



**Anglicization of Higher Education in Groningen: a  
Students' and Lecturers' Perspective**

*(Verengelsing van het Hoger Onderwijs in Groningen: het Perspectief van  
Studenten en Docenten)*

## Colophon

**Title: Anglicization of Higher Education in Groningen: a Students' and Lecturers' Perspective**

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## Foreword

The number of study programs instructed in English at Dutch higher education institutions has increased over the past few years. This process of anglicization (in Dutch: ‘verengelsing’) has caused discussion in the media, with some parties favoring the anglicization of higher education and others opposing it. This paper discusses the findings of a research project by the Research Committee of the Groninger Studentenbond (GSb) targeting the opinions of both students and lecturers about the ongoing anglicization at the University of Groningen and Hanze University of Applied Sciences. In 2018, the Research Committee consisted of six members: Mandy Abbing, Tudor Crăciun, Lisanne de Jong, Jocelyne Ludoph, Dorothea Pink and Liesbeth van Ravenhorst.

The research project consisted of two parts. In the first part of the study, the opinions of students on anglicization and its effects were explored by means of a survey. In addition, the problems the students might experience were also measured. In the second part of the study, interviews were conducted with lecturers about how they view the process of anglicization. The interviews served mainly as background knowledge and broadened the perspective of the study. The goal of the study was to gain insight into the opinions and experiences of both students and lecturers and to give advice to higher education institutes of Groningen based on the collected information.

We would like to thank all the respondents who filled out our survey and provided us with their opinions and experiences. Additionally, we would like to thank the lecturers who participated in the interviews. Due to their participation, which involved them sharing their viewpoints and anecdotes, we were able to gain insight into their perspectives. Lastly, we would like to thank all the student organizations that helped us by distributing the survey among their students and members (see page 3 for the full list of student organizations).

Mandy Abbing, Tudor Crăciun, Lisanne de Jong, Jocelyne Ludoph, Dorothea Pink & Liesbeth van Ravenhorst, October 2018

## List of student organizations (in alphabetical order)

1. **AEGEE-Groningen**  
<https://www.aegEE-groningen.nl/>
2. **A.S.V. Dizkartes**  
<https://www.dizkartes.nl/>
3. **Caerus**  
<https://www.caerus-ucg.com/association/home>
4. **C.S.V. Ichthus Groningen**  
<https://www.icht.nl/>
5. **Democratische Academie Groningen**  
<http://democratischeacademie.com/>
6. **DWARS Groningen**  
<https://dwars.org/groningen/>
7. **ESN Groningen**  
<https://www.esn-groningen.nl/>
8. **Esperia**  
<http://www.svesperia.nl/nl/home-2/>
9. **F.F.J. Bernlef**  
<https://bernlef.frl/>
10. **FSV Fysiek**  
<https://www.fsvfysiek.nl/over-fysiek/home>
11. **Fysisch-Mathematische Faculteitsvereniging**  
<https://www.fmf.nl/>
12. **GHD Ubbo Emmius**  
<https://www.ubbo-emmius.nl/home>
13. **Groninger Levenswetenschappen Vereniging Idun**  
<https://www.idun.nl/home>
14. **Ibn Battuta**  
<https://www.ibnbattuta.nl/home>
15. **IFMSA-NL**  
<https://ifmsa.nl/ifmsa-nl.html>
16. **International Student Team**  
<https://www.hanze.nl/eng/study-at-hanze/meeting-hanze-uas/campus-tours>
17. **Lijst Student Erkend**  
<https://www.lijststerk.nl/home>
18. **M.F.V. Panacea**  
<https://www.panacea.nl/en/bachelor>
19. **Navigators Studentenvereniging Groningen**  
<https://www.nsgroningen.nl/home>
20. **Partij Studenten Belangen**  
<https://www.facebook.com/PsbPartijStudentBelangen/>
21. **Perspectief Groningen**  
<https://www.perspectief.nu/nl/ppfgroningen>
22. **SIB Groningen**  
<https://sib-groningen.nl/>
23. **Studentgenootschap voor Onderneming & Recht**  
<https://www.sgor.nl/home>
24. **Sociëtas**  
<http://societasonline.nl/>
25. **Studenten Organisatie Groningen**  
<https://www.studentenorganisatie.com>
26. **Studievereniging Faculteit Filosofie**  
<https://www.stuffgroningen.nl/home>
27. **Studievereniging Scopus**  
<https://www.svsopus.nl/home>
28. **TW!ST Groningen**  
<http://twistgroningen.nl/>
29. **VINTRES Groningen**  
<http://www.vintres.nl/>
30. **ZaZa**  
<http://www.zaza-nederlands.nl/>
31. **Zeilstichting Aeolus**  
<https://www.zeilstichtingaeolus.nl/>

## Abstract

This study explored the opinions of students and lecturers about the ongoing anglicization at higher education institutions in Groningen. In the first part of the study, online survey data was collected from 186 students who were non-native speakers of English, of which 172 students were studying at the University of Groningen and 14 were studying at Hanze University of Applied Sciences. In the second part, interviews were conducted with five lecturers from the University of Groningen and two from the Hanze University of Applied Sciences. The results reveal that both students and lecturers indicate that more differentiation is needed in the language policy of educational institutes. According to them, it is not necessary for every program to be taught entirely in English, especially as some programs are primarily aimed at the Dutch labor market. Furthermore, several students mentioned that they would like better communication and transparency about the language policies. In addition, students were more positive about anglicization when they thought it did not have a negative effect on the transfer of knowledge and when they used English in their daily lives on a regular basis. Moreover, lecturers at the University of Groningen were satisfied with the support offered by their educational institute, while lecturers at the Hanze University of Applied Sciences were less satisfied. Additionally, students would like more support from the educational institutes. They believe more attention should be paid to English language proficiency, intercultural understanding and multilingual and multicultural skills. Lastly, several students would like more integration between Dutch and international students. The implications and the advice for educational institutes based on the findings can be found in the last section.

## Abstract (Dutch)

In dit onderzoeksproject zijn de meningen van studenten en docenten over de huidige verengelsing van het hoger onderwijs in Groningen onderzocht. In het eerste gedeelte van het onderzoek is data van een online vragenlijst verzameld bij 186 studenten van wie Engels niet de moedertaal is, waarvan 172 studenten studeerden aan de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen en 14 studeerden aan de Hanzehogeschool. In het tweede gedeelte zijn interviews afgenomen met vijf docenten van de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen en twee van de Hanzehogeschool. De resultaten lieten zien dat zowel studenten als docenten vonden dat er meer differentiatie nodig is in het taalbeleid van de onderwijsinstellingen. Volgens de respondenten is het niet nodig om alle studieprogramma's geheel in het Engels te geven, zeker omdat sommige programma's voornamelijk op de Nederlandse arbeidsmarkt gericht zijn. Daarnaast noemden meerdere studenten dat ze betere communicatie en transparantie wensen betreft het taalbeleid. Er werd ook gevonden dat studenten positiever zijn over verengelsing wanneer ze denken dat het de kennisoverdracht niet negatief beïnvloedt en wanneer ze het Engels regelmatig gebruiken in hun alledaagse leven. Verder waren de docenten van de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen tevreden met de ondersteuning die ze krijgen van hun onderwijsinstelling, terwijl de docenten van de Hanzehogeschool minder positief waren. Tevens noemden studenten dat ze meer ondersteuning van de onderwijsinstellingen zouden willen krijgen. Volgens hen zouden de onderwijsinstellingen meer aandacht moeten besteden aan de Engelse taalvaardigheid, intercultureel begrip en meertalige en multiculturele vaardigheden. Tot slot benoemden meerdere studenten dat ze meer integratie tussen de Nederlandse en internationale studenten wensen. De implicaties van deze bevindingen en het daaruit volgend advies aan de onderwijsinstellingen kunnen worden gevonden in de laatste sectie van het artikel.

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## 1. Introduction

Over the last few years, the number of study programs offered in English at Dutch higher education institutions has risen steadily (KNAW, 2017). This trend of anglicization (in Dutch: ‘verengelsing’) is strongest at academic universities, but there is also an increase of it at universities of applied sciences. A study by the NOS (2017) shows that 20% of university bachelors and 70% of master programs in the Netherlands are instructed entirely in English. For universities of applied sciences, this percentage is lower, with 8% of the programs instructed entirely in English (Vereniging Hogescholen, 2017).

Anglicization has caused a lot of discussion and controversy in the media over the past years, with some parties deeming the process as a positive trend and others being more critical of the possible effect on the quality of education and of the motivation behind the switch to English-instructed courses.

### Arguments against anglicization

Looking at news articles on the anglicization of the Dutch higher education system, criticism and concerns about anglicization seem to be the norm rather than the exception (e.g. van Bree, 2014; Klaassen, 2001; & Trouw, 2002). Klaassen (2001), for instance, argued that students do not study as thoroughly when English is the primary language of instruction. Dutch students might have a harder time understanding the information in English, which is why they might learn more superficially. Van Bree (2014) raised the point that when English is used in Dutch universities, it supposedly lowers the transfer of knowledge. This would result in exam fail rates that are almost twice as high for students taking courses taught in English as for students taking courses taught in Dutch. The study of van Bree (2014) showed that this was true even when the English level of the instructor was of good quality. A study by Trouw (2002), however, found no significant difference in exam performance between students following Dutch or English courses.

Another point is that the process of anglicization could place native English speakers at an unfair advantage in the sense that Dutch students might need to invest more time and energy to compensate for not being a native speaker when English is used as the language of instruction (Neerlandistiek, 2018). Since English native speakers do not have to expend this time and energy, they can focus more on other subjects, such as mathematics, additional studying, or hobbies. Thus, one can argue that it might be easier for native English speakers to

achieve higher grades, since they do not need to focus as much on understanding the language of their study materials. This might then facilitate concentration on the actual content of their study materials. However, it is important to consider that most international students in the Netherlands and in Groningen specifically are non-native English speakers (NRC, 2017; Groningen City Monitor, 2018), and are thus not advantaged in this way. Most international students that are non-native English speakers, however, did make a conscious choice to follow a study program instructed in English which may leave them better prepared for studying in English. This is not necessarily the case for Dutch students who, for example, started a study program that was initially instructed in Dutch and only later switched to English for certain courses within the program.

Additionally, a study by Hendriks, van Meurs, and Hogervorst (2016) suggested that students' comprehension of non-native English (e.g. Dutch) lecturers depends on how strong the lecturer's accent is. They found that lecturers with a moderate accent were perceived as less comprehensible, and less likable than lecturers with a more subtle accent (Hendriks, van Meurs, & Hogervorst, 2016). De Voogd (Trouw, 2017) argued that fully English-taught university programs hinder the transition between higher education and the Dutch labor market. According to him, universities have a social responsibility and should prepare students for the local labor market (Trouw, 2017). M. de Roij, a student of Leiden University, observed that the quality of argumentation declined for both students and lecturers, when English was spoken instead of Dutch (EenVandaag, 2017). Huygen (2017) argued against English programs at Dutch universities because, according to him, even before Dutch universities started offering English programs, Dutch universities were highly ranked in international lists. He criticized university policies for being too focused on the financial influx that international students bring with them, and failing to take into account that this leads to more competition among students when the study program is taught in English, due to the limited number of places universities have to offer. Huygen (2017) also claimed that English programs will be at the expense of Dutch language skills and that studying in English will not improve students' English language skills, because the level of English proficiency students are exposed to is not sufficient, and English language errors are not corrected.

### **Arguments in favor of anglicization**

There are, however, also many positive aspects to anglicization. One of the main arguments, as put forward by the KNAW (2017), is that the international environment at higher education institutes promotes diversity which could benefit the quality of education. However, there are

two necessary conditions mentioned by the KNAW (2017) which need to be fulfilled in order to truly benefit from anglicization. Firstly, institutions must invest in the subject-specific and pedagogical aspects associated with their language choice. Lecturers must not only possess adequate English skills, but also the pedagogical skills needed to teach in a second language (KNAW, 2017). Secondly, students and staff must master an adequate number of intercultural skills. Hence, a solid policy is important to achieve these benefits of anglicization. In addition, study programs that aim to prepare students for an international labor market usually use English, whereas programs that want to prepare students for the Dutch labor market typically use Dutch. Thus, the labor market which the students are going to be part of after graduation seems to be an important factor in determining the language of instruction (KNAW, 2017). Anglicization is also partly influenced by economic reasons, as there is global competition between institutions for good students and staff (KNAW, 2017). International students represent a source of financing for institutions of higher education as well, thereby offering the possibility to increase the quality of education. The Dutch Minister of Education (Nu.nl, 2018) states that universities should discuss anglicization and make clear that English lectures are not only used as an instrument in competition. She assumes that some universities choose to offer English-instructed education to boost the number of students without a substantive reason.

### **Current situation in Groningen**

At the University of Groningen, 66% of master students and 59% of bachelor students are currently following a study program in which English or a combination of English and Dutch is used as the language of instruction (NOS, 2017). At the Hanze University of Applied Sciences, the percentage of students studying in English or a combination of English and Dutch is 14% (NOS, 2017). These numbers include both Dutch and international students. The estimated number of foreign students in Groningen, as per reports released by both the University of Groningen and Hanze University of Applied Sciences, amounts to approximately 8500 internationals (University of Groningen, 2018; Hanze University of Applied Sciences, 2018). According to the most recent updates of the Groningen City Monitor (2018), most international students from the University of Groningen are from Germany (32.5%), the United Kingdom (5.5%), and China (5.0%). Most international students of the Hanze University of Applied Sciences are also from Germany (37.0%), followed by students from China (6.1%), and Bulgaria (4.8%).

As mentioned earlier, there is a lot of discussion in the media about using English as the language of instruction, and the consequences of anglicization on the quality of education

for students. In order to achieve the desired level of quality, both lecturers and students must have a good command of the language of instruction (KNAW, 2017). But how competent do students and lecturers really feel about their English language skills, and how do they experience the anglicization? Even though anglicization has been discussed extensively, little research has been conducted on the experiences and opinions of students and lecturers located specifically in Groningen. Gaining insight into their views and experiences could, however, help to paint a clearer picture on the potential difficulties students and lecturers might face. This could help improve the transition of the language of instruction from Dutch to English. Additionally, this information could be used to assess the necessity of anglicization in different study programs.

### **The current study**

An exploratory study on the ongoing anglicization of Dutch universities in Groningen was conducted. Since this study's primary concern involved the views of students on the increase of anglicization, the main research focus was to develop a questionnaire that would allow students to appropriately indicate their opinions. In this first part of the study a questionnaire was used to adequately capture students' current perceptions on how the language of instruction used in their study program affects: 1) the quality of education, 2) their confidence, 3) their transfer of knowledge, 4) how necessary they deem English, and 5) how informed they feel about language policies executed at their institution. Besides investigating students' opinions, the research project was aimed at highlighting what lecturers and staff members from the University of Groningen and the Hanze University of Applied Sciences think about the anglicization of universities. Therefore, the second part of the study consisted of interviews with lecturers regarding their stances on anglicization. This not only served as background knowledge for the study, but also offered some insight into the different, yet relevant, population comprising the lecturers. Their opinions, which may differ from those of students, are important because lecturers are likely to both be better informed about language policies at their institute as well as have more expertise in evaluating how anglicization has affected their institute over the years.

## 2. The students' perspective: survey

### Method

#### Participants

A total of 351 participants started the survey, of which 186 were included in the analysis. For the analysis, only the participants who finished the survey and who met the requirement of being a non-native speaker of English were included. Since the focus of this study was on the attitudes of non-native speakers of English towards English-taught education, native speakers were excluded from participation in this study. Moreover, a large number of people dropped out after the section of demographic questions, because of which we were left with the data of the 186 people who did finish the survey.

The final sample consisted of 186 students (67 men and 119 women) of the University of Groningen ( $n = 172$ ) and the Hanze University of Applied Sciences ( $n = 14$ ) who completed the survey. The age of participants ranged from 17 to 28 ( $M = 21.54$ ,  $SD = 1.99$ ). The sample included 161 Dutch students (people who indicated Frisian as their native language were also categorized as Dutch students) and 25 international students. Lastly, the average final exam grade for English of the Dutch students was 7.45 ( $SD = .99$ ).

#### Materials

A survey consisting of 90 items was created for the study (see Appendix A). The first 14 items involved demographic information of the participants. Items 15 to 87 consisted of statements to which participants responded using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The last part of the survey consisted of three open questions. The reliability of the close-ended scales was measured by the means of Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ), which explores if the items of the scale are measuring the same concept. The closer the score is to 1, the higher the internal consistency reliability of the scale (de Waard, 2011).

#### *Demographic information*

The first part of the survey concerned the demographic information of the participants, including age, gender, native language, institution and faculty, and study phase (bachelor, pre-master, master). Moreover, this section addressed key aspects of the participants' experience with English prior to as well as within their current study program, such as whether they had been involved in any other English language-related activities, whether they had followed at

least one course taught in English to date, and what language of instruction they preferred (English, Dutch as their native language, or no preference). This section was designed to provide some context on students' general experiences with English, and to distinguish between individuals who had previously followed English-taught courses versus the ones who had not.

### ***Quality of education***

This section contained 11 items ( $\alpha = 0.89$ ) focused on the opinion of students regarding the impact of English use on the overall quality of courses at higher education. Only students who indicated that they had followed at least one course that was instructed in English responded to this scale. These items addressed the English quality of the auxiliary materials used by lecturers within their courses (lecture slides, additional materials, etc.), together with the English language skills of lecturers and the quality of in-class discussions in English. The items were coded in such a way that a high total score on this scale indicated a positive opinion on the quality of the courses instructed in English.

### ***Confidence***

In total 24 items have been included to measure students' confidence in their English language proficiency. Seventeen items ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ) were selected and adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety scale by Horwitz and Cope (1986). This scale reflects the extent to which participants are confident about their English language skills (e.g. 'I feel self-conscious about speaking English in front of my peers and lecturers'). Additionally, seven items were added that specifically targeted pronunciation (e.g. 'I think it is okay if people can hear that I am not a native speaker of English'). Items on this scale were coded in such a way that a high total score reflected a high level of confidence.

### ***Transfer of knowledge***

The scale of transfer of knowledge included six items ( $\alpha = 0.73$ ) related to how the use of English within study programs influenced the efficiency of knowledge transfer between lecturers and students. In this part, the impact of switching from courses taught in one's native language to English-only courses was evaluated, as well as the individual's opinion on the role of the lecturer's English level in efficiently passing on their knowledge (e.g. 'I believe the ability of lecturers to properly share their knowledge is negatively affected if courses are taught

in English’). Items were coded in such a way that a high score on this scale reflected a positive opinion on knowledge transfer in English-taught courses.

### ***Context of English use***

The section about context of English use included 21 items ( $\alpha = 0.92$ ) related to the use of the English language outside of the context of higher education, English level requirements from participants within their degrees and their views on the necessity of English for their prospective careers. Within this part of the questionnaire, the frequency of English use for each individual within their degree (nine items) was inquired upon (e.g. ‘In my current degree, I have to communicate with non-Dutch peers on a regular basis’) as well as outside of the context of higher education (six items) and in a future working environment (six items). A high score on this scale reflected a high frequency of English use.

### ***Anglicization***

This section included six items ( $\alpha = 0.78$ ) aimed at participants’ general opinion about the process of anglicization at Dutch higher education institutions (e.g. ‘I find it positive that Dutch universities offer English courses/programs’). The items were coded in such a way that a high total score on this subscale indicated a positive attitude towards anglicization.

### ***Informedness***

The last part of the survey included five items ( $\alpha = 0.81$ ) that examined the extent to which students were feeling well-informed and up-to-date regarding the educational institution’s English policy regulations and changes (e.g. ‘I feel well-informed by my educational institution about the language requirements for a course taught in English’). A high score on these statements reflected that a participant felt well-informed. This section also involved three open questions where participants were asked to indicate what their faculty, institution and instructors could do differently regarding communication about language policies.

### **Procedure**

The survey was designed based on the literature discussed in the introduction. Before the survey was released, a pilot was conducted in order to test and ensure the quality of the scales. The survey was posted on the Facebook page of the GSb and was promoted using advertisements financed by the GSb as well as through word-of-mouth promotion. Moreover, the survey was spread across different social media platforms by members of the Research

Committee. Additionally, student organizations and associations were approached to distribute the survey among their members. The students could participate in the study on a voluntary basis. No compensation was provided, but participants could enter their email address in order to have a chance of winning one of the gift cards provided by the GSB.

## Results

### Descriptives of the scales

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics and the correlations of the variables measured by the scales. Based on the confidence intervals, it was found that the mean scores were significantly lower at the alpha level of .05 for the informedness scale ( $M = 2.99$ ,  $SD = .95$ , 95% CI [2.86, 3.14]) and the anglicization scale ( $M = 3.05$ ,  $SD = .86$ , 95% CI [3.93, 3.18]) when compared to the other scales. The average scores were leaning more towards a neutral opinion, as the score was close to '3'. However, no difference was found when the two scales were compared to each other. On the other hand, both the mean of the context total scale ( $M = 3.90$ ,  $SD = .76$ , 95% CI [3.79, 4.01]), which included the use of English within and outside the study context and within the prospective careers, and the mean of the quality scale ( $M = 3.82$ ,  $SD = .78$ , 95% CI [3.68, 3.96]) scored significantly higher at the .05 level than the other scales, except when compared to each other.

From all significant correlations, only the moderate ( $r \geq .50$ ) and strong relations ( $r > .70$ ; Mukaka, 2012) will be discussed hereinafter. The quality scale was found to have a moderate positive correlation with the transfer of knowledge scale,  $r = .63$ . It seemed that the perspectives of higher quality of additional English material predicted a more positive opinion on effectiveness of the knowledge transfer. Confidence seems to be positively correlated with the transfer of knowledge scale,  $r = .57$ , and the context total scale,  $r = .63$ . Transfer of knowledge also seems to be positively correlated to the context total scale,  $r = .54$ , as well as to the opinions on anglicization,  $r = .64$ , and the opinion on informedness,  $r = .55$ . In addition, a positive correlation between the context total scale and the opinions on anglicization were found,  $r = .49$ .

### Predictors of opinions on anglicization

After checking the assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity (see Appendix B for an explanation of the assumptions), a stepwise regression was performed to develop a model for predicting students' opinion towards anglicization. The students'

responses about quality, confidence, transfer of knowledge, context, informedness, institution, study phase, whether they had followed English courses before, and their preferred language were included as possible predictors. Only the transfer of knowledge and context total had significant ( $p < .05$ ) partial effects in the full model. The final model is shown in Table 2. The two predictor model was able to account for approximately 38% of the variance in students' opinion on anglicization,  $F(2, 118) = 35.45, p < .01, R^2 = .38$ . Both the coefficients transfer of knowledge and context total were positive,  $b_{\text{transfer}} = .5, SE = .09, b_{\text{context}} = .299, SE = .11$ . Therefore, this model predicts a more positive opinion towards anglicization when students' evaluations of their transfer of knowledge and their context total scores are higher.

### **Demographic information as predictor of the scales**

After checking the assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and non-collinearity (see Appendix B), a MANOVA including five independent variables (IVs; nationality, institution, study phase, whether people have followed English courses before, and language preference of instruction), and including the six scales (quality of education, confidence, transfer of knowledge, context of English use, anglicization, and informedness about language policies) as the dependent variables (DVs) was conducted.

The multivariate result was significant for preferred language of instruction, Pillai's Trace = .61,  $F(12, 19) = 6.77, p < .01, \eta^2 = .30$ , indicating a significant effect of preferred language on the DVs. In addition, two significant interactions were obtained: 1) Between nationality and language preference, Pillai's Trace = .17,  $F(6, 92) = 3.19, p < .01, \eta^2 = .17$ , and 2). Between study phase and whether students had followed additional English courses before, Pillai's Trace = .13,  $F(6, 92) = 2.33, p = .04, \eta^2 = .13$ . However, regarding the interaction of nationality and language preference it is important to consider that the sample did not include many internationals in general ( $n = 25$ ). In particular, the sample did not include any internationals indicating that they prefer their native language over English, thus the significant interaction is likely caused by an unrepresentative and small sample of the international students. The interaction between study phase and whether students had followed additional English courses before had significant effects on students confidence and total context. However, the sample did not have the same number of participants in each study phase. Most students were bachelor students and only four participants were pre-master students. Thus, it is difficult to draw any sound conclusions from these interactions, despite their statistical significance.

Univariate testing found language preference to significantly predict all six DVs (see Table 3). The interaction of nationality and language preference only reached significance for quality of education,  $F(1, 97) = 4.75$ ,  $p = .03$ ,  $\eta^2 = .05$ , and for confidence,  $F(1, 97) = 8.16$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .08$ . The interaction of study phase and whether the student had followed additional English courses was only significant for confidence,  $F(1, 97) = 4.13$ ,  $p = .05$ ,  $\eta^2 = .04$ , and for the total context of English use,  $F(1, 97) = 5.00$ ,  $p = .03$ ,  $\eta^2 = .05$ . All other main effects and interactions were nonsignificant.

Posthoc analyses using Bonferroni revealed that people who indicated that they prefer English or that they have no language preference evaluated the quality of their education to be significantly higher than people who prefer their native language ( $p < .01$ ). The difference between people preferring English versus those who indicated ‘no preference’ was not significant ( $p > .99$ ). People who indicated that they prefer English or that they have no language preference reported significantly higher confidence ( $p < .01$ ) as opposed to people favoring their native language. Preferring English versus having no preference was associated with significantly higher confidence ( $p = .02$ ). People who indicated that they prefer English or that they have no language preference reported significantly higher transfer of knowledge ( $p < .01$ ) opposed to people favoring their native language. The difference between people preferring English versus those who indicated ‘no preference’ was not significant ( $p = .12$ ). Preferring English or having no preference was associated with significantly higher scores on context ( $p < .01$ ) compared to those who prefer their native language. Preferring English versus having no preference was associated with significantly higher scores on context ( $p = .02$ ). Preferring English ( $p < .01$ ) or having no preference ( $p = .01$ ) was associated with a significantly more positive opinion towards anglicization compared to those who prefer their native language. Preferring English versus having no preference was associated with having significantly more positive views regarding anglicization ( $p = .02$ ). Preferring English ( $p < .01$ ) or having no preference ( $p < .01$ ) was associated with reporting to be better informed about language policies compared to those who prefer their native language. Whether people prefer English or have no preference did not significantly affect how informed they felt about language policies ( $p > .99$ ).

### **High school English grade as a predictor**

After checking the assumptions of univariate normality, bivariate normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity (see Appendix B), a multivariate regression was performed to predict: quality, confidence, transfer of knowledge, context total, anglicization, and informedness based

on students' English grades in high school. Both normality scales showed slight violations for some scales but considering the big sample size and the lack of outliers, these slight violations do not seem problematic and may thus be disregarded. The multivariate test revealed a significant main effect of English grade on the selected DVs, Pillai's Trace = .36,  $F(6, 87) = 8.16$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta^2 = .36$ .

It was found that a student's English grade significantly predicted several scales (see Table 4). A person's English grade significantly predicts their reported quality score,  $b = .16$ ,  $SE = .07$ ,  $p = .03$ . In other words, when people obtained a higher English grade in high school they were likely to evaluate the quality of their higher education to be higher as well. Furthermore, it was found that a person's English grade significantly predicted their self-reported confidence,  $b = .40$ ,  $SE = .05$ ,  $p < .01$ . People who obtained a higher English grade in high school were therefore more likely to report feeling more confident in their English language proficiency. In addition, a person's English grade significantly predicted their transfer of knowledge,  $b = .17$ ,  $SE = .07$ ,  $p = .02$ . Hence, people who obtained a higher English grade in high school were more likely to report higher transfer of knowledge at their study program. Lastly, it was found that a person's English grade significantly predicted their score on context total,  $b = .27$ ,  $SE = .06$ ,  $p < .01$ . In other words, people who obtained a higher English grade in high school were more likely to use English more in their daily lives.

## **Open questions of survey**

### ***Positive comments***

Most of the positive comments came from international students, who indicated that overall, they were happy with the quality of their program and the level of English and that they would even want to have more courses offered in English. The same was found for participants whose entire study program was in English, such as students of American Studies and English Language and Culture. However, these participants acknowledged that they voluntarily chose to follow a program in English, which might have led to different expectations.

### ***Recommendations faculty/institution***

#### ***Maintain the Dutch language***

Many students argued for a structural bilingual approach rather than having anglicization as a goal. One student mentioned that this approach 'would emphasize both the Dutch character of the university as well as its international orientation'. Ideally, a course would be

offered in both Dutch and English, so that people are not forced to take the English course. Additionally, it was mentioned that more flexibility in language policies would be preferable, such that for instance Dutch students would be allowed to write individual assignments in Dutch if an English course were taught by a Dutch lecturer.

#### *More support for improving language skills*

Another point that was raised concerned the support that students can receive if they wish to improve their English language skills. Many students expressed the feeling that within their program, little attention is being paid to writing, speaking and academic English skills. They argued that if more programs and courses are offered in English, it should be the responsibility of the university to offer language support to facilitate this change. This could be done in the form of mandatory courses in the first year or by making the courses of Language Center more accessible and affordable for students.

#### *More support for improving language skills by lecturers*

Related to the previous issue, students mentioned that a course should only be taught in English if the lecturer is proficient enough in the language. Suggestions included offering more opportunities for lecturers to improve their pronunciation, spelling and general communication skills, as well as more support for the translation of lecture slides and exam questions.

#### *Determine language policy per program*

A further point addressed that the usefulness of English-taught courses should be evaluated per program or even per course. Many students indicated that it makes sense for internationally oriented courses to be taught in English, but that simply translating existing courses that talk about issues in the Dutch society into English does not offer any value. They argue that language policies should depend on whether a program prepares students for the Dutch or the international labor market.

#### *More transparency about language policies*

According to many respondents, the communication about language policies should improve. Many examples were given of students who signed up for a Dutch program, only to then find out that the majority of courses would be taught in English. In general, participants indicated that they would like to be better informed about their options as well as future changes in language policies.

### *Transition rather than all at once*

The rate at which anglicization takes place was often commented upon. Some students mentioned that their entire course program was in Dutch during the first year and completely in English the following year, a change they considered too drastic. It was argued that the high rate at which anglicization occurs negatively affects the quality of the courses, as lecturers might not have enough time to adequately prepare for the courses they have to instruct in English. Most students commented that they are not necessarily against anglicization, but that it should be carried out at a rate at which the quality of the courses can be maintained.

### *Inclusion*

As mentioned above, many students noted that English courses often involved a mere translation of the Dutch version of the course. Related to this, students commented that changing the language of instruction to English does not automatically lead to a more international classroom, something that is put forward as an argument for anglicization. In order to achieve better integration of Dutch and international students, the focus should not only be on the language itself, but also on topics such as intercultural understanding.

### *General comments on anglicization*

In general, participants seemed to agree on the importance of being prepared for an international labor market, for which knowledge of the English language is necessary. However, they felt that the current motivation behind the anglicization process is more about attracting international students and thereby generating more money for the institution. Students indicated that this could be justified if the money was invested in improving the quality of the courses, but that this is not yet the case. Moreover, the goal of creating an ‘international classroom’ cannot be achieved by merely translating existing courses or programs into Dutch and more attention should be paid to multilingual and multicultural approaches. As put forward by a number of participants, anglicization can only yield positive outcomes if it involves more integration between Dutch and international students.

As a last remark, students expressed the worry that a high level of English proficiency is slowly becoming an entry requirement to higher education, making it less accessible for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. In order to prevent higher education from being exclusively accessible to the ‘elite’, the institutions should offer students more support in improving their English language skills.

### **3. The lecturers' perspective: interviews**

#### **Method**

##### **Participants**

In total, 11 lecturers who were native Dutch speakers were approached via email of which seven lecturers agreed to take part in an individual interview session on a voluntary basis. This sample included five lecturers from the University of Groningen (71.4%) and two lecturers from the Hanze University of Applied Sciences (28.6%). Each interviewed lecturer of the University of Groningen was employed at a different faculty, which included the Faculty of Arts (FA); the Faculty of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSS); the Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB); the Faculty of Science and Engineering (FSE) and the Faculty of Spatial Sciences (FSS). The lecturers of the Hanze University of Applied Sciences were an employee of the School of Communication, Media and IT (SCMI) and an employee of the School of Nursing (SN).

The lecturers mentioned that their schedules varied throughout the year. However, at the moment the interviews were conducted, the number of hours each of them taught ranged from 0 hours up to 12 hours per week. Moreover, all were involved in multiple courses, except for one lecturer who was at the moment involved in only one course. Additionally, each lecturer instructed at least one course in English and the majority also instructed at least one course in Dutch. Lastly, the lecturers of FSE, FA, SCMI and SN had experience with English as the language of instruction for 10 years or longer, while the others had experience with instructing in English between three to nine years.

##### **Material**

A semi-structured interview guide was composed specifically for this study, in which the interview was outlined and structured in order to standardize the procedure. The questions were mainly based on the literature discussed in the introduction (e.g. KNAW, 2017; Klaassen, 2001). The lecturers were asked about their opinion on several statements mentioned in the literature. One such statement, for example, was: "What is your opinion on the statement that it is more difficult for lecturers to use didactic/pedagogical when teaching in English instead of Dutch?". Moreover, topics such as their confidence in their English language proficiency and their views on the competence of their colleagues were reviewed. In addition, the views of the lecturers on the anglicization policies of their employer and the support they were receiving

from the educational institutes were discussed. Lastly, the lecturers were asked to share their views on the experiences of both Dutch and international students with regard to anglicization and the effects of anglicization on the Dutch language proficiency of Dutch students. The complete interview guide can be found in Appendix C.

## **Procedure**

Lecturers who taught courses in both English and Dutch were targeted. Furthermore, to obtain an overview of the differences between faculties, lecturers had to be from different faculties or institutes. The participants were contacted via a standard email (see Appendix D), which was adapted to the specific lecturer that was being approached. The email informed the participants about the study itself and their rights as participants. In addition, the interview questions were included as an attachment, so the lecturers could take a look at them before deciding whether to participate or not. Provided that a participant agreed to take part in the study, an appointment was made. After the interviews, the recordings of the conversations were transcribed and the transcriptions were sent to the lecturer in order to give them the opportunity to approve the information.

## **Results**

Transcriptions of the interviews were analyzed, interpreted, and compared manually. The topics discussed were divided into two subtopics: 1) the experiences of the lecturers themselves and 2) their views on the experiences of students.

### **Experiences of lecturers**

The lecturers agreed that not every study program should be instructed entirely in English and that more differentiation is needed in the language policy of educational institutes. They mentioned that instruction in English generally leads to positive outcomes such as greater diversity, general and financial growth of the educational institute and a better preparation for students towards the globalized labor market. Nevertheless, they commented that the transition to English as the language of instruction should be considered within the context of the program. The lecturer of FSS commented that the English language plays a crucial role in academia, but that the degree of necessity differs between fields of study. Most lecturers agreed that instruction in English is not needed in every program, especially as some are aimed at the Dutch labor market and society. In addition, both the lecturers of FEB and FSE mentioned that in the end, Dutch students make up the largest part of the student population and that many

students still prefer a program taught in their native language. For these reasons, they agreed that Dutch programs should still be offered next to English programs.

Whereas the lecturers of BSS, FEB and FSS thought the quality of education to be unaffected by the language of instruction, the lecturer of FSS argued that using English as the language of instruction would increase the quality of education as it leaves room for a more diverse student population. Nevertheless, the background of both students and lecturers, instead of the language of instruction, might influence the quality of education according to some of the lecturers. For instance, the lecturer of FSE said that instruction in English might lower the quality of education when teaching a group consisting of Dutch students only, but increase the quality when teaching a mixed group of students. In addition, the lecturers of FA, SCMI and SN were concerned with the loss of quality due to Dutch students and lecturers having trouble expressing themselves accurately in English. The SN lecturer commented that this might especially be the case during a transitional period from Dutch to English.

Furthermore, the majority of lecturers did not experience differences in their pedagogical skills between teaching in English or in Dutch, but some mentioned that thinking of examples and anecdotes is more difficult while teaching in English. It was also mentioned by some that evaluating and grading papers is more difficult in English than in Dutch. Moreover, the majority evaluated their colleagues as competent in their English language skills, but some also mentioned they know a few colleagues who are not as proficient. In general, the lecturers were confident about their own English language proficiency, even though it had taken them some time to adapt. A slight difference in confidence in their English language proficiency was found between the lecturers at the University of Groningen and lecturers at the Hanze University of Applied Sciences, as the lecturers at the university seemed more confident about their English skills. In addition, some mentioned that practice had helped them to develop their English language skills, but that they still needed extra preparation time for an English course.

According to the lecturers of the University of Groningen, they were sufficiently supported by their higher education institute. For example, the lecturer of FSS mentioned that the faculty offered to translate PowerPoint slides and that lecture recordings were made and checked by the Language Center of the university. Several lecturers also mentioned they were required to take an English language proficiency test at the Language Center and that lecturers can follow English courses at the Language Center in their free time. However, not many lecturers make use of this opportunity due to their already busy schedules. In addition, the lecturer of BSS said the faculty takes the language preference of lecturers into consideration

when making a division of the courses. This support offered by the university contrasts with the comments of the lecturers of the Hanze University of Applied Sciences, who said that they were not offered any support and had to actively seek it. For example, the lecturer of SN and SCMI noted that the educational institute would assume that lecturers are proficient enough in English and do not need any additional help. The SCMI lecturer indicated that many lecturers would appreciate being asked more frequently whether they feel competent enough to teach in English.

### **Views on experiences of students**

Multiple lecturers mentioned that most Dutch students are reluctant to speak English in the beginning, but that they gradually become accustomed to it. Furthermore, the lecturer of FEB commented that they observed a dichotomy between students with a high and a low level of English proficiency. According to the lecturer, not being as fluent in English might become an obstacle that students will have to overcome.

The lecturers of FSS and FSE mentioned that international students might feel excluded by the Dutch students, as most of them speak Dutch with each other. However, they said that exclusion of non-Dutch students happens less frequently as the faculties are becoming more international. The lecturer of FEB also said that you should have a consistent language policy as a lecturer in order to make the international students feel more included. Moreover, the lecturer of BSS observed greater differences in English language proficiency within international students than within Dutch students, with most Dutch students' English language proficiency being quite high. Also, multiple lecturers thought that most international students are satisfied with the quality of education and appreciate the opportunity to study in the Netherlands.

The last topic discussed was about the effects of instruction in English on the Dutch language proficiency of students. Some mentioned that the Dutch language proficiency of students should not be a concern of the higher educational institutes and that it should be the responsibility of secondary schools. However, others observed a deterioration of the Dutch language proficiency of students in written reports, which they attribute to a lack of feedback on students' writing in Dutch. Related to this, the lecturer of FA mentioned that there should be more focus on academic writing skills in Dutch.

**Further remarks**

Both lecturers of the Hanze University of Applied Sciences mentioned that anglicization is not synonymous with internationalization, as the culture within the educational institutes does not necessarily become more international by simply offering programs in English. In addition, the lecturer of FA said they do not get a lot of support in developing international and intercultural skills and that they sometimes have trouble acknowledging and dealing with cultural issues. Furthermore, some lecturers mentioned that students do not receive a lot of feedback on their English speaking skills from native English speakers and this way, their language proficiency is less likely to improve. Lastly, the lecturer of FSS commented that the language policy should focus more on the increased diversity due to anglicization instead of focusing on the financial reasons.

## 4. General discussion

The current research project investigated the opinions of both lecturers and students on the topic of anglicization of higher education in Groningen. The first part of the study aimed to explore students' attitudes towards anglicization, using a survey. In the second part of the study, interviews with lecturers of both the University of Groningen and the Hanze University of Applied Sciences were conducted to gain insights into their views and experiences regarding anglicization.

### Main findings

One of the main findings was that both the students and lecturers think that more differentiation is needed in the language policy of educational institutes. According to them, not every program should be taught entirely in English, as some study programs are primarily aimed at the Dutch labor market and society. They believe courses should only be instructed in English if it adds value to the study program. It can be concluded that students' overall evaluation of the survey scales was relatively high. For example, the majority of students was positive regarding the quality of the use of English within their study programs, as well as their confidence in their English language proficiency. On the other hand, the results showed mixed opinions of the lecturers regarding the loss of quality due to anglicization. Some mentioned that not necessarily the language, but the composition of both the group of students and lecturers influence the quality. Others were concerned with the loss of quality due to Dutch students and lecturers having trouble expressing themselves accurately. Students also commented that the high rate at which anglicization occurs might negatively affect the quality of the courses, as lecturers might not have enough time to adequately prepare for the classes they have to instruct in English.

A number of other concerns were raised by students. It seems that students' average rating on the informedness scale on the language policy was relatively low compared to the other scales, except for the anglicization scale. This indicates the presence of uncertainty towards the process of communication of policies between the educational institutes and students. This is also underlined by the content of the responses to the open questions. Many students described they had signed up for a Dutch program, only to find out later that the majority of the courses would be taught in English. In general, students mentioned they would like to be better informed about these language policies. It also seems that the students' average

opinion on anglicization was relatively low compared to the other scales, except for the informedness scale. The students commented they were not necessarily against anglicization and seemed to agree on the importance of being prepared for an international labor market. However, students thought that the reasons for the anglicization process are too heavily motivated by financial reasons, which was also mentioned by one lecturer during an interview.

In addition, students' opinions on anglicization could be predicted by their opinions on the effects of the transfer of knowledge and their scores on the total context of English use. Therefore, their opinions on anglicization were more positive if they thought courses that are being taught in English do not negatively affect their transfer of knowledge, if they were exposed to English frequently, and if they deemed it necessary for their prospective careers. It might be the case that if students think the language of instruction does not affect the transfer of knowledge, and thus does not affect the difficulty of the program, they do not mind using a language other than their native language. They might even be more positive towards anglicization, because they see possible positive outcomes of anglicization. Furthermore, it might be that students' opinions on anglicization are positively impacted by their exposure to English as they might get used to instruction in English and might seek it actively within their studies and free time. They also might be more positive and open towards anglicization when they deem it necessary for their long-term careers and international employment prospects.

Next to the general opinions on the process of anglicization, more specific subtopics were investigated. It can be concluded from the survey that the majority of students were generally confident about their English language proficiency. Several lecturers also mentioned they evaluate the English language proficiency of most Dutch students to be high, but that they observed greater differences among international students. Moreover, the lecturers thought most Dutch students gradually become accustomed to instruction in English. Furthermore, most lecturers were confident in their own English skills, even though it had taken them some time to adapt. However, the lecturers at the University of Groningen seemed more confident than the lecturers at the Hanze University of Applied Sciences. This distinction might be explained by differences in support offered by the educational institutes and the differences in educational methods associated with both levels of education (University of Groningen, 2017). The practical application of knowledge used at a university of applied sciences might be more aimed towards the Dutch labor market and the materials might be more readily available in Dutch compared to university level study programs. Lastly, lecturers commented on the influence of anglicization on the Dutch language proficiency of students. Some thought that the Dutch language proficiency of students should not be a concern of the higher educational

institutes, but of the secondary schools. Nevertheless, others observed a deterioration of the Dutch language proficiency of students in written reports due to anglicization. This observation is in line with Huygen's (2017) argument, which stated that instruction in English will be at the expense of Dutch language skills.

### **Support offered by the educational institutes**

The last main finding considers the support offered by the educational institutes. The lecturers of the University of Groningen commented that they got offered enough support by their educational institute. For example, a lecturer mentioned that the faculty offered to translate PowerPoint slides and that lectures were recorded and checked by the Language Center of the university. In addition, another lecturer said that their faculty takes the language preference of lecturers into consideration when dividing the courses among the lecturers. Furthermore, some also mentioned that lecturers can follow the English courses at the Language Center in their spare time, but that not many lecturers make use of this opportunity due to their already busy schedules. This support offered by the University of Groningen contrasts with the comments of the lecturers of the Hanze University of Applied Sciences, who said that they were not offered any support and that they had to actively seek it. In addition, lecturers mentioned that their educational institute assumes they do not need help and that everyone is sufficiently proficient in English. Furthermore, a lecturer said they did not receive a lot of support regarding developing their international and intercultural skills and they sometimes have trouble acknowledging and coping with different cultures.

The students also mentioned their views on the support offered by their educational institute. Students mentioned there is little attention for writing, speaking and academic English skills within their program. According to them, it should be the responsibility of the educational institute to offer more affordable language support if more programs and courses are offered in English. In addition, the students mentioned that more opportunities should be offered for lecturers to improve their English language proficiency. However, educational institutes should keep in mind that the majority of lecturers are already very busy. The students also agreed with the lecturers on the topic of intercultural understanding, multilingual and multicultural approaches, as they mentioned their preference for more integration between Dutch and international students. Some students said anglicization can only lead to positive outcomes if it involves more integration between Dutch and international students and if the concept of international classroom is applied correctly.

## **Exploratory findings**

### **English grade as a predictor**

In an additional exploratory analysis, it was found that English grade was a significant predictor for multiple scales, including confidence, quality of education, transfer of knowledge and context in total. These results point towards students' English grades to be efficient predictors for their self-confidence, their exposure to English, and how necessary students deem English, following their high school years. A higher English grade predicted a higher level of self-confidence regarding their language proficiency, which implies the importance of high school English courses in preparing students for higher education. Additionally, the importance of preparation for English-instructed education is also stressed by the positive relationship between English grade and students' transfer of knowledge. The transfer of knowledge and understanding of the material might influence the study progress of the students. Surprisingly, a higher English grade also predicted a more positive perception of the quality of education in English. This might occur because students with high English grades pay more attention to detail and are more appreciative of the correct use of English. This finding suggests individual differences as a predictor of evaluations of quality.

### **Language preference as a predictor**

In an exploratory MANOVA, language preference of students was found to significantly predict all six survey scales. Students who preferred English reported significantly higher confidence, higher transfer of knowledge, higher quality of education, higher scores on context, higher informedness, and a more positive opinion on anglicization than students who preferred instruction in Dutch. This underlines the importance of students' preferences regarding the language of instruction, as it relates to their perceptions, experiences and opinions regarding their study program.

## **Strengths, limitations and future research**

This study has a number of strengths. First, it is one of the few studies that has investigated the opinions of both students and lecturers on anglicization and it is one of the first studies to show data of a sample from Groningen. This offers insight into the experiences of both the relevant populations of the higher educational institutes. Moreover, it considers the specific situation and context in Groningen, as this might be different for other Dutch student cities. A second strength of this study involves a combination of qualitative and quantitative data, as collected through a survey and through interviews. The quantitative data allows for a broad capacity of

information that can be gathered, while the qualitative data allows for more in-depth insights into the individual opinions of participants. In addition, one of the benefits of using a survey is its anonymity, which allows respondents to give more honest and valid answers (Brinkman, 2011). The benefit of using interviews is to explore the topic in a general way and it is an effective way to obtain detailed information about personal feelings, perceptions and opinions (de Waard, 2011). The period of time invested in the promotion of the survey enabled the questionnaire to reach a large number of students from multiple faculties and different study phases. For this, study organizations were approached, and social media were actively used.

Besides the strengths, this study also has a number of limitations. The sample for the survey can be regarded as a convenience sample. Because not all members of the population had access to the survey, some groups might be overrepresented or underrepresented. In addition, there is a selection bias for both the interviews and survey, because people who were passionate about the topic were more likely to participate. This might affect the quality and the generalizability of the data. Moreover, there are other disadvantages of using online surveys, such as socially desirable answer bias and the fact that it is difficult to control the extent to which answers are thought through (Brinkman, 2011). Furthermore, approximately half of the people who started the survey finished it, thus restricting the generalizability of these findings. The length of the survey was mentioned as a reason for this high dropout rate. However, we believe that a more detailed survey allowed us to collect more nuanced information from respondents. Another limitation of restricting the generalizability is the small sample size of Hanze University of Applied Sciences students compared to the real population. This was also the case for international students, who were underrepresented in this study. In addition, international lecturers were not included in the interview sample as they were not the target group. However, they might have different opinions on this topic. Lastly, because of the small sample size of the lecturers ( $n = 7$ ), it remains difficult to generalize the results of the interviews, but it gives insight and background information in order to paint a broader picture of the effects of anglicization. Thus, although generalizations from this study should be approached with caution, the results provide a better and deeper understanding of the opinions and experiences of students and lecturers in coping with anglicization. Additionally, this study might serve as the foundation of a continued discussion on anglicization.

For future research, it is recommended to investigate the necessity of English in different fields of higher education. Longitudinal research could help to predict if following a program instructed in English ensures better performance in and opportunities for an (international) job. Besides that, Hanze University of Applied Sciences students and students

from several fields were underrepresented in this study. For this reason, no comparisons could be made between these different types of students. Future research is needed to examine their opinions and to get an idea of the possible differences between studies/faculties and between Hanze University of Applied Sciences and University of Groningen students. Another recommendation for future studies is to include the opinions of policy makers and international lecturers. This could provide a different perspective on the topic of anglicization. Lastly, conducting research at secondary schools on the teaching of English language proficiency could be helpful to see if these preparations are sufficient for students to start with an English study program or if more attention is needed.

## 5. Advice

Based on the data collected from the respondents of the survey and the interviews conducted with lecturers from the University of Groningen and Hanze University of Applied Sciences, the following section contains an overview of recommendations regarding the improvement of the anglicization process.

It was mentioned by students and lecturers from both educational institutes that they are not necessarily against anglicization. Multiple participants mentioned positive outcomes, such as increased diversity within the organization, which might improve the quality of education. However, a number of key points have been made throughout this research process. They will be briefly readdressed in the following paragraphs.

### **Necessity of English and rate of transition**

According to the respondents, only certain courses, i.e. the ones where the use of English is mandated by the global aspect of the course, should be offered as English-only courses (e.g. International Business; International Law). Therefore, the instruction in English should add value to the course. In addition, the lecturers agreed that not every study program should have English as the dominant language of instruction, as some are primarily aimed at the Dutch labor market and society. Ideally, a course would be offered in both Dutch and English, so students and lecturers can express their preference. However, this is not always possible, especially when a study program is regarded as small. In this case, more flexibility in the language policy would be preferable. For example, students would be allowed to write individual assignments in Dutch if the course is instructed by a Dutch lecturer. These policy rules should also be communicated clearly to both lecturers and students.

Furthermore, students mentioned that the rate of the anglicization process is too drastic and that it should be carried out at a rate at which the quality of the courses can be maintained. This makes it easier to adapt for both students and lecturers during the transitional period.

### **Support**

In relation to the development of language skills for both students and lecturers from these two organizations, more support from both Hanze University of Applied Sciences and Groningen University is required. In the case of the university, many students complained about high costs of participating in English courses from the Language Center, whilst the Hanze University of

Applied Sciences could improve on the promotional activities for their language courses. In addition, opportunities for lecturers to improve their English should be offered. Especially the Hanze University of Applied Sciences seems to be lacking in this area, as the lecturers mentioned they were not receiving enough support. Even though it was mentioned that lecturers from both institutes could take English courses, they should be incorporated in the schedules of the lecturers as the workload of most lecturers is already high. Furthermore, support should not only focus on the language aspect of internationalization, but also on the required intercultural and pedagogical skills, as also highlighted by the KNAW (2017). Some lecturers mentioned that they did not receive support on these kinds of topics.

### **Communication**

In addition, both educational institutions should improve on the communication of their language policies for both students and lecturers, as this issue was mentioned by multiple respondents. Students should be better informed about the number of English/Dutch courses in their program prior to starting their academic year. Keeping students up-to-date with each faculty's intentions and future plans regarding language policy should be prioritized, since many of these individuals might not feel open towards taking courses in English in the future. In addition, both students and lecturers should be engaged in future policy making.

### **International classroom**

The last item considers the topic of diversity and internationalization, which is often mentioned as a positive outcome of anglicization. Both students and lecturers argued that changing the language of instruction from Dutch to English does not automatically lead to a more international classroom. For example, a lecturer mentioned to sometimes have trouble acknowledging and coping with different cultures, as they do not receive any support with these issues. In order to achieve better integration of Dutch and international students and employees, the focus should not only be on the language itself, but also on topics such as intercultural understanding, pedagogical skills and multilingual and multicultural approaches. This advice is also in line with the report published by the KNAW (2017). A number of students mentioned that integration and mutual understanding between Dutch and international students is needed to yield positive outcomes of anglicization.

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## 7. Tables

Table 1

*Correlations, Means, Standard Deviations and Confidence Intervals*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	95% CI	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Quality <sup>a</sup>	3.82	.78	[3.68, 3.96]	-					
2. Confidence <sup>b</sup>	3.46	.78	[3.34, 3.57]	.42	-				
3. Transfer of knowledge <sup>c</sup>	3.36	.79	[3.25, 3.48]	.63	.57	-			
4. Context total <sup>b</sup>	3.90	.76	[3.79, 4.01]	.44	.63	.54	-		
5. Anglicization <sup>b</sup>	3.05	.86	[3.93, 3.18]	.28	.41	.64	.49	-	
6. Informedness <sup>b</sup>	2.99	.95	[2.86, 3.14]	.45	.38	.55	.37	.38	-

<sup>a</sup>n = 122.

<sup>b</sup>n = 186.

<sup>c</sup>n = 185.

All correlations are significant at the .01 level (two sided).

Table 2

*Model of the Prediction of the Opinion on Anglicization*

Predictors	<i>b</i>	<i>SE b</i>	<i>T</i>	Sig.
(Constant)	.20	.39	.51	
Transfer of knowledge	.50	.09	5.38**	.00
Context total	.29	.11	2.85**	.01
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>				.38
<i>F</i>				35.35**

\*\*p &lt; .01

Table 3

*Univariate Tests of Language Preference as a Predictor of the Scales*

Predictor	Variables	Sum of squares	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	$\eta^2$
Preferred language	Quality	1.88	1	14.23**	.23
	Confidence	2.38	1	28.35**	.37
	Transfer of knowledge	.42	1	26.76**	.36
	Context total	.16	1	17.42**	.26
	Anglicization	.32	1	8.47**	.15
	Informedness	.78	1	4.127*	.08
	Error			97	
Total			121		

\*p &lt; .05

\*\*p &lt; .01

Table 4

*Univariate Tests of High School English Grade as a Predictor of the Scales*

Predictor	Variables	<i>b</i>	<i>SE b</i>	<i>F</i>	$\eta^2$
English grade	Quality	.16	.07	4.91*	.05
	Confidence	.39	.06	45.09**	.33
	Transfer of knowledge	.17	.07	5.67*	.06
	Context total	.27	.06	20.94**	.19
	Anglicization	.14	.08	3.08	.03
	Informedness	.09	.09	.86	.01

\* $p < .05$

\*\* $p < .01$

## 8. Appendices

### Appendix A: GSb Survey on anglicization - 2018

#### Demographic information (answer possibilities depend on the question)

1. What is your age?
2. What is your gender?
3. What is your native language?
4. At what institution are you studying?
5. At what faculty do you study? (If studying at University of Groningen)
6. At what faculty do you study? (If studying at Hanze University of Applied Sciences)
7. What do you study?
8. In what phase of your study program are you?
9. In what year of your program are you? (choose the year of which you follow the most courses)
10. In your study program up until now, have you followed at least one course in which you have to actively use English (speaking, writing, presenting)?
11. Apart from mandatory English classes in high school, did you do any of the following things to improve your English before starting your studies? (Multiple options possible)
12. Which language do you use most often in your daily life?
13. What language of instruction do you prefer?
14. What was your final grade for English in high school? (Ranging from 1-10, no decimals)

#### Statements of the “Quality of English” scale (5-point Likert scale)

1. My non-English lecturers have good English language skills.
2. The English lecture slides are of good quality.
3. The English exam questions are formulated clearly and correctly.
4. I am satisfied with the overall quality of my studies taught in English.
5. The fact that my study program is in English lowers its quality.
6. My non-English lecturers lack adequate English language skills.
7. The English lecture slides contain a lot of mistakes.
8. The English exam questions are formulated poorly.

9. The overall quality of my studies taught in English is low.
10. In-class discussions are more superficial because they are in English.
11. The fact that my study program is in English adds to its quality.

### **Statements of the “Confidence” scale (5-point Likert scale)**

#### ***Overall confidence***

1. I feel self-conscious about speaking English in front of my peers and lecturers.
2. I worry that people will judge me if I make a mistake when speaking English.
3. I get nervous when I know that I am going to be called on in a class where I have to speak English.
4. If I cannot follow what the lecturer is saying in an English class, I will ask for clarification.
5. I generally think that other students in my course are better at English than I am.
6. Speaking in English without preparation is not a problem for me.
7. For me, the language of instruction of a course does not affect its difficulty.
8. I am able to follow classes taught in English as well as classes taught in my native language.
9. I feel more tense and nervous in classes taught in English than in classes taught in my native language.
10. I believe it is more difficult to convey a message in English than in my native language.
11. If I have to write a paper in English, I find it more difficult to express my thoughts than I would in my native language.
12. If I have to do a presentation in English, I find it more difficult to express my thoughts than I would in my native language.
13. I find it more difficult to structure a paper or presentation in English than I would in my native language.
14. If I have to engage in a discussion in English, I find it more difficult to express my thoughts than I would in my native language.
15. If I have to engage in a discussion in English, I find it more difficult to come up with arguments on the spot than I would in my native language.
16. If I have to engage in a discussion in English, I find it more difficult to formulate a reply to what other classmates said than I would in my native language.

17. I spend more time preparing for a class taught in English than for a class taught in my native language.

### ***English pronunciation subscale***

1. I feel confident about my English pronunciation.
2. It is my goal to sound like a native speaker of English.
3. I believe people will only take me seriously if I speak English without a clear foreign accent.
4. I sometimes do not raise a point, because I am insecure about my English pronunciation
5. I feel that people generally find it easy to understand my English pronunciation.
6. I think it is okay if people can hear that I am not a native speaker of English.
7. I believe that my accent when speaking English makes me sound less competent than I would if I were to speak my native language

### **Statements of the “Transfer of knowledge” scale (5-point Likert scale)**

1. I believe the ability of teachers to properly share their knowledge is negatively affected if courses are taught in English.
2. I think the adjustment period that follows a switch from native-language courses to English courses impacts the learning process effectiveness negatively.
3. I feel that the global characteristic of English and the number of materials available in English facilitate a smoother understanding of various study-related concepts.
4. It takes more effort to concentrate and pay attention to my English classes, compared to classes in my native language.
5. I believe it is harder to relate information captured during English classes to day-to-day discussions and situations in my native language, due to the differences in terminology between the two languages.
6. Having courses taught in English enables me to improve my foreign language skills and adds to my ability to access a wider range of sources of information.

### **Statements of the “Context” scale (5-point Likert scale)**

#### ***Within study program context***

1. In my current degree, it is necessary that I am able to read scientific articles in English.

2. In my current degree, it is necessary that I am able to hold a presentation in English.
3. In my current degree, it is necessary that I am able to write a paper in English.
4. In my current degree, it is necessary that I am able to hold a discussion in English.
5. In my current degree, I have to communicate with non-Dutch peers on a regular basis.
6. Most of my lecturers are non-Dutch speakers.
7. I find it important to study in an international environment.
8. My current degree has a strong international orientation.
9. Cultural and linguistic diversity are important in my field of study.

### ***Outside study program context***

1. Outside of my studies, I regularly read texts or books written in English.
2. Outside of my studies, I regularly watch TV or movies in English.
3. Outside of my studies, I regularly watch or listen to educational media in English, such as podcasts, YouTube videos or documentaries.
4. Outside of my studies, I speak English on a regular basis.
5. Outside of my studies, I write texts in English on a regular basis (e.g. on social media, write emails, blogs, poetry).
6. Outside of my studies, I regularly interact with people that do not share my native language (e.g. while traveling).

### ***Career context***

1. For the career that I would like to pursue, it is necessary that I am able to read English texts.
2. For the career that I would like to pursue, it is necessary that I am able to hold a presentation in English.
3. For the career that I would like to pursue, it is necessary that I am able to write texts in English.
4. For the career that I would like to pursue, it is necessary that I am able to hold a discussion in English.
5. I can see myself moving abroad in the future.
6. I can see myself working for an international company or institution in the future.

### **Statements of the “Anglicization” scale (5-point Likert scale)**

1. I find it positive that Dutch universities offer English courses/programs.

2. I believe it is necessary that Dutch universities switch to English-taught programs.
3. I am in favor of the increasing anglicization of Dutch universities.
4. I believe the majority of university programs in the Netherlands should be offered in Dutch.
5. I view the ongoing process of anglicization negatively.
6. I think that every course/program should be offered in both English and Dutch.

### **Statements of the “Informedness” scale (5-point Likert scale)**

1. I feel well-informed by my educational institution about my options for courses taught in English versus ones taught in Dutch.
2. I feel well-informed by my educational institution about the language requirements for a course taught in English (i.e. what my English proficiency should be in order to successfully participate in such a course).
3. I feel well-informed by my educational institution about future changes in language policy (e.g. a course that was previously taught in Dutch will be taught in English in the future, or vice versa).
4. I feel well-informed by my educational institution about options to improve my English (e.g. language courses).
5. I feel well-informed by my lecturers about the language policy within a certain course (e.g. if I am allowed to answer exam questions in Dutch if the lectures are in English).

### **Open questions**

1. What do you think your faculty/educational institution could do differently regarding language policies?
2. What do you think your lecturers could do differently regarding language policies?
3. Do you have any questions or remarks about this survey? If you have any other comments about issues regarding anglicization that were not covered in this survey, feel free to leave them here as well.

## Appendix B: Explanation of the statistical assumptions

### Normality

The assumption of ‘normality’ is that each dependent variable is normally distributed for every possible value of the independent variables (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). In other words, the scores of the dependent variable should be systematically distributed around the mean. Violations of the assumption might lead to drawing incorrect conclusions. However, some tests are relatively robust to moderate violations of normality, except for small sample sizes, unequal sample sizes, and/or extreme violations.

### Linearity

The assumption of linearity is important for analyses that use linear regression models (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). This assumption states that there is a linear relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables. If this assumption is violated, another model should be used in order to analyze the data in a reliable way.

### Homoscedasticity

The assumption of ‘homoscedasticity’ or ‘homogeneity of variance’ is that variances of each population are equal to each other (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). This means that the variance of the residuals should be equal for every value of every independent variable. When the assumption is violated, the possibility of false positive and false negative test results might increase. In turn, this might lead to drawing incorrect conclusions.

### Non-collinearity

The assumption of ‘non-collinearity’ is unique to multiple linear regression analyses and states that there is no strong linear relationship between two or more independent variables (Lomax & Hahs-Vaughn, 2012). In other words, the predictors should not correlate strongly with each other. When the assumption is violated, it might lead to lower generalizability and utility of the results.

### References

Lomax, R.G, & Hahs-Vaughn, D. L (2012). *Statistical concepts: A second course*. New York, NY: Routledge.

## Appendix C: Interview Guide

### Original Dutch Version

#### 1. Introductie van het interview

Welkom heten + aanspreekvorm bespreken

Uitleg over het doel van het interview (achtergrondinformatie verzamelen over verengelsing)

Duur interview + onderwerpen

Akkoord geluidsopname interview?

Vragen?

#### 2. Algemene gegevens

Hoeveel uren geeft u colleges/werkgroepen?

Welke vakken geeft u?

Hoeveel vakken geeft u in het Engels/Nederlands?

Hoe lang geeft u al les in het Engels?

#### 3. Ervaring docent met verengelsing

1. Wat vindt u van het nieuwe beleid van de hogere onderwijsinstellingen om de meeste programma's in de toekomst enkel in het Engels aan te bieden?
2. Wat vindt u van de stelling dat door de verengelsing op het hoger onderwijs de kwaliteit van het onderwijs vermindert?
3. Wat vindt u van de stelling dat door de verengelsing op het hoger onderwijs het moeilijker is voor docenten om didactische/pedagogische vaardigheden (zoals voorbeelden geven en discussies leiden) in te zetten?
4. Wat vindt u van de stelling dat door verengelsing van programma's zowel de onderwijsinstellingen als de medewerkers en de studenten beter worden voorbereid op de globaliserende wereld?
5. Hoe zelfverzekerd en bekwaam voelt u zich om les te geven in het Engels?
6. Welke taal heeft uw voorkeur bij het lesgeven en waarom?
7. Welke verschillen merkt u bij uzelf tussen het lesgeven in Engels en Nederlands?
8. Wordt u genoeg gesteund (bv. extra Engelse les, langere voorbereidingstijden) vanuit de onderwijsinstelling bij de omschakeling van het lesgeven in het Nederlands naar het lesgeven in het Engels?
  - a. Heeft u zelf extra Engelse lessen genomen?
9. Hoe competent vindt u uw collega's in het lesgeven in het Engels?

10. Is het onvermijdelijk om op den duur over te schakelen naar een Engelse voertaal?
11. Heeft u verder nog opmerkingen die u ons wilt vertellen over u als docent en de verengelsing die nog niet aan bod zijn gekomen?

#### 4. Ervaringen studenten met verengelsing

1. Hoe denkt u dat de Nederlandse studenten de Engelse colleges/werkgroepen ervaren?
2. Welke verschillen merkt u tussen het lesgeven in het Engels en het Nederlands bij uw Nederlandse studenten?
3. Hoe denkt u dat de internationale studenten de Engelse colleges/werkgroepen ervaren?
4. Wat vindt u van de stelling dat de studenten niet goed zijn voorbereid op de (Nederlandse) arbeidsmarkt qua Nederlandse taalvaardigheid door hun Engelstalige studie?
5. Heeft u verder nog opmerkingen die u ons wilt vertellen over studenten en de verengelsing die nog niet aan bod zijn gekomen?

## **English Translation**

### 1. Introduction of the interview

Welcoming + terms of address

Explaining the goal of the interview (gathering background information about anglicization)

Time + subjects

Approve of voice recording?

Questions?

### 2. General information

How many hours do you teach lectures/practicals?

Which courses do you teach?

How many courses do you instruct in English/Dutch?

How long have you been teaching in English?

### 3. Experience of the lecturer with anglicization

1. What is your opinion on the new policy of the higher educational institutes to offer most programs only in English in the future?
2. What do you think of the statement that the quality of education decreases due to the anglicization of higher education?
3. What is your opinion on the statement that it is more difficult for lecturers to use didactic/pedagogical skills (e.g. giving examples and leading debates) when teaching in English instead of Dutch?
4. What do you think of the statement that due to anglicization of higher education, both the educational institutes as the employees and students are better prepared for the globalized world?
5. How confident and competent do you feel to teach in English?
6. Which language do you prefer when teaching and why?
7. What differences do you notice when teaching in English and in Dutch?
8. Are you supported by the educational institute (e.g. extra English lessons/longer preparation time) for the transition from teaching in Dutch to English?
  - a. Have you taken extra English lessons by yourself?
9. How competent do you regard your colleagues to teach in English?
10. Is it inevitable to switch to English as the lingua franca in the long run?

11. Do you have further remarks that you want to tell us in terms of teaching and anglicization?

#### 4. Views on experiences of students with anglicization

1. How do you think Dutch students experience the English lectures/practicals?
2. Which differences do you experience between instructing in English and Dutch with your Dutch students.
3. How do you think the international students experience English lectures/practicals?
4. What is your opinion on the statement that Dutch students are not well prepared for the (Dutch) labor market in terms of Dutch language proficiency due to anglicization?
5. Do you have further remarks that you want to tell us in terms of students & anglicization?

## Appendix D: Email Send to Lecturers

### Original Dutch Version

#### Betreft: Uitnodiging interview GSb Onderzoeksbureau

Geachte [titel; voornaam; achternaam],

Momenteel zijn wij, het Onderzoeksbureau van de Groninger Studentenbond, bezig met een onderzoek over ‘verengelsing op het hoger onderwijs’. Om een beter beeld te krijgen van de verengelsing, zouden wij graag een interview willen uitvoeren met docenten die veel te maken hebben met verengelsing. Graag zouden wij hiervoor u in het bijzonder willen uitnodigen. [Reden noemen waarom precies deze docent wordt uitgenodigd]. Deelname aan dit interview is geheel vrijblijvend en u kunt uw medewerking op elk moment intrekken.

Dit interview zal tussen de 30 en 60 minuten duren en zal anoniem verwerkt kunnen worden als u dit wenst. Tijdens dit interview zullen de volgende onderwerpen met u besproken worden:

1. Beleid verengelsing op het hoger onderwijs
2. Ervaring docenten en verengelsing
3. Ervaring studenten en verengelsing

De specifieke interviewvragen zijn als bijlage toegevoegd, zodat u deze kunt inzien. Tevens zullen wij vragen of het mogelijk is het interview met u alleen te voeren. Indien u liever heeft dat er ook iemand anders aanwezig is bij het interview, is dat ook een mogelijkheid. Verder is het ook mogelijk om vooraf een kennismakingsgesprek te organiseren als u dat wenst.

Tot slot zullen wij bij het interview om uw toestemming vragen of wij het gesprek op mogen nemen met een recorder. Natuurlijk zal er zorgvuldig met uw interview worden omgegaan en zullen wij u de transcriptie toesturen zodat u het kunt goedkeuren.

Als u ergens vragen over heeft, dan horen we dat graag.

Graag zien we uw reactie tegemoet.

Met vriendelijke groet,

Liesbeth van Ravenhorst,  
Mandy Abbing &  
Jocelyne Ludoph

Onderzoeksbureau, Groninger Studentenbond (GSb)  
[Adres + e-mailgegevens + telefoonnummer coördinator]

## English Translation

### Subject: Invitation interview GSb Research Committee

Dear [title; first name; family name],

We, the Research Committee of the Groninger Student Union, are currently conducting research about ‘anglicization at the higher educational institutes’. To paint a clearer image of anglicization, we would like to interview lectures at the university who are involved with anglicization and we would like to invite you in particular for an interview. [State reason why this lecturer in particular is being invited]. Attending this interview is without obligations and you can revoke your cooperation at any time.

This interview will take approximately 30-60 minutes and, if you wish, can be processed anonymously. During this interview, the following topics will be discussed:

1. Policy on anglicization at universities
2. Experiences of lecturers
3. Experiences of students

Please find attached the specific interview questions. Furthermore, we would like to ask you if it is possible to conduct the interview in private. If you would like someone else to be present at the interview, that is possible as well. Moreover, it is also possible to organize an introduction meeting prior the interview if you wish.

Lastly, prior the interview we would like to ask for your permission to record the interview. It goes without saying, we will handle the material carefully and we will send you the transcript when we have processed it in order to give you the opportunity to approve it.

If you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We are looking forward to your reply.

Yours faithfully,

Liesbeth van Ravenhorst,  
Mandy Abbing &  
Jocelyne Ludoph

Research Committee, Groninger Studentenbond (GSb)  
[Address + email + phone number coordinator]