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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Global English Medium Instruction: Perspectives at the crossroads of Global Englishes and EMI

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ABSTRACT

This conceptual article draws together perspectives from the research fields of Global Englishes and English medium instruction (EMI) to explore shared issues, critical perspectives, and future agendas. While embedded in the reality of English being a dominant global language and academic lingua franca, both Global Englishes and EMI lobby for the promotion of multilingual pedagogies, challenge native speaker hegemony, and highlight the importance of multilingual teachers. Both fields strive to balance pragmatic aims to develop students into global language users, while supporting critical movements to resist centre–periphery views of English. To support the perspectives raised in this article, we draw upon scholarship from and about Asian contexts to emphasise research contributions to both Global Englishes and EMI outside the western hemisphere and Anglosphere. The article concludes with calls for more critical research into EMI, which could be informed by further exploration of research at the crossroads of Global Englishes and EMI.

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Introduction

With trends towards the internationalisation of higher education and the spread of English as an international language of science and academia, a growing number of higher education institutions (HEIs) have elected to teach some or all of their academic subjects through English. The growth in English medium instruction (EMI) has been called 'the most significant trend in educational internationalisation' (Chapple, 2015, p. 1). In the context of China, the phenomenon has been depicted by Hu (2008) as 'a runaway juggernaut that is rattling across the country with fierce velocity' (p. 195). Along with its proliferation at HEIs worldwide, research on EMI has grown exponentially in the last decade. Such research has covered topics ranging from the linguistic challenges faced by teachers and students to the perceived benefits of EMI programmes for a variety of stakeholders.

Like the phenomenon of EMI, research surrounding the topic of Global Englishes has boomed in recent decades. From seminal work in the area in the 2000s (Canagarajah, 2007), there has been a growing amount of scholarship (for a systematic review of

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research in the past decade, see Rose, McKinley, & Galloway, 2021). Global Englishes has been defined as a broad term, inclusive of research positioned in the diverse, but overlapping, fields of World Englishes, English as a lingua franca, English as an international language, and translingual practice (Galloway, 2017). As such, the field of Global Englishes aims to critically evaluate hegemonic perspectives about speakers of English, and ideologies surrounding the English language itself. It calls for greater acceptance of the diverse global realities of what English is, who uses the language, where it is used, and how it is used.

Several shared concepts underpin both Global Englishes and EMI scholarship, hence there are opportunities for greater synergies between the two fields: both fields focus on phenomena that have emerged in lockstep with economic and political globalisation; both establish the primary focus of research attention within non-Anglophone national contexts; both seek implications for the betterment of educational practices; and both are astutely aware of the importance of multilingualism in a seemingly English-centric field of study. Due to these shared endeavours, the aim of this article is to bring together key concepts at the crossroads of Global Englishes and EMI to reveal shared critical perspectives to inform best practices in a global (i.e. not western-centric) positioning of EMI. Common perspectives offered from Global Englishes for EMI, which are covered in this article, include the following:

- The development of shared agenda for the promotion of multilingualism in both Global Englishes and EMI.
- Challenges to native speaker hegemony in Global Englishes and EMI.
- Challenges to centre–periphery views of English and EMI to capture a shift of power from the Anglosphere.

In fitting with publication in *Asian Englishes*, we exclusively draw on scholarship within or about Asian contexts to inform our perspectives on these topics, with the explicit purpose to emphasise research outside the western hemisphere and Anglosphere.

A critical Asian perspective

While accepting the limitations of defining concepts as nebulous as language and educational cultures within geographical confines, in this article we define Asia according to a mixture of (generally) accepted geographical, political, and cultural criteria. We include examples from Japan in Asia's far east, Indonesia to the far south, China to its north, and Turkey at its westernmost point. We operationalise an Asian perspective as any insight from scholarly voices or research from or about the context of Asia. We confine our sources of knowledge to Asian perspectives for two main reasons.

First, previous scholarship on EMI has been too Eurocentric. EMI research has tended to focus heavily on the Englishisation of higher education as the result of European integrated mobility initiatives such as the Erasmus programme. Similarly, many of the core concepts of Global Englishes were borne from English as a lingua franca scholarship, which initially focused on English use in a mobile and multilingual Europe. Asian contexts are thriving and diverse regions of rich EMI and English as a lingua franca research (Fang & Widodo, 2019; Walkinshaw, Fenton-Smith, & Humphreys, 2017). Thus, it is important

that these fields focus more on non-western, diverse contexts to seek answers to local educational problems associated with globalisation. Global Englishes has been underpinned by a growing body of empirical scholarship in the contexts of Japan (e.g. Galloway, 2013; Ishikawa, 2021), Hong Kong (e.g. Sung, 2015a, 2015b), and more recently Thailand (e.g. Boonsuk, Ambele, & McKinley, 2021; Prabjandee, 2020), so offers a unique comparison point for the rapidly emerging body of EMI scholarship in the Asian region (for a comprehensive collection of such work, see Fang & Widodo, 2019).

Second, in recent years there has been a greater call for non-western perspectives in informing educational fields (Singh & Meng, 2013). Published research is currently very western-centric, which not only limits the lens through which we explore linguistic and educational phenomena but reinforces hegemonic views of the West at the centre of the global knowledge economy. To counter this imbalance, we need greater representation of researcher voices and research contexts outside the western sphere. Thus, in this article, we purposely have drawn on scholarship from researchers in Asian contexts, and research about Asian contexts, while also being accepting of the fact that we live in a mobile and global research community (i.e. not all research about Asia is conducted by researchers in or from Asia, and not all researchers from Asia currently reside in Asian contexts).

Researcher positionalities

As this article is a critically oriented conceptual piece, it is also necessary that we interrogate our own researcher positionalities and engage in reflexivity to bring our own preconceptions to the surface. While we are a team of three researchers who have extensively lived, worked in, and investigated the Asian contexts of Japan, Turkey, and China, western identities have undoubtably shaped our positionalities. All three of us studied our advanced degrees in Anglophone universities, and at the time of writing one of us was currently working for a university in the UK. We thus confess that our positionality as researchers who are currently working in, or have studied in, western universities has inevitably shaped our own researcher perspectives of the very contexts about which we write. Using reflexivity as a method to situate ourselves, we reveal contrasting insider and outsider researcher selves that may have led to specific conclusions in this position article, which stem from our decisions to draw on particular literature, contextual knowledge, and interpretations.

Multilingualism as a core concept

Global Englishes, which was heavily influenced by Canagarajah's (2007, 2016) work on translingual practice, is also reflected in current theorisations of translanguaging:

> There is now a growing realization that English cannot be separated from other languages. This is true not only of the contemporary global contact zones where languages intermingle, but of all communication, because languages are always in contact. (Canagarajah, 2016, p. 16)

Global Englishes embraces this view of language, and has been positioned as sharing many of the endeavours found in the multilingual turn in applied linguistics. Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) scholars have used the multilingual

turn as an anchor for calls for change in English language teaching to be more inclusive of students' and teachers' knowledge of other languages, including their first language (L1) (see e.g. Canagarajah, 2014; Leung, 2014). Lin's (2013) research in Hong Kong schools has illustrated how plurilingual pedagogies can be used to enhance teaching in content classrooms. Similarly, Global Englishes research has included a considerable amount of scholarship that explores plurilingual and translingual practices. Rose and Galloway (2019) note that 'Translingual practice showcases linguistic hybridity, and helps to inform our understanding of how speakers of English as a global lingua franca utilise their multilingual, or translingual, repertoires to communicate' (p. 9).

Nonetheless, western philosophies on these phenomena are not without their critique. Adopting an Indonesian perspective, Sugiharto (2015) has called the multilingual turn 'a vacuousness' intellectual movement, which ignores the deep realities of multilingualism being part of a rich and ongoing history in most regions of the world. Drawing on the work of Kubota (2016), he further observes that scholars of multilingualism (even those in postcolonial contexts) are 'complicit with, and therefore succumb to colonial hegemony, Eurocentrism, and elitism' (Sugiharto, 2015, p. 415). Bearing in mind this critique, we explore some non-western examples of what translingual practices look like in EMI research in some Asian contexts.

Research investigating the use of L1 or translanguaging practices for teaching and learning have formed a rich field of scholarship in contexts such as Hong Kong (e.g. Lo & Macaro, 2012), China (e.g. Wang & Curdt-Christiansen, 2019), Turkey (e.g. Sahan, 2020), and Nepal (e.g. Sah & Li, 2020). These studies have examined the benefits of translanguaging in teacher training courses (e.g. Liu, Lo, & Lin, 2020), English as a foreign language classrooms (e.g. Liu & Fang, 2020; Yuzlu & Dikilitas, 2021), content and language integrated learning secondary school lessons (e.g. Lin & He, 2017), and EMI tertiary contexts (e.g. Song & Lin, 2020). Research has found that teachers and students generally hold positive attitudes towards translanguaging practices in EMI settings (Fang & Liu, 2020; Kırkgöz & Küçük, 2021), despite top-down policies that envision a monolingual, English-only implementation (Chang, 2019).

While some studies have framed L1 use as a coping strategy for teachers to overcome challenges related to low student English proficiency (e.g. Chang, 2021; Pun & Thomas, 2020), a growing body of research has highlighted the affordances of translanguaging as a pedagogical practice to facilitate the co-construction of meaning (e.g. Lin & He, 2017; Wu & Lin, 2019). Such studies have also provided rich examples of the pedagogical affordances offered through translanguaging practices, including through playful talk (Tai & Wei, 2021) and whole-body sense-making (Wu & Lin, 2019). Translanguaging, or L1 use, has also been reported to assist with word search sequences (Duran, Kurhila, & Sert, 2019), facilitate discussion during laboratory work (Pun & Tai, 2021), and negotiate meaning in classrooms where migrant students do not share the same L1 as their teacher (Lin & He, 2017).

Such studies highlighting the pedagogical benefits of translanguaging practices are bolstered by research from Turkey (Sahan, Rose, & Macaro, 2021) and China (Hu & Duan, 2019) which suggests that the quality of teacher–student interaction in English in EMI classrooms is limited. In contrast, research has suggested that, through the use of translanguaging or code-switching practices, teachers and students engage in dynamic interactions to making sense of the academic content being taught (Lin & He, 2017;

Sahan, 2020). Lin and Lo (2017) highlighted the multiple communicative resources held by learners in secondary EMI science classrooms, and argued for a necessity of teachers to activate both the everyday and academic L1 resources of students to more effectively co-construct meaning. Moreover, a study on interaction in EMI secondary schools in Hong Kong found that L1 use appeared to be associated with higher-order questions (Pun & Macaro, 2019), which may, in turn, lead to better content learning outcomes. In an EMI medicine degree programme in mainland China, Jiang, Zhang, and May (2019) observed that teachers frequently adopted accommodation strategies such as code-switching and converging the morphosyntactic features of their speech to students' L1 for interaction quality. In fact, a study involving 561 students from a wide range of EMI university programmes in China reported that around 85% agree their mother tongue should be used both by their teacher and themselves in class, and over half of the respondents strongly purport such use (Rose, McKinley, Xu, & Zhou, 2020).

Research on translanguaging from the Asian context has highlighted the inherently multilingual nature of EMI classrooms, including classrooms in which the majority of learners are local students who share the same L1 as the teacher (e.g. Sahan, 2020; Wang & Curdt-Christiansen, 2019). While this is not to suggest that international students do not form an important part of the EMI experience in Asian contexts, it represents a shift from Eurocentric understandings of EMI as tied to international student mobility, such as through the Erasmus exchange programme. This shift represents a conceptual switch from understanding the decision to teach through English as the result of it being the lingua franca in an international classroom to recognising the layers of sociolinguistic complexity involved in medium of instruction decision-making.

In turn, this opens up new spaces for critical research challenging the notion of EMI as a monolingual endeavour. Rather than view multilingualism as the result of international student flows, this body of research has illustrated the ways in which translanguaging practices have the potential to empower multilingual teachers and students through fluid language use. As Lin (2019) notes, translanguaging contributes to 'the dynamic flow of co-making of knowing and meaning, without which what is left in the classroom would mainly be parroting without active ownership of learning on the part of the students' (p. 12). While this perspective highlights the strength of a translanguaging approach, critical research from Asia has also noted the inequities that result from linguistic hierarchies in EMI settings, 'suggesting the need to reconsider the uncritical recommendation of translanguaging without reflecting on local realities and systemic barriers' (Sah & Li, 2020, 1). Thus, EMI requires a degree of context-specific critical reflection on the sociolinguistic role of multilingualism in each educational context.

Native-speakerism

Another core construct at the centre of Global Englishes scholarship is native-speakerism. Native-speakerism refers to an ideology that views native English speakers as ideal representatives of the English language, western culture, and teaching methodologies, which produces deleterious consequences for English language teachers who are positioned as 'non-native speaker teachers' (NNESTs) (Lowe & Pinner, 2016). Native-speakerism thus leads to 'othering', where dichotomous and unhelpful labels are created to separate members of a linguistic or professional community.

Attachments to the 'native speaker' as the idealised English language user, and the othering of 'non-native' speakers, is a pervasive global phenomenon. It has been noted to be especially prevalent in parts of East Asia such as Japan (see Galloway, 2014) and China (see Fang, 2018).

Native-speakerism in teacher recruitment

One of the sinister manifestations of native-speakerism is in teacher recruitment practices. As Selvi (2010) observes, native-speakerism espouses inequality in English language teacher hiring practices, where recruitment values the nativeness of a teacher and their variety of English over other criteria, creating a barrier to professional employment for a majority of teachers. To combat discriminatory practices, an advocacy movement called the NNEST movement has emerged in the TESOL community to advocate for greater professionalism. Selvi (2014) describes the movement as follows:

> Theoretically, it builds a more inclusive intellectual space defined by a shift from the traditional monolingual, monocultural, native-speakerist approach to teaching, learning, and teacher education in TESOL. Practically, it brings together and supports a wide spectrum of threads from the research, teaching, and advocacy realms to promote and institutionalize discourses of multilingualism, multiethnicism, and multiculturalism. (pp. 574–575)

The NNEST movement, by way of its promotion of multilingualism in education, draws attention to the value of NNESTs' unique multicultural and multilingual identities. These values have prompted several scholars to call for more importance placed on recruiting 'Multilingual English Teachers' (e.g. Kirkpatrick, 2011, 2012), rather than native English speakers. Global Englishes sees multilingual English teachers as ideal role models for English language use, as they represent authentic global users of the language. Furthermore, NNESTs who have a different L1 to their students provide the added advantage of automatically creating an authentic communicative context for students to use the target language of English as the classroom lingua franca when conversing with the teacher (Rose & Galloway, 2019).

Questions surrounding native-speakerism in EMI teacher recruitment and promotion have not been accompanied with the same level of debate as in the field of ELT, although several of the core issues are shared. A recent global mapping study which examined EMI provision in 52 lower and middle-income countries found that, in many contexts – including China – HEIs preferred to hire EMI teachers who had received their postgraduate degrees from Anglophone universities, or who had overseas study or work experience (Sahan et al., 2021b). Similarly, a study in Vietnam and Thailand found that in both countries a degree from abroad was considered an essential requirement for EMI teachers (Galloway & Sahan, 2021), even though neither teachers nor students considered 'native-like' accents to be an important characteristic of successful EMI teachers. Similar findings with respect to student attitudes were found in a study conducted at three EMI universities in Turkey: the majority of students who responded to a Likert-type questionnaire did not express a preference for 'native English-speaking lecturers', and most students in interviews stated a preference for Turkish content lecturers over 'native-speakers' (Karakaş, 2017).

Nonetheless, the assumption behind hiring criteria favouring candidates with overseas experience appears to be grounded in the belief that candidates who have studied in Anglophone contexts will possess 'good English' as a result of exposure to Inner Circle varieties. These assumptions not only perpetuate native-speaker ideologies that privilege native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) over NNESTs, but fail to consider the specific linguistic competencies and pedagogical skills needed by EMI lecturers in order to explain academic content in L2 English. Indeed, research has demonstrated that EMI teachers perceive a difference between the English proficiency needed to present at an academic conference and the proficiency needed to teach courses in English (Macaro & Han, 2019; Macaro, Sahan, & Rose, 2021). This difference reflects the challenges associated with conveying complex academic topics to students who may have varying levels of English proficiency themselves, and indicates that EMI teaching requires more than an adequate command of the English language. A study of EMI secondary schools in China found that science lessons taught by NESTs tended to be teacher-dominant with little student participation (An, Macaro, & Childs, 2021), suggesting that NEST status – or high English proficiency alone – does not necessarily improve the quality or quantity of interaction in EMI classes. Rather, studies have suggested that multilingual teachers may be able to facilitate richer interaction through translanguaging practices (see earlier section 'Multilingualism as a core concept'). Still, the role of native speakerism in EMI hiring practices, particularly in terms of discriminatory practices against NNESTs in EMI, has not yet been thoroughly interrogated and warrants further research.

Resisting the centre–periphery of English

The concept of the centre–periphery derives from world systems theory and corresponds to models of unequal power that separate western and non-western countries, with especially powerful Anglophone countries at the core of the centre (Xu, 2020). Global Englishes has been described as a paradigm that aims to interrogate these unequal relationships with a purpose to empower the periphery. As Rose, Syrbe, Montakantiwong, and Funada (2020) state:

> In the TESOL industry, various powerful 'centres of English' (i.e. native speakers and native speaking countries) have the lion's share of influence, while others are relegated to the 'periphery'. There is an imbalance in power between the centre and periphery, which feeds into all related decisions in language teaching policy and practice. (p. 8)

Early conceptualisations of a Global Englishes approach to language teaching were underpinned by the writings of Canagarajah (1999), who argued that:

> If English teaching in Periphery communities is to be conducted in a socially responsible and politically empowering manner, the authority for conceiving and implementing the curriculum and pedagogy should be passed on to the local teachers themselves. (pp. 90–91)

Influenced by these ideals, Global Englishes seeks to resist an imbalance of power in English language teaching by promoting grassroots change in classrooms and curricula. Grassroot change is manifested in teacher-led, locally informed curricular innovation in

classrooms, such as that reported in Thailand (Boonsuk, Ambele, & McKinley, 2021), Japan (Galloway, 2013; Ishikawa, 2021), and Hong Kong (Sung, 2015a, 2015b). By shifting the focus of curriculum and pedagogy to Englishes and global English users, researcher-practitioners have sought to disrupt the power dynamics between the centre and the periphery by showcasing curricular decision-making and innovation in classrooms outside the Anglosphere.

Centre–periphery dynamics also underpins EMI, especially in the neoliberal higher education sector. As Xu (2020) astutely puts it, 'the world of academic knowledge is not a level playing field but more closely approximates the centre–periphery dynamic described in world systems theory' in which 'countries on the periphery must work within a world system framed by the centre countries' (pp. 157–158). In East Asia, the rapid expansion of EMI in parallel to the internationalisation of higher education in recent years has been criticised by researchers to reflect a 'neo-colonial mentality' (Gu & Lee, 2019; Yang, 2013), which may reduce knowledge production in local languages and commercialise English and higher education (Phan, 2013). In China, Gu and Lee (2019) pinpointed a common assumption of the students that curriculum imported from top universities in Anglophone countries equals high-quality teaching for their EMI courses. However, the students soon realised that the assumption seemed nothing more than an illusion, when they perceived their acquisition of content knowledge as far less competitive than their Chinese-medium educated peers. Further, the authors caution that the copying of western institutions may result in the attrition of oriental Confucian educational values, leading to homogenisation of institutional development. Zhou and Rose (2022) also note a similar concern in their recent review of EMI development in mainland China, reporting that researchers are wary that the exclusive use of textbooks imported from Anglophone countries without supplementary materials in Chinese might 'westernise' students and detach them from local perspectives (e.g. Zhang & Liu, 2005). In the context of Nepal, EMI has been referred to as embodying quasi-colonialism (Sah, 2022), in that resource-poor nations look to external (i.e. foreign) knowledge sources and materials to create the curriculum. Sah (2022) argues that EMI policy and practices such as these result in social fragmentation spurred on by neoliberal agenda setting.

Centre and periphery inequalities are also central to the driving forces of EMI in many Asian contexts. In order to compete in global job markets, many universities offer EMI programmes as a form of 'internationalisation at home', where 'international' (operationalised as 'English medium') courses are offered to local students in a bid to emulate the experiences of gaining an 'international' (i.e. English medium) degree. In Kirkpatrick's (2014) review of EMI in universities in East and Southeast Asia, he observes that EMI has developed at the expense of local languages in academia, and introduces English 'ways of thinking' into the curriculum. Thus, if EMI is uncritically adopted from centre countries by the periphery, it may propagate colonisation of the minds of those working and studying within these systems.

EMI policy, therefore, would benefit by disrupting the current world system by looking to local and neighbouring sources of knowledge for policy-making and best practice. Research across the Global South has demonstrated that the needs of EMI are very context specific, and there is no 'one-size-fits-all' model of EMI provision (Sahan et al., 2021b). This has prompted some scholars such as Richards and Pun (2021) to devise a typology of

EMI that can be used 'as a navigator to guide curriculum planners as well as content and language teachers to find "suitable" sets of parameters to implement effective EMI teaching according to their cultural and classroom contexts' (p. 15). Better understanding the differences and similarities of EMI across contexts can help policy-makers seek answers for best practice from knowledge sources in the periphery that may be striving to meet similar educational outcomes and that contend with comparable socio-political tensions.

Conclusions

Global Englishes as a field of study has sought to critically question western and Anglocentric ideologies in language education, and we believe the field of EMI would benefit from a similar degree of critical interrogation. Just as Global Englishes has challenged native speaker hegemony and the centrality of Inner Circle norms for global needs, so too should EMI resist the relevance of Inner Circle solutions for their local HEI contexts. To extend Canagarajah's (1999) views of resistance in language education, a socially responsible and politically empowering implementation of EMI should see authority given to local teachers and academic staff for conceiving and implementing the appropriate curriculum and pedagogy to meet their students' needs. Research across diverse contexts in Asia has shown that, even when EMI is conceived in a top-down policy manner, the realities of classroom practice are very different, where teachers adapt or disregard ill-fitting policy when addressing immediate classroom learning needs (see e.g. Ali, 2013, in Malaysia; Aizawa & Rose, 2019, in Japan; Sahan, 2020, in Turkey; Rose et al., 2020, in China).

These findings do not repudiate the importance of institutional or national approaches to EMI provision, but emphasise that EMI implementation needs to also value the role of bottom-up policy-making in informing best practice. Just as Global Englishes Language Teaching began as a grassroots campaign for change by researcher-practitioners in language classrooms in Japan (see Galloway, 2013), a truly global EMI needs to look to local on-the-ground innovations as important sources of knowledge, rather than positioning them as deviations from pedagogical and policy norms that require correction.

To further accentuate the synergies between Global Englishes and EMI, we borrow from the dimensions of the Global Englishes Language Teaching framework (Rose & Galloway, 2019) to map core characteristics of what we see as 'Global EMI'. Adopting this perspective, Global EMI:

- is owned by a global academic community (it is not the property of the Anglosphere);
- is inclusive of diverse educational cultures (it does not require nations to adopt foreign pedagogies);
- is flexible in its norms of practice and takes on multiple forms (there is no one-size-fits-all model of language and content integration);
- places importance on qualified, competent teachers (it does not place greater importance on recruitment of NESTs or teachers with degrees from Anglophone countries);
- establishes expertise in content and discipline-specific linguistic knowledge (rather than establishing expertise in general English proficiency);

- looks to local communities and salient comparable contexts for sources of learning materials (it does not uncritically borrow sources from hegemonic centres of knowledge);
- views the knowledge of other languages and cultures as a resource and encourages students and teachers to make use of their full linguistic repertoires (it does not promote a monolingual, monocultural, or native-speakerist approach to education);
- defines the needs of students based on local or glocal demands (it does not uncritically emulate foreign curricular outcomes);
- views the goal of EMI as developing multicompetent graduates (it does not see the achievement of native-like proficiency as a central goal); and
- is multilingual and translingual in orientation (it is not monolingual or English-only in presentation).

This article has shown a rich body of research from and about Asia that has developed a strong evidence base of diverse EMI policy and practice. This research makes important contributions to understanding EMI outside the western hemisphere and Anglosphere. Future critical research on Global EMI – informed by the aforementioned dimensions – can help to resist hegemonic views of English medium education. This can be realised by highlighting effective translingual EMI practices, resisting native-speakerism, and disrupting historical imbalances of knowledge between the centre and periphery.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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