## UTRECHT UNIVERSITY

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

BA THESIS

# Students' Perceptions of English-medium Instruction at Dutch Universities

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#### Abstract

This study aims to provide an insight into Dutch students' attitudes to English-medium instruction at Dutch universities. More specifically, it seeks to answer the question: "What are Dutch students' perceptions of English-medium instruction at Dutch universities?". In this study, a quantitative research design with an online survey was used. The findings suggest that students' attitudes to English-medium instruction in the Netherlands are positive. This research intends to contribute to the growing area of research by exploring Dutch students' perceptions of English-medium instruction.

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#### 1 Introduction

In the past few decades globalization has become an increasingly important topic. Globalization makes it easier to travel to remote places and communicate with people around the world. It is often linked to internationalization, which "includes policies and practices undertaken by academic systems and institutions [...] to cope with the global academic environment" (Altbach & Knight 290). Globalization also makes it easier to study in a foreign country. This is one of the main reasons there is an increasing number of universities that focus on internationalization and offer their curriculum in English. According to Spring, there is a growing global uniformity of educational practices such as the use of English (334). There is debate about whether the Netherlands is still a country in the expanding circle of Karchu's division of countries' use of English (Gerritsen 292). This means that English is used as a foreign language, instead of a second language. Booij claims that English is becoming increasingly popular and has started to develop into a second language in the Netherlands (347). The growing uniformity of educational practices and the development of English as a second language have resulted in many universities in the Netherlands choosing to offer their curriculum in English. However, in this addition of an English curriculum, there are many important elements to consider. According to Coleman, "[a]dopting English requires a switch from a focus on the national system and culture to an international focus" (10). Another important factor that should be taken into account is whether the internationalization attracts local students.

In a study conducted at Delft University of Technology by Klaassen it was found that, to have a truly international profile, lecturers should at least have a C1 level in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFL) (71). Klaassen defines that a university has an international profile if the level of English is sufficient for students from abroad to participate in courses. As a result, the international profile will be enhanced if more students from abroad are attracted.

The existing body of research on internationalization at Dutch universities suggests that it should be assessed what students' attitudes are toward the increasing use of English at Dutch universities. This research aims to determine Dutch students' attitudes to English at Dutch universities are by using a survey.

#### 2 Literature Review

#### 2.1 The Increasing Use of English at Universities

There are several reasons for universities to add an English track to the curriculum. English is one of the most dominant languages nowadays for communicating with people around the world. It is a lingua franca (Dewaele 133), which means that "it is used as a contact language across lingua-cultures whose members are in the main so-called nonnative speakers" (Jenkins 157). Moreover, English is also becoming increasingly popular in Europe because "wider use of English is promoted through economic, political and strategic alliances, through scientific, technological, and cultural corporations, through improved communications, and through internationalization of professional and personal domains of activity" (Coleman 2). In addition, the European Union stimulates the use of Content Integrated Language Learning (CLIL)<sup>1</sup> to "enhance individual and societal multilingualism. The wider use of English in the world is one of the most important reasons for universities to offer their curriculum in English. Students will be a part of an environment that promotes the wider use of English after graduating, which emphasizes the importance to prepare students for that terrain. According to Qiang, this environment "[does not only require] academic and professional knowledge, but also multilingualism, and social and intercultural skills and attitudes" (248). Thus, it has become an increasingly popular practice to teach content through English-medium instruction, especially in the Netherlands (Smit & Dafouz 1). Since 2002, the amount of BA and MA programs offered in English has tripled in the Netherlands (Smit & Dafouz 1). Booij mentions that an important reason for the popularity of English in the Netherlands is the open attitude to the Anglo-Saxon culture (2). As mentioned earlier, there is debate about English is used as an EFL, or an ESL (Gerritsen; Booij). In a study by Edwards (189), it was shown that varieties and corpus of the Dutch variety of English illustrated features of both English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL).

Furthermore, universities in the Netherlands choose to offer their curriculum in English, so they can recruit international students to earn profits (Altbach & Knight, 292) and to stimulate cultural diversity (Bartell 62). Some scholars argue that internationalization at universities aims to create responsiveness to globalization and being in line with international standards, instead of just preparing students for the English environment after graduation or recruiting international students (Qiang; McKay; Altbach & Knight; Deem et. al).

#### 2.2 Adding an English Curriculum at Dutch Universities

In the process of adding an English curriculum or track at a Dutch university, it is important to consider several elements. Even though adding an English curriculum can be a good preparation for students' future in an international

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>CLIL: Using a second language to teach a subject (Coleman 4).

academic environment, Coleman claims that there are multiple predictable problems that should be taken into consideration in European countries (7). Firstly, the skills level could be too low and there might be need for language training of teachers and students. Secondly, native speaker teachers in European countries might have difficulties coping with non-native speaking students. Thirdly, there could be a lack of interest in English from local students. Finally, the cultural integration of international students in the local student life might be problematic (Coleman 7). It is necessary to take these potential problems into account when adding an English curriculum at a Dutch university. In a study by Airey, it was found that "lecturers need to be given sufficient time to prepare for teaching [...] English [in Sweden] and course administrators need to acknowledge this fact" (50). Moreover, Airey claims that students and lecturers' level of English might be adequate, but they are not confident enough to speak English. One question that requires further examination, however, is what teachers level of English in the Netherlands really is.

There is a relatively small body of literature that is concerned with teachers' level of English in the Netherlands. In research conducted by Klaassen, it was established that, to achieve an international image, it is recommended that teachers have CEFR level C1 (71). The research consisted of an English language screening of the scientific staff at Delft University of Technology. It was demonstrated in the results that there was a mean score of C1. Klaassen concluded that, even though there were many complaints by students suggesting that lecturers' the level of English was poor, the level was reasonable. After publishing this article, no complaints were made by students for a while. However, "[c]ontrary to the expectations of the Board of Directors, [...] student complaints have resumed after a year, despite the effort to raise the proficiency of the scientific staff" (Klaassen 74). This indicates that it might not only be the lecturers' level of English, but also that students could have a negative attitude to English in general for instance. Therefore, it is important to examine what students' attitudes to English-medium instruction are.

#### 2.3 Students' Attitudes to English-medium Instruction

In a study by Dewaele, the attitudes of Flemish students to the English and French language were measured. Dewaele declared that "[a]ttitudes to foreign languages are clearly determined by the individuals perception of his/her capacity to sustain successful [...] interactions in that language" (133). It was found that students were generally more positive about English, which "may [...] be the result of the perception of English as a lingua franca" (Dewaele 133). There are few studies in the area of Dutch students' attitudes to English. To indicate what elements should be taken into consideration when adding an English track in the Netherlands, it is important to examine Dutch students attitudes to English-medium instruction at Dutch universities.

## 2.4 Research Question

The elements that are discussed above raise the next question: What are Dutch students' perceptions of English-medium instruction at Dutch universities?

To answer the research question above, three sub questions were formulated:

SQ1: What are students' attitudes to English?

SQ2: To what extent can students understand English-medium instruction?

SQ3: What are students' perceptions of their teachers' level of English?

#### 3 Method

The aim of this study is to assess what Dutch students' attitudes to English-medium instruction are by using a quantitative approach. A survey was published online for students who met the requirements. There were three sections in the survey (Appendix A). These sections focused on three sub questions: "What are students' attitudes to the English language?", "To what extent do students understand English-medium instruction", and "What are students' perceptions of their teachers level of English". This chapter will focus on the method, which includes criteria for participants, the structure of the survey, tools used for data analysis, and the procedure followed to conduct the research.

#### 3.1 Participants

The criteria for recruiting the participants can be listed as follows: Dutch had to be the first language and the participant had to be enrolled at a Dutch university in an English-language program.

This study aims to determine students' attitudes to the use of English at Dutch universities in an English curriculum. To support the aim of the study, students were required to have a minimum of four courses in English to make sure they had enough experience to form an opinion about an English curriculum. As a result, it was decided to set the requirement that the students were enrolled in an MA, BA, Minor or Premaster program in English. It was also specified that the respondents should be current students, as the attitudes of students nowadays are measured. Finally, it should be noted that English Language and Culture students were excluded due to a potential bias.

During the first four days, 51 respondents were acquired via a link on Facebook. On the fifth day, five participants were recruited at University Library de Uithof. All respondents completed the survey online. The participants at the Library in Utrecht borrowed a laptop to complete the survey. There was no specific information given about the aim of the research to any of the respondents beforehand. 26 women (46,4%), and 30 men (53,6%) participated in the survey. There were 56 respondents (N=56) from different universities who completed the survey. Since the most important requirement was their familiarity with an English curriculum at a Dutch university, no questions about age were included.

#### 3.2 The Survey

Before the survey officially started, respondents were asked to answer three general questions to gather information about the respondent. The respondents were asked about their gender, the university at which they studied, and the degree. It was important to find out at which university the participant studied and his or her subject because this might influence their perception of English-medium instruction. For instance, a student who studies for a degree in International Business might feel English is more important than a student at a Technical University.

The survey consisted of 21 questions including the general questions. The official part of the survey contained 19 questions divided into three parts, which focused on three sub questions. The first sub question examined students attitudes to English, the second sub question investigated to what extent Dutch students understand English-medium instruction, and the final sub question aimed to demonstrate what students' perceptions are of their teachers' level of English (Appendix A). The results from the survey can be found in Appendix B. Every part of the survey consisted of five questions and included closed questions with a 5-point scale. At the end of the survey, respondents were asked to rate the level of English at their university on a 10-point scale. All of the questions were formulated in Dutch, as all participants' first language (L1) was Dutch.

#### 3.3 Tools

LimeSurvey and SPSS were used to analyze and collect data from the survey. LimeSurvey is an online tool to create and share surveys. The data collected in LimeSurvey could be exported to SPSS or Excel. In this research, SPSS was chosen for the analysis, as it offered more possibilities for statistics than Excel.

#### 3.4 Procedure

A pilot survey was carried out before the final version of the survey was put online. Five participants were asked to complete the pilot. The data collected during the pilot was analyzed to improve the survey. Several questions were added and rephrased after the pilot. The questions that were added contributed to more information for the first, second and third sub question. The online survey was shared via Facebook and completed by 51 respondents. Additionally, five participants were approached at the Utrecht University Library de Uithof on Wednesday February 15, 2017. The respondents at the University Library were asked to complete the survey on a laptop. It took approximately five minutes to complete the survey, and no information about the content of the research was given. To motivate participants to complete the questionnaire, a raffle prize was offered. The introduction explained what requirements there were for students to qualify, how many questions it contained, and how long it approximately took to complete the survey. There was no specific information provided about the research to prevent potential bias. The data collected in LimeSurvey was exported to SPSS to process and analyze the information. The results of this study will be discussed in the next chapter.

#### 4 Results

This chapter will focus on the results retrieved from the survey and subsequent data analysis (Appendix B). The first section will examine the first sub question, "What are students' attitudes to English?" Secondly, the results of the sub question "What are students' abilities to understand English-medium instruction?" will be presented. The third sub question "What are students' perceptions of teachers' level of English during English-medium instruction?" will be discussed in the final part of the results.

### 4.1 What Are Students' Attitudes to English?

The first set of questions aimed to measure students' attitudes to English. Table 4.1 shows an overview of the questions in the part of SQ1. Question 1A, 1B, and 1D focused on English in general, and question 1C, 1E and 1F on English at universities.

Table 1: SQ1 Statistics

| Question                                                                                                       | N  | Min | Max | Mean | SD    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-----|-----|------|-------|
| 1A: I like the English language.                                                                               | 56 | 2   | 5   | 4.39 | .705  |
| 1B: I think it is important that English is learned at an early age.                                           | 56 | 3   | 5   | 4.70 | .502  |
| 1C: I think that an English track at university increases the possibility of getting a good job in the future. | 56 | 2   | 5   | 4.11 | .908  |
| 1D: I think English is an international language.                                                              | 56 | 4   | 5   | 4.89 | .312  |
| 1E: Im not discouraged to ask a question in English during a lecture.                                          | 56 | 2   | 5   | 4.30 | .952  |
| 1F: Im bothered by the increasing use of English at Dutch universities.                                        | 56 | 1   | 5   | 2.36 | 1.017 |

As can be seen from the table above, there was agreement amongst students (rating between 4-5) in this part of the survey. The statement "I like the English language" (A1) was answered very positively; there was only one respondent who disagreed. The outcome of this question might have been influenced due to the positive formulation of this question, as positively formulated questions can be interpreted differently (Borgers et. al. 30). These results therefore need to be interpreted with caution. Furthermore, the mean score for A2 was 4.7, which indicates that students think it is important that English is learned at a

young age. Few respondents thought that an English track does not increase the possibility for a job in the future (1C, N=3). Apparently, nearly all students thought that English is an international language, as the standard deviation (SD=.705) was the lowest and the mean (M=4.89) highest. In addition, students were not afraid to ask questions in English during a lecture (1E, M=4.30). Finally, students were relatively positive about the increasing use of English at Dutch universities (1F), as they disagreed with the last question in this part of the survey. This question was formulated negatively which, again, indicates that the results need to be interpreted with caution. In these last two questions (1E, 1F), however, the standard deviation is relatively high. This means the attitudes between students varied.

At the end of the survey, students were asked to rate the level of English at their university. The results of this final rating are presented below.

Table 2: Level of English in current degree at University

|       | N  | Min | Max | $\mathbf{M}$ | SD     |
|-------|----|-----|-----|--------------|--------|
| Grade | 56 | 4.0 | 9.0 | 7.3          | 1.1069 |

The mean score for the rating, which was on 10-point scale, was a 7.3. It should be noted that the standard deviation of this question, as well as the last two questions of SQ1 in the survey, is approximately 1.0. The frequency of the given grades demonstrate how the given answers were spread (Appendix B, Table 6). 19,6% of the students (N=11) graded the use of English at their universities with a 6,0 or lower, and 44,6% (N=25) an 8,0 or higher.

# 4.2 To What Extent do Students Understand Englishmedium Instruction?

The results for SQ2, as shown in Table 3, indicate that respondents thought they have no problems understanding English-medium instruction.

Table 3: SQ2 Statistics

| Question                                                                                              | Ň  | Min | Max | Mean | SD   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-----|-----|------|------|
| 2A: In general, I think<br>that I am good at                                                          | 56 | 2   | 5   | 4.43 | .759 |
| speaking English.                                                                                     |    |     |     |      |      |
| 2B: I can easily follow an English lecture.                                                           | 56 | 2   | 5   | 4.64 | .672 |
| 2C: I can easily understand<br>English-medium<br>instruction.                                         | 56 | 3   | 5   | 4.54 | .660 |
| 2D: If I dont understand<br>an English word, I can<br>figure out the meaning<br>by using the context. | 56 | 1   | 5   | 4.38 | .906 |
| 2E: I can easily absorb<br>and process information<br>during an English<br>lecture.                   | 56 | 2   | 5   | 4.34 | .880 |

The mean score for every question in this category is between four and five, which is presented in the table above. This shows that most participants feel that they can easily understand English-medium instruction during a lecture. Moreover, students think that their English is good (M=4.43, SD=,759). Only 5.4% (N=3) answered with a 3 (neutral) or lower.

# 4.3 What Are Students Perceptions of Their Teachers Level of English?

Interestingly, it was observed that there were different responses to the final part measuring SQ3. Compared to the other sub questions that assessed students' attitudes to English and their ability to understand English-medium instruction, this question about students' attitudes to their teachers' level of English was answered less positively.

Table 4: SQ3 Statistics

| Question                                                                                                                 | N  | Min | Max | Mean | SD    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-----|-----|------|-------|
| 3A: I think it is important that my teacher speaks English fluently                                                      | 56 | 2   | 5   | 4.45 | .872  |
| 3B: I think it is important that my teacher does not have an audible foreign accent in English.                          | 56 | 1   | 5   | 2.93 | 1.110 |
| 3C: I think that my teachers generally have a high level of English.                                                     | 56 | 1   | 5   | 3.38 | .983  |
| 3D: I think my teachers' English-medium instruction is intelligible                                                      | 56 | 2   | 5   | 3.88 | .740  |
| 3E: When I (or someone else) ask(s) a question, my teacher formulates the answer completely in English.                  | 56 | 2   | 5   | 4.04 | .852  |
| 3F: If I had the choice, I would prefer to follow a Dutch track because of the low level of English in my study program. | 56 | 1   | 5   | 2.05 | 1.227 |

There was agreement amongst the participants that it is important for a teacher to speak English fluently (M=4.45, SD=.872). Participants responded between disagree and neutral (M=2.93, SD = 1.110) to the importance of a teacher without a foreign accent in English (3B). Students responded neutral towards their teachers' level of English in the third question (3C, M=3.38, SD=.983). The most striking result to emerge from the data is that all respondents' attitudes were more positive about their own level of English than their teachers' level of English. In table 4.5, the mean of question 2A that measures students' own level of English is compared to that of 3C, which measures students' perceptions their teachers' level of English.

Table 5: Comparison 2A & 3C

| 2A: In general, I think that | Iamg         | good | at speaking English. |
|------------------------------|--------------|------|----------------------|
| 3C: I think that             |              |      |                      |
| my teachers generally        | $\mathbf{M}$ | N    | SD                   |
| have a high level of English |              |      |                      |
| 1                            | 4.50         | $^2$ | .707                 |
| 2                            | 4.00         | 11   | 1.000                |
| 3                            | 4.60         | 10   | .516                 |
| 4                            | 4.47         | 30   | .730                 |
| 5                            | 5.00         | 3    | .000                 |
| Total                        | 4.43         | 56   | .759                 |

The table above demonstrates that all students (N=56) who answered question 3C were more positive about 2A. This indicates that every respondent who completed the survey rated their own level of English higher than their teachers' level of English. Furthermore, the mean score of the level of English in their current degree at university listed in table 2 was a 7.3, whereas the mean of their teachers level of English was 3.38. Both of these questions seem to ask the respondent to rate the level of English, but were answered differently. Respondents generally thought that their teachers English-medium instruction is intelligible (M=3.88, SD=.740). Finally, it should also be noted that students would not prefer to follow a Dutch track if they had the choice (M=2.02, SD-1.227). In the next chapter, the results will be discussed.

#### 5 Discussion

In this chapter, the results presented in the previous chapter will be discussed. The sub questions will be discussed one by one and they will be explained and interpreted by using the results from the survey, and previous research.

#### 5.1 What Are Students' Attitudes to English?

The first three questions in the first part of the survey measured students' attitudes to the English language in general. Participants responded positively to the sub question as a whole. They generally like the English language (1A, Appendix B), they think it is an international language (1D, Appendix B), and they think it is important to learn English at an early age (1B, 1C, Appendix B), also with respect to job prospects. The outcomes of the survey correspond to recent studies of European students' attitudes to English-medium instruction in several countries in Europe (Coleman; Jenkins; Smit & Dafouz).

The last two questions in this part of the survey focused more on attitudes to English at university. The majority of the respondents are confident to ask questions during a lecture (1E, Appendix B). The context for respondents in this study is similar to CLIL, which is used in secondary schools in the Netherlands. However, the aim of using CLIL in secondary school is to teach English. In English-medium instruction, it is primarily about the content that is learned. Some of the respondents did not choose an English track, as a Dutch track is not always available. Even though it was not always their own choice to follow an English track and English is not their L1, they responded that they are not discouraged ask questions. This indicates that students are quite confident to speak English during a lecture. According to Ryan & Viete, students that are studying abroad "may experience an initial loss of confidence", partly because of the language differences (310). This indicates that Dutch students abroad might have difficulties speaking English during a lecture. However, the respondents participating in this survey had Dutch as an L1, and were studying in a familiar environment, such as their home country. Moreover, there are many lecturers at higher universities in the Netherlands whose L1 is also Dutch. If students have the same L1 as their lecturers, they might feel less intimidated to speak up, which could explain why respondents were confident to ask questions during a lecture.

Another question that should be discussed is the final question (1F, Appendix B) of this part, which focuses on the increasing use of English at higher universities. The results of this question support the idea of several studies which established that European students are not bothered by the internationalization at their universities (Berns et. al; Littlewood; Coleman; Jenkins). However, the standard deviation in this question (1F, Appendix B) was high and every answer in the rating was chosen by at least one participant. It is therefore important to consider the different attitudes of students to internationalization at Dutch universities. There are many elements that can influence a respondent's opinion about internationalization at universities, which makes

### 5.2 To What Extent do Students Understand Englishmedium Instruction?

It was striking that every question in the second part examining SQ2 was answered extremely positively. This indicates that a vast majority of the respondents agree that they can understand a lecture in English easily. Moreover, nearly all students who participated also agreed that they have a high level of English. It might be the case that all of the respondents really have a high level of English. However, MacIntyre et. al, and Williams & Takaku showed that students tend to overestimate their level of an L2, and self-efficacy. This present study is consistent with that of MacIntyre et. al, and Williams & Takaku because respondents were very positive about their own level of English. These results from the survey suggest that respondents might be overestimating their level of English.

# 5.3 What Are Students' Perceptions of Their Teachers' Level of English?

The questions in the final part were answered more neutrally. There are several results that raise questions. Firstly, one unanticipated finding was that students were less positive (3C, M=3.38) about their teachers' proficiency, than their own level of English (2A, M=4.43). It seems possible that these results are due to students having higher expectations of their teacher's level of English, as teachers can be seen as a model for students. In a study by Klaassen, it was shown that the average level of lecturers at Delft University of Technology is C1 in the CEFR. The aim of her study was to demonstrate teachers' level of English at university because there were complaints amongst students about their teachers proficiency in English. According to Klaassen, the published test results with a C1 level were considered reasonable, which caused students not to complain for a year (74). However, the complaints returned, which also emphasizes that students tend to stay critical of their teachers' proficiency.

There were two questions that explicitly asked the respondent to rate the level of English at university (3C, Table 4, Appendix B). The questions were asked differently: 3C focused on teachers' proficiency during English-medium instruction, and the final question asked respondents to rate the level of English in their curriculum at university. Surpisingly, it was found that there was a difference in the results of these two questions. The mean score was 3.38 out of 5 for the 3C question about teachers level of English. The rating of English at their university was answered with a mean score of 7.3 out of 10. There was a difference in the rating scale because the last question intended to indicate students' perceptions of the English in their curriculum at university in general. Students might have felt that they had to take other things into account when they were asked to rate the level of English at their university, for instance the English version on the website, or their own proficiency during classes. It

is difficult to explain this result, but the rating might be related to Dutch students being generally satisfied about their universities in the Netherlands (Franses & Verhoef, 602). According to the research conducted by Klaassen, students' tend to remain critical about teachers' level of English. This indicates that the difference might be due to students' satisfaction about the university they are studying at, and the criticism about their teachers. This might be an explanation for this inconsistency between the 3C question and the final rating.

#### 6 Conclusion

This chapter will attempt to answer the question of what students perceptions are of English-medium instruction at Dutch universities and summarize the findings in this study. Furthermore, important elements that might have affected outcomes or should have been taken into consideration will be discussed in the limitations. The final paragraph will recommend further research.

#### 6.1 Summary and Conclusion

The aim of this study was to examine Dutch students perceptions of Englishmedium instruction at Dutch universities. Students were asked to complete an online survey. Firstly, SQ1 measured students' attitudes to English in general. SQ2 investigated to what extent students understand English-medium instruction. Finally, students perceptions of their teachers level of English were examined in SQ3. The present study has gone some way towards enhancing the understanding of students attitudes to internationalization at universities, students' perceptions of their lecturers level of English, and their own level of English.

Firstly, it became apparent that a majority of the Dutch students who completed the survey have a positive attitude to English in general. The final question that asked students to grade the level of English at their university was answered positively (Appendix B, Table 4, M=7.3). These findings coincide with earlier research (Coleman; Jenkins; Smit & Dafouz). Moreover, when students were asked to indicate if they were bothered by increasing use of English at Dutch universities, also known as internationalization (Altbach & Knight, 290), the mean score was positive (M=2.36). However, it must be stressed that a considerable amount of respondents were not positive about the internationalization at Dutch universities. This resulted into a mean score that might not be representative for all students due to the answers that were widely spread.

In addition, respondents were very positive about their ability to understand English-medium instruction. All of the questions incorporated in the second part of the survey were answered extremely positively. This present study seems to confirm the implications of earlier research that students might overestimate their level of an L2 and self-efficacy in English (MacIntyre et. al; Williams & Takaku).

Furthermore, one of the more significant findings to emerge from this study is that students are less positive about teachers' level of English at Dutch universities. All respondents rated their teachers' level of English lower than their own. This, again, suggests that students often overestimate their own level of English. It also seems that students tend to be more critical of their teachers than they are of themselves. In a study by Klaassen (2010), it was found that teachers' proficiency in English at a Dutch university was good. After a year, however, students returned with complaints, which implies that students' will remain critical about their teachers' proficiency. It is therefore important to understand the reason for these complaints.

In conclusion, the present study overall strengthens the idea that students are positive about the increasing use of English at Dutch universities. However, it still seems that students remain critical of their teachers' level of English. English. Several limitations, such as a shortage of time and respondents, can contribute to suggestions for further research.

#### 6.2 Limitations

In this study, there are several limitations that should be noted. Firstly, due to the limited amount of time, the survey was only online for a week. To represent all Dutch students in the Netherlands in an English curriculum at a Dutch university, there should have been more respondents. It is unfortunate that this study did not investigate students attitudes to English in relation to their university or study program more extensively, as it could have gained more insight into potential differences between these programs. There was not enough data to make generalizations about the level of English at the university or study program of respondents. Participants were asked to fill in their university and study program, and many students from different universities responded, which resulted into small groups of respondents per university. Another limitation was that students seem to overestimate their own level of English. It would have been useful to take this in consideration while formulating the questions. These factors may have affected the outcomes of the survey.

#### 6.3 Further Research

Further research could usefully explore Dutch students perceptions of internationalization at Dutch universities by taking more time to recruit respondents. This way, more data might be retrieved, which enhances the reliability of the results. Moreover, a greater focus on the differences in students attitudes to the internationalization process at universities could produce results that are more representative for the Netherlands as a whole. A future study investigating the different attitudes among several disciplines to the use of English at Dutch universities would be very interesting. Finally, if the debate is to be moved forward, a better understanding students reasoning about their perceptions needs to be developed. This can be achieved by conducting a research with a qualitative approach, as it might provide more insights to students perceptions.

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## 8 Appendix

#### 8.1 Appendix A

Bedankt voor het aanklikken van mijn vragenlijst! Deze enqute duurt ongeveer 5 minuten en bestaat uit 21 vragen.

Let op! Je kunt alleen meedoen aan deze enqute als je aan deze voorwaarden voldoet:

- Nederlands is je moedertaal.
- Je doet een Bachelor, Master, Minor of Premaster aan een Nederlandse universiteit.
- Je cursussen worden volledig in het Engels gegeven.
- Je bent gn student Engelse Taal en Cultuur.

Deze vragenlijst voor is opgesteld voor mijn Bachelorscriptie aan de Universiteit Utrecht. Er zullen eerst een aantal algemene vragen gesteld worden en daarna zal de vragenlijst officieel beginnen. Heb je nog vragen? Stuur me dan gerust een berichtje op Facebook, of stuur een mailtje naar estelle.roijmans@gmail.com. Alvast bedankt voor je deelname.

#### Groetjes, Estelle Roijmans

- 1 = Zeer mee oneens
- 2 = Oneens
- 3 = Neutraal
- 4 = Eens
- 5 = Zeer mee eens

#### Engels (SQ1):

- 1. Ik vind Engels een leuke taal.
  - 1 2 3 4 5
- 2. Ik vind het belangrijk dat je Engels op een jonge leeftijd leert.
  - 1 2 3 4 5
- 1 2 3 4 5
- 3. Ik vind dat een Engels studieprogramma de kans op een goede baan vergroot.
  - 1 2 3 4 5
- 4. Ik vind Engels een internationale taal.
  - 1 2 3 4 5
- 5. Ik durf tijdens een college vragen te stellen in het Engels.
  - 1 2 3 4 5
- 6. Ik stoor me aan de verengelsing op Nederlandse universiteiten.
  - 1 2 3 4 5
- 1 = Zeer mee oneens
- 2 = Oneens
- 3 = Neutraal
- 4 = Eens

#### 5 = Zeer mee eens

#### Begrijpen (SQ2):

- 1. Ik heb het gevoel dat ik Engels over het algemeen goed beheers.
  - 1 2 3 4 5
- 2. Ik kan een college dat volledig in het Engels gegeven wordt goed volgen.
  - 1 2 3 4 5
- 3. Ik kan uitleg die in het Engels gegeven wordt makkelijk begrijpen.
  - 1 2 3 4 5
- 4. Als ik een woord niet begrijp, kan ik de betekenis van het woord door de context achterhalen.
  - 1 2 3 4 5
- 5. Ik kan informatie die in het Engels uitgelegd wordt tijdens een college snel opnemen en verwerken.
  - $1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5$
- 1 = Zeer mee oneens
- 2 = Oneens
- 3 = Neutraal
- 4 = Eens
- 5 = Zeer mee eens

#### Duidelijkheid (SQ3):

- 1. Ik vind het belangrijk dat mijn docent vloeiend Engels spreekt.
  - $1\quad 2\quad 3\quad 4\quad 5$
- 2. Ik vind het belangrijk dat mijn docent geen hoorbaar accent heeft tijdens de uitleg.
  - 1 2 3 4 5
- 3. Ik vind dat mijn docenten over het algemeen goed Engels spreken.
  - $1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \ 5$
- 4. Ik vind de uitleg van mijn docenten verstaanbaar.
  - $1\quad 2\quad 3\quad 4\quad 5$
- 5. Als ik (of iemand anders) een vraag stel(t), formuleert mijn docent het antwoord volledig in het Engels.
  - 1 2 3 4 5
- 6. Als ik de mogelijkheid krijg om mijn studie in het Nederlands te volgen, zou ik vanwege het Engels niveau op mijn opleiding hiervoor kiezen.
  - 1 2 3 4 5

Rating: Geef hieronder aan welk cijfer je het Engels binnen jouw opleiding zou geven.

# 8.2 Appendix B

Table 1: SQ1 Statistics

| Overtices                             | N    | Min    | Max | Mean | SD    |
|---------------------------------------|------|--------|-----|------|-------|
| Question                              | 11/  | IVIIII | Max | Mean | യ     |
| 1A: I like the                        | 56   | 2      | 5   | 4.39 | .705  |
| English language.                     | 30   |        | 5   | 4.39 | .705  |
| 1B: I think it is                     |      |        |     |      |       |
| important that English                | 56   | 3      | 5   | 4.70 | .502  |
| is learned at an early age.           |      |        |     |      |       |
| 1C: I think that an                   |      |        |     |      |       |
| English track at university increases |      |        |     |      | 000   |
| the possibility of getting            | 56   | 2      | 5   | 4.11 | .908  |
| a good job in the future.             |      |        |     |      |       |
| 1D: I think English                   | F.C. | 4      | 5   | 1.00 | 210   |
| is an international language.         | 56   | 4      | Э   | 4.89 | .312  |
| 1E: Im not discouraged                |      |        |     |      |       |
| to ask a question in English          | 56   | 2      | 5   | 4.30 | .952  |
| during a lecture.                     |      |        |     |      |       |
| 1F: Im bothered by the                |      |        |     |      |       |
| increasing use of English             | 56   | 1      | 5   | 2.36 | 1.017 |
| at Dutch universities.                |      |        |     |      |       |

| Table 2: Grade Statistics |    |     |     |     |        |  |  |
|---------------------------|----|-----|-----|-----|--------|--|--|
|                           | N  | Min | Max | M   | SD     |  |  |
| Grade                     | 56 | 4.0 | 9.0 | 7 3 | 1 1069 |  |  |

Table 3: SQ2 Statistics

| Question                    | N  | Min | Max      | Mean | SD   |
|-----------------------------|----|-----|----------|------|------|
| 2A: In general, I think     |    |     |          |      |      |
| that I am good at           | 56 | 2   | 5        | 4.43 | .759 |
| speaking English.           |    |     |          |      |      |
| 2B: I can easily            | 56 | 2   | 5        | 4.64 | .672 |
| follow an English lecture.  | 50 |     | 9        | 4.04 | .072 |
| 2C: I can easily understand |    |     |          |      |      |
| English-medium              | 56 | 3   | 5        | 4.54 | .660 |
| instruction.                |    |     |          |      |      |
| B4: If I dont understand    |    |     |          |      |      |
| an English word, I can      | 56 | 1   | 5        | 4.38 | .906 |
| figure out the meaning      | 50 | 1   | 0        | 4.36 | .900 |
| by using the context.       |    |     |          |      |      |
| 2D: I can easily absorb     |    |     |          |      |      |
| and process information     | 56 | 2   | 5        | 4.34 | 990  |
| during an English           | 50 |     | )<br>  0 | 4.04 | .880 |
| lecture.                    |    |     |          |      |      |

Table 4: SQ3 Statistics

| Question Table 4. 5Q5 S                 | N    | Min    | Max | Mean | $\overline{SD}$ |
|-----------------------------------------|------|--------|-----|------|-----------------|
|                                         | 11   | 101111 | Max | Mean | שט              |
| 3A: I think it is important             | 56   | 2      | 5   | 4.45 | .872            |
| that my teacher speaks English fluently | 30   | 2      | 0   | 4.40 | .012            |
| 3B: I think it is important that        |      |        |     |      |                 |
| my teacher does not have an audible     | 56   | 1      | 5   | 2.93 | 1.110           |
| foreign accent in English.              |      |        |     |      |                 |
| 3C: I think that my teachers            | 56   | 1      | 5   | 3.38 | .983            |
| generally have a high level of English. | 50   | 1      | 9   | 3.30 | .900            |
| 3D: C4: I think my teachers'            |      |        |     |      |                 |
| English-medium instruction is           | 56   | 2      | 5   | 3.88 | .740            |
| intelligible                            |      |        |     |      |                 |
| 3E: When I (or someone else) ask(s)     |      |        |     |      |                 |
| a question, my teacher formulates the   | 56   | 2      | 5   | 4.04 | .852            |
| answer completely in English.           |      |        |     |      |                 |
| 3F: If I had the choice,                |      |        |     |      |                 |
| I would prefer to follow a Dutch track  | F.C. | 1      | 5   | 2.05 | 1.227           |
| because of the low level of English     | 56   | 1      | ) i | 2.05 | 1.221           |
| in my study program.                    |      |        |     |      |                 |

Table 5: Comparison 2A & 3C

| 2A: In general, I think that I am good at speaking English. |              |    |       |  |  |  |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|----|-------|--|--|--|--|
| 3C: I think that                                            |              |    |       |  |  |  |  |
| my teachers generally                                       | $\mathbf{M}$ | Ν  | SD    |  |  |  |  |
| have a high level of English                                |              |    |       |  |  |  |  |
| 1                                                           | 4.50         | 2  | .707  |  |  |  |  |
| 2                                                           | 4.00         | 11 | 1.000 |  |  |  |  |
| 3                                                           | 4.60         | 10 | .516  |  |  |  |  |
| 4                                                           | 4.47         | 30 | .730  |  |  |  |  |
| 5                                                           | 5.00         | 3  | .000  |  |  |  |  |
| Total                                                       | 4.43         | 56 | .759  |  |  |  |  |

Table 6: Frequency Rating

| -     | Engarranar | Dancont | Cumulative |
|-------|------------|---------|------------|
|       | Frequency  | Percent | Percent    |
| 4.0   | 2          | 3.6     | 3.6        |
| 5.0   | 1          | 1.8     | 5.4        |
| 6.0   | 8          | 14.3    | 19.6       |
| 7.0   | 16         | 28.6    | 48.2       |
| 7.5   | 4          | 7.1     | 55.4       |
| 8.0   | 19         | 33.9    | 89.3       |
| 8.5   | 1          | 1.8     | 91.1       |
| 9     | 5          | 8.9     | 100.0      |
| Total | 56         | 100.0   |            |