

Challenges and Professional Development Inclusive Teaching in English As a Medium of Instruction for Indonesia Further Education

Thania Nursyabila Endri¹, Desi Ratna Sari²

{thaniaendri@gmail.com¹, desiratna@polibatam.ac.id²}

Politeknik Negeri Batam, Management and Business Department, Batam City, Indonesia¹²

Abstract. This research aims to investigate the challenges and professional development inclusive teaching in English as a medium of instruction for Indonesia further education. A qualitative method was employed utilizing an interview protocol as a research instrument. In total, 18 lecturers from four programs of an international college were selected using a purposive sampling technique. Descriptive analysis was applied to describe systematically, factually and accurately the facts and the relationship between the phenomena being investigated. The results revealed that participants encountered both linguistic and pedagogical challenges and only 42% of the population have received any training for resource creation and development. Taking all of this into consideration, this study provides suggestions for EMI to develop further in Indonesia's higher education institutions as all the lecturers expressed agreement regarding the significance of EMI implementation.

Keywords: Challenges, English Medium Instruction, Bilingual Education, Professional Development, Teaching in English

1 Introduction

The internationalization of higher education represents a significant trend in global educational settings. Many universities have adopted English as the medium of instruction to attract international students to their programs. Notably, Japan and China have taken a leading role in Asia by enrolling a substantial number of international students in their English-Medium Instruction (EMI) programs [1].

The definition of EMI varies across different contexts, partly due to its recent surge in prominence. EMI is defined as "The use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries and jurisdictions where English is not the predominant language" [2][3]. The internationalization and globalization of higher education as a way of producing graduates with a worldwide perspective who can compete in the global job market is the key driving force behind this global trend of EMI in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). A number of other reasons have also been cited for internationalization, includes growth in the

economy, ranking and visibility of Higher Education Institutions, staff mobility, quality assurance, and accreditation by both national and international bodies.

Studies on EMI have revealed a significant gap between the expectations of the benefits of EMI and its actual-ideal implementation in global contexts [4][5]. In Indonesia, there is no specific arrangement by the government to permit the practice of EMI at the higher education level. A clear mention was once made by the Minister of Research and Technology and Higher Education (Menristekdikti) using the term 'Bilingual Class' as a reference to EMI [6]. One way to address global competition is to offer this class. University EMI programs are growing in popularity because of this appeal. However, since HE institutions have just recently started to internationalize, the research on documenting EMI practice in Indonesia is still in its early stages [7].

EMI content teachers faced a significant pedagogical issue within the classroom, which involved overlooking the individual learning styles of their students. Furthermore, certain EMI subject teachers strictly relied on subject textbooks when delivering their lectures, possibly as a compensatory approach or even as a protective measure to limit spontaneous interaction and improvisation[8]. In contrast, there is a notable scarcity of well-established, clearly defined training programs and professional development opportunities for EMI teachers on a global scale. [3] The conversation centers on the types of training and professional development that are pertinent and required for EMI educators.

As a result, and considering the insufficiency of research on the EMI teacher challenges and professional development needs in Indonesian higher education, the present study has a timely and relevant contribution to the context, and may also contribute to the growing literature regarding EMI, particularly in the emerging field of EMI teacher education contexts in which the language is not commonly spoken[9]. Therefore, more research is needed on classroom discourse regarding lecturers' questions in EMI classrooms. Motivated from this gap in the literature, the study addresses with research question what are the challenges faced by lecturers in terms of language and content while they are teaching EMI courses, namely students' language proficiency and subject matter learning?

2 Literature Review

2.1 English Medium Instruction (EMI)

In the context of this research, there are two primary categories of EMI practices. To begin with, English language courses are delivered by instructors who possess content expertise and employ it to direct language instruction. This type of course is referred to as English for Specific Purposes (ESP)[10]. The second category, which is currently gaining popularity in universities worldwide, involves instructors from various disciplines using the English language as the medium for teaching their respective subjects. This particular course, which is the main focus of our study, is known as EMI [11] [9]. In numerous settings, EMI courses are commonly conducted by subject-matter lecturers, regardless of whether they have received formal pedagogical training in EMI.

2.2 Challenges

Students in EMI lessons encounter a variety of difficulties from various perspectives. A study by [12] found that EMI presented students with challenges related to academic comprehension,

textbooks and course resources, assessment, and classroom debate. In comparison to [13] their study highlights several challenges encountered by EMI students, including limited vocabulary, insufficient language skills, the lecturers' poor oral skills and teaching methods, and time constraints. On the other hand [3] cited a multitude of difficulties confronted by EMI students as they attended business programs: a shortage of relevant knowledge background, instruction, poor English skills, and difficulties in comprehending lectures. Even though many EMI students face a wide range of challenges, it is evident that linguistic, lecture comprehension, cultural, emotional, inappropriate methods, and inadequate resources are considered major obstacles that hinder the learning process of EMI students.

2.3 Student's English Proficiencies

Linguistic difficulty is not only experienced by the teacher but also students. Some studies found that students' low proficiency and the failure in the classrooms were because of their low proficiency in English [14]. Inadequate English proficiency gives an effect on the implementation of EMI. [15] found student's low proficiency in English makes them have a low level of participation in the classes during the lesson. Besides, [16] found that students found it difficult to understand the lesson. This problem in the teaching and learning process becomes a challenge faced by the teacher because they need to think about how the students with low proficiency catch up with the lesson. Some of these lecturers felt frustrated because, in addition to their academic fields, they have to scope with language issues in their classrooms, which demands extra knowledge and skills regarding the second language acquisition process. Moreover, lecturers had to spend additional time adapting their teaching materials and activities to students' varied language abilities.

3 Research Methods

The primary aim of the study was to investigate the implementation of English-Medium Instruction (EMI) by lecturers across twelve Indonesian polytechnics. This particular college was chosen due to its comprehensive adoption of EMI across all its study programs. Consequently, a qualitative approach was deemed appropriate for this research, as qualitative studies seek to provide a comprehensive analysis of a subject from the perspective of the individuals under examination. Qualitative research delves into the ideas, perceptions, opinions, and beliefs of the individuals being studied, all of which cannot be quantified or measured by conventional means. [17]

The purposive sampling technique was employed in this qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources [18]. In this study, I conducted focus group interviews in a social context in order to collect high-quality data, which allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the specific challenges faced by EMI implementation from the perspective of the participants.

3.1 Data Collecting Procedure

Questionnaire

A questionnaire was developed based on the research inquiries and relevant contextual information. It was distributed to the study participants via email. The questionnaire exclusively

comprised open-ended questions. Participants were explicitly instructed to respond individually, refraining from any collaboration or seeking information or inspiration from external sources both prior to and during their response. The initial section of the questionnaire was dedicated to gathering information about the participants' backgrounds, and in adherence to ethical considerations, their personal details were treated with utmost confidentiality to safeguard their privacy.

Focus Group Discussion

The utilization of focus group discussions proved to be an effective method for gathering valuable data within a social context[19]This approach was instrumental in enhancing my comprehension of the unique hurdles and the significance of EMI implementation as perceived by the research participants. The primary objective of employing this technique is to elucidate the collective understanding of a group through the outcomes of the discussion. The discussions led to the identification and resolution of specific issues. Furthermore, focus group discussions are designed to minimize any potential researcher misinterpretation regarding the core problem under investigation.

4 Results and Discussion

The survey was completed by 69 participants from 12 Polytechnics. The majority from Politeknik A, Politeknik B and Politeknik C. Others participants are, Politeknik D, Politeknik E, Politeknik F, Politeknik G, Politeknik H, Politeknik I, Politeknik J, Politeknik K and Politeknik L. The teachers surveyed were from a variety of teaching backgrounds.

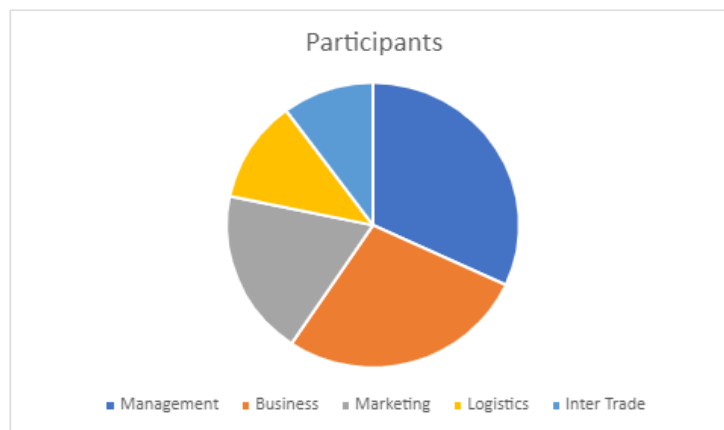


Fig. 1. Background of participants

And the number of teachers who used English resources in the classroom is displayed below.

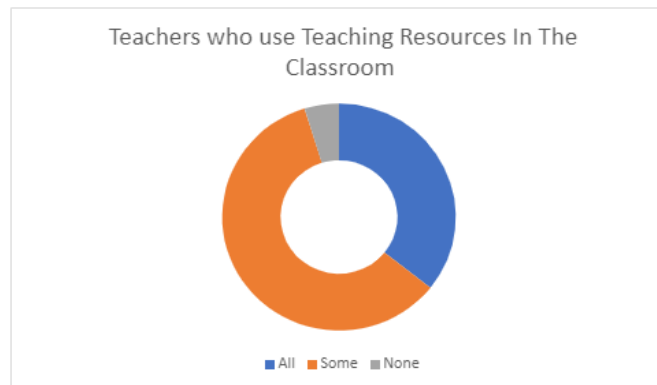


Fig. 2. Teachers who use English resources in the classroom

The data above validates the objectives of the study, we were hoping to have a sample size of about fifty participants reaching out to a minimum of six Polytechnics in Indonesia to teachers teaching EMI; primarily in Logistics, International trade, and Supply Chain Management. The survey participants are sixty nine, encompassing twelve Polytechnics with teachers delivering EMI, some of which are in Logistics, International Trade and Supply Chain management. Very few of the teachers in this cohort are currently delivering in English so the impact and sustainability of this project will be easy to evaluate.

The biggest challenges faced in the classroom were interesting. 47% of the survey participants agreed that the biggest challenge faced in the classroom was the low level of English competency among the students. 52% believed that the students insufficiency the required competency and others.

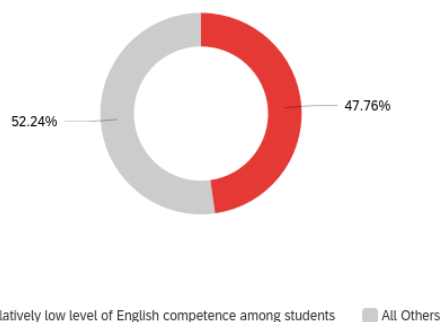


Fig. 3. What are the biggest challenges faced in the classroom

However, what was particularly interesting was the response to the other questions. The insufficiency of collaboration between language and content staff, the insufficiency of quality

control on resources, the focus on curriculum design and the consistency of staff teaching EMI could all be categorised under the quality of the products being developed and used in the EMI classroom and accounts for 36% of the answers.

95% of teachers already engage in some form of CPD to maintain or improve their English level and 81% confirmed that they would accept and engage with the offer of English Training to build upon their skills as an EMI teacher. Seven participants expressed a concern and belief that their English language may never be good enough to teach EMI and I had to wonder whether these participants were among the two responses who never engage in any form of CPD to maintain or improve their English level.

One teacher suggested that the students being recruited for the EMI courses did not have the necessary English to cope with the course being delivered in English and that the student recruitment process was flawed. However, in contradiction to this most teachers did not believe that teaching in English would lead to poor learning outcomes.

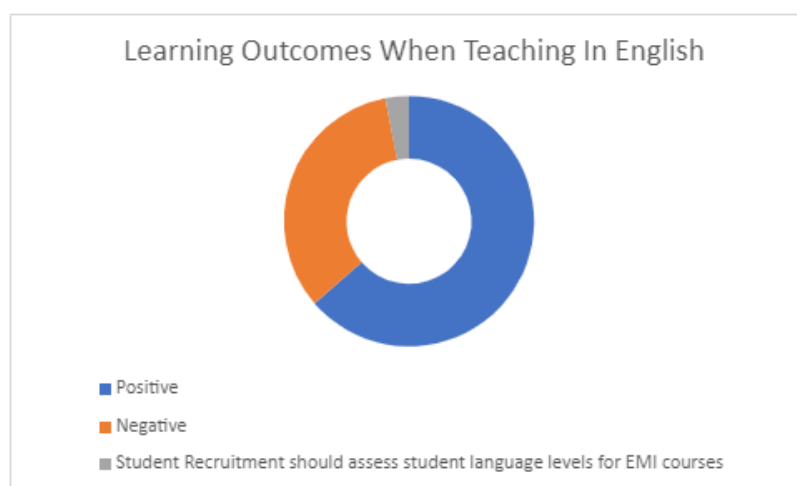


Fig. 4. Learning outcomes when teaching in English

Based on the interview result, it is found that there are some points that can be classified related to lecturers' perception on the use of English as a medium of instruction in the classroom.

English and the Institution

The consistency of speaking English at all times on the International programmers was brought into question. There was a suggestion by INT-1 from the Politeknik E State said:

It was too easy to mix languages or indeed lapse into the native Indonesian language as all or most of the International Students were Indonesian, indeed Malang State

Polytechnic advocate it, encouraging a seventy five percent English twenty five percent Bahasa approach to delivery.

INT-2 from Politeknik A, added:

Regarding challenges in my class, I've actually tried to record a presentation in English. I uploaded it to YouTube. Only two topics on which students immediately commented. The comments were not related to the content, but instead they asked to return to Bahasa Indonesia.

A few ideas to resolve this were shared, principally by INT-1 and INT-3 from the Politeknik A, they both agreed that an International program should not be done half-heartedly with a mixture of Indonesian and English language lesson delivery. It should not only be the lecturers who speak in English on the International programmers, in their opinion, but the entire faculty including administration and support staff. The International department should be a one hundred percent English language speaking oasis within the Polytechnic. Politeknik J have an initiative which has been running since 2002, the entire campus staff, lecturers and students must speak in only English for a day, INT-4 believes in the initiative and thinks it gets everyone on campus used to the idea of speaking in English.

INT-7 confirmed that the language being taught was indeed English for Specific or Academic purposes:

I teach is operations management whose vocabulary and terms are rarely used in everyday life. When they get used to reading references in English, then they will get used to it, for example they write assignments, they will get used to more or less the same sentences or words that they read from references.

INT-1 went as far as to say that the Politeknik A should be renamed with International Polytechnic to attract more native English speakers and students from other countries such as Thailand, Libya, Serbia and Pakistan. A more diverse sample of students on International courses would force the delivery of all International courses to be in English as Indonesian would not be widely understood in the classroom setting.

5 Conclusions and Suggestions

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the findings presented in the study and the preceding chapters, the writer comes with one research question. What are the challenges faced by lecturers in terms of language and content while they are teaching EMI courses, namely students' language proficiency and subject matter learning.

1. 95% of the survey population use English resources in the classroom but only 19% are provided with the course materials and resources by their polytechnics.

2. 37% of the survey population feel that the quality of their delivery is negatively impacted as they concentrate on the English language more than the students and their engagement with the learning resources.
3. 89% of the population intend to teach in English and use English resources on a daily basis but only 4% of the cohort feel confident about their level of English and using it to teach.

5.2 Suggestions

Suggestions and inputs this research are as follows:

1. It is suggested to implement some methods and strategies in learning such as: Project Based Learning (PBL) for the students. In general, it was recognized that the implementation of PBL having become accustomed to the students' English speaking and presentation skills had significantly improved.
2. It is suggested to developing appropriate standardized teaching material to help the lecturer counter act some challenges with characteristic of good teaching resources.
3. It is suggested to improve the standardizing the syllabus, topics, and references is important to ensure validity' also agrees with who feels that the overall standardization of materials would be beneficial to both teachers and students.

References

- [1] N. Galloway, T. Numajiri, and N. Rees: The 'internationalisation', or 'Englishisation', of higher education in East Asia. *High Educ (Dordr)*, vol. 80, no. 3, doi: 10.1007/s10734-019-00486-1 (2020)
- [2] E. Genc and D. Yuksel: Teacher questions in English medium instruction classrooms in a Turkish higher education setting," *Linguistics and Education*, vol. 66, doi: 10.1016/j.linged.2021.100992 (2021)
- [3] A. Alhassan: Challenges and Professional Development Needs of EMI Lecturers in Omani Higher Education: *Sage Open*, vol. 11, no. 4, p. 21582440211061530, doi: 10.1177/21582440211061527 (2021)
- [4] N. E. Simbolon: English Medium Instruction (EMI) practice: Higher education internationalization in Indonesia. *Englisia: Journal of Language, Education, and Humanities*, vol. 8, no. 2, doi: 10.22373/ej.v8i2.8961 (2021)
- [5] J. Dearden: English as a medium of instruction – a growing global phenomenon: phase 1," *Going Global 2014, Interim Report, Oxford: Department of Education, University of Oxford.*, no. April (2014)
- [6] N. Simbolon: English Medium Instruction (EMI) practice: Higher education internationalization in Indonesia. *Englisia Journal*, vol. 8, pp. 72–83, doi: 10.22373/ej.v8i2.8961 (2021)
- [7] N. E. Simbolon: Emi in indonesian higher education: Stakeholders' perspectives. *Teflin Journal*, vol. 29, no. 1, doi: 10.15639/teflinjournal.v29i1/108-128 (2018)
- [8] A. M. Johnson, M. E. Jacovina, D. G. Russell, and C. M. Soto: Challenges and solutions when using technologies in the classroom. *Adaptive Educational Technologies for Literacy Instruction*, doi: 10.4324/9781315647500 (2016)
- [9] E. Macaro, M. Akincioglu, and J. Dearden: English Medium Instruction in Universities: A Collaborative Experiment in Turkey. *Studies in English Language Teaching*, vol. 4, no. 1, doi: 10.22158/selt.v4n1p51 (2016)

- [10] P. Nübold: English for specific purposes: A learning-centred approach. Hutchinson, Tom and Waters, Alan, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, viii + 183 pp., L5.95,” *System*, vol. 16, no. 2. doi: 10.1016/0346-251X(88)90041-3 (1988)
- [11] E. MacAro, A. K. Hultgren, A. Kirkpatrick, and D. Lasagabaster: English medium instruction: Global views and countries in focus. *Language Teaching*, doi: 10.1017/S0261444816000380 (2019)
- [12] Y. H. Phuong and T. T. Nguyen: Students’ Perceptions Towards the Benefits and Drawbacks of EMI Classes. *English Language Teaching*, vol. 12, no. 5, doi: 10.5539/elt.v12n5p88 (2019)
- [13] K. Almudibry: Students’ attitudes towards using English as a medium of instruction in scientific disciplines: Challenges and solutions. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*, vol. 17, no. 8, doi: 10.18844/cjes.v17i8.7522 (2022)
- [14] R. Kyeyune: Challenges of using english as a medium of instruction in multilingual contexts: A view from ugandan classrooms. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, vol. 16, no. 2, doi: 10.1080/07908310308666666 (2003)
- [15] U. Oktaviani: Teacher’s Perspectives and Challenges towards English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI). *Lingua, Jurnal Bahasa & Sastra*, vol. 20, no. 1 (2019)
- [16] R. Tsuneyoshi: Internationalization strategies in Japan. *Journal of Research in International Education*, vol. 4, no. 1, doi: 10.1177/1475240905050291 (2005)
- [17] Prof.Dr.Sugiyono: Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif. In *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif. Rake Sarasin*, no. March (2020)
- [18] L. A. Palinkas, S. M. Horwitz, C. A. Green, J. P. Wisdom, N. Duan, and K. Hoagwood,: Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, vol. 42, no. 5, doi: 10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y (2015)
- [19] H. B. Basnet: Focus Group Discussion: A Tool For Qualitative Inquiry. *Researcher: A Research Journal of Culture and Society*, vol. 3, no. 3, doi: 10.3126/researcher.v3i3.21553 (2018)