 27 in total.

In the following, the background of the statements developed for the questionnaire will be given. The background is given starting with the attitude statements, then moving to benefit statements and ending with challenge statements.

The language of HE has been deemed one of the most important factors for the survival of a language (Klaas-Lang & Metslang 2018: 668). The language can only be considered productive and alive if it is usable in all contexts. As such, statement A1 (English-medium education in higher education is a positive development) carries a lot of weight in seeing how the language of HE is perceived by students. Do they perceive growing EMI as a positive, neutral or a negative development?

Statement A2 (I think that English will be the main language of the academia in Estonia in the future) was constructed upon anxieties that English has ‘explosively expanded’ and domain loss in one specific context, such as HE, could lead to domain loss in other areas, such as general education, and then other areas (Ehala et al 2014: 500, Klaas-Lang & Metslang 2018: 668). In Räs et al (2018: 16) representative from the UT sees the one language requirement of the HE reform as the largest source of the panic over ETPs; the much too strict requirement opposes English and Estonian too much and this causes anxiety and fear as the two languages seem to be competing.

Statement A3 (I think the UT is part of the international academic community and

therefore English-medium instruction is inevitable) is discussed in Lukk et al (2017: 45). They state that English is an inescapable reality in HE and the means of internationalisation are a prerequisite of the continued improvement of Estonian HE. Räs et al (2018: 15) express that It is important to show willingness to host international students and staff if Estonian HE institutions wish to send their own students and staff to gain experience abroad. A positive sentiment towards ‘international collaboration’ was expressed in several other international texts too (for example Margić & Vodopija-Krstanović 2020: 54, Ingvarsdóttir & Arnbjörnsdóttir 2020: 141).

As previously discussed, having the local language as the language of HE has a crucial role in keeping the language alive in all domains. Thus, the language of HE is seen as a particularly vulnerable area, for it affects the functionality of language as well as students’ ability to express themselves (Lukk et al 2017: 45). Proper skills of self-expression should be expected from any graduate. However, students themselves have expressed concerns about their inability to express the nuances of their field in a non-academic register in Estonian (Lukk et al 2017: 49). This skill is of vital importance if we want the academia and the people who graduate from it to serve their communities. A4 (Using English in higher education has a negative impact on students’ Estonian proficiency) should show students’ opinions on the matter.

Concerning A5 (Bachelor’s programmes should be fully Estonian), it is mostly thought that bachelor’s degrees should undoubtedly be offered in Estonian with a small amount of English for support (Lukk et al 2017: 48, Räs et al 2018: 15). Master’s and higher studies (statement A6 (Master’s programmes should be fully Estonian)) can be freer in choosing their study language. It is noted that master’s studies should include some international component so that a master’s thesis could serve as students’ first academic publication (Lukk et al 2017: 48). That being said, Räs et al (2018: 15) stress that it is

precisely master's programmes and doctoral programmes that play a more important role in developing Estonian terminology and the language of the academia, therefore complete Englishisation should be challenged. The interviewees in Lukk et al (2017: 45) remained hesitant about all master's programmes in any field switching to English entirely.

Statement A7 (On an Estonian-taught course, everything should be done in Estonian (including course readings)) stems from the fact that English is most often encountered by students on Estonian-taught courses in the form of course literature (Räis et al 2018: 24). Most Estonian programmes and courses require reading in English (Lukk et al 2017: 45) and it is accepted as the norm by most programme directors in Estonian universities (Räis et al 2018: 23). Internationally, this is supported as well. Kir & Akyüz (2020: 170) mediated an instructor who remarked that departments with Turkish-language instruction use English reading materials. In Estonia, there are incentives to develop and publish more study materials for HE in Estonian (ex. Lukk et al 2017: 48, Klaas-Lang & Metslang 2015: 170) and there is a national programme (*Eestikeelsed kõrgkooliõpikud 2010–2023*) in place to promote the publication of Estonian-language HE textbooks.

Statement A8 (The proportion of English in my studies has been too large) is devised to explore whether students think English has occupied too large a part in their studies. Since Estonian universities wish to participate in the global community, there are and will be foreign instructors that teach in Estonian universities. Their courses will often be in English. The number of English-taught courses has increased slightly because universities have set that as their strategic goal (Räis et al 2018: 24). Therefore, it is more common for students to encounter an English-taught course in their studies.

Statement A9 (Teaching style of instructors on English-taught courses is different from that of instructors on Estonian-taught courses) considers whether students feel EMI instructors' courses are somehow intrinsically different from Estonian-medium courses. In

Teemant (2010: 93), foreign students studying at a US university felt that the testing system and instructors' attitudes were different than those in their home countries. Since Teemant examined students going into an English-majority learning environment and experiencing these differences, it is interesting to see, if the same is true when the instructors who teach in English are a minority.

For statement A10 (The workload of English-taught courses is larger than that of Estonian-taught courses), the problem of added workload from learning in a foreign language is explored. This was briefly discussed in chapter 1.1. of this thesis where Breeze (2014: 12) argued that those whose language proficiency is low, have to spend more time to compensate for the lack of understanding. This problem is not EMI specific. In Estonian universities, there are students whose first language is Russian and for whom, the same problem can arise when they start learning subject matter in Estonian (Räis et al 2018: 17). Statement A11 (I would have reached the course aims better if the courses were taught in Estonian) ties into this problem. Owing to the possible increased time and effort necessary for reaching course aims in a foreign language, students may decide against spending more time on fully mastering the content of the course in favour of focusing on other matters. Which effectively means that reaching course aims would have been easier if there was not the added layer of foreign language related problems.

The necessity of English proficiency in terms of employment is not contested (Räis et al 2018: 15), this might lead people to claim statement A12 (English-taught courses are more beneficial to me than Estonian-taught courses). English-taught courses can seem very beneficial. In a discussion on language of Estonian HE, linguist Indrek Park reported that students struggle with fear of missing out on competitive advantages that ETPs can provide when there are parallel programmes taught in English and Estonian; the benefits of ETPs seem to be assessed more highly in comparison (Sotsiaaldemokraatlik Erakond 2017:

1:15:28–1:16:05).

Statement A13 (English-taught course or courses fully met my expectations) should serve as a general gauge of students' satisfaction with the courses they have participated in. There is a write-in follow-up question where the respondents can elaborate on their experience.

Moving on to the benefits, B1 (Taking English-taught courses gives me an advantage on the labour market) stands on the grounds of Räis et al's (2018: 21) opinion that there are at least some fields where studying in English is hugely beneficial to future employment because these fields are already international. In Yeh (2014: 314), over a half of the respondents (53%) believed that EMI can help in future work.

The point of statement B2 (Taking English-taught courses broadens my horizons and worldview) was mentioned in previous research a few times. Students reported that studying in English will help them see the world more broadly and consider themselves global citizens (Kir & Akyüz 2020: 169). In Yeh (2014: 314) almost a half (48%) of responding students believed EMI can broaden their horizons. Räis et al (2018: 15) consider a diverse learning environment, that in which there are international students, to broaden students' worldview.

The fact in statement B3 (I find study materials more easily in English) was touched upon in Phillipson (2015: 26). He ties this to the hegemony of English in academic publishing (2015: 34); certainly, if most materials are published in English, they are the easiest for students to find. However, Räis et al (2018: 23) praised English materials for having gone through a better process of peer-reviewing because the community is large and homogenous. Therefore, the sources are more trustworthy.

Statement B4 (Studying on English-taught courses develops my English skills) was based on Kir & Akyüz (2020: 167), in which all students agreed that studying in their EMI content classes was beneficial to their language proficiency, although instructors were more

hesitant.

And to conclude with statement B5 (Studying on English-taught courses enhances my motivation to learn English), Yeh (2014: 312) found that 50% of their respondents felt that learning content in English improved their motivation to learn more of the language as well.

Moving on to the challenges, C1 (I can follow the speech of instructors and fellow students) is concerned with students' overall comprehension of EMI classes. In Kir & Akyüz (2020: 166), most (88.4%) of the students thought their ability to listen and understand lectures in class was average or higher. This might be because the ever-growing feeling that knowing English is important even before entering tertiary education. It is interesting to see whether Estonian students echo the confidence.

For statement C2 (The language use of instructors is clear and understandable), Yeh (2014: 312) reports that an overwhelming majority (75%) were satisfied with the instructors' English proficiency. In Estonia, Räis et al (2018: 22) claim that lecturers' English proficiency is good enough and often an even bigger problem is that English is the *only* foreign language that the faculty knows. Yet an instructor interviewed in Kivistik & Ress (2018: 13) argues that English proficiency of University of Tartu employees still needs to be developed.

Statement C3 (I can follow the lecture enough to take notes) was considered a problem in Breeze (2014: 13). They tested law students and medical students and both found note-taking in EMI 'difficult' or 'very difficult'. Students in Kir & Akyüz (2020: 166) were more confident in their abilities and mostly rated their note-taking skills as 'average'. It is important to say, though, that note-taking, regardless of what language it is done in, is a skill in its own right. Many university students cannot do it when they start their education (van der Meer 2012: 14).

As for C4 (I feel it is harder for me to contribute to discussion in English-taught lectures/seminars than in Estonian-taught ones), in Kir & Akyüz (2020: 170) students professed to understanding the lectures but not wanting to express themselves in class in English. It is perceived easier to receive rather than produce language.

The problem with memorising expressed in statement C5 (Compared to studying in Estonian, it is harder for me to memorise information) came up in Teemant (2010: 94, 95), where students expressed the opinion that it is harder to memorise information in a non-native language; they called it ‘double effort’.

Statement C6 (I can understand academic reading material in English without a problem) was based on Kir & Akyüz (2020: 166) where most students did not mention having troubles with reading academic material; most (74.4%) rated themselves ‘average’ or ‘good’. This statement aims to find out Estonian students’ opinions.

On the topic of studying on an EMI course hindering content learning (C7), Yeh (2014: 314) had a very balanced result as 33% of the subjects disagreed, 36% agreed and the rest remained neutral. But slightly more students still believed that it *did* affect learning content negatively.

Statement C8 (My previous education sufficiently supports me to do well on an English-taught course) was expressed by university staff in Estonia, Räis et al (2018: 17) claimed that students’ State Examination results often do not match their practical skills for studying in English at university level.

Statement C9 (I know and can use specific terminology in English) is rooted in Yeh (2014: 313), in which the researchers asked students whether they felt there are too many specific terms in EMI courses. Most did not agree or were neutral. Kir & Akyüz (2020: 170) claim that nearly all of their respondents indicated having a difficult time acquiring the terminology because their previous experience with learning English had been general not

academic. The law students in Breeze (2014: 13) expressed difficulty with learning terminology for open-ended questions. The problem seemed to consistently lessen when students progressed from first year of studies to fourth (Breeze 2014: 13). Terminology proved to be difficult for students in Teemant (2010: 94) as well.

Lastly from the challenges, for statement C10 (The grade or feedback I receive from an English-taught course reflects my actual knowledge of the content), two thirds (out of 13) respondents in Teemant (2010: 92) expressed their dissatisfaction with grading in a foreign language; they felt these grades did not reflect their actual knowledge of the topic but rather whether they have the language skills to be able to demonstrate their knowledge.

The questionnaire was presented to respondents in Estonian rather than English. In a thesis that concentrates on (not) understanding content through a foreign language, it was necessary to eliminate such a hindrance from conducting the research. Conducting the survey in English might exclude students who would wish to respond but would not know how to do it in English. Students could access the questionnaire through a university-wide weekly student newsletter sent out on April 11, 2021. For a wider reach, the questionnaire was shared on social media both in general and in specific groups for students of the UT. The data collection was ended on April 30, 2021.

## **2.2. Results**

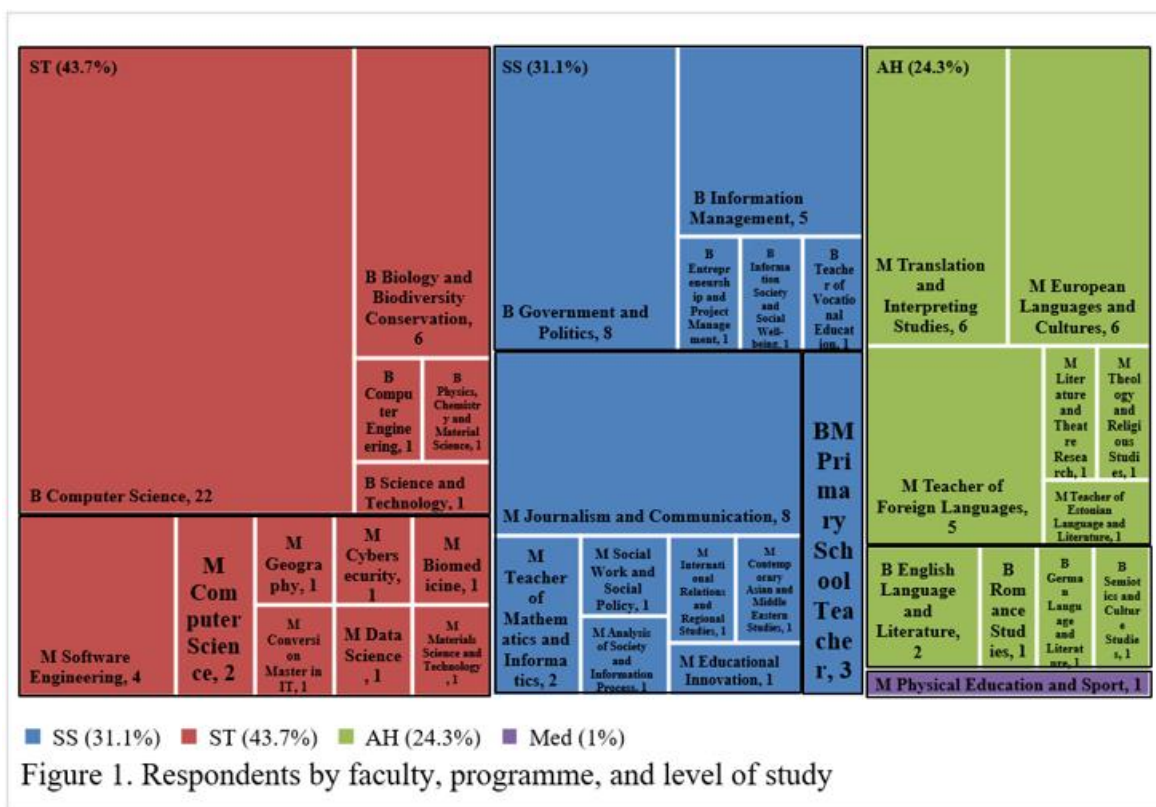
The questionnaire yielded the following results.

### *2.2.1. The profile of respondents*

A total of 103 students from the UT answered the questionnaire. The respondents ages ranged from 19 to 44, giving the average age of 24. As a group, most answers came from 21-year-olds (16), followed closely by 24-year-olds (15). About a third (30 people,

29.1%) of the respondents had taken more than 10 ETCs. Next biggest group (18, 17.5%) had only taken one. This was followed by those who had taken either two or three courses (both 13, 12.6%), or six courses (10, 9.7%). Then came those who had taken either four courses (7, 6.8%) or seven courses (5, 4.9%) and lastly those who had taken five, nine, or ten (2 each, 1.9%) and eight courses (1, 1%).

A graphic overview of the respondents' profile by faculty (marked by colour), programme, and level of study (marked by black borders within the faculty) can be seen on Figure 1. Based on the level of study, 49.5% of the respondents were bachelor's students, 47.6% were master's students and 2.9% were students on the combined bachelor's and master's programmes. A little over a third (45, 43.7%) of all responses came from the Faculty of Science and Technology, followed by 32 responses (31.1%) from Faculty of Social Sciences and 25 (24.3%) from Faculty of Arts and Humanities. Only one of the responses (1%) came from Faculty of Medicine.



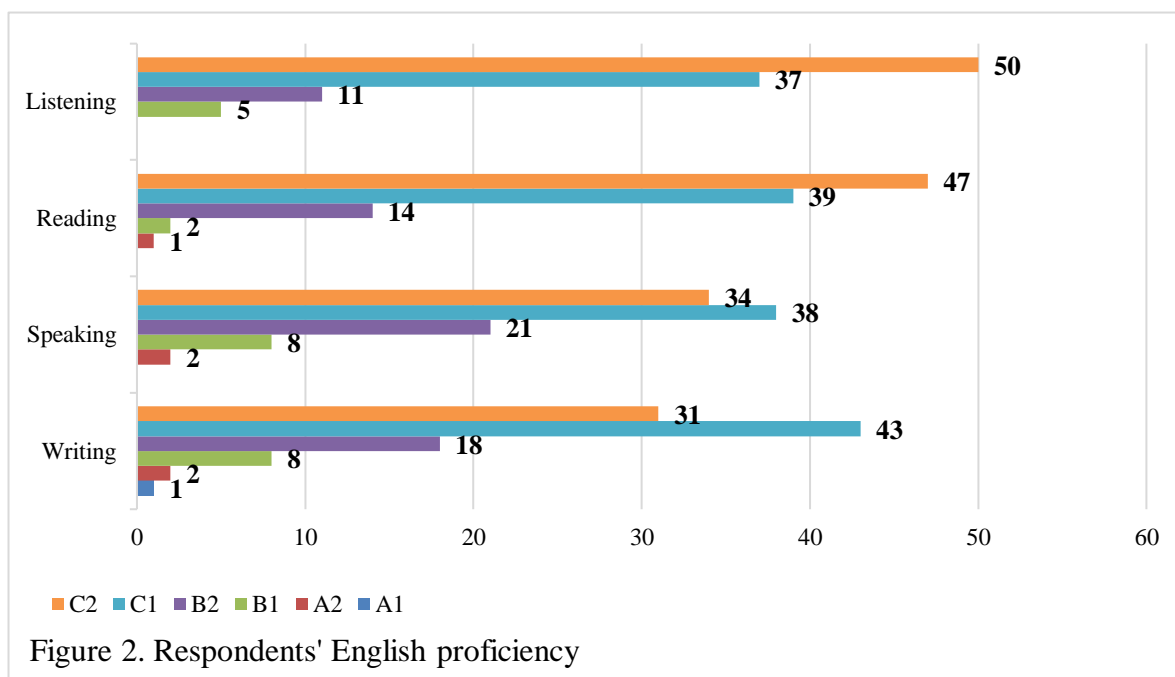
As for the programmes represented, Computer Science took a significant lead with

22 responses from Computer Science bachelor's programme and two more from their master's programme. Additionally from ST, there were six responses from Biology and Biodiversity Conservation bachelor's and four from Software Engineering master's programme. Computer Engineering, Physics, Chemistry and Material Science, and Science and Technology bachelor's programmes all had one respondent, as did the master's programmes in Geography, Conversion Master in IT, Materials Science and Technology, Cybersecurity, Biomedicine, and Data Science.

The most results from SS came from Journalism and Communications masters and Government and Politics bachelors (both eight). These were followed by five Information Management bachelors, three Primary School Teachers and two Teachers of Mathematics and Informatics. One response came from the bachelor's programmes of Entrepreneurship and Project Management, Information Society and Social Well-being, and Teacher of Vocational Education; and master's programmes of Analysis of Society and Information Processes, International Relations and Regional Studies, Contemporary Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Social Work and Social Policy, and Educational Innovation.

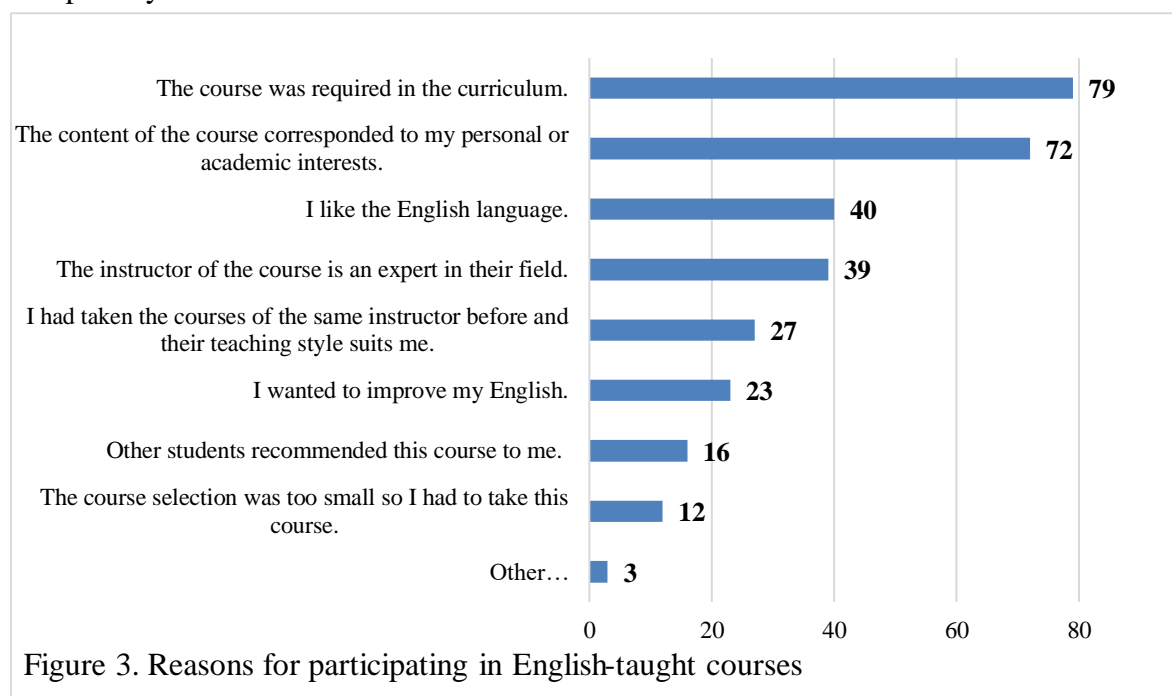
Most answers from AH came from the master's students of European Languages and Cultures and Translation and Interpreting Studies (both six). Teacher of Foreign Languages master's students gave five responses. Students from the English Language and Literature bachelor's programme gave two answers. Also represented with one response were the bachelor's programmes of Romance Studies (French), German Language and Literature, and Semiotics and Culture Studies; and master's programmes of Literature and Theatre Research, Teacher of Estonian Language and Literature, and Theology and Religious Studies. The one answer from the Faculty of Medicine came from a master's student of Physical Education and Sport.

As for the respondents' language level (see Figure 2), CEFR proficiency levels C1 and C2 were stated the most for all four basic language skills. And although the C levels dominate for all skills, the respondents rated their receptive skills to be better than productive skills. For listening and reading, C2 was the leading choice whereas for speaking and writing C1 was more common. A1 level was only reported for writing. People seem to be the most certain in their listening skills; C2 level in listening was reported most often, there were comparably few B level listeners, and no one chose A levels for listening at all. People seem to be the least certain in their speaking skills which have the lowest number of C levels and more B2 levels than other skills do.



The questionnaire also asked why students at the UT participate in ETCs. An overview of results can be seen on Figure 3. For this question, respondents were presented with nine possible reasons and they could choose all the reasons that applied. The results show that the biggest reason (for 79 people, 76.7%) for participating in ETCs is that it is compulsory. Over two thirds of the respondents (72, 69.9%) stated that they took the course because it corresponded to their personal or academic interests. Around a third of the people took the courses because they like the English language (40, 38.8%) or because the instructor

of the course is an expert in their field (39, 37.9%). About a quarter (27, 26.2%) said they had taken the courses of the same instructor before and liked their teaching style and slightly less took the courses because they wanted to improve their English (23, 22.3%). The other reasons were chosen less often; 16 (15.5%) people had the course recommended to them by other students, 12 (11.7%) chose the ETC because the course selection was too small. Three people utilised the ‘Other...’ option to say that their programme or minor was in English. In essence, these three answers fall under the most popular reason; the courses were compulsory in their curricula.



### 2.2.2. What are Estonian native speaker EFL students' general attitudes towards EMI in Estonia and at the University of Tartu?

The second section of the questionnaire aimed to answer RQ1. In this section, respondents were asked to rate 13 statements about the general sentiments often expressed about EMI. The statements were the following:

A(ttitude)1. English-medium education in higher education is a positive development.

A2. I think that English will be the main language of the academia in Estonia in the future.

A3. I think the UT is part of the international academic community and therefore English-medium instruction is inevitable.

A4. Using English in higher education has a negative impact on students' Estonian proficiency.

A5. Bachelor's programmes should be fully Estonian.

A6. Master's programmes should be fully Estonian.

A7. On an Estonian-taught course, everything should be done in Estonian (including course readings).

A8. The proportion of English in my studies has been too large.

A9. Teaching style of instructors on English-taught courses is different from that of instructors on Estonian-taught courses.

A10. The workload of English-taught courses is larger than that of Estonian-taught courses.

A11. I would have reached the course aims better if the courses were taught in Estonian.

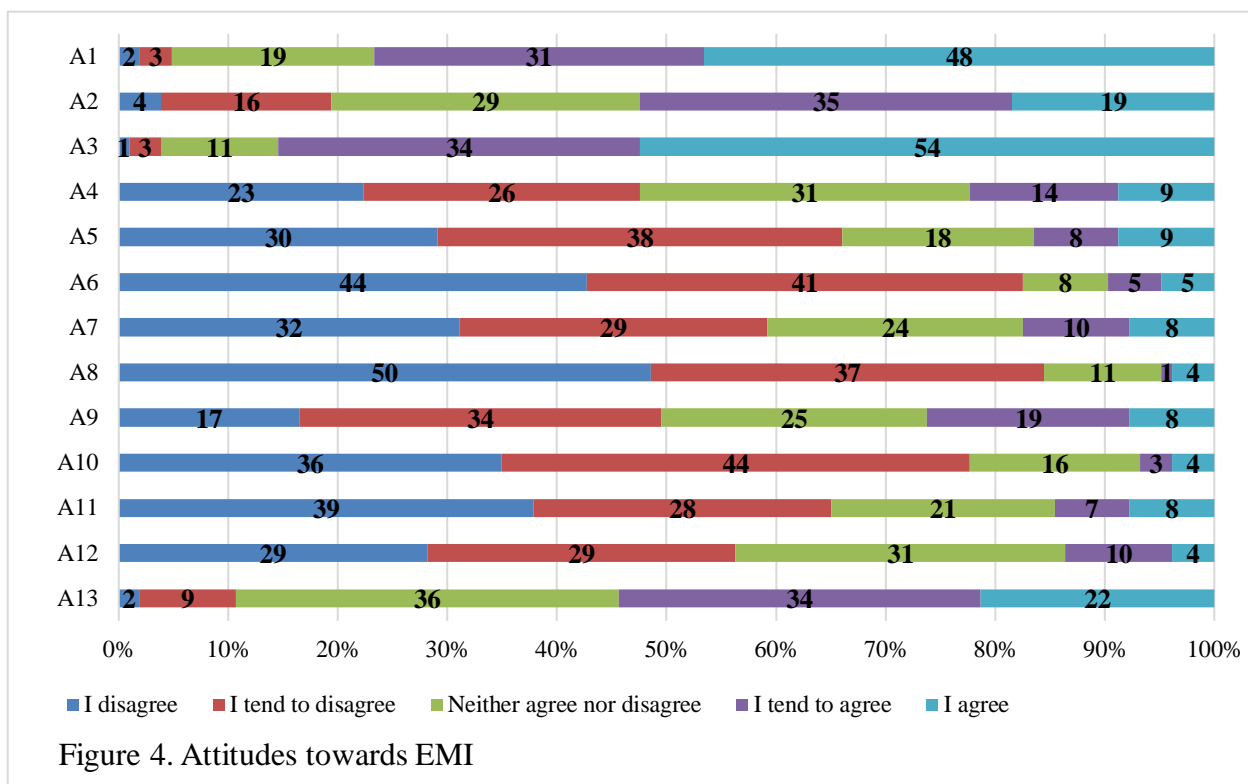
A12. English-taught courses are more beneficial to me than Estonian-taught courses.

A13. English-taught course or courses fully met my expectations.

The results are given on Figure 4. Most respondents agreed or tended to agree that English is a natural part of studying at the UT because it is part of the international academic community (A3: 88, 86.3%) and that EMI in HE is a positive development (A1: 79, 77.5%). Over a half also agreed or tended to agree that English will be the main language of the academia in Estonia in the future (A2: 53, 51.9%), although a larger part chose that they 'tend to agree' (35) or 'neither agree nor disagree' (29) rather than agreeing certainly (19), showing that there is uncertainty when it comes to this topic.

Statements that an overwhelming majority disagreed or tended to disagree with were that the proportion of English in their studies has been too big (A8: 87, 84.4%) and that

master's programmes should be fully Estonian (A6: 85, 82.5%). The majority also disagrees or tends to disagree that bachelor's studies should be fully Estonian (A5: 68, 66%). When comparing the two, the prevailing existence of Estonian seems to be more important and appreciated on the bachelor's level. 80 people (77.7%) did not think that the workload had been bigger due to the language of the course (A10). About two thirds did not think that they would have reached the course aims better in Estonian (A11: 67, 65%). As for whether everything on an Estonian-medium course should be done in Estonian (A7), 61 people (59.2%) disagreed or tended to disagree with 'neither agree nor disagree' being the next most chosen.



It seems that there were statements that could vary from course to course and the answers reflect uncertainty. For example, 51 people (49.5%) said they disagree that the teaching style of instructors is different depending on the language of instruction (A9). This is not a majority. Such statements also had many people choose 'neither agree nor disagree'. For statement A4 31 people (30.1%) neither agreed nor disagreed. The level to which the

student's Estonian is affected could depend on each student's choice to keep their Estonian skills in use and functional. If the two disagreeing choices were counted together, 49 people (47.6%) would disagree. That's not a majority opinion. Statement A12 is an interesting one, 31 people (30.1%) neither agreed nor disagreed, which is technically the option most chosen. Indeed, the usefulness of a course can be very contingent on the courses that were taken, some could be more useful and others not as much. However, if the disagreeing options were counted together, they would form a majority (58, 56.3%).

Lastly A13, concerning whether the ETC fully met the students' expectations, is also highly based on the specific courses taken, especially if a large part of the respondents had participated in more than 10 ETCs. The 36 votes (34.9%) for 'neither agree nor disagree' showcase the diversity of experiences. If the agreeing options were counted together, they would form a majority (56, 54.3%) but uncertainty is still evident as 'I tend to agree' (34) has more votes than 'I agree' (22). For the last statement, if the respondent chose 'I disagree' or 'I tend to disagree', they were asked to elaborate what expectations were not met or why they were not satisfied. One respondent expressed the inability to claim certain contentment with the courses they had taken by saying, 'It depended on the subject. The point of the response I gave is that my expectations were no different than for Estonian-taught courses. Expectations varied depending on the course' (Q1, for the original quotes in Estonian, see Appendix 2.).

Although only 11 people chose the disagreeing options, 14 chose to elaborate on their answers. For some, the reason for dissatisfaction had to do with instructors' level of English (mentioned 5 times) or behaviour (3). A respondent said,

'The instructors of Estonian-taught courses are almost always more passionate, punctual, and accommodating. The requirements, instructions, feedback, and lessons on English-taught courses are often sparse or have bad grammar due to which it is impossible to get a clear understanding.' (Q2)  
Students' own level of English was cited three times, one said, 'I felt that the language barrier

considerably hindered my learning.’ (Q3) and the other stated,

‘There have been times on English-taught courses where I have not done as good compared to Estonian-taught courses. However, a 100% knowledge of English has not been expected on any course, so such language barrier induced mishaps have been forgiven.’ (Q4)

For one student, it was difficult to switch between two mediums of instruction when they had one English class between two Estonian ones; this made it harder to concentrate. There were also respondents who said that the dissatisfaction with the course did not stem from the language of instruction but the content of the course (1), difficulty adjusting to higher level of study (1) or the structure of the curriculum itself (1).

Three people utilised the write-in option not to express any dissatisfaction but to specify some of their opinions about EMI. Their stance on EMI was generally positive.

‘It is good to develop English skills because a lot of work in the future will be in English anyway /.../. Curricula should not need to be in Estonian just because they must be. There are a lot of good materials in English and if the courses are also in English, it is easier to process them,’ (Q5)

said one respondent and the other added that ‘/.../ studying at university should certainly be at least partly in English and I do not think EMI has any negative impact on Estonian native speaker students’ (Q6).

### *2.2.3. What do Estonian native speaker EFL students consider the benefits of English-taught courses?*

The third section of the questionnaire aimed to answer RQ2. In this section the respondents had to rate 5 statements about the beneficial parts of EMI courses on the scale of how much they personally agreed to them. The statements were the following:

B(enefit)1. Taking English-taught courses gives me an advantage on the labour market.

B2. Taking English-taught courses broadens my horizons and worldview.

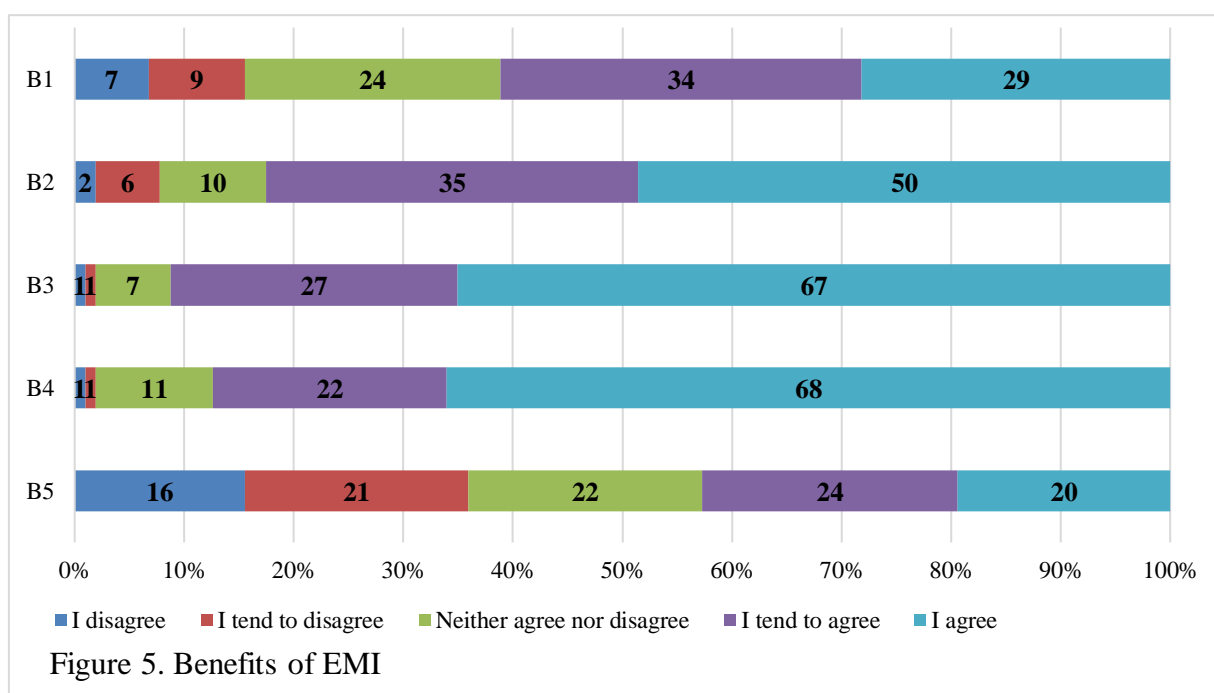
B3. I find study materials more easily in English.

B4. Studying on English-taught courses develops my English skills.

B5. Studying on English-taught courses enhances my motivation to learn English.

The results are given on Figure 5. The benefit that the students agreed or tended to

agree with the most was that they can find materials more easily in English (B3: 94, 91.3%). Most also believed that taking English-taught courses improves their English skills (B4: 90, 87.4%) and broadens their horizons and worldview (B2: 85, 82.5%). Slightly under two thirds agreed or tended to agree that English-taught courses give them an advantage on the labour market (B1: 63, 61.1%). A few more people said they tend to agree (34) over agreeing completely (29), which may show uncertainty or that they think it depends on a field of study. As for whether studying on English-taught courses enhances their motivation to learn English (B5), the trends are unclear, the choices are rather evenly dispersed among the respondents. The tentative answers in the middle gained more answers than the extremities and tending to agree leads with 24 (23.3%) votes.



The respondents also had a write-in option to add more benefits they had experienced in EMI and 24 people chose to do so. As there were only five benefits proposed in the questionnaire, active elaboration was very welcome. A benefit that came up repeatedly and emphatically was that of the positive influence of international students. Respondents found making international acquaintances a benefit in its own right (5) and praised the benefits of an international learning environment in classroom (7), a respondent said, ‘Often there are

exchange students on English-taught courses and studying with them broadens my horizons and gives me a chance to meet students I would otherwise not have met /.../' (Q7). International students can make learning more interesting because 'the groups are more diverse, /.../ seminars are more interesting with [international students]' (Q8), and they further class discussion which leads to deeper understanding because they express their thoughts more. One student explained, '/.../ there are often international students who speak up more boldly than Estonians and initiate interesting discussions in class' (Q9). One can also collaborate internationally with students of their field (1). However, not only international students were praised but instructors as well (2); one respondent explained, 'English-taught courses have instructors with international background. This itself is an advantage for the content of the course' (Q10); one student also liked that they get a chance to hear different kinds of English from instructors and coursemates. One respondent said EMI is helpful for getting to know the English-speaking cultures specifically.

The respondents also appreciated that ETCs helped them acquire terminology, which four people brought up, as well as develop their academic skills (1) and revise English (1). Quite a few people appreciated that it is easier to find information in English (3) and that it is, in fact, easier to do all the work in English, rather than translating between two languages, which often happens on Estonian-taught courses. A respondent said,

'When the material (both given by the instructor and found on the internet) is in English, it is much easier to write a small research paper, essay or the like in English. It is much more difficult to use English materials on Estonian-taught courses.' (Q11)

One person said that learning in English makes them concentrate better, they expanded, '[My] brain becomes more active when I study in English because I have to start thinking in a language other than my mother tongue /.../' (Q12). Owing to a large number of students from Computer Science, two thoughts were about this field specifically; one commented on the fact that 'IT (information technology) as a field necessitates English [and]

it is imperative to know the English terminology and look up information in English' (Q13), the other student described taking Estonian-taught IT classes but translating the Estonian terminology into English to get a better understanding.

### *2.2.3. What challenges do Estonian native speaker EFL students experience in English-taught courses?*

The fourth section of the questionnaire aimed to answer RQ3. In this section the respondents had to rate 10 statements about the challenging parts of EMI courses on the scale of how much they personally agreed to them. The statements were the following:

C(hallenge)1. I can follow the speech of instructors and fellow students.

C2. The language use of instructors is clear and understandable.

C3. I can follow the lecture enough to take notes.

C4. I feel it is harder for me to contribute to discussion in English-taught lectures/seminars than in Estonian-taught ones.

C5. Compared to studying in Estonian, it is harder for me to memorise information.

C6. I can understand academic reading material in English without a problem.

C7. Studying in English hinders my ability to learn content.

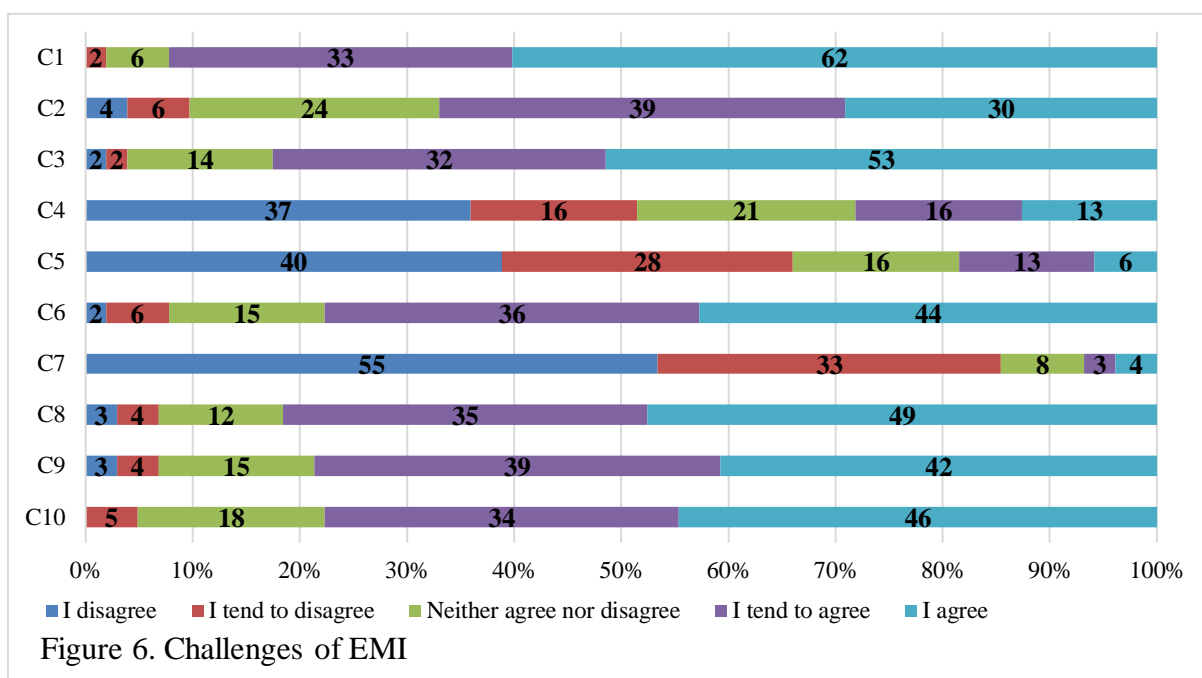
C8. My previous education sufficiently supports me to do well on an English-taught course.

C9. I know and can use specific terminology in English.

C10. The grade or feedback I receive from an English-taught course reflects my actual knowledge of the content.

The results are illustrated on Figure 6. Most of the statements see a consensus of either agreement or disagreement. Most respondents agree that they can follow the speech of instructors and fellow students in class (C1: 95, 92.2%) and that they can follow along well enough to take notes (C3: 85, 82.5%). They also believe that their previous education

supported them enough to do well on ETCs (C8: 84, 81.6%), they can understand and can use field specific terminology (C9: 81, 78.6%), that reading the material in English causes them no trouble (C6: 80, 77.7%), and that the feedback and grade they receive from an ETC accurately represents their knowledge of the content (C10: 80, 77.7%). No one chose that they outright disagree with the last. Slightly less, but still a majority, think that the instructors' English is clear and understandable (C2: 69, 66.9%).



A clear majority disagreement can be seen to the statement that studying in English hinders students' ability to acquire content (C7: 88, 85.4%). About two thirds disagree that it is more difficult to memorise information compared to Estonian (C5: 68, 66%). Whether it is more difficult to contribute to class discussion in English when compared to Estonian was not very clear, slightly over a half (C4: 53, 51.4%) disagreed.

As with the benefits, there was a write-in option available for expressing further challenges. 21 people had thoughts to add. Some used the question to propose more challenges, some to comment on the ones they already answered about. The topic of instructors' language level once again came up in this section; eight people chose to comment on it. Sometimes the problem in understanding lies with the instructor's accent but

not much can be done about that. As one respondent put it,

‘/.../ There have been outstanding instructors and those whose enunciation is not the best. However, I do not see how the university could say anything to an instructor who knows English well but has enunciation that is very difficult to follow because of their cultural background /.../’ (Q14)

It is not just the instructors’ language level that causes problems; for two respondents other students’ English level was a challenge. Students whose language level is lower tend to employ compensation strategies like using many filler words or ‘/.../ trying to find their way out by randomly putting words and phrases together. /.../’ (Q15). Two people said that Estonian students do not want to participate in discussions in a foreign language, ‘It is scarier to speak in a foreign language; there is a fear of making mistakes. Consequently, Estonian students are more passive than they would be on an Estonian-taught course’ (Q16).

A few people (3) felt that the use of English in class felt slightly forced. The three problems were all different. One of the respondents did not see a reason for a course to be in English if everyone taking the course as well as the instructor are actually Estonian. The second had a problem with the course being in English even if just *one* student is non-Estonian. This is what Hultgren et al (2015: 6) refer to as the ‘guest decides principle’. The last person’s point is a variation of this, ETCs often adhere to using *only* English; they said,

‘On an English-taught course, the instructors are seemingly forbidden to assign readings in any other language [besides English]. /.../ On an Estonian-taught course it is acceptable to assign readings in another language and it is done often. This is a benefit and opportunity not utilised in EMI.’ (Q17)

Some more problems were the fact that studying in English takes longer (2), with one student saying that the time dedicated to working through material in English increases threefold compared to Estonian materials and the other saying that much of the time is spent looking up terminology which lowers the speed of reading. Using specific terminology was also commented on (3). It is difficult to have no previous exposure or preparation in English terminology to then having to make sense and express thoughts using them. One respondent illustrated,

‘I have some problems with mathematics’ courses if they are taught in English because all of the previous base has been in Estonian. It is expected that I already know all the mathematical terms in English. [It is]

especially [difficult] when all of the previous mathematics' courses in the curriculum have been in Estonian but then suddenly one of them is primarily in English.' (Q18)  
This also shows that some students do not feel prepared from their previous studies.

There were two people who felt they would like to get more feedback. One would like to get more feedback on the language itself. They would benefit from a more CLIL-like environment. Another student said, 'For some reason, the grading on these courses is often pass/fail, which I feel is too succinct and does not reflect the outcome well enough' (Q19), showing that students really appreciate getting constructive feedback for their work. One person said it is difficult to switch back to Estonian after classes in English and one said that EMI makes them completely lose the motivation to learn.

#### *2.2.4. Additional thoughts about EMI*

In the fifth part of the questionnaire, respondents had a chance to write in any additional thoughts they have about EMI, which they did not have a chance to express before. 20 people chose to do so. The thoughts can generally be categorised as either critical of or complimentary to EMI. Many of the talking points that come up have been previously mentioned under reasons for dissatisfaction, benefits, or challenges. Once more the problem of instructors' (3) and students' English (1), along with fear of contributing that stems from expressing thoughts in a foreign language (1) are brought up. So is the fact that it is more time consuming to navigate English materials for an otherwise Estonian class (1),

'/.../ the Estonian-taught courses in which reading materials are in English, but class discussions are in Estonian are much more challenging because at least on an English-taught course there is just one language. On Estonian-taught courses often both Estonian and English are used, so there is constant translating taking place and it is much more tiring.' (Q20)

In this section, it is also emphasised that a lower level in English puts some students in a less advantaged position (3), gives an advantage to those who have a strong English background (1) and it is quite impossible to graduate university without knowing English because the materials, even for Estonian-taught courses, are in English (2). Said one student, 'English is not a problem for *me* but my mother is attempting to finish her /.../ master's

studies and is struggling to get through English materials. It is a shame that English is considered natural on an Estonian-taught programme' (Q21). For another, EMI is the reason for not pursuing their education further, 'I will not be continuing in master's studies because it does not seem reasonable nor productive to learn the whole programme in English' (Q22).

There are also thoughts of English posing a threat to Estonian as a language of the academia (2) exacerbated by the lack of Estonian terminology in certain narrow fields (1). Some people find that having the opportunity to study in one's mother tongue is something to be cherished (2). One respondent explained,

'Studying in English hinders the development of Estonian academia. Accessibility to Estonian-taught education must be provided in all specialities at all levels. This includes course materials and home readings that should be in Estonian, so that all young people would have an equal chance to get a degree notwithstanding their language level /.../.' (Q23)

Someone said they chose the UT over other universities because they wanted to get an education in their native language. It implies that the UT seems to have struck a better balance between English and Estonian instruction than other institutions.

There were also respondents who disregarded the language of the class as the biggest influence on how well the student will do on the course (2). According to one, the benefits of ETCs come from how much work the student is willing to put in and the other saw masterful teaching and relationship between the instructor and the class as the core necessity for doing well. They said,

'I have not noticed that English-medium instruction itself has had a significant impact. Rather it is the teaching competence and skill of instructors (i.e. on Estonian-taught courses it can be similarly difficult to understand material or get along with the instructor). (Q24)

Instructors also seem to be accommodating with giving explanations in other languages, 'Even if the instructor teaches the class in English, they can mostly speak either Estonian or Russian as well and this is why I have never had any trouble taking English-taught courses,' (Q25) said a student.

There were three students who would appreciate even more English-taught courses. Two answers came from computer science which both expressed that their field and future

work environment is English-based. Said one ‘/.../ It seems that students are considerably less satisfied with courses that strictly require Estonian [instead of English], even when writing code’ (Q26) and the other added ‘In computer science, there should be even more English. It is silly to take turns using both English and Estonian terms for the same thing. Especially if there is no use for Estonian terms outside of the academia’ (Q27). The third said more didactics courses should be in English.

A balancing response from one student embodies the strive of the UT being the international national university (*rahvusvaheline rahvusülikool*). In their view using more Estonian need not mean that internationalisation is impossible. They said,

‘I’m bothered by the thought that international students and Estonian never go together or that using Estonian eliminates internationalisation. I have seen quite a few examples at the Institute of Estonian and General Linguistics that contrasts this, including foreign instructors who teach in Estonian. I find that we should think not only about how to turn as many programmes as possible into English but also about how to make Estonian programmes more accessible to those who wish to take part.’ (Q28)

### **2.3. Discussion**

The aim of the thesis was to get a gauge of Estonian native speaker EFL students’ views on English-medium instruction at the UT through three research questions.

Based on the ratings given to the statements, the general attitude towards EMI in HE and at the UT seems to be cautiously positive. All of the statements that the respondents strongly or moderately agreed or disagreed on showed a positive sentiment towards EMI. Most of the students take English mediated learning as a matter of fact because the UT is part of a wider academic community, yet they do not feel like the amount of English has been overpowering in their experience or that EMI courses make their workload bigger. They see EMI in HE as a positive development and do not think either master’s or bachelor’s programmes should be exclusively Estonian just because of an ideal. According to the students, it is more the bachelor’s programmes that should stray from becoming fully

English. As only three of the 29 bachelor's and master's ETPs at the UT are bachelor's (University of Tartu Statistics 2021), it seems that the UT shares the sentiment. They do not believe that English is a hindrance in reaching course aims. The last does, however, depend much on the aims set. It could be that the aims of ETCs are sometimes deliberately more lenient given that the language of instruction is not the students' first language.

The cautiousness comes in with the rest of the statements, where there can be slight leaning towards agreeing or disagreeing, but the results are not definitive enough to make any certain claims. A small majority agreed that English might become the main language of the academia in Estonia in the future, but a considerable part also could not take a stance. It can be difficult to predict large shifts on such a scale. Likewise, it is complicated to gauge if and how much studying in English might affect students' Estonian or if it would be necessary to resolutely use only Estonian materials in Estonian-taught courses, if there is plenty of high quality material written in English; not to mention knowing whether it is the English-taught or Estonian-taught courses that are more beneficial. A respondent said, 'How much you benefit from an English-taught course depends on how hard you are willing to work and study. You can pass some courses without really learning anything' (Q29). These opinions can also be very circumstantial; some EMI lecturers may have a teaching style different from those on Estonian-taught courses. It may be that non-Estonian instructors have differing methods from Estonian instructors. When the exchange students in Teemant (2010: 93) noted that the instructors' attitudes and testing systems were different to what they were used to at home, they were experiencing going into another culture; a place of English-majority learning environment. However, only 15% of teaching and research staff at the UT is international (University of Tartu Statistics 2021). More students will encounter Estonian instructors who teach in English as well as Estonian and it is doubtful that their methods drastically vary depending on what language they use.

However, there was an interesting quote from one student who said, ‘/.../ the instructor was very stuck in their own vocabulary and did not accept any synonyms; everything had to be according to their language use’ (Q30). On the one hand, the instructor may have been using terminology and the intolerance of synonyms was the intention. On the other hand, it may suggest that the instructor’s language level restricted them from accepting any language that they were not previously familiar with, only accepting what they themselves had learned was the correct way to answer. If the latter were the case, this could certainly mean that instructors’ methods and style could differ when teaching in a foreign language. Someone who is unsure of their own language would probably eliminate situations where they had to engage with spontaneous language. They would not use such techniques as class discussions or longer written works like essays. Thus, proving that the teaching style can actually vary because of the language of instruction for some people. This is all hypothetical and could be researched further.

The students’ positive attitude towards EMI shows from their answers to the benefit statements as well. The results show general agreement with the benefits proposed; they can find materials easily for ETCs because a lot of the materials are in English, which is understandable, considering much of the publishing of academic materials happens in English as discussed in Phillipson (2015:26). Students think that ETCs improve their English skills and broaden their horizons. This result echoes other perception-based studies where students very often believe that taking ETCs or studying on ETPs makes them better at English (for example Kir & Akyüz 2020, Rogier 2012). It could be theorised that owing to the constant exposure to the language and the need to participate using English improves students’ confidence to use English (Rogier 2012: 92) and raises their self-efficacy in using English, which the students perceive as getting better at the English language.

Some agreed that these courses can make them more employable, which is proposed

as one of the main benefits in theory (for example in Li et al 2009, Yeh 2014, Macaro et al 2018, Räs et al 2018). It is not possible to say whether studying on ETCs enhances motivation to learn English because the answers to that statement spread out quite evenly among the choices on the scale. This differs from the students in Yeh (2014), because half of these students believed that EMI does enhance motivation. However, there is much that goes into creating and maintaining motivation besides the external need to know enough English to pass a course. Thus, it is understandable if the respondents did not show much leaning towards either answer.

Another very important benefit that emerged from the answers of the write-in question is that of the international collaboration. The number of times students mentioned either international students, lecturers, or a chance to collaborate with peers overseas demonstrates that the status of the UT as an international university is important. A respondent cited collaboration as a benefit, ‘If you have acquaintances who are not Estonian but study the same field, you can ask them for help or share lecture notes to get a wider grasp of the subject’ (Q31). Students enjoy the differing perspectives that an international group can offer; they feel it gives more depth to the discussions. Therefore, the UT’s objective to stay international is justified.

Even more positive sentiment towards EMI is seen under the challenge statements. Students are confident in their ability to keep up in class, take notes and they believe that their previous education supports them enough to partake on ETCs. This may be because English proficiency in Estonia is generally regarded to be high (Education First 2020). The students disagree that EMI is a hindrance for acquiring content and slightly disagree that it is harder to memorise content in English. Students do not tend to perceive terminology or academic texts in English as difficult, tend to think the grade and feedback is reflective of their knowledge and that the instructors’ language is clear and understandable. The statement

about whether English impedes expressing thoughts in class yielded a kind of middle-of-the-road outcome. It is not easy to make a conclusion based on that. It seems that most of the students do not seem experience the challenges proposed too much.

With that said, of course, there is nuance to these discussions. From the write-in questions throughout the questionnaire, it was the issue of instructors' language use that repeatedly showed up. This makes it clear that although most students find the instructors' English proficiency to be sufficient, it is a considerable problem for those who do not. What is more, studies have found that if students do not comprehend the lecture and they perceive their instructors' English skills to be poor, they also perceive the instructor to be less competent in what they teach and their classes to be less useful and interesting (Jensen & Thøgersen 2020: 2). Meaning these students could be more critical towards the instructor and their methods. There was one respondent in this research that said, 'The quality of lectures is often worse because there are no instructors who speak English as their first language' (Q32). Whether it is necessary for the instructor to be a native English speaker to teach well in English is questionable, but the quote does show that students judge the quality of the course in tandem with the instructors' language use. As for what should be done, it is difficult to say. Offering additional English training for willing instructors could be a consideration. There could also be some specialty-based training on how to teach their subject through English or how to teach through English in general.

The other pressing issue is the fact that those whose language level is lower, have a more difficult time on these courses or seem to lose their interest and motivation to continue learning because of EMI. The feelings of students who say EMI is a reason that their 'motivation to learn this subject disappears' (Q33), or those whose education stops short because they do not feel the benefits of EMI (Q22 above) might be in the minority but these are still valid criticisms that should be taken into account when the topic is handled.

As for the limitations of this research, it must be said that the results of it cannot be seen as the complete picture. The sample cannot be considered representative of the whole student body at the UT, as stated above, local minority language native speakers and international students are excluded, although they are an important part of the university. Further research might also benefit from a different approach as the results of this thesis come from a self-selected sample and could be affected by self-selection bias (Sterba & Foster 2011: 807), which might mean that the results do not reflect the opinions of an average student but only those who had enough to say to be interested in filling in the questionnaire. This thesis is merely an insight into some tendencies for opinions which are held by a specific part of the student body at the UT; a possible helpful starting point for further research. A more in-depth analysis of this data could be done to see whether students' views differ based on different measurements like their language proficiency, number of ETCs taken, or their faculty.

In conclusion, a questionnaire was conducted among the students of the UT to find out about their views on EMI as well as the benefits, and the challenges that the students face when participating in EMI. A self-selected sample of students from different faculties and levels of study answered the questionnaire. Based on the 103 results, EMI is not without faults; many students spoke up on language proficiency of instructors and students. Yet many also expressed the joy of having the chance to study in an international environment. On the students at the UT seem to be positively minded towards EMI.

## CONCLUSION

The wide spread of English-mediated instruction in HE has been noted in Europe. Reasons for being international are often policy-driven. A fundamental first step was the General Agreement on Trade in Services signed in 1995, through which HE became a service that can be exchanged and traded. In Europe, the formation of the European Higher Education Area with the Bologna Declaration in 1999 gave a big push towards European universities becoming more international. This in turn started influencing internationalisation strategies to be made on national and institutional level. And when the international students arrived at local universities, changes had to be made on classroom level to accommodate these learners.

Since Estonia and the UT are part of the European Higher Education Area, all that applies in Estonia as well. EMI in HE has been the subject of debate in many countries and here Estonia is not an exception either. In addition to the aforementioned, there are some specific reasons why EMI is being implemented more in Estonia. Firstly, in 2013, the Higher Education Act stated that all university programmes must only have one language of instruction, so some of the programmes where two languages were combined before became English-only programmes. Secondly, Estonian universities are struggling with finding students. The generation attending university is smaller than the previous ones. The number of students has decreased and there is incentive to fill the vacant positions with international students lest programmes need to be closed entirely.

As with most things, there are benefits and challenges to EMI in HE. EMI is said to benefit the country through finances. International students are mostly expected to pay tuition and once they graduate, there is hope that they will stay in the country and pay taxes.

Previously, Estonian universities have not made much money from tuition. However, with plans to reduce tuition free positions on ETPs, it is set to change.

EMI is also lauded for offering a chance to facilitate global intercultural communication and understanding because it offers a chance to meet people from different places of the world. On the student level it is claimed that participating in EMI can aid in future employment as employers in many fields expect their employees to know English. If the possible employee has acquired the basics of the field terminology already, they are more likely to be eligible for the position. It can also make working in international environments easier.

The challenges can appear on societal and personal level. It is frequently mentioned in research that EMI obstructs and offers less benefits to those whose English proficiency is not very high. Both students and instructors can struggle with EMI if their English level is not high enough. If the students have lower levels in English, they can experience inequality of opportunities, they must work longer to reach the same understanding of content than their coursemates, and their instructors will have to work more to accommodate them. If the instructors' language skills are not strong enough their lessons as well as their confidence as educators could suffer from it.

On a societal level, the expansion of EMI can be seen as a threat. It may seem like English is slowly replacing smaller languages in the academia and other situations of formal communication. This would make English the language of the educated elite and relegate local languages to the status of the common language; those who do not speak English will not have access to the academia or scientific discoveries and discussions. Quite a bit of anxiety surrounding this topic in Estonia stems from the effort to preserve the vitality of Estonian. Estonian has been a language of the academia for only about 100 years. Some of that time it has had to share its status with Russian. Owing to its past, the language situation

in Estonia is still varied and adding a considerable amount of English to its academia causes tensions. The UT has set the objective in their Strategic Plan 2021–2025 to strengthen the status and reputation of Estonian in HE; there is to be more focus on balancing the internationalisation with the UT's standing as the national university.

The thesis aimed to determine Estonian Native Speaker EFL Students' Views on EMI at the UT through three research questions:

1. What are Estonian native speaker EFL students' general attitudes towards EMI in Estonia and at the University of Tartu?
2. What do Estonian native speaker EFL students consider the benefits of EMI?
3. What challenges do Estonian native speaker EFL students experience in EMI?

A questionnaire was devised and conducted among the students. A total of 103 Estonian native speaker EFL students from all four faculties of the UT responded and the following conclusions could be made:

1.1. Estonian native speaker EFL students at the UT express cautiously positive sentiment towards EMI. They realise that the UT is a part of the international academia and therefore English mediated learning is sometimes necessary on both master's and bachelor's levels. On the whole EMI is seen as a positive development and students do not feel it has overpowered their university experience or hindered them in acquiring content.

1.2. They remain cautious on claiming that English poses a threat to Estonian in the academia and students' Estonian proficiency. Likewise, there is no resolute answer to whether EMI is more beneficial than studying in Estonian, if all English should be left out of courses taught in Estonian, whether they would reach the course aims better if they had took the course in Estonian rather than English, or that the lecturers' style of teaching differs from language to language.

2. Estonian native speaker EFL students generally agree with the benefits of EMI proposed. They think it is easier to find materials for ETCs, find that taking ETCs improves their English proficiency and broadens their horizons, as well as makes them more employable. The students also enjoy studying in an international environment; instructors and students from abroad can enrich course content and class discussions and offer perspectives that make learning more interesting and fulfilling.

3. Estonian native speaker EFL students generally do not experience the challenges proposed by the questionnaire. Yet it is important not to discard these problems outright; most respondents considered instructors' language proficiency to be sufficient, but from the free form answers throughout the questionnaire it became evident that unclear or incomprehensible language use from an instructor or fellow students were considerable problems to those who did not think so.

As seen from these conclusions, Estonian native speaker EFL students regard EMI as generally positive, they believe they experience many of the benefits and little of the challenges of EMI. Yet they would rather not make many bold claims about EMI causing larger societal shifts.

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## APPENDIX 1: Questionnaire in Estonian

### Tartu Ülikooli tudengite arvamus ingliskeelsete õppeainete õppimisest

#### *Osa 1. Vastaja taust*

Esimene osa küsimustikust kogub infot vastajate tausta kohta. Kõiki andmeid sellest ja järgnevatest küsimustiku osadest kasutatakse ainult vastajatest üldpildi loomiseks. Neid ei viida kokku ühegi vastaja isikuga.

#### 1. Millises õppeastmes Sa õpid?

- Bakalaureuseõpe
- Magistriõpe
- Bakalaureuse ja magistri integreeritud õpe

#### 2. Kui vana Sa oled? (Kirjuta arv)

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#### 3. Mis valdkonna üliõpilane Sa oled?

- Humanitaarteadused ja kunstid
- Loodus- ja täppisteadused
- Meditsiiniteadused
- Sotsiaalteadused

#### 4. Mis õppekaval Sa õpid?

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Järgmisele küsimusele vastates tuleb Sul kasutada keeletasemeid (A1-C2). See kast annab lühikese kirjelduse sellest, mida inimene igal keeletasemel teha suudab. Kui tead oma keeletaset, võid kirjelduste lugemise vahele jätta.

Keeletasemel...

A1 (läbimurre) – Saan kuulates aru tuttavatest sõnadest, mis puudutavad mind, mu perekonda või mu vahetut ümbrust. Saan lugedes aru tuttavatest nimedest ja sõnadest, lühikestest lausetest (nt posttril). Oskan vestelda väga lihtsal teemal, kui partner mind palju aitab, oskan kirjeldada kohta, kus elan, ja inimesi, keda tunnen, ja teiselt nende kohta küsida. Oskan kirjutada väga lühikest ja lihtsat sõnumit (nt tervitus postkaardil) ja täita ankeeti.

A2 (esmane keeleoskus) – Saan kuulates aru tihti esinevatest fraasidest, mis puudutavad olulisemaid valdkondi (mina ise, perekond, ostlemine, kodukoht, töökoht). Saan lugedes aru väga lühikesest tekstist ja oskan sellest leida spetsiifilist infot (nt reklaam, tööpakkumine, infoleht, menüü, lühike isiklik kiri). Oskan kirjeldada ennast ja tuttavaid teemasid (perekond ja teised inimesed, elutingimused, haridustee ja töökoht), ei juhi vestlust, aga saan igapäevaselt tuttavalt teemal räägitud. Oskan teha märkmeid ja kirjutada lihtsat isiklikku kirja.

B1 (suhtluslävi) – Saan kuulates aru põhilisest infost selges, tuttavas tavakõnes ning aeglaselt ja selgelt esitatud raadio- või teleaate põhisisust, kui need on päevakajalised või minu huvidega seotud. Saan lugedes aru sagedamini esinevatest või minu tööga seotud sõnadest, isiklikes kirjades saan aru mõtete ja soovide kirjeldustest. Rääkides saaksin enamjaolt keelega hakkama maal, kus seda räägitakse emakeelena, oskan ettevalmistuseta rääkida tuttavalt või olulisel teemal, kirjeldan oma kogemusi, unistusi ja kavatsusi, selgitan lühidalt oma seisukohti ja oskan edasi anda millegi sisu (film, raamat, jutt). Oskan kirjalikult koostada seotud teksti tuttavalt või huvitaval teemal, kirjutan oma kogemustest ja muljetest.

B2 (edasijõudnu tase) – Saan kuulates aru pikematest kõnedest ja ettekannetest, teleuudiste ja filmide sisust, tuttavalt teemal saan aru kõigist nüanssidest. Saan lugeda aktuaalsetel teemadel kirjutatud tekste, milles autor avaldab seisukohti või vaatenurki ja ka tänapäevast proosat. Vestluses osalen spontaanselt ja ladusalt, arutlen endale tuttavalt teemal, käsitlen neid teemasid laialt, selgitan oma seisukohti ja põhjendan neid. Oskan kirjutada selgeid detailseid tekste end huvitavas teemaderingis (nt essee, aruanne, referaat), kommenteerin ja põhjendan seisukohti, tõstan esile enda kogemuste ja sündmuste olulisi aspekte.

C1 (vaba suhtluse pädevus) – Saan kuulates aru pikemast tekstist, mis pole selgelt liigendatud, seosed on kaudsed või vihjatud, mõistan suurema vaevata teleprogramme ja filme. Lugesen saan aru pikkadest keerulistest tekstidest ja saan aru stiililistest eripäradest, mõistan ka erialast artiklit ja pikemat tehnilist juhendit, kuigi see ei pruugi olla minu erialalt. Väljendan suuliselt end ladusalt ja spontaanselt eriti väljendeid otsimata, kirjeldan keerulisi teemasid üksikasjalikult, kasutan keelt paindlikult, avaldan mõtteid ja arvamusi, teen kokkuvõtteid ja arendan teemat. Oskan kirjutada selget, hästi liigendatud teksti: esseed, kirja või aruannet keerukal teemal, tõstan olulisemat esile ja kohandan lugejast lähtuvalt oma stiili.

C2 (haritud emakeelekõneleja tase) – Kuulates saan vaevata aru igasugusest kõnest, ka kiirkõnest, kui mul on aega sellega harjuda. Loen vaevata kõiki kirjalikke tekste, sealhulgas abstraktset, struktuurilt või keeleliselt keerulist teksti näiteks käsiraamatus või erialaartiklis ja ilukirjanduses. Suuliselt saan vabalt osaleda igas vestluses ja diskussioonis, kasutan keelemängu ja tähendusvarjundeid, esitan kuulajale vastavas stiilis teksti, rõhutades olulisemat ja vajadusel sõnastan enda mõtet kuulaja jaoks ümber. Oskan kirjutada õiges stiilis teksti, keerulisi kirju, aruandeid, artikleid, sisukokkuvõtteid, annotatsioone, retsensioone. Esitan infot kirjalikult liigendatuna nii, et lugeja suudab leida tekstist olulise.

Viide: Euroopa Nõukogu (Council of Europe) "Euroopa keeleõppe raamdokument: õppimine, õpetamine, hindamine". Esialgu avaldatud 2001, eestikeelne tõlge Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium 2007.

5. Kuidas hindad oma inglise keele oskust nelja osaoskuse lõikes (kuulamine, lugemine, kirjutamine, rääkimine)?

	C2	C1	B2	B1	A2	A1	0
Kuulamine							
Lugemine							
Kirjutamine							
Rääkimine							

6. Mitmes ingliskeelses aines oled Sa osalenud? (Kirjuta arvuga 1–10. Kui arv on suurem kui 10, kirjuta 10+)

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Mis põhjusel sa ingliskeelseid aineid võtnud oled? (Vali kõik sobivad põhjused)

- ☐ Kursus oli õppekavas kohustuslik.
- ☐ Kursuste valik oli liiga väike ja ma pidin selle kursuse võtma.
- ☐ Ma tahtsin arendada oma inglise keele oskust.
- ☐ Aine õppejõud on oma eriala ekspert.
- ☐ Olin sama õppejõu aineid varem võtnud ja tema õpetamise stiil sobib mulle.
- ☐ Mulle meeldib inglise keel.
- ☐ Kursuse sisu vastas mu isiklikele või akadeemilistele huvidele.
- ☐ Teised tudengid soovitasid mulle seda kursust.
- ☐ Muu: \_\_\_\_\_

## Osa 2. Üldhinnang ingliskeelsele õppele Eestis ja Tartu Ülikoolis

Küsimustiku teise osa eesmärk on saada vastajate üldhinnang ingliskeelsele õppele.

1. Palun hinda iga väidet viiepallisüsteemis. (1 - Ei ole nõus, 2 – Pigem ei ole nõus, 3 – Nii ja naa, 4 – Pigem olen nõus, 5 – Olen nõus)

		1	2	3	4	5
A1	Ingliskeelne õpe kõrghariduses on positiivne areng.					

A2	Arvan, et inglise keel on Eestis tulevikus peamiseks teaduskeeleks.					
A3	Arvan, et Tartu Ülikool on osa rahvusvahelisest teaduskogukonnast ja ingliskeelne õpe on seetõttu loomulik.					
A4	Inglise keele kasutamine kõrghariduses mõjutab negatiivselt tudengite eesti keele oskust.					
A5	Bakalaureuseõppe õppekavad peaksid olema täielikult eesti keeles.					
A6	Magistriõppe õppekavad peaksid olema täielikult eesti keeles.					
A7	Eestikeelses õppeaines peaks kogu õppetöö olema eesti keeles (ka lugemismaterjal).					
A8	Inglise keele osakaal minu õpingutes on olnud liiga suur.					
A9	Ingliskeelsete ainete õppejõudude õpetamisstiil erineb eestikeelsete ainete õppejõudude omast.					
A10	Ingliskeelsete ainete õppekoormus on suurem kui eestikeelsete ainete oma.					
A11	Eestikeelses aines oleksin õpiväljundid saavutanud paremini.					
A12	Ingliskeelsed ained on kasulikumad kui eestikeelsed.					
A13	Ingliskeelne aine või ained vastasid täielikult minu eelnevatele ootustele.					

2. Kui vastasid eelmises küsimuses viimasele väitele, et Sa ei ole nõus või pigem ei ole nõus, siis palun täpsusta, mis täpsemalt Sinu ootustele ei vastanud.

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### *Osa 3. Ingliskeelsete erialaainete läbimise eelised*

Küsimustiku kolmandas ja neljandas osas tuleb Sul anda oma kogemuse põhjal hinnang väidetele, mis käivad ingliskeelses aines õppimise kohta.

1. Palun hinda iga väidet viiepallisüsteemis. (1 - Ei ole nõus, 2 – Pigem ei ole nõus, 3 – Nii ja naa, 4 – Pigem olen nõus, 5 – Olen nõus)

		1	2	3	4	5
B1	Ingliskeelsete ainete läbimine annab mulle eelise tööturul.					
B2	Ingliskeelsete ainete läbimine laiendab mu silmaringi ja maailmavaadet.					
B3	Leian inglise keeles paremini õppematerjali.					
B4	Ingliskeelsete ainete õppimine arendab minu inglise keele oskust.					

B5	Ingliskeelsete ainete õppimine tõstab mu motivatsiooni õppida inglise keelt.					
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2. Kui Sa oled kogenud veel mõnd eelist, mis kaasneb ingliskeelsete ainete õppimisega, siis palun kirjuta lähemalt.

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#### *Osa 4. Ingliskeelsete erialaainete läbimise probleemid*

Küsimustiku kolmandas ja neljandas osas tuleb Sul anda oma kogemuse põhjal hinnang väidetele, mis käivad ingliskeelsete ainete õppimise kohta.

1. Palun hinda iga väidet viiepallisüsteemis. (1 - Ei ole nõus, 2 – Pigem ei ole nõus, 3 – Nii ja naa, 4 – Pigem olen nõus, 5 – Olen nõus)

		1	2	3	4	5
C1	Ma suudan loengus õppejõudude ja kaaslaste räägituga kaasas püsida.					
C2	Õppejõudude keelekasutus on selge ja korrektne.					
C3	Suudan loengut piisavalt hästi järgida, et teha märkmeid.					
C4	Tunnen, et mul on ingliskeelses loengus/seminaris raskem kaasa rääkida kui eestikeelses.					
C5	Võrreldes eesti keeles õppimisega on inglise keeles raskem infot meelde jätta.					
C6	Ma saan probleemideta aru ingliskeelsest erialasest lugemismaterjalist.					
C7	Ingliskeelne õpe takistab mul ainesisu omandamist.					
C8	Minu eelnev haridustee toetas mind piisavalt, et ingliskeelsetes ainetes edukalt hakkama saada.					
C9	Ma saan aru ja oskan kasutada ingliskeelseid erialaspetsiifilisi termineid.					
C10	Ingliskeelsel kursusel saadud hinne või tagasiside peegeldab minu tegelikke teadmisi ainest.					

2. Kui oled kogenud mõnd muud probleemi ingliskeelsete ainete õppimisega, siis palun kirjuta lähemalt.

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#### *Osa 5. Mõtted ingliskeelsete erialaainete läbimise kohta*

Küsimustiku viiendas osas on Sul võimalik avaldada veel teemaga seotult tekkinud mõtteid.

1. Kui Sul on veel mõtteid, mis selle teemaga seonduvad, kuid eelnevalt ei saanud neid kuskil väljendada, siis palun kirjuta need siia.

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## APPENDIX 2. Quotes from respondents in Estonian

Q1	Sõltus aineest. Pigem on antud küsimuse vastuse sõnum, et see ei olnud erinev eestikeelse aine ootustest. Ootused erinesid ikka mõlema aine puhul.
Q2	Eestikeelsete ainete õppejõud on peaaegu alati kirglikumad, punktuaalsemad ja vastutulelikumad oma kursustes. Inglisekeelsete ainete nõuded, juhendid, tagasiside ja loengud on tihti hajusad, halva grammatikaga, millest tulenevalt pole võimalik kõike üheselt mõista.
Q3.	Tundsin, et keelebarjäär takistab oluliselt õpinguid.
Q4	Mõnes ingliskeelses aines on olnud hetki, kus ma ei ole nii hästi sooritanud võrreldes eestikeelsetega, kuid üheski aines ei ole eeldatud 100% inglise keele oskamist ning seetõttu on sellised keelebarjääri põhjustatud apsakad andeks antud.
Q5	Inglise keelt on hea arendada, sest palju tööd tuleb tulevikus teha nii kui inglise keeles ja kui ei harjuta siis ei ole valmis tööeluks. Õppekavad ei peaks olema puhtalt selle pärast eesti keeles, et peab. Seda selle pärast, et palju head materjali on juba inglise keeles, siis oskab neid materjale ka paremini töödelda.
Q6	Leian, et õpe ülikoolis peaks olema kindlasti inglise keeles vähemalt osaliselt ning ma ei usu, et ingliskeelne õpe mõjutaks eesti keelt emakeelena rääkivaid tudengeid kuidagi negatiivselt.
Q7	Tihti on ingliskeelsetel kursustel ka vahetusõpilasi, kellega koos õppimine laiendab silmaringi ja annab võimaluse tutvuda tudengitega, kellega poleks muidu kokku puutunud. Inglisekeelsete ainete õppimine on ka aidanud mul harjuda ja areneda akadeemiliste tekstide lugemiseks ja kirjutamises inglise keeles.
Q8	Tudengite seltskond on kirevam – ingliskeelseid aineid võtavad ka välistudengid – nendega on seminarid põnevamad.
Q9	Inglisekeelsetes ainetes on sageli ka välistudengid, kes julgevad tihti rohkem kaasa rääkida kui eestlased ja siis tekivad klassis huvitavad diskussioonid.
Q10	Ingliskeelseid aineid annavad rahvusvahelise taustaga õppejõud. See annab eelise ainuüksi juba kursuse sisus.
Q11	Kui õppematerjalid on inglise keeles (nii õppejõudude poolt antud kui ka ise internetist vms otsitud), siis on lihtsam kirjutada ingliskeelset väikest uurimistööd, esseed jms. Eestikeelses aines ingliskeelsete materjalide kasutamine on märksa keerulisem.
Q12	Inglise keeles õppides hakkab aju rohkem tööle, sest ma pean hakkama mõtlema muus keeles kui oma emakeeles ning tänu sellele on minu keskendumisvõime suurem.
Q13	IT on erialaselt siiski ingliskeelne eriala. Kindlasti on väga oluline teada ingliskeelseid termineid ja osata otsida infot inglise keeles.
Q14	Eks üldiselt on väga hea inglise keelt kõnelevate õppejõududega. Kuid nii nagu mõned on suurepärased, on olnud ka neid, kelle diktsioon ei ole kõige parem. Aga ma ei kujuta ette, kuidas ülikool saaks öelda õppejõule, kes muidu oskab inglise keelt hästi, aga näiteks kultuuriliselt ongi kujunenud hästi teistsugune diktsioon, mida on raske jälgida (nt kiire ja kõrge hää).
Q15	Põhiprobleem arusaamise ja jälgimisega on eestlastest õppejõudude kehv inglise keel ja kogematus inglise keeles õpetamisega. Kaastudengitega tekitavad probleeme eelkõige tugev aktsent ja pigem, et nad ei saa käsitletavast teemast aru. Viimast ei oska ma antud hetkel paremini lahti seletada, kui et inimesed ei saa

	teemast aru ning seda võimendab asjaolu, et nad peavad võõrkeeles kuidagi oma tee välja leidma, ning asutakse sisuliselt suvalisi sõnu ja fraase ritta seadma. Minu enda taha üldjuhul ingliskeelne õpe ei jää. Kuigi aeg-ajalt ei tule kohe mingi termin küsimust esitades või seminaris arutades kohe meelde, siis olen reaalselt C2 sertifitseeritud kõneleja (nii CAE kui ka TOEFL iBT) ning tunnen end inglise keeles väga mugavalt.
Q16	Võõras keeles on kuidagi hirmsam kaasa rääkida, sest on kartus teha keelelisi vigu. Seega on eesti tudengid loengus passiivsemad kui nad oleksid seda eestikeelses loengus.
Q17	Ingliskeelses aines on õppejõul justkui keelatud anda lugemismaterjali muus keeles, mis piirab aine sisu, kui tegemist on nt keele, kultuuri või muu riigispetsiifilise valdkonnaga, mille mõne aspekti kohta on kohalikus keeles rohkem materjali kui inglise keeles. Eestikeelses aines on aktsepteeritav anda lugemist muus keeles, seda on julgelt ka tehtud ning see on eelis ja võimalus, mida ingliskeelses õppes ei ole.
Q18	Matemaatika ained tekitavad veidi probleeme, kui need on inglise keeles, sest kogu varasem baas on eesti keeles olnud, aga eeldatakse, et sa juba tead kõiki ingliskeelseid matemaatilisi termineid. Eriti kui erialal kõik matemaatika ained eesti keeles olnud ja siis järsku on üks neist peamiselt inglise keeles.
Q19	Tihti on mingil põhjusel nendes ainetes hindamine olnud skaalal pass/fail, mis tundub olevat liiga kokkuvõtlik ning ei peegelda piisavalt hästi tulemust.
Q20	Nii ingliskeelsete kui ka eestikeelsete ainete hulgas on olnud neid, mille kirjeldus ei vasta sisule – see ei sõltu keelest. Samas eestikeelsed ained, mille raames antakse ingliskeelsed materjalid kodus läbitöötamiseks ja seminaris räägitakse eesti keeles, on palju suuremaks katsumuseks, sest ingliskeelses aines on vähemalt üks konkreetne õpikool – eestikeelsetes on sageli mõlemad, nii eesti kui inglise keel, nii et toimub pidev tõlkimine, mis on palju väsitavam ja koormavam.
Q21	Minu jaoks ei ole inglise keel probleem, aga nt mu ema püüab praegu ammu pooleli jäänud magistrtrit lõpetada ja näeb kurja vaeva, et end ingliskeelsetest materjalidest läbi närida. Kahju, et seda loomulikuna võetakse, et inglise keelt peab eestikeelsel erialal oskama.
Q22	Magistrisse edasi ei lähe, sest kogu õppekava ingliskeelsena läbimine ei tundu mõistlik ega arendav.
Q23	Ingliskeelne õpe pärsib eestikeelse teaduse arengut ja Eestis peab olema eestikeelse ülikoolihariduse kättesaadavus tagatud kõikidel erialadel ja tasemetel – ka loengu materjalid/ kodulugemised peaksid eesti keeles olema, et kõigil noortel oleks võrdne võimalus eriala omandada vaatamata nende võõrkeele oskusele. Eriti arvestades asjaolu, et üldhariduskoolide keeleõppe tasemed on erinevad.
Q24	Ei ole otseselt täheldanud, et inglise keeles toimuv õpe ise kuidagi eriliselt mõjutaks. Pigem on määravaks konkreetse õppejõu enda pädevus ja oskus ainet hästi õpetada (st täpselt samamoodi ka eestikeelse õppe korral võib olla materjalist raske aru saada või õppejõuga suhtlemine mitte kõige paremini õnnestuda).
Q25	Kui mõned õppejõud isegi õpetavad ainet inglise keeles, siis tavaliselt nad oskavad ikkagi eesti või vene keeles ka rääkida ja sellepärast pole kunagi probleeme olnud ingliskeelsete ainete võtmisega.
Q26	Informaatika õppekaval on ingliskeelne õpe pigem hädavajalik, et tööturul toime tulla ja erialast infot leida. Üldiselt tundub, et tudengid on oluliselt vähem rahul õppeainetega, kus rangelt nõutakse eestikeelset väljendust, sh koodi kirjutades.
Q27	Informaatika erialal peaks rohkem inglise keelt isegi olema. Suht tobe on

	kordamööda nii eestikeelseid kui ingliskeelseid termineid sama asja jaoks kasutada, eriti kui akadeemia väliselt nende eestikeelsete terminitega pole sul midagi teha.
Q28	Mind häirib suhtumine, et välistudengid ja eestikeelne õpe ei käi mingil juhul kokku või et eesti keeke kasutamine välistab rahvusvahelistumise. Eesti ja üldkeeleteaduse instituudis olen näinud üksjagu vastupidiseid näiteid, sh välismaalt pärit õppejõude, kes loevad aineid eesti keeles. Leian, et mõelda tuleks mitte ainult sellele, kuidas võimalikult palju õppekavasid ingliskeelseks teha, vaid ka sellele, kuidas muuta eestikeelne õpe avatumaks neile, kes soovivad sellest osa saada.
Q29	See, kui palju õpilane saab kasu ingliskeelsest aineist, sõltub minu arvates ikkagi sellest, kui palju õpilane on ise valmis vaeva nägema ja õppima. Aineid saab läbitud ka nii, et sa ei õpi eriliselt midagi.
Q30	Probleem polnud aines endas, vaid pigem õppejõu käitumises, millega oli ka eelmise kursuse õpilastel natuke probleeme. Samuti oli õppejõud enda sõnavaras väga kindel ja töödes mingeid sünonüüme ei tunnistanud – kõik pidi täpselt tema keele järgi olema.
Q31	Kui sul on tuttavaid, kes pole eestlased kuid õpivad sarnast teemat, saad nende käest abi paluda/konspekte jagada, et laiemalt teemat haarata.
Q32	Loengu kvaliteet päris tihti on halvem, kuna emakeeles inglise keelt rääkivaid õppejõude pole.
Q33	Motivatsioon õppeaine omandamiseks kaob.

## RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL  
ANGLISTIKA OSAKOND  
Carmen Neerut

### **Estonian Native Speaker EFL Students' Views on English Medium Instruction at the University of Tartu**

### **Eesti keelt emakeelena kõnelevate tudengite arvamus ingliskeelsest õppest Tartu Ülikoolis**

magistritöö

**2021**

Lehekülgede arv: 74

#### Annotatsioon:

Magistritöös uuritakse eesti emakeelega üliõpilaste arvamust ingliskeelse õppe kohta Tartu Ülikoolis. Paljudes riikides esineb kõrghariduses aina enam ingliskeelset õpet ning Eesti ei ole erand. Inglise keeles aine õppimisega kaasnevad erinevad probleemid nii ühiskondlikul kui ka isiklikul tasandil. Töö eesmärk on näha, milline on Tartu Ülikooli üliõpilaste meelestatust ingliskeelse õppe suhtes ja mida nad näevad ingliskeelse õppe eeliste ning puudustena.

Tööl on sissejuhatus, kaks peatükki, kokkuvõte, kirjanduse loetelu ja kaks lisa. Sissejuhatuses avatakse kõrghariduse ingliskeelestumise põhjuseid. Põhjused on mitmel tasandil. Maailmatasandil on kõrgharidus muutunud teenuseks, mida saab müüa ja vahetada. Euroopa tasandil mängib suurt rolli Euroopa kõrgharidusruum, mille liikmete üliõpilased ja akadeemiline töötajaskond peab saama vabalt liikuda. Riiklikul tasandil tehakse plaane, et olla rahvusvahelisemad ja avatud koostööks. See mõjutab ülikoole ja nende plaane, sest rahvusvahelises teaduskogukonnas osalemine on soositud. Ning kui klassiruumides on juba tudengeid välismaalt, siis hakkab see mõjutama õppe korraldust. Tihti valitakse õppekeeleks inglise keel.

Esimene peatükk on teooriapõhine ja jagatud kaheks osaks. Esimeses osas arutatakse ingliskeelse õppe eeliseid ja puudusi. Eelistena tuuakse välja rahvusvaheliste suhete paranemist ja üliõpilaste laiemat maailmapilti ning rahalist sissetulekut, mida välistudengid võivad pakkuda. Probleemidena esitatakse isiklikul tasandil seda, et õpilased, kelle inglise keele tase on madal, võivad jääda ilma võimalustest (õppida alal, mis neile meeldib/ omandada ainet sama kvaliteetselt kui teised). Ühiskondlikul tasandil räägitakse ingliskeelestumise ohust ning sellest, kuidas inglise keel võib riikide kohalikud keeled teadusest välja tõrjuda. Teises osas kajastatakse põhjuseid, miks Eestis ingliskeelset kõrgharidust vaja on: näiteks demograafiline langus noorte inimeste hulgas ja rahalised põhjused. Samuti kirjeldatakse, milline on Eesti kõrghariduse keele seisund ning seda ümbritsev diskursus. Kõrghariduse ingliskeelestumine on Eestis kirgi küttev teema, sest eesti keel on teaduskeeleks olnud vaid umbes viimased 100 aastat ning sedagi staatust on osaliselt tulnud jagada muude keeltega.

Teine peatükk põhineb empiirilisel uurimisel. Üliõpilaste arvamuse kogumiseks koostati küsimustik, millele vastas 103 Tartu Ülikooli tudengit. Üliõpilastel tuli küsimustikus anda väidetele hinnang viiepallisüsteemis. Nende hulgas oli 13 meelestatuse väidet, 5 eeliste väidet ja 10 probleemide väidet. Lisaks oli küsimustikus vaba vastusega küsimusi, milles vastajad said oma vastuseid täiendada või lisada veel arvamusi. Küsimustiku vastuste põhjal võib väita, et Tartu Ülikooli tudengite arvamus ingliskeelsest õppest on üldiselt positiivne aga tagasihoidlik. Üliõpilased kogevad enamjaolt kõiki pakutud eeliseid kuid väheseid pakutud probleeme. Samas ilmneb kirjutatud vastustest ka see, et aine omandamist võib oluliselt takistada õppejõudude või kaastudengite keeleoskus, mille tõttu

jäävad seletused, tööjuhendid ja tagasiside ebaselgeks. Üliõpilaste vastustest ilmneb ebakindlust selliste väidete suhtes, mis ennustavad suuremaid ühiskondlikke nihkeid. Selgust ei ole näiteks selles, kas nende arust on inglise keele kasv eesti keelele ohtlik, või selles, kas inglise keeles õppimine on kasulikum kui eesti keeles õppimine. Siiski näevad üliõpilased, et Tartu Ülikool on osa rahvusvahelisest teaduskogukonnast ja ingliskeelne õpe on seetõttu osalt loomulik ja positiivne areng. Vabalt kirjutatud vastustest ilmneb, et õpilased hindavad kõrgelt välistudengite ja õppejõudude pakutavat rahvusvahelist õpikeskkonda, sest see aitab õpitavat teemat laiemalt mõsta.

Märksõnad: kõrgharidus, võõrkeelne kõrgharidus, ingliskeelne õppekava, ingliskeelne

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