CrossMark

Internationalization of higher education and language policy: the case of a bilingual university in Taiwan

Ken Lau[1] · Chia-Yen Lin[2]

Abstract Universities worldwide, in placing a greater emphasis on global mobility, have recently seen a growing number of in- and outbound students. Parallel to this development has been the need to internationalize individual campuses, an important aspect of which is to have a common language (or languages) used for communication. The language policies in Asian universities have been complicated by the growing presence of international students who may only understand one of the languages used as the medium of instruction, typically English. Drawing on Tinto's integration (Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1987) and Spolsky's language policy (Language management, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009) frameworks, this exploratory, perceptual study solicits the views from 38 international students on the implementation of a bilingual education policy, especially with respect to whether the policy facilitated these sojourners' academic and social integration at a Taiwanese university that is actively advocating internationalization. The findings suggest that Mandarin Chinese continues to be the mainstream medium of instruction and social activities, while English is used rather sparingly and on an as-needed basis. The recognition of the growing economic power of China and importance of Chinese as well as the scholarships provided may have overridden these sojourners' integration concerns and challenges arising from the underuse of English as a lingua franca.

Keywords English as an academic lingua franca · International students · Internationalization · Bilingual policy · Academic and social integration

✉ Ken Lau
lauken@hku.hk

[1] Centre for Applied English Studies, The University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam, Hong Kong

[2] Yuan Ze University, Taoyuan City, Taiwan

🙋 Springer

Introduction

The effect of globalization on higher education has been immense since the early 1990s (Enders 2004; Vidovich 2002). The increased student mobility between institutions across nations has given rise to a situation in which "linguaculturally heterogeneous groups of learners are no longer rare" (Smit 2010, p. 16). This increase in the intake of international students has not only resulted in economic benefits, but also changed the ecologies of the universities' structures, administrations and operations (Vickers and Bekhradnia 2007). Such changes have been particularly noticeable in many Southeast Asian universities that have recently set internationalization as one of their institutional goals with a view to enhancing their global competitiveness and subsequently raising their international profiles and rankings (Mok 2007). Internationalization is very much a fluid concept, and the aspects it covers are broad-ranging. As Knight (2004, p. 5) suggests, the term "means different things to different people and is thus used in a variety of ways." Instead of trying to define the term comprehensively, as many other researchers have (see for example Knight 2003), we focus on a core aspect of internationalization that characterizes our study, which is to consider it as *a process of integration*. Internationalization is a process because of its "ongoing and continuous efforts" (Knight 2004, p. 11), which always involves the integration, be it academic or social, of various ethnic groups. Arriving somewhere unfamiliar, international students must not only adapt to the new academic culture (academic integration) but also navigate through the "social way-of-life" (Rienties et al. 2012, p. 686) (social integration). Integration is thus a key institutional experience and yet often neglected in the studies of international education.

Threatened by the strong position of the internationalized higher education market (Song and Tai 2007), Taiwanese universities followed suit by offering degree programs delivered in English to take a share of the lucrative market. This is also a way to prevent "brain drain" (Faber 2010, p. 24) of domestic talents. According to Taiwan's Ministry of Education (2014), there were more than 78,200 international students in 2013 compared to only 26,400 in 2006, amounting to a threefold increase in just seven years. While the expansion in the population of international students could enhance the global competitiveness of Taiwanese universities, the problems these students face should not be overlooked. Studying the dispositions of international students at a Taiwanese university, Roberts et al. (2010) pointed out that the biggest challenges their international students faced was memorizing Chinese characters, followed by adjustment to the climate and food. Such findings have two important implications: (1) language accommodation by learning and using the host language plays a key role in the lives of these international students; (2) the research focus has always been placed on how these sojourners have tried to fit into the lives of the host nation, but rarely on how the domestic students and the host institutions meet them half way.

An important catalyst for a successful realization of internationalization, particularly in terms of academic integration, is the formulation of language policies that cater to the needs of both domestic and international students in acquiring subject knowledge. For example, English is chosen by many universities as the common language, i.e., the lingua franca (Jenkins 2014), given its status and recognition in the academic discourse community. That said, the phenomenon of Englishization, or hegemonic English (see, for example, Park 2009, 2011), has been criticized by a number of scholars such as Kirkpatrick (2011) who encouraged Asian universities to formulate and implement bilingual/multilingual language policies. In a similar fashion, the concept of 'parallelingualism' has been

proposed in Nordic countries "as a way to ensure an equitable balance between English and the Nordic language(s) without the former encroaching on the latter" (Hultgren 2014, p. 61). In a more specific context, Björkman (2014) undertook a critical discourse analysis of the institutional language policy documents of eight Swedish universities, concluding with the concern that there was "insufficient guidance as to how students and staff in these university settings are to use English in their everyday practices" (p. 335). This insufficiency therefore fails to inform policymakers about the relevant language policies in place. Adopting a different methodological approach from Björkman, our study foregrounds the voices of the international students with a view to investigating their integration into a Taiwanese university where internationalization comes to the fore of the institutional planning enacted by the developmental bilingual (Mandarin Chinese and English) language policy.

While the existing literature on international students is mostly concerned with the Western and European contexts, this study focuses on investigating the language-policy-related factors that influenced the integration of these sojourners into a Sinophone environment where both Chinese and English are advocated as the medium of instruction (MoI hereafter) and where the academic and social environments are dominated by Chinese-speaking people. The question we address in this study was: to what extent do the international students perceive that the bilingual language policy has facilitated their integration into the university? This overarching question is further specified as follows:

1. What are the enabling and impeding factors that impact on the international students' integration?
2. How do the international students react to the language environment presented?

Language policies in Taiwan: a brief historical overview

A brief review of the language policies in Taiwan is provided to help further contextualize this study. Taiwan is mainly inhabited by four ethnic groups: the Indigenous Peoples, who are also Austro-Polynesian aborigines; Hakka; Southern Min (or Hokkien); and Mainlanders (Chen 2010; Sandel 2003). This mixed population, taken together with the influx of immigrants and intermarriages at various points in history, has resulted in a complex ethnolinguistic, multilingual environment that challenges language policies.

The national language movement in the 1950s was an attempt to unify the language used through a very strong directive that enforced the exclusive use of Mandarin, i.e., the 'national language (guo yu).' Other linguistic varieties were sanctioned until the late 1980s (Tsao 2000), but the influence of this linguistic unity has been long-lasting, with almost the entire population now identifying themselves as Mandarin speakers.

Concomitant with "the public's awareness of the importance of pluralism and the value of ethnocultural identity" (Chen 2010, p. 87), the mother tongue movement was put in place in 1987 (Scott and Tiun 2007), with formal implementation in 2001, to promote the indigenization of local languages (e.g., Amis). The teaching and learning of ethnic languages were built into the primary school curricula despite the lack of relevant infrastructure such as qualified local teachers and quality textbooks.

The political and economic pressures of internationalization have prompted the policymakers' proactive responses to multilingualism since the early twenty-first century. Focusing on "proficiency in *international English*" (Chen 2010, p. 90; italics in the

original) and communicative competence (Chang 2008), the new English language policy was formulated to popularize the use of English in all walks of life. A number of measures have been taken by various authorities to create a bilingual environment "in public institutions and in the community at large" and "make English the second official language of the country" (Oladejo 2006, p. 149). The 'Challenge 2008' project, for instance, aimed at developing "a new generation of creative, lively youths capable of international dialogue and adept at using information and English skills to their advantage" (MOE Taiwan 2015). Basic English conversation classes were offered to develop the ability of Taiwanese people to engage foreigners in simple conversation, especially in their work domains. Despite all these efforts, there was a lack of interest and enthusiasm from the general public in the programs offered, mainly because of the perceived low pragmatic value (Chen 2010). Consequently, English is still used very sparingly for daily and professional purposes.

Of particular relevance to academia was the inclusion of English as part of elementary school curricula in 2001 (Chern 2002; Chen 2006; Chen and Tsai 2012), implying that the current university students would have benefited from such an initiative, although there appears to be a lack of longitudinal evidence of the magnitude of its success. Most parents were so in favor of the early exposure to English that they enrolled their children in English classes much earlier than the suggested timeline set out in the policy (Chang 2008). Another relevant aspect is the monetary incentive awarded to university professors who adopt English as their MoI (Chen 2010). The action's voluntary nature nevertheless raises questions about the extent to which English as another academic lingua franca has been successfully implemented, particularly in the higher education context.

To summarize, Mandarin Chinese has long been the main MoI and is likely to maintain a deep-rooted status in Taiwanese academic culture. That being said, "[t]he hegemonic monolingual Mandarin-only policy gave way to the overt goal of fostering multilingual competencies" (Li 2006, p. 167), and English has been recognized as an increasingly important medium for academic communication and even as an academic lingua franca.

Theoretical framework (1): Tinto's integration framework

Effectively a model of retention, Tinto's (1987) integration theory posits that there is an inverse correlation between students' attrition rates and their degree of integration, academic and social, into the "organizational culture and the co-curricular opportunities" (Billups and Kite 2010). Tinto's theory considers an array of attributes and experiences ranging from personal to institutional commitments, and while it was established based on fresh college students, we believe it can be adapted and applied to international students in our context as the two groups of students would, to some extent, have similar experiences during their initial navigation phase or in the "transitional space" (Palmer et al. 2009, p. 42). Our interviewees' responses somehow reflect their degree of integration into the university's academic and social environments, which illuminates our understanding of the role that bilingual policy plays in the process as an institutional commitment.

In more specific terms and to (con)textualize Tinto's model, we investigated the following aspects of our informants: their (1) linguistic capital, (2) motivation for studying at a bilingual university and (3) personal experiences of academic and social integration facilitated by the bilingual policy. These three aspects broadly cover "pre-entry attributes,"

"goals and commitments," "institutional experiences" and "personal/normative integration" in Tinto's model (1987, p. 114). Figure 1 shows the adapted framework for the context of our study.

Theoretical framework (2): Spolsky's language policy framework

While Tinto's framework provides the direction for the investigation of the social context of integration, there is a need to bring in another theory for the dimension of language policy. In this respect, Bernard Spolsky's language policy framework was operationalized to unpack and understand the international students' experiences. The framework fits our context because the "three interrelated but independently describable components" (Spolsky 2009, p. 4), namely, language practices, language ideologies and language planning/management, encompass both perceptions and the practices of those who are subject to the impact of the language policies in place. As Spolsky and Shohamy (2000, p. 2) explain,

> …it is necessary to distinguish the language practice of a speech community—its habitual pattern of selecting among the varieties that make up its linguistic repertoire, its language ideology—the beliefs about language and language use, and any specific efforts to modify or influence that practice by the formulation of specific language policies.

Because of the exploratory nature of the present study and ethical considerations, we considered it sufficient to ask our interviewees to report their various language practices, particularly the interactions with the home students, instead of collecting discourse or ethnographic data.

Research contexts

The study reported here was conducted at Yuan Ze University (henceforth YZU), a private research-led university located in Taoyuan, Taiwan. According to the Times Higher Education (2015), YZU is ranked 11th in Taiwan and 91st in Asia, with a number of
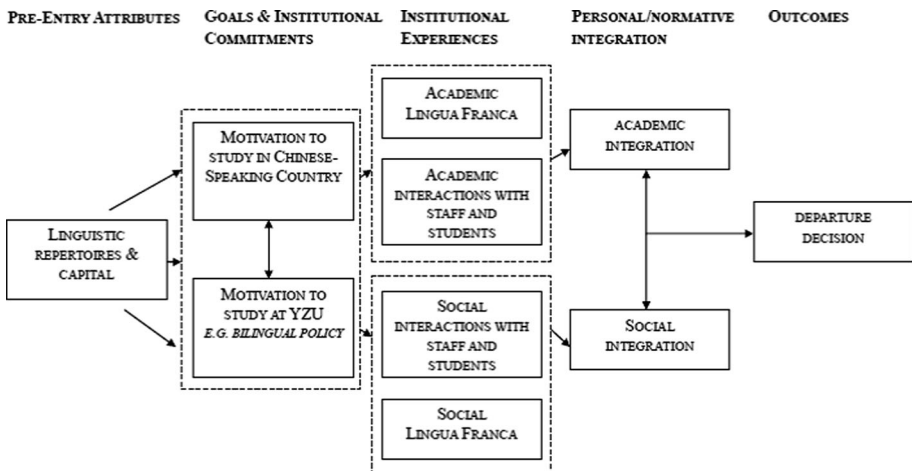

Fig. 1 Integration framework adapted from Tinto's (1987) retention model

academic programs such as management earning a very good reputation. YZU is also the first bilingual university in Taiwan, making it an interesting case to study. In 2005, YZU won a large national grant that was partially used to support its internationalization initiative through implementing the bilingual language policy and offering generous scholarship packages. Currently, about 300 overseas students from nearly 30 countries are studying at YZU either for a full degree program or on a one-semester exchange program, accounting for about 3.5 % of the total student population (YZU 2015a)—a proportion considerable enough to deserve attention. Based on the information provided by YZU's website (2015b), more than 30 % of the courses offered at YZU use English as the MoI. Rather than taking a top-down approach, i.e., from a senior management angle, this study investigates whether international students perceive that their own presence promotes the implementation of English as another academic lingua franca, alongside Chinese. In other words, a bottom-up approach was adopted.

Methodology and data generation

A number of recent studies of language policies employed quantitative methods with the use of questionnaire surveys. Bolton and Kuteeva (2012), for example, explored the adoption of and attitude toward English-medium instruction across disciplines at a Swedish university through a large-scale survey. In a subsequent publication based on the same project, Kuteeva and Airey (2014) identified disciplinary variations in the use of English through examining the survey respondents' open comments. In this study, however, data were collected through semi-structured, individual interviews with the international students pursuing a degree or on an exchange program at YZU during 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 academic years. We adopted a qualitative design using solely interviews because, as Jenkins (2014, p. 166) pointed out, "[international students] had not yet [...] been given very much opportunity to engage in the debate to any great extent themselves, particularly in respect of the English language and EMI." The adoption of interviews is also a reflection of our belief that knowledge is socially constructed through human interactions (Cohen et al. 2011). More importantly, we were concerned about the students' diverse language proficiencies so conducting interviews face-to-face allowed opportunities for clarifications of their views as the need arose.

Interview invitations were sent to all international students via the international office. In total, 38 international students volunteered to be interviewed, with 14 undergraduates and 24 postgraduates. They were from a range of disciplines, which enhances the representativeness of the findings because for some programs such as English-BBA, English is a given, while other may vary in the extent to which English is used in their teaching and learning. The interviews were conducted in English and nearly 12 h of spoken narrative data was collected, transcribed verbatim and analyzed. Table 1 presents the interviewees' demographic information.

The interview questions were formulated to cover aspects related to the student interviewees, their academic programs and the institution. Each interview, conducted personally by the authors, began with questions related to the interviewees' backgrounds including their native language(s), the typical MoI used by universities in their home countries and their reasons for choosing YZU. The next set of questions addressed the degree program the interviewees followed, particularly the extent to which English was used as one of the MoIs and whether they had ever come across difficulties in academic

Table 1 Summary of demographic information of interviewees

	Country of origin	Study area	Reasons for choosing to study at YZU				
			Scholarship available	Bilingual policy	Diplomatic ties	Word of mouth	Other reasons
P1	Nepal	Engineering	✔			✔	
P2	Thailand	Humanities		✔			
P3	Malaysia	Humanities	✔				
P4	Indonesia	Humanities	✔				
P5	Iraq	Engineering	✔				
P6	India	Humanities	✔			✔	
P7	Gambia	Humanities			✔		
P8	India	Business	✔				Family
P9	Honduras	Business	✔			✔	
P10	Vietnam	Business	✔	✔		✔	
P11	Honduras	Engineering		✔	✔		
P12	Vietnam	Business	✔				
P13	Honduras	Engineering	✔				
P14	Vietnam	Business		✔			
P15	Vietnam	Engineering	✔		✔		
P16	Honduras	Business	✔	✔	✔	✔	
P17	Vietnam	Engineering		✔	✔	✔	
P18	Vietnam	Business				✔	
P19	El Salvador	Engineering	✔		✔	✔	
P20	Vietnam	Business	✔				
P21	Honduras	Engineering				✔	
P22	Vietnam	Business	✔			✔	Location
P23	Vietnam	Business	✔			✔	
P24	Vietnam	Engineering	✔			✔	
U1	Honduras	Engineering	✔	✔			
U2	Iraq	Engineering				✔	Preference for a private university
U3	Gambia	Business				✔	
U4	Vietnam	Business				✔	
U5[a]	Brunei Darussalam	Humanities			✔		
U6[a]	Korea	Engineering		✔			
U7[a]	Japan	Humanities		✔	✔		
U8	Malaysia	Engineering		✔		✔	
U9	Mongolia	Social Science	✔			✔	
U10	Swaziland	Engineering		✔		✔	
U11	Tajikistan	Humanities		✔			
U12[a]	Morocco	Business		✔	✔		
U13	Indonesia	Engineering	✔				

Table 1 continued

	Country of origin	Study area	Reasons for choosing to study at YZU				
			Scholarship available	Bilingual policy	Diplomatic ties	Word of mouth	Other reasons
U14	Indonesia	Business		✔			Family

P postgraduate, *U* undergraduate

 ᵃ Exchange student

integration in relation to language choices such as course selections, learning environment, participation in learning activities and support services available. The final set of questions aimed to solicit respondents' views on institutional language policies in general, and more specifically in relation to English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) to discern any perceived differences between what was advocated and the reality of the academic and social environments.

Themes were identified by reading and re-reading the transcriptions until patterns emerged. To minimize any potential for bias from individual views, each key point reported here is based on data from at least two informants. When analyzing the data and interpreting the findings, we were aware of the subjectivities that we may have brought to the process by constantly challenging our own and each other's assumptions and pre-conceptions. We also considered it important to acknowledge conflicting views, even if that meant it would be more difficult to make generalizations. The fact that we came from two universities located in two post-colonial Asian cities put us in an advantageous position as we were able to make sense of the informants' experiences from both emic and etic perspectives, thereby enhancing the reliability of the findings.

Findings

In this section, the perceptions and the reported language practices of the interviewees will be presented with respect to the categories of the adapted integration framework (Fig. 1).

Pre-entry attributes: linguistic capital and repertoires

We first highlight the pre-entry attributes, specifically the 'linguistic capital' of the 38 interviewees. Linguistic capital is "defined as fluency in, and comfort with, a high-status, world-wide language which is used by groups who possess economic, social, cultural and political power and status in local and global society" (Morrison and Lui 2000, p. 473; see also Sandel 2003). It is based on Bourdieu's conception of symbolic capital, which is considered to have exchange value in the market-driven economy, the possession of which allows access to other capitals (Silver 2005). Mandarin Chinese and English are regarded as linguistic capital that can be exchanged for tangible and intangible resources or opportunities at YZU. Eliciting information on linguistic capital thus not only presents a general picture about the profiles of our interviewees, but it also serves as the baseline data for contextualizing our understanding of their perceptions.

The 38 interviewees came from 18 countries across three continents—Asia (27 inter-viewees), Africa (4 interviewees) and Central America (7 interviewees). All of them spoke

at least two languages, i.e., their mother tongue and English, and many (26) were multi-lingual speakers. For instance, the Malaysian interviewee (P3) could speak Malay, Cantonese, Mandarin, Hakka and English. Based on his linguistic capital, it seems reasonable to anticipate that he could fit in quite well with the academic and social contexts of YZU. This conjecture could also be verified through various parts of his interview data (I = Interviewer):

I: Have you ever participated in those English Corners or made use of the service?
P3:   I was a host in the English Corner and I worked as an [writing] assistant as well, which means if someone needs help I will help them.

…

I: Have they ever expressed concerns or complaints about the prevalent use of Chinese?
P3:   International students never complain but they express the need of translation maybe during travelling or some activities. Since I am always with them I am always their translator.

'English corners' are a popular on-campus initiative where the participants "may talk to complete strangers or make friends with people through practising English together at will" (Gao 2009, p. 61). Often led by students with a native or near-native English proficiency, English corners provide opportunities to students of different nationalities to mingle and improve their English outside class and in a more relaxed manner, a key initiative to promote English as a social and academic lingua franca. Student P3 was able to integrate comfortably into the academic and social environments at YZU as his knowledge of Mandarin (and Hakka) facilitated his access to the majority of the domestic students, and better still, he had become a valuable linguistic resource within the local and international students' communities by taking on the roles of an English corner host, a writing assistant and translator. However, P3, as well as the Indonesian informant U13 whose native language is Hokkien, was an outlier in our group of interviewees. Although most of the rest said they had some basic mastery of Chinese, it was mainly learned through the compulsory course offered by YZU, which targeted daily conversation. U2 and P14, for instance, highlighted their insufficient linguistic capital:

U2:   Even though I'm fluent in Chinese I still have problems. You know something about conversation daily life but scientific words are very difficult.
P14: The Chinese I learnt was useful for grocery shopping but not for learning in class.

As revealed in the narrative accounts, the kind of expressions the two interviewees had learned from the Chinese language course were insufficient for what was needed academically. Despite its position as an internationalized, bilingual university, YZU also subscribed to the new national English language policy under which the choice of the MoI rested with individual faculty members. Even with his self-reported knowledge of Chinese, U2 struggled to understand the classes, as the teachers mostly chose to use Chinese, essentially facing a 'double whammy' of learning through an unfamiliar language while trying to make sense of the academic register, which in this case was the language of computer science.

The incompatible ideologies between the nationwide language policy and YZU's internationalization initiative may also have posed difficulties to the interviewees, who overwhelmingly emphasized the importance and expectation of having English as the MoI. The reasons cited were both intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsically, the inability to understand

academic Chinese presupposed such a need, whereas extrinsically, the roles that ELF plays in the global academic context appear to have been recognized by a number of interviewees (such as P1 and P17), who suggested that receiving education in an English-medium environment would open up more opportunities for further studies in Anglophone countries such as the US, in addition to being conducive to academic studies, as research papers and references are predominantly published in English:

P1:   I'd like to study in the US after completing my Master degree at YZU and having a degree in English is a prerequisite.

P17:   I have to publish articles in English to fulfill the graduation requirements of my PhD studies.

Goals and institutional commitments: sustaining motivation

As seen in Table 1, out of the 38 informants, 14 cited the benefits of the bilingual policy as one of the main reasons for studying at YZU. U7 and P7, in particular, acknowledged the opportunities to use Chinese. Particularly noteworthy was their strong intrinsic motivation for learning the language:

U7:   Some of them cannot speak English. When I meet these people I write down Chinese to communicate. To communicate with them is a good chance for me to improve my Mandarin.

P7:   I'm a member of taekwondo association. I communicate with them very well. Almost 90 % of them are Taiwanese. I in fact use that opportunity to practice my Mandarin.

These two informants, one from Japan (U7) and the other from Gambia (P7), expressed a strong desire to communicate with others in Mandarin through seizing 'opportunities of use.' The low English proficiency of the majority of Mandarin speakers the informants had interacted with may have further strengthened their motivation to learn and use the host language rather than catalyzing the adoption of English as a lingua franca for communication.

Institutional experience: social lingua franca and social integration

In an earlier publication (Lau and Lin 2014), we investigated the role that ELF played in the social integration of a subset of the same group of international students into the local students' community at YZU. Based on the empirical evidence, we reported there the following obstacles to social integration experienced by these informants: (1) local students were perceived to be too self-critical of their non-native English and overly anxious about losing face through making mistakes to the extent that they would rather not interact at all; (2) local students appeared to be obsessed with a 'native' accent and recognized only a single variety of English, i.e., American English, as the norm to a degree that caused discomfort among those international students who spoke English with a first-language accent; (3) publicity materials for social activities were mostly presented in Chinese, which most international students could not understand without translation; (4) insufficient language-related support services were provided to facilitate communication between the international and local students. We concluded that the international students at YZU tried very hard to integrate into the social lives of local students but yet without much success. A vicious circle was thus formed as local students avoid interacting with international

students and so international students have no choice but to hang out with other international students (see also Caudery et al. 2008; Shaw et al. 2009).

The centrality of language in the process of social integration was thus observed. Turning to academic integration, it seems logical to assume that language would play an even more pivotal role. Our analyses revealed conflicting results. Although some of the interviewees felt frustrated about the limited use of English at YZU, quite a few of them empathized with and even defended the dominant use of Mandarin Chinese. What is more interesting was the juxtaposition of these two seemingly contradictory opinions in a number of interviews. These ambivalent views about the status quo at YZU will now be scrutinized.

Institutional experience: academic lingua franca and academic integration

Distribution of the two complementary languages

The first step to look into the academic experiences of participants is to identify how Mandarin Chinese and English are distributed in the curricular activities. Most of the interviewees corroborated the views that the two languages were still not, in Preisler's term (2009), 'complementary' and had unequal statuses, with Chinese being very much the mainstream MoI and English being used 'as and when' needed and on a program-specific basis:

P6:   Almost every day the international students complain that language is a problem for them because lectures are in Chinese and they don't understand. And they say that the professors asked them to read articles but the professors and students discuss in Chinese. And even for presentations all the other students present in Chinese and only my friend himself used English. Every time.

P9:   Everything is in English in my programme [International Business] but sometimes the teachers may use Chinese to explain to the local students as their English is not that good.

U1:   The PPTs are in English. If I have some questions, the professors respond in English. Lectures mostly are in Chinese. I was very surprised that happened…everything was in Chinese….

U2:   The professors could speak English but most of the courses are taught in Mandarin Chinese. But the slides are in English. Maybe we get help from the books. Maybe if we do not, maybe we will turn to the professors during office hours then he can speak some English for us. English is really helpful for us.

P6, in particular, reflected on the experience of her friend who failed to participate in academic discussion or receive constructive feedback on presentations for improvement because of the language environment. These quotations also indicate that YZU's professors, while capable of using English, as reflected in their ability to prepare PPT slides and interact, though infrequently, with international students in English, appeared to shy away from making English the instructional language in the classroom settings. This could be due to the limited exposure to such kind of language use throughout these professors' former education as "classroom teaching [of English] remained test-driven and focused on grammar" (Chen and Tsai 2012, p. 183) for the last 30 years or so.

The predominant adoption of Chinese as the MoI also deprived the students of their ideal course choices:

P7:   Only the books, references are in English but lectures are in Chinese. I may not be following. I felt deprived of the right. I really want to do that [course]. I felt disappointed because I thought all the courses taught here are in English.

U1:   Very limited. I'm not happy. I have to take 20 courses from other departments. But the other departments only teach in Chinese. The ability to take some courses is very limited. I had meetings with the teachers and said we wanted more courses in English. Eventually I did give up.

P10:   I'm doing a PhD but almost all the courses are taught in Chinese so I have no choice but to study with Master (students).

While these interviewees expressed disappointment in the limited range of course selections, others such as Thai postgraduate student P2 and Iraqi undergraduate U2, without expressing a very negative sentiment, adopted the avoidance strategy of only looking for courses conducted in English.

'Business-as-usual' discourse

Despite the relatively small presence of international students at YZU, it is as important to understand how they were influenced by the language policy as it is to investigate how they influenced the teachers' practices. Such students' general dissatisfaction with the status quo may have been strengthened or mitigated by their own realization of under-representation:

U1:   If they tell the teachers to use English, okay at first, it'll be mentioned in the course description but in reality when they see only one foreign student in the class, okay I know my other students won't understand half the things. So let's lecture in Chinese and only the PPT in English.

U6:   I don't understand the lectures in Chinese. But I am minority. It's okay.

The preceding extracts appear to reflect a 'business-as-usual' discourse that shows ignorance about the presence of the international students in class. Honduran interviewee U1 clearly vents her frustration over the unfulfilled promise made by the course descriptions, which had indicated that English was the MoI. Korean exchange student U6 nevertheless exhibits a more understanding attitude, recognizing that the 'majority rule' was at play. Such a language choice may disadvantage these non-Mandarin-speaking students' knowledge acquisition and demotivate learning as they will not be able to engage in intellectual exchanges with peers and teachers.

Defending Chinese

Despite the frustration and disappointment expressed by some of the interviewees regarding the limited use of English on a supposedly bilingual campus, there were also arguments in defense of the use of Chinese:

P5:   Chinese is important. Some people speaking English in a few years' time it's not that important. So you should have a third language. Because I am busy I did not focus on Chinese. But here there are not many chances to speak English but a lot of chances to speak Chinese.

P6:   I know Mandarin is the first language. Important for their economic development. I was mentally prepared.

P7:   For any country developed well they must use their language as the MoI in their
        schools. English or other languages are additional as long as they are working
        towards their development needs. And I think that's the case in Taiwan. Especially
        in sciences and hard sciences I think that's important. They should keep using
        Mandarin. That's very important. Many of international students here told me that
        in their home countries their own language was used as the medium of instruction.
        Indonesian, Vietnamese, Japanese, Korean. That's a completely different story in
        my country.

U11:   I think, in 10 years' time, Chinese will become as strong as English because
        Chinese is spoken in many countries, the Philippines, Malaysia.

Given Mandarin Chinese's established status in the academic context of Taiwan and its
ever-growing importance across socio-economic domains around the world (Tan 2006),
these four interviewees recognized that its dominant use at YZU was inevitable and
understandable. Gambian postgraduate P7 in particular noted a strong external force that
necessitates the use of Mandarin Chinese, despite his earlier complaint about the limited
course selections. Although internationalization and the ensuing use of English are at the
forefront of YZU and the nation's agenda, there is still much to be done internally in which
Mandarin Chinese continues to play a vital role.

A few of the interviewees such as P4 and U2 reasoned out the benefits of using their first
language to learn by putting themselves into the shoes of the local students:

P4:   We have to come back this is not an English-speaking country. English is a foreign
        language so it might be really difficult for them to understand. The professors are
        there to transfer the knowledge not the language itself. Sometimes it's easier for the
        students to understand in their first language.

U2:   Bachelor is the most important degree in your life. You build your information on
        that and then Masters and PhD. If you study your bachelor, in our country we say
        you should study in your own language to get the full attention and understand
        everything and to go from there.

P4 and U2 were vicariously aware of the positive influence of mother tongue education on
knowledge acquisition. U2's comment is particularly intriguing in the sense that it could be
considered a complaint about the status quo, or a defense for it. In any case, the comments
are in line with the general consensus on the educational benefits of mother-tongue
instruction (Li and Majanovich 2010). Unlike places such as Hong Kong, which was
colonized by an Anglophone country, Taiwan and its education system are very much
Chinese-based. Taiwanese students have long been used to studying in their own native
language since kindergarten under the mother tongue language movement as previously
delineated. Learning subject knowledge in English appears to be a foreign concept to the
local students, as "Taiwanese language-in-education policy prioritized mother tongue over
English" (Wu 2011, p. 27) despite the ongoing demands of parents. Tien (2013), in her
reflection on one of her linguistics classes, highlighted the local Taiwanese students'
(whose English was supposed to be better than those from other departments) struggle to
understand lectures conducted solely in English and ended up having to mix codes during
teaching.

Discussion

The interview findings have identified a few key issues that appear to have influenced the integration processes: the linguistic repertoires and motivation of the international students themselves, the implementation of the institutional language policies, and the practices of the language policies by YZU teachers and students. These issues are now drawn together for a more systematic discussion in response to the research questions set out earlier.

RQ1: What are the enabling and impeding factors that impact on the international students' integration?

The bilingual policy provides YZU international students with 'the best of both worlds,' which most of them could not benefit from in their own countries or institutions where a monolingual policy is practiced. The English learning environment situates them within the global academic discourse community where English is a widely recognized academic lingua franca. However, as Pennycook (2001) cautioned, the power and value of English are not inherent in the language itself but lie in its manifestation as different forms of capitals that "have been historically linked to core English-speaking countries" (Hu 2008, p. 205). In this respect, their vested interest in the Chinese language, vision of the roles of Chinese and recognition of the growing economic development of China may in fact have constituted a stronger attraction for these international students to integrate into YZU. This is also consistent with Spolsky's (2009) theoretical standpoint that the perceived value and status of a language contributes significantly to the ideological beliefs in its policy and management. Many of the YZU's international students possess the linguistic capital as multilinguals enabling them to gain entry to and benefit from a bilingual learning environment, with the hope that they could subsequently redeem more capitals for "enhanc[ing] life chances" (Morrison and Lui 2000, p. 474) or "gain[ing] upward and outward mobility" (Li 2012, p. 78).

The interview data also show that the students' integration into YZU is not an unproblematic process. While the adoption of a bilingual language policy is praiseworthy, there is a notable difference in the extent to which the two languages are distributed in the curricula. The international students at YZU express a strong demand for more courses taught in English. However, pedagogical approaches such as 'English across the Curriculum' and 'Content and Language Integrated Learning' are still at a developmental stage in Taiwanese academic practices (Huang 2012). For teachers who lack academic experiences in Anglophone countries, adopting English as the MoI can be very challenging. It can be perceived by these teachers as much a nerve-racking as a face-threatening act to instruct in English in front of native-speaking international students, fearing that they will be judged on their English fluency. The emphasis of 'face' in Asian culture has been well documented in the literature; losing face means losing respect from students (Young et al. 2012). It is perhaps this mentality that discourages many YZU teachers from using English as the instructional language. Another possible reason is the consideration of the abilities of local students. Even though the new generation of Taiwanese may have begun learning English very early in their lives, it was learned as an academic subject. Many of them have not had any exposure to English as an instructional medium, not to mention using it to participate meaningfully in class activities. The adoption of Chinese as an MoI, however, undoubtedly poses challenges to many international students in terms of academic integration.

Our earlier work also showed that international students at YZU sometimes found it difficult to integrate into the social circle of local students as the bilingual policy has not been fully extended to extracurricular activities (Lau and Lin 2014). For example, the international students are not able to take part in activities publicized or conducted only in Mandarin Chinese. To many students, particularly those who come from afar, social life is an integral part of the institutional experiences (Severiens and Schmidt 2009). However, social integration is often not explicitly addressed as far as institutional language policies are concerned.

RQ2: How do the international students react to the language environment presented?

In response to the dominant use of Chinese as an instructional medium, many of the international students at YZU were found to be resourceful and creative in looking for ways to 'make things work' for them such as asking for translation services from other students or individual consultations with faculty members. Less resourceful students, however, adopted passive or even avoidance strategies such as choosing only courses with English as an MoI. These 'personal coping strategies' (McAllister et al. 2006) are merely quick fixes at an individual level; more long-term planning at the institutional level is needed to address the needs.

Our conversation with the international students reveals a strong 'pull' factor (Mazzarol and Soutar 2002), though not directly related to the language policy, which may have influenced their reaction to the language environment presented. For those coming from less prosperous countries, any form of financial assistance such as scholarships may become an overriding consideration (see Table 1). Gunawardena and Wilson (2012) found that financing one's own education was a common source of anxiety among these sojourners. Li and Bray (2007) also concurred that the availability of scholarships was one of the major concerns among international students when making decisions about the choices of institutions. It is possible that the concerns over academic and social integration may have been relegated to a lower level of priorities for some of the international students in our study.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the implementation of the bilingual policy at YZU and similar universities is not simply a matter of adding an instructional language to the existing educational framework. Such a policy must take into account a range of socio-political considerations, historical decisions and individual factors. Our review of the development and effectiveness of the language policy exhibits some inherent insufficiencies that slow the internationalization of the higher education sector.

The key findings of this study suggest that at present, the bilingual policy and its realization have facilitated the international students' integration into YZU to a limited extent. The use of English in teaching, learning and social activities is still not as popular as the international students want and expect, but YZU and the student interviewees appear to be working around rather than tackling the roots of the problem. There seems to be a lack of clear functional distribution of the two languages in the curriculum structure or formalized, across-the-board arrangements to address the academic and social needs of

international students. Quick fixes may have been established to address the misalignment between needs and realities, but what seems to be necessary is a more long-term plan for bringing English up to more or less equal status with Mandarin Chinese, at least in terms of the academic lingua franca. Indeed, we should not underestimate the difficulty in the realization of 'parallelingualism,' especially because the Chinese language has a very strong presence and is expected to continue to grow in terms of its influence internationally.

While 'Englishization' has been favored by many Asian universities advocating internationalization (Hu et al. 2014), a bilingual policy—in sync with the proposition made in Kirkpatrick's (2011) study on ASEAN countries—is the right move for YZU. That said, in the midst of transition and changes YZU has a number of obstacles to overcome before English is widely accepted and adopted as an academic and social lingua franca alongside Mandarin Chinese.

References

Billups, F. D., & Kite, S. L. (2010). *Perceptions of doctoral students regarding factors contributing to student success.* Retrieved 1 March 2015 from http://digitalcommons.uconn.edu/nera_2010/19.

Björkman, B. (2014). Language ideology or language practice? An analysis of language policy documents at Swedish universities. *Multilingual, 33*(3–4), 335–363.

Bolton, K., & Kuteeva, M. (2012). English as an academic language at a Swedish university: Parallel language use and the 'threat' of English. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 33*(5), 429–447.

Caudery, T., Petersen, M., & Shaw, P. (2008). The motivations of exchange students at Scandinavian universities. In M. Byram & F. Dervin (Eds.), *Students, staff and academic mobility in higher education* (pp. 114–130). Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press.

Chang, Y. F. (2008). Parents' attitude toward the English education policy in Taiwan. *Asia Pacific Education Review, 9*(4), 423–435.

Chen, S.-C. (2006). Simultaneous promotion of indigenization and internationalization: New language-in-education policy in Taiwan. *Language and Education, 20*(4), 322–337.

Chen, S.-C. (2010). Multilingualism in Taiwan. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 205*, 79–104.

Chen, S., & Tsai, Y. (2012). Research on English teaching and learning: Taiwan (2004–2009). *Language Teaching, 45*(2), 180–201.

Chern, C.-L. (2002). English language teaching in Taiwan today. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, 22*(2), 97–105.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research methods in education* (7th ed.). New York: Routledge.

Enders, J. (2004). Higher education, internationalisation, and the nation-state: Recent developments and challenges to governance theory. *Higher Education, 47*(3), 361–382.

Faber, P. (2010). English as an academic lingua franca. *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses, 23*, 19–32.

Gao, X. (2009). The 'English corner' as an out-of-class learning activity. *ELT Journal, 63*(1), 60–67.

Gunawardena, H., & Wilson, R. (2012). *International students at university: Understanding the student experience.* Bern: Peter Lang.

Hu, G. (2008). The misleading academic discourse on Chinese–English bilingual education in China. *Review of Educational Research, 78*(2), 195–231.

Hu, G., Li, L., & Lei, J. (2014). English-medium instruction at a Chinese university: Rhetoric and reality. *Language Policy, 13*(1), 21–40.

Huang, Y.-P. (2012). Design and implementation of English-medium courses in higher education in Taiwan: A qualitative case study. *English Teaching and Learning, 36*(1), 1–51.

Hultgren, A. K. (2014). Whose parallelingualism? Overt and covert ideologies in Danish university language policies. *Multilingua, 33*(1–2), 61–87.

Jenkins, J. (2014). *English as a lingua franca in the international university: The politics of academic English policy.* London: Routledge.

Kirkpatrick, A. (2011). *Internationalization or Englishization: Medium of instruction in today's universities.* Hong Kong: Centre for Governance and Citizenship, The Hong Kong Institute of Education.

Knight, J. (2003). Updated internationalization definition. *International Higher Education, 33*, 2–3.

Knight, J. (2004). Internationalization remodeled. Definition, approaches and rationales. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 8*(1), 5–31.

Kuteeva, M., & Airey, J. (2014). Disciplinary differences in the use of English in higher education: Reflections on recent language policy developments. *Higher Education, 67*, 533–549.

Lau, K., & Lin, C.-Y. (2014). The role of English as a social lingua franca: The case of the international students of a university in Taiwan. *The Asian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 1*(1), 36–49.

Li, D. (2006). Chinese as a lingua franca in Greater China. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 26*, 149–176.

Li, D. C. S. (2012). Linguistic hegemony or linguistic capital? Internationalization and English-medium instruction at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. In A. Doiz, D. Lasagabaster, & J. M. Sierra (Eds.), *English-medium instruction at universities: Global challenges* (pp. 65–83). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Li, M., & Bray, M. (2007). Cross-border flows of students for higher education: Push–pull factors and motivations of mainland Chinese students in Hong Kong and Macau. *Higher Education, 53*, 791–818.

Li, V. W. K., & Majanovich, S. E. (2010). Marching on a long road: A review of the effectiveness of the mother-tongue education policy in post-colonial Hong Kong. *Gist Education and Learning Research Journal, 4*(1), 10–29.

Mazzarol, T., & Soutar, G. N. (2002). "Push–pull" factors influencing international student destination choice. *International Journal of Educational Management, 16*(2), 82–90.

McAllister, L., Whiteford, G., Hill, B., Thomas, N., & Fitzgerald, M. (2006). Reflection in intercultural learning: Examining the international experience through a critical incident approach. *Reflective Practice, 7*(3), 367–381.

Ministry of Education, Republic of Taiwan. (2014). *Statistical smmaries.* Retrieved 1 March 2015 from http://english.moe.gov.tw/lp.asp?CtNode=11429&CtUnit=1345&BaseDSD=16&mp=1.

Ministry of Education, Republic of Taiwan. (2015). *Challenge 2008: National development plan.* Retrieved November 22 from http://english.moe.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=7043&ctNode=784&mp=1.

Mok, K. H. (2007). Questing for internationalization of universities in Asia: Critical reflections. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 11*, 433–454.

Morrison, K., & Lui, I. (2000). Ideology, linguistic capitals and the medium of instruction in Hong Kong. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 21*(6), 471–486.

Oladejo, J. (2006). Parents' attitude towards bilingual education policy in Taiwan. *Bilingual Research Journal, 30*(1), 147–170.

Palmer, M., O'Kane, P., & Owens, M. (2009). Betwist spaces: Student accounts of turning point experiences in the first-year transition. *Studies in Higher Education, 34*(1), 37–54.

Park, J. S. Y. (2009). *The local construction of a global language: Ideologies of English in South Korea.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Park, J. S. Y. (2011). The promise of English: Linguistic capital and the neoliberal worker in the South Korean job market. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 14*(4), 443–455.

Pennycook, A. (2001). *Critical applied linguistics: A critical introduction.* Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Preisler, B. (2009). Complementary languages: The national language and English as working language in European universities. In P. Harder (Ed.), *English in Denmark: Language policy, internationalization and university teaching* (pp. 10–28). Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press and the University of Copenhagen.

Rienties, B., Beausaert, S., Grohnert, T., Niemantsverdriet, S., & Kommers, P. (2012). Understanding academic performance: The role of ethnicity, academic and social integration. *Higher Education, 63*(6), 685–700.

Roberts, A., Chou, P., & Ching, G. (2010). Contemporary trends in East Asian higher education: Dispositions of international students in a Taiwan university. *Higher Education, 59*, 149–166.

Sandel, T. L. (2003). Linguistic capital in Taiwan: The KMT's mandarin language policy and its perceived impact on linguistic practices of bilingual Mandarin and Tai-gi speakers. *Language in Society, 32*(4), 523–551.

Scott, M., & Tiun, H.-K. (2007). Mandarin-only to Mandarin-plus: Taiwan. *Language Policy, 6*(1), 53–72.

Severiens, S. E., & Schmidt, H. G. (2009). Academic and social integration and study progress in problem based learning. *Higher Education, 58*, 59–69.

Shaw, P., Caudery, T., & Petersen, M. (2009). The motivations of students on exchange in Scandinavia: Motivation, interaction, ELF development. In A. Mauranen & E. Ranta (Eds.), *English as a lingua franca: Studies and findings* (pp. 178–199). Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press.

Silver, R. E. (2005). The discourse of linguistic capital: Language and economic policy planning in Singapore. *Language Policy, 4*, 47–66.

Smit, U. (2010). *English as a lingua franca in higher education: A longitudinal study of classroom discourse*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co.

Song, M.-M., & Tai, H.-H. (2007). Taiwan's responses to globalisaton: Internationalisation and questing for world class universities. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, 27*(3), 323–340.

Spolsky, B. (2009). *Language management*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Spolsky, B., & Shohamy, E. (2000). Language practice, language ideology, and language policy. In R. D. Lambert & E. Shohamy (Eds.), *Language policy and pedagogy: Essays in honor of A. Ronald Walton* (pp. 1–41). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Tan, C. (2006). Change and continuity: Chinese language policy in Singapore. *Language Policy, 5*(1), 41–62.

Tien, C.-Y. (2013). Codeswitching in a university in Taiwan. In R. Barnard & J. McLellam (Eds.), *Codeswitching in university English-medium classes: Asian perspectives* (pp. 24–42). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Times Higher Education. (2015). *The Asia University rankings*. Retrieved 1 May 2015 from http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/world-university-rankings/2013-14/regional-ranking/region/asia.

Tinto, V. (1987). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Tsao, F.-F. (2000). The language planning situation in Taiwan. In R. B. Baldauf Jr. & R. B. Kaplan (Eds.), *Language planning in Nepal, Taiwan and Sweden* (pp. 60–106). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Vickers, P., & Bekhradnia, B. (2007). *The economic costs and benefits of international students*. Oxford: Higher Education Policy Institute.

Vidovich, L. (2002). Quality assurance in Australian higher education: Globalisation and 'steering at a distance'. *Higher Education, 43*(3), 391–408.

Wu, M.-H. (2011). Language planning and policy in Taiwan: Past, present and future. *Language Problems & Language Planning, 35*(1), 15–34.

Young, M., Kuo, F., & Myers, M. D. (2012). To share or not to share: A critical research perspective on knowledge management systems. *European Journal of Information Systems, 21*, 496–511.

YZU (Yuan Ze University). (2015a). *Statistics*. Retrieved 1 May 2015 from http://www.yzu.edu.tw/admin/aa/index.php/content/blogcategory/138/259/lang,tw/.

YZU (Yuan Ze University). (2015b). *Courses offered in English*. Retrieved 1 May 2015 from http://www.yzu.edu.tw/admin/oia/index.php/content/view/117/541/lang,en/.