調査

The “Glocal” Classroom: English Medium Instruction (EMI) and Adapting Language of Instruction Models from the Greater Bay Area for the Japanese Context

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Abstract: This paper outlines recommendations for implementing glocal – blending global and local perspectives – into the curriculum at Komatsu University. It examines English Medium Instruction (EMI) and Content and Language Learning (CLIL) as key pedagogical approaches for internationalisation and language acquisition. The paper draws insights from case studies of universities in China’s Greater Bay Area and proposes a three-stage language and core skills development plan for Komatsu University’s Intercultural Communication Faculty. This plan emphasises guided discovery-based learning and comprehensive scaffolding to promote intercultural competencies and critical thinking in students to further address contemporary challenges in a globally interconnected world.

Keywords: Glocal, English Medium Instruction, Content and Language Learning, Discovery-Based Learning, Scaffolding

1. Introduction

This research investigates the potential benefits of observing other Asian educational models to inform the development of a glocal studies curriculum at a Japanese higher education institution. The study analyses the educational and internationalisation strategies of two universities in China’s Greater Bay Area, focusing on their objectives within a primarily Cantonese-speaking context. Contemporary literature on “glocalism” (Båge et al., 2021; McDougald, 2018) is also examined to provide further insight into effective language education. Based on this analysis, the paper outlines a strategic plan for a language curriculum that promotes both functional language competency and intercultural communicative skills. First, the foundational concepts in glocal language education will be introduced as well was English Medium Instruction (EMI) and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). Second, an examination of internationalisation policies in the Greater Bay Area. Third, the glocal education context in Japan and its relationship with internationalisation. Finally, a plan of action and a Glocal curriculum framework is introduced and outlined.

2. Foundational Concepts in Glocal and Language Education

Glocal can be understood as the combination of the words “global” and “local,” the term originated from the Japanese word *dochakuka,* which refers to farming techniques that matched local conditions (Miyoshi & Harootunian, 1989; Robertson, 1995). The term was alter adopted for business use under the concept of “global localisation” where global outlooks were adjusted for local contexts (Robertson, 1995). The core philosophical feature of glocal is the dialectical relationship of local and global where local actions affect global change, and that local and global are mutual constitutive factors that reflect through a dynamic and bidirectional relationship (Båge et al., 2021; Sklad et al., 2016; Weber, 2007). In addition to the dialectical relationship, the simultaneity of global and local interpenetration is also key, where globalising and localising forces are not always contradictory, but sublate and complement at times as well (Featherstone & Lash, 1995; Robertson, 1995). This dynamic and bidirectional relationship between global and local rests at the centre of glocal. Next an explanation of the educational context of glocal.

In the educational context, glocal approaches work to address inequalities and promote global communication in local contexts. Glocalisation recognises global inequalities and strives to increase integration to realign and reduce inequalities and global stratification (Weber, 2007). One notable effort is in the decolonisation efforts in Africa and focusing on indigenous knowledge which can be integrated into international worldviews for addressing marginalisation and past wrong-doings and injustices (Hamdan, 2021; Mampane et al., 2018). Hamdan (2021) also highlighted the role of glocalisation as a method of maintaining socio-national identity and to buffer against globalisation. Another educational aspect is language education. Glocal effectiveness comes through cross-border communication and engagement of international and global issues within local contexts and adapting international perspectives and materials that can fit into local teaching, research, and civil needs (Hamdan, 2021). One method for these cross-cultural and intercultural communicative contexts is English Medium Education (EME) which provides a medium for greater knowledge sharing that when coupled with the social justice and understanding of local needs can work to amplify profiles of local communities and ensure knowledge and success in the protection of local heritages while tooling from international knowledge to tackle complex problems.

2.1 Intercultural approach to teaching in Glocal educational contexts

Within the Glocal literature, language teaching from an intercultural approach is strongly recommended. Through an intercultural approach, courses, including language studies, enhance education, inclusivity, and communication (Båge et al., 2021; Hamdan, 2021). McDougald (2018) indicated that intercultural approaches to language teaching move beyond solely focusing on linguistic skills, but rather

explicitly work to integrate language and culture into teaching. This requires learners to engage with differing value systems, and recognising the relationship between language, culture, and learning (Båge et al., 2021). For glocal classrooms to be successful, they need to indicate the multicultural and interconnected nature of the world and engage learners in the understanding of diverse cultures and historical perspectives regarding living and thinking.

Another aspect of the glocal classroom is the importance of fostering interaction and understanding. Båge et al. (2021), indicated that international classrooms blur the lines between cultures, language, and nationality. Diverse themes, topics, and focus on communication are required to take international themes and move them into a glocal sphere. McDougald (2018) stressed that glocal classrooms should be seen to promote communication. This communication should yield open-mindedness and productive understanding through the acceptance, respect, and incorporation of ideas of experience from students from varied educational, economic, and cultural backgrounds. In addition, to the communicative and diversity of the classroom, the integration of local elements is what makes a classroom authentically glocal (Caena, 2014). The local turn can be through a mediation of local identities and practices and their relationship toward global and international phenomena, where an intercultural approach recognises local and indigenous knowledge while integrating this into international worldviews and understanding (Mampane et al., 2018). The final challenge is preparing educators to implement glocal skill sets into the classroom.

The key constraints and challenges for educators in teaching in an intercultural setting is related to pedagogical approach, linguistics, and cultural implications of teaching in each environment (Båge et al., 2021; Caena, 2014). While the Japan context is not as diverse as more multiethnic teaching contexts, the shift to global engagement, multidisciplinary training and research, and the general push for international recruitment raises these challenges to educators in Japan. Educators from outside the local context must assess and learn to teach in a localised curriculum, while balancing the need for pluralism and eliminating language and cultural barriers among all members of the university either students or faculty (Caena, 2014; Jackson & Han, 2016). To balance and effectively work in a glocal challenges curriculum educators must strive to promote cultural understanding and integrate diverse perspectives and work to navigate complex, interconnected environments while fostering effective communication that can transfer to both international and local contexts.

More specifically regarding English Medium Education (EME), the curriculum can offer the development of 21st-century skills where learners are equipped with access to knowledge and cultural literacy to aid in the participation in international streams for the benefit of local economies (Båge et al., 2021). While recognising English as a global language that can create barriers for non-native speakers, developing strategies for inclusion and effective curricula English language learning can relate to support for multilingual pedagogies strengthening and enhancing content learning. Within EME there are two

distinct approaches for language education that could benefit learners in the glocal context: English Medium Instruction (EMI) and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) where both highlight distinct aspects of learning in the university context. Next EMI will be introduced and then CLIL.

2.2 English Medium Instruction (EMI)

English Medium Instruction (EMI) is the approach where academic subjects in countries outside of the Anglosphere use English as the primary content delivery mechanism (González & Andrés, 2018). In recent years, EMI has seen a surge in European and Asian higher education due to the need to increase economic competitiveness and promote internationalisation strategies (De Costa et al., 2025; González & Andrés, 2018; Wilkinson, 2018). In the European context alone, EMI programmes numbered around 700 in 2002 and grew to 8,019 by 2014 (Wachter & Maiworm, 2014). Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) (2022) reported 40% of Japanese universities offer some form of EMI, and the number of full degree programmes taught entirely in English are growing. As of 2021, in Japan, 87 full undergraduate degree programmes where thought in English at 39 universities with expectations of growth to more than 100 within a few years (Japan Student Services Organization, 2022). More specifically to EMI, more than one-third of all universities in Japan offer at least some courses taught in English and is likely connected to the Global 30 Project which is the successor of the Top Global University Project ran prior.

Research has found that EMI offers some range of benefits for students, teachers, and institutions which include fostering internationalisation, enhancing language and content learning, and promoting professional development (Dalton-Puffer et al., 2010; Darvin et al., 2020; De Costa et al; 2025; González & Andrés, 2018; Gustafsson, 2020; Kim & Lee, 2019; Pérez-Cañado, 2012). From the student perspective, EMI programmes have demonstrated improvements in global communicative competencies, receptive linguistic skills, speaking fluency, vocabulary skill improvements (both academic and non-academic words) (Pérez-Cañado, 2012). Additionally, EMI enhances student motivation and engagement with content related to their major which can make language learning more meaningful from their perspective (Kim & Lee, 2019). EMI approaches when correctly implemented also foster self-confidence and a sense of ownership over English acquisition (Kim & Lee, 2019). In the case of educators, EMI can offer professional development and personal fulfillment for instructors and encourages educators to reconsider their identities and adapt pedagogical approaches beyond simply changing the language of instruction, such as considering cultural variations in content delivery (González & Andrés, 2018; Wilkinson, 2018). Furthermore, EMI can challenge educators' pedagogical practices and lead to more effective teaching through targeted linguistic support and scaffolding of content (Wilkinson, 2018). Additionally, from the design perspective, EMI requires closer collaboration in faculty settings among content specialist and language experts legitimising both parties' expertise in an academic environment

(Wilkinson, 2018). Finally, from the institutional perspective EMI improves competitiveness, develops pathways for multilingual and multicultural environments, and addresses language deficits by improving foreign language competencies (De Costa et al., 2025; González & Andrés, 2018; Gustafsson, 2018; Kim & Lee, 2019; Pérez-Cañado, 2012). EMI provides multiple benefits to learners provided the implementation and educators are appropriate oriented.

While the literature indicates success for EMI programmes, it is also important to highlight some of the shortfalls. When EMI can face some significant challenges during implementation. One key challenge is teacher unreadiness (Byun et al., 2011; Kim & Lee, 2019). Content educators may lack the pedagogical experience or expertise to teach subjects effectively in English, where traditional lecture methods need to be supplemented with more active learning and scaffolded support strategies. Without active scaffolding and support mechanisms EMI can lead to a lack of student participation, struggle with comprehension, and less effectively delivery of subject material (Hellekjær, 2017; Pérez-Cañado, 2012). Another is defining linguistic needs, EMI teaching competence is complex and requires a dynamic interaction not only in intercultural communicative competencies, but also in linguistic interactions, and cultural strategies for effective delivery of educational content (Gustafsson, 2020). Finally, it is imperative to understand EMI does not automatically improve English comprehension, as exposure enough is often not sufficient for language development and is a complimentary force to other methods of acquisition. Despite these short comings, appropriate teacher training, and a robust language curriculum can aid in mitigating these pressures. One aspect of a language curriculum for preparing students for EMI-styled courses is Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL).

2.3 Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) us a dual-focused educational approach where in addition to language learning a subject or content aspect is included in the course simultaneously (Coyle at al., 2012; Darvin et al., 2020). CLIL’s origins are from the 1990s in Europe and expanded into Latin America and Asian contexts (Marsh, 2002). De Costa et al (2015) described CLIL as a pragmatic solution for acquisition of proficiency in multiple languages. The core aspects of CLIL centre around content, communication, cognition, and culture (Coyle et al., 2012; Darvin et al., 2020; González & Andrés, 2018). CLIL’s pedagogical theory aligns with constructivist and socio-cultural notions of learning and work best in an active and cooperative learning environment with co-construction of knowledge being a key aspect of the learning process (González & Andrés, 2018). Next, a brief overview of CLIL’s methodology.

Methodology in CLIL is designed around the dual focus where content integration and language learning is supported through specific learning strategies. Strategies for CLIL include scaffolding to

provide appropriate aid for learners including visual aids, modelling, and breaking down complex tasks to provide more cognitive accessibility for learners. Additionally, CLIL requires conceptual fronting where content is prioritised key language is made salient through embedding and scaffolding, which can be a challenge for educators without CLIL or linguistics training (Ball et al., 2015). Lexical focus, is another aspect of CLIL that is central to its methodological success where subject-specific vocabulary and grammatically tasks are situated as advanced work (Bradford & Brown, 2017). Similarly, to EMI, CLIL should take on student-centred approaches and focus on pair and group work with more hands-on-learning with materials to enhance learning outcomes. Additionally, linguistic shortcomings should not be a priority in assessment while language is an asset the priority should be on content (González & Andrés, 2018). From the CLIL methodological practices, the benefits and outcomes of CLIL are also noteworthy.

CLIL provides a few notable benefits and outcomes. The first benefit of CLIL is that it enhances language proficiency and content mastery, which precisely is the primary objective of this educational approach (Pérez-Cañado, 2012; Wilkinson, 2018). CLIL students often acquire gains in their second language, and this is demonstrated through higher proficiency levels, particularly with receptive skills. Additionally, student satisfaction on the subject matter is often high and on par with their monolingual peers (Pérez-Cañado, 2012). This indicates that learning content in a second language does not delay learning of subject content, and at worst maintains parody with traditional monolingual classes. Additionally, Infante et al. (2009) found that CLIL fostered greater motivation, language awareness, and active participation in class, lowering anxiety for both students and educators. CLIL is also adaptable and capable of being reconfigured for local needs (Darvin et al., 2020). The benefits of CLIL overlap with EMI but offer a more nuanced building-block on language learning. The biggest challenge with CLIL is implementation and teacher preparedness. In the case of implementation, this is based on establishing the fluidity between content and language teachers to promote the deeper methodological changes necessary as well as a pivot away from a lecture-based teaching style. Finally in the case of teachers, ensuring that content specialist have confidence to teach a topic in English and for language professionals to have necessary knowledge to teach content that may be outside their specialisation.

Both CLIL and EMI originate from different focuses (dual-focus vs content-only), but both operate to internationalise and train diverse student populations to develop the skills necessary to navigate the complexities of the 21st century marketplace. Both approaches rest primarily on effectively trained educators, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the understanding of the interplay between culture, content, pedagogy, and language in the educational setting which overlaps with similar goals of contemporary initiatives in glocal curriculum. In the next section, two case studies on internationalisation will be discussed, while not glocal specifically, the lessons in curriculum design can indicate effective ways for implementing multilingual approaches to pedagogy and curriculum design.

3. Case Studies: Internationalisation in the Special Administrative Regions (SARs)

China’s Special Administrative Region (SARs) in the Greater Bay Area include Hong Kong and Macau. The region, regarding education, maintains a long-standing tradition of using English as a medium of instruction across multiple disciplines. Hong Kong maintains a biliterate and trilingual language policy aiming for proficiency in written and spoken Chinese and English, as well as spoken Mandarin (Putonghua) (Yeung & Lu, 2018). Similarly, Macau has adopted English as a primary medium of instruction, with ambition to be a world centre of tourism and leisure, while the government maintains Cantonese and Portuguese as official languages. The adoption of EMI in Macau can high light similar challenges as in Japan with varying levels of English competency and subject mastery concerns, but the general perception is EMI maintains a benefit for long term career success. In this section two case studies are briefly discussed University of Macau and City University of Hong Kong.

3.1 University of Macau

The University of Macau (UM) was founded in 1981 and according to the Times Higher Education, ranks at 180 globally and 34 in Asia as of 2025 (Times Higher Education, 2025). At UM, English is the primary medium of instruction across most faculties and programmes, but Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin) as well as Portuguese are also used in specific academic areas. UM aims to develop bi-and trilingual professionals, provides multi-language university support through a language centre and is continuing to increase emphasis on English as a primary medium of instruction to enhance internationalisation of the institution (UMagazine, 2022). In addition to these language medium focused programmes, another faculty at UM uses a fourth language, Japanese in what could be described as Japanese Medium Instruction – the Department of Japanese studies.

The principal investigator of this project visited the University of Macau and met with faculty from the Department of Japanese Studies. The faculty serves as an excellent case study for developing an EMI programme in Japan, considering the primary and culturally linguistic medium outside the University of Macau is not in Japanese as Japan does not have an English primary or cultural medium outside university campuses. The University of Macau’s Japanese Studies curriculum is designed for the immersion of students into Japanese language and culture. The courses focus on Japanese language, literature, linguistics, history, and contemporary society and are predominantly taught in Japanese.[1)] The programme is includes five primary features to ensure that the Japanese medium instruction is successful: early systematic language training to develop Japanese skills, language courses with emphasis on business Japanese, content courses taught in Japanese, and conversation courses taught by native instructors (Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Macau, 2025). In the first year, students take twenty-four credits of Japanese language courses as well as six in English and three in Portuguese or

Chinese. From year two, students continue Japanese language study through practical, integrated, and composition-based courses. The programme requires students to then take special topics, advanced language courses, and other content-based courses on Japanese culture and language (Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Macau, 2025).

While this is a full-immersion effort style curriculum several insights can be taken from this robust approach to developing learners. The first, is that ensuring development of core language skills rests as a foundational approach within the curriculum through courses and study abroad initiatives. Second, upon the basic language foundation additional language skills are developed through content-based engagement and deeper topics and themes related to culture and language – this is related to approaches in CLIL style classrooms. Finally, the full immersion through full Japanese medium instruction is conducted in special topics and advanced courses finalising the curriculum's trajectories. The key takeaway here, is the key pathway toward a medium instruction in a foreign language: language learning to CLIL and then to the language of medium instruction. Additionally, students can get faculty and university support in their native language which aids in student well-being and comprehension of tasks.

The University of Macau case study, with a particular emphasis on the Japanese Studies faculty demonstrates a potential model or aspects that can be implemented into a successful language model. Another aspect to consider is the culture of the university and commitment to excellence of students and academic pursuits. In addition to the core curriculum design, academics and university staff need to promote a sense of excellence, and promote students raise their individual academic standards. Additionally, this requires the fostering of autonomous learning and interest in pursuing academic excellence. In the next case study, the City University of Hong Kong is discussed.

3.2 City University, Hong Kong

City University of Hong Kong (CityU) was founded in 1984 and gained full university status in 1994. The university is currently ranked 62nd in the World University Rankings (Quacquarelli Symonds, 2024). The university focuses on professional education and problem-driven research. Similar to UM, CityU's primary language of instruction is English (City University of Hong Kong, 2024). The rationale for this approach is the recognition of English as the current lingua franca for international academics, business, and technology, and therefore to be an international institution English medium is necessary to attract a diverse student body and faculty. The core focus being on maintaining global competitiveness. This aligns also with CityU's location, in Hong Kong, where the city has long enjoyed a history as an international city. However, the key to understanding CityU in the scope of this project centres more firmly into educational approach and culture.

The core educational philosophies of CityU are based on two fundamental interconnected approaches:

Discovery-enriched Curriculum (DEC) and Outcomes-based Teaching and Learning (OBTL) (City University of Hong Kong, n.d.). DEC is the philosophy where all students are promoted to make original discoveries through their studies. City University of Hong Kong (n.d.) rationalised this as a philosophy that moves beyond traditional knowledge transmission and encourages active engagement in inquiry, innovation, and creation to move beyond traditional lecturing. OBLT is the university’s commitment to student-centred learning approaches where curriculum, teaching methodology, and assessment as clearly defined learning outcomes. Additionally, these outcomes specify both the learning goals and prerequisites for courses *the need to know* and *will know* of each course. Within this philosophy CityU also has several key teaching strategies that when considered with CLIL, EMI, and the glocal educational policies synergises to assure student development and are critical approaches to ensure success for internationalising and glocalising students.

The core aspects of CityU’s teaching strategies are on interactive learning where classrooms and teaching is activity, discussion, and technology focused to engage students and facilitate deeper understanding of content beyond traditional lecture models. As previously stated, language learning, CLIL, and EMI all need activity and flexibility in the classroom where learners are engaged and active rather than passive participants in lecture style courses. Additionally, CityU focuses its curriculum on problem and project-based learning aligning with their DEC philosophy to require application and practical skill development based on knowledge base to deepen understanding akin the Kolb’s experiential learning systems (Kolb, 1984). This is not to dismiss the importance of lectures for theoretical and foundational knowledge, but lectures alone will not ensure learning and need to be accompanied in a dual-mode approach with tutorials or seminars to ensure a return and rich engagement with materials.

The key findings from CityU’s curriculum and teaching approach is ensuring more opportunities for active learning, flipped classroom approach, and problem/project-based learning. These strategies relate to the larger philosophy where the curriculum has clear pathways and understood development of skills and learning by both faculty and students. In the next section, using both the UM and CityU findings a return to the concepts of Glocal education in Japan within the context of internationalisation and language learning is discussed.

4. Glocal Education at a Japanese University

Glocal historically has held a powerful resonance within Japan, as Japan has demonstrated historically its capacity to *Japanify* processes and technology by importing, adapting, and integrating foreign knowledge and technologies to suit its own cultural framework (Kariya, 2024). However, contemporarily and within the frame of education, Japan has been perceived as overtly top-down and reactionary to the

pressures of global university rankings which have led to hastily assembled initiatives such as the Top Global University Project (Watanabe et al., 2017). This has resulted in superficial or in-name-only global programmes and environments that stress students and faculty (Tanaka-Ellis, 2024). The central goal is to combat these short comings of existing global and international programmes by developing a principled and strategic roadmap for the glocalisation of the curriculum and the role of language education as it threads into other aspects of the curriculum and diploma policies of a Japanese institution. The glocal pedagogy can offer a more organic and bottom-up approach and empower Japanese students to understand global theoretical tools, articulate unique perspectives, and actively engaging critically with their own culture while engaging with international and domestic peers. The core strategy being to transform passive learners into active participants in domestic and global dialogues.

To achieve these clear pedagogical aims, there is a need for courses and programmes to be vetted and then organised into a scaffolded and guided curriculum that promotes active student engagement through active learning, flipped classrooms, and problem/project-based approaches. The primary aim of a glocal classroom is to develop knowledge where intercultural competences enable participants to think globally while living and applying knowledge to local environments (Varner et a, 2019). This a differentiation of policy from the Greater Bay Area universities which focus on internationalisation, in contrast to this approach, the glocal curriculum identifies internationalisation as being connected with economic and political ideologies particularly related to neoliberal motivations, including commodification of students (Harvey, 2005). Within a glocal context, the pedagogy is a critical intervention, where students push against homogenising tendencies and grouping by recentering on local contexts critically while framing education through concepts such as social justice, equity, and sustainability (Niemczyk, 2019). With the concepts of glocal pedagogical aims in the Japanese context briefly outlined the next section, a recommendation for executing a glocal curriculum centred EMI programme will be outlined.

5. Recommendations for a Structure of EMI within the Context of Glocal Studies

The primary aim of a glocal educational curriculum is to enhance and ensure glocal competencies where students develop sophisticated forms of intercultural competences that enable them to live local while being and thinking globally. This requires pedagogy and culture within the university context to promote authentic interactions with materials and cultures on intra and interpersonal levels. The key goals require students to develop empathy, critical thinking, perspective-taking, and the ability to navigate ambiguity in their personal, academic, and daily lives. Specifically, within in the Japan context, issues such as rise in immigration and depopulation and the management of these concepts are front and centre as the country is beginning to struggle with its own national and cultural identity.

Based on the two case studies and the literature, a successful structured EMI programme should be

built around a philosophy of guided discovery-based learning (DBL) (Himelo-Silver et al., 2007; Pascoe, 2017; Prince & Felder, 2006) where DBL is the core philosophy that aided in the development of CityU’s Discovery-enriched curriculum (DEC). The key to this rests in the importance of implementing guiding measures, and ensuring students have base knowledge before engaging in a DBL strategy. DBL focuses on active experimentation and exploration of topics, issues, and subjects by students and promotes authentic and original research and project outputs. In contrast to a standard DBL approach where students are required not only to experiment and explore but also discover target information or conceptual understanding independently without facilitator or educational intervention—a guided approach would allow for more mentorship and intervention from an educator to manage and aid students in pathways of exploration and learning development. This leads to another important consideration in implementation—the role of scaffolding and ensuring that proper education steps are in place for student development.

Scaffolding in the educational paradigm can be defined as an approach where learning processes are supported through additional processes to ensure learning acquisition of targeted teaching points with examples such as visual aids, sentence frame support, and additional explanation and guidance. Scaffolding as an educational principle relates to the socio-educational theories of Vygotsky (1978; 1989) and have been utilised in many educational paradigms (Lantoff & Thorne, 2006). On the class level, scaffolding would be utilised on four fundamental levels: linguistic, cognitive, affective and cultural, and procedural (Table 1).

Another more strategic form of scaffolding within the framework of the glocal curriculum and EMI implementation is developing strategic stages within the curriculum to ensure students learn and transition forward from language learner to user. This can be accomplished through three strategic stages: Stage 1: Foundational English and Glocal Inquiry, Stage 2: English CLIL Transition, and Stage 3: EMI and Advanced Disciplinary Study. Each stage represents a strategic movement for learners as they develop base or fundamental knowledge and language skills followed by transitioning into more advanced learning while the education turns EMI focused.

The first stage focuses on the development of foundational knowledge. The goal should be to promote student development beyond rote learning of English and subject materials and instead promote active investigation of subject materials and active and productive language use. One example would be to encourage students to investigate local culture and customs and develop actions to promote, represent, and understand them globally. Once core skills in language and glocal literacy are established, the second stage would be to move from general analytical knowledge-based skills to discipline-specific synthesis. Students in stage two would engage with more authentic language materials while looking at more specific topics focusing on creative and evidence-based glocal issues with written and spoken outputs in both the target language and their native language. Finally, stage three would focus on the realization of

the student's area of study, their major, where students deploy fully developed abilities and approaches to produce significant and original work. The goal of students is to develop and produce tangible discoveries communicated to global audiences in English. The progression through these three stages would represent a powerful pedagogical journey that motivates students to negotiate meaning between local and glocal reference points, in both their native and targeted language (Japanese and English). The central goal is not just to learn about these contexts in English, but to think critically and intersect between both English and Japanese to develop intercultural mediation skills. In the next section, the current process of what has been done, and what needs to be addressed in the glocal context, is discussed.

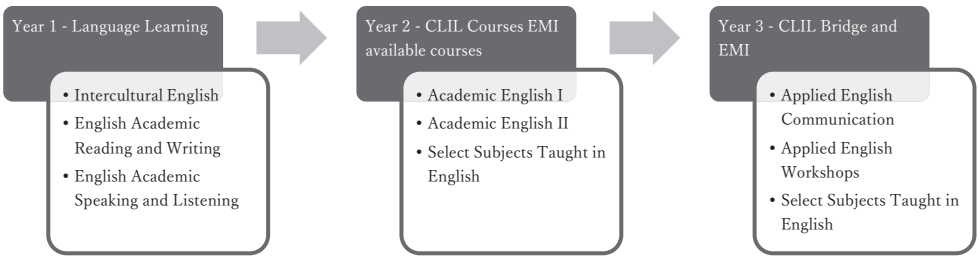
Table 1.
Strategic Classroom Level Scaffolding

Scaffolding Type	Specific Strategies and Examples
Linguistic Scaffolding	**Vocabulary & Terminology:** • Pre-teaching of discipline-specific English vocabulary. • Creating collaborative, student-generated dictionaries of key terms with examples. **Genre & Discourse:** • Providing explicit instruction and annotated models of key academic English genres (literature reviews, research proposals, referencing). **Pedagogical Translanguaging:** • Allowing students to use Japanese in small group discussions to brainstorm complex ideas before writing or presenting in English (Lan, 2025). • Using Japanese or providing written explanation to clarify a highly abstract theoretical concept during a lecture to ensure deep comprehension before moving on (Qiu et al., 2022). • Mediation strategies for language such as establishing a Zone of Proximal Development through facilitator and peer support (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).
Cognitive Scaffolding	**Process & Task Decomposition:** • Breaking down the large tasks into smaller, manageable steps (e.g., topic selection, annotated bibliography, outline, first draft). • Using graphic organizers (concept maps; flow charts and other visuals).
Affective & Cultural Scaffolding	**Building Confidence:** • Creating low-stakes opportunities for students to practice presenting their research in English to small, supportive peer groups. • Providing constructive, encouraging feedback that focuses on both strengths and areas for growth. **Intercultural Awareness:** • Explicitly discussing the different rhetorical and academic conventions between Japanese and English academic cultures. • Encouraging collaboration with international students and seeing multilingualism as a benefit.
Procedural Scaffolding	**Collaboration & Support Structures:** • Structuring collaboration between content faculty and language specialists for co-teaching or workshop delivery (Hu, 2023; Wallace et al., 2020). **Use of Multimodal Resources:** • Using videos, diagrams, simulations, and other visual aids to present complex information, reducing the purely linguistic load on students (Banegas, 2023). • Encouraging students to produce multimodal "accomplishments" (e.g., documentaries, podcasts, websites) that allow them to demonstrate their discovery through various mediums.

6. Current Status of Komatsu University’s Intercultural Communications Faculty Curriculum

The 2026 academic year will signal a transformation of the Komatsu University Intercultural Communications curriculum. Under the university’s curriculum policies (CP) students should develop a knowledge of international society, an international sensibility, strong human qualities, and rich intellect and sensitivity which in turn should promote them to contribute to regional development and toward Japan’s sustainable growth (Komatsu University, n.d.). Upon graduation, the university’s diploma policy (DP) encourages foundational skills for regional contribution, glocal talent qualities such as rich knowledge and insight into international society as well as into Japan’s domestic affairs including politics, history, economics, language, and culture, robust foreign language proficiency, and the ability to return these outcomes to society via planning, information gathering, analysis, and problem solving (Komatsu University, n.d.). With these policies in mind, and the need to redevelop the curriculum to foster glocal skills and knowledge bases the language curriculum under the new curriculum follows the three stages of language and core skills development, discipline specific development and content-based learning through CLIL, and finally the self-directed, subject specific, and research driven EMI via an English Plus Programme (E-Plus) (Figure 1).

Figure 1
Curriculum Language Plan



Within the curriculum plan for languages, students will receive more intensive first year language training to ensure foundational understanding, exposure, and application of those skills through assessed output. With core skills and competencies established students will then transition to more discipline specific knowledge where English is used in the context of studies related to glocal topics, and finally moving into the final stage where students navigate both subjects, and academic rigour in English focusing on contemporary challenges and issues to ensure glocal literacy.

For this design to be successful, culture, student, and faculty needs and expectations need to be clearly understood. On the class level this requires all courses to include clearly understandable outcomes and goals in the form of intended learning outcomes (ILOs), teaching and learning activities (TLA), and

assessment tasks (AT). ILOs should focus on concepts such as critical analysis of materials, evaluation of local and global material or content on the subject matter, synthesising knowledge and concepts into original arguments, designing and producing quality outputs orally or written, and time and capacity to reflect on content and output. TLAs should represent the educator's strategy to ensure content is being successfully transmitted to students including interactive lectures with scaffolding (when needed), reading and discussion materials such as case studies, guest lectures, practical workshops, and peer-review sessions on designed output. Finally, ATs should be balanced to emphasise process rather than final products, instead of a 60% final report, tasks and writings should be broken down into their constituent parts: research proposal, literature review, methodology, etc., where students develop the project over the course of a semester rather than at the end of the year.[2)] Additionally, faculty development and interdisciplinary collaboration is a core necessity for the success of an EMI programme. This requires that the faculty plan and conduct faculty training to ensure content-area members of the faculty are appropriately trained on pedagogical strategies for active learning, flipped-classrooms, principles of CLIL and EMI with appropriate strategies for scaffolding for learners. Also, the faculty will need to platform interdisciplinary collaboration to breakdown traditional institutional silos where academics section and isolate themselves from non-germane researchers in faculty groups, and thereby support collaboration between varied content-specialisations, language teachers, and pedagogical specialist to ensure quality teaching outcomes. These processes should be formalised through faculty development workshops and seminars as well as collaborative teaching and joint teaching strategies to ensure a seamless and coherent student experience.

7. Conclusion

Komatsu University's Intercultural Communication faculty has undertaken its new strategy for the 2026 curriculum. The core aspect of the new curriculum vision is the development of glocal competencies, and a major part of this is the internationalisation and EMI focused aspects of the English language programme. Within the new curriculum a clear scaffolded structure has been set in place as well as the initial plan for collaborative and cross-disciplinary teaching, which will bring greater coordination and coherence to the faculty vision. The next steps for the faculty should be the training of educators through workshops, and the establishment of ILOs, TLAs, and ATs for all courses that are understood by all members of the faculty and promote clear transitions for students as they move through their university experience.

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Notes

1) This information was obtained through discussions and interviews with faculty and students in the Department of Japanese Studies at the University of Macau.
2) This concept of process is doubly important considering we live in the age of AI tools, by providing process-based tasks and learning, students must tackle and see how their project develops step-by-step and the educator also can observe this journey.

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