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NAUCZYCIELE AKADEMICCY JAKO PRAKTYCY ENGLISH MEDIUM INSTRUCTION (EMI)

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UNIVERSITY TEACHERS AS ENGLISH MEDIUM INSTRUCTION (EMI) PRACTITIONERS

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Introduction

Successful communication in one's native language is essential not only for conveying information but also for understanding the emotions and intentions behind that information. In educational contexts, where effective communication is paramount, this skill is even more critical. Not only do lecturers have to transfer knowledge but also ensure that students grasp the underlying meaning and are able to apply this knowledge in practice. This entails lecturers taking a number of different steps such as staying updated with the latest developments in their field and revising the strategies they use to share expertise in order to be successful in that venture. While it may seem fairly easy for a teacher/lecturer to transfer their knowledge effectively in their native language to their students, the same cannot be said about a foreign language, especially if one has not been trained or instructed in that language.

Socio-economic changes taking place in the world have also made policymakers revisit the organisation of the didactic process at higher institutions. Over the years the numbers of corporations and businesses employing international personnel able to communicate effectively in English across the world have flourished. To meet the demands of the international labour market in many countries around the world university policies often require lecturers to teach their subjects through a foreign language (predominantly English), which may often lead to a feeling of uncertainty or discomfort if they are not proficient in that language.

Although the interest in teaching subjects through English in the form of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has an interesting history in primary and secondary education (e.g., Coyle et al., 2010; Będkowska-Obłąk, 2013; Papaja, 2014; Otwinowska-Kasztelanic, 2010, 2011, 2013; Ball et al., 2015;), the research on English Medium Instruction (EMI) in higher education is relatively recent. While it is true to say that countries such as Spain, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Finland have developed their own EMI policies concerning higher education, the situation of EMI in Poland needs further exploration. Additionally, it appears that the area of teaching subjects through English by lecturers who have not been trained in that language needs careful investigation, the results of which might offer useful insights. This group of academics may face "the difficulties of limited proficiency in English, and limited familiarity with language teaching methodology" (Maley, 2014: 3). Furthermore, a lack of subject-

specific materials together with no systematic methodological and linguistic training may pose practical difficulties for successful delivery of the course content by university academics.

The aforementioned considerations have significantly aroused my curiosity within this specific field of study. Consequently, this doctoral dissertation has been written to delve into the intricacies and address the gaps arising from those very issues. Being an English teacher myself and having taught subjects through English at various under- and post-graduate studies, courses and workshops at university, I realised that there was an urgent need to focus more on the English Medium Instruction (EMI) area and in the future create an educational framework for such a group of lecturers. During our small talk conversations, the participants highlighted a number of issues that required further exploration, some of which included a lack of institutional support for running such courses, limited proficiency in English or a lack of content-specific resources. Bearing in mind that the availability of EMI materials is scarce, and university teachers in order to teach effective EMI classes need proper guidance, it appears evident that addressing these issues can significantly enhance the teaching and learning experience in higher institutions and contribute to the given university's educational offer in order to attract domestic and overseas students wishing to enrol on EMI studies or courses. Most of the concerns articulated by the lecturers are in line with the latest research (Dearden, 2014; Dearden and Macaro, 2016; Sandström and Neghina, 2017; Macaro *et al.*, 2018; Galloway, 2020; Macaro *et al*., 2021; Sahan *et al.* 2021a; Sahan *et al.*, 2021b) done on EMI.

This doctoral dissertation evolved around important issues behind EMI. Initially, its objective was to characterise EMI and pinpoint the problematic areas associated with it. Secondly, it focused on EMI instructors as English language users and identification of the problem areas they faced while preparing and conducting classes in English. For these reasons, the dissertation is divided into seven chapters, each of which covering a different issue. Chapter 1 provides the general background to foreign language teaching with a particular emphasis on English language teaching and important changes in the teaching methods that have taken place over the years. It then discusses the major political, commercial, economic, religious and educational factors that contributed to the rise of English as an international language and its implication on the present-day world. Additionally, two important areas within English Language Teaching (ELT) are discussed with reference to higher education: English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and

English for Academic Purposes (EAP). Chapter 2 provides an outline of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) and the challenges resulting from implementing this type of instruction in higher institutions. It starts with defining EMI, which is followed by the reasons that led to the popularity of EMI courses at universities. Next numerous challenges resulting from the implementation of EMI programmes are discussed. This is followed by the situation of EMI in Poland. Chapter 3 discusses the teacher as a critical component of the educational process, particularly within higher education. It begins by outlining the various roles of university teachers, highlighting their integral participation in academic life. The discussion first addresses their responsibilities in advancing scientific knowledge, followed by an exploration of their didactic and pedagogical duties. Additionally, the chapter examines the organisational responsibilities of university educators. Finally, it portrays the teacher as an EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction) practitioner, detailing the specific duties associated with this role. Chapter 4 presents the results of the pilot study conducted in the form of an online questionnaire on a group of both doctoral students and experienced university teachers who taught the classes thorough English. The aim of this study was manifold. Firstly, it aimed to identify potential problems that might result from the main study and to improve the research instruments. Additionally, it provided preliminary data for generating hypotheses for future research. Chapters 5 and 6 discuss the results of the main research conducted among EMI practitioners and students who had such classes. The research included questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and observations of the lessons conducted by EMI practitioners. Finally, Chapter 7 discusses implications for future work in the field, as well as areas requiring further research.

Chapter 1 English Language Teaching

Introduction

Foreign language teaching has a long and interesting history that can be traced to as early as 500 B.C. (Kelly, 1969; Musumeci, 2009), when the classical languages of Greek and Latin were predominantly taught as foreign languages. Certainly, the reason why they became international languages at certain point in history was the "political and military power" (Crystal, 2003: 9) of the people who spoke them. The conquests of Alexander the Great and later the power of the Roman Empire and Roman Catholicism made Greek and Latin truly international languages, respectively. Knowing them was a sign of good education, social quality and prestige, which has, in fact, not changed until today. Latin, although now a dead language, is still used in legal and medical professions to avoid confusion or misunderstanding when referring to legal cases or different medical conditions. It is also the official language of the Catholic Church.

Additionally, as Kelly (1969: 293) mentions, "owing to the important position of Latin in the Roman Catholic Church, the Roman universities (i.e., those of the Vatican) still require theses in Latin." Furthermore, when the first universities were founded in Italy, France, England and Spain, the privileged people from around the European continent wanted to gain valuable knowledge and enrolled on these universities. Therefore, knowing Latin, which was the medium of instruction at that time, was a necessity.

However, as different European colonial countries (Spain, Portugal, France, England and Germany) gained in power and importance in the Renaissance era and began to develop their vernacular languages, the growing need to communicate in those languages became a necessity. Crystal (2003), Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008), Gajewska and Sowa (2014), Richards (2015) mention political, commercial, economic, religious and educational factors that contributed to the interest in foreign language learning and teaching. Monarchs and other rulers who were involved in ongoing military conflicts, conquered foreign lands and expanded their territories needed qualified foreign language speakers and translators who helped them gain some advantage over their enemies, sign peace treaties or impose their language on the conquered land.

Additionally, successful merchants quickly started to appreciate the knowledge of foreign languages, as this was a significant element of their economic prosperity, which depended on the import and export of manufactured goods. Furthermore,

religious pilgrimages, characteristic of all world religions, were commonplace. As a result, wanderers or believers were eager to visit the holy places connected with their faith, and this required from them some knowledge of the language in question.

1.1. The rise of English as a global language

The dominance of English as a global language is the result of a number of different geo-historical and socio-cultural factors (Crystal, 2003: 29; Richards, 2015) which played a pivotal role throughout history. This situation is best illustrated by Howatt (1994: xiii), who states that "The spread of English round the world in the wake of trade, empire-building, migration, and settlement has ensured the teaching of the language a role, sometimes central, sometimes peripheral, in the educational history of virtually every country on earth."

The sixteenth century, and the reign of queen Elizabeth I in particular, is often seen as the beginning of English expansion across the world. First voyages of Walter Raleigh to the New World, followed by establishing first settlements in Jamestown (1607) and Plymouth (1620) contributed to the spread of English to other parts of the world such as North America and the Caribbean. Furthermore, James Cook's exploration of Australia and New Zealand in the second half of the 18th century resulted in founding new settlements in those countries. People from all over the British Isles were sent there, sometimes as convicts, which contributed to the further spread of the English language. The British involvement in the African continent started in the 16th century, when "a regular trade in spices, ivory and slaves began" (Mesthrie and Bhatt, 2008: 17). However, it was not until the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that British supremacy in trade allowed to establish English as the official language in many of the African countries alongside their vernacular languages so as to avoid social unrest resulting from preferences for one tribal language over another. In other African countries, because of their ethnic diversity, English was and is still viewed as an important means of communication. Additionally, the formation of different trading companies such as the British East India Company allowed its merchants to establish various trading stations in South Asia, of which India was most important (Crystal, 2003: 32-48).

Certainly, one of the factors that contributed to the rise of English was paradoxically a gradual decline of Latin as "a scholastic lingua franca" in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the rise in importance of

vernacular languages of French, English and Italian (Richards and Rogers, 2004) in commerce, diplomacy and science. Although Latin was still used as the language of instruction at universities and enjoyed "esteem in the academy" (Musumeci 2009: 54), it "was neither students' first nor preferred language for everyday communication even at the university" (*ibid.:* 49), because they preferred their vernacular languages as a means of everyday communication. Furthermore, England started to be perceived as a country of bright philosophical and political ideas, which sparked interest in the influential works of Bacon, Locke and Hume, and people started to read English literature of Shakespeare (Howatt, 1994: 61-64).

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries witnessed the first and second Industrial Revolutions, which changed the lives of people on an unprecedented scale. The inventions of that time, mostly of British and later of American origin, had far-reaching linguistic consequences for the whole world. The steam engine and later electricity or internal combustion engine helped to transform human and animal labour into machinery. This, in turn, affected how language was used. A great number of new words were introduced to the English lexicon and foreign scientists wishing to learn about these inventions had to learn and understand English in order to introduce them in their own countries. At the same time, many ambitious British entrepreneurs decided to live abroad and introduce the new technological advancements in the countries of their choice (Crystal, 2003: 80-81). All these developments that led to the gradual rise and later dominance of the British Empire were important factors that contributed to the spread of English across the world, especially in those countries that were under "British colonial administration" (Richards, 2015: 5). As a result, English became the primary language of communication in different areas of life such as administration, commerce and education.

The twentieth century, especially after the Second World War, saw further expansion of English as the language of international communication. Although the glory of the British empire had declined, the role of the USA as the new leading economic, political, scientific and military superpower throughout that century contributed substantially to the English language expansion (Mesthrie and Bhatt, 2008: 24; Troike, 1977). Significant technological advances that were made mainly in the USA, as a result of the third Industrial Revolution, characterised by the rapid development of electronics and computer science resulting in digitization of many processes, consolidated the position of the English language as the world's global

language. This, in turn, had far-reaching implications for the flow of information. Numerous political, economic, health, scientific, sports and cultural organisations and associations, comprising countries from around the world, were created to promote values in which they believed. Consequently, the English language became one of the official languages in such proceedings (Crystal, 2003: 87–88).

In this discussion an interesting point of view is the one expressed by Phillipson (1992), who argues that the spread of English across the world was not only the result of the colonial past, but also the fact that "language pedagogy has played a part in this success" (1992: 6). The formation of the British Council or the United States Information Agency in the 20th century, together with the opening of their offices in numerous countries across the world and promoting various events allowed to popularise not only the language but other elements of English culture that would include literature, arts, philosophy or science (*ibid.*: 139).

The twenty-first century is the continuous hegemony of the English language. The power of the press, TV, cinema and the omnipresent Internet, in which "English continues to be the chief lingua franca" (Crystal, 2003: 117), are clear examples of the cultural legacy that made the English language accessible to virtually everybody on the planet. The number of webpages written in English exceeds the number of all the pages written in different languages put together (https://www.statista.com/statistics/262946/most-common-languages-on-the-internet/). Additionally, the fourth Industrial Revolution with its rapid technological development is likely to maintain the English language supremacy. Artificial Intelligence (AI), machine learning algorithms, neural networks, chatbots and virtual assistants, the growth of volume data, or autonomous cars and other vehicles are just examples of why the knowledge of English is necessary.

1.2. Changes in language teaching methods

Language teaching has always been the subject of scientific study and the search for the most effective methods is well explained by Kelly (1969: 7), who claims that "Throughout the history of language teaching, methods of presentation have varied according to the type of mastery required from the pupil." This view is also supported by Richards and Rodgers (2004: 3), who state that "Changes in language teaching methods throughout history have reflected recognition of changes in the kind of proficiency learners need, such as move toward oral proficiency rather than reading

comprehension as the goal of language study; they have also reflected changes in theories of the nature of language and of language learning."

Although attempts to facilitate the learning of foreign languages were made in every period of history, it was not until the 19th century that the strong interest in foreign language teaching and the theories of learning started to grow. Due to the socio-economic changes of the 17th and 18th centuries, of which the Industrial Revolution was the greatest, and the introduction of modern languages in the European curricula (Richards and Rogers, 2004) foreign language teaching accelerated. However, the way languages were taught was still based on how Latin was taught (*ibid.*), where the emphasis was on grammar. This is best illustrated by Titone (1968: 27, in Richards and Rogers, 2004: 5):

> Nineteenth-century textbook compilers were mainly determined to codify the foreign language into frozen rules of morphology and syntax to be explained and eventually memorised. Oral work was reduced to an absolute minimum, while a handful of written exercises, constructed at random, came as a sort of appendix to the rules.

However, prominent linguists of that time such as Jespersen, Viëtor, Sweet and Passy started to question the importance of the written word. For them it was speech that represented "the primary form of language" (Richards and Rogers, 2004: 5) and foreign language teaching should include it as one of its main goals. This primacy of speech, together with "the centrality of the connected text as the kernel of the teaching-learning process, and the absolute priority of an oral methodology in the classroom" (Howatt, 1994: 171) were the three principles on which the late nineteenth century Reform Movement was based.

While it is true to say that foreign language teaching, as it is known today, was shaped by the significant changes in the twentieth century in the fields of linguistics and psychology, "many current issues in language teaching are not particularly new" (Richards and Rodgers (2004: 3). Kelly (1969: 34) gives an example of *the inductive principle*, one of the approaches to teaching grammar, which was regarded "as the basis of scientific discovery" by ancient Greeks. However, as he further suggests, it was St. Augustine who was believed to have applied this principle in the classroom, where he "popularized dialogued methods of teaching, making the pupil's role in the dialogue part of the act of discovery" (*ibid.*: 35). Ancient scholars, in order to facilitate the

learning process, used various teaching aids and techniques which are still in use today. *Simplified readers*, also known as *graded readers*, are one example of such aids used to teach the reading skill. As Kelly (1969: 140) mentions "Abridgment of standard works is a very ancient procedure, going back to the golden age of Greece, and continuing through Roman times until the end of the Middle Ages."

Developments in linguistics, pedagogy and psychology during the first half of the twentieth century shaped perceptions of how languages are learned and taught, illustrating how differing conceptions of language led to distinct teaching practices. The experiments carried by Pavlov, Watson and Rayner gave rise to what is now called *behaviourism*, which relied on the idea of *conditioning*, being therefore the result of a three-way procedure of *stimulus-response-reinforcement.* Skinner (1957) believed it could be applied to language learning and according to behaviourists, language learning was the result of *imitation*, *practice*, *feedback on success* and *habit formation*. The Audio-Lingual method is a classic example based on this theory of learning. However, this view of language learning was criticised by Chomsky (1959), for whom languages could not be analysed in terms of observable stimuli and responses as children are born with a special ability to discover for themselves the underlying rules of a language system. Other researchers (Vygotsky, 1978; Piaget, 1926 (in Ginsburg and Opper 1969); Bruner, 1966) emphasised the child's closest environment as an important factor in developing one's native language and, consequently, the second/foreign language.

The 1970's saw a great interest in humanistic approaches emphasising individual choice, responsibility and growth of the learner, making him/her an important participant of the learning process (Richards and Rodgers, 2004; Williams and Burden, 2007). Influential research by Erikson (1963), Maslow (1968, 1970) and Rodgers (1969) on human learning and development led to the emergence of various approaches and methods in foreign language teaching. These unconventional methods highlighted the affective domain of learners as crucial to their success in language learning, as well as the roles teachers and learners play in this process (Williams and Burden, 2007). Concurrently, linguists began emphasising the need for communication, leading to the rise of communicative language teaching, influenced by "changing educational realities in Europe" (Richards and Rodgers, 2004: 154).

The socio-economic and political changes that occurred in the second half of the late 20th and the early 21st centuries have significantly impacted language teaching methods, necessitating a reassessment of language education policies. Notable

developments include the creation of the European Union (formerly the European Economic Community), the collapse of the Iron Curtain ending the division between the Eastern Bloc and Western countries in Europe and symbolizing the end of the Cold War, and the establishment of the Schengen Agreement which facilitated the free movement of people across member countries. However, these changes have also been accompanied by social unrest, including political oppression, economic disparities, authoritarian rule, social (in)justice and digital divides.

Challenges such as increased immigration, the rise of immigrant families, children from mixed marriages and temporary relocation to foreign countries have further underscored the need for updated language teaching strategies. Policymakers, leading publishers and various organisations, such as the British Council, have been compelled to address these issues to ensure effective communication and integration within increasingly multicultural and multilingual societies, thereby fostering language diversity. Significant emphasis has been placed on training foreign language teachers to manage multicultural and multilingual classrooms.

Consequently, in foreign language teaching a growing interest in positive psychology (MacIntyre and Mercer, 2014), teacher wellbeing (Mercer and Gregersen, 2020) and the development of global (Mercer et al., 2019) or transition (Fürstenberg et al., 2024) skills essential for thriving in the modern, globalised world can be observed. These skills include communication, collaboration, mediation, creativity, critical thinking, intercultural competence, citizenship, emotional self-regulation, well-being and digital literacy, all of which are now seen as driving forces in foreign language teaching.

One of the most visible results of these changes is bi-/multilingualism in early childhood, adolescence or adulthood, which has become increasingly common (Chłopek and Pradela, 2024; Li and Hua, 2015) and nowadays there are various forms of support available to help people thrive in multilingual environments. These include different bilingual models of education in kindergartens, primary and secondary schools in which the language of instruction is usually English. Additionally, in multilingual countries translanguaging appears to be a pragmatic approach where multilingual speakers are encouraged to use their full linguistic repertoire to communicate and learn (Cenoz and Gorter, 2017). Teachers are advised to allow learners to switch between languages to enable them to draw on all their language resources to make meaning, learn and express themselves, thus advocating for inclusive education. Bilingual families' blogs that can

be found on the Internet and various parents' guides are also a useful source of information for people wishing to raise their children bi-/multilingually.

Another critical aspect of this discussion on the evolution of language teaching methods is the rapid advancement of technology and its far-reaching implications. Classrooms that were once equipped with a chalkboard and a CD player are now considered outdated. Instead, a shift towards a digital and multimodal environment can be easily seen, in which teachers and learners engage in a multitude of interactive activities. The present-day society is characterised by being constantly connected to digital technologies. As Stecuła and Pradela (2025: 206) mention, "the 21st century with its Society 5.0 vision is witnessing further expansion of technology in the form of broadband Internet service, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Virtual Reality (VR), data analytics, deep learning and neural networks, setting new directions in foreign language learning." These, in turn, allow for the development of numerous services, such as educational platforms, virtual classrooms, online translators, streaming services, social media, virtual assistants, generative artificial intelligence chatbots, video conferencing tools and language learning apps, many of which offer personalised learning experience, often known as *adaptive learning software*. Utilizing sophisticated AI algorithms, deep learning models, and neural networks that mimic brain function, language learning apps assess individual learner data, adapt to users' learning preferences and customize the language learning experience. They provide interactive, user-friendly content and activities specifically designed to meet each learner's needs (*ibid.*). Most of these services are available on any mobile device and can be easily implemented in a foreign language classroom, contributing to what Sharma and Barrett (2007) call *blended learning*. An additional advantage of these developments is the promotion of out-of-class learning, as seen during the COVID-19 pandemic, which necessitated the implementation of hybrid learning, in which learners and teachers at all education levels were able to connect with each other by means of video conferencing tools.

These technological advances highlight another crucial aspect of this discussion: communicative competence. Donaghy et al. (2023: 5-6) argue that the traditional skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing may not be enough for a learner to be communicatively competent, and teachers should also focus on developing multimodal communicative competence in learners, which is defined as "a learner's ability to use language to communicate successfully through various communication modes such as the linguistic, visual, aural, and gestural modes" (*ibid.*: 36). They further explain that

today’s effective communication requires young people to understand, respond to, and create meaning using various forms of multimodal texts. Developing multimodal literacy, in turn, equips learners for successful communication in their personal, social, academic and professional lives. Therefore, two additional skills should be included in language teaching: viewing and representing, the former relating to being able to understand and reply to multimodal texts, and the latter referring to conveying information and ideas by producing texts that utilize multiple modes (Donaghy et al., 2023).

Yet, these technological advances come with a price. Although they have improved the lives of many people worldwide, their application raises certain concerns in the context of language education. Among the many challenges associated with the use of technology in this field, digital divide and ethical behaviour have attracted considerable attention. Reinders et al. (2024), citing a UNESCO report, argue that the availability of technology, such as the internet, is uneven worldwide. They highlight that only 40% of primary schools globally have access to the internet, exacerbating the digital divide between countries. Moreover, easy access to AI technology may lead to unethical behaviour, such as plagiarism, which raises questions about the appropriateness of assigning homework. In the light of these issues contemporary foreign language teaching also focuses on developing digital literacy and digital well-being among language learners and teachers.

All the changes and developments in foreign language instruction that have been introduced over the few hundred years aimed at finding solutions to problems and facilitating the learning process. It must be stressed that foreign language learning is dynamic in nature and in the future new developments are likely to be implemented to meet the needs of the future learners.

1.3. English for Specific Purposes

The hegemony of the English language across the world is evident in all spheres of people's lives, especially English Language Teaching (ELT). Although learning General English (GE) as a school subject dominated all educational levels - focusing on the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and subsystems (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) (Harmer, 2015) - ELT has diversified over time. Socio-economic pressures and labour market demands have driven this shift toward specialised domains meeting the needs of a changing world (Hutchinson and Waters, 1999). This evolution

manifests particularly in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), where targeted language training equips learners with specialised communication skills for professional domains like business, medicine and engineering.

In order to give a clear picture of the scope of ELT it might be a good idea to divide it into sections that will illustrate the complexity of ELT (de Chazal, 2014; Hutchinson and Waters, 1999):

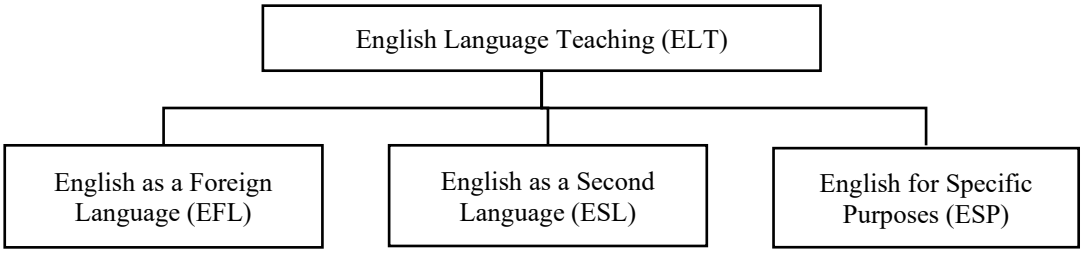

Figure 1. The scope of English Language Teaching.

The simplified graphic representation of ELT divides it into three broad categories: English as a Foreign Language (EFL), English as a Second Language (ESL) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP), each focusing on different learner needs. EFL has a long history that has been discussed earlier in this chapter. While EFL is straightforward and does not cause any confusion, ESL might be misleading, depending on the country where the ESL courses take place. For learners residing in an English-speaking environment, such as the United Kingdom, the USA, Canada or Australia, who require English to integrate into that setting, the term English as a Second Language (ESL) is frequently used. This again might be problematic, as Thornbury (2006: 74) notes that "many learners of English may already be multilingual in their home environment, so English may well be a third or even fourth language, not necessarily a second." As he (*ibid.*) further explains, distinctions can be made between English as an Additional Language (EAL), English as an International Language (EIL) and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), all of which acknowledge that English is used as a language of international communication.

Both EFL and ESL are often contrasted with ESP, the third category presented above, which has dominated ELT for years due to globalisation, labour market demands and English's status as the global lingua franca. Although ESP emerged in the second half of the 20th century, its practical focus traces back to the Middle Ages, when merchants and diplomats needed rapid, targeted language training (Gajewska and Sowa,

2014). Today, professionals entering international fields such as business, medicine, aviation and science require not only General English but also specialised ESP knowledge to meet occupational English proficiency standards in job advertisements. This specialised knowledge helps them function in the given field. Nowadays, working in a different country either permanently or temporarily does not pose many difficulties for the potential employees, and people working as doctors, nurses, taxi or bus drivers are a common occurrence in many countries, provided that they meet the criteria specified in the job offers, which may include good specialist knowledge of English. For these reasons, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses have gained popularity worldwide, and much academic research has been conducted in this area (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998; Grucza, 2013a, 2013b; Gajewska and Sowa, 2014; Johns, 2014) focusing on different aspects, such as genre analysis, critical discourse analysis, learner needs and also professional development of ESP teachers and the roles they play in this process. The scope of ESP research shows that it has become a multi-disciplinary area that attracts more and more attention. Furthermore, the practical application of ESP is evident in the numerous coursebooks and guidelines published by leading publishers that specifically address ESP material.

Within this broad ESP domain, which could be considered an umbrella term for various types of professional English, several specific categories can be mentioned, each catering to different student needs based on specific learning purposes and requiring specific methodological training: English for Science and Technology (EST), Business English (BE), English for Medical Purposes (EMP), Legal English (LE) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). All these types share English as a language of communication. Higher education institutions, therefore, include ESP courses, which "focus on the language, skills, and genres appropriate to the specific activities the learners need to carry out in English" (Paltridge and Starfield, 2014: 2) as part of the degree curriculum.

Additionally, there is a need for specialised English in tertiary education for undergraduate, postgraduate or PhD students wishing to study in English, even if not in an English-speaking country. This is often part of programmes such as the Erasmus+ exchange programme or similar initiatives offered by higher institutions. This situation is also characteristic of university teachers who teach their subjects through English as part of their institution's policy.

1.4. English for Academic Purposes

Of particular interest in the discussion of ELT in higher education is English for Academic Purposes (EAP). As de Chazal (2014: 5) explains, EAP "involves the teaching and learning of the English language so that students can operate effectively in the disciplines, i.e. in their specific subject(s) in an academic institution, typically a university." It is important, however, to realise that the term *disciplines* is very broad and it can encompass numerous sciences, which can be further subdivided: natural (e.g., biology, chemistry), social (e.g., sociology, psychology), formal (e.g., mathematics, computer science), applied (e.g., engineering, medicine) and interdisciplinary (e.g., biotechnology). Each of these disciplines requires a specific set of skills and abilities, which students need to develop in order to "function effectively as students in the disciplines" (de Chazal, 2014: 16).

Therefore, within this field, another important division can be made: English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) and English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP) (Basturkmen & Elder, 2004; de Chazal, 2014). In the case of EGAP, students from various disciplines are brought together, with teaching aimed at their shared academic requirements and skills, such as note-taking, understanding lectures, seminar participation and constructing argumentative essays. In other words, EGAP provides a broad foundation that equips students with the transferable skills needed across academic settings, regardless of their specific field of study. Conversely, ESAP students are organized according to their fields of study, with instruction focused on the language use and skills essential for effective communication within those disciplines (Basturkmen & Elder, 2004: 673).

EAP is not only specific to higher education only because such courses are also offered to secondary school learners or private language schools, in which pre-university students are given academic guidance to study in English and develop academic skills necessary for success at university (McCarter & Jakes 2009; de Chazal, 2014). Such guidance may take the form of International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes, which are offered worldwide, usually in non-Anglophone countries, and secondary school learners are expected to receive education that is distinct, rigorous and varied (https://www.ibo.org).

It is important to realise that EAP also has practical applications for academic staff, especially those who are not teachers of English, were not instructed in English,

learned it as a foreign language, and who have to communicate in English in various situations. In the highly competitive higher education world, university researchers are required to publish in prestigious journals, attend conferences or give presentations in English, as this language is the dominant language of academic research and publication. Having one's research article published in such journals wins a person recognition in the world of science and also offers some additional advantages such as promotion or higher status at one's place of work. The number of articles published in English also puts the researchers' universities in higher rankings of internationalization. All this pressure to publish in peer-reviewed journals has led to the development of English for Research Publication Purposes (ERPP), a branch of EAP aiming to help academics publish in prestigious journals (Cargill & Burgess, 2008; Habibie & Starfield, 2020).

Conclusion

The evolution of English Language Teaching is reflected in the broader political, social and technological forces that have shaped the role of English in the world. The expansion of English from a vernacular language to a global lingua franca, has triggered the development of numerous teaching methods - from Grammar-Translation to Task-Based Learning, humanistic and technologically enhanced approaches. Contemporary ELT addresses increasingly diverse learner needs, ranging from general proficiency to specialised academic and professional purposes, including ESP, EAP and ERPP.

At the same time, contemporary changes that include rapid technological development, global mobility, multicultural classrooms and issues such as digital inequality continue to reshape the field. They highlight the dynamic nature of language learning and the ongoing need for adaptable, research-informed pedagogies. As society and technology evolve, ELT is likely to transform, seeking new ways to support effective and equitable language learning in a globalised world.

Chapter 2 English as a medium of instruction in higher education

Introduction

One of the visible signs of ELT transformation mentioned in the previous chapter is teaching content through the medium of English, a practice that has recently gained popularity, particularly in higher education in non-Anglophone countries. While ELT, ESP and EAP courses are typically taught by English teachers as part of foreign language education, the situation differs in the case of English Medium Instruction (EMI) programmes for students wishing to study in a given university. EMI involves subject specialists delivering core disciplinary content in English, often without explicit language instruction, which poses unique challenges for both lecturers and learners. This shift reflects globalization pressures and the drive for international student mobility, yet it raises questions about linguistic equity and pedagogical effectiveness in multilingual contexts. The following chapter therefore explores the nature of this instructional method.

2.1. Defining English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in higher education

From the myriads of different forms of education available worldwide there is one that has gained international prominence in the field of higher education – English as a Medium Instruction (EMI). Although there are various definitions of EMI (Hellekjaer, 2010; Macaro, 2018; Rose, Curle, Aizawa & Thompson, 2019), the working definition is the one suggested by Rose and McKinley (2018: 111): "an educational system where content is taught through English in contexts where English is not used as a primary, first, or official language."

Internationalising higher education institutions by offering English taught programmes and encouraging student and staff mobility is one of the outcomes of the Bologna Process (Sandström & Neghina, 2017; Galloway, 2020). Therefore, many national education authorities and numerous universities in non-Anglophone countries across the world in order to be attractive to potential domestic and overseas undergraduate and postgraduate students offer programmes which are delivered in a foreign language, English being the most prevalent and playing the central role (Dearden, 2014; Sandström & Neghina, 2017; Galloway, 2020; Sahan et al., 2021a; Macaro and Aizawa, 2022; Veitch, 2021). The proliferation of English-taught programmes is also the result of the colonial past of some African and Asian countries,

"where the use of English as a language of learning was imposed by imperial powers" (Galloway, 2020: 25). This state of affairs is partly due to the fact that nowadays, as Phillipson (1992: 6) argues,

> English has a dominant position in science, technology, medicine, and computers; in research, books, periodicals, and software; in transnational business, trade, shipping, and aviation; in diplomacy and international organizations; in mass media entertainment, news agencies, and journalism; in youth culture and sport; in education systems, as the most widely learnt foreign language.

Similar comments on the prominence of English as a global language can also be found in Veitch (2021: 7), who states that "English, as a language of academia, science and technology and corporate transnational business, empowers and opens up opportunity and access for individuals, institutions and nations educationally, economically and socially."

Phillipson (2006), however, raises concerns about English Medium Instruction (EMI) reinforcing *linguistic imperialism* - the dominance of English from major native-speaking countries, which privileges them and widens social inequalities, as high proficiency is often limited to elite classes. This hegemony is reflected in academic publishing in which indexed journals prioritize English for high citations and rankings, marginalizing non-English research (especially in culture-bound fields like humanities and social sciences) and reducing non-English outputs. Similar concerns connected with the rise of English can be found in Nordic countries. Lasagabaster (2022) cites the research of Kuteeva et al. (2020), who show that the rise of English in Nordic sciences has led to domain loss, sparking linguistic tensions and policy debates, as English holds higher status. This extends beyond universities into society, fostering perceptions of English domination and threats to institutional language ecologies. Similarly, the problem of English gaining more prominence over other languages such as Italian in certain fields of study has been reported by Italian teaching personnel (Broggini & Costa 2017; Motta 2017).

In spite of the fact that the introduction of English Medium Instruction may cause certain tensions, this situation is likely to continue. The European Commission, for example, supports the international exchange of not only students, but also academic staff and researchers through various programmes

(https://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/higher-education/about-higher-education-policy_en), which, as Hashimoto & Glasgow (2019: 103) say it, "symbolizes the current trend towards globalization in education." The same authors (*ibid.*: 115) mention three different types of programmes that are offered, for example, in Japanese tertiary education, in which English is used as a medium of instruction. Firstly, there are English courses offered only to Japanese students the aim of which is to increase their English proficiency. Secondly, there are courses offered in English for international students whose knowledge of Japanese is inadequate to complete the course or studies in Japanese. Finally, there are courses "that cater to both Japanese and international students in order to create a mutual space for them to mix (...)." Similar courses can be found at numerous universities across the world, where English is not the native or official language of the given population.

It must be stressed that the range of programmes or courses that are offered in English by various universities differ in length: some are 30-hour courses; others are 60-hour courses. There are of course educational systems at non-Anglophone universities offering full-time or part-time Bachelor's or Master's degree studies that are delivered solely in English. An underlying assumption of these study programmes is that they are aimed specifically at overseas students. However, as the results of the study by Sahan et al. (2021a) show, a great number of students studying EMI subjects are, in fact, home students. International students, many of whom come from neighbouring countries, constitute only a small percentage of the total student population enrolled on EMI programmes. This situation might be a consequence of the various challenges posed by this specific mode of instruction.

2.2. Research on EMI

Although the research on EMI in Higher Education is relatively recent emerging in the 1990s and 2000s and originating from various approaches such as CLIL, immersion programmes and bilingual education (Vu & Burns, 2014; Macaro, 2018; Baker, 2001), it is still growing, with the Netherlands and the Nordic countries paving the path for its development. Numerous researchers have tried to tackle the issues of EMI from various perspectives. For example, one of the first studies carried out by Dearden (2014) in 55 countries across the world reveals that EMI is an ongoing process and is likely to expand in the future. Moreover, this policy appears to be supported by some national governments (Galloway, 2020), and it could be said that policymakers "see EMI as a

way of rapidly increasing international policy" (*ibid.*: 16). Lasagabaster (2022: 4) gives an example of South Korean universities that are financially supported by the Korean government "depending on the proportion of EMI course offered." This policy, as he (*ibid.*) explains citing the research of Byun et al. (2011) and Kim (2017), has proven an effective means of encouraging South Korean universities to embrace EMI and driving growth in international student enrolment, respectively.

The results of an extensive report presented by Sandström and Neghina (2017: 9) on English-taught bachelor's programmes (ETBs) offered by higher education institutions in 19 European Higher Education Area (EHEA) countries support some of Dearden's (2014) conclusions. They show that the number of such programmes has risen substantially since 2009 in many countries, with the Netherlands being the leader in the rankings. The authors of the report (*ibid.*: 11) also reveal the top five reasons why ETBs are offered at European universities, and these are to: "internationalise the institution, become or remain competitive, attract international talent, prepare local students for a global world and respond to demographic shifts (declining local student population)," all of which reflect profound changes taking place in the global market. The report also indicates that the most popular disciplines of the ETBs and English-taught Master's programmes (MTBs) are: Business and Management, Social Sciences, Engineering and Technology (*ibid.*: 14). Comparable conclusions are evident in the study conducted by Galloway (2020: 16), where, in addition to the factors mentioned earlier, bilingual education policies in primary and secondary education and the influence of higher education on a country's knowledge diplomacy are also highlighted.

Similar conclusions can be drawn from the global report prepared by Sahan et al. (2021a), who investigated the use of English as a medium of instruction in higher education in 52 developing countries across Europe, Asia, Africa and South America. According to the authors, "preparing students for the global job market and enhancing the university's reputation were found to be the key driving forces behind EMI expansion" (*ibid.*: 8). The study also showed that Business, Computer Sciences and Social Sciences were the most popular subjects taught through English (*ibid.*: 59), which is in line with the results given by Sandström & Neghina (2017).

Molino et al. (2023) present a comprehensive volume discussing the developments of EMI scholarship in European universities, which is based on studies from the Transnational Alignment of English Competences for University Lecturers (TAEC) project, supported by ERASMUS+. This initiative compiled a Literature

Database covering 20 years of EMI research across five European countries (Croatia, Denmark, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain), serving as the foundation for the book's literature review. In it various authors pinpoint gaps and areas for enhancement.

Another substantial volume edited by McKinley & Galloway (2022), outlines EMI strategies across diverse regional (Europe, Asia, Africa, South America) settings, illustrating varied approaches to enacting EMI policies in universities. Based on case studies from multiple countries, it delivers a comprehensive grasp of shifting interpretations, obstacles and contemporary global policies.

2.3. EMI advantages

The five reasons mentioned by Sandström & Neghina (2017) in the previous section why such courses are offered could also be regarded as advantages. Offering EMI courses enables higher education institutions to internationalize by facilitating access to English-language materials, the use of specialized English terminology and authentic opportunities for English communication (Lasagabaster, 2022; Macaro, 2024), especially for mobility programme students, which, in turn, contributes to the development of English proficiency in their disciplines.

It also appears that offering EMI courses globally has become financially attractive for both higher education institutions and potential students, especially in non-Anglophone countries. The availability of EMI courses enables less advantaged students to choose their preferred university, potentially contributing to higher international enrolment. For instance, Kirkpatrick's (2011) research revealed that Malaysian students chose to study medicine in Russia because it was considerably less expensive than studying at Anglophone universities.

Another advantage results from EMI policy making decisions in countries such as Japan, China and Taiwan. Rose et al. (2023), citing the research for Rose & McKinley (2018), Lei and Hu (2014) and Lin (2020), emphasise the top-down policy making resulting in universities offering English medium instruction to domestic students, allowing them to "obtain future high quality employment" (Macaro, 2024: 23). An interesting trend in offering EMI courses is found in some Middle East and African countries, in which local universities decide to cooperate with reputable universities from the English-speaking countries (Lasagabaster, 2022) resulting in the establishment of branch campuses. This form of strategic partnerships proves beneficial in making

such universities attractive to not only international but also domestic students, allowing them to obtain a degree from an English-speaking university.

Strategic partnerships between universities, such as that between the Silesian University of Technology (SUT) and Yanshan University in China, constitute a cornerstone of international cooperation. These collaborations encompass dual-degree programmes, student and staff mobility schemes, and broader initiatives aimed at educational internationalization. A key feature of this partnership involves Chinese students completing their initial year of study at Yanshan University before transferring to SUT for the subsequent three years. Additionally, SUT faculty and researchers may travel to China to deliver on-site instruction (Siwczyk, 2025: 14).

In summary, EMI offers multidimensional advantages including internationalization through enhanced English proficiency, financial competitiveness for institutions and students, top-down policy support for graduate employability and strategic partnerships via branch campuses - all positioning it as a key driver of global higher education accessibility and appeal.

2.4. Teaching and learning through English: Educational implications of EMI

The trend in internationalising higher education institutions by offering EMI programmes and studies poses certain difficulties, also highlighted in the aforementioned reports, that policymakers have to resolve. The starting point in the discussion of English as a medium of instruction is to focus on the term *language proficiency*, which Richards and Schmidt (2010: 321) define as "the degree of skill with which a person can use a language, such as how well a person can read, write, speak, or understand language."

While it is relatively straightforward for English teachers to assess their own proficiency or that of their students using the criteria outlined in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (i.e., A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, or C2) by means of, for example, placement tests, the same cannot be said for university educators instructing their subjects in English but not specializing in English teaching. Assessing their language proficiency becomes a distinctive challenge in this context, with potential far-reaching implications for the success of EMI classes. This issue is elucidated in the study conducted by Dearden & Macaro (2016). Their comparative analysis of interviewed lecturers from Austria, Italy and Poland revealed a common challenge -

determining the appropriate proficiency level for teaching EMI classes proved to be a complex task for these educators.

2.4.1. Knowledge of English

The fact that universities offer programmes in which the content is taught in English has a number of implications, not only for the universities themselves but also for the teaching personnel, students and administration. On the one hand, such possibilities increase the given university's position in the rankings of internationalisation of higher education, allow for international mobility of students and academic staff, and may also increase the students' future prospects of employment, an argument mentioned by many students (Wächter & Maiworm, 2014). On the other hand, such a situation may put a strain on university teachers who are not English language experts, and they may find it difficult to cope with the pressure of teaching in a language that is not their native language (Macaro & Aizawa, 2022).

For that reason, some older university teachers may feel uncomfortable or less confident teaching their subjects through English, because their knowledge of that language may not be adequate, and it may be necessary for them to enrol on a language course or to refresh their English to gain more confidence. This, in turn, may be time-consuming and may require additional time for class preparation. For instance, the research conducted by Bradford (2019) revealed that EMI lecturers at Japanese universities reportedly required four to five times more effort to teach in English than in Japanese. As a result, the recruitment process for the lecturers willing to teach their subjects through English may pose certain difficulties (Dearden, 2014). Dearden & Macaro (2016) suggest that this challenge may stem from what they describe as a generation gap. Their findings indicate that younger teachers, particularly those who have studied abroad or obtained doctorates from Anglophone countries, demonstrate greater enthusiasm in taking up the personal challenge of teaching in English compared to their older counterparts. Unfortunately, there are also such lecturers who have been nominated by the university authorities and that have to run their classes in English (Dearden, 2014, Galloway, 2020).

Additionally, depending on the university teacher's specialisation, knowledge of general English may not be enough to run effective classes, as knowledge of some specialist language, vocabulary in particular, may be required. It might also be true that

university teachers' language proficiency is high and their knowledge of specialist vocabulary is ample due to the fact they keep up-to-date with the latest developments in the professional fields by reading scientific literature or writing articles for peer-reviewed journals, being involved in numerous international projects and initiatives, or attending and giving presentations at international conferences, all of which require the use of English. Unfortunately, what they often struggle with while "teaching in an EMI context is that they have to dig deeper to find linguistic resources to adequately convey information to students who themselves may have low levels of English proficiency" (Sahan et al., 2021a: 11). Therefore, their inability to activate this knowledge during face-to-face classes with students may result from a lack of specific pedagogical skills or methodological background. Macaro et al. (2016) and Lasagabaster (2022), citing the research of Bock (2021) and Kim, Kim & Kweon (2018), highlight that a great number of teachers think of themselves, first and foremost, as content teachers, not language teachers who "had had no training in language teaching" (Lasagabaster, 2022: 15). That is the reason why they do not provide any feedback to students on their language performance.

Another interesting point in the English proficiency discussion comes from Galloway (2020: 33), who cites the research of Tsui (2017). Tsui found that EMI lecturers reported a constrained capacity to incorporate humour in their classes, limiting student rapport. This may result from insufficient language skills that would allow them to feel confident in English. Ball et al. (2015: 285) suggest that university teachers "must possess the confidence to deliver a lecture in the target language, be accurate to the extent that they are understood, and be able to interact spontaneously with students in either a lecture or a smaller seminar context, as well as in more informal situations." Therefore, some kind of institutional teacher training and ongoing professional development should be considered (Wolff, 2012; Ball et al., 2015; Cañado, 2018).

The linguistic challenge also extends to students aspiring to enrol on EMI programmes. Depending on the quality of English education in secondary schools, students often represent varying levels of English proficiency (Galloway, 2020), which might be a determining factor of their future success on EMI programmes. Secondary schools across the world offer specific programmes, such as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) or International Baccalaureate (IB), that allow students to experience EMI, thus preparing them for studying at universities offering EMI programmes. An additional challenge, as Galloway (2020) mentions, is the fact that for

some students English-taught programmes are a complete novelty and they may need more time to adjust to a new situation. The research carried out by Nguyen et al. (2009) in Vietnamese universities, in which English as a Medium of Instruction (EMOI) was implemented, revealed that students did not have opportunities to practise social and professional English to improve their English competence. Additionally, they did not have access to any reference materials that were needed to handle the university workload. Similar research conducted by Macaro et al. (2017: 52-53) underlines that insufficient proficiency in the English language is a significant obstacle, impeding students from maximizing the advantages of EMI programmes across certain European and Asian countries. Struggling with inadequate listening skills hampers their comprehension of lectures, while deficiencies in academic writing and limited vocabulary knowledge pose hindrances to effective content learning.

In contrast to Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), where language and content specialists cooperate through team teaching to ensure effective learning, EMI is primarily taught by content specialists alone, in this case university lecturers. Additionally, lecturers' and students' English proficiency, which is often at different levels, may influence the quality of teaching the subject. As it is often taken for granted that exposure to the content delivered in English is tantamount to the improvement of English skills, some researchers warn against such optimism (Lasagabaster, 2022; Chapple 2015).

Qualified English administrative personnel appear to be one of the most important elements of successful management of the EMI classes or studies, which is reflected in the students' comments (Sandström & Neghina, 2017). It appears that possessing the right language skills is of overriding importance, not only for the academic teachers but also for the administrative staff who are often "in contact with international students during their time at the institution" (ibid: 19) and coordinate various office activities in order to maintain the efficiency of the educational process. This view is also supported by Sahan *et. al* (2021a: 36), who emphasise that administrative personnel play a crucial role in interacting with students within university departments and are essential participants in the execution of English Medium of Instruction (EMI) programmes.

2.4.2. Classroom management and professional development opportunities

University teachers' views on effective management in an EMI classroom vary. In such settings with international students, challenges arise, such as simplifying language input to explain complex content or creating interactive environments (Dearden, 2014: 23-24) or common EMI strategies. Ensuring an undisturbed educational process is crucial, and preparing for classes involves finding and adapting field-specific materials. Therefore, EMI teachers, who in most cases are not professional English teachers, require skills akin to ESL teachers (Dearden, 2014), and may necessitate additional methodological training for teaching course content in English.

English language expertise, as discussed above, affects the teaching process to varying degrees. One of them is content specialists' methodological training, i.e. do they feel linguistically and pedagogically prepared to deliver the content in English to students. The study carried out by Borght et al. (2025) revealed that the effectiveness of EMI hinges not solely on linguistic proficiency but also on teachers' pedagogical skills and self-assurance. Unfortunately, as the body of research (Dearden, 2014; Wächter and Maiworm, 2014; Dearden and Macaro, 2016; Macaro et al., 2018; O'Dowd, 2018; Macaro et al., 2021; Sahan et al., 2021a; Sahan et al., 2021b; Macaro and Aizawa, 2022) reveal that professional development opportunities for pre-service or in-service EMI practitioners are seriously limited or even unavailable, and focused on developing English skills. For instance, in the study conducted by Dearden (2014) in 55 countries, 60 per cent of the respondents said that no written guidelines were suggested on how to teach through EMI. Moreover, the great majority of the respondents (83 per cent) stated that there were not enough qualified EMI teachers. The later studies by Macaro et al. (2021), Sahan et al. (2021a) and Sahan et al. (2021b) support Dearden's (2014) findings and emphasise that most of the respondents had not taken part in any form of training.

However, those who took part in some form of training mentioned they followed the guidelines from "both external and internal in-service sources" (Macaro et al. 2021: 9), such as visiting specialists from English-speaking countries, workshops and seminars offered by the British Council or their universities. Though some countries offer short courses, lectures, seminars or written guidelines, they are not the norm, which makes EMI teachers responsible for their own professional development.

An interesting point in this discussion is the one by Macaro & Aizawa (2022: 8-10), who tried to characterise EMI professional development (PD) providers. The

results of their search for such PD opportunities available online revealed that most of them are professional English teachers employed at universities' various education departments and holding MA or PhD degrees in education. Moreover, predominantly English-speaking countries, such as the UK, Australia, the US and Canada, offer such programmes. Other countries providing PD opportunities included Turkey, Japan, China, Denmark, Germany, Spain and Sri Lanka. Their research results also indicate that many of these PD courses primarily focus on enhancing pedagogical skills for effectively using language to teach content, thus avoiding discipline-specific goals. This may be because content experts are minimally or not at all involved in delivering these professional development courses.

2.4.3. EMI resources and institutional support system

The amount of institutional support, in the form of reference books, resources and general EMI guidelines, that is offered for both EMI teachers and students is very often scarce and varies from country to country (Dearden, 2014; Zare-ee & Hejazi, 2017; Galloway, 2020; Sahan et al., 2021a). As Dearden (2014: 24) states, "It appears therefore that policymakers in many countries insist on introducing EMI for reasons of economic growth, prestige and internationalisation without considering the teaching resources needed to ensure its proper implementation such as sufficiently trained teachers, materials and assessment."

The existing research (Macaro, 2015, 2018; Galloway, 2020; Sahan et al. 2021b) on how to help learners prepare for EMI courses or studies centres around four models, each of which focusing on different aims. The *multilingual* model allows students to receive instruction in their L1 as well as in English, whereas in the *concurrent* support model students take additional EAP or ESP courses. In the *preparatory year* model future students attend an intensive one-year English course before they join EMI studies. Finally, the *selection* model, which is characteristic of English-speaking countries, requires students to pass an English proficiency test.

The available educational materials on the market may be too general for the subjects that university teachers teach. Additionally, most EMI research articles are written by language specialists (i.e., applied linguists) rather than content experts and are extensively published in applied linguistics journals. This might suggest a lack of collaboration between the two groups, potentially limiting the benefit that content

specialists could derive from existing EMI research (Macaro & Aizawa, 2022). This limited access to good quality content-specific materials forces teachers to look for different ways to deal with the problem.

It appears that there is no universal approach for teaching EMI programmes and universities should create tailored support systems for teaching English Medium Instruction (EMI) programmes, incorporating content-specific strategies. These systems should be developed through needs analyses, identifying potential challenges to EMI programs, as suggested by Galloway (2020).

2.4.4. Assessment

EMI assessment also appears to be a complex issue, as shown by Dearden (2014: 26), who discusses various instances of how this issue is addressed in Asian and African countries. It is sometimes the case that lectures are delivered in English, but the assessment takes place in L1. There are also instances of subjects being taught in L1 or both L1 and English, but assessed in English, which might result from various university policies or a lack of appropriate written guidelines. Certainly, an important issue to be considered is the fact what is to be assessed: the English or the subject content?

2.4.5. Admissions regulations

There is no unanimous policy concerning entrance requirements for future students wishing to study EMI programmes and they vary across the world. Numerous Anglophone (i.e. American, British or Australian) universities in order to ensure high quality of teaching specifically require a proof of English proficiency, usually in the form certificates such as TOEFL, IELTS or Cambridge standardised exams. Dimova (2020) citing the research of Cho & Bridgeman (2012), O'Loughlin (2011) and Bridgeman et al. (2016) highlights that the validity studies show mixed predictive power of such exams against Grade Point Average (GPA) - from none or weak correlations to moderate ones, sometimes negative.

Other higher education institutions, especially in non-Anglophone countries, do not impose such strict requirements. Furthermore, they challenge the suitability of these forms of assessment for EMI programme admissions (Gundermann, 2014) and employ the procedures that are country specific. Some advocate for post-admission screening to

detect underprepared students requiring linguistic assistance (Kurtan, 2006). Other researchers (Saarinen and Nikula, 2013) argue that standardised tests reinforce native-speaker standards.

Another important factor is the linguistic threshold specified in university guidelines for EMI course admission, which some candidates fail to meet (Sert, 2008; Ellili-Cherif and Alkhateeb, 2015); yet this requirement is sometimes disregarded (Aizawa & Rose, 2019), allowing underprepared students to enrol. Additionally, some scholars (Hellekjaer, 2009; Wilkinson & Zegers, 2006) disagree regarding the nature of appropriate evidence for language proficiency. The common criticism of standardized proficiency tests in this context is that they focus on general rather than academic English. It is therefore difficult to say whether they are a good predictor for someone's success at EMI courses.

As a result of these different admissions regulations, the EMI classes may be comprised of students of varying levels of English, making the education process more difficult. A similar situation concerns the teaching staff who are selected for teaching their subjects through English. As it has been written above, the process is not unanimous and is dependent on each university's internal regulations.

2.5. EMI in Poland

The political, economic and social transformations in Poland post-1989 profoundly shaped foreign language education. Key events - the fall of the Iron Curtain (1989), Poland's accession to NATO (1999) and the EU (2004) and educational reforms in 1999 and 2017 - heightened demand for foreign languages, particularly English (Romanowski, 2022, 2024). A critical teacher shortage emerged, as philology departments could not meet needs. Although Poland's 11 universities graduated around 300 English majors annually, only one-fifth chose school teaching. Upon entering the post-communist era, Poland faced a school system employing 18,000 Russian language teachers compared to just 4,500 instructors for all other foreign languages combined. A stark illustration of the shortages that emerged after granting equal status to all foreign languages in education was the acute demand for English teachers. At that time, only 1,200 English instructors worked in schools. Nationwide, the need for English teachers was estimated at about 20,000. Thus, practical three-year Teacher Training Colleges were established for English, French, German, Italian and Spanish specialists in order to fill the gap. These colleges fulfilled their role effectively and, over a short period, not

only filled the immediate gap by training thousands of qualified instructors but also provided scalable, hands-on programmes tailored to practical classroom needs, ensuring sustained language education capacity amid rapid societal shifts. It is estimated that two-thirds of college graduates immediately entered education and the remaining one-third pursued master's studies, after which many also took up teaching roles, often in secondary schools. Later, after launching fee-based second-cycle supplementary studies, the colleges proved an excellent recruitment source for universities - providing highly motivated, mature students well-prepared for master's-level work. (Komorowska, 2017: 71-72).

Simultaneously, the interest in learning foreign languages attracted the focus of foreign language publishers. As a result, foreign language teachers - especially English instructors - received support from numerous publishers and organisations such as Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, Longman-Pearson, Macmillan, the British Council and the Peace Corps. This assistance encompassed workshops, training sessions, expert-led conferences on dynamic teaching activities and specialized publications, and later the creation of dedicated webpages, learning apps and platforms. These developments, in turn, prompted primary and secondary schools to adopt diverse foreign language programmes, including extended-hour classes, CLIL-based bilingual education, and International Baccalaureate options for students pursuing international study. It must be emphasised that depending on the school context different languages, English, French, German, Italian and Spanish, were employed in the context of bilingual education (Romanowski, 2024).

2.5.1. The beginnings of EMI

It cannot be denied that these profound socio-economic shifts also compelled higher education institutions in Poland to adapt to the evolving landscape, exemplified by the Schengen Agreement's abolition of internal border controls among participating European states, thereby enabling citizens' free movement across the continent. Consequently, as mentioned in Chapter 1, courses in English as a Foreign Language (EFL), English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) proliferated to equip students with specialist knowledge of languages for this dynamic globalized environment.

A visible sign of this new strategy is the rising popularity of English Medium Instruction (EMI) programmes in Poland, spanning state-owned and private higher education institutions, which enable teacher/student mobility and internationalization. The inaugural English-taught degree programmes emerged in the late 1990s at leading Polish institutions, including the University of Warsaw, Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Warsaw University of Technology, SGH Warsaw School of Economics, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, and AGH University of Science and Technology in Kraków (Romanowski, 2024: 179). As could be further read in Romanowski (2024: 180), of the 54 universities in Poland - categorized into 'classic' universities (18), economic sciences (5), technical fields (17), medical schools (8) and life/natural sciences (6) - the numbers of English-taught courses and programmes have since increased steadily. This tendency cannot be ignored, and Polish universities try to attract domestic and international students with their study offer. In 2021, a great number of these 54 universities offered diverse EMI programmes that covered different disciplines, such as humanities, social sciences, technology and engineering, natural sciences and medical sciences. There were also full BA, MA and Doctoral programmes offered.

Additionally, according to the *Foreign Students in Poland 2024* report by Fundacja Edukacyjna Perspektywy (www.perspektywy.org), state-owned and private higher education institutions offered 903 English-taught courses in the 2023/2024 academic year, attracting 107,130 international students from 177 countries. In the 2024/2025 academic year, the number of international students in Poland rose to 108,600 - a 1.4% increase from the previous year (Statistics Poland, 2025).

2.5.2. Classification of EMI courses in Polish universities

Of the five English-medium instruction (EMI) models discussed by Romanowski (2024: 183-185) - pre-sessional ESP/EAP courses, embedded ESP/EAP courses, adjunct ESP/EAP courses, Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education (ICLHE) and EMI - only the latter dominates in Polish universities due to persistent challenges. Pre-sessional ESP/EAP courses, tailored pre-programme training addressing varying student proficiency levels and discipline-specific linguistic needs, are rarely implemented in Poland owing to the requisite collaboration between language specialists and content experts (Unterberger, 2012). Embedded ESP/EAP courses, integrated into the regular curriculum (e.g., academic writing for thesis preparation), are gaining traction amid

rising numbers of international Master's and PhD students (Schmidt-Unterberger, 2018). Adjunct ESP/EAP courses that Macaro (2015, 2018) describes as concurrent, running parallel to specific content courses to provide targeted discipline-specific language support (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989), prove challenging in Poland due to coordination demands. ICLHE, which integrates content mastery with explicit language development through close collaboration between content and language specialists (Wilkinson, 2011; Gustafsson & Jacobs, 2013), remains rare owing to time-intensive planning, team teaching and financial barriers. Finally, EMI - teaching content in English without explicit language objectives - is most prevalent in Polish higher education institutions (HEIs), relying on incidental language improvement through exposure, though empirical evidence for its efficacy is limited (Järvinen, 2008). This framework underscores the need for enhanced language-content integration to bolster student proficiency in Polish HEIs.

2.5.3. Language requirements

The Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 30 July 2025 on documents certifying proficiency in the language of instruction lists certificates confirming foreign-language skills at B2 level or higher. Students wishing to study in English must hold one of the certificates listed below:

a) University of Cambridge, ESOL Examinations:
    a. B2 First (FCE),
    b. C1 Advanced (CAE),
    c. C2 Proficiency (CPE),
    d. B2 Business Vantage (BEC Vantage),
    e. C1 Business Higher,
    f. Certificate in English for International Business and Trade (CEIBT)
b) University of Cambridge, ESOL Examinations, British Council, IDP IELTS Australia:
    a. International English Language Testing System (IELTS) – a minimum score of 5.5
c) Trinity College London:
    a. ESOL Skills for Life – Level 1 (B2) or higher,
    b. Integrated Skills in English (ISE) – ISE II or higher,

c. ISE Digital – above 80 points (B2)

d) Educational Testing Service (ETS):
    a. Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) – Internet-Based Test (iBT) – a minimum score of 72,
    b. Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) – a minimum score of 785 in the Listening & Reading section, 150 in the Speaking section and 160 in the Writing section

e) Pearson Assessment English:
    a. Pearson English International Certificate – paper-based and computer-based versions (formerly Pearson Test of English General (PTE) or London Tests of English) – Level 3 (Edexcel Certificate in ESOL International Level 1 – Pass, Merit, Distinction) or higher,
    b. Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic) in both paper-based and online versions – a minimum of 59 points

f) LanguageCert (PeopleCert Qualifications (PCQ)):
    a. LanguageCert International ESOL – LanguageCert Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International (Listening, Reading, Writing) (Communicator B2), also known as: LanguageCert International ESOL Communicator B2 Listening, Reading, Writing or higher, including the LanguageCert Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International (Speaking) (Communicator B2), also known as LanguageCert International ESOL Communicator B2 Speaking or higher,
    b. LanguageCert Academic – LanguageCert Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International (Listening, Reading, Writing, Speaking) (LanguageCert Academic B2) or higher,
    c. LanguageCert Test of English – LanguageCert Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International (Listening, Reading, Writing, Speaking) (LanguageCert Test of English B2) or higher,

g) Education Development International (EDI), London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examinations Board: London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examinations (LCCI):
    a. English for Business Level 2 or higher,
    b. Foundation Certificate for Teachers of Business English (FTBE),

h) European Consortium for the Certificate of Attainment in Modern Languages – Level B2 (Vantage) or higher
i) telc GmbH, WBT Weiterbildungs-Testsysteme GmbH:
    a. Certificate in English,
    b. Certificate in English for Business Purposes,
    c. Certificate in English for Technical Purposes,
    d. telc English,
    e. telc English Business,
    f. telc English Technical,
    g. telc English University
j) International Baccalaureate Diploma

As outlined in section 2.4.5 (Admissions regulations), universities may in practice waive these proficiency requirements, permitting enrolment in English-medium instruction (EMI) courses. This flexibility often aims to boost international recruitment but poses risks, as studies highlight language-related challenges for students, including extended study times and reduced content comprehension.

2.5.4. Visa requirements

It must be stressed, however, that the number of international students from non-Schengen countries seeking EMI programmes at a given university depends on country-specific visa regulations, particularly affecting applicants from Africa and Asia. In Poland, stricter verification measures introduced in 2024 - including the Regulation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs amending consular fees, suspension of the Poland Business Harbour Programme, and enhanced guidelines following the Supreme Audit Office (NIK) report on 2018-2023 visa abuses - have led to frequent student visa rejections or delays. These aim to curb misuse, such as leveraging student status for employment or Schengen access rather than genuine study (MSZ, 2024; NIK, 2024). Consequently, tuition-dependent universities risk financial losses, while others may forgo EMI programmes due to insufficient international enrolment. This, in turn, can undermine Erasmus+ students, who must amend their learning agreements - the formal contracts between sending/receiving institutions and students. Such disruptions also strain administrative resources, as universities navigate revised compliance protocols

and support affected applicants. Ultimately, these policy shifts challenge the sustainability of EMI expansion in Poland, balancing national security with internationalization goals.

Conclusion

The expansion of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in higher education has become a defining feature of contemporary internationalisation policies, reflecting broader socio-economic, political and academic transformations across the globe. As shown throughout this chapter, EMI is not a uniform or monolithic phenomenon; rather, it represents a constellation of context-dependent practices shaped by national agendas, institutional priorities and local linguistic ecologies.

At the policy level, EMI is frequently adopted as a strategic response to global competitiveness, demographic pressures, knowledge diplomacy and aspirations for higher institutional visibility. However, such top-down initiatives often outpace the development of adequate support mechanisms, revealing significant gaps in teacher preparation, assessment standards and institutional infrastructure.

From a pedagogical perspective, EMI introduces a complex interplay between language proficiency, disciplinary expertise and methodological competence. While the potential benefits - including enhanced English competence, access to international academic resources and improved employability - are well documented, these advantages can only be realised when appropriate pedagogical foundations are in place. The research reviewed in this chapter underscores persistent challenges: lecturers' varying levels of English proficiency, limited training in language-aware pedagogy and difficulties in adapting teaching materials for linguistically diverse cohorts. These issues are compounded by disparities in students' language readiness, which can hinder comprehension, participation and academic performance. The absence of consistent assessment practices and specialised professional development programmes further complicates the effective implementation of EMI.

The Polish context reflects many of these global tendencies while exhibiting distinct local dynamics. The socio-political transformations following 1989, coupled with Poland's integration into transnational structures such as NATO and the European Union, significantly accelerated the demand for foreign language education and contributed to the rise of EMI. Polish universities have increasingly adopted EMI programmes to strengthen their international profiles, attract foreign students and

enhance mobility opportunities for both staff and learners. Nonetheless, challenges persist, including shortages of adequately trained academic staff, type of instruction, disparities in institutional support systems and recent visa policy shifts that disproportionately affect non-EU applicants. These factors directly influence the sustainability and accessibility of EMI programmes in Poland, particularly for institutions reliant on tuition-based international recruitment.

Taken together, the evidence presented in this chapter demonstrates that EMI is a multifaceted educational innovation whose success depends on the careful alignment of policy objectives, pedagogical practices and institutional capacities. While EMI holds considerable promise for fostering internationalisation and expanding academic opportunities, its effectiveness cannot be assumed. Instead, it requires deliberate investment in teacher training, development of context-sensitive support systems, clear admissions and assessment policies, and ongoing collaboration between language specialists and content experts. Only through such sustained and coherent efforts can EMI contribute meaningfully to equitable, high-quality education within both global and Polish higher education landscapes.

Chapter 3 Characteristics of a university teacher

Introduction

Today's competitive world has changed the way people think about education, be it primary, secondary or tertiary. Recent technological advances have increased people's awareness of what education might look like and what it might involve. Big data, automation, robotics, machine learning, educational platforms, chatbots and virtual assistants are just a few examples of how technology has marked its existence in numerous fields, including education. The use and development of Artificial Intelligence (AI), with ChatGPT as the most visible example of Large Language Models (LLMs), in various sectors such as industry, science, research and education has had far-reaching implications for education policymakers across the world, compelling them to reassess and adapt the current educational frameworks, teaching methodologies and curriculum designs.

The traditional teacher-centred Prussian model of education, where eminent scholars unilaterally transmitted knowledge to students, is increasingly seen as less effective in today's context. With education no longer confined to the four walls of a classroom, individuals now have virtually unlimited access to information from numerous sources, provided that they possess the skills to search for and verify it. Furthermore, the vast amount of data analysable by AI tools challenges conventional methods of teaching and studying. Consequently, educational formats such as classes, lectures, workshops and seminars that solely involve information delivery may hold limited practical value (Chłopecki 2013, Kaszuba-Perz & Perz 2013; Żylińska, 2013).

Instead, university teaching staff are expected to be more student-centred, and they are encouraged to develop more conducive ways of involving students and thus making them responsible for the process of learning. This entails offering a number of different solutions such as: developing various teaching methods and strategies to satisfy the needs of individual students, developing new skills and knowledge to continue lifelong learning, updating syllabuses to meet the needs of the labour market, or making use of newest technologies to enhance the students' learning experience (Chłopecki 2013; Kaszuba-Perz & Perz 2013; Fürstenberg et al. 2024). As a result, students are likely to develop hands-on experience and apply knowledge in practice, cultivating practical competencies such as problem-solving, critical thinking,

collaboration, and digital proficiency essential skills for EMI graduates entering international and technology-driven workplaces.

Additionally, higher education institutions are expected to integrate themselves more with economy – through various industry partnerships, internships, and curriculum co-design with employers – and adapt their educational programmes to the changing needs of the labour market (Pałys & Piotrowska 2022), such as demands for digital skills, intercultural competence and global employability. For this reason, some universities like the Silesian University of Technology offer dual studies combining academic learning with company experience and vocational training. Consequently, students selecting this educational format gain valuable professional experience during their studies, as the programme is co-developed with industry representatives.

It is also important to recognize that the rapid pace of technological advancement and the flexibility of the modern job market have enabled individuals to reskill and upskill their professional knowledge on an unprecedented scale. Formal education, traditionally confined to the classroom, is no longer the only option available. Alternatives such as participating in various online courses or workshops, many of which are free, joining professional associations and organisations to gain valuable experience or engaging in voluntary work with different charities offer practical avenues for education. These diverse forms of learning contribute significantly to lifelong learning, a crucial competency strongly advocated by UNESCO (2016). Due to the fact that the contemporary higher education is globally competitive, universities try to offer programmes, preferably in English, which are appealing to present and future students (Chłopecki 2013: 13), hoping that they will choose their university. Certainly, the emphasis on high-quality research that universities place is an additional advantage that may attract future students. Bearing in mind these changes, the future appears to be unpredictable, which makes it very challenging for the education sector to prepare the learners or graduates to adapt to these changes (Chmielecka & Dokowicz, 2022).

It is worth emphasising that in the field of higher education, every Polish institution operates autonomously under principles established by the Higher Education Act, enabling flexible EMI implementation (Romanowski, 2024: 179). A key responsibility of each university's Senate is to design study programmes and approve study regulations; accordingly, it can pass resolutions governing specific English-taught programmes after the faculty dean submits a proposal, reviewed and approved or

rejected by a dedicated committee. This procedural autonomy is underpinned by foundational documents like the university statute, which details governance structures, procedures and transparency to ensure efficient operations. Complementing this, the university's mission aligns principal objectives - such as ambitious research, training digitally literate staff, postgraduate studies, specialist courses and regional collaborations - with EMI priorities, addressing modern global demands.

Of particular interest in this discussion is the training of university students who are to become highly qualified workforce and the challenges they are likely to face. Higher education institutions play a crucial role in this process (Woźnicki, 2022), as they are expected to guide students through two significant changes, which Fürstenberg et al. (2024: 3) call *major transitions* and they include the shift from teacher-led school education to self-directed university learning, and the transition from education to entering the workforce. Therefore, all higher education institutions have education quality assurance systems, which outline all the necessary requirements needed for the smooth execution of the didactic process and which comply with the specifications of the National Accreditation Committee and the Bologna Agreement.

Learners of all ages, and university students in particular, have very high expectations, especially regarding the quality of education they receive. (Hassel and Ridout, 2018). It is undeniable that well-trained and qualified teaching personnel are essential for the successful implementation of curricula, the achievement of learning objectives, and the delivery of engaging classes, many of which are conducted in English. Education is an ongoing process that unfolds progressively, with each level building upon the previous one. Regardless of the educational level, a competent teacher remains a crucial element in ensuring the success of this process. Therefore, the following sections will attempt to characterise schoolteachers, university teachers and English Medium Instruction (EMI) university teachers.

3.1. Schoolteachers

To become a kindergarten, primary, vocational or secondary school teacher, individuals must meet stringent criteria, one of the most important of which is the acquisition of formal qualifications, such as a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree in education or a relevant subject area. The teacher training programme, which is spread over the entire study cycle, typically comprises various modules, including pedagogical and psychological training, general didactics, and specific didactics tailored to teaching at different

educational levels and school subjects. The theoretical training is complemented by practical teaching experience in different types of schools. This involves teaching classes specific to the trainee's specialisation and the trainee being supervised by a teacher who agreed to be his/her mentor. All the requirements are specified in the Education Act (https://www.gov.pl/web/edukacja) and the Teacher's Charter (https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU19820030019). After completing all these requirements, a person is allowed to start their teaching career. At the onset of their careers, novice teachers pursue a path of career progression (https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU20220001914), and a mentor - usually an experienced teacher from the school where they are employed - is assigned to them. They work together to allow novice teachers to reach professional advancement levels each of which focusing on different areas of teaching expertise. There are three such levels: novice teachers, nominated teachers and diploma teachers.

Depending on the school they are employed at, i.e., kindergarten, primary, vocational or secondary, teachers work on developing their didactic and organisational skills specific to the educational level of the learners. This involves learning about the organisation and functioning of the school, trying out various approaches and techniques that will facilitate the teaching process, developing classroom management skills and reflecting on one's teaching practice.

During their entire teaching career teachers are expected to continue their professional development which takes the form of lifelong learning. There are a number of in-service teacher training opportunities available: conferences, workshops, seminars or webinars which are organised by central teacher training centres (https://www.codn.edu.pl), teacher associations, publishing houses or other organisations. One popular form of continuous professional development is becoming a member of various national and international associations or organisations, such as the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL), in which teachers of English participate in various forms of training offered by this association. Moreover, teachers are encouraged to join special interest groups (SIGs) that focus on different aspects of teaching English. Teachers are also encouraged to improve their content knowledge by reading guidelines or methodology books or subscribing to newsletters specific to their field. Some teachers who would like to gain additional qualifications and teach new subjects need to complete postgraduate studies or courses. This is particularly important for teachers who work at schools which offer

bilingual programmes such as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) or International Baccalaureate (IB). Such programmes require from teachers both content knowledge and appropriate language proficiency (Będkowska-Obłąk, 2013; Papaja, 2014).

An interesting way of developing one's scientific and didactic skills is through writing articles to popular peer-reviewed methodological journals where they share their ideas concerning successful teaching of a particular subject. Although it is not compulsory for teachers to engage in this type of activity, some of them take this opportunity and have their articles published. Their scientific achievements are also taken into consideration during the assessment of their path of career progression. It must be remembered that the ever-changing advances in technology force teachers to look for effective ways of spreading the knowledge among their learners in an effective and interesting way. Consequently, some teachers develop their didactic skills by creating online blogs or webpages on which they try to explain the intricacies of their subjects in a very simple and understandable manner. The aim of such action is to help learners understand the subjects, spark interest in them and develop cognitive curiosity. A good example of such an initiative is the Khan Academy, an educational platform created "as on-line support for its founder's cousins who had problems with Maths at school" (Pradela, 2017: 84) and it became a worldwide phenomenon. Similar initiatives can be found on the Internet.

Teachers' responsibilities are closely tied to a range of organisational tasks essential for the smooth operation of their work. One significant aspect is the administrative duties they must manage, including maintaining attendance records, preparing reports for supervisors, preparing students for various subject competitions and final school exams, and corresponding with students and parents. Additionally, teachers are required to supervise hallways during breaks and participate in school field trips with their students. Furthermore, organizing parent-teacher meetings, often held once or twice a semester to update parents on their children's progress, is also a key component of their role. Teachers who aspire to become headmasters or headmistresses in the long term typically pursue postgraduate studies related to educational administration and apply for such positions when vacancies arise.

In this rapidly changing world, driven by socio-economic transformations previously discussed in this work, teachers face numerous educational challenges, regardless of the subject they teach. Learners from diverse backgrounds, including those

with psychological and psychiatric disorders, present significant difficulties that affect classroom management. The need to organise home tuition for learners with special needs or provide remedial classes for less able students exemplifies the hurdles teachers encounter. Programmes and initiatives from non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and higher education institutions are of great educational value, offering support to schoolteachers in addressing these challenges and fostering practices that enhance learners' future academic success.

3.2. University teachers

University teachers constitute a large group of highly trained professionals whose age usually ranges from twenty-four onwards. All of them completed compulsory (primary and secondary) and tertiary schooling, which equals to seventeen or eighteen years of formal education. By pursuing their academic career, they become doctoral (PhD) students and, in the long run, a substantial number of them become assistant professors, associate professors or full professors.

Moreover, they continue their lifelong learning by enrolling on various post-graduate programmes, different field-specific workshops or courses that may improve their skills and increase their professional knowledge. University staff often go on placements abroad for professional development. All the activities they are involved in are to help them conduct research in their area of expertise and publish scholarly work to advance knowledge and win recognition. This group of professionals could be characterised according to three important areas: scientific development, didactic skills and organisational skills.

3.2.1. Scientific development

Universities encourage their staff members to participate in various forms of professional development and offer various forms of support either nationally or internationally within the Erasmus+ Exchange Programmes or other grants sponsored by the European Union (https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/programme-guide/part-b/key-action-1/mobility-projects-for-higher-education-students-and-staff). There are also other education programmes to which staff members may apply such as Norway Grants or Fulbright Poland. Therefore, each university has specialised units such as the International Mobility Office to seek and sign partnership agreements between universities. These might include programmes such as staff mobility for teaching or

staff mobility for training. By participating in such programmes university teachers not only advertise their own department, faculty or university, but also develop networking skills i.e., they may start exchanging information with people who share similar professional interests. Furthermore, senior lecturers who act as rectors' plenipotentiaries have the authority to sign memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with other universities, i.e., they establish formal agreements or partnerships with other educational institutions, fostering collaboration and enhancing international ties which might include research collaboration, student exchanges, joint programmes and academic cooperation.

However, if lifelong learning is to be successful, "many learning opportunities have to be provided by the non-educational sectors of society, such as the corporations, and […] there need to be partnerships between education and those other providers of learning opportunities" (Jarvis 2004: 65). For that reason, higher education institutions are encouraged to cooperate with various small, medium or big businesses to share their experience with each other and create favourable conditions for professional development. Consequently, university teachers gain valuable experience by having access to the newest technologies and latest advances in their disciplines. Finally, they participate in and organise various scientific conferences, collaborate with different universities or research centres to work on projects, or undertake research themselves. It is often the case that with time university lecturers often become trainers, coaches or tutors who organise the aforementioned programmes or courses. The collaboration between academia and the socio-economic environment is evident in doctoral programmes, particularly in the Joint Doctoral School. In these programmes, PhD students employed by various companies or corporations undertake research for their doctoral theses, with the primary objective of addressing challenges or enhancing the performance of the respective organisations. Typically, these students have two supervisors: one from the university and the other from the company in which they are employed (The Act of 20 July 2018).

University teachers also undergo an internal evaluation procedure during which they have to provide a proof of their scientific development. This entails being involved in numerous scientific activities and initiatives. These include publishing monographs, chapters in monographs, books, research papers or articles in national and international journals connected with their specialisation. Reviewing such articles in journals and monographs is also seen as an element of a person's scientific activity. The more prestigious the journal, i.e. high-impact factor journals, the better for the author of the

article whose publication can be found there, as such journals signal rigour and selectivity, boosting an author's reputation for hiring, promotions and funding. Many academic evaluation systems explicitly reward such publications over those in lower-impact venues.

Furthermore, depending on the character of the higher education institution, a researcher may apply for innovative patents from the Patent Office for inventions arising directly from their research activities. These patents typically stem from novel discoveries, processes or applications developed during academic projects. Research-oriented universities often support this through Centres for Incubation and Technology Transfer (CITTs) or Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs), which handle invention disclosures, provisional patent applications and commercialization to protect intellectual property. Securing patents not only safeguards research outcomes but also attracts funding, industry collaborations and revenue sharing between inventors and institutions. Although the patent procedure takes a long time to finish, provisional patent applications allow inventors, including university researchers, to use "patent pending" status for 12 months while assessing commercial viability before filing a complete non-provisional application.

Acquiring, coordinating or managing international research projects connected, for example, with priority research areas of each university is another field in which university teachers are actively involved. Such projects may aim at finding solutions to the existing problems, improving the existing situation or contributing to the development of the priority research areas. Universities have specialised units, also known as Project Management Centres (PMCs), that organise training workshops for those interested in applying for various national and international grants and projects. These centres provide standardised processes, tools and support throughout the grant lifecycle - from proposal development and submission to financial reporting and compliance. Successful involvement in such projects enhances researchers' profiles, fostering collaborations and access to funding from bodies like the European Commission or national agencies, and contributes to positive internal assessment processes.

3.2.2. Didactic skills

In addition to their scientific pursuits, which are vital for their professional development and recognition in the academic community, university teaching staff are expected to possess didactic skills. These skills ensure that the specialized knowledge they impart is accessible to students and relevant to contemporary changes and challenges. University teachers play a crucial role in shaping the minds of students, who often come from diverse socio-economic, educational and cultural backgrounds. For students, as mentioned above, the university period represents a significant transition (Fürstenberg et al., 2024) from secondary to higher education, and subsequently, to the workforce. To ensure the effectiveness and relevance of the teaching process, university teachers are expected to develop various methods and tools that foster students' understanding and develop cognitive curiosity. Consequently, they are encouraged to participate in courses and workshops designed to enhance their teaching methods and innovate in humanizing their subject matter. Ideally, they should develop in their students a *deep approach to learning*, which Fry *et al.* (2009: 10-11) define as

> an intention to understand and seek meaning, leading students to attempt to relate concepts to existing understanding and to each other, to distinguish between new ideas and existing knowledge, and to critically evaluate and determine key themes and concepts. In short, such an approach results from the students' intention to gain maximum meaning from their studying, which they achieve through high levels of cognitive processing throughout learning.

This is in stark contrast to a *surface approach to learning,* which is characterised (*ibid.*) as

> an intention to complete the task, memorise information, make no distinction between new ideas and existing knowledge; and to treat the task as externally imposed. Rote learning is the typical surface approach. Such an approach results from students' intention to offer the impression that maximum learning has taken place, which they achieve through superficial levels of cognitive processing.

Unfortunately, this didactic path appears to be rather neglected and university lecturers are not given much guidance, in contrast to schoolteachers, or are left on their own to develop their knowledge concerning teaching and learning (Berthiaume, 2009; Dearden, 2014; Wächter & Maiworm, 2014; Dearden & Macaro, 2016; Macaro et al., 2018; Macaro et al., 2021 O'Dowd, 2018; Sahan et al., 2021a; Sahan et al., 2021b; Macaro &

Aizawa, 2022). Furthermore, university teachers hardly ever teach only one subject, as part of their teaching workload. The multitude of fields of study, the number of specialisations within one's faculty or department, the curriculum minimum imposed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, or specific institutional contexts make university teachers, regardless of their teaching experience, truly versatile people who have to be adept at various scientific disciplines (Rozmus, 2013). Classes, lectures, workshops, project-based learning, problem-based learning, design thinking or seminars require different didactic skills from university teachers. Although there are nowadays methodological modules devoted to teaching in higher education, usually included in PhD programmes for future lecturers, they are not discipline-specific and cover general ideas from the theory of teaching and learning. This, as Berthiaume (2009: 215) states, "is not sufficient to become an effective teacher in higher education." Therefore, *discipline-specific pedagogical knowledge* (Lenze, 1995; Berthiaume, 2007, 2009) should be promoted among university teaching staff, i.e., they should be given guidelines on how to "develop understanding of the teaching and learning requirements of one's own discipline" (Berthiaume, 2009: 215).

University teachers' involvement in didactics is also evident in their collaboration with students across various areas of scientific activity. One such area is supervising student scientific clubs, where students engage in a wide range of academic and research-oriented tasks. Under the guidance of their supervisors, students write research papers, conduct experiments and work on innovative projects aimed at expanding their scientific knowledge and skills. Furthermore, students participate in conferences, competitions and exhibitions, where they present their work and exchange ideas with peers and professionals from their fields. This collaborative environment not only enhances students' academic development but also prepares them for future careers in academia, research or industry, while reinforcing the role of university teachers as mentors and facilitators of learning beyond the classroom.

University teachers' didactic skills are also subject to employee assessment procedure, which usually takes the form of administrative drop-ins, where supervisors briefly visit a classroom with or without prior scheduling to gauge everyday teaching dynamics. Such observations usually focus on teacher lesson preparation, the use of innovative methods and didactic aids to facilitate the process of learning, and whether the topic of the class complies with the syllabus. Administrative drop-in observations

form a key part of the internal quality assurance procedures that all university teachers undergo periodically throughout their academic careers.

3.2.3. Organisational skills

The third dimension of university teachers' roles involves their organisational skills, which are essential for the effective management of departments, faculties or entire universities. Depending on their qualifications and their willingness to engage in decision-making processes, university teachers may assume various administrative positions, such as rector, dean, head of a faculty or department, member of the senate, director of PhD studies or Erasmus+ programme coordinator. Most of these positions are typically attained through participation in university elections, conducted according to the university's statutes.

Additionally, organisational skills encompass chairing, organizing or scientific committees for national and international conferences, seminars, competitions and exhibitions held periodically by the university. Another aspect of this field involves the coordination of postgraduate programmes and the implementation of new areas of study that respond to the evolving demands of the modern world. Responsibilities also include performing duties assigned by the rector and the senate, such as serving on panels and committees, the disciplinary council, and membership on boards of foundations, as stipulated by university laws.

University teachers frequently hold executive positions in national or international institutions, associations, organisations or foundations. Some are also involved in politics, serving as members of parliament or ministers in government. While these roles are not primarily connected with their universities, the influence of their work is often reflected in policymaking decisions at national or international levels. As a result, they may serve as experts, specialists or consultants, and sit on advisory boards. Their responsibilities often include writing comprehensive reports, contributing to the development strategies of various institutions, or offering advice to organisations.

In addition to the highly responsible functions previously mentioned, university teachers are also tasked with duties related to the day-to-day functions of the university. These responsibilities include planning departmental timetables and allocating classrooms for classes. Moreover, university teachers are responsible for administering

and updating learning management systems (LMSs) and maintaining faculty and departmental webpages and social media sites. Acting as laboratory supervisors is another example of their organisational responsibilities. This role involves ensuring that high-tech equipment in research laboratories receives proper attention and regular maintenance to prevent malfunctions and ensure optimal performance.

Supervising student internships is also a crucial aspect of their education and training practices. University teachers ensure that the internship process aligns with the students' specialisations and meets the criteria necessary for successful completion. There are also instances when students are unable to attend classes or when private matters require attention. To maintain effective communication between university teachers and students, office hours are organised. These sessions provide students with the opportunity to meet one-on-one with instructors at designated times. These tasks are integral to their organisational duties.

Each university's internal quality assurance procedures, as the ones specified at the Silesian University of Technology (www.polsl.pl), highlight teachers' organisational responsibilities connected with their work and the subjects they teach. Every course instructor is responsible for developing a syllabus - for long-cycle MA programmes, first- and second-cycle studies, doctoral schools and postgraduate studies - that complies with the binding study or training programme curriculum. During the first class, students must be provided with information on the principles of the teaching process (including methods and forms of conducting classes), ongoing progress monitoring methods and conditions for obtaining credit. In the case of first laboratory class, the instructor is obliged to familiarize students with the applicable work regulations and occupational health and safety (BHP) rules, which must be documented with students' signatures on attached forms. University teachers are also required to enter and publish this course information in the USOS system. Additionally, the instructor oversees the maintenance of partial grade catalogues confirming achievement of learning outcomes (as listed in the syllabus), monitors the proper implementation of class forms specified in the syllabus, and ensures timely entry of final grades into the USOS system. Where applicable, they conduct exams - documenting oral exams via a protocol - and approve credit protocols in the USOS system. They must inform students of credit or exam results and provide access to review their own credit or exam papers, all within timelines set by the study regulations.

Finally, of particular interest in this section is the popularisation of science by university faculty. This initiative can take various forms, including open days, podcasts, workshops, exhibitions, lectures, festivals and films, with the general public - comprising children, teenagers and adults - as the primary audience. These events provide an excellent opportunity for faculty members to familiarise the public with recent scientific developments and offer insights into the nature of their work, potentially sparking participants' interest in specific fields and encouraging them to consider further studies within the department.

3.3. University teachers as EMI practitioners

Internationalising higher education by offering EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction) courses or full-cycle programmes requires university policymakers to ensure that teaching personnel are both willing and capable of teaching their subjects in English. In addition to their scientific, didactic and organisational responsibilities characterised above, some university teachers are tasked with delivering instruction in English.

It is important to have a clear picture of who EMI teachers are, as this term may cause some confusion (Macaro et al., 2021) and is the central theme of this work. For the purpose of this doctoral dissertation, the working definition excludes English language specialists, such as applied linguists, teachers of English, teachers of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) or teachers of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Instead, EMI teachers are those for whom English is not the first language and teach content through the medium of English in a country where English is not an official language. Furthermore, EMI teachers are those who teach their subjects in both their native language and English, as part of their teaching workload. This description complements the definition of English Medium Instruction provided in Chapter 2 of this work.

3.3.1. English proficiency

The issue of English language proficiency among EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction) teachers was initially addressed in Chapter 2, highlighting the linguistic challenges EMI lecturers may face. However, questions remain regarding the appropriate or accepted level of English proficiency needed to teach a subject in English, and the degree of confidence one should possess in delivering instruction. As

Macaro et al. (2021) point out, English proficiency can be understood in various ways. For some lecturers, proficiency may involve a broad knowledge of grammar and "technical vocabulary specific to a given discipline" (*ibid.*: 3), while for others, it refers to the linguistic ability to communicate ideas effectively across diverse contexts.

In the context of EMI, proficiency can also be interpreted through the distinction between Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS), the social language used in everyday interactions, and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), the academic language needed in classroom instruction. This distinction, first proposed by Cummins (1979) in reference to immigrant children, offers insight into a teacher's ability to communicate complex ideas. BICS typically develops within 1-2 years through contextual cues and repetition in informal settings, relying on face-to-face exchanges like greetings or small talk. In contrast, CALP demands 5-7 years or more to master, involving decontextualized, abstract language with precise vocabulary and structures essential for lectures, readings and assessments. While some EMI teachers may feel confident in their BICS during casual conversations, they might struggle with CALP when explaining intricate concepts in their subjects or participating in classroom discussions.

Additionally, considering that students may be new to the field of study, and some may have a CEFR level of A2/B1, EMI teachers could encounter challenges in presenting difficult concepts in accessible ways. They may also struggle to scaffold instruction, breaking down complex material into manageable steps to ensure student comprehension (Macaro et al., 2021).

The geographical location and popularity of universities offering EMI programmes, which often attract international students, and EMI teachers can significantly influence language proficiency. For instance, Macaro et al. (2021) refer to Werther et al.'s (2014) study, which found that EMI teachers at the University of Copenhagen rated themselves as highly proficient in English. In contrast, Borg (2016) reported substantial challenges faced by EMI teachers in the Kurdish region of Iraq in delivering their classes in English. Certainly, this contrast can be accounted for by the fact that the study was conducted "at the Copenhagen Business School – where presumably there is a heavy focus on international business which in turn requires high levels of English" (Macaro et al. 2021: 4). This is in stark contrast to Iraq, where access to English is seriously limited and teachers have fewer opportunities to practise English.

3.3.2. Code-switching and translanguaging

Closely connected to English proficiency is the concept of *code-switching*, a communication strategy defined as the alternate use of two or more languages within the same conversation (Di Pietro, 1977; Scotton & Ury, 1977). Some EMI teachers may switch languages due to their own or their students' varying English proficiency levels, especially when explaining complex concepts. Fergusson (2009) advocates for the use of code-switching in educational settings, as it can facilitate learning. Similarly, Sahan and Rose (2021) refer to research conducted by Tarnopolsky and Goodman (2014) at one ~~a~~ Ukrainian university and by Macaro, Tian, & Chu (2018) in China, which showed that code-switching is often employed for classroom management. This includes building rapport, maintaining discipline, explaining subject-specific vocabulary and translating technical terms. Although code-switching is common in bilingual contexts and popular among EMI teachers, it must be used with caution. In most cases, EMI students share the same native language as their lecturers, and code-switching may prove beneficial. However, in settings with international or mobility programmes students who do not share the same first language (L1), excessive use of code-switching could lead to communication breakdowns and exclusions.

Evidence suggests that not only the use of English, but also the use of other languages might be beneficial for successful implementation of EMI courses. Therefore, as Lasagabaster (2022: 33) mentions “translanguaging practices” are becoming common across universities, where students employ their available linguistic repertoires to successfully participate in EMI classes. This term has been briefly described in Chapter 1. Cenoz & Gorter (2017: 901) highlight that “within the field of multilingual education studies, there is a strong trend towards replacing the idea of isolated linguistic systems with approaches that take multilingual speakers and their linguistic repertoire as a reference.” Although translanguaging originated from multilingual education, its impact on EMI research is constantly growing (van der Walt, 2013; Doiz & Lasabagaster, 2017; Kim, 2017; Muguruza, Cenoz & Gorter, 2020; Llanes & Cots, 2020; Lasagabaster, 2022) revealing various practices employed by EMI instructors.

3.3.3. Methodological training

This study focuses on university teachers, primarily employed at technical and medical universities. These institutions typically do not prepare educators but rather train qualified professionals to work in industries such as manufacturing, corporate sectors or healthcare. However, graduates who choose to pursue an academic career and enrol in PhD programmes often have limited methodological training in their native language, a gap that becomes evident when they are required to teach students.

Moreover, as previously noted, university teachers, particularly those who are not language specialists, receive minimal methodological guidance on how to conduct lectures, seminars or projects in English. This aligns with the findings of Sahan et al. (2021: 8), whose report, based on a study of 52 countries, highlights that "professional development opportunities appear to be limited for teaching staff on EMI programmes. When support is offered, it tends to focus on improving general English proficiency, rather than the specific skills required to teach in English within a multi-/bilingual classroom context."

3.3.4. Effective oral communication

At the university level, unlike primary or secondary schools, which are often more homogeneous in terms of social and cultural background, teachers and students encounter individuals with diverse perspectives, coming from a wide range of backgrounds, towns, cultures or countries. Some individuals may also have disabilities that are not immediately apparent, and they may be reluctant to disclose these, potentially affecting communication dynamics. This is especially relevant for EMI practitioners, who may face challenges resulting not only from cultural differences but also from their and their students' limited language proficiency. Moreover, since oral instruction, often supported by some audiovisual aids, is often the preferred method of knowledge dissemination during seminars, lectures, classes and discussions, effective interpersonal communication becomes crucial in this context. Therefore, all participants, lecturers and students, in this process "need to be able to communicate their message effectively in a wide range of situations and, crucially, persuade and convince their audience" (de Chazal, 2014: 239).

Baran (2013: 18) compares interpersonal communication to a form of *transaction*, which is based on the exchange of thoughts of all the participants, i.e. the

sender and the receiver, of the communication process. Consequently, maintaining a high standard of interpersonal communication, i.e., the ability to communicate effectively with others, is essential.

3.3.5. Intercultural competence

Closely connected to interpersonal communication is the notion of intercultural competence and development of intercultural skills. As Utley (2004: 6) mentions, "intercultural competence can end disputes, save lives, radically transform the existence of millions of people; it can lubricate the wheels of industry and business; it can help teams win, whether they be sports teams or teams of international aid workers." The availability of diverse EMI courses and programmes attracts students from various countries transforming higher education institutions into multicultural environments.

Consequently, EMI teachers are likely to encounter students from diverse educational backgrounds, who may find it difficult to become accustomed to novel teaching practices, particularly content delivery in English, which represents novelty for many. Waves of migration further complicate instruction for the whole educational system. This requires lecturers to continuously adapt their pedagogical approaches, balancing standardised curricula with individualised support for varying proficiency levels and cultural expectations. Professional development in culturally responsive teaching thus becomes essential to manage these fluid demographics effectively.

Moreover, this situation is inherently dynamic, with each semester potentially featuring students from multiple countries, cultures and religions (Siewierska-Chmaj, 2013). Diverse interaction patterns may also pose challenges, particularly for students from educational cultures where the lecturer holds an authoritative, omniscient position that brooks no dissent, and any disagreement is subject to criticism. This may be the result of the *power distance*, one of the elements of *dimensions of national culture*, suggested by Hofstede et al. (2010), which could be described as how much a society accepts unequal power distribution in hierarchies. Siewierska-Chmaj (2013: 169-171) discussing power distance in higher education, focuses on teacher-student dynamics and classroom interactions. In cultures scoring high on power distance (e.g., many Asian or Latin American countries) (Hofstede et al., 2010), students often regard professors as authority figures, limiting debate or questioning. In contrast, societies with low power distance, such as those in Scandinavia or the USA (Hofstede et al., 2010), encourage

egalitarian classrooms where students openly question ideas and work alongside faculty. What is more, they are expected to take initiative, develop critical thinking skills and cognitive curiosity. This approach supports interactive teaching methods, though it can sometimes diminish the instructor's perceived authority.

Of particular interest is the second dimension suggested by Hofstede et al. (2010), namely the distinction between *collectivism,* emphasising group harmony and interdependence, and *individualism*, prioritizing personal goals and independence. It could be argued that in individualistic cultures like the USA, education focuses on personal achievement, critical thinking and self-expression. Students highly value individual initiatives, speak up freely and view diplomas as tools for self-respect and economic gain. Collectivist societies (e.g., many in Asia), on the other hand, treat classrooms as group settings, discouraging solo initiatives to preserve harmony and face. Learning prioritizes practical skills for group status, with in-group ties influencing teacher-student dynamics. Therefore, one's background, be it teacher or student, may profoundly affect one's behaviour at university (Siewierska-Chmaj, 2013: 172-174).

The third dimension suggested by Hofstede et al. (2010) is *uncertainty avoidance* understood as a society's comfort with ambiguity and lack of structure. This has a direct application to higher institution setting as it shapes how students and faculty handle risk, rules and innovation in university settings. In high uncertainty avoidance cultures, universities emphasize rigid curricula, detailed instructions and rote learning to reduce anxiety. Students favour explicit directions and uniform evaluations, though this may hinder creativity and flexibility. Conversely, societies with low uncertainty avoidance welcome adaptable teaching, open-ended assignments, and discussion, promoting trial-and-error approaches. This enhances critical thinking yet can frustrate learners who crave greater guidance (Siewierska-Chmaj, 2013: 177-181; Kole, 2025).

Hofstede's fourth ma*sculinity-femininity* dimension reveals how cultural values influence educational goals and student drive (Hofstede et al., 2010; Huang & Brown, 2009; Kole, 2025). In masculine societies, education stresses competition, achievement and performance rewards (Ceylan & Sever, 2020), promoting individual excellence through high standards, ambition, assertiveness, and tangible results like grades or awards. In contrast, feminine cultures value relationships, well-being, and cooperation, with teaching focused on inclusion, empathy, holistic growth, group activities, and supportive classrooms (Jardinez & Natividad, 2024).

As mentioned earlier, EMI students come from diverse educational and cultural backgrounds, and it is therefore essential for the teaching staff to adopt a culturally sensitive approach toward these students to avoid causing offence, as individuals' backgrounds can profoundly influence their behaviour at university. In order to avoid unnecessary tensions Dingen (2011: 4) specifies three conditions that need to be fulfilled to communicate effectively across cultures:

- "You need to have an understanding of your own culture and the target culture you are dealing with. This means researching and analysing the national, regional and corporate cultures of the people you are dealing with.
- You need to be flexible in the way you communicate with people from other cultures. This means adapting your style of communication to fit the situation.
- You need to develop an international style of communication that will enable you to get your message across effectively."

Conclusion

The analysis presented in this chapter demonstrates that the role of the university teacher is dynamic, multidimensional and increasingly demanding. University teachers operate simultaneously within three core academic spheres: scientific development, didactic competence and organisational responsibilities, each of which is essential to the functioning of contemporary higher education institutions. As shown, academic staff must not only conduct and disseminate research but also guide students through key educational transitions and ensure that teaching responds to rapidly evolving societal, technological and economic realities. These responsibilities require adaptability, continuous professional development and the capacity to create learning conditions that foster cognitive curiosity, independence and critical thinking among diverse student populations.

Furthermore, university teachers carry broad organisational duties that ensure the smooth functioning of departments, faculties and entire universities. These include administrative tasks resulting from internal quality assurance procedures, programme coordination, involvement in university governance and contributions to public engagement and scientific outreach. Such responsibilities underscore the centrality of university teachers to the institutional mission and broader social role of higher education.

At the same time, the rising prevalence of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) adds another layer of complexity. EMI teachers must navigate challenges related to linguistic proficiency, academic language demands, scaffolding strategies and intercultural communication. As the chapter indicates, effective EMI teaching requires not only solid subject expertise but also awareness of linguistic diversity, sensitivity to cultural differences and the ability to mediate meaning across languages and educational traditions.

Overall, this chapter illustrates that contemporary university teachers must be highly versatile professionals capable of integrating research, teaching and organisational work while adapting to continuously shifting academic landscapes. The increasing globalisation of higher education, diversification of student bodies and expansion of EMI programmes emphasise the need for structured professional support, particularly in discipline specific pedagogy and EMI methodology. Sustained investment in the development of academic staff is therefore crucial for ensuring high quality education and for preparing future graduates to navigate an unpredictable and rapidly changing world.

Chapter 4 The pilot study analysis

Introduction

As discussed in the preceding chapters, English Medium Instruction (EMI) is a complex process that draws heavily on various disciplines, including extensive content knowledge, psychology and foreign language teaching methodology. Unfortunately, this didactic aspect is often overlooked, leaving university teachers struggling to meet the demands of delivering their classes in English. Bearing in mind that university teachers often teach many subjects from related disciplines, this approach requires teachers to possess not only broad content knowledge but also specific linguistic expertise to transfer knowledge to students without disruption. To explore the challenges faced by university teachers, this preliminary study was conducted.

4.1. Aims and research questions

Firstly, it provided preliminary data for generating hypotheses for future research. Additionally, it aimed at identifying potential problems that might result from the main study and to improve the research instruments. The following are the research questions that were asked:

1. What form of institutional support did you receive to teach your subject in English?
2. How do you plan for teaching your classes in English?
3. What problems do you face while teaching in English?
4. What language problems do you face while using English?
5. How do you deal with language problems?

4.2. Research instruments

The research instrument used in the pilot study was an online questionnaire, created in the Google Forms software, that consisted of open and closed questions that were grouped in the following sections: personal information and language biography, the use of English at work, problems with English and finally, developing English on one's own.

4.3. Research participants

The preliminary study involved 19 EMI practitioners, comprising 7 PhD students and 12 experienced university teachers. Among the PhD students, 2 were male, and 5 were

female, with ages ranging from 28 to 29 years, resulting in a mean age of 28.4 years. The group of experienced university teachers included 5 male and 7 female participants, with ages ranging from 35 to 50 years, yielding a mean age of 43.8 years. All the participants had been learning English for an extended period, with durations ranging from 8 to 37 years.

4.4. Research implementation

The research participants were informed about the questionnaire during the in-service workshops aimed at improving the didactic skills of the teaching personnel at higher institutions. These workshops were organised by the Silesian University of Technology in 2020 and 2021 and were sponsored by the European Union through the Operational Programme Knowledge Education Development (OPKED) [Program Operacyjny Wiedza Edukacja Rozwój (POWER)] and Applied Integrative Data Analysis (AIDA) initiatives. All the EMI practitioners were informed about the purpose of the questionnaire, its anonymity, and that the information collected would be used solely for research and teaching purposes. The link to the survey was sent to the participants' email addresses to facilitate easier completion at home. The response rate was 100%.

4.5. Results and findings

The analysis of the data collected from the online questionnaires revealed the following findings, shedding more light on the problem areas and contributing to a better understanding of English Medium Instruction in higher education institutions.

4.5.1. Level of English

Although all of the respondents claimed to be independent or proficient users of English, it must be noted that only 8 people held official certificates confirming their satisfactory command of English. Namely, four people were awarded with certificates at B2 level (First Certificate in English (FCE)) and four people were awarded with certificates at C1 level (Certificate in Advanced English (CAE)) according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Eight respondents used English everyday outside of work, which usually took the form of small talk with friends or family members.

4.5.2. EMI practice

All of the participants were actively involved in English medium instruction, which took the form of lectures, classes, laboratory classes and project-based learning. The survey also revealed that the majority of the university teachers had received hardly any formal institutional support on how to teach subjects through English, which is in line with the latest research (Sahan et al 2021; O'Dowd 2018; Dearden 2014). Only one person attended some form of training from the OPKED programme, which aimed at enhancing the competences of university teachers and was sponsored by the European Union, and one of its components focused on improving teacher's foreign language abilities. Unfortunately, the respondent did not mention what such a training involved.

4.5.3. Course and lesson planning

Course and lesson planning was another area of concern in the survey. From numerous options that the respondents could choose on how they prepared for the classes, two answers appeared to be the most prevalent: making their own lesson plan according to which they taught was mentioned by sixteen respondents, and looking for films or other authentic materials on the internet was chosen by twelve respondents. However, one of the comments is of particular importance as it shows the teacher's struggle with successful lesson planning:

- *Most often, I write myself whole sentences that I want to say. Many times I practise in front of the mirror. I arrange my speech for myself and write down practically the whole thing. I never read slides or notes on presentations. I try to speak from memory and build my own simple sentences that I understand. The most stressful questions are the ones that are difficult to prepare for (they are difficult to predict). [own translation]*

The above comment is in contrast to another mentioned by one of the respondents, which might be dependent on the type of class one teaches:

- *I don't prepare differently for this class due to the fact that it is in English. The labs usually look like this: students work independently using the instructions we have prepared in advance. The instructor consults the work as he talks to the students and circulates between the desks. Sometimes there is a short introduction at the beginning and then I just plan for myself what I should mention. Sometimes I write it down in bullet points and check during class if I have said everything. [own translation]*

4.5.4. EMI problems

The survey also focused on the problems that university teachers faced while conducting their classes in English. It appears that time is a key factor in successful planning of such classes and the results showed that university teachers spent an enormous amount of time preparing to teach in English, which included consulting dictionaries or other reference materials for unknown lexis or looking up for information. One teacher noted that preparing lessons in English and corresponding with foreign language students demanded significantly more time compared to conducting similar classes in Polish. This process was also more exhausting, as it required greater focus due to the complexity of both the subject matter and the teaching approach, which was expressed by one of the respondents:

- *Preparing for classes in English and correspondence with foreign-speaking students takes a lot of time (I estimate that about three times more than analogous classes in Polish). Conducting classes in a foreign language is also more exhausting (requires much more concentration because both the topic and the method of delivery are difficult). [own translation]*

Additionally, the excess of other organisational responsibilities and duties was a serious obstacle for successful time management, as mentioned below:

- *First of all, lack of time to prepare for classes well enough and professionally. Lack of time is mainly due to an excess of other official organisational duties. [own translation]*

The problem of the increased workload is also discussed by Galloway (2020), Babicheva and Lee (2018), Nikola *et al* (2016) and Henriksen et al. (2018). Limited language abilities, which included the lack of vocabulary, were also mentioned by some of the university teachers affecting their confidence and increasing the level of stress in successful running of the classes. Another teacher complained about problems with group management, in particular problems with different levels of preparation of students, which might result from various English proficiency levels of the students taking part in EMI courses or degree programmes. Finally, the survey revealed that university teachers had been given hardly any guidelines on how to prepare for EMI activities, which might be the reason why time management is an important element in successful teaching.

4.5.5. Language problems

The survey additionally examined language areas that EMI practitioners found problematic. It appears that listening, speaking, pronunciation, writing, grammar and vocabulary caused confusion for the respondents.

As for listening, the respondents mentioned that they found it difficult to understand students' questions, mainly due to their various English-speaking levels. Furthermore, some respondents had trouble understanding pronunciation, especially for non-native English speakers. Students' speaking speed was also a concern for the respondents who found it difficult to follow some of the students.

Speaking, especially in public, constitutes another area of difficulty that the EMI practitioners mentioned. For example, talking to a large group of students increased the level of stress in university teachers, which was supported by one of the teachers:

- *I get very stressed out when I speak English. When I speak at home, I feel like I'm doing very well and my pronunciation is fine, but when I speak to students or give a presentation at a seminar, I*

feel like I've forgotten how to say certain words - or I feel like I'm just starting to learn English. [own translation]

Other comments highlighted pronunciation problems:

- *There are words I can't pronounce correctly. [own translation]*
- *Speaking - mental block; pronunciation - I have trouble pronouncing some words. [own translation]*
- *As for pronunciation, even though I have been learning English for a very long time, I am never sure how to read a new word. [own translation]*
- *There are words that I have learned to pronounce incorrectly, and even though I now know the correct pronunciation, I sometimes still slip into using the wrong form. [own translation]*
- *I am not satisfied with the level of my speech - I choose too simple words and make grammatical errors. [own translation]*

A similar situation is connected with English grammar and vocabulary, which the respondents found difficult to handle. One respondent lost her thoughts when she started thinking about grammar, which prevented her from delivering her speech effectively:

- *When I start thinking about grammar while speaking I sometimes lose my thoughts. [own translation]*
- *Difficulty in sentence construction. Despite knowing the words, I can't construct a fluent statement. [own translation]*

Finding the right word to fit the context or using the right tense or word order are the areas to work on:

- *Sometimes I lack a sufficiently rich vocabulary of the issues I discuss. [own translation]*

The EMI practitioners are well aware of the mistakes they make, yet they try to keep working on them, which is expressed by two respondents:

- *Grammar - I don't pay too much attention to this, but I know that sometimes I speak and write ungrammatically. [own translation]*
- *I never liked grammar. [own translation]*
- *Unfortunately, grammar has been haunting me since primary school - I never liked learning it, and when I did sit down to it, I could rarely remember the grammar rules. [own translation]*

Certainly, the problems mentioned by the respondents may result from the lack of regular contact with practical language use of English, as mentioned by two respondents:

- *Lack of familiarity, stress caused by infrequent use of English in daily life. [own translation]*
- *Lack of regular contact with practical language use. [own translation]*

4.5.6. Tackling the problems

The survey further investigated the way the respondents tackled the language problems they faced. It appears that the most common strategy of dealing with the problem is using an online dictionary, both at the lexical and sentence level. The advances in technology have certainly facilitated the process of looking for the required information. Another strategy used by the respondents was typing the problem question into a search engine and looking for the answer. All the key players on the technology market equipped the search engines with AI powered assistants, which again allows their users

to find specific information or solution to a problem. Still there are people who, when in doubt, ask the question to someone more knowledgeable than them.

4.5.7. Developing language skills

The last part of the survey asked the respondents which areas they would like to develop if given the chance. The respondents' answers revealed that the productive skills of writing and speaking together with the receptive skills of listening and reading were of great importance for them. This is probably connected with the fact that they continue using English both in the professional context and on a daily basis. The professional context requires reading reference material (i.e. academic publications) in their professional field (e.g., articles, monographs), writing research articles, attending international conferences or conducting EMI classes. Using English on a daily basis involves being active on social media (Instagram, X (Twitter), YouTube, Facebook) or informal conversations with friends, to name but a few.

4.6. Research perspectives in the context of the results of the pilot study

It appears that the answers obtained from the online questionnaire allowed to add more insight concerning the research on English Medium Instruction. Firstly, the online questionnaire in the main study was restructured for better clarity. This procedure entailed retaining the same number of sections, but they were renamed, and their order was reshuffled. Additionally, more options were added to the multiple-choice questions for the respondents to choose from, including the 'other' option, which allowed the respondents to add more comments. All the changes allowed to design a questionnaire that would address the issues highlighted in the theoretical part of this dissertation. Consequently, apart from the above-mentioned online questionnaire for EMI practitioners, three additional research tools were included in the main study: teacher interviews, an online questionnaire for students and teacher observation sessions.

Conclusion

The answers to the research questions revealed important areas that EMI practitioners find troublesome. Institutional support, lesson planning, successful classroom management and frequent contact with English appear to be necessary for successful delivery of English Medium Instruction, and they will be further explored in the main study. These findings underscore the need for targeted professional development

programmes to address these challenges in EMI contexts. Ultimately, enhancing these elements could significantly improve teacher agency and student outcomes in bilingual higher education settings.

Chapter 5 Main study research findings

Introduction

EMI practitioners face the complex challenge of integrating disciplinary content instruction with effective language-mediated pedagogy. This chapter presents research findings that address the posed research questions and hypotheses by analysing data from four tools across four parts. It highlights the interplay between linguistic competence and pedagogical practice among EMI practitioners, while examining how student backgrounds influence instructional effectiveness in varied academic settings. These insights offer practical recommendations for enhancing EMI training and policy in higher education.

5.1. Research hypotheses and questions

On the basis of the answers given by the respondents in the pilot study the following research hypotheses need to be addressed:

1. Continuous institutional support (i.e. methodological training) for the EMI practitioners required to maintain high standard of teaching is scarce and necessary.
2. EMI practitioners need language support opportunities to facilitate effective communication with students.
3. Teacher talk is an essential component of successful EMI classroom management.
4. EMI practitioners need to develop various teaching strategies in order to successfully conduct their classes and build rapport with their students.

On the basis of the answers given by the respondents in the pilot study the following research questions need to be addressed:

1. How is teacher agency manifested in EMI?
2. What strategies do teachers use to deliver their classes?
3. Which assessment techniques are appropriate for EMI classes?

5.2. Research design

The research instruments used in this study addressed the stated research questions. Data collection comprised four phases: (1) an online survey of university teachers, (2) semi-structured interviews with university teachers, (3) an online survey of students and (4) classroom observations of teacher lessons. Together, these phases captured diverse perspectives on linguistic competence and pedagogical challenges in EMI settings. Results are presented in chronological order of data collection.

5.2.1. Teacher questionnaire participants

All 108 EMI practitioners who completed the questionnaire were informed of its purpose, their anonymity, and that the data would be used exclusively for research and educational purposes. To avoid low return rates and other issues associated with completing online surveys, such as lack of motivation (Iwaniec, 2020), the survey link was distributed through the author's network across Poland to the participants' email addresses, facilitating easier completion at home. The survey was divided into four sections: background information and language biography, language skills development, the use of English at work and, finally, language-related challenges encountered while teaching through English. The online survey was designed and completed in Polish, as all of the respondents were of this nationality.

5.2.2. Interviews with university teachers

As with the teacher questionnaire, all interview participants were informed of the study's purpose, that sessions would be recorded, and that they provided consent. Recordings were used solely for research and stored confidentially. To ensure comfort and fluid communication, interviews were conducted in Polish, participants' native language.

This semi-structured format used pre-prepared questions while allowing elaboration on EMI-related topics. Twenty-five university teachers from diverse disciplines participated: 14 assistant professors, 7 university professors, 3 full professors (all with extensive teaching experience), and 1 PhD student (1-year experience). The table below details their fields of study.

Table 1. Scientific specialisations of EMI interviewees.

Field of study	Number of interviewees
Faculty of Organization and Management	7
Institute of Physics	3
Faculty of Mechanical Engineering	6
Faculty of Energy and Environmental Engineering	2
Faculty of Civil Engineering	3
Faculty of Mining, Safety Engineering and Industrial Automation	1
Faculty of Biomedical Engineering	2
Faculty of Electrical Engineering	1

Each recording was transcribed by means of a word processor. It must be remembered that spoken language, which includes numerous paralinguistic features, differs substantially from written language (Rolland et.al., 2020: 287). For that reason, the transcribed speech was later edited to comply with the grammatical norms, and next translated by the author. Finally, all the answers were coded to capture the key ideas in the data.

5.2.3. Student questionnaire participants

As with the teacher questionnaire, all 92 student participants were informed of the survey's purpose, their anonymity, and the exclusive use of data for research and teaching. The survey link was administered via the author's Polish academic network directly to participants' emails, enabling convenient home completion. It comprised two sections - background/language biography and EMI study experiences - using both closed and open questions. Unlike the teacher survey, it was designed and completed in English to accommodate the respondents' diverse nationalities.

5.2.4. Classroom observation participants

The final research instrument was non-participant classroom observation, where the observer did not engage in teaching. Consenting university instructors delivering EMI classes were informed of the observation's purpose, that no recordings would occur, and that data would serve research purposes only.

Observations had two aims: (1) to examine lesson structure and (2) to analyse teachers' English language use. Sessions covered diverse EMI formats (lectures, classes,

labs and project-based learning), with notes recorded via a pre-prepared scheme. Each session ended with a 10-minute post-observation discussion.

Twenty-four sessions occurred over one semester involving teachers from diverse disciplines (e.g., marketing, physics, logistics, engineering fields (biomedical/civil/production), applied mathematics, statistics and informatics). Participants matched the interview demographics: one PhD student (with one-year teaching experience) and one assistant, alongside 10 assistant professors, 11 university professors, and one full professor (all with extensive teaching experience).

Table 2. Academic disciplines of EMI classroom observation participants.

Field of study	Number of participants
Faculty of Organization and Management	7
Faculty of Mathematics	2
Faculty of Mechanical Engineering	2
Institute of Physics	3
Faculty of Civil Engineering	5
Faculty of Biomedical Engineering	3
Faculty of Automatic Control, Electronics and Computer Science	2

5.3. Teacher online questionnaire

The following is the analysis of the answers given by university teachers. These responses reveal key insights into their linguistic competence and pedagogical strategies in EMI contexts. They highlight both strengths and challenges in delivering content across diverse academic disciplines.

5.3.1. Background information and language biography

The first part of the survey focused on the teachers' general and linguistic background as they were asked questions concerning their age, gender, profession, place of work, their self-assessment concerning their knowledge of English and other languages, and also any official exam certification. Additionally, they were asked about their use of English outside of work.

5.3.1.1.Age, gender and profession

The online questionnaire was conducted among 108 university researchers, including 42 females and 66 males, with ages ranging from 27 to 72 years. The mean age of the participants was 43.09 years. The respondents who took part in the research represented technical, economic and medical universities. Therefore, numerous fields of study were mentioned: natural, formal, applied and interdisciplinary. The table below shows the research disciplines in which the respondents were involved.

Table 3. Research disciplines in numbers.

	Number of people	Percentage (%)
Medicine	14	13
Organization and Management	19	18
Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics	13	12
Mining and Geology, Health and Safety	10	9.2
Architecture and Civil Engineering	11	10.9
Materials Engineering	4	3.7
Mechanical Engineering	15	13.9
Biomedical Engineering	9	8.3
Automation, Electronics, Electrical and Computer Science	9	8.3
Social sciences	4	3.7

5.3.1.2.Place of work

All the respondents were employed at higher education institutions i.e. universities. Additionally, in the case of doctors, all of them, i.e. 13% of the total research sample, were also employed full-time or part-time in hospitals where they combined their research and professional duties, which is a standard procedure in clinical hospitals that are part of the medical university. There were also six respondents, i.e. 5.5% of the total research sample, employed in other companies, such as small or medium sized enterprises (SMEs).

5.3.1.3. Learning duration and proficiency levels

One of the first questions of the research was to ascertain the duration for which the respondents had been learning English. The findings indicate that 57 individuals, representing over half of the entire sample, had been studying English for more than 21 years, thereby forming the largest subgroup. The table below illustrates these results.

Table 4. EMI teachers' years of English language study.

Number of people	Percentage (%)	Number of years learning English
57	52	21 years and more
18	17	16-20 years
18	17	11-15 years
12	11	6-10 years
3	3	1-5 years

An interesting aspect was the respondents' self-assessment concerning their level of English according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The results reveal that they highly assessed themselves: 11 (10.1%) stated their level was C2; 49 (45.4%) claimed to be at the C1 level; 32 (29.6%) at B2; 7 (6.5%) at B1; 8 (7.4%) at A2; and 1 (0.9%) at A1.

The same participants were asked whether their English proficiency was reflected in any official certificates. The responses differed somewhat from previous findings. The largest group - 39 participants (36.1%) - reported no such certificates. Among those holding such certificates (52.7% of the total), the distribution was as follows: 2 respondents (1.9%) held a C2-level Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE); 22 (20.4%) held a C1-level Certificate in Advanced English (CAE), and 27 (25%) held a B2-level First Certificate in English (FCE); 3 (2.8%) held a TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) certificate; 2 (1.9%) held an LCCI (London Certificate of Commerce and Industry) certificate, and 1 (0.9%) person held a TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) certificate. Additionally, 51 participants (47.1%) mentioned internal exams taken as part of their doctoral studies requirements, but these were not official documents.

5.3.1.4. Knowledge of other languages

Based on the responses provided by all participants, it can be concluded that a great number of them possess varying levels of proficiency in multiple languages. The findings indicate that EMI practitioners form a group of bilingual and multilingual individuals, with French, German, Russian and Spanish being the most prevalent languages. As can be seen in the figure below, nearly a half (49%) of the respondents knew one additional foreign language. A small group, i.e. 16 (15%), of the respondents knew only English. What is interesting to notice is the fact that one EMI practitioner was proficient in seven languages: three (French, Italian and Russian) advanced, one (German) intermediate and three (Greek, Latin and Hebrew) basic. The figure below shows all the answers given by the respondents.

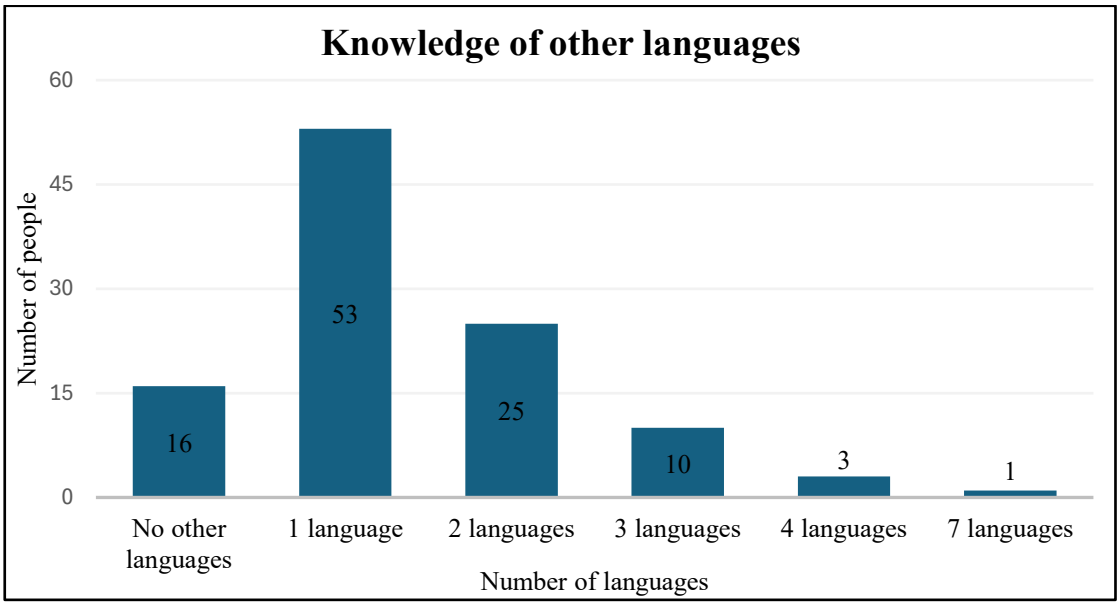

Figure 2. Knowledge of other languages.

5.3.1.5. English outside the workplace

The respondents were asked if they used English outside of their work. The ability for respondents to choose more than one option reflects a variety of activities. The analysis of the results indicated that 59 individuals (55%) used English outside of their work, while 49 individuals (45%) did not. Those who used English outside of their work were asked to specify the activities in which they used English. Two primary activities are prevalent: writing emails and engaging in small talk with friends from abroad, which were chosen by 39% and 33% per cent of the respondents, respectively. The former,

writing emails, may be associated with the respondents' work-related responsibilities that necessitate such communication. The latter, small talk with friends from overseas, is likely to be facilitated by the technological advancements that enable online meetings.

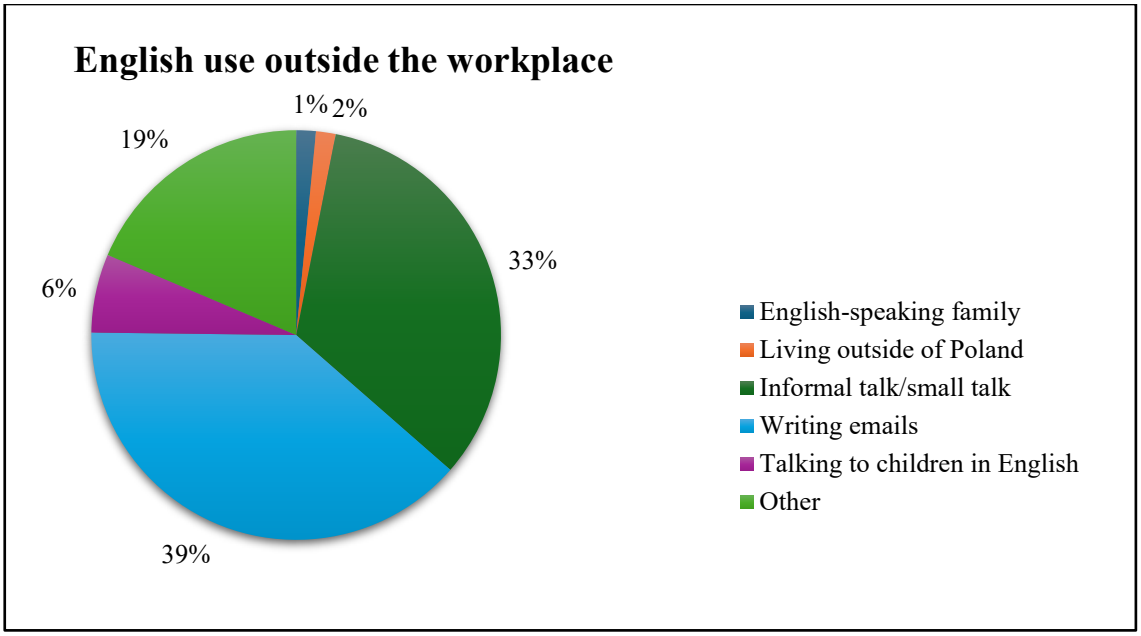

Figure 3. English use outside the workplace.

Regular contact with English is also maintained through other methods (19%) mentioned by the respondents. These can be categorised into hobbies and work-related activities. Hobbies include reading books in English, watching streaming services in English, travelling and listening to English songs. Work-related activities involve reading and writing research articles, giving presentations at international conferences, working in a bank, and participating in international projects and Erasmus+ programmes. It is clear that distinguishing between work and private life may be challenging, as these two areas often intersect. A notable option is employment within a banking institution. As previously discussed, university educators can also be highly skilled professionals engaged by various organisations. These educators deliver lectures to students under contractual agreements formed through collaborations between higher education institutions and external entities.

5.3.1.6. Daily use of English

Daily English use was significantly associated with self-reported English proficiency. Teachers reporting daily use declared significantly higher proficiency levels than others

(Wilcoxon rank-sum test: $W = 1074$, $p = 0.015$). The effect size was small ($r = 0.24$), indicating a modest but consistent shift toward higher proficiency among daily users.

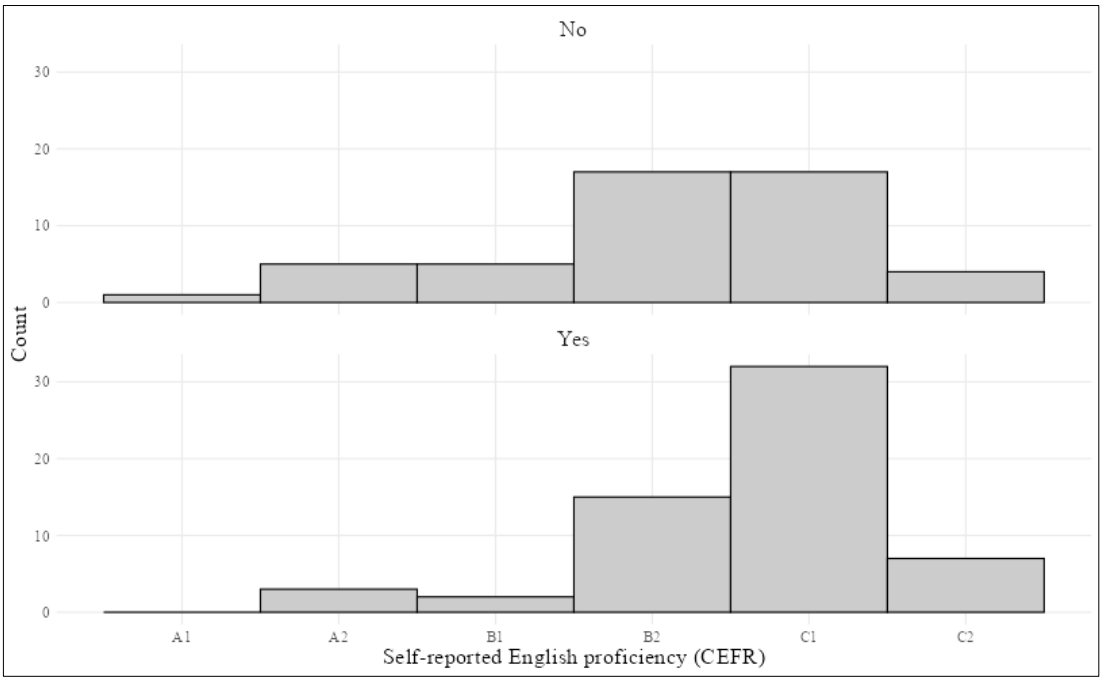

Figure 4. Self-reported English proficiency levels (CEFR) among teachers by daily use of English.

The figure demonstrates a clear shift in self-reported English proficiency distributions between daily and non-daily English users. Daily users show a concentration at higher CEFR levels (particularly C1–C2), while non-daily users are more represented at B2 and below. Despite partial overlap, the pattern aligns with the statistically significant Wilcoxon result (small effect size).

Among teachers holding language certificates, certified English proficiency levels did not differ significantly by daily English use (Wilcoxon rank-sum test $W = 327.5:$, $p = 0.105$). Although daily users tended to hold slightly higher-level certificates, the effect size was small ($r = 0.21$) and non-significant.

Overall, daily English use appears primarily associated with higher self-reported proficiency rather than formally certified levels or demographics.

5.3.2. Language skills development

Knowledge of English is an important element in the world of science where researchers read about other research and also write about their findings. Additionally,

higher institutions are places where national and international conferences are organised, and usually English is the language of instruction. Higher institutions also attract foreign and domestic students with an attractive study offer of English-taught programmes. These, in turn, need to be constantly developed and updated to maintain the highest standard of teaching. It appears natural, therefore, for EMI practitioners to develop their English proficiency, which is highlighted by their answers given below.

5.3.2.1.The purpose of learning English

EMI practitioners need English for various purposes, as can be seen in the table below. All of them need English to write research articles in their field, as part of their professional development. As previously mentioned, high-impact factor publications - typically written in English - are highly valued in academia. This is also reflected in reading, as the vast majority (95%) read articles connected with their area of research. Linguistic development is also visible in attending international conferences (89%) and instructing students in English (97%). The table below shows the results.

Table 5. The purpose of learning English.

	Number of people	Percentage (%)
Writing research articles	108	100
Participating in international conferences	96	89
Working in an international team	64	59
Teaching classes in English	105	97
Reading articles in my research area	103	95
Participation in webinars/video conferences	90	83
Going abroad	98	90
Other:….	17	15.7

The other options that the respondents mentioned could be grouped into work-related activities, socialising and enjoying hobbies. The first group includes situations such as normative, patent and legal analysis, writing project applications and grant proposals. It shows that that the EMI practitioners' knowledge of English is intertwined with their professional duties. Socialising takes the form of meeting English-speaking friends or conversations with foreign acquaintances. Finally, EMI practitioners enjoy reading books and watching films in a cinema without dubbing.

5.3.2.2. Self-study

EMI practitioners appear to be very disciplined as far as developing English on their own is concerned. The results in the table below show that it is very difficult to separate professional life from private life. Reading academic publications (e.g., articles, monographs) in their field of study is an essential element of developing English, as this activity was mentioned by all of the respondents. The second most often used activity was watching films with or without subtitles on streaming services.

Table 6. EMI teachers' autonomous English development methods.

	Number of people	Percentage (%)
a) Reading books	63	58.5
b) Watching films or video files in their original version (e.g., on Netflix, Apple TV+, HBO Go, YouTube, Amazon Prime, Vimeo) with or without subtitles	71	65.7
c) Listening to radio or podcasts (audio files, e.g., audiobooks)	49	45.3
d) Listening to English songs	49	45.3
e) Reading academic publications (e.g., articles, monographs) in my field of study	108	100
f) Using social media (Instagram, (X) Twitter, YouTube, Facebook)	54	50
g) Informal conversations with friends	56	51.9
h) I attend a language course	20	18.5
i) I do not use English	2	1.9
j) Other (which?):	6	5.6

5.3.2.3. Communicative situations

The communicative situations the respondents were involved in are usually work-related. From numerous options available the respondents could choose the ones that applied to them. The table below illustrates the results.

Table 7. EMI teachers' English use across communicative contexts.

	Number of people	Percentage (%)
a) Teaching (lectures/exercises/laboratories)	88	81.5
b) Presenting a paper at international conferences	70	64.8

c) Participation in international conferences without papers	53	49.1
d) Small talk - informal meetings	51	47.2
g) Other	8	7.4
e) Work in an international corporation	10	9.3
f) Not using at all	0	0

Teaching in English and presenting papers in English at international conferences were the most often chosen by the respondents. The 'other' option included remote online meetings, office hours for incoming Erasmus+ students or communication with customers.

5.3.2.4. Developing language skills and subsystems

Foreign language learning is an ongoing process that requires systematic contact with that language. The EMI practitioners appear to know that, and the results of the survey show which areas of language they would like to develop if given a chance. As with previous questions, they could choose the options that applied to them. The results show that speaking is believed to be the most important skill to master, as 72 (66%) practitioners would like to improve it. Closely connected with speaking is pronunciation, mentioned by 49 (45%) of the respondents. High in the hierarchy is grammar, mentioned by 57 (53%) of the respondents, the knowledge of which is essential in different forms of writing, such as research articles, a necessary component in the respondents' scientific portfolio. Vocabulary and writing, mentioned by 50 (46%) and 48 (44%) of the respondents, respectively, are also important for the EMI practitioners.

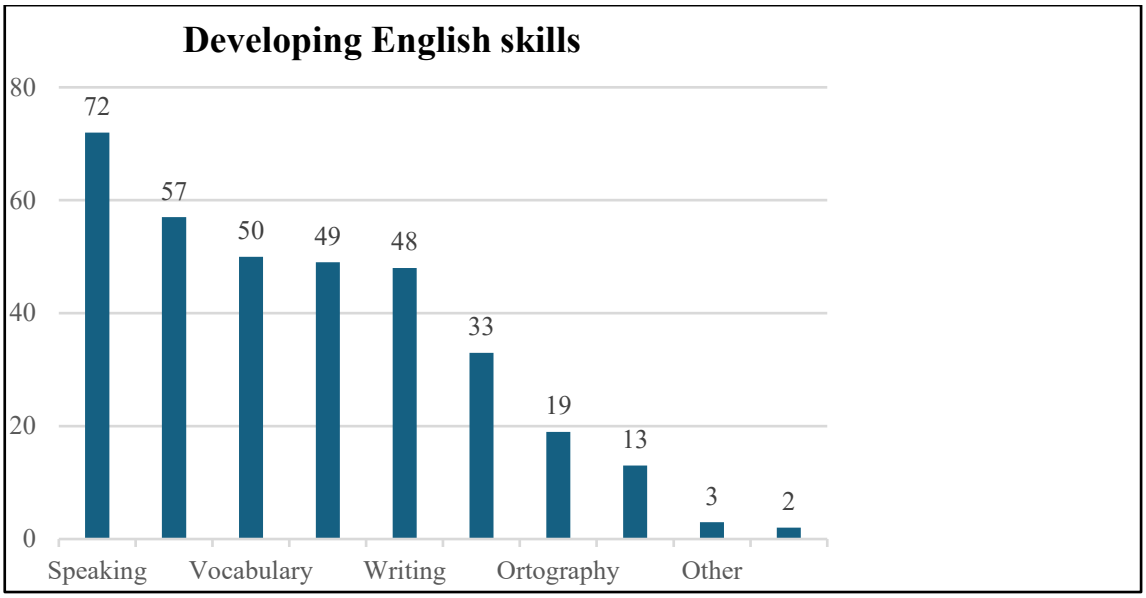

Figure 5. Developing English skills.

5.3.3. The use of English at work

Using English is a tool for teachers to communicate their ideas to students. Certainly, how they use it depends on the exact situation they are in, and they type of instruction they provide.

5.3.3.1. Type of instruction

The respondents use English in a number of teaching contexts, and the figure below provides the data concerning the type of classes the university teachers are usually involved in. Similar to previous questions, they could choose all the options that applied to them. The most frequent forms of English medium instruction include lectures, classes, laboratory and project classes. Each of the types of instruction requires a specific set of skills necessary for smooth running of the lesson. The was also a category of 'other' in which the teachers included office hours during which they consulted some written assignments, diploma exams, PhD defence exams or field trips with students.

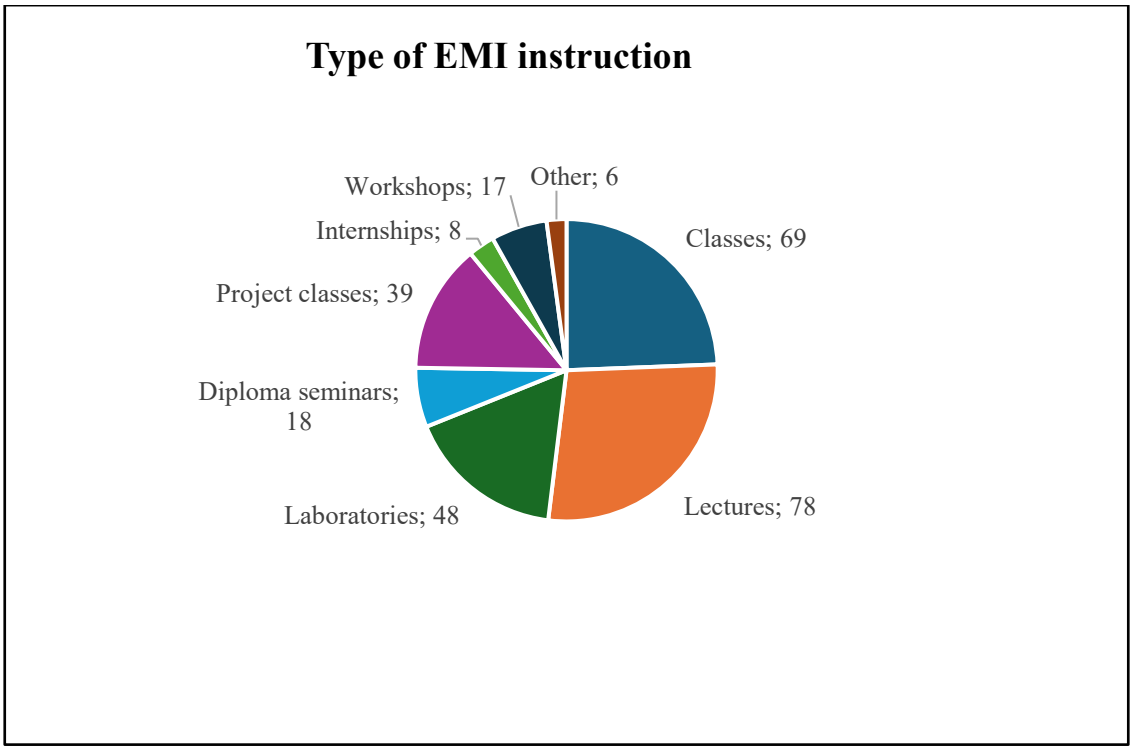

Figure 6. Type of EMI instruction.

5.3.3.2. Preparing for classes

Lesson planning is an important element of successful delivery of the content to students. For that reason, one of the questions concerned how EMI practitioners prepared to teach classes in English. Again, there were a number of options from which they could choose. The table below presents the results.

Table 8. Lesson preparation.

	Number of people
I teach classes as in Polish.	74
I prepare a lesson plan according to which I conduct the class.	46
I learn the lesson by heart.	4
I prepare a PowerPoint or other presentation and read from the slides.	12
I prepare a PowerPoint or other presentation but read from my notes.	22
I use (i.e. read) only my notes.	6
I search for videos or other authentic materials on the Internet and use them in class.	33
I send teaching materials to students in advance so that they become familiar with them.	18
Other:	17

Of particular interest are the comments they gave, as they reveal their varying teaching experience. Below are some of the comments:

- *It depends on the form: lectures - (because of my short work experience) I prepare a presentation, I read a little, I discuss a little; other forms: I prepare materials for students, but I discuss them 'off the top of my head'; additionally I use films, photos, websites during lectures; I prepare Kahoot, Mentimeter for students; I read a lot on the Internet and articles; I try to approach classes in Polish and English in a different way [own translation]*

- *I prepare teaching packs and presentations, I speak freely - I don't read from slides, the slides are designed to help students 'follow' the spoken word and structure their knowledge without the need to focus on taking notes during the class, the slides sometimes help both sides in case of difficulties with finding the right words [own translation]*

- *I prepare a PowerPoint presentation and a text for some of the slides, but I don't learn it by heart (it's hard to learn a 1.5 h lecture by heart), nor do I read it during class. For me, it is the basis of what I tell the students during class. This is exactly the same way I prepare for classes in Polish. [own translation]*

- *I try to make the content of my classes independent of the language. The way I prepare for classes depends on the teaching methodology chosen for the specific class. I will prepare differently for laboratory exercises, workshops and lectures. [own translation]*

- *The students have varying degrees of knowledge of both the language and the subject matter being discussed. As a general rule, you have to react and adapt the activities to the*

students' skills - vide hard to define a fixed schedule. [own translation]

The central theme emerging from participants' accounts was flexible, student-centred preparation prioritising adaptation over rigid scripting. EMI practitioners employed diverse, format-specific strategies - emphasising visual aids, teaching packs, spontaneous delivery, and real-time responsiveness to student needs - that mirrored their Polish-medium practices. Lectures typically incorporated presentations, videos, interactive tools (e.g., Kahoot, Mentimeter) and targeted online readings, while interactive sessions relied on improvised discussion. Slides served primarily as structural scaffolds to aid student comprehension, enabling lecturers to speak freely without verbatim reading.

5.3.3.3. Institutional support

The survey also included two questions concerning institutional support. The first one focused on whether the respondents' home universities provided any support in the subject they were teaching in English. The answers revealed that out of 108 respondents 84 (77,7%) had not received any form of institutional support. The second question focused on whether they had ever participated in methodological training on how to conduct classes in English at university. The answers show that out of 108 respondents only 14 (13%) participated in any form of training. Those who participated in any form of training were briefly asked to comment on the content of such training. Three people mentioned completing a one-year postgraduate course that aimed at developing academic English skills. Four people mentioned attending some form of EMI courses, but they did not say much about the content. There were two people who attended a refresher course for lecturers having classes in a foreign language and they found it really useful. One person competed a BA in this field. One of the respondents mentioned The International Management Teachers Academy (IMTA), a flagship programme of The International Association for Management Development in Dynamic Societies (CEEMAN) (https://www.ceeman.org/programs-events/imta-international-management-teachers-academy). As the person wrote,

- *the training was very helpful for substantive reasons, not necessarily for linguistic ones - but it is not a course aimed at teaching 'in English' either. The training was very helpful for*

content reasons, not necessarily for linguistic ones - but it is not a course aimed at teaching 'in English' either. [own translation]

Two more comments by the participants:

- *There was a language training course for those who wanted it, financed by the university. The lady teaching, from the foreign language department of our university, has a flair for methodology and in addition to the typical language course she gave readings and we discussed methodology, but officially it was not a methodology course. It was a pity that it only lasted one semester.* [own translation]

- *Classes in English are taught to students for whom it is not their native language, therefore, the English used is a slightly simplified version adapted to the students' level. The university's guidelines concerned the form of communication (confirming verbal content in writing to ensure 100% understanding).* [own translation]

The remaining one did not mention what kind of training they had had. This omission may reflect varying levels of awareness or perceived relevance of formal training among participants.

5.3.4. Challenges in teaching English

The last part of the survey concerned the problems EMI practitioners faced while conducting their classes in English. In particular, the respondents were asked to refer to lesson planning, language problems and ways of dealing with them, and a willingness to attend methodological training.

5.3.4.1. Lesson planning and running classes in English

From the options provided, they could choose more than one answer. As the table below shows, for nearly half of the respondents lesson planning is time consuming. It might be connected with the lack of any specific guidelines on how to prepare for particular

activities. Certainly, the emotional side of human behaviour also plays a role, as lack of confidence and stress were mentioned by one third of the respondents.

Table 9. Problems with lesson preparation.

	Number of people
Lack of any specific guidelines on how to prepare for particular activities	26
Problems with managing a group of people	18
Problems finding appropriate teaching materials	17
Excessive time required to prepare for teaching in English	51
Lack of confidence when teaching in English	34
Stress related to teaching in English	30
Other	20
No answer	12

Of particular interest are the comments given by the respondents under the different answer option, as they reveal some information not specified in the options. University readiness, cultural differences, uniqueness of student groups, diverse language levels and accents are the areas the respondents mentioned, of which poor language skills is the most prevalent. Below are their comments:

- *In mixed groups, the problem is that the subject I teach is difficult and in the absence of preparation for university, the classes sometimes feel like a language course ... And not that the language is only a tool for passing on knowledge. Students have problems because if they are given a task in Polish and the course is in English, they cannot solve it or answer it.* [own translation]

- *Teaching in a foreign language triggers a number of problems due to cultural differences. Of course, you can pretend not to see them and deliver the content of the class, but the effectiveness of the knowledge transfer then drops dramatically. Communication is not confined to the efficient use of the language itself.* [own translation]

- *The groups of students are unique with different levels of knowledge, language proficiency and degree of commitment and ability to use the programmes. This is the main problem - the lack of possibility of 'polishing' subsequent classes in subsequent years - each year is a set of individual activities with no possibility of greater continuity.* [own translation]

- *I would like to speak more fluently, and I feel uncomfortable when I realise my own limitations during a lecture (e.g., 'I have some concepts on the tip of my tongue' that I know but can't articulate them when speaking).* [own translation]

- *Very diverse language level of students (ERASMUS groups, different countries, mix of first- and second-degree students) so I don't know how much content 'gets through.'* [own translation]

- *Some accents are difficult to understand, e.g., Korean, some African and Middle Eastern; sometimes I have to ask students to repeat a sentence or explain it in different words.* [own translation]

- *It takes a lot of time to prepare materials in English, even though I use essentially the same content as in my Polish-language classes*. [own translation]

- *Linguistic diversity within the group – varying levels of language proficiency and different accents in international groups require flexibility and can sometimes lead to difficulties in understanding one another.* [own translation]

- *I deliver my own lectures in both English and Polish. During the Polish lectures, I display slides with English*

captions and announce important terms in English. The teaching approach is the same for both Polish-speaking students and Erasmus students. [own translation]

- *Most students do not have a sufficient command of English to participate actively in classes. Some students do not attend lectures, explaining that they do not know the language.* [own translation]

The teachers' comments highlight key challenges in Polish higher education EMI faced by both students and teachers. Student heterogeneity in language proficiency and backgrounds disrupts instructional flow, hindering continuity and content uptake.

Language barriers often transform subject classes into de facto language lessons, for which instructors lack specialized training. Cultural and communication gaps exacerbate content delivery issues, while foreign accent comprehension difficulties necessitate pedagogical adaptations, such as requesting repetitions or asking for clarification. Low class attendance is frequently attributed to students' English deficits. Teachers also report fluency discomfort, exemplified by tip-of-tongue phenomena, alongside the time-intensive burden of preparing English materials despite reusing Polish content. Some employ bilingual strategies, such as English slides in Polish lectures. These insights underscore the need for targeted EMI support, including language training for instructors and proficiency assessments for students, to enhance instructional effectiveness and equity.

5.3.4.2. Language problems

As the table below shows, grammar, speaking and vocabulary are the areas which the respondents found most problematic while conducting classes in English. It must be stressed, however, that other areas are closely connected with each other.

Table 10. Problem areas of EMI teachers.

	Number of people	Percentage (%)
Speaking	43	21
Writing	12	6
Reading	2	1

Listening	28	14
Grammar	45	22
Pronunciation	26	13
Vocabulary	36	18
Orthography	10	5

However, what is of particular relevance are the comments that the respondents made while explaining the difficulties, as they reveal the true matter of the problem. Below are some comments connected with speaking, listening and specialist vocabulary:

- *The most stressful thing for me is that there are students who know English better than me and my learned language and pronunciation is not good, or that the students don't understand me. Sometimes […] there are students from different countries and when they ask additional questions during lectures, I don't understand their questions and therefore I don't know how to answer. But it's not due to lack of knowledge but not understanding the context, etc. Unfortunately, at one point we were told to teach in English while no one prepared us for this and did not ask us what your level of knowledge and skills in English is. In addition, while for a 1.5 hour lecture in Polish I have to spend about 5-6 hours preparing the presentation, etc., for a class in English it takes me at least 2-3 times as much time to find the right materials, write it down in the form of a presentation, without grammatical errors, etc., which is also very stressful when suddenly your presentation will be found somewhere on the Internet and they will point out to you some linguistic or factual errors connected with not understanding the issue* [own translation]

- *I cannot speak English fluently because in stressful situations (like teaching a class) I forget basic words and wonder about the grammatical correctness of the*

sentences I construct. For the majority of students attending my classes conducted in English, the language is not native. Most of them are not Polish either, but students from various countries. Their accent is often completely different from the one I hear when watching films in English or listening to music. So I sometimes have trouble understanding what they are saying. [own translation]

- *Generally, I have worked and work a lot on English for hobby reasons for many years, I enjoy the language and communicating in it, so as problems arise/occur I work on them. So at the moment listening may be the weakest link (but it's not something very problematic either), which means that I meet students from different parts of the world and everyone has a slightly different accent and vocabulary and level of English. For these reasons, I sometimes have to ask. Pronunciation varies a lot when it comes to people from e.g., India, African countries. But talking to different people and getting to know each other makes it easier and easier to understand more and more people - practice.* [own translation]

- *I notice that I sometimes miss the right words or grammatical constructions, repeat the same phrases or sentences too often. I feel the discomfort of poor spoken language during a lecture in relation to the stock of concepts that I understand when reading or can use in a thoughtful form, e.g., when writing. On the other hand, as someone who uses mainly English in the academic world, I don't do very well with the vivid colloquial language spoken on the English 'street.'* [own translation]

- *I don't know how to pronounce certain words, I don't always remember to check before a lecture - but this is not the main problem; there are times when I miss words, but more often from everyday language (which I use to explain 'specialist' terms I know from the literature). I write a lot, but I fall into a routine and forget the rules of syntax. So I am not sure of the correctness of the texts, but I am sure that they are understandable to an audience whose first language is NOT English.* [own translation]

- *I think 'in Polish' so before I say something in English I have to translate it in my head into English and only then do I speak. I have no spontaneous speech. I find it hard at times to understand students with a different accent, mainly people from India. As it is only during class that I have the opportunity to speak in English I feel I lack the vocabulary because I don't practise it in other places.* [own translation]

- *When I speak, I cannot spontaneously recall words that I know. When I listen to someone teaching a class I think to myself that this is what I would also be able to say. Then I stand in front of the group and cannot find the right words. I lack a rich vocabulary of typically specific names in my scientific field.* [own translation]

- *I have trouble writing freely in a concise and understandable way. I lack ready-made phrases in scientific language. I have trouble with grammar, and, despite fluent speech, I feel insecure during speeches.* [own translation]

Teachers' comments align with prior comments (e.g., heterogeneity now teacher-focused), emphasizing EMI's demands on instructors in Polish contexts. They highlight

persistent EMI challenges, the most important of which is teacher oral fluency. Their anxieties encompass word recall failures, grammar/pronunciation doubts, tip-of-tongue phenomena, translation burdens, repetition and stress-induced gaps. Additionally, their performance anxiety is visible in their discomfort from student outperformance and incomprehension of students' questions. Accent comprehension issues are illustrated by their difficulties understanding diverse student accents (e.g., Indian, African), requiring repetition or clarification. Preparation and writing burdens, which include syntax and fear of errors issues, require excessive time for English materials/slides compared to less time spent in Polish. Addressing these multifaceted challenges demands comprehensive EMI professional development programmes, prioritizing oral fluency training and accent adaptation strategies to bolster instructors' confidence and effectiveness.

5.3.4.3. Problems vs self declared English level

The relationship between teachers' English proficiency (CEFR level) and the number of reported problems in preparing or delivering English-medium classes was examined via Spearman's rank correlation. Proficiency was mapped to a 6-point ordinal scale (A1=1 to C2=6), while multiple-response data on difficulties were pre-processed (e.g., via regular expressions) to tally distinct issues per teacher. Results showed a significant negative correlation ($\rho=-0.31$, $p=0.001$), meaning higher-proficiency teachers reported fewer challenges.

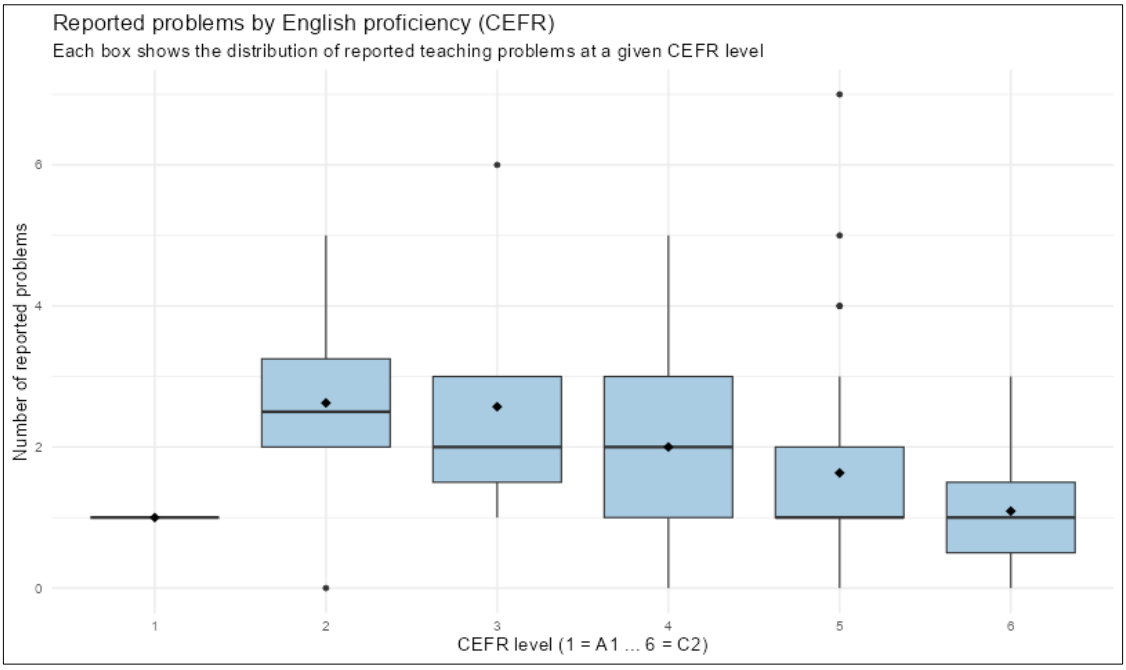

Figure 7. Reported problems by English proficiency.

Each boxplot in Figure 7 depicts the distribution of reported difficulties (e.g., lack of materials, group management, stress) across CEFR levels (1 = A1 to 6 = C2), with black diamonds marking the mean. Medians decrease with rising proficiency, accompanied by reduced variability.

Table 9 in section 5.3.4.1. presents the number of times each type of teaching-related problem was reported by respondents. Each count reflects how many participants selected or mentioned the given issue, including both predefined answers and custom responses (categorized as *Other*). The most commonly reported issue was the excessive time required to prepare for teaching in English (n = 51), followed by lack of confidence (n = 34) and stress related to teaching in English (n = 30). Problems such as the absence of preparation models, group management difficulties, and difficulty finding appropriate materials were also mentioned by multiple respondents. Finally, custom responses provided additional context, including concerns not fully captured by the predefined options.

Figure 8 below displays the average CEFR proficiency of teachers reporting each problem type. Lower-proficiency instructors (lower average CEFR) more often cited confidence issues, material shortages (bottom of figure) and stress, while general challenges like group management or miscellaneous issues spanned all proficiency levels.

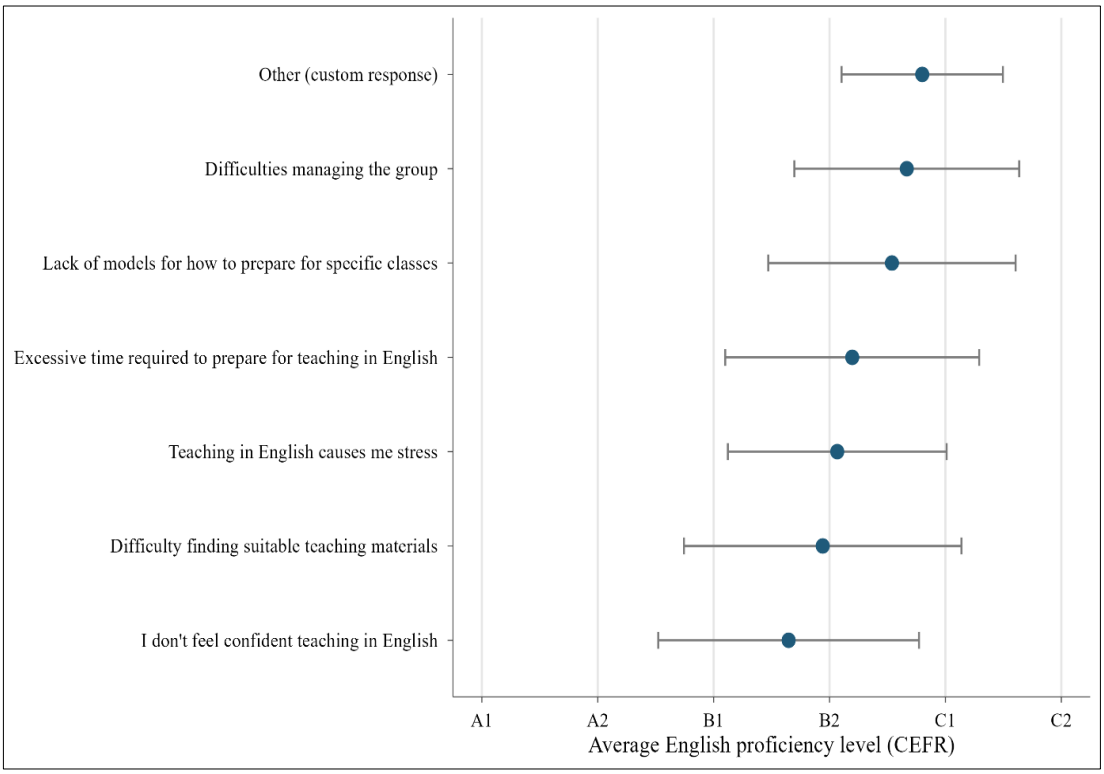

Figure 8. Average CEFR level by reported problem type.

To test if these proficiency differences across problem types were statistically significant, a Kruskal-Wallis test yielded $\chi^2(6) = 24.18$, $p < 0.001$. Post-hoc Dunn's tests with Bonferroni correction confirmed that confidence-related problems were reported by significantly lower-CEFR teachers than those citing classroom management or other issues; no other pairwise differences were significant.

Overall, higher-proficiency instructors reported fewer, less language-specific problems in preparing or delivering EMI. Confidence and perceived language limitations were especially prevalent among lower-proficiency teachers. These patterns underscore the value of targeted language and pedagogical support to alleviate instructional stress and workload in EMI contexts.

Teachers could also describe additional challenges beyond the predefined list. Of 108 respondents, 26 provided open-ended responses, which were manually reviewed, translated to English, and thematically categorized to enrich the quantitative findings.

Figure 9 below shows custom response frequencies by theme. The largest (n=9) reported no particular difficulties. Student- and diversity-related issues ranked second

(n=7), followed by specific vocabulary challenges, fluency gaps, accent comprehension problems, extra preparation time, and cultural complexities of non-native instruction.

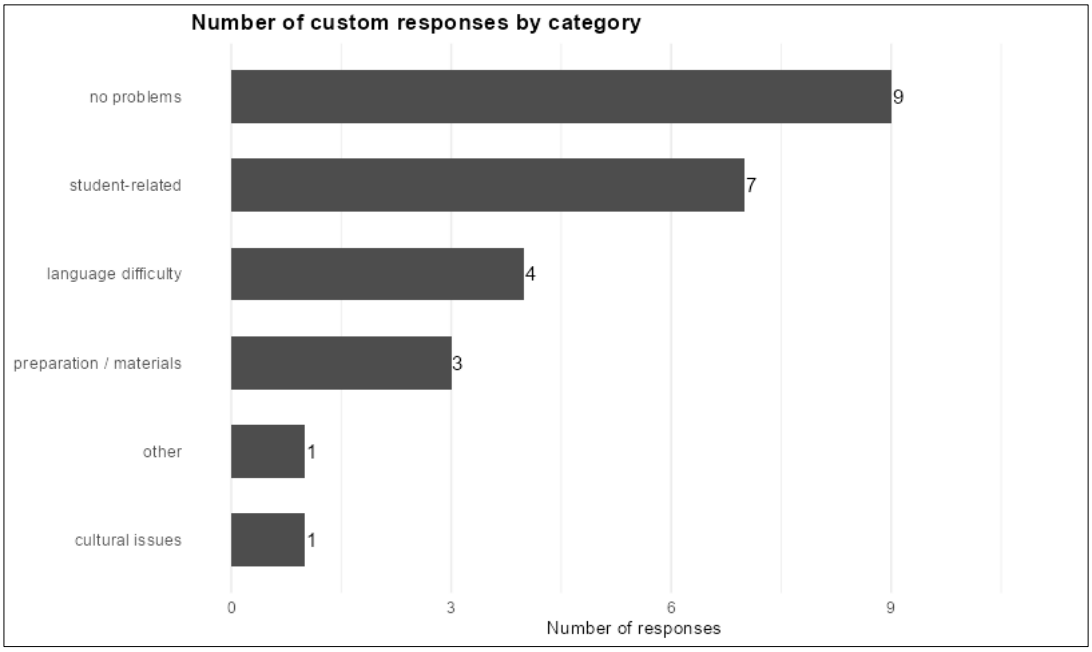

Figure 9. Number of custom responses by category.

The table below lists the original custom responses translated into English and assigned to thematic categories.

Table 11. Custom responses.

Category	Translated custom responses
no problems	• *I have no problems* • *I have no problems teaching in both English and Polish* • *I have no difficulties* • *I have no problems with English-taught classes* • *I don't see any problems* • *I have no problems!*

	• *No problems beyond those common in Polish-taught classes* • *I don't have problems preparing or teaching, I work the same way in both languages* • *I teach the same way as for Polish-speaking groups*
student-related	• *Student groups vary widely in knowledge, language skills, and engagement, making it hard to standardize or improve classes year to year.* • *Very diverse language levels among students (e.g., ERASMUS, different degrees) make it unclear how much is being understood.* • *Most students don't speak English well enough to actively participate. Some skip class due to language difficulties.* • *In mixed groups, students struggle due to subject difficulty and low readiness. Sometimes it's like a language course.* • *Students often have poor English or unnatural pronunciation.* • *Linguistic diversity and different accents in international groups require flexibility and sometimes cause communication issues.* • *Groups are too large*

language difficulty	• *Sometimes I can't recall specific vocabulary* • *I'd like to be more fluent—sometimes I get stuck mid-lecture despite knowing the term* • *Some accents (e.g., Korean, African, Middle Eastern) are hard to understand; I sometimes ask students to repeat* • *Having access to domain-specific English terms helps convey knowledge effectively*
preparation / materials	• *Preparing materials in English takes much more time, even when using the same content as in Polish* • *I have original lectures in both English and Polish. I use the same methodology, but preparing in English is more time-consuming* • *English-taught courses are rare, so the first ones each year are harder due to lack of routine*
cultural issues	• *Teaching in a foreign language brings cultural challenges that reduce the effectiveness of communication—even with good language skills*
other	• *blank / missing*

5.3.4.4. Dealing with challenges

EMI teachers often encounter challenges related to English, as mentioned in the preceding section. Consequently, one of the survey questions addressed methods for overcoming these challenges. The responses included in the table below indicate that

technology plays a crucial role in resolving these issues. Specifically, online dictionaries and search engines supported by artificial intelligence (AI) are the primary tools used for finding satisfactory solutions. One of the respondents mentioned large language models, “I use the support of large language models by putting them in the appropriate situational context, this is particularly helpful when it is possible to translate some words differently.”

Table 12. Dealing with English problems.

	Number of people
I use an online dictionary	78
I type the problem question into an internet search engine and look for the answer	69
I ask the question to a person more knowledgeable than me	29
I check in reference materials (e.g., grammar textbook)	23
Other (please specify): …	17

5.3.4.5. Challenges with reading specialist texts

EMI practitioners also read a lot specialist texts in order to keep up to date with the latest developments in their fields of expertise and use them as a basis for lesson preparation. Although reading specialist texts, especially in the respondents’ fields of expertise, does not cause comprehension problems, there are certain situations in which these texts are problematic, with specialist vocabulary being a key factor. It is important to stress, however, that this difficulty may result from a number of sources, such as deciphering what the author of the text had in mind. As one of the respondents wrote, there are “different terms for the same ranges, technologies, etc.,” which make the comprehension of the text challenging.

In their comments, the respondents mentioned areas such as different interpretations, different varieties of English, trying to understand words directly translated into English from other languages, or simply new words:

- *Sometimes I happen to forget the meaning of a certain word. It also happens that another scientist uses a different word to name a certain phenomenon that I would call differently. I would not*

call this a difficulty, but rather a different interpretation. [own translation]

- *New classes require the preparation of a proper technical dictionary - sometimes a slightly different vocabulary is used in American textbooks and in European textbooks developed in English.* [own translation]
- *I am not sure of the original meaning of certain expressions translated from a foreign language (e.g., French, Chinese, Japanese) into English.* [own translation]
- *Very specialist articles often introduce concepts that are new to me.* [own translation]

Certainly specialist vocabulary is not the only problematic area that the respondents mentioned. The other aspects are listed in the table below.

Table 13. Problems with specialist texts.

	Number of people
General vocabulary	10
Specialist vocabulary	57
General comprehension of the text	22
Sentence length - number of words in a sentence	17
Grammar	5
Other	22

Sentence length and the number of words in a sentence was also mentioned by some of the respondents. Complex sentences blur the understanding of the text. Lack of certain vocabulary is an important element that the respondents mentioned in the 'other' option.

5.3.4.6. Key strengths

The respondents were also asked to describe their strengths in using the English language, highlighting various skills in which they felt confident. Many respondents felt confident in speaking and communicating in English, with no issues in fluency and ease

in conversing on various topics. They also indicated that they had no problems reading texts, both specialist and popular, and understanding clearly spoken statements. Some respondents stated that they do not perceive major issues in using English, whether in speaking, writing or reading. Finally, the respondents emphasised that they managed well with remembering vocabulary and using synonyms, which facilitated their communication in English.

5.3.4.7. Willingness to attend methodological training

The last question of the survey addressed the respondents' willingness to participate in methodological training if given the opportunity. Out of 108 respondents, 59 were willing to participate in training, 36 were likely to participate, and only 12 were unwilling to participate. One person did not answer the question.

Next, teachers' self-reported English proficiency was compared across three levels of declared willingness to participate in English-medium methodological training: "No," "Maybe," and "Yes." Proficiency was measured using ordered CEFR categories and treated as an ordinal variable. A Kruskal-Wallis rank-sum test assessed differences in self-reported levels between groups. Additionally, Spearman's rank correlation examined the monotonic relationship between proficiency and willingness. The distribution of CEFR levels across groups is shown in the Figure 10.

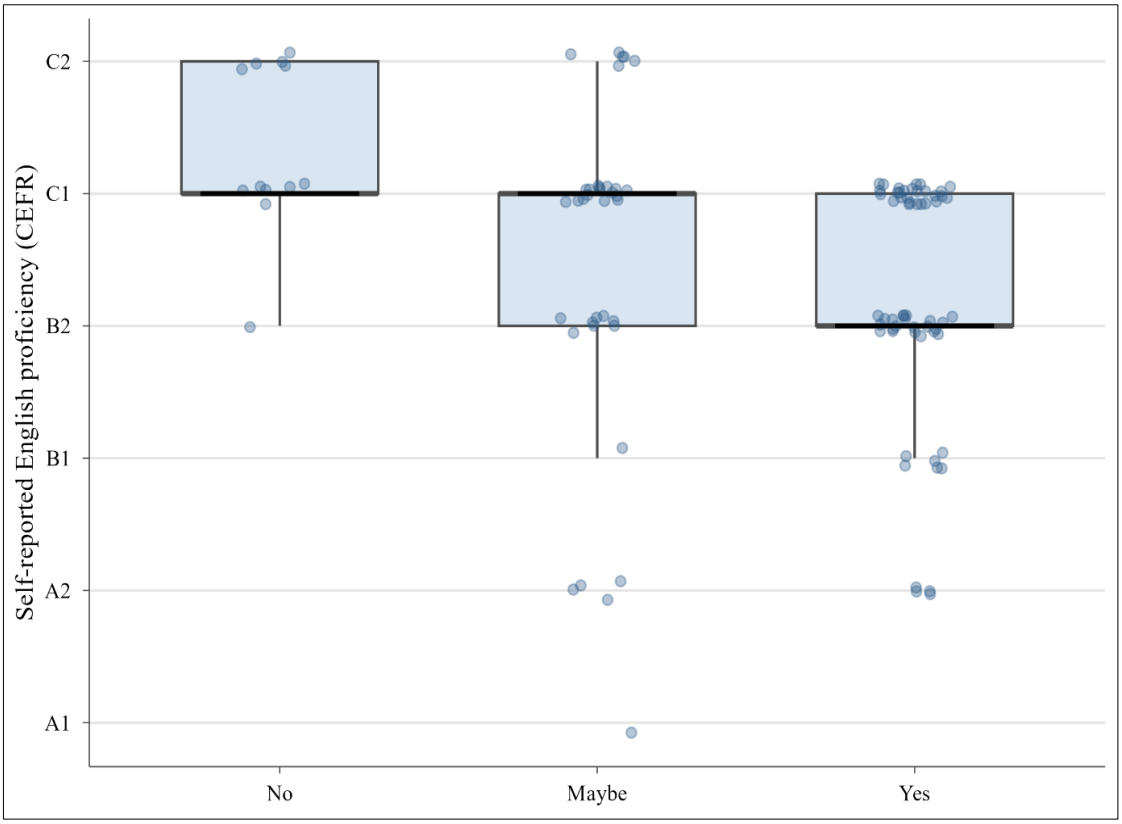

Figure 10. Self-reported English proficiency (CEFR) by willingness to attend methodological training.

The Kruskal-Wallis test revealed a significant difference in self-reported English proficiency across willingness groups ($\chi^2(2) = 14.733$, $p = 0.001$), with a moderate effect size ($\eta^2[H] = 0.121$). Group sizes were "No" (n = 12), "Maybe" (n = 36), and "Yes" (n = 59). Spearman's rank correlation confirmed a significant negative monotonic relationship ($\rho = -0.336$, $p < 0.001$).

The above figure illustrates this pattern: the "No" group concentrated at C1–C2 levels, while "Yes" respondents clustered at B2–C1, with greater dispersion toward lower CEFR levels. The "Maybe" group occupied an intermediate position. Overall, lower proficiency aligned with higher willingness to attend training, consistent with inferential tests.

These results indicate that English-medium methodological training may appeal most to teachers with lower self-perceived proficiency. Notably, the larger "Maybe" and "Yes" groups suggest broad interest beyond low-proficiency respondents, supporting retention of this figure in the final report.

5.3.4.8. Teachers' self-reported English level vs expected help during training

Teachers' self-reported English proficiency was compared across categories of anticipated support needs during methodological training: clear communication, materials/preparation/tools, language accuracy and fluency, teaching methods and class design, no clear expectation and multicultural/group management. As before, proficiency was measured using ordered CEFR categories and treated as ordinal. A Kruskal-Wallis rank-sum test assessed differences across categories, followed by pairwise post hoc comparisons due to multiple groups. Figure 11 displays median self-reported CEFR levels and group sizes per category.

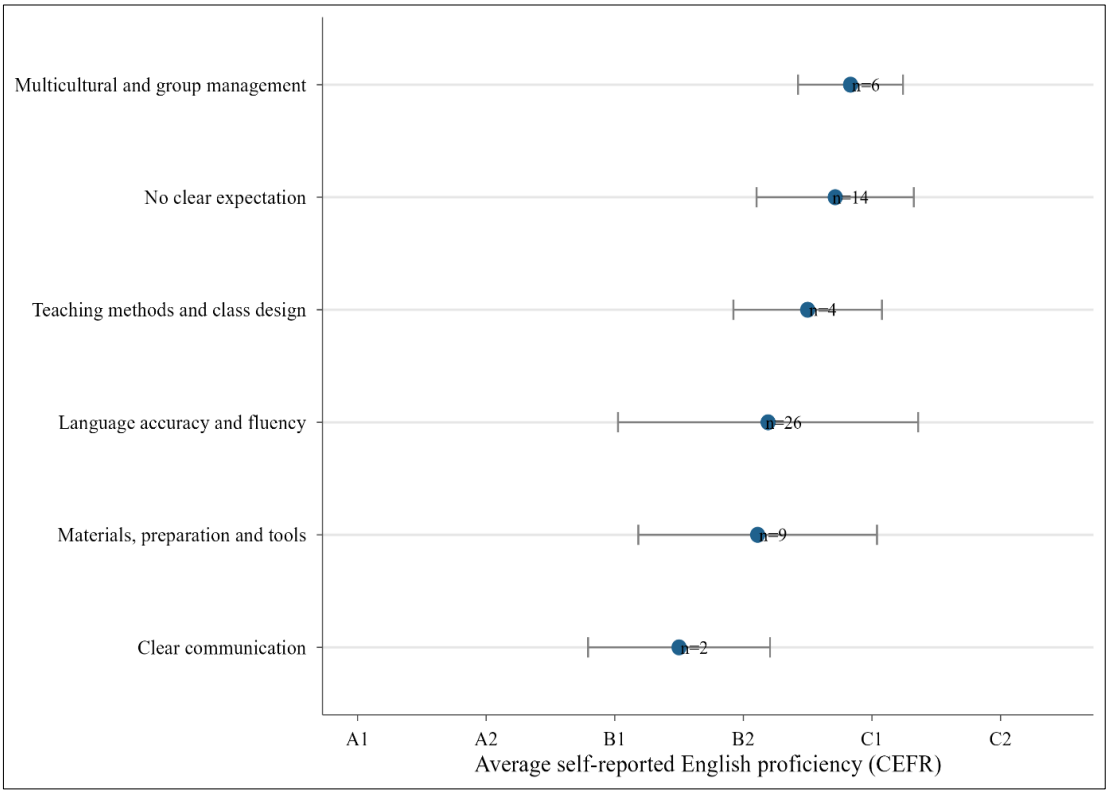

Figure 11. Average self-reported English proficiency (CEFR) by expected help during methodological training.

The Kruskal-Wallis test showed no significant difference in self-reported English proficiency across six anticipated support categories ($\chi^2(5) = 6.977$, $p = 0.22$), with a small effect size ($\eta^2[H] = 0.036$). No pairwise post hoc comparisons were significant after multiple-testing adjustment. Group sizes varied widely (2–26 respondents).

Descriptively, median CEFR levels (or means: *M* range = 3.50–4.83, *SD* = 0.41–1.17) showed minor variation (Figure 11), highest in multicultural/group management

(M = 4.83, n = 6) and no clear expectation (M = 4.71, n = 14), lowest in clear communication (M = 3.50, n = 2). Small subgroups limit estimate stability.

These null results suggest support expectations are largely unrelated to proficiency. Descriptive trends (e.g., lower-proficiency teachers favouring communication support) lack statistical backing and warrant caution due to uneven n.

5.4. Interviews with teachers

The questions that were asked focused on areas such as methodological and linguistic background, testing and assessment, and content and language preparation. These topics were selected to capture lecturers' experiences in navigating EMI challenges within higher education contexts. Respondents highlighted practical strategies for balancing disciplinary content with language support, revealing common gaps in institutional training.

5.4.1. The reasons for instructing classes in English

There were many reasons why university lecturers began delivering their classes in English. The statements provided by them often combined several categories, reflecting diverse motivations behind their responses.

5.4.1.1. Imposition

One reason some teachers began teaching the subjects in English was that the practice had been *imposed* upon them. Below are some answers given:

- *Unfortunately, I wasn't a volunteer. It was imposed on me from above.* [own translation]
- *No, definitely not, I wasn't a volunteer. However, it can't be said that it was imposed on me, which is a bit of a strong word, but I was simply assigned to a certain subject, and it took time to deal with this problem.* [own translation]
- *In my case, it was also imposed on me, because classes I teach in this area were sort of switched to English, and since I teach them in Polish, I had to accept them in English.* [own translation]

From the comments answers, teachers narrated their entry into English Medium Instruction (EMI) as non-voluntary, highlighting constrained agency in policy implementation. One respondent explicitly rejected the label of "volunteer," stating it was "imposed on me from above," underscoring top-down coercion. A second speaker echoed this involuntariness but softened it, noting they were "simply assigned to a certain subject" rather than imposed upon, framing EMI as an administrative burden. The third respondent described classes as "sort of switched to English," an institutional fait accompli they "had to accept" despite prior Polish-medium delivery. These accounts portray EMI as structural imposition rather than pedagogical choice, often mitigated by hedges like "sort of" or "a bit of a strong word" to balance critique with institutional loyalty. Such narratives align with EMI research, discussed in previous sections of this work, on how top-down policies limit teacher agency unless actively negotiated.

5.4.1.2. Need and demand

Certainly, the fact that the classes were imposed on some lecturers resulted from the *need* and *demand* for such classes, together with an *awareness of requirements*. As written in previous chapters, numerous universities in order to be competitive on the higher education market and attract domestic and overseas students offer full study programmes delivered solely in English. Additionally, Erasmus+ exchange programmes play a role in the flow of students.

- *At one point, we started teaching classes with groups that came here either through Erasmus+ or other types of exchanges, and basically it was a requirement from above that we had to teach in English because I had passed an English exam during my doctoral studies. It wasn't an FCE or any other type of exam, it was an internal exam. However, having a PhD, I had to demonstrate my knowledge of a language, so I was chosen to teach the classes.* [own translation]

- *There was a need for people who could teach classes in English. And here it was said that not all employees currently working in our department are adequately*

prepared to teach classes in English. And that was also one of the advantages I had during the recruitment process, so to speak, because I was told that they would hire me also because of my English skills, so that I could teach these technical classes in English. [own translation]

- *There is a need, and there are students, so it must be done.* [own translation]
- *I was aware that some of my duties would require the use of English.* [own translation]

In contrast to the previously discussed narratives of imposition, teachers in this dataset described their involvement in EMI primarily as a pragmatic response to institutional needs that aligned with their existing linguistic competencies. One respondent was selected due to passing a doctoral English exam, triggered by exchange student arrivals (Erasmus+), framing it as a logical "requirement from above" matching pre-existing qualifications. Another highlighted English proficiency as a key recruitment advantage, explicitly hired to teach technical classes in English amid departmental gaps in staff preparedness. These comments are underpinned by a sense of pragmatic inevitability, as two speakers observed that "there is a need, and there are students, so it must be done," alongside prior awareness that their duties would involve English.

Unlike prior comments' resentment or hedging, these position EMI as anticipated alignment of skills to demand - enhancing employability rather than constraining agency - revealing EMI entry as credential-driven selection within institutional pragmatism.

5.4.1.3. Younger teachers' English proficiency edge, self-development, self-improvement and personal growth

As it is written in the theoretical part of the thesis, it is often claimed that younger generation knows foreign languages better than the older generation (Dearden and Macaro, 2016), which is reflected in the following comments:

- *And so we formed a group of young doctoral students who were considered to know English a little better than the older generation. I am not saying that I knew the language very well at the time. However, it just so happened that we were considered to be much better at speaking the language than the older generation.* [own translation]

- *It's become the convention that we are considered to speak this language decidedly better than the older generation.* [own translation]

Other lecturers became *volunteers* as they saw an opportunity for *self-development*, *self-improvement* and *personal growth*, and it was also a *linguistic challenge*, as can be seen in the comments below:

- *It was imposed on me, but I agreed to take on the classes. It was a new challenge, yes. I also wanted to try it out, to see what it would be like with students from another country. It went reasonably well.* [own translation]

- *I like challenges, and English classes are not easy, because often our audience, our students, are students for whom English is not their native language, and this must also be taken into account, so we have to choose our words carefully to ensure that we always have full communication with the students.* [own translation]

- *I chose these classes because I wanted to test myself to see if I am able to teach such courses, or if I could possibly offer such a course to students from a foreign university in the future. I am also thinking about such training trips.* [own translation]

All the comments mentioned in this section enrich the wider discussion of teacher agency outlined in Dang *et al*. (2024), based on interviews with 15 EMI lecturers from 10 Vietnamese universities. They suggest that grasping teachers' views on EMI requirements is essential for effective rollout; top-down policies should consider contextual factors shaping agency to foster genuine transformation over simple adherence.

5.4.2. Impact of teaching English

University teachers' engagement with English Medium Instruction (EMI) profoundly transformed their professional lives and personal experiences. This shift necessitated addressing multiple interconnected factors, including motivation, self-directed learning, stress management, and navigating linguistic and cultural differences.

5.4.2.1. Increased motivation and self-improvement

It could well be said that English-medium instruction inspired greater investment in self-development and professional skills. The interviewees were motivated to improve, and teaching in English spurred further self-study. Additionally, teaching in English triggered significant linguistic and professional progress, particularly in academic communication, which is clearly expressed in the comments below:

- *I was motivated. If I didn't have to teach them in English, I probably wouldn't have time to learn more.* [own translation]
- *Of course. One of my motivations was to step out of my comfort zone and move forward. I knew that it would greatly improve my language skills, especially in scientific and professional fields.* [own translation]
- *I wanted to improve my language skills and I generally like communicating in English.* [own translation]

In contrast to prior narratives of imposition or pragmatism, these teachers positioned EMI adoption as a motivated pathway for personal and professional growth. One respondent affirmed, "I was motivated," noting that without EMI, "I probably wouldn't

have time to learn more," framing it as a valuable catalyst for development. Another cited a deliberate aim "to step out of my comfort zone and move forward," anticipating significant gains in "language skills, especially in scientific and professional fields." A third simply stated a desire "to improve my language skills," coupled with intrinsic enjoyment of "communicating in English." It could be said that these accounts highlight proactive agency, transforming EMI from obligation into an opportunity for self-improvement and enhanced competence.

5.4.2.2. Greater preparation, workload, materials development and time

Instructing students in English required an excessive amount of workload and preparedness on the part of materials development and time management. Looking for field-specific materials, making presentations, translating the existing materials into English and adapting them to the students' needs were the challenges that university teachers had to face.

- *This had an impact because I had to prepare all the materials from scratch. It was time-consuming, so time was the biggest problem, because I was assigned five new subjects in one academic year: three in the winter semester and two in the summer semester, and it was a really daunting challenge.* [own translation]

- *When it came to preparing for this, all materials and presentations had to be prepared in English. So when it came to teaching the course in this language for the first time, it always required additional effort. If it was a subsequent cycle of these classes, then it was definitely easier, because the materials were already prepared.* [own translation]

- *As for the materials, they had to be prepared in English. And when preparing in English, at least that's how I do it, I prepare everything from English-language materials without translating anything from Polish. Because when you translate from Polish, the words come out very*

strange, so I had to prepare so many things from scratch. [own translation]

- *I had to translate materials from Polish into English.* [own translation]

- *[…] I think that preparing and conducting classes in English is definitely more difficult. You need to have more strength, power, energy and time than when teaching in Polish.* [own translation]

The comments above highlight the substantial workload associated with preparing materials for English Medium Instruction (EMI), particularly during the initial transition from teaching in the national language.

One respondent noted preparing all materials "from scratch" for five new subjects in a single academic year - three in the winter semester and two in the summer - calling it a "daunting challenge" due to extreme time constraints. Others echoed this, emphasizing that initial English preparations demanded "additional effort" compared to subsequent cycles, where reused materials eased the load.

Preparation strategies varied but uniformly increased cognitive and energetic demands. While one teacher sourced directly from English-language materials to avoid "strange" Polish translations, another relied on translating existing Polish content, yet both agreed EMI required "more strength, power, energy and time" than Polish-medium teaching. These accounts reveal EMI's front-loaded "startup costs," transforming routine course delivery into exhaustive labour and underscoring policy-practice tensions in resource allocation.

5.4.2.3. Stress and initial anxiety

It appears that the emotional dimension significantly influenced EMI practitioners during their courses. Respondents frequently cited initial stress and barriers, which typically lessened as they gained experience. Below are some of the comments made by the respondents.

- *The beginning was definitely stressful, because it's a matter of overcoming some kind of internal barrier to*

speaking in public in a foreign language. However, as you gain experience, the stress decreases. Of course, I always have it in the back of my mind that it's not my first language, my native language, so there's always a slight stress, but as I gain experience, it goes away. [own translation]

- *Well, it was definitely very difficult at first, because when I started working here, I couldn't even imagine that English would play such an important role in my work in a few years' time.* [own translation]

- *This is certainly very stressful and requires more preparation than classes in Polish.* [own translation]

- *I had to prepare myself specially because my English is poor; I would even say very basic, and it required more effort on my part. As for practising the language itself and all the content that was in Polish, I simply had to translate it.* [own translation]

The above comments describe the initial phase of EMI delivery as psychologically burdensome, primarily due to psychological barriers associated with public speaking in a non-native language. One respondent highlighted the stress of overcoming an "internal barrier," noting that while "the beginning was definitely stressful," it diminished with experience, though a "slight stress" persisted from L2 awareness. Another conveyed shock at English's unanticipated prominence, stating they "couldn't even imagine" its future role when starting work, underscoring the difficulty of this unforeseen shift. A third emphasized amplified demands stemming from self-perceived "poor" or "very basic" English, requiring "special" preparation and translation, which made EMI "certainly very stressful" and more effortful than Polish-medium classes. These accounts portray EMI onset as a period of heightened affective strain, mitigated over time by habituation but rooted in proficiency gaps and lack of forewarning.

5.4.2.4. Linguistic and cultural challenges and adaptive teaching

The ability to communicate in a foreign language with people who come from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds may pose certain difficulties for both the lecturers and the students. Revisiting teaching strategies, which involved the need for more interactive, culturally responsive or differentiated instruction for a diverse classroom, was evident for those who participated in the interview. This is clearly visible in the teachers' responses:

- *I wanted to verify and analyse the knowledge I had acquired earlier once again, and think about how I could present it in English in an interesting and accessible way for students.* [own translation]

- *It's different. They were Chinese students whom I taught. So these Chinese students are culturally different, first and foremost. And, of course, you have to communicate with them.* [own translation]

- *The cultural context was very important. It's all about how to address these people. I have a lot of experience in this area, too. I've been to Muslim countries many times, for example, and I've made a few cultural blunders there on several occasions. In Malaysia, for instance, a very conservative Muslim country, you simply cannot shake hands with a woman, for example. So, in a way, the experiences I've had also influence the way I run my classes, that is, how to address people. I always try to gauge whether I can afford to be more direct, or whether I should simply conduct these classes in a more formal manner.* [own translation]

The comments presented above provide valuable insights into respondents' experiences of teaching in EMI contexts, particularly regarding knowledge adaptation, intercultural awareness, and student engagement. Together, they illustrate both proactive

professional development and the challenges associated with teaching in multilingual and culturally diverse classrooms.

The first comment reveals linguistic and pedagogical reflection: the respondent actively revisited prior knowledge to reframe it for English delivery, emphasizing accessibility and interest for students. This reflects deliberate pedagogical innovation - translating disciplinary content into engaging EMI formats - common in higher education where lecturers balance expertise with language mediation.

The second comment underscores cultural differences, discussed in chapter 2 and exemplifying Hofstede et al.'s dimensions of national culture (2010), as a primary hurdle, specifically with Chinese students, framing communication as an essential response. It implies an emotional and relational layer to EMI: beyond language, teachers must navigate unspoken norms (e.g., hierarchy, indirectness in Chinese contexts), which can amplify cognitive load early on.

The third excerpt highlights a teacher's emphasis on cultural sensitivity in classroom interactions. The speaker draws from personal travel experiences in Muslim countries, like Malaysia, to inform their teaching approach, adapting directness or formality based on students' cultural cues.

In EMI settings, such as Polish higher education, the above examples illustrate teacher agency in multicultural classrooms. It supports EMI best practices by advocating cultural gauging to enhance student participation and avoid miscommunication in English-taught content courses.

5.4.3. English proficiency certificate to teach in English

The responses given by the speakers indicate that no mandatory English proficiency certificate was required to teach in English. Several respondents noted that passing final English exams during their doctoral studies and doing research and publishing in English, served as sufficient demonstration of proficiency. Additionally, low numbers of English-teaching staff resulted in relaxed requirements where willing staff could teach without certificates.

5.4.4. Recurring subjects and challenges

Due to frequent changes in curriculum updates, workload variations, group formations and departmental rotations, only a few teachers teach the same subject every year

without interruption. Some subjects are regular and are taught every year, but the subject's name or content may change. As one instructor mentioned, "Sometimes the name of the subject changes and the content remains partially the same, so there is some repetition." Other subjects are taught sporadically, either on an as-needed basis or without a consistent pattern. It is worth mentioning that team or course rotation is common, meaning course assignments are rotated among staff members, so an individual may not repeat every year. Organisational factors such as curriculum reform, demand and staffing significantly affect year-to-year continuity in English-medium teaching.

EMI instructors report that initial difficulties tend to decrease over time, particularly after the first year of implementation. The most prevalent challenges involve linguistic hurdles, such as vocabulary demands in specialist or technical courses, which are especially acute at the outset. Cultural and student variations further influence barriers, often tied to group composition - for instance, international versus Polish students, levels of engagement or accent diversity. Student reluctance adds friction, particularly in Polish-speaking cohorts that prefer their L1 for discussions, complicating English-medium delivery. Technological and resource issues emerge when students lack familiarity with English-language engineering tools or software. Notably, some challenges - like attendance or assessment issues - parallel those in Polish-medium teaching and are not unique to EMI.

5.4.5. Course duration

Course durations are primarily semester-based, with common formats ranging from 15 to 30 hours, typically divided into lectures, exercises, laboratory classes/work and project-based learning (PBL). Respondents also reported modular or split courses delivered in segments throughout the semester or academic year, meaning that a single course may comprise lectures, laboratory sessions and projects. This instructional approach can extend some courses beyond 30 hours, reaching a total duration of 60 to 90 hours. One lecturer noted, "I have subjects that are 90 hours long because they consist of lectures, laboratory work and a project." To successfully complete a course module, students are required to pass all its individual components.

Team teaching, or co-teaching, is a common practice among university faculty, wherein the course responsibilities are shared between two or three instructors. For

example, one instructor may deliver the lectures, while others conduct the laboratory sessions and supervise project work. As one instructor mentioned, “But very often there is also a second teacher; it's a team teaching situation, which isn't a bad thing, because then we can work together to deal with any problems, exchange experiences about teaching the same classes or even the same group and level.”

5.4.6. Teaching the same subject in Polish and English: significant differences in conducting these classes

Teaching the same subject in one's native language versus English presents distinct challenges that vary by disciplinary specificity. Interview responses offer valuable insights into these issues, particularly regarding materials, content adaptation and teaching approaches.

5.4.6.1. Materials and content

It appears that classes conducted in English typically rely on different English-language materials that university teachers tend to look for in diverse sources rather than direct translations. These materials often contain distinct visuals, terminology and sometimes curriculum differences reflecting international student needs. As one EMI teacher noted, “There is a difference in the materials, because when I’m preparing to teach in English, I use materials in English, which are more helpful.” This brief comment underscores a practical distinction in teaching preparation: English-medium classes rely on English-language materials, which the speaker finds inherently "more helpful" than alternatives. Additionally, authentic English materials enhance teacher readiness and content fidelity, countering challenges like vocabulary gaps or resource scarcity, and showing how material alignment builds instructor confidence and reduces preparation friction. Translation of subject-specific vocabulary may be problematic, as one lecturer noted,

- *I don't translate it word for word. I also use other sources, because I know that the vocabulary can vary. Sometimes we think we can translate something, but then it turns out that certain names or technical terms are not as straightforward as we thought, but have a different name in English, for example.*[own translation]

The above excerpt describes an instructor's nuanced approach to handling technical vocabulary in EMI preparation, avoiding literal translation and drawing on multiple English sources to navigate terminological variations. In EMI contexts like Polish engineering or technical courses, this illustrates pragmatic adaptation to linguistic challenges - it exemplifies teacher agency in sourcing authentic English materials, mitigating "student reluctance" or comprehension gaps by ensuring precise terminology.

5.4.6.2. Teaching approach

While the general structure of the class remains consistent and unfolds in a predictable order, with presentation, examples and exercises as the main components, English classes incorporate more explicit cultural integration and contextualization. This is especially visible at the onset of the courses when teachers introduce some cultural information, such as customs and holidays, for the foreigners studying at the university. This is done on purpose so as to familiarise them with the reality and to allow them to feel comfortable. One of the interviewees mentioned,

- *When it comes to teaching the entire course, the first classes are definitely different, because during the first class I try to get to know the students, so I place greater emphasis on integration, so that each student can tell something about themselves. I know that it can be difficult for people who come to a new country and have to find their feet in a place where they don't know anyone. So I try to emphasise integration here, so that everyone talks about themselves, so that the group gets to know each other, and I always want to get to know the students, too. These are definitely introductory classes, and I also talk about Poland during the classes. I also devote one class to general cultural issues or issues related to cuisine, for example. I think it is important to familiarise students with this.* [own translation]

The above comment illustrates a thoughtful, student-centred approach to course initiation, prioritizing relational and cultural onboarding in a diverse, international

classroom. The respondent places high value on first classes as a space for "integration," using icebreakers where students share personal details. This reflects high teacher agency in fostering belonging, especially for newcomers navigating relocation stress - common in EMI contexts with non-native English speakers from abroad. It counters potential isolation by building group cohesion early, aligning with pedagogical best practices for multilingual higher education. Beyond rapport-building, cultural orientation layer is highlighted. The teacher dedicates time to host-country topics like Poland, cuisine, and general culture, framing it as essential familiarization. This proactive cultural mediation reduces cognitive and emotional barriers, easing transitions into content-heavy EMI courses. It exemplifies how lecturers adapt introductory classes to bridge linguistic gaps with contextual support, diminishing initial stress as noted in prior respondent themes.

5.4.6.3. Language and curriculum challenges

It appears that teaching in English requires simplification of language, more detailed explanations and revisiting basic concepts that Polish student groups are assumed to already know. English classes often demand more step-by-step guidance and slower pacing due to linguistic and cultural diversity. This is highlighted by one of the interviewees,

- *When it comes to language or teaching in English, I try to explain certain things at greater length and in a simpler way, using really basic words. I don't know why, to be honest, whether the reason is that I want to be sure that it will really get through to them, or simply not. Or maybe there is another reason? Maybe it's a barrier on my part that when I speak English, I naturally switch to simpler language when giving lectures.* [own translation]

Another important aspect to consider is that English-speaking groups tend to be more *heterogeneous* in terms of prior knowledge, often necessitating a review of foundational concepts. In contrast to Polish groups, lecturers are unable to fully assess students' prior mastery of the curriculum content; consequently, the initial classes typically serve as an introductory phase to familiarize themselves with the group. The variation in students'

backgrounds in mathematics and physics requires instructors to adjust the depth of content, with some teachers revisiting basic material to support those with limited prior knowledge, as mentioned by EMI instructors below:

- *We are familiar with the curriculum for secondary schools in Poland. We know what students are expected to know by the time they reach a particular class. At university level, however, when we have groups from different countries, we are not even able to fully verify what the curriculum entails there. Nor are we given any specific details or an overview, so those first classes are always a bit of a warm-up to get to know the group. We are aware that, in addition to differences in the curriculum, there is also a language barrier, so we really do need to go back to the basics.* [own translation]

- *It is often the case that when this group is made up of students from different universities and different countries, some of them are already familiar with the concept of differential equations, […] However, it also happens that the mathematical background is a little weaker, and we have to go back a bit to what should be covered in other subjects taught at our faculty prior to these automation courses; hence, we know what, for example, students at our Faculty use when they come to the basics of automation. However, we do not know the exact syllabuses of the students who come to us for such subjects.* [own translation]

- *If, for example, you were to take an introductory course in automation, you'd have to start at a different level to someone who's already studied physics, advanced maths or fluid mechanics. Because then they'd already be familiar with certain mathematical concepts such as derivatives, differential equations and partial differential*

equations, and so it would be easier for them to grasp more advanced knowledge… [own translation]

These excerpts reveal EMI instructors' challenges in Polish universities stemming from diverse international student groups, where unverifiable foreign curricula create knowledge gaps that necessitate initial "warm-up" sessions. In technical fields like automation, physics and maths, instructors must diagnose uneven mathematical backgrounds - some students arrive advanced, others requiring remediation to prior faculty-level basics - compounded by language barriers that demand revisiting foundational concepts.

This curricular and linguistic heterogeneity aligns with broader EMI hurdles, including cultural diversity in group composition, vocabulary variability in technical terms, and adaptive preparation using authentic English materials over literal translations. While local Polish syllabi provide familiarity, the lack of details on international ones underscores teacher agency in flexible diagnostics.

5.4.6.4. Cultural, regional and international context

Certain subjects with local or regional specificity (e.g., issues related to Silesia mining or finance) require additional explanation in English for international students unfamiliar with the local context. For example, mining constitutes a natural and historically ingrained aspect of the Silesian region. The majority of students originate from this area and therefore possess, to varying degrees, a foundational understanding of mining activities, including resource extraction, associated environmental impacts and mining-induced damage. In contrast, international students, who come from diverse geographical and educational backgrounds, often require additional introductory explanations. It becomes necessary to devote more time to contextualising why mining-related issues are addressed within the curriculum of the Faculty of Civil Engineering, and to clarify the regional significance of these topics, as mentioned by on of the lecturers:

- *This is because, let's say, mining is a natural part of life here in the Silesian region. Our students, the vast majority of whom come from the Silesian region, have some knowledge of mining, of extraction, of its effects, of*

mining impacts and mining-related damage. On the other hand, with international students – those from various countries – I have to spend a bit more time discussing these issues; let's say the basic introductory points as to why we are discussing these mining impacts in the Department of Civil Engineering. [own translation]

Similarly, the finance course available at the Faculty of Organization and Management required considerable adaptation to align with international academic standards, as mentioned by one of the EMI practitioners,

- *The classes needed to be brought more into line with international standards, because it is difficult to explain to foreigners an accounting law that applies exclusively in Poland; so we simply had to take this knowledge to a new level in terms of internationalisation.* [own translation]

Discussing legal frameworks such as the Polish Accounting Act, applicable exclusively within the national context, proved impractical when addressing an international student cohort. As a result, the course content had to be restructured and elevated to a more globally relevant level, reflecting the broader objectives of internationalisation. This adjustment posed a particular challenge, as the curriculum designed for Polish students is typically grounded in domestic legal and regulatory frameworks. Preparing content for an international audience necessitated a fundamental shift in pedagogical approach and thematic scope.

5.4.7. Code switching in classes

Courses delivered in English are offered to three types of student groups: Polish students enrolled in English-medium programmes; international students for whom English serves as the language of instruction; and mixed cohorts comprising both Polish students and incoming participants, such as those from the Erasmus+ programme. Therefore, code switching as a communication strategy, if present, is usually dependent on the group composition.

5.4.7.1. Teacher code switching

Teacher language use strictly follows group composition. Therefore, classes consisting entirely of foreign students are conducted exclusively in English by instructors. This is expressed in the teachers' comments:

- *If this is an English-speaking group, we cannot allow any Polish interjections here, and that doesn't happen.*[own translation]
- *If the group is English-speaking rather than Polish-speaking, then you can't afford to let that slip. You have to be prepared, focused and make an effort to use English, and I think I'm managing quite well, running the classes in this way.* [own translation]
- *I mean, when it comes to Chinese students, it doesn't make any sense, does it? So I don't do it.* [own translation]
- *I have a rule that if I have classes taught in English – that is, in the Faculty of Civil Engineering – my courses don't have mixed groups; instead, we have English-language programmes and Erasmus students are assigned to them, so it's either Polish or English. I have a rule that when I enter the classroom, I speak only English.* [own translation]

Polish is rarely or never used in these settings, except in very rare slips. In mixed groups, instructors mostly keep English-only policy in order to maintain inclusivity and avoid alienating non-Polish speakers. They are sensitive to inclusivity, avoiding Polish when it could exclude or confuse foreign students, which is highlighted by one university teacher's comment, "I know that people who don't understand Polish may feel offended in some way that they don't know what we're talking about right now."

Cultural explanations may involve bilingual terminology as a didactic tool to enrich students' understanding, as mentioned by another teacher,

- *As I also teach classes in English, I sometimes make brief comments – just for information's sake for the international students, and as a point of interest for them – explaining, for example, that a particular word is such-and-such in Polish, or when I talk about these cultural and culinary matters, I also tell them the name in English and in Polish, so that I hope to broaden their knowledge and horizons, not only regarding these specific technical issues, but also other issues…*[own translation]

It does happen, however, that teachers switch to Polish, but only for clarifications or upon explicit student requests:

- *At the students' request, though I try to avoid doing so, bearing in mind that these are precisely the classes designed to improve their language skills. They didn't understand something, and perhaps they were taking notes in Polish as well, so they wanted to write down the equivalent in Polish too.* [own translation]

In the case of entirely Polish groups, the use of Polish is primarily used for clarifying specialist terminology or complex concepts:

- *Let me put it this way: it depends on the situation, because we do have groups (…) – there's a course taught in English, and there's a group of students who speak Polish, with perhaps two or three people speaking English. Obviously, I teach the whole course in English, but if someone doesn't understand something, I can of course offer a hint in Polish, but I do try to ensure that if a particular subject is to be taught in a specific language, it is taught in that language. This is so that the other people who have specifically enrolled on the*

course in English can understand it and benefit from it. [own translation]

- *If we have a Polish-speaking group that has lessons in English, it often happens that we define new terms for ourselves, we get to know new machines, because that sort of thing comes into play here, and it happens that we give a component a name in English and translate it for ourselves, giving it a name in Polish as well, so that we can link that knowledge together, to avoid a gap where we know what it's called in English but have absolutely no idea what it's for or how it works in Polish. So it also happens that, at some point, when we need such a definition, because it's not as though we're prepared to translate everything into Polish and English for these Polish-speaking students; it's only when a problem arises, or a question is asked, that we then define it and help them understand it in Polish. It then turns out that everything is simply easier to grasp.*[own translation]

- *I sometimes find myself explaining something to them in Polish, adding a few words, or they ask questions in Polish, because there is also the issue of specialist vocabulary, so sometimes we explain a word, a term or a phenomenon so that they can understand it…*[own translation]

Small Polish language slips happen when searching for terms, but these are rare and usually corrected or aided by students, as mentioned by the lecturers,

- *I admit that sometimes I ask Polish students to remind me of the word.*[own translation]

- *Well, it's natural that they happen sometimes. A single word slips your mind when you're formulating a*

definition […]. Precisely when you need to cite a law - and it's very important to quote a law that should be stated from A to Z in exactly that way. And then that one word slips out, and it would be a mistake to misquote it, because it's simply a fundamental law of the subject and should be stated in that way. So then, I might either ask the students, or I simply need a moment to remind myself – of course it happens.[own translation]

5.4.7.2. Student code switching

Group composition and types of classes are important determinants when code switching among students. Polish students in English-medium classes often switch back to Polish when working in small groups during project work or classes, especially for clarifying difficult concepts or discussing assignments informally. This is generally accepted and tolerated by instructors provided the final presentations or official communications remain in English:

- *Well, if there are larger groups from the same country – and that's actually the case here – then yes, they very often ask each other for help, because their language skills vary greatly: there are a few people who speak English, and a few who find it very difficult, so they do end up communicating amongst themselves.*[own translation]

Foreign students typically use English as the lingua franca when groups are mixed or multinational. However, when multiple students from the same country form a subgroup, they sometimes converse quietly in their native language. Similarly, project work and classes are the ones during which they code switch.

- *Yes, the Spanish-speaking students […] spoke to each other in Spanish and then to me in English.* [own translation]

- *Yes, it does happen, of course. I suspect this is because they perhaps want to better understand certain things we're currently covering in class, and that's why it often happens that we have large groups from Spain, and there, well, I wouldn't say it's common, but it's not uncommon for students to speak their native language amongst themselves.* [own translation]

5.4.7.3. Instructors' attitudes

Most instructors adopt a permissive stance toward code-switching as a communication strategy, viewing it as beneficial for language and content comprehension. They regard it as a natural form of peer support that fosters comprehension and social bonding. Although a minority express mild concerns regarding potential exclusion or diminished information fidelity - as one respondent noted: "I am aware that when asking a colleague in their native language, they may receive incorrect information" - L1 use is broadly seen as an inherent feature of multilingual classrooms. This practice enhances learning, peer cooperation and comfort without substantially undermining English-medium instruction, provided clear English outputs are prioritized. Whether EMI instructors explicitly recognize it or not, permitting L1 use effectively promotes translanguaging - which is elaborated earlier in this study - enabling multilingual students to draw on their full linguistic repertoires and address gaps in technical discussions without monolingual rigidity.

5.4.8. Difficulties in conducting classes in English and ways of managing them

The responses given by the EMI practitioners reveal certain areas that they found problematic, and these could be grouped into the following categories: vocabulary and language retrieval, intercultural classroom dynamics, impact of educational resources and classroom management.

5.4.8.1. Vocabulary and language retrieval

A common initial challenge for most instructors, regardless of their teaching experience, was the use of *specialist vocabulary*, particularly when working under pressure; this often resulted in ongoing stress, exacerbated by the risk of forgetting technical terms.

To compensate for these gaps, instructors frequently developed their own personalized retrieval systems which involved adapting materials from their predecessors, compiling their own vocabulary lists and accessing and developing online resources.

Another frequently reported area of difficulty among instructors was *understanding*, or *being understood by*, students whose strong accents, first-language influenced pronunciations and rapid speech, predominantly among those from distant Asian and African backgrounds, sometimes impeded effective communication. The concern among teachers did not stem from insufficient subject knowledge but rather from the potential inability to comprehend students' questions, which raised doubts about their capacity to provide appropriate responses. To ensure comprehension, instructors often asked students to repeat their questions once or twice. Occasionally, other students facilitated communication by rephrasing or clarifying what their peer had intended to convey.

Lack of *everyday conversational practice* is another common difficulty expressed by the lecturers - a difficulty that became especially apparent when engaging students in discussions about current events, sometimes leading to communication breakdowns. Since the English language is not used in everyday contexts such as shopping, at home, during travel or business trips, or even for the majority of the time spent at university, the Polish language remains the predominant means of communication. This was supported by one of the EMI practitioners, "We lack such social skills, and we lack such ordinary human conversations with other people in English, because we don't do it on a daily basis and we don't have such practice." Another person added, "I don't use English on a daily basis and actually tend to avoid using it, which is why I signed up for this course, to force myself to do it." Based on respondents' answers, the overall pattern indicates that this type of difficulty was most evident in spontaneous language production, particularly in less structured project and class contexts. As one interviewee noted, "The lecture is easier for me because I have slides and there is additional content on the slide that simply needs to be supplemented."

Varied English proficiency among students, including strong accents and limited vocabulary, requires strategies like *repetition requests* and *slowed speech*. EMI practitioners complained about poor language skills of some students who used online translators to understand the lecturer. Barriers in establishing contact with some of the students raised uncertainty whether such difficulties were due to material difficulty, students' weaknesses in English or other background knowledge.

5.4.8.2. Intercultural classroom dynamics

Nearly all speakers raised the challenge of intercultural differences which could be discussed on different levels. *Student engagement* and *willingness to participate* were believed to have their roots in a country of origin. Southern European and African students were described as more expressive, vocal and willing to participate in classes, whereas Asian students, although well prepared in terms of knowledge, tended to be more reserved and hesitant, seldom speaking up first. These differences influenced classroom dynamics. This difficulty was not evident during lectures but became apparent during classes or project work, where students engaged in informal small-group activities and were required to develop solutions to specific problems.

Group behaviour constitutes another area worth explanation. Cross-cultural differences in work ethic and group dynamics were observed by some respondents. For example, natural student self-grouping by ethnicity or religion was common during laboratory or project classes, which contributed to students switching back to their native languages and required more teacher intervention. Some instructors rearranged the groups to facilitate the use of English and foster student cooperation. Cultural differences were also manifested in approaches to the task, with certain nationalities, such as German, French and Polish participants, demonstrating greater diligence, while others, such as Pakistani, Turkish and Spanish participants, exhibited comparatively lower levels of conscientiousness.

5.4.8.3. Classroom management

In general, there were no major issues with group management, intercultural communication, or interpersonal problems across diverse student groups. The lecturers mentioned that there were no students who attended classes solely to cause disruption. On the contrary, students demonstrated greater awareness and a clear intention to engage in learning. Any form of misbehaviour was incidental and initially resulted from cultural differences, which were later resolved. Some teachers mentioned that group management was much easier in English-taught groups due to the fact that they were much smaller and cohesive. However, lesson planning had to be more detailed; it was necessary to be prepared for a greater number of options and potential situations that may arise.

Some teachers reported issues with *punctuality* during lectures, regardless of students' nationality. In certain instances, this led to instructors losing their train of thought and having to repeat content for latecomers, thereby disadvantaging other students. One teacher noted that, rather than simply reiterating instructions, students were conditioned through positive reinforcement, such as awarding credits for punctuality, which gradually became established as a norm. Students were informed that punctuality is essential for maintaining mutual respect and minimizing disruptions. Emphasis was placed on the importance of timely arrival, as tardiness negatively impacts the learning environment and causes frustration detrimental to all parties involved. This approach aimed to foster a relaxed and respectful atmosphere and was perceived as the most effective method.

Note-taking constitutes another issue warranting further consideration. Most interviewees observed that students rarely took notes during lectures or classes, and when they did, the notes were often very brief. One contributing factor was the legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic, during which online teaching materials were typically made available on learning management systems (LMSs). Consequently, students had easy access to these resources and tended to treat LMSs primarily as repositories for links and bibliographic information. This caused some frustration in university teachers, as one respondent remarked,

- *I am currently facing a significant dilemma, and it does not only concern English speakers. It also concerns Polish speakers. How should I proceed? Should I just post some questions on this platform, because it turns out that I have to put in a lot of work. Lectures, presentations, everything has to be posted on the platform on time, in some version.* [own translation]

Despite the various challenges identified in the interviews, over time teachers became more comfortable with EMI by adapting content delivery, incorporating cultural awareness and accepting linguistic imperfections in favour of authentic communication and learning. Several respondents emphasized that collaborative discussion, encouragement and a focus on meaningful engagement were more important than strict linguistic accuracy.

5.4.9. Assessing students

Testing and assessment constitute another area that reveals teachers' beliefs concerning this element of teaching. This part focuses on assessment practices, handling of language difficulties and grading criteria in English-medium instruction (EMI).

5.4.9.1. Language of assessment

All respondents reported that the language of assessment in these English-medium instruction (EMI) contexts was predominantly English, irrespective of the group. They consistently confirmed that when courses are taught in English, testing, grading and knowledge verification are conducted exclusively in English. Even among native Polish-speaking students, the language of assessment remains English to ensure fairness and consistency. Although some lecturers occasionally permit the use of Polish during individual office hour consultations as needed, this does not extend to formal assessments.

5.4.9.2. Form of assessment

Based on the interviews with the EMI practitioners, nearly all of them showed preference for written assessment formats. The reasons were manifold. One of them was *objectivity* and *evidence*. The respondents noted that while written assessments leave a clear record of the student's knowledge, providing unambiguous evidence and making grading more objective, oral assessments can seem subjective or unfair because of perceived differences in question difficulty or grading. *Institutional* and *accreditation requirements* are an additional reason why the written form is preferred. Written documentation of tests or reports is often required by institutional rules, usually specified in the syllabuses, and accreditation standards to officially record student achievement. Some respondents mentioned *clarity* and *avoidance of ambiguity*, meaning that written form prevents misunderstandings or mishearing student answers, which can happen with oral tests, especially by students with language barriers. Having answers in writing helps instructors to accurately assess students' knowledge. Furthermore, the respondents highlighted *fairness* regarding language ability. In their opinion, written tests, especially multiple-choice or other structured formats, reduce the disadvantage caused by students' limited spoken English proficiency or language anxiety, which enables fair evaluation of the content, not language fluency.

5.4.9.3. Types of oral and written assessment

Teachers' preferred way of checking students' knowledge depends on the type of instruction students receive. Those who taught lectures usually assess students by means of multiple-choice or open cloze tests. Laboratory and project work usually involve submitting written assignments in the form of reports in which the students are supposed to include all the information necessary for successful completion of the assignment. Open-ended short answer and descriptive written questions, such as open cloze or complete the sentence, are also common examples. Oral forms of assessment, such exams or presentations, are mainly used for courses with practical nature where students have to defend their projects or theses. Teachers sometimes use them as retake forms of tests or are applied at students' request.

5.4.9.4. Assessment criteria

Teachers are aware of their own language limitations and acknowledge that they themselves make mistakes. Consequently, they promote a tolerant attitude towards student errors, often overlooking grammatical mistakes as long as these do not impede communication. For them, the most important aspect is the content and whether the student has answered the questions satisfactorily. Below are some comments made by the teachers:

- *I do not comment on these linguistic errors because we are in the field of management and production engineering, and here I only pay attention to substantive, technical issues, as I would call them. I do not comment on errors or grammatical issues in the English language.* [own translation]

- *Unfortunately, I am not qualified to check the correctness of the English used by students. I am not a native speaker, I do not have such qualifications, so I only take into account the substantive content.* [own translation]

- *I don't think I'm qualified to assess their grammar, because I make grammatical mistakes myself, so it's like a language teacher who isn't qualified to assess a student's technical skills, I'm not qualified to assess their grammatical correctness in English.* [own translation]

It is important to emphasise that university teachers pay close attention to the components of the reports students must prepare following a series of laboratory or project classes. While it is evident that instructors from different fields of study require varying content in these reports, certain elements are considered essential. These include an introduction, a conclusion, experimental design, visual components such as graphs and calculations. This requirement aims to prepare students for their future roles as engineers.

5.4.10. Reading scholarly methodological publications on how others teach similar classes in English

The interviewed EMI practitioners responded negatively to whether they read scholarly methodological publications, indicating that none consulted works on how peers deliver similar classes. The reasons they gave were similar in nature. Firstly, the amount of workload and the number of professional, i.e. scientific and organisational, duties prevented them from gaining access to such sources. Secondly, most of them were unaware that such publications exist and they did not know where they could find such publications. However, it is important to mention that they tried to develop their methodological skills by watching some tutorials on the internet, joining special interest groups (SIGs) and some of them attended courses devoted to English Medium Instruction.

5.4.11. Writing articles on how to teach one's subject in English

The respondents reported that they have never authored scientific papers specifically describing their approaches to teaching their subjects in English. Their responses indicate that such pedagogical articles do not contribute to their professional evaluation. This is largely due to a strong institutional emphasis on research achievements rather than documentation of teaching quality, which discourages the publication of pedagogical work.

Depending on their contractual obligations, university teachers are generally expected to publish within their assigned scientific disciplines. Consequently, pedagogical writing tends to be peripheral or neglected, reflecting institutional prioritization of research output. Additionally, respondents expressed concerns about their limited methodological competence, indicating uncertainty about what content such articles should include. However, this does not imply unwillingness to produce pedagogical publications. On the contrary, some EMI practitioners demonstrate openness to collaborative or future publications on EMI methodology, provided that sufficient time and external support are available.

5.5. Student online questionnaire

The following analysis examines EMI students' closed and open-ended responses, drawing on their experiences of studying content through English to illuminate key challenges and perceptions.

5.5.1. Background information and language biography

The first part of the student survey focused on their general and linguistic background as they were asked questions concerning their age, gender, nationality, educational background, their self-assessment concerning their knowledge of English, and also any official exam certification. Additionally, they were asked about their use of English outside of university.

5.5.1.1. Age, gender, degree and nationality

The research involved 48 female, 43 male university students, and one person who preferred not to disclose their gender. Their ages ranged from 18 to 45 years, with a mean age of 19.22 years. Of these, 47 students were studying for a Bachelor's degree, while 45 were enrolled in Master's degree programmes. The table below shows the nationalities of the students in numbers.

Table 14. Nationality of students.

Nationality	Number of students
Polish	45
Chinese	6
Rwandan	4

Ukrainian	3
Italian	3
British	3
Pakistani	2
Israeli	3
Bangladeshi	3
Jordanian	2
Norwegian	2
Indian	2
Portuguese	1
Swedish	1
Mexican	1
Albanian	1
Australian	1
Armenian	1
Kenyan	2
Spanish	2
Kyrgyz	1
American	1
Iranian	1
Tunisian	1

The students represented three main universities: the University of Technology, the Medical University and the University of Economics. The figure below shows the number of students from each institution.

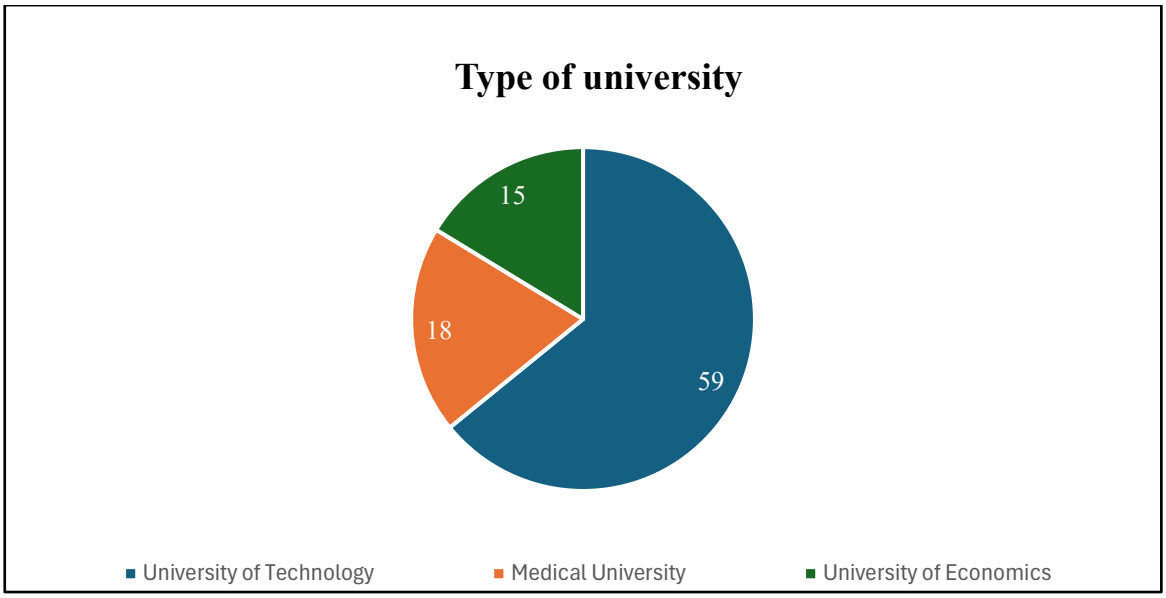

Figure 12. Type of university.

5.5.1.2. English learning duration and proficiency levels

Similarly to the teacher online questionnaire, the students were asked to specify the duration of their English language learning. The findings indicate that two subgroups, 11–15 years and 16–20 years, were predominant among the students, with 38 and 30 students in each group, respectively. The table below illustrates these results.

Table 15. Number of years learning English.

Number of students	Number of years learning English
12	21 years and more
30	16-20 years
38	11-15 years
7	6-10 years
5	1-5 years

The students' extensive experience with the English language is also reflected in their self-assessments of their English proficiency. The data indicate that they generally consider themselves to be at an advanced level. The table below presents the relevant data.

Table 16. Students' self-assessed level of English.

Number of students	Level of English
21	C2
40	C1
30	B2
1	B1

Unfortunately, the students' high self-assessments are not reflected in the possession of official certification, as 59 out of 92 students do not hold any such certificates. It should be noted, however, that those who do possess certificates can demonstrate their proficiency at a minimum of the B2 level according to the CEFR.

Table 17. Official certification.

Number of students	Type of certificate
59	No certificate
5	FCE
15	IELTS (6.0 and above)
6	CAE
1	PTE 4
1	PTE 5
5	CPE

5.5.1.3. Students vs teachers – self-reported English level

Self-reported English proficiency was measured using CEFR levels (A1–C2) and treated as ordinal data. Original categorical responses were recoded into an ordered scale (numeric 1–6 for visualization only), with all inferential analyses using ordinal-appropriate methods. Group differences between students and teachers were assessed via non-parametric tests, descriptive statistics, and graphical displays.

The Wilcoxon rank-sum test showed a significant difference ($W = 6025$, $p = 0.0057$), with a small effect size ($r = 0.196$). Students reported modestly higher proficiency than teachers (positive effect direction), despite substantial distributional overlap.

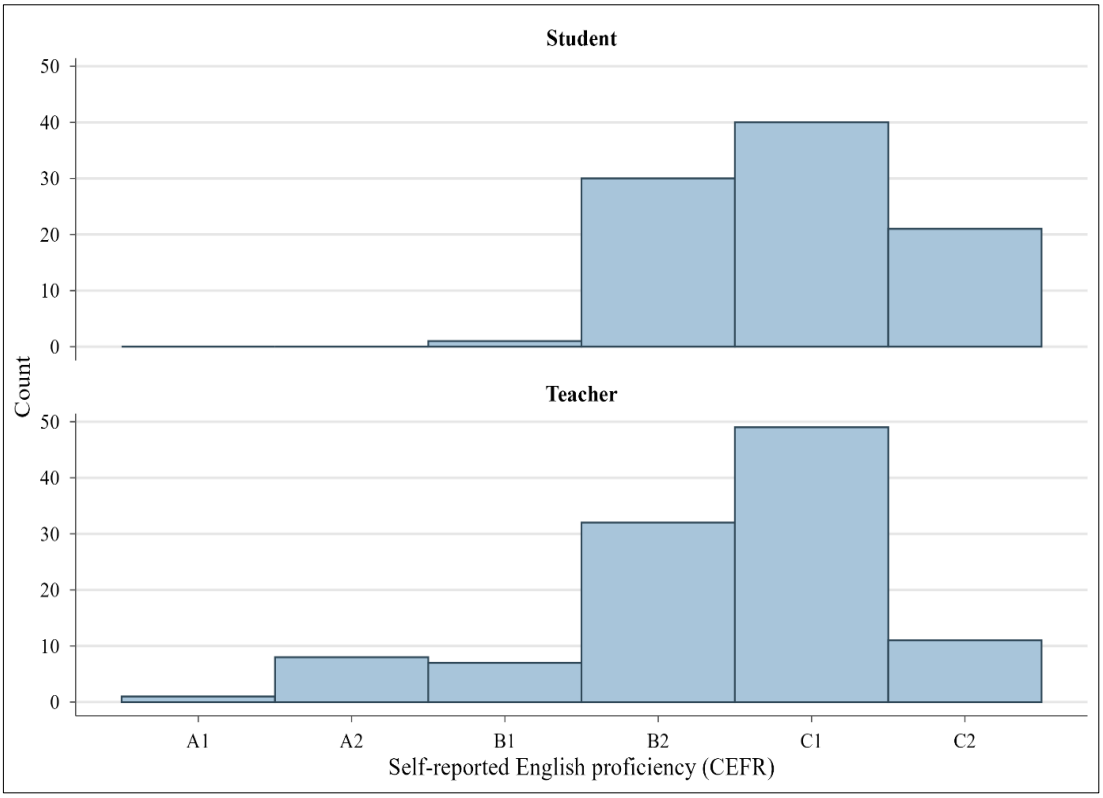

Figure 13. Self-reported English proficiency levels (CEFR A1–C2) separately for students and teachers.

For both groups, distributions concentrate at upper-intermediate/advanced levels (B2–C1). Students displayed a relatively narrow distribution centred around the C1 level, with some respondents reporting C2 proficiency and only a small number indicating lower proficiency levels. In contrast, teachers exhibited greater variability, with proficiency levels extending into the A2 and B1 ranges. Both share a C1 median, but students' distribution shifts modestly higher - consistent with the significant yet small Wilcoxon rank-sum difference.

Table 18. Descriptive statistics.

Type	N	Mean	Sd	q1	Median	q3
Student	92	4.88	0.768	4	5	5
Teacher	108	4.42	1.07	4	5	5

Table 18's descriptive statistics clarify Figure 13 patterns. Both groups share a C1 median and B2 - C1 IQR, but students report higher mean proficiency (M = 4.88, SD = 0.77) than teachers (M = 4.42, SD = 1.07). Teachers' larger SD reflects broader

dispersion and lower-tail extension. Together, these indicate a modest rightward shift in students' distribution rather than central tendency differences.

5.5.1.4. Students vs Teachers – certificates

The table below presents the number of official certificates teachers and students have.

Table 19. English proficiency certificates.

	No	Yes
Student	59	33
Teacher	39	69

A chi-square test showed a significant association between participant type and language certificate possession ($\chi^2(1) = 14.51$, $p < 0.001$). Teachers were substantially more likely to hold certificates than students (63.9% vs. 35.9%; Cramér's V = 0.27, small-to-moderate). Among certificate holders, types differed markedly: Fisher's exact test confirmed a highly significant association with participant type ($p < 0.001$). Students favoured standardized exams (Cambridge, IELTS; mostly B2–C1), while teachers showed heterogeneity across A1–C2 levels and non-standard certificates. Both concentrated at B2 - C1 on CEFR mapping, but teachers displayed broader dispersion.

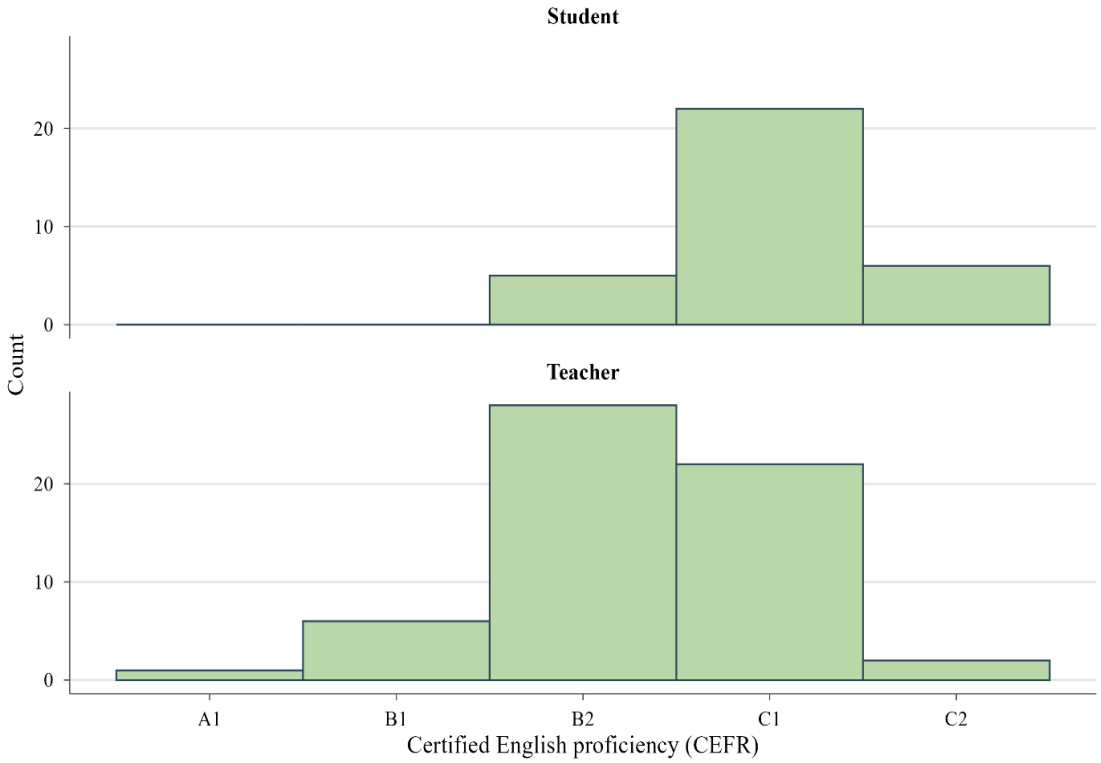

Figure 14. English proficiency levels (CEFR) among students and teachers holding a language certificate.

Students exhibited a relatively homogeneous proficiency profile, with most respondents reporting English proficiency at the C1 level, a smaller proportion at C2, and only a few indicating lower levels. In contrast, teachers demonstrated greater variability in their self-assessed proficiency, with responses spanning a broader range of CEFR levels, including A2 and B1. Although both peak at B2–C1, teachers span wider CEFR levels despite higher certificate ownership ($\chi^2(1) = 14.51$, $p < 0.001$; Cramér's V = 0.27).

5.5.1.5. Using English outside of university

The last question in this section concerned students' English practice outside the academic environment. The results show that 68 students use English on a daily basis whereas 24 do not. From the answers given it might be concluded that the respondents demonstrate varied but consistent use of English daily, grouped into five main clusters. The table below summarizes the answers.

Table 20. Using English outside of university.

Cluster	Key English Use contexts	Notes
Social Communication	• Talking/writing with friends; • Social media; • Casual conversation	• Frequent communication with international peers; • Code-switching noted
Professional / Academic	• Emails, reports, lectures, essays, research papers, • Teaching, tutoring	• Includes formal writing and teaching roles; • Digital pedagogy usage
Multimedia and Digital	• Watching videos/movies; • Gaming; • Software use with English interface	• Immersive media consumption supports language use
Pragmatic / Daily Necessity	• Daily communication where Polish is limited or unknown	• English as main functional language for daily life
International / Multicultural Contexts	• Communication in Erasmus or mixed nationality groups	• English as lingua franca facilitating intercultural exchange

It might be said that that the respondents use English primarily to maintain contact with foreign friends and peers. This includes both spoken and written modes, as well as social media and gaming platforms. Some foreign students studying in Polish engage in code-switching with Polish speakers. Secondly, it appears that for some students home contexts and studying contexts are intertwined, as the students rely on English in formal communication within their work and studies. This takes the form of writing emails, reports, essays, engaging in teaching at multiple proficiency levels and conducting research. In this case English functions as a medium for academic growth and professional collaborations. Thirdly, English-language media such as videos, movies, music and video games play a role in reinforcing daily language use and immersion. Several respondents also use English-language software interfaces extensively. Furthermore, for respondents less fluent in Polish or in international settings, English serves as a primary practical language for day-to-day communication, both spoken and written. Finally, English serves as the default language among international students and multicultural groups (e.g., Erasmus+ mobility contexts), enabling interaction despite differing native languages.

5.5.2. Studying in English

The second part of the survey focused on students' experience of studying in English. This involved their opinions concerning teaching provided in English by lecturers in thir faculty, assessment of EMI teachers' professional preparation, most common problems faced by students during EMI classes, provision of materials, dealing with problems and ways to improve.

5.5.2.1. Students' general opinion of the teaching provided in English by lecturers in their faculty/department

EMI students' general opinions concerning the teaching provided in English vary, as can be seen in the following table.

Table 21. Students' general opinion of the teaching provided in English by lecturers.

Very poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Very good
2	12	26	39	13

Of significant interest are the comments made by the students. The negative responses, i.e. those marked as very poor and poor, reveal significant concerns about lecturers' English language proficiency in EMI settings, particularly in technical and medical disciplines.

Limited fluency and lack of confidence with English lead some lecturers to rely solely on reading prepared materials without elaborating or responding effectively to questions asked by students. This results in communication barriers that hinder students' full understanding, especially for non-Polish speakers or international students. Additionally, pronunciation problems and frequent grammar mistakes further challenge comprehension.

The problem intensifies as teaching content becomes more specialized and detailed, requiring even greater precision in communication. Some lecturers' English capabilities vary widely, with many seen as insufficient considering the complexity of subjects like medicine.

To cope with these difficulties, university teachers employ various compensation strategies, such as outsourcing the reading of materials or requesting translations during lectures. Additionally, some lecturers resort to code-switching and explain concepts in

Polish. Unfortunately, this approach excludes non-Polish-speaking students. Below are some of the negative comments made by the students:

- *Professors do not understand English and cannot communicate correctly in English. It is broke English, poor polish translation and many important concepts are lost during these interactions. I can tell the professors do not understand me and therefore I need to simplify my questions and this leads to frustration.* [original wording]

- *Most of the elderly aged lectures have a very poor level of English. It is not sufficient to explain matters discussed during lectures. Additionally, the faculty hires Ukrainian professors who either do not speak English and only read presentations not able to answer any questions or even outsource the reading to assistant professors as they can't use English at all.* [original wording]

- *The majority of our lecturers struggle with English that goes beyond explaining their presentations or prepared materials. Especially professors teaching in my first year kept struggling with expressing their thoughts and also communicating with students and answering more detailed questions. I am Polish, so I can translate a lot of things between me and my professors, but it keeps getting more complicated as our knowledge progresses and gets more detailed.* [original wording]

As can be seen in the table above the answers varied and those who were neutral in their answers shed more light in their comments. First and foremost, the responses highlight significant variability in lecturers' English language proficiency in EMI settings, affecting teaching quality and student learning. While some lecturers communicate well

with fluency and solid vocabulary, many struggle with limited English skills, especially subject-specific terminology. Such a situation, in students' opinion, leads to over-reliance on reading prepared presentations, weak spontaneous explanations, poor pronunciation and grammatical errors that hinder comprehension. Poor grammar or unclear English in written tests and exam questions can negatively affect student grades, sometimes perceived as unfair by them.

Secondly, students frequently feel more proficient in English than their lecturers, which can affect classroom dynamics. To compensate, lecturers may use translation tools or depend on bilingual peers although this is not an ideal solution. It also appears that there are visible departmental and individual differences, with some areas performing much better than others.

Thirdly, time and content constraints further compound understanding difficulties, as lecturers often rush through content with heavy information load, limiting comprehension and interaction. Students' comments:

- *Some can speak without problems on complex subjects with good accent and overall skill, some speak very poorly, and there are a few who can't speak at all.* [original wording]

- *The level of English wasn't that bad in general but in terms of explaining the topic of the subject it was worse. I think that there was a lack of technical vocabulary. A lot was explained literally from polish which could be not understood by the foreign students.* [original wording]

- *It's hard for me to specify if my opinion is good or bad, as I have to consider all the professors at once and they all have different levels of proficiency. Some of them have better accent, some have it worse, also their vocabulary varies. Sometimes it seems that they poorly share their knowledge, despite having wide knowledge in the topic, because of the barrier that the foreign language gives. I have to admit that I am in awe when it*

comes to the fact that they teach us in the foreign language and don't feel bad that their students may have a higher proficiency in it. [original wording]

- *Some lecturers do not speak English at all, they use Google translate for basic conversations or completely avoid students' questions. Others do not have vocabulary for the subject, making simple explanations unnecessarily convoluted and long. On the other hand, there is a group that is well prepared for the subject, and communicate clearly despite pronunciation and grammar mistakes. I chose neutral because it is 50/50.* [original wording]

- *I think that the english level the lecturers have is, more or less, average which makes me feel like I know the language better than they should.* [original wording]

- *I feel some departments speak really well whereas some department professors really struggle to explain the concepts in English and this becomes really difficult for the students to understand the information being taught. Some times when the professors are really struggling to find the word in English we have to try to guess the word and complete the sentences for the professors. But in any way it doesn't impact our academic drastically so it's completely understandable.* [original wording]

- *The lecturers want to present much data in short time.* [original wording]

- *Some of the classes consists on reading the slides in front of the class, in others they go really fast and is not possible understand completely the topics that are being given* [original wording]

Despite the afore-mentioned challenges, many students still grasp core concepts and appreciate lecturers' efforts to teach in a non-native language, showing a level of acceptance alongside the language-based frustrations.

Most students, however, appreciate EMI lecturers efforts in delivering classes in English, as can be seen in the table above. They perceive lecturers' English proficiency as good to very good, allowing them to understand the teaching adequately despite occasional pronunciation, grammar or vocabulary challenges. Although pronunciation and fluency vary across individuals, with some lecturers struggling more than others, communication remains effective overall. Students value lecturers' efforts to teach in English and perceive a positive learning environment with well-organized lectures and supportive faculty. Gaps in technical vocabulary and the occasional use of Polish are noted but typically tolerated as part of practical teaching challenges.

Overall, the quality of English instruction provides a solid foundation for learning, with some students particularly motivated by exposure to high-level English and international teaching environments. However, there remains an acknowledged potential for improving language clarity and consistency. Students' comments:

- *I chose "good" as most of the lecturers and professors speak excellent, clear English, and they can convey the ideas successfully and easily. I didn't mark "very good," as in some cases the English of some lecturers lacks decent pronunciation, which causes misunderstandings.* [original wording]

- *The variation of levels of English among the teachers leans towards good in majority.* [original wording]

- *I understand everything, but sometimes small mistakes are made, which may be confusing to those who English is not their first language.* [original wording]

- *Every professor is proficient in English. While there could be some moments when lecturer forgets something or uses incorrect grammar, I believe those moments do*

not hinder the understanding of the presented material.
[original wording]

- *All of the classes are in english and professor are willing to help as if we don't understand a certain word.*
[original wording]

The students' comments indicate that, overall, the English proficiency of the teaching staff is perceived as good to very good. Lecturers are praised for using clear, fluent and understandable English. The ideas are conveyed successfully and without major difficulties. One student notes that all professors are proficient in English and that occasional slips - such as forgetting a word or using incorrect grammar - do not obstruct comprehension of the material. This suggests that functional intelligibility rather than formal accuracy is the real focus, which is typical in English-Medium Instruction (EMI) settings where communication is meaning-oriented.

At the same time, the feedback emphasises some significant nuances. One student points out that the pronunciation of some lecturers is not always clear, which can lead to misunderstandings. This reveals that pronunciation and intelligibility are salient issues for learners whose first language is not English. Another comment mentions that "the variation of levels of English among the teachers leans towards good in majority," which signals an uneven distribution of language competence across the teaching staff. Such variability can create different learning experiences within the same programme and underlines the need for more consistent language standards.

Despite these observations, students generally report that they understand the content and that support is available when they encounter unfamiliar words or expressions. One respondent notes that all classes are conducted in English and that professors are willing to help when a particular word is not understood. This reflects a supportive and responsive classroom environment, where teachers scaffold comprehension through clarification and repetition. Overall, the feedback suggests that while the majority of lecturers meet the functional language requirements of EMI, there is room for improvement in pronunciation, consistency, and explicit strategies for handling minor errors in a way that maintains clarity and confidence among students.

5.5.2.2. Students' self-reported English level vs general opinion of EMI teaching

Students' self-reported English proficiency (ordered CEFR categories, ordinal) was compared across general EMI opinion categories: *very poor*, *poor*, *neutral*, *good*, *very good*. A Kruskal–Wallis rank-sum test assessed group differences, with Spearman's rank correlation examining the monotonic proficiency-opinion relationship. Figure 15 shows CEFR distributions by category.

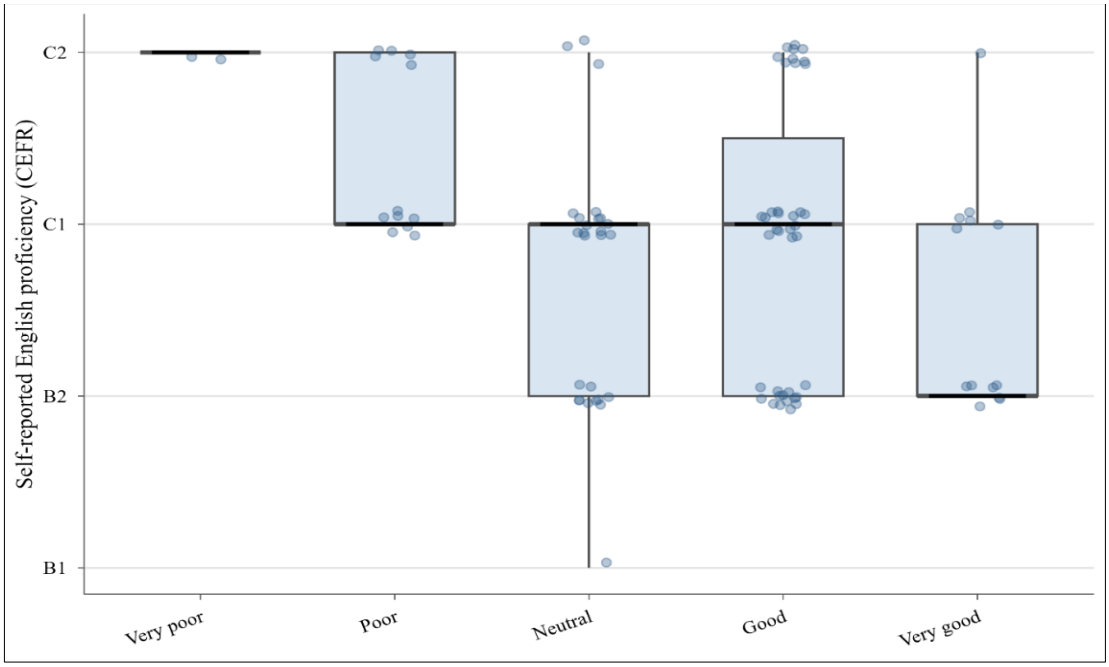

Figure 15. Self-reported English proficiency (CEFR) by general opinion of EMI teaching.

The Kruskal–Wallis test revealed significant differences in self-reported English proficiency across EMI opinion groups ($\chi^2(4) = 14.17$, $p = 0.007$, $\eta^2[H] = 0.12$), confirmed by Spearman's correlation ($\rho = -0.25$, $p = 0.02$). Groups: very poor (n = 2), poor (12), neutral (26), good (39), very good (13).

Figure 15 shows higher-proficiency students (C1–C2) overrepresented in very poor/poor opinions, versus broader B2–C1/C2 distributions in positive groups. This suggests proficient students critically appraise EMI delivery, interaction or quality more acutely - though interpret very poor cautiously (n = 2).

Overall, proficiency shapes EMI evaluations, with skilled students more demanding, underscoring linguistic competence's role in perceived teaching quality.

5.5.2.3. Students' assessment of EMI teachers' professional preparation

Assessing EMI teachers' professional preparation was another area which the students had to comment on. The following table presents the students' answers.

Table 22. Students' assessment of EMI teachers' professional preparation

Very poor	Poor	Neutral	Good	Very good
1	12	18	47	14

As can be seen the answers are mostly positive, which is also reflected in the students' comments. Similar to a previous point, the responses given by students reveal a wide variation in English proficiency among lecturers, with some departments and teachers exhibiting strong mastery and others struggling significantly. Despite generally possessing the necessary technical vocabulary, some lecturers face challenges with pronunciation, grammar and fluency that occasionally hinder communication clarity.

A common teaching strategy is strong reliance on reading slides or presentations, sometimes translated poorly from Polish, which limits in-depth explanations. Nevertheless, most lecturers appear well-prepared and provide materials reasonably well, though the sharing of resources can be inconsistent.

Students recognize lecturers' efforts and dedication to teaching in a second language and adapt to communication gaps, often guessing meaning without significant academic detriment. Some use of Polish and code-switching is noted, especially where English proficiency is limited, which can exclude non-Polish speakers.

Overall, while many students find English teaching sufficiently clear and effective, there is acknowledged room for improvement in fluency, vocabulary and material quality to enhance learning experiences. Students' comments:

- *They have the knowledge and vocabulary the course requires* [original wording]
- *Well equipped with technical English* [original wording]
- *Every lecturer has done enough preparation* [original wording]

- *Teachers are passionate and prepare well* [original wording]
- *Lecturers always come prepared* [original wording]
- *Course outlines prepared* [original wording]
- *Professors unable to present without reading slides* [original wording]
- *Some professors only read a presentation* [original wording]
- *A few have problems with phonetics and mispronounce words* [original wording]
- *Grammatical mistakes* [original wording]
- *Pronunciation could improve* [original wording]
- *Sometimes lectures in Polish* [original wording]
- *Lecturers mix English and Polish* [original wording]
- *Some presentations are poorly translated from Polish* [original wording]
- *Materials mostly available via Distance Education Platform* [original wording]

The students' comments suggest that the teaching staff possess solid subject-matter knowledge and the appropriate technical vocabulary required for the course, which is a key prerequisite for effective EMI instruction. Teachers' professionalism is also highlighted in the remarks such as "well equipped with technical English" and that they "always come prepared." The note that "every lecturer has done enough preparation" and that "teachers are passionate and prepare well" further reinforces the perception of professionalism and commitment.

However, alongside praise for preparation and content expertise, students point to significant methodological and language related limitations. A recurring critique that "professors are unable to present without reading slides" and that "some professors only read a presentation" may be accounted for by the fact that, as the interviews revealed, some teachers do not feel confident during this type of instruction. Their teacher centred, text dependent style of delivery - relying heavily on prepared slides rather than engaging in spontaneous explanation or interaction - can reduce classroom dynamism and limit opportunities for clarification, negotiation of meaning, and learner engagement, which are especially important in EMI contexts.

From a linguistic perspective, students signal that while teachers generally function well in English, there are noticeable issues with accuracy and intelligibility. These remarks indicate that although the teachers' knowledge and vocabulary are adequate, their spoken English is not always polished or consistently clear, which may occasionally hinder comprehension, particularly for non-native speakers. The observation that "some presentations are poorly translated from Polish" also points to challenges in register and phraseology, where expressions may sound unnatural or inaccurate in English.

Another important theme is language alternation and partial use of Polish. Students note that "lecturers mix English and Polish" and that there are "sometimes lectures in Polish." This suggests that Polish serves as a supportive language during instruction, and might be a sign that some teachers are not yet fully comfortable delivering all content in English.

On the organisational side, students appreciate that "course outlines [are] prepared" and that "materials [are] mostly available via Distance Education Platform," which shows that the administrative and logistical framework of the course is well-structured. Ready access to syllabi and materials supports transparency, planning, and independent study, which are important components of student-centred learning.

Overall, the feedback paints a picture of competent, knowledgeable and well-prepared teachers who effectively use technical English but who also display some limitations in delivery style, language accuracy and consistency in using English.

5.5.2.4. Most common challenges faced by students during EMI classes

The respondents were also asked about the most common problems they faced during EMI classes. In the survey they could choose more than one option. The responses reveal some concerns highlighted in the previous two sections and highlight multifaceted communication challenges in English-Medium Instruction settings. Language proficiency (i.e. pronunciation and grammatical errors) was chosen by the respondents as having the biggest impact on their understanding of the classes. Monotonous and too theoretical classes also ranked high in the survey, preventing the students from gaining a lot.

However, of particular interest are the comments made by the students. It appears that a key issue is restricted direct communication between lecturers and individual students, as class representatives often act as intermediaries, potentially causing delays or breaches in confidentiality. Language proficiency barriers affect both teachers and students, particularly in specialized scientific and technical content. This may result in misunderstandings, hesitations and occasional misinformation. To alleviate some issues, students suggest advance topic notification and the provision of authentic English learning materials.

Lecturers sometimes resort to translation tools (e.g., Google Translate) or switch to Polish to compensate for linguistic shortcomings, which can marginalize non-Polish-speaking students. Presentations tend to be basic or overly reliant on reading slides, limiting in-depth explanation and interactive engagement. Pronunciation difficulties and limited specialized vocabulary appear as recurring obstacles.

Despite these challenges, some students report no significant problems, suggesting variability in lecturer proficiency and teaching quality. Concerns remain about some lecturers' preparation and subject mastery, further complicating effective EMI.

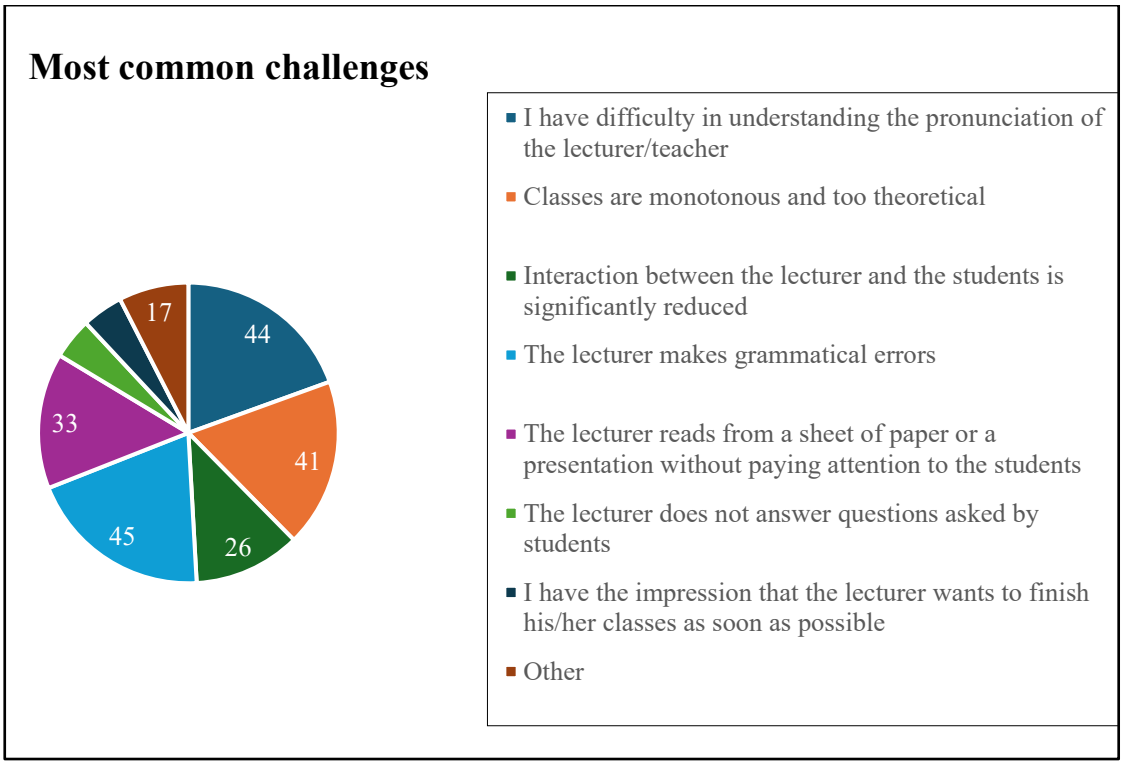

Figure 16. Most common challenges faced by students during EMI classes.

5.5.2.5. Students' self-reported English level vs number of challenges faced in EMI classes

Spearman's rank correlation examined the relationship between students' self-reported English proficiency (ordered CEFR categories, ordinal) and the number of EMI class challenges reported (total selected categories per respondent). Figure 17 shows challenge counts by CEFR level, with black diamonds marking group means.

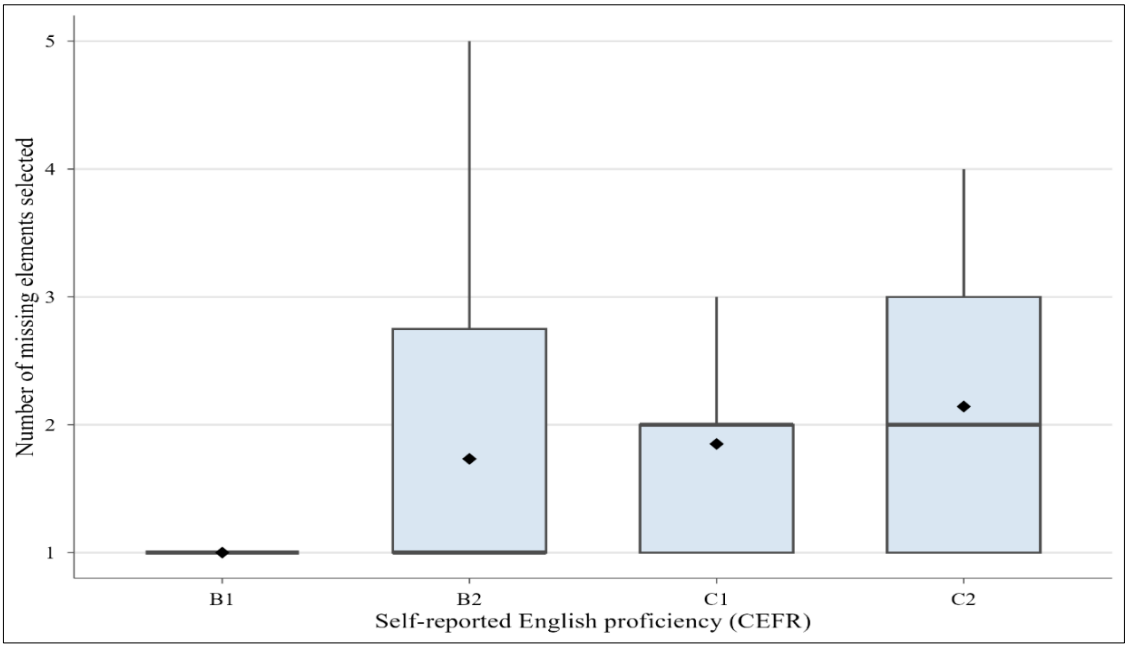

Figure 17. Number of challenges faced in EMI classes by self-reported English proficiency (CEFR).

Spearman's rank correlation revealed a weak but significant positive association between students' self-reported English proficiency and reported EMI challenges ($\rho = 0.21$, $p = 0.04$).

Figure 17 above shows a modest upward trend: B2 students reported fewer challenges (*M* lowest), while C1/C2 groups had higher means with broader, overlapping distributions - greatest variability at C2. The small B1 subgroup (*n* low) limits interpretation. This pattern suggests higher-proficiency students may notice/report more diverse issues (e.g., delivery, organisation), though the weak link indicates only a modest tendency.

5.5.2.6. Provision of materials

An important element of university education are the materials from which the students can learn and expand their knowledge. The vast majority of the respondents confirmed that such materials are provided by the lecturers, as can be seen in the following table.

Table 23. Provision of materials.

	Yes	No	I don't know. I don't use them at all.
Do your lecturers provide you with teaching materials in English, e.g., on a remote learning platform (Moodle, Teams, etc.), or via email?	84	8	
Are the teaching materials provided helpful in preparing for classes?	69	13	10

In their comments, the students revealed mixed experiences with teaching materials in EMI contexts. While the materials are thought of as helpful for understanding and exam preparation, concerns arise regarding timing, organisation and language quality. Early access to materials is desired to facilitate active learning and question preparation, as mentioned by one of the students, “Would appreciate if materials were available before the lecture” [original wording].

Secondly, the quality of language and translation is variable, with some materials suffering from poor translation, inclusion of Polish language content, or AI-generated errors. This problem particularly affects non-Polish-speaking students. Although technical vocabulary and discipline-specific terms present challenges, materials generally align with course content and examination requirements.

Thirdly, students often use materials as supplementary tools for self-paced learning, especially when lectures are content-heavy or fast-paced. However, material availability is inconsistent, with some courses providing little or late resources, occasionally prompting reliance on textbooks or independent study.

In general, despite these challenges, many students are satisfied with the usefulness of the materials and acknowledge the dedication of lecturers in preparing teaching aids.

5.5.2.7. Dealing with language difficulties

Another question in the survey addressed how students cope with language difficulties when studying content in English. Participants were able to select more than one option from the available responses. Using the Internet, including online search engines and dictionaries, emerged as the most commonly employed strategy. Additionally, students

often sought assistance from individuals with greater knowledge when encountering problems. The table below presents the strategies that the students used.

Table 24. Ways of dealing with language problems.

		Number of students
1	I type the problem question into an internet search engine and look for the answer	63
2	I use an online dictionary	54
3	I check in reference materials (e.g. grammar textbook)	20
4	I ask the question to a person more knowledgeable than me	49
5	Other	9

Again, of particular interest are the students' comments concerning their language problem solution. The responses reveal varied experiences with language barriers in EMI settings. Some students face challenges when lecturers struggle to explain complex material in English, leading to truncated or abandoned explanations. Others adapt their own language use to match less fluent tutors or rely on peer support from native speakers for clarifications.

Some students compensate independently through self-study or seek help using large language models like ChatGPT and Claude to understand difficult content or linguistic aspects. There are, of course, some students who do not report any significant language difficulties. This might indicate individual variation in coping with EMI challenges.

In general, this diversity underscores the importance of flexible support mechanisms, including peer collaboration and digital tools, to address linguistic gaps in EMI learning environments.

5.5.2.8. Language support from university

Although EMI students encounter some language difficulties, their responses to whether they would expect language support from the university are not straightforward. As shown in the following figure, only 19 students would welcome such support, 37 students reject it, and 36 students remain undecided.

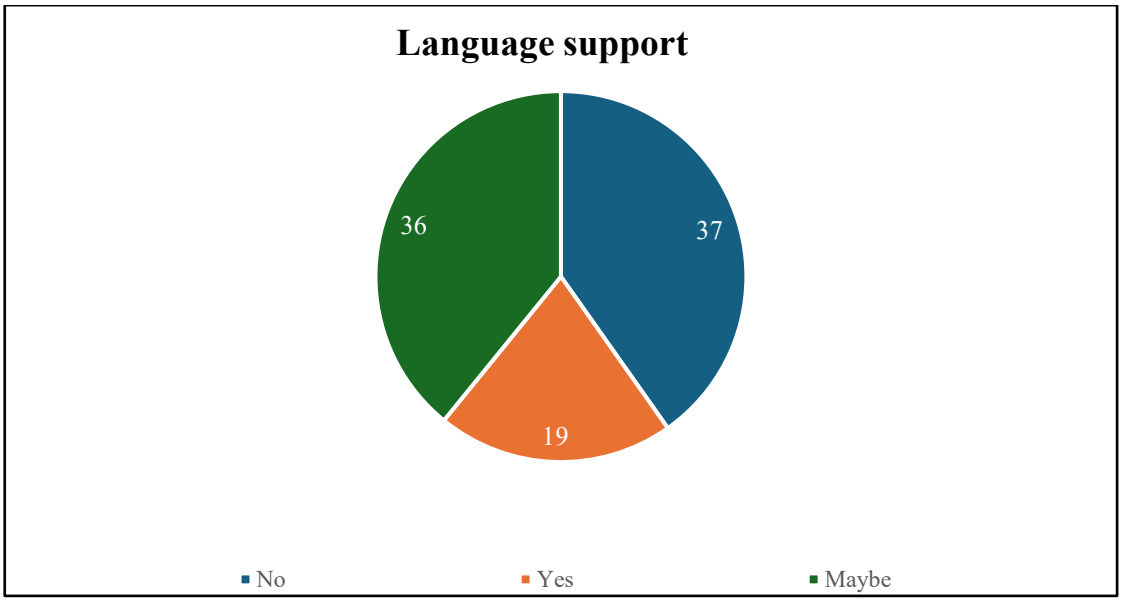

Figure 18. Language support.

Those who were positive enumerated a number of suggestions that they thought would be beneficial. First of all, they emphasized the need for greater English-language accessibility across university infrastructure, including campus signage, equipment instructions, administrative communications, and resources to avoid marginalizing EMI students. There is recognition that international and master's students currently lack access to language classes, which were previously available at bachelor levels. Some students expressed their wish that language courses should be organised for professional development of lecturers' English proficiency. These could include tailored workshops, seminars, particularly focusing on technical English and oral skills. Furthermore, adequate English communication channels within administration and student services are highlighted as necessary for inclusive student engagement. Last but not least, provision of Polish classes for non-native speakers and availability of supplementary materials such as dictionaries were proposed as part of the support framework. However, a few respondents expressed uncertainty about how best to address these language support needs.

5.5.2.9. Availability of resources

EMI students also expressed their views on whether the university where they study is well equipped with English-language teaching aids (e.g., library, remote learning platform). The responses indicate that 36 students were positive, 18 negative and 38 uncertain.

In their comments the respondents mentioned that they generally view university teaching aids and resources in English positively, particularly appreciating digital platforms (USOS, Teams, Moodle) that enable easy access to course materials and communication with lecturers. The remote learning platforms are highlighted as key facilitators for flexible, anytime learning. However, there were some concerns regarding language and translation issues on university websites and schedules, leading to occasional confusion. Library services are believed to provide valuable English-language books and online materials but some limitations were mentioned in quantity and diversity, especially in digital resources.

5.5.2.10. Missing elements in EMI classes

The last question in the student questionnaire concerned what they students found missing during the classes. A with previous examples the students could choose from a number of available options. The following table presents the data.

Table 25. Missing elements during the classes.

		Number of students
1	Talking freely with the lecturer	23
2	A simple explanation of difficult concepts	55
3	Engaging and interactive classes	34
4	Pair/group work so that we can discuss the issues during the classes	13
5	Guidelines on how to prepare for the exam/test	39
6	Other	8

A significant number of students emphasized the need for difficult concepts to be explained in simple terms, preferably using plain language. Given that the survey was conducted among students in science, technology, engineering and medical disciplines, it is evident that clear and accessible explanations of complex concepts would greatly benefit them. Furthermore, students highly valued clear guidance on exam and test preparation, as well as engaging and interactive classes. Some students also noted a lack of opportunities for conversation with lecturers.

Students' comments highlight several key areas for improving support for English-speaking EMI students. One of them is early access to lecture materials, which is crucial to allow students to prepare questions and deepen their understanding.

Another area included lecturers' language proficiency issues; in particular their ability to understand and respond correctly in English, as well as the quality and clarity of exam questions, which are sometimes compromised by grammatical errors, negatively affecting fair assessment.

Spearman's rank correlation examined the relationship between students' self-reported English proficiency (ordered CEFR categories, ordinal) and reported missing EMI elements (total selected categories per respondent). Figure 19 shows distributions by CEFR level, with black diamonds marking group means.

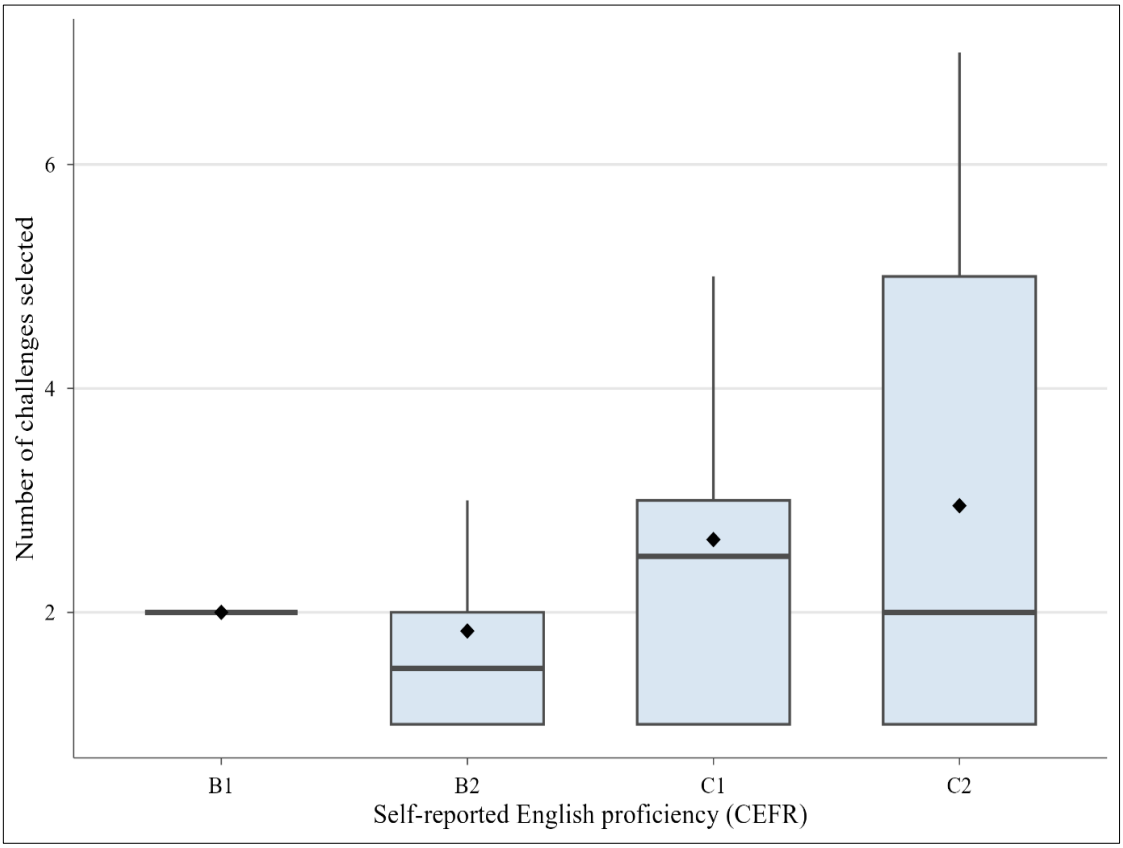

Figure 19. Number of missing elements in EMI classes by self-reported English proficiency (CEFR).

No significant association emerged between students' self-reported English proficiency and reported missing EMI elements (Spearman's $\rho = 0.15$, $p = 0.14$).

Figure 19 reveals slight upward descriptive trends (higher CEFR → marginally more elements), but substantial overlap and small differences in medians/means across B2 - C2; interpret B1 cautiously (n low). Distributions lack a clear gradient.

Thus, proficiency minimally influences perceived EMI shortcomings, with comparable unmet expectations across levels.

5.6. Classroom observations

It is important to note that the observed student groups attending various forms of English instruction were relatively small, rarely exceeding twenty participants. All lectures took place in traditional classrooms arranged in orderly rows, with students typically seated in the front. This arrangement facilitated session management. Additionally, the composition of observed groups varied by subject area. Three distinct groups were identified during the observations: native Polish students, incoming Erasmus+ students and full-time international students.

5.6.1. Lectures

The lectures represented the largest subset of classroom observation sessions, totalling thirteen. Depending on the subject, lecture durations ranged from 75 to 90 minutes. These were rarely traditional lectures where the EMI instructor spoke continuously while students took notes. On the contrary, following 20-minute teacher monologues, practical question-and-answer sessions occurred during which the teacher actively engaged the learners. This pattern was common across all observed lectures.

5.6.1.1. Structure of the lecture

The pattern of the lecture proceeded in a predictable order. Three lecture starters could be observed: firstly, small talk between the lecturer and the students about the students' time spent at weekends or holidays; secondly, the teacher's brief reference to a previous lecture, followed by general questions to consolidate the students' knowledge; thirdly, the teacher's explanation of the content of the lecture in question.

As mentioned above the lectures were not traditional, meaning the teacher did not talk all the time. Instead, they were divided into a few 20-minute sessions during which the lecturers introduced the new content, very often by giving explanations or definitions of difficult concepts or telling some stories connected with the topic of the lecture. Afterwards, the teachers usually asked comprehension questions to the groups of students to make sure it was understood. The teachers also provided numerous practical examples to help students consolidate the knowledge from the lecture.

At the conclusion of the lectures, some lecturers recapitulated the material covered to provide students with a sense of closure. Others informed the students about the topic of the next lecture. It should be noted that lectures often form part of clusters

with other instructional methods, such as projects or laboratory classes. Therefore, during the closing stages of certain lectures, instructors outlined the subsequent steps students needed to take or highlighted essential information required to successfully complete related projects.

5.6.1.2. The use of audio-visual aids

During the lectures all the teachers mostly used a data projector, a laptop computer with access to the Internet and PowerPoint presentations, which were indispensable for successful delivery of the lectures. Bearing in mind that the observed sessions encompassed various scientific disciplines and the scope of topics was extensive, the content included in the presentations was essential for students to understand the complexity of the message and also served as a framework for both the EMI practitioners and the students during the lecture. Predominantly it included definitions of difficult concepts, numerous graphic organisers in the form of charts, graphs, tables, formulas, pictures and short videos, some of which had been taken from scientific sources and others from specific educational websites or teachers' own experiences. These were to illustrate the complexity of problems, visualise some technical issues and support what the teachers aimed to explain to the students.

There were also instances of teachers using traditional chalkboards or electronic tablets serving as whiteboards connected to the data projector to explain certain concepts or provide additional examples. This was particularly important in lectures with groups of international students when teachers wrote mathematical equations that complied with European Union standards for codifying formulas to ensure their universality across countries.

5.6.1.3. Teachers' use of English

The observed teachers demonstrated various degrees of English command. The aim, however, was not to assess the teachers' level of English but to focus on certain aspects of the language that contributed to the successful delivery of the lectures.

One of the elements examined was the *small talk* occurring at the beginning of the lectures. This form of initiating the session proved to be largely ineffective, typically involving one or two questions posed by the teacher, which elicited reluctant responses from students, prompting the teacher to move quickly to the next stage of the lecture.

The second element was *code-switching*. The observation sessions and follow-up discussions revealed that this communication strategy was dependent on the constitution of the group and teachers' and students' command of English. Of the thirteen lectures observed, two sessions included monolingual Polish groups, and eleven sessions included international student groups. Within the international groups, three sub groups could be mentioned: firstly, groups comprising Polish and international students; secondly, a monolingual Chinese group; thirdly, international students from different countries. The table below presents the occurrence and instances of code switching within groups.

Table 26. Examples of code-switching during lectures.

	Presence of code switching		
	Yes	No	Examples
Monolingual Polish groups (2 lectures)	x		• *Jak będzie po angielsku "połamać język?"* • *Można dalej?* • *I don't know how to say "gęsia skórka" in English?*
Groups comprising Polish and international students (4 lectures)	x		• *Sprawdźmy obecność…* • *Jak będzie "stirrup" in Polish?* • *Let me tell you a joke.*
Monolingual Chinese student groups (1 lecture)		x	
International groups of students (1 lecture)		x	

In multilingual groups the teachers usually refrained from switching between the languages. This was done so as not exclude the foreigners from the lecture. There were, however, instances when code-switching was employed. One of them was the teacher's inability to remember the specific English vocabulary item and resulted in the teacher asking students for help in their mother tongue. One teacher told jokes or anecdotes in Polish to introduce relaxing atmosphere, but this was incidental. The examples mentioned in the table above are characteristic of intersentential and intrasentantial switches. There were, however, groups composed entirely of non-Polish students, and in these groups, no instances of code switching were observed. All the recorded instances

of code-switching support the interviewees' answers discussed in section 5.4.9. of this work highlighting teachers' sensitivity and conscious use of appropriate forms of communication.

The third element examined was *classroom language*. Teachers' abilities to structure and signpost the lecture were the key aspects of interest during the observation sessions. It was observed that this aspect varied depending on the teacher: some used classroom language phrases frequently and intentionally, while others were more economical with their use. Post-observation discussions revealed that those who used such language intentionally felt their lectures had greater coherence and were easier to conduct, as they could better guide the students. Conversely, some teachers primarily followed their slides to maintain the flow of the lecture. The most often used phrases were as follows: 'It's good to remember …'; 'In a minute we'll discuss other examples…'; 'Let's go further …'; 'Please, write it down…'; 'Now …'; 'Have a look …'; 'Now we can go …'; 'OK, let's come back …'; 'So …'; 'I'm going to start …'; 'Look at this …'; 'As you see…'; 'Last time we …'; 'Today …'; 'We put it here …'.

The last element examined during the lectures was teachers' use of *specialist language*, i.e., vocabulary and structures. This again varied across the lectures observed. High intensity of such language was visible during lectures delivered at the faculty of civil engineering, applied mathematics or the institute of physics. These highly scientific fields of study required such language. Concrete structures, theory of relativity, laws of Newton, calculus and differential equations are just examples of such use. Of particular interest here are the answers given by the teachers in post-observation discussions. Phrases such as, 3^2 *– three squared*, *2/2 – two over two*, 5^3 *– five to the power of 3*, or *the effect of friction on speed* are not taught during general English classes at schools or language courses. They require sound knowledge of the content. Those who used such specialist language said that they had watched YouTube tutorials and videos or read reference books in English before teaching such subjects for the first time. Others consulted specialist bilingual dictionaries and practised such phrases before delivering lectures for the first time. These answers are in line with answers given by the teachers during the online questionnaires and interview sessions. With time it became routine and the teachers used them with ease. Still being able to use such structures requires careful organisation of the didactic process.

5.6.2. Laboratory classes

This subset of five laboratory sessions differed from the lectures in one key aspect: they were significantly quieter, and the teacher's use of English was kept to a minimum. One reason for this was that the laboratory classes followed a different organisational pattern and were more practical in nature. It should be noted that all observed laboratory classes were divided into thematic blocks, with the completion of each sometimes spanning two or three 90-minute sessions. Occasionally, observation sessions took place in the middle of such a thematic block, during which students were continuing tasks from previous laboratory classes.

Students were expected to acquire skills essential for achieving the laboratory class objectives, which varied across sessions - from process logistics to designing a 3D artificial limb. Firstly, the teacher outlined the problem to be addressed. Secondly, students received tasks pre-uploaded to the LMS for continuous access. Thirdly, they used specialized software on laptops or desktops to complete the tasks. Upon completion, students uploaded their work to the LMS for teacher assessment.

5.6.2.1.Teachers' use of English

As mentioned above, the teachers' use of English was much more limited compared to the lectures. Still the observation sessions allowed to capture the language they used during these classes. Firstly, it must be said that the teachers' language was more concerned with signposting and guiding the students during the laboratory classes. Therefore, structures such as 'Let's start…'; 'Now, let's …'; 'Can I have your attention …'; 'Let's move further on …'; 'First of all, …'; 'And the next step of the lab is …' were common. Attention management markers like 'Can I have your attention …' help redirect focus amid comprehension challenges in EMI classrooms. Sequencing and scaffolding phrases such as 'First of all, …' 'Now, let's …' and 'next step' chunk information effectively, reducing cognitive load for non-native listeners. Inclusive engagement through 'Let's' builds rapport, mitigating frustration from bidirectional incomprehensibility between teachers and students. In contexts with student proficiency gaps, these explicit markers compensate for implicit discourse norms unfamiliar to L2 learners, enhancing clarity and interaction - key in teacher training for language support. Without them, lecturers might risk disengagement.

Secondly, depending on the laboratory classes, each of which used a specific software package, the teachers used more technical language in order to guide the students through the different functions that software offered. Phrases such as ‘Click on the file ...’; ‘Go to the options and choose …’; ‘Save as …’; ‘Upload it to the LMS…’ , were used on a regular basis. Procedural instruction phrases like ‘Click on the file ...’; ‘Go to the options and choose …’; ‘Save as …’; ‘Upload it to the LMS…’ deliver procedural scaffolding in EMI settings. Step-by-step directives provide task guidance, reducing cognitive overload for the EMI students navigating digital tools. Shared reference through ‘it’, ‘the file’, and ‘LMS’ assumes visual context, fostering joint attention. Conciseness of imperatives prioritizes action over elaboration, suiting time-constrained labs.

Thirdly, one observed teacher repeatedly used positive reinforcement phrases like 'Yeah!', 'Perfect!', 'OK!', 'No problem!', 'Yes!' and 'Very good!'. These provided motivational feedback through instant validation to sustain task engagement, error tolerance by normalizing mistakes (e.g., 'No problem!') to ease frustration, and classroom rapport via high-energy tone for diverse proficiencies. In post-observation discussion, when confronted with these phrases, she noted their natural, unintentional use, emphasizing emotional encouragement over detailed correction. While improving retention and participation, such strategies require cultural sensitivity to avoid perceived patronization.

5.6.2.2. Interaction patterns

In contrast to the lectures, which followed the lockstep procedure with the teacher leading the whole group, three interaction patterns were observed: whole-class work, pair work and individual work. The choice of the interaction pattern depended on the stage of the laboratory class. The whole-class work usually occurred at the onset of the laboratory class when the teacher explained the task to the students, which was similar to the lectures. Next individual work was observed when the students worked on their own to carry out the task. Pair work was noticed when the students faced some difficulties, and they consulted their partner. While students engaged in laboratory work, teachers supervised and provided assistance as needed.

5.6.2.3. Code-switching

All the observed laboratory classes were done among groups of students of different nationalities. Code-switching, as a communication strategy, was usually observed among both teachers and students. In most cases these were just individual words or sentences. In the case of students, code-switching was employed when they faced a problem while completing the tasks. They usually asked their partners to compare the results, or they asked the teacher for help in public. Sometimes native Polish students individually approached the teacher and asked questions in Polish.

5.6.3. Project-based sessions

The third subset of observation sessions differed from other tools in that project-based sessions were structured into discrete stages, which students completed sequentially to earn their semester grade. These stages varied according to subject-specific requirements, resulting in distinct session formats across the three observations and revealing varied interaction patterns.

In the first session, the instructor conducted individual check-ins with students, eliciting progress reports on their project stages. These one-to-one discussions addressed emergent challenges, after which students resumed independent work under occasional instructor monitoring. The instructor functioned primarily as a mentor, offering targeted advice and highlighting critical task-completion steps.

The second session emphasized chalkboard practice, during which the instructor and students collaboratively solved mathematical equations essential for designing concrete structures. This was followed by an analysis of numerous case studies illustrating instances of faulty workmanship and incorrect calculations that resulted in structural failures.

In the third session, students presented findings from one stage of their five-stage research project to peers, adhering to instructor guidelines. Following each presentation, the instructor provided feedback on students' adherence to these guidelines. In this monolingual Polish group, very few examples of student and teacher code switching were recorded. These were intrasentential and intersentential switches. Examples are presented in the following table.

Table 27. Code switching in laboratory classes.

	Teacher code-switching	Student code-switching
Monolingual Polish group	• *Jakby Pani była uprzejma podać kabel…* • *Wiktoria się spóźniła, ja sobie to odnotuję.* • *Coś zepsułam…*	• While checking the attendance: *Jestem.*

One observed instance of teacher code-switching illustrates compensatory translanguaging: phrases such as 'Jakby Pani była uprzejma podać kabel…' ('If you would be so kind to pass the cable') politely soften commands to foster inclusion; 'Wiktoria się spóźniła, ja sobie to odnotuję' ('Wiktoria is late; I will note it down') manages discipline narratively; and 'Coś zepsułam…' ('I broke something…') provides affective self-repair. These support rapport, efficiency and anxiety reduction amid proficiency gaps, aligning with bilingual EMI strategies.

In contrast, the student's 'Jestem' ('I am [here]') during roll call reflects an automatic L1 reflex that expedites routines and signals Polish solidarity for comfort under linguistic pressure. Given the routinised nature of attendance procedures, the use of Polish may reflect a habitual communicative response or a preference for linguistic economy in a low-stakes interaction. Unlike the teacher's more deliberate use of Polish for pedagogical and interpersonal purposes, the student's contribution appears to have been spontaneous and context-specific. These patterns reflect broader EMI contexts worldwide, where pedagogical needs frequently take precedence over rigid monolingual policies.

5.6.4. Classes

Classes formed the fourth subset, comprising three 90-minute sessions; two extended lectures previously attended by the observer. They covered the topics of logistics and applied mathematics, with the third session also related to mathematics. Similarly to laboratory classes and project-based sessions, the classes were much more silent than the lectures observed. In one case, it was a reading comprehension session: students read a text sent to them via the LMS, discussed questions in groups, and received teacher feedback on their performance. The second and the third session took the form of chalkboard practice in which the students volunteered to come to the chalkboard and solve the mathematical equations.

5.6.4.1. Teachers' use of English

As mentioned previously, the teachers' use of English was limited to short utterances the aims of which were firstly, to direct students' attention, and secondly, to comment on their performance. Of particular importance, however, are the structures used by one of the teachers during the chalkboard practice. Examples include *Very good, OK,* and *That's right,* illustrating the positive reinforcement central to behaviourist language teaching, where reward-punishment dynamics prevailed. A similar technique was noticed during laboratory sessions. When asked if she employed it consciously or unconsciously, the teacher replied that it felt natural.

Conclusion

The findings highlight the diverse linguistic and educational backgrounds of the EMI practitioners, their extensive experience in learning English and their proficiency in multiple languages. Most reported long-term English exposure and advanced CEFR self-assessments, yet many lacked formal certificates, revealing a disconnect between perceived and validated proficiency. English serves primarily professional functions - teaching, research publication, and international collaboration - with development occurring autonomously via academic reading and media immersion. Institutional EMI support remains minimal, as nearly all respondents reported no tailored methodological or language training.

Despite functional self-perceived proficiency, instructors face notable delivery challenges: extended preparation, stress, fluency issues, vocabulary/grammar retrieval, and diverse accent comprehension, exacerbated by heterogeneous student proficiency. Statistical analyses confirm that higher self-reported proficiency correlates with fewer issues, while lower-proficiency teachers seek EMI-specific training. These findings underscore the urgent need for institutional investment in integrated language-pedagogy programs.

The interviews conducted with EMI practitioners further advance the field of English Medium Instruction by providing valuable insights into course duration, challenges associated with teaching the same subject in both Polish and English, teacher and student code-switching practices and assessment criteria. Additionally, the university teachers shared their perspectives on reading and writing scientific literature related to EMI, thereby enriching the overall understanding of instructing students in

English. Despite these challenges, the respondents demonstrate a strong commitment to developing their English skills and overcoming language-related issues through various methods, including the use of technology and self-directed learning.

The student online questionnaire developed the context of English Medium Instruction, highlighting areas for improvement on the part of the teachers. These areas include clear and accessible explanations of complex concepts, instructional sessions characterized by student participation and interactivity, and guidance on strategies for exam and test preparation. Of paramount importance to the students is the university teachers' high level of English proficiency, which helps to avoid communication breakdowns as well as students' anxiety and frustration resulting from misunderstandings.

The observations reveal EMI teaching as predominantly interactive and multimodal, diverging from traditional lecture formats to mitigate linguistic demands - a pattern evidenced by lectures segmenting into brief explanations followed by comprehension checks, which enhance understanding per Vygotskian scaffolding principles (Vygotsky, 1978). Visual aids dominate meaning-making in content-heavy disciplines, likely compensating for vocabulary gaps by leveraging non-verbal redundancy, as dual-coding theory (Paivio, 1971, 1986) predicts. Teachers' strategic classroom language and signposting - more than raw proficiency - drive coherence, suggesting that pragmatic competence outweighs fluency in EMI success. Selective code-switching, confined to lexical gaps or tasks, reflects pedagogic intentionality rather than deficit, aligning with translanguaging as agentive repertoire deployment amid cohort diversity. In laboratory/project sessions, minimal procedural teacher talk promotes autonomy via reinforcement, yielding higher student initiative than in lecture-heavy Polish-medium parallels. These dynamics underscore multimodal interaction as EMI's core affordance, challenging purist English-only models and informing adaptive policy.

In conclusion, the study provides valuable insights into the experiences and challenges of EMI practitioners, highlighting the need for ongoing support and training to enhance their effectiveness in teaching in English.

Chapter 6 Discussion of the study results

Introduction

The research conducted in this dissertation examined English Medium Instruction primarily through the lens of teacher experience. By integrating findings from a student-led questionnaire, this study establishes a more comprehensive, multi-perspectival understanding of classroom dynamics. The data highlight critical tensions in linguistic proficiency, pedagogical adaptation and intercultural interaction. Consequently, this chapter argues that targeted interventions - particularly those designed to strengthen teacher agency and support strategic translanguaging - are essential to navigating the complexities identified in the research questions.

6.1. Verification of research hypotheses

The research hypotheses were designed to assess the status of EMI teachers in Poland and determine whether their pedagogical needs require immediate intervention.

6.1.1. Continuous institutional support (i.e., methodological training) for the EMI practitioners required to maintain high standard of teaching is scarce and necessary.

Macaro and Aizawa (2022) referring to established research on teacher professional development (e.g., Borg, 2018; Lieberman, Campbell & Yashkina, 2017; Xu & Zhang, 2022) emphasise that practitioners are more likely to adopt innovative pedagogies when these align with their existing belief systems. Secondly, they are likely to challenge their practices more effectively when participating in related research. Thirdly, their engagement increases when programmes are led by peer practitioners. Additionally, sustained change is facilitated by extended durations with follow-up sessions. Given English Medium Instruction's (EMI) interdisciplinary nature, integrating second language acquisition and discipline-specific education, professional development should ideally feature collaborative delivery by experts (and preferably researchers) from both domains (Macaro, Akincioglu, & Dearden, 2016; Xu & Zhang, 2022).

Unfortunately, the research revealed that institutional support is not easily available to EMI practitioners worldwide (Galloway, 2020; Fenton-Smith et al., 2017) and it varies from university to university, making EMI instructors look for such training on their own. The great majority of the respondents had not taken part in any

form of professional development (PD). Additionally, participation in such PD opportunities might be seriously limited due to numerous scientific, didactic and organisational duties that university teachers must meet in order to pass the internal assessment procedures, as discussed in the EMI practitioners' interview answers.

This necessitates looking for available options elsewhere, and these may include internet tutorials or joining SIGs. As the research has shown, it is usually the teachers with lower self-perceived proficiency that would appreciate some methodological training. While it is true to say that mainly teachers with higher self-perceived language proficiency were unwilling to participate in such training, within this group there were also those who would signal their willingness to be part of such form of training.

At the same time, methodological materials are also scarce, as most EMI research articles are written by authors whose academic background is rooted in linguistics and whose affiliations are with language departments. Therefore, their publications appear in multiple applied linguistics journals, which might be of little interest to EMI practitioners. Very few articles are written by content specialists (Macaro and Aizawa, 2022). The results of their study also show that professional development (PD) programmes are primarily taught by English language specialists holding master's or doctorates in education, applied linguistics or related fields. Of the 19 PD programme providers that Macaro & Aizawa (2022) found on the websites, only one explicitly involved both language and content specialists (e.g., engineering professors alongside applied linguists). This underscores a lack of interdisciplinary collaboration in most EMI PD programmes. This is also evident in the findings of the present study. EMI practitioners do not tend to publish field-specific methodological articles, as such output does not contribute to their professional appraisal. However, this should not be interpreted as a lack of willingness to do so. Some EMI practitioners appear open to collaborative or future publications on EMI methodology, provided that sufficient time and external support are available.

It must be remembered that the participants of this research represented various fields of study and the scope of their interest is enormous. Therefore, the PD opportunities should be tailor-made, catering to their field-specific needs. Generic, one-size-fits-all programmes often fail to address discipline-specific content demands alongside language proficiency needs (Airey, 2015). It appears apparent that involving content specialists from fields like engineering or sciences ensures relevance and effectiveness in EMI settings.

6.1.2. EMI practitioners need language support opportunities to facilitate effective communication with students.

In EMI settings, academic coherence and classroom rapport are fundamentally underpinned by the teacher's oracy skills - the strategic command of spoken language. One significant challenge identified by practitioners is the difficulty in navigating informal small talk; while experts in their fields, many instructors struggle with the casual, everyday register necessary to build student rapport. Research suggests that targeted training in these versatile conversational tools - such as discussing current affairs - is essential for fostering natural, inclusive classroom dynamics. It was observed that small talk, as a component of classroom discourse, was largely ineffective across all EMI formats, with many students exhibiting a reluctance to engage in such interactions. One potential explanation is that for some students, participation in EMI classes represented a significant novelty, necessitating a period of adjustment. Furthermore, some students may have lacked confidence in their English proficiency; for instance, Chinese students often possessed such limited English skills that they communicated with instructors primarily through affirmative (“Yes”) or negative (”No”) responses. It is also possible that some teachers, as mentioned above, were uncertain as to how to initiate small talk, and, following a lack of response to their initial enquiries, they abandoned further attempts at discussion. This situation mirrors the findings of Tsui (2017), discussed in Chapter 2, who reported that EMI teachers’ limited linguistic competence impeded their ability to incorporate humour within the classroom environment, thereby limiting a strategy that can help establish rapport and promote classroom integration.

Although small talk was found to be of limited success in this context, it offers potential advantages that EMI practitioners may find beneficial for classroom management, particularly when considering that neither instructors nor students are native speakers of English. Primarily, as Richards (2014) highlights, small talk facilitates the development of social competencies. This environment provides students with a secure space to practise communication, active listening and the pragmatic skills essential for navigating diverse social situations. Secondly, small talk fosters rapport and a sense of belonging (Kegley, 2023), which are instrumental in establishing a classroom community where students feel acknowledged, valued and at ease. This is particularly significant for international students navigating an unfamiliar academic

environment. Such opportunities for informal interaction not only facilitate language acquisition but also enhance learner engagement and satisfaction. Indeed, small talk may transform the classroom from a strictly transactional space into a social environment, thereby increasing students' confidence to participate in subsequent substantive discussions.

Certainly, students' concerns regarding teachers' proficiency cannot be ignored in this context, as they highlight the potential importance of oracy skills. The results of the student questionnaire suggest that some teachers, particularly more experienced ones, may have limited language proficiency, which can be an obstacle to the smooth conduct of classes. This may, in turn, reduce opportunities for genuine interaction, in which lecturers respond to students' questions and develop them into extended classroom discussion. The issue may be further compounded by a lack of specific linguistic resources needed to explain complex processes in technical and medical fields, which can leave students dissatisfied. Opportunities for open interaction with the lecturer and for explaining complex concepts in accessible terms were among the elements most frequently reported by students as lacking in the classes they described. This suggests that classroom communication was often perceived as one-directional, with limited space for dialogic engagement. Such constraints may have reduced students' ability to test understanding and clarify emerging difficulties in real time. Limited language proficiency on the part of lecturers may, as one student noted, occasionally lead to misunderstandings of student questions. In addition, some lecturers pause frequently while searching for appropriate terminology, which can disrupt the flow of the lecture and make it more challenging for students to follow and comprehend the content. Therefore, strong language competence appears to be important, as it may enable teachers to move beyond merely reading from presentations and to make classroom communication more interactive and effective.

Parallel to this communicative agility, accurate pronunciation is equally vital to pedagogical success. It serves as a cornerstone for content comprehension, minimizing misunderstandings and reducing the anxiety that often inhibits active student participation. Furthermore, precise articulation bolsters professional credibility and facilitates deeper vocabulary and listening acquisition, addressing the common student frustration regarding instructor incomprehensibility.

Therefore, to ensure effective EMI instruction, it is essential to provide practitioners with targeted training programmes that prioritize comprehensive oracy

skills (Millard & Menzies, 2016). Such professional development is the necessary intervention to transform the theoretical potential of small talk and phonological precision into a tangible, classroom-ready reality, ultimately bridging the gap between passive listening and active academic engagement.

6.1.3. Teacher talk is an essential component of successful English medium instruction classroom management.

Managing students' learning by organising and controlling what happens in the classroom is of vital importance in successful classroom management. This applies to a variety of actions teachers take to deliver the classes so that they can develop a *deep approach to learning* (Fry et al., 2009) in their students, as mentioned in Chapter 3 of this work. As Richards & Lockhart (1995: 182) say, "No matter what teaching strategies or methods a teacher uses, it is necessary to give directions, explain activities, clarify the procedures students should use on an activity, and check students understanding," all of which could be embraced under the umbrella of teacher talk. Bearing in mind that EMI is practised in a variety of educational contexts, the use of teacher talk must be highly contextualised. This requires instructors to adapt their signposting and communicative strategies to reflect the specific linguistic demands and epistemic culture of their particular field of study, ensuring that management techniques remain relevant to both the subject matter and the instructional format

To ensure academic coherence in EMI settings, teachers rely ~~heavily~~ on discourse markers to signpost information, though the efficacy of this practice varies according to the instructor's linguistic proficiency and the nature of the instruction, directly impacting student comprehension. By leveraging the contextualized, daily interactions inherent in the classroom, instructors can reinforce the functional role of the target language from the initial meeting. By establishing English as a functional tool for inquiry from the beginning, instructors can reframe the language as an essential medium for academic collaboration. As the study results show, regular exposure to discourse markers in authentic interactions fosters this transition, effectively converting passive comprehension into active participation and reinforcing the continuity of the academic discourse.

While small talk may reflect basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS), the language a teacher uses may reflect cognitive academic language proficiency

(CALP), a distinction introduced by Cummins (1979) and discussed in Chapter 3 of this work. According to Brown (2014: 207), CALP is particularly important in this context because it enables EMI teachers to manage classroom dynamics ("Can I have your attention?", "Work in pairs"), express ideas in formal academic language ("The difference between velocity and speed is that…," "The next step in this discussion is…"), formulate test questions ("What is the missing word in this sentence?"), and engage actively in classroom communication ("That is a good point, but …").

Of particular interest in this discussion is how foreign language teachers adapt their language to support students' comprehension and learning. Such strategies include, among others, slowing down speech, using pauses, and adjusting pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and discourse (Richards & Lockhart, 1995: 183). As part of institutional support and closer collaboration between language and content specialists, practice-oriented workshops for EMI practitioners could help them develop these strategies and align their language more deliberately with lesson objectives and learners' proficiency levels.

Finally, this integration transforms the classroom into an authentic communicative space that mirrors the specific discourse of the field. By aligning teacher talk with discipline-specific rhetorical practices, instructors provide students with the dual benefit of mastering academic content while simultaneously internalizing the communicative norms of their profession.

6.1.4. EMI practitioners need to develop various teaching strategies in order to successfully conduct their classes and build rapport with their students.

The research reveals that the efficacy of English Medium Instruction (EMI) is inherently linked to the instructor's ability to navigate diverse instructional formats. While delivering formal lectures often follows a more structured, predictable path, formats such as project-based learning, seminars and laboratory sessions necessitate more dynamic, interactive teaching strategies to sustain active student participation. In these complex environments, successful instruction requires more than mere content delivery; it demands that EMI practitioners develop a repertoire of adaptive strategies to manage the classroom effectively and build authentic rapport. Consequently, this underscores an urgent need for faculty training in student-centred pedagogies. Galloway (2020: 52) suggests that to enhance instructional efficacy, EMI faculty require training

in the functional application of scaffolding techniques, evidence-based approaches to academic vocabulary development, and collaborative models that bridge the expertise of language instructors and subject-matter specialists.

Using reading materials to compensate for EMI teachers' limited ability to explain certain field-specific processes may offer only a short-term solution and may, in some cases, discourage genuine student engagement. Likewise, code-switching may be counterproductive in this context, especially in internationally diverse classrooms.

6.2. Answers to research questions

In addition to the research hypotheses, this study also addresses several key research questions.

6.2.1. How is teacher agency manifested in EMI?

In EMI contexts, teacher agency is typically understood as the ability of teachers to make deliberate, thoughtful decisions about how they plan, implement and modify EMI instruction in light of policy requirements, institutional demands, student needs and their own professional beliefs (Dang et al., 2024; Xiong et al., 2024). The results of the study show that this agency is visible in teachers' behaviour and professional preparation. During the interviews and observation sessions, it became evident that, whether the decision to teach in English was imposed or voluntary, teachers were compelled to adapt their practices to the existing circumstances. That involved interpreting, negotiating and reconfiguring EMI practices to enhance their relevance and effectiveness.

First of all, content preparation and evaluation had to be carefully examined. The fact that EMI students represented diverse educational and cultural backgrounds sometimes necessitated adaptation on the part of teachers, especially when the content was country- or region-specific, as in the case of economics and civil engineering classes. Additionally, the time spent on looking for authentic materials to fit the EMI context was an important element of teacher preparation. Bearing in mind that both students and teachers represented various proficiency levels, the content had to be adapted so that it would be understood by the students.

Secondly, intercultural awareness, defined as the ability to interact respectfully and effectively with individuals from culturally diverse contexts, adds a further dimension to teacher agency. The fact that EMI classes comprised students representing

different educational and cultural backgrounds, as discussed in the previous chapters, compelled teachers to look for conducive ways of content delivery. One of the ways was lengthening the classes compared to the same classes taught in Polish, which allowed teachers to consolidate the knowledge of the EMI students with reference to the syllabus requirements.

Thirdly, teacher agency is also manifested by modifying the course content so as to level off the language and curricular heterogeneity. As mentioned in Chapter 5, teachers introduce various forms of support such as warm-up classes or prolonging English lessons. These adaptations not only enhance student comprehension but also foster greater inclusivity in diverse classrooms. By tailoring materials to learners' proficiency levels, teachers effectively bridge gaps in prior knowledge and curricular backgrounds.

6.2.2. What strategies do teachers use to deliver their classes?

The teachers used a number of different strategies, partly discussed in the teacher agency section, that aimed at helping them to successfully run their classes.

EMI teachers actively reshaped the conventional lecture structure to make content delivery more accessible and student-centred. In post-observation discussions, they emphasized that the traditional 75-90-minute monologues - once standard - were now "a thing of the past" and fundamentally counterproductive, as students struggled to sustain effective, attentive listening over extended periods. To address this, they adopted 20-minute mini-lectures followed by targeted post-listening tasks like quizzes, mini-discussions or Q&A sessions. This teacher-led innovation aligns with Bonwell and Eison's (1991) active learning framework and reflects Morton's (2009: 59) qualities of an engaging lecture. These include logically structured content that is easy to follow, participatory elements like relatable examples and skilful questioning that involve students regardless of class size, and an overall experience where time flies, knowledge sticks, and curiosity drives further exploration.

Compensatory strategies, which could be defined as strategies that language users employ as a result of language deficiency (Oxford, 1990: 47-48), are a good example that illustrates various actions teachers take to facilitate the smooth running of the educational process. Firstly, the research revealed that teachers resorted to this broad group of strategies when they faced a word recollection problem which resulted in them

switching to the mother tongue, using mime or gesture, showing a picture or a diagram, or using a circumlocution. Secondly, teachers' incomprehensibility due to students' strong accents sometimes resulted in their requesting repetition or reformulation of questions. Thirdly, depending on the students' proficiency level, teachers slowed their speech to allow the students to comprehend the content.

Social strategies employed by EMI teachers across various EMI formats were also observed, typically at the onset of classes as a form of small talk initiation. However, as mentioned earlier in this section, they were relatively uncommon. These included asking questions to clarify the problem, encouraging students to work with other group members, and fostering cultural understanding by learning more about students' culture, particularly in relation to the content of EMI classes.

Teachers also employed *adaptive* strategies, including scaffolding through materials adaptation. As noted earlier in this study, the availability of instructional materials is sometimes limited, and authentic materials may prove too challenging. Consequently, teachers adapt materials to meet their own needs and those of their students. Such adaptations can take various forms, as outlined by Cunningsworth (1995: 136): omitting selected portions; supplementing with additional published or original content; replacing with more suitable alternatives; and modifying published material for its intended use.

Teachers' concern for the successful delivery of classes where specialist vocabulary plays an essential role is evident in their use of *memory* strategies. These include adapting materials from predecessors, compiling personal vocabulary lists, and accessing or developing online resources. This practice highlights an interesting trend: some teachers share materials with colleagues, particularly when teaching subjects that form part of larger clusters encompassing lectures, classes, projects and laboratory work.

Although the strategies employed by teachers reflect their commitment and ongoing efforts to ensure effective content delivery, students' perspectives indicate that certain elements remain insufficiently addressed. In particular, they point to a lack of engaging, interactive classroom practices and a need for clearer guidance on how to prepare for tests and examinations. These concerns suggest a gap between instructional intentions and students' learning expectations in EMI settings. Addressing this gap may require not only refining assessment communication but also strengthening opportunities for active participation during classes. Additionally, fostering more

explicit scaffolding of learning processes could help students better navigate both content and language demands. Such adjustments may contribute to aligning pedagogical practices more closely with students' perceived needs and enhancing overall learning outcomes.

6.2.3. Which assessment techniques are appropriate for EMI classes?

Interview responses revealed that EMI practitioners' preferred assessment techniques vary by instructional mode. For lectures, they favour written formats such as multiple-choice or open cloze questions. This preference stems from their function as verifiable records of student performance, enabling discussions of grades between instructors and students. In laboratory and project-based classes, practitioners prioritize written reports that adhere to predefined semester criteria that are followed by oral defence of the project. Still, a number of issues merit closer attention.

One of them concerns English as the default language of assessment in EMI. The findings show that aligning the language of instruction with that of assessment is generally taken for granted rather than explicitly questioned. Interviewees consistently treat English as the expected language of evaluation in English-taught courses, often referring to fairness, consistency or academic standards. This is in line with similar research done by Pulcini and Campagna (2015). In this way, EMI seems to extend beyond classroom delivery and shape broader assumptions about how knowledge should be demonstrated and assessed. What is particularly striking is that this expectation persists even in contexts where Polish dominates everyday academic interaction, suggesting that English carries a certain symbolic weight in relation to formal assessment. At the same time, this principle is not applied in a fully rigid way. Some lecturers report occasional shifts to Polish, mainly in consultations or when communication problems arise. These moments are usually framed as practical responses to specific situations rather than as a move towards bilingual assessment. They show how lecturers try to reconcile institutional expectations with the realities of teaching and learning. Taken together, this points to a tension between a largely implicit monolingual norm and the multilingual nature of the context. An interesting point in this discussion is made by Ingvarsdóttir and Arnbjörnsdóttir (2015: 146), who claim that "this is not the case in academic settings in Iceland and in some Scandinavian countries (Pecorari et al., 2012) where input is in English while information processing and

assessment is in another language." This is what they call simultaneous parallel code use (SPCU) (Ingvarsdóttir and Arnbjörnsdóttir (2015: 147). As they further state the language of assessment is Icelandic. They explain that the main way students are assessed is by how well they can transfer knowledge from the language used in course materials to the language used in exams. Being able to handle SPCU is therefore important for their academic success and future careers. However, in SPCU settings, there is little awareness of the challenges students face, and no systematic effort is made to adapt the curriculum (ibid.: 147). Treating English-only assessment as self-evident may overlook the potential benefits of more flexible language use, while also increasing the demands placed on students. At the same time, the selective use of Polish suggests that lecturers retain some room to manoeuvre, even if this is constrained by institutional expectations.

Secondly, the interviews reveal a strong tendency to prioritise content knowledge over language proficiency. Lecturers consistently frame their role as assessing subject knowledge rather than students' command of English. This position is often justified through comments such as "I am not an English teacher; I make mistakes myself," which reflect a broader reluctance to evaluate language due to perceived lack of expertise. Assessment criteria are typically introduced in the first class and detailed in the course catalogues or syllabuses distributed to students. As a result, respondents emphasise conceptual understanding, methodological accuracy, problem-solving, and disciplinary reasoning - skills that are essential for the future work of an engineer - while language is treated as secondary unless it interferes with comprehension. This orientation can be read as an attempt to avoid penalising students for linguistic limitations in an EMI context where English is often an additional language for both students and lecturers. From a fairness perspective, it reflects an effort to separate disciplinary achievement from linguistic form. At the same time, however, the data suggest that this separation is not entirely clear-cut. Even when lecturers claim not to assess language, they still attend to intelligibility, clarity of expression, appropriate use of terminology or the overall coherence of written and spoken performance. In this sense, language re-enters assessment indirectly, embedded in criteria such as clarity, structure or the ability to explain one's reasoning.

Thirdly, language appears to function as a threshold condition rather than a central grading criterion. Although most participants reject the explicit assessment of grammar, their accounts show that language becomes relevant when it begins to affect

meaning, structure or the overall clarity of the work. Several lecturers describe returning assignments with serious language problems, asking students to revise unclear work, or acknowledging that very weak English may affect the grade if the answer becomes difficult to follow, as in this comment: "(…) if a student submits a report containing glaring grammatical errors, I return it to them for revision, because if they've chosen to take a class in English, I expect both their written and spoken English to be correct"[own translation]. In general, a distinction is made between minor errors, which are overlooked, and errors that distort meaning and interfere with the interpretation of content. This points to a threshold model of EMI assessment, in which language proficiency is not normally treated as a separate grading category but still functions as a prerequisite for demonstrating disciplinary knowledge. While this approach may seem fairer than direct grammatical marking, it also remains somewhat vague. The threshold is rarely defined in explicit or operational terms, so lecturers often rely on personal judgement when deciding when language issues become significant for assessment.

Furthermore, preference for written assessment as more objective, safer and documentable is visible among all the answers. Many respondents favour written exams, tests, reports and project documentation because these forms leave a trace, reduce ambiguity, and can be revisited if disputes arise. Written assessment is repeatedly described as safer, more objective and easier to justify, particularly in technical subjects and in systems shaped by accreditation requirements. Oral assessment, by contrast, is sometimes associated with subjectivity, unequal questioning, misunderstanding and lack of documentary evidence. Yet oral work remains important in certain contexts, especially laboratories, projects, presentations and small specialist groups. In those settings, oral interaction is often used not as a classic examination but as a means of probing whether students understand procedures, can explain experiments or can defend project choices. Thus, the data suggest a mixed ecology: written assessment dominates for formal verification, whereas oral interaction often serves diagnostic, clarifying, or performative functions.

A brief note on teachers' in-class feedback, which may constitute part of formative assessment, is warranted. The interviews also indicate that EMI teachers who do not feel sufficiently competent to assess students' linguistic performance rarely provide feedback on the form of students' utterances; instead, they tend to focus on content accuracy, using a range of strategies that may also vary depending on the instructional format. Richards & Lockhart (1995: 189) identify several such strategies

available to teachers, including confirming correct responses, signalling incorrect answers, offering praise, elaborating on or modifying a student's response, providing criticism, and restating or summarizing. Classroom observations further revealed that confirming correct responses and offering praise were particularly prominent in one teacher's practice, constituting what is commonly referred to as positive reinforcement.

Fairness in assessment needs to be elaborated on in this context. The interviews suggest that lecturers generally view fairness in EMI assessment as prioritising disciplinary knowledge while minimising the impact of language errors. They see themselves as subject specialists rather than language assessors and believe that penalising grammar may unfairly disadvantage students in EMI contexts. Fairness is therefore understood as protecting students from linguistic penalties when the primary focus is subject knowledge. This also includes students with learning disabilities, such as dyslexia. At the same time, the findings show that content and language cannot be fully separated. Even lecturers who claim to assess only content still expect students to communicate clearly, use appropriate terminology and explain ideas coherently. Minor grammatical errors may be overlooked, but language becomes relevant when it prevents the examiner from recognising conceptual understanding. The data therefore suggest that fair EMI assessment should prioritise disciplinary knowledge while treating intelligibility and disciplinary terminology as necessary threshold requirements rather than major grading criteria.

The issue of translanguaging also requires careful consideration. Most respondents do not support its use as a regular practice in formal assessment. Their dominant view is that if a course is taught in English, assessment should likewise be conducted in English. This position is linked to consistency, institutional expectations and the perceived integrity of EMI programmes. At the same time, several lecturers acknowledge the practical value of limited use of Polish during consultations, clarification sequences or exceptional situations. Some also allow students to explain or clarify intended meanings when linguistic limitations obscure otherwise valid knowledge. The findings therefore point to a nuanced position. While full translanguaging in formal summative assessment is generally not accepted, selective translanguaging appears pedagogically useful in formative and diagnostic contexts. It can help lecturers distinguish between insufficient subject knowledge and difficulties in linguistic expression. The interviews suggest that limited translanguaging, particularly

in feedback, consultation and clarification, may support fairness without undermining the English-medium character of the course.

Finally, the interviews raise questions about whether multiple-choice testing is an appropriate way to assess complex disciplinary reasoning. The responses reveal mixed perspectives. Some lecturers favour multiple-choice formats because they are efficient, easier to standardise and less dependent on students' productive language skills, which may make them appear fairer in EMI settings. This is particularly important when students vary considerably in their confidence and fluency in English. From this perspective, multiple-choice questions may reduce the influence of language limitations on assessment outcomes. At the same time, other respondents clearly prefer open-ended, semi-open, hybrid or practical tasks, arguing that these provide better insight into students' reasoning, conceptual understanding and problem-solving processes. This perspective frames assessment as an interpretive process rather than a purely numerical scoring exercise, while also placing greater demands on communication and professional judgement on the part of the teacher. Several also criticise selected-response formats for encouraging guessing or for failing to capture the way students think in applied technical contexts. The findings therefore suggest that the validity of multiple-choice testing depends largely on the construct being assessed. Such formats may work well for testing terminology, factual knowledge or limited conceptual distinctions, but they are less suitable as the sole measure of complex reasoning, methodological planning, explanation, or professional judgement. Overall, the data support a mixed assessment approach in which multiple-choice tasks are complemented by written, oral, practical or project-based forms of assessment.

Conclusion

Taken together, the findings demonstrate that effective English Medium Instruction (EMI) implementation in higher education hinges on the dynamic interplay of linguistic competence, pedagogical adaptability, institutional support and intercultural responsiveness. Evidence reveals that EMI practitioners navigate demanding, often under-supported contexts, continuously negotiating challenges in classroom communication, materials adaptation, student diversity and assessment. Simultaneously, the study highlights teacher agency as central to mediating these demands, with instructors proactively modifying content, strategies, and interactions to maintain academic quality and student engagement. The results further imply that EMI's long-

term success relies not only on individual teacher efforts but also on systematic, discipline-sensitive professional development and coherent institutional frameworks. Ultimately, EMI emerges not merely as a linguistic endeavour but as a multifaceted educational practice contingent on aligning pedagogical, organisational and intercultural dimensions.

Chapter 7 Implications, limitations and further research

Introduction

This chapter discusses the principal implications of the study and outlines their relevance for both EMI scholarship and educational practice. The findings suggest that effective EMI provision in higher education cannot be reduced to teachers' command of English alone, but depends on the interaction of linguistic, pedagogical and institutional factors. In theoretical terms, the study refines current understandings of EMI competence, classroom communication and teacher adaptation in context. In practical terms, it highlights the need for sustained professional development, support for spoken classroom communication, varied teaching strategies, context-sensitive assessment and stronger institutional frameworks. The chapter is organised into seven sections presenting these implications, followed by a discussion of the study's limitations and suggestions for further research.

7.1. Scarce institutional support for professional development (PD) demands targeted, interdisciplinary training

Continuous methodological training is scarce and inconsistent across universities, compelling EMI teachers to seek support independently despite their substantial workloads in scientific, didactic and organisational domains, as discussed in Chapters 3 and 5. As the results show, these PD opportunities mainly focused on developing language skills rather than field-specific skills. This situation contributes to uneven access to professional development and may affect the overall consistency of EMI practices, favouring some teachers while disadvantaging others.

Furthermore, professional development should be sustained, peer-led and collaborative, involving both language and content specialists so that effective teaching practices can be implemented in EMI teachers' work and incorporated into their teaching repertoire. Such opportunities should also be discipline-specific in order to align with teachers' beliefs and needs, as generic programmes are often inadequate. In other words, a good command of English alone may not be sufficient for the effective delivery of content in English Medium Instruction; it needs to be complemented by pedagogical expertise and communicative competence (Galloway, 2020: 50-51).

7.2. Teachers require oracy-focused language support

The research revealed that EMI success depends primarily on strategic spoken skills like small talk for rapport-building and pronunciation for accurate comprehension. Therefore, training in conversational tools (e.g., current affairs discussion) and phonological awareness is essential to overcome informal register struggles, reduce student reluctance and foster belonging, especially for non-native speakers. Additionally, bearing in mind that internationalizing higher education is a fact and is likely to continue, intercultural awareness cannot be neglected in this discussion. Good knowledge of what is allowed and what is not is of crucial importance in rapport-building activities. Therefore, EMI teachers need to be aware how culture may influence communication (Hofstede, 2010).

Millard & Menzies (2016), in their report on the state of learners' oracy skills in British schools, identify four strands underpinning the development of oracy: physical, linguistic, cognitive and social and emotional. Of particular relevance to EMI practitioners is the social and emotional strand, within which the management of interactions and turn-taking is especially salient, as these elements exert a considerable influence on effective classroom management in linguistically diverse settings. In EMI contexts, where both content and language learning objectives must be negotiated simultaneously, such skills are integral to the maintenance of productive classroom dynamics, facilitating not only the exchange of ideas but also the co-construction and mediation of disciplinary knowledge through English.

7.3. Teacher talk is key to effective management

Proficiency in contextualized classroom language - such as discourse markers, signposting and CALP-related elements (e.g., instructions and explanations) - supports coherence, fosters active participation and enhances discipline-specific relevance. Therefore, the systematic integration of English-medium classroom routines from the outset is essential to facilitate a gradual shift from BICS to CALP and to approximate professional discourse. Structuring lectures, as advocated by Morton (2009: 60-61), can further enhance the process, particularly through effective signposting. For instance, explicitly stating learning outcomes - i.e. clarifying what students are expected to have learned by the end of each lecture - can improve comprehension. Additionally, incorporating an engaging narrative mode that strategically draws on BICS during lectures remains valuable, especially when discussing examples that relate both to the

subject matter and to students' experiences. Therefore, the ability to move fluently between BICS and CALP is an important pedagogical competence for teachers seeking to manage their classes effectively.

7.4. Diverse teaching strategies are needed for varied formats

It is important to recognise that EMI classes are inherently dynamic and frequently comprise students from diverse educational, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Learners in EMI contexts bring varied prior experiences of both language and content learning. Such diversity necessitates the adoption of pedagogical practices that scaffold both content and language development, while fostering active participation across the student cohort (Gosling, 2009: 113). In this respect, approaches informed by principles of scaffolding and translanguaging can support inclusive engagement, thereby promoting equitable participation and mitigating the risk of exclusion.

Accordingly, teachers are required to develop adaptive, student-centred approaches that extend beyond traditional lecturing, particularly in interactive formats such as project-based or laboratory classes. For instance, mini-lectures combined with post-listening tasks can foster student engagement and participation. More broadly, the implementation of scaffolding techniques, alongside compensatory, social and memory strategies, can support learners in managing both content and language demands. In this context, targeted vocabulary-development strategies are especially important in enabling students to access discipline-specific lexis and bridge content-language gaps. While translation may function as a temporary support in relatively homogeneous contexts (e.g., monolingual Polish classrooms), its applicability is more limited in linguistically diverse, international EMI settings.

Embodied cognition, a concept rooted in cognitive linguistics and psychology, emphasises the role of bodily and sensorimotor experience in shaping cognitive processes and supporting the understanding of abstract concepts central to higher education (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999). From this perspective, learning is enhanced when students actively engage with content through experience, interaction and the activation of prior knowledge, as reflected in the oft-cited maxim: "Tell me and I forget; teach me and I remember; involve me and I learn." In EMI contexts, this suggests the value of incorporating pedagogical practices that go beyond verbal explanation, such as using visualisations, gestures, physical demonstrations, and problem-based tasks that anchor abstract disciplinary concepts in more concrete experience.

Complementing this view, neuroscientific research highlights the role of the hippocampus in detecting novelty and supporting memory formation (Spitzer, 2008; Żylińska, 2013). While such insights should not be applied uncritically, they point to the importance of designing learning environments that include varied, engaging and cognitively stimulating input. In practice, this may involve varying instructional formats, introducing unexpected or thought-provoking elements and encouraging active student participation. Together, these approaches can support deeper processing, facilitate the integration of new knowledge with existing cognitive structures, and enhance both content understanding and language development in EMI classrooms.

As noted in Chapter 1, technological developments have transformed the ways in which teachers share knowledge, promoting multimodal forms of outreach that may have important implications for EMI. Rather than relying on a single classroom channel, teachers increasingly use podcasts, webpages, videos, live interaction and other digital resources to extend teaching beyond the lecture room, making input more accessible and engaging. These practices can help reach students, scaffold comprehension and sustain engagement across and beyond the classroom. For this reason, they may deserve wider adoption in EMI, as they can support students in maintaining a stronger focus on their field of study.

All these teaching practices risk being undermined if EMI teachers continue to rely on complex or opaque language. Instead, employing plain language to explain challenging concepts is a highly effective strategy. Mastering the art of conveying specialist ideas through everyday vocabulary not only enhances comprehension but also makes abstract content more accessible. While some concepts are inherently difficult to grasp, specialist terminology can exacerbate barriers to understanding. Simplifying language, therefore, represents a deliberate and principled pedagogical choice in EMI contexts.

7.5. Teacher agency drives EMI adaptation

The findings indicate that teacher agency plays a central role in the adaptation of EMI to specific institutional and classroom contexts. This agency is reflected in teachers' ability to modify content, select or redesign materials, adjust the pace and structure of classes, and respond to the linguistic and cultural diversity of their students. It is also evident in their efforts to accommodate different proficiency levels and to make pedagogical decisions that reflect the realities of both voluntary and imposed EMI

settings. For this reason, institutional policies should not constrain teachers through overly rigid frameworks; rather, they should enable informed and context-sensitive decision-making. Supporting teacher agency in this way may strengthen the responsiveness, inclusiveness and overall effectiveness of EMI provision.

7.6. Appropriate assessment aligns with instructional modes

Assessment in EMI should be aligned with the mode of instruction and the nature of the learning tasks involved. In lecture-based classes, written formats such as multiple-choice questions, cloze tests or short written responses may offer a more reliable means of evaluating students' understanding, particularly when linguistic limitations may affect spontaneous oral production. By contrast, in laboratory or project-based classes, written reports combined with oral defence can provide a more comprehensive picture of student performance by capturing both subject knowledge and the ability to explain procedures, results and decisions. Such alignment between teaching format and assessment mode may help ensure greater validity and fairness while taking into account the additional linguistic demands associated with EMI.

7.7. Strategic translanguaging and interventions enhance outcomes

Finally, the findings suggest that strategic translanguaging and targeted pedagogical interventions can play an important role in enhancing EMI outcomes. Carefully considered use of students' first languages may, in some contexts, support comprehension, reduce anxiety and facilitate access to disciplinary content, particularly when linguistic demands risk obscuring conceptual understanding. At the same time, such practices should be embedded within broader institutional support structures that help teachers address differences in language proficiency, intercultural communication and methodological preparedness. Long-term EMI success depends not only on individual teachers' efforts, but also on systematic, discipline-sensitive professional development and coherent institutional frameworks that sustain effective practice over time.

7.8. Limitations and further research

Because the study was conducted in nine Polish universities, including five technical universities, two universities of economics, one medical university and one classical university, and involved a relatively limited sample of 108 EMI practitioners and 92 EMI students, the findings should be interpreted as context-specific rather than broadly

generalisable. Although the sample included participants from a range of disciplinary backgrounds, as shown in Table 3 in Chapter 5, the study still reflects a specific institutional and national setting. The reliance on self-report data, such as questionnaires and interviews, also means that the findings represent participants' perceptions rather than direct evidence of classroom practices in actual EMI settings. Moreover, despite differences among the institutions, they may share important features associated with Polish academic culture and with the broader Central European higher education context, which may limit the transferability of the findings beyond similar settings. The reliance on self-report data, such as questionnaires and interviews, means that the findings reflect participants' perceptions of EMI rather than fully independent evidence of classroom practice or learning outcomes. As a result, some challenges may have been overstated because participants were more likely to recall difficulties than routine successes, while other issues may have been underreported if they were less visible to participants themselves. The absence of student outcome data, such as grades, retention rates or other measures of learning, further limits the possibility of verifying whether perceived challenges were associated with actual differences in academic performance.

The study may also be subject to researcher bias, particularly in the interpretation of classroom observations and participants' accounts, as the researcher's prior assumptions and analytical perspective may have influenced how the data were understood and presented. In addition, the cross-sectional design limited the possibility of capturing longer-term changes in language use, comprehension, or teacher development. For these reasons, the study should be interpreted in terms of transferability to similar contexts rather than broad generalisability.

Several issues merit further investigation. Replicating the study in a larger number of Polish universities and with a greater number of EMI practitioners would help verify the present findings and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of EMI policy and practice in Poland. Comparative research involving EMI and non-EMI courses could also provide insight into the extent to which content is actually delivered through English in classroom settings. Longitudinal designs would be especially valuable for examining how teachers' experiences, language use and pedagogical strategies develop over time, particularly across a semester or an academic year and in relation to institutional support. Finally, future studies could focus more directly on discipline-specific EMI practices and actual classroom interaction, rather than relying solely on participants' perceptions.

Conclusion

Taking all the findings together, the study suggests that successful English-Medium Instruction in higher education depends on far more than teachers' command of English. Effective EMI requires the interaction of linguistic competence, pedagogical expertise, appropriate assessment practices and sustained institutional support. The findings indicate that top-down implementation alone is unlikely to produce effective outcomes, particularly when teachers are expected to teach in English without adequate methodological preparation or access to continuing professional development. For this reason, EMI policy should be accompanied by discipline-sensitive pre-service and in-service training, as well as specialist guidance and support structures that enable teachers to respond to the communicative and pedagogical demands of their classrooms. Ultimately, EMI is most likely to succeed when it is treated not simply as a language policy, but as a complex educational practice requiring coherent and long-term institutional commitment.

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Summary

This doctoral dissertation examines English Medium Instruction (EMI) in higher education, with particular attention to the Polish university context and to lecturers who teach academic subjects through English without formal language-teaching training. The study is grounded in the growing internationalisation of higher education and the increasing demand for English-mediated teaching, which has created new linguistic, methodological and institutional challenges for university staff.

The main aim of the thesis is to characterise EMI as an educational phenomenon, identify the principal difficulties faced by EMI lecturers, and explore the linguistic, pedagogical and organisational conditions that shape the delivery of content through English at university level. Particular emphasis is placed on issues such as lecturers' language proficiency, limited methodological preparation, insufficient subject-specific resources, and the need for stronger institutional support.

The empirical part of the dissertation is based on a pilot study and a main study conducted among EMI practitioners and students attending EMI classes. The empirical investigation drew on data collected from 108 lecturers and 92 students representing 9 Polish higher education institutions. The research employed a mixed-methods approach, including online questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. The pilot study served to identify potential research problems, refine the instruments and generate preliminary assumptions, while the main study provided detailed insight into the experiences, needs and challenges of those involved in EMI teaching and learning.

The dissertation is organised into seven chapters. The opening chapters present the theoretical background, including developments in foreign language teaching, the global rise of English, and the relevance of English for Specific Purposes and English for Academic Purposes in higher education. Subsequent chapters focus on EMI itself, the role of the university teacher as an EMI practitioner, the pilot study, and the findings of the main research. The final chapter outlines implications for future practice and research.

The findings revealed that effective EMI in Polish higher education depends not only on teachers' English proficiency, but also on sustained institutional support, oracy-focused development, context-sensitive pedagogy, and assessment practices aligned with instructional formats. This doctoral dissertation offers a nuanced, empirically grounded account of EMI at Polish universities by combining teacher questionnaires, interviews, student perspectives, and classroom observations to show how language, pedagogy, and

institutional conditions interact in practice. In doing so, it fills a key gap in EMI research by moving beyond policy-level and self-reported generalisations to illuminate the underexplored realities of EMI implementation in Polish technical and disciplinary contexts. Overall, the thesis highlights the need for systematic linguistic, methodological and institutional support for lecturers teaching through English.

Streszczenie

Niniejsza rozprawa doktorska analizuje zjawisko English Medium Instruction (EMI) w szkolnictwie wyższym, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem kontekstu polskich uczelni oraz wykładowców prowadzących zajęcia kierunkowe w języku angielskim bez formalnego przygotowania do nauczania języka. Badanie osadzone jest w kontekście postępującej internacjonalizacji szkolnictwa wyższego oraz rosnącego zapotrzebowania na kształcenie za pośrednictwem języka angielskiego, co generuje nowe wyzwania o charakterze językowym, metodycznym i instytucjonalnym dla kadry akademickiej.

Głównym celem pracy jest scharakteryzowanie EMI jako zjawiska edukacyjnego, identyfikacja kluczowych trudności napotykanych przez wykładowców prowadzących zajęcia w tym modelu oraz zbadanie uwarunkowań językowych, pedagogicznych i organizacyjnych wpływających na realizację treści dydaktycznych w języku angielskim na poziomie akademickim. Szczególną uwagę poświęcono takim zagadnieniom, jak kompetencje językowe wykładowców, ograniczone przygotowanie metodyczne, niewystarczające zasoby specjalistyczne oraz potrzeba silniejszego wsparcia instytucjonalnego.

Część empiryczna rozprawy opiera się na badaniu pilotażowym oraz badaniu właściwym przeprowadzonym wśród praktyków EMI oraz studentów uczestniczących w zajęciach prowadzonych w modelu EMI. Badanie empiryczne przeprowadzono z udziałem 108 wykładowców oraz 92 studentów reprezentujących 9 polskich uczelni wyższych. W badaniach zastosowano podejście mieszane (mixed methods), obejmujące ankiety internetowe, wywiady częściowo ustrukturyzowane (półstandaryzowane) oraz obserwacje zajęć dydaktycznych. Badanie pilotażowe posłużyło identyfikacji potencjalnych problemów badawczych, udoskonaleniu narzędzi badawczych oraz sformułowaniu wstępnych założeń, natomiast badanie właściwe dostarczyło pogłębionych informacji na temat doświadczeń, potrzeb i wyzwań uczestników procesu nauczania i uczenia się w modelu EMI.

Rozprawa składa się z siedmiu rozdziałów. W rozdziałach wprowadzających przedstawiono podstawy teoretyczne, w tym rozwój nauczania języków obcych, globalny wzrost znaczenia języka angielskiego oraz rolę English for Specific Purposes (ESP) i English for Academic Purposes (EAP) w szkolnictwie wyższym. Kolejne rozdziały koncentrują się na EMI, roli nauczyciela akademickiego jako praktyka EMI, badaniu

pilotażowym oraz wynikach badania właściwego. W ostatnim rozdziale przedstawiono implikacje dla przyszłej praktyki i badań.

Wyniki badania wykazały, że skuteczna realizacja EMI w polskim szkolnictwie wyższym zależy nie tylko od znajomości języka angielskiego przez nauczycieli akademickich, lecz także od trwałego wsparcia instytucjonalnego, ukierunkowanego rozwijania kompetencji w zakresie komunikacji ustnej, pedagogiki wrażliwej na kontekst oraz praktyk oceniania dostosowanych do form prowadzenia zajęć. Niniejsza rozprawa doktorska wnosi pogłębiony, empirycznie ugruntowany obraz EMI na polskich uczelniach, łącząc dane z kwestionariuszy dla nauczycieli, wywiadów, perspektyw studentów oraz obserwacji zajęć, aby ukazać, w jaki sposób język, pedagogika i warunki instytucjonalne współdziałają w praktyce. Tym samym wypełnia istotną lukę badawczą w obszarze EMI, wykraczając poza uogólnienia oparte na poziomie polityki edukacyjnej i deklaracjach respondentów, by ukazać słabo dotąd zbadane realia wdrażania EMI w polskich kontekstach technicznych i dyscyplinarnych. Całość pracy podkreśla potrzebę systemowego wsparcia językowego, metodycznego i instytucjonalnego dla wykładowców prowadzących zajęcia w języku angielskim.

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Key terms used

AI – Artificial Intelligence

BE – Business English

CAE – Certificate in Advanced English

CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

CLIL – Content and Language Integrated learning

CS – Code switching

EAP – English for Academic Purposes

EFL – English as a Foreign Language

EHEA – European Higher Education Area

EAL – English as an Additional Language

EGAP – English for General Academic Purposes

EIL – English as an International Language

ELF – English as a Lingua Franca

ELT – English Language Teaching

EMI/EMOI – English as a Medium of Instruction

EMP – English for Medical Purposes

EOP – English for Occupational Purposes

ERPP – English for Research Publication Purposes

ESAP – English for Specific Academic Purposes

ESOL – English for Speakers of Other Languages

ESP – English for Specific Purposes

EST – English for Science and Technology

ETB – English-taught Bachelor's programme

FCE – First Certificate in English

FL – Foreign Language

GE – General English

GPE – Grade Point Average

HEI – Higher Education Institutions

IB – International Baccalaureate

ICLHE – Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education

IELTS – International English Language Testing System

LE – Legal English

L1 – First Language, Mother Tongue, Home Language, Community Language, Heritage Language

LMS – Learning Management System

NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization

PD – Professional Development

SUT – Silesian University of Technology

TAEC – Transnational Alignment of English Competences for University Lecturers

TOEFL – Test of English as a Foreign Language

Appendices

Appendix 1 Ankieta dla pracowników

Szanowni Państwo,

Niniejszą ankietę kieruję do pracowników uczelni wyższych, którzy prowadzą zajęcia w języku angielskim. Celem jest poznanie rzeczywistej sytuacji, problemów oraz potrzeb w kontekście prowadzenia zajęć w języku obcym (w języku angielskim) przez polskich pracowników badawczo-dydaktycznych i dydaktycznych. Zebrane informacje zostaną użyte wyłącznie do celów naukowo-dydaktycznych, stanowić będą bazę publikacji na temat wykorzystania języka angielskiego przez pracowników uczelni wyższych.
Bardzo dziękuję za poświęcony czas.

Z wyrazami szacunku,

Jacek Pradela, Wydział Organizacji i Zarządzania, Katedra Lingwistyki Stosowanej, Politechnika Śląska (kontakt: Jacek.Pradela@polsl.pl)

Szacowany czas wypełnienia ankiety: około 15 minut.

I. Pytania podstawowe

1. Wiek: _____
2. Płeć:
   a) Kobieta
   b) Mężczyzna
   c) Inna: ….
3. Wyuczony zawód: _____
4. Wykonywany zawód: _____
5. Miejsce pracy (np. firma komputerowa, uczelnia wyższa): _____
6. Jak długo uczą się Państwo języka angielskiego?
   a) 1-5 lat
   b) 6-10 lat
   c) 11-15 lat
   d) 16-20 lat
   e) 21 lat i więcej

7. Proszę określić Państwa poziom znajomości języka angielskiego.

a) Podstawowy (A1)

b) Średniozaawansowany niższy (A2)

c) Średniozaawansowany (B1)

d) Średniozaawansowany wyższy (B2)

e) Zaawansowany (C1)

f) Biegły (C2)

8. Zdane egzaminy językowe (proszę zaznaczyć, jeśli dotyczy)

a) Podstawowy (A1)

b) Średniozaawansowany niższy (A2 np. KET)

c) Średniozaawansowany (B1 np. PET)

d) Średniozaawansowany wyższy (B2 np. FCE; PTE 3)

e) Zaawansowany (C1 np. CAE; PTE 4)

f) Biegły (C2 np. CPE; PTE 5)

g) Inny (np. IELTS, BEC)

9. Jakie inne języki obce Państwo znają? Proszę określić Państwa poziom znajomości każdego z nich (np. język rosyjski – średniozaawansowany).

10. Czy posługują się Państwo językiem angielskim na co dzień poza pracą?

a) Tak

b) Nie

12. Jeśli wybrali Państwo odpowiedź „Tak", proszę wskazać, jaki ma to charakter (można zaznaczyć więcej niż jedną odpowiedź).

a) Anglojęzyczna rodzina

b) Mój współmałżonek / moja współmałżonka jest cudzoziemcem / cudzoziemką i język angielski jest naszym językiem komunikacji

c) Mieszkam poza granicami Polski

d) Nieformalne rozmowy ze znajomymi z zagranicy

e) Pisanie maili/listów

f) Rozmawiam ze swoimi dziećmi w języku angielskim

g) Inne (proszę wymienić): _____

II. Rozwijanie kompetencji językowych

13. Do czego jest Państwu potrzebny język angielski? (można zaznaczyć więcej niż jedną odpowiedź)

a) Pisanie artykułów naukowych

b) Uczestnictwo w międzynarodowych konferencjach
c) Praca w międzynarodowym zespole
d) Prowadzenie zajęć w języku angielskim
e) Czytanie publikacji z własnej dziedziny naukowej
f) Uczestnictwo w webinariach i wideokonferencjach
g) Wyjazdy zagraniczne (np. delegacje służbowe)
h) Nie wykorzystuję języka angielskiego w istotnym zakresie
i) Inne (proszę wymienić): _____

14. Samodzielnie rozwijam znajomość języka angielskiego poprzez (można zaznaczyć więcej niż jedną odpowiedź):
a) Czytanie książek
b) Oglądanie filmów lub materiałów wideo w wersji oryginalnej (np. na platformach streamingowych) z napisami lub bez napisów
c) Słuchanie radia, podcastów lub audiobooków
d) Słuchanie angielskich piosenek
e) Czytanie publikacji naukowych (np. artykułów, monografii) z mojej dziedziny
f) Korzystanie z mediów społecznościowych
g) Nieformalne rozmowy ze znajomymi
h) Uczęszczam na kurs językowy
i) Nie używam języka angielskiego
j) Inne (jakie?): ….

15. W jakich sytuacjach komunikacyjnych najczęściej używają Państwo języka angielskiego? (można zaznaczyć więcej niż jedną odpowiedź)
a) Nieformalne rozmowy
b) Wygłaszanie referatu na konferencjach międzynarodowych
c) Udział w konferencjach międzynarodowych bez wygłaszania referatu
d) Prowadzenie zajęć (wykłady/ćwiczenia/laboratoria)
e) Praca w międzynarodowym środowisku zawodowym
f) Nie używam języka angielskiego w sytuacjach komunikacyjnych wymienionych powyżej
g) Inne (proszę wymienić): …

16. Które kompetencje językowe chcieliby Państwo rozwinąć, gdyby istniała taka możliwość? (można zaznaczyć więcej niż jedną odpowiedź)
a) Mówienie

b) Pisanie
c) Czytanie
d) Słuchanie
e) Gramatyka
f) Wymowa
g) Słownictwo
h) Ortografia
i) Inne (proszę wymienić): _____

III. Język angielski w pracy

Ta część ankiety dotyczy używania języka angielskiego w pracy.

17. Czy prowadzą Państwo zajęcia dydaktyczne w języku angielskim w miejscu swojej pracy?

a) Tak
b) Nie

18. Jeśli zaznaczyli Państwo odpowiedź „Tak", proszę wskazać, jakie typy zajęć prowadzą Państwo na uczelni w języku angielskim (można zaznaczyć więcej niż jedną odpowiedź).

a) Ćwiczenia
b) Wykłady
c) Laboratoria
d) Seminaria dyplomowe
e) Zajęcia projektowe
f) Praktyki
g) Warsztaty
h) Inne (proszę wymienić): _____

19. W jaki sposób przygotowują się Państwo do prowadzenia zajęć dydaktycznych w języku angielskim?

a) Prowadzę zajęcia w sposób zbliżony do zajęć prowadzonych w języku polskim
b) Przygotowuję konspekt zajęć, według którego prowadzę zajęcia
c) Przygotowuję szczegółowy przebieg zajęć
d) Przygotowuję prezentację multimedialną i opieram na niej prowadzenie zajęć
e) Przygotowuję prezentację multimedialną oraz korzystam z własnych notatek
f) Korzystam wyłącznie z własnych notatek

g) Wyszukuję w Internecie filmy lub inne materiały autentyczne i korzystam z nich w czasie zajęć
h) Wysyłam studentom materiały dydaktyczne z wyprzedzeniem, aby się z nimi zapoznali
i) Inna odpowiedź: …

20. Czy uczelnia macierzysta zapewniała lub zapewnia Państwu wsparcie merytoryczne w zakresie prowadzenia nauczanego przez Państwa przedmiotu w języku angielskim?
a) Tak
b) Nie
21. Czy uczestniczyli Państwo kiedykolwiek w szkoleniu metodycznym dotyczącym prowadzenia zajęć w języku angielskim w szkolnictwie wyższym?
a) Tak
b) Nie
22. Jeśli wybrali Państwo odpowiedź „Tak", proszę krótko opisać, na czym polegało to szkolenie (np. jakie obejmowało treści, jak długo trwało oraz czy okazało się pomocne). _____

IV. Przygotowanie i prowadzenie zajęć w języku angielskim

Ta część ankiety dotyczy trudności związanych z przygotowaniem i prowadzeniem zajęć w języku angielskim.

23. Jakiego typu trudności napotykają Państwo podczas przygotowania i/lub prowadzenia zajęć w języku angielskim? (można zaznaczyć więcej niż jedną odpowiedź)
a) Brak wzorców przygotowania do poszczególnych typów zajęć
b) Trudności w zarządzaniu grupą studentów
c) Trudności ze znalezieniem odpowiednich materiałów dydaktycznych
d) Konieczność poświęcania dużej ilości czasu na przygotowanie zajęć w języku angielskim
e) Niewystarczające poczucie pewności w prowadzeniu zajęć w języku angielskim
f) Odczuwanie stresu związanego z prowadzeniem zajęć w języku angielskim
g) Inne (proszę wymienić): _____
24. Które z poniższych kompetencji językowych sprawiają Państwu największą trudność w posługiwaniu się językiem angielskim? (można zaznaczyć więcej niż jedną odpowiedź)

a) Mówienie
b) Pisanie
c) Czytanie
d) Słuchanie
e) Gramatyka
f) Wymowa
g) Słownictwo
h) Ortografia

25. Proszę opisać, na czym polegają trudności wskazane w pytaniu powyżej (np. „podczas mówienia odczuwam blokadę", „nie wiem, jak wymawiać niektóre słowa", „mam trudność z poprawnym zapisem wyrazów w języku angielskim").
26. Jeśli napotykają Państwo trudność językową, w jaki sposób sobie z nią radzą? (można zaznaczyć więcej niż jedną odpowiedź)

a) Wyszukuję informacje dotyczące napotkanego problemu w źródłach internetowych
b) Korzystam ze słownika internetowego
c) Sprawdzam informacje w materiałach źródłowych (np. podręcznikach do gramatyki)
d) Konsultuję problem z osobą posiadającą większe kompetencje językowe
e) Inne (proszę wymienić): …

27. Czytając teksty specjalistyczne z Państwa dziedziny naukowej w języku angielskim, co sprawia Państwu największą trudność? (można zaznaczyć więcej niż jedną odpowiedź)

a) Słownictwo ogólne
b) Słownictwo specjalistyczne (akademickie/techniczne)
c) Ogólne zrozumienie sensu tekstu
d) Długość zdań – liczba wyrazów w zdaniu
e) Gramatyka
f) Inne (proszę wymienić): ...

28. Na czym polegają trudności wskazane powyżej? (np. „mam problem z zapamiętywaniem słów", „nie znam niektórych wyrażeń").
29. W jakich obszarach posługiwania się językiem angielskim nie odczuwają Państwo trudności? _____

30. Czy byliby Państwo skłonni uczestniczyć w szkoleniu metodycznym dotyczącym prowadzenia zajęć w języku angielskim, gdyby istniała taka możliwość?

a) Tak
b) Nie
c) Może

31. Jakiego rodzaju wsparcia oczekiwaliby Państwo w ramach szkolenia metodycznego?

Dziękuję za poświęcony czas i wypełnienie ankiety.

Jacek Pradela

Appendix 2 Scenariusz wywiadu częściowo ustrukturyzowanego

Wprowadzenie i uzyskanie zgody na nagranie

Prowadzący wywiad: Dziękuję za wyrażenie zgody na udział w wywiadzie. Zanim rozpoczniemy, chciałbym/chciałabym poinformować, że rozmowa będzie nagrywana. Nagranie posłuży wyłącznie do wiernego zarejestrowania Pani/Pana wypowiedzi i pozwoli uniknąć pominięcia istotnych informacji. Czy wyraża Pani/Pan zgodę na nagranie rozmowy?

Respondent/Respondentka: [Oczekiwanie na odpowiedź i zgodę]

Prowadzący wywiad: Dziękuję. Chciałbym/chciałabym podkreślić, że nagranie będzie wykorzystywane wyłącznie do celów badawczych i przechowywane w sposób poufny. Jeżeli w dowolnym momencie poczuje się Pani/Pan niekomfortowo lub zechce przerwać nagrywanie, proszę o informację — możemy wówczas wstrzymać lub zakończyć wywiad. Czy przed rozpoczęciem ma Pani/Pan jakieś pytania lub wątpliwości?

Respondent/Respondentka: [Odpowiedzi na pytania lub zgłoszone wątpliwości]

Informacje wstępne o respondencie/respondentce

Prowadzący wywiad: Na początek proszę powiedzieć, na jakim wydziale lub w jakiej katedrze Pani/Pan pracuje oraz jak długo trwa Pani/Pana doświadczenie zawodowe w tej jednostce.

Pytania dotyczące prowadzenia zajęć w języku angielskim

1. Dlaczego prowadzi Pani/Pan przedmiot w języku angielskim? Czy było to narzucone, czy zgłosił(a) się Pani/Pan dobrowolnie? Jaki wpływ miało to na sposób prowadzenia zajęć?
2. Czy musiał Pan/musiała Pani przedstawić certyfikat znajomości języka angielskiego, aby prowadzić zajęcia w tym języku?

3. Czy przedmiot, którego uczy Pani/Pan w języku angielskim, prowadzi Pani/Pan co roku? Jeśli tak, czy pojawiają się trudności w prowadzeniu tego przedmiotu? Jakiego są one rodzaju? Czy powtarzają się one w kolejnych latach?
4. Czy jest to przedmiot 30h (semestralny), 60h (roczny)?
5. Czy ten sam przedmiot prowadzi Pani/Pan również w języku polskim? Czy dostrzega Pani/Pan istotne różnice w sposobie prowadzenia tych zajęć?
6. Czy podczas prowadzenia zajęć posługuje się Pani/Pan wyłącznie językiem angielskim, czy również językiem polskim? W jakich okolicznościach? Czy studenci będący Polakami również zmieniają język? A czy studenci zagraniczni przechodzą czasem na swój język ojczysty?
7. Czy doświadcza Pani/Pan trudności w prowadzeniu zajęć w języku angielskim? Jeśli tak, jakiego są one typu?
8. W jaki sposób radzi sobie Pani/Pan z trudnościami pojawiającymi się podczas zajęć, np. związanymi z zarządzaniem grupą, planowaniem zajęć, wykorzystaniem pomocy dydaktycznych, komunikacją interpersonalną czy różnicami międzykulturowymi?

Sprawdzanie wiedzy i ocenianie

9. Czy sprawdza Pan/-i wiedzę po polsku czy po angielsku?
10. W jaki sposób sprawdza Pani/Pan wiedzę z prowadzonego przedmiotu? Czy bierze Pani/Pan pod uwagę błędy językowe (np. gramatyczne)?
11. Czy jest to forma ustna, czy pisemna? Czy dopuszcza Pani/Pan formę pisemną zamiast ustnej na prośbę studenta/studentki?
12. Czy stosuje Pani/Pan określony podział procentowy w ocenianiu, np. 50% za treść i 20% za poprawność językową?

Przygotowanie merytoryczne i językowe do prowadzenia zajęć

13. Czy zapoznaje się Pani/Pan z publikacjami naukowymi lub metodycznymi dotyczącymi sposobów prowadzenia podobnych zajęć w języku angielskim? Dlaczego tak lub dlaczego nie?
14. Czy napisał(a) Pani/Pan artykuł na temat sposobu nauczania swojego przedmiotu w języku angielskim? Jeśli nie, to dlaczego? Czy rozważał(a)by Pani/Pan taką możliwość? Dlaczego tak lub dlaczego nie?
15. Czy dostosowuje Pan/-i poziom języka angielskiego do grupy, którą Pan/-i naucza? Dlaczego (nie)?

16. W jaki sposób upewnia się Pani/Pan, że studenci rozumieją przekazywane treści?
17. W jaki sposób zachęca Pani/Pan studentów do aktywnego uczestnictwa w zajęciach?

Appendix 3: Student Survey

This questionnaire is addressed to university students who are studying in English but are not enrolled in philological studies. Its purpose is to identify students' current experiences, challenges, and needs in relation to attending university classes taught in English. The information collected will be used solely for research and teaching purposes and will contribute to publications concerning the use of English by university teaching staff.

If you are Polish, you may complete the survey in Polish.

Thank you very much for your time and assistance.

Researcher: Jacek Pradela, Faculty of Organization and Management, Department of Applied Linguistics, Silesian University of Technology

Estimated completion time: approximately 15 minutes

Section A. Respondent Information

1. Email address:

2. Age:

3. Sex:

a) Male
b) Female
c) Prefer not to say

4. Nationality: …

5. Degree for which you are currently studying:

a) Bachelor's degree
b) Master's degree

6. Which university/faculty/department are you studying at?

7. How long have you been learning English?

a) 1-5 years
b) 6-10 years
c) 11-15 years
d) 16-20 years
e) 21 years and over

8. What is your level of English?

a) Basic (A1)
b) Lower intermediate (A2)

c) Intermediate (B1)
d) Upper-intermediate (B2)
e) Advanced (C1)
f) Proficient (C2)

9. Have you passed any of the following language examinations? (Please tick all that apply.)

a) First Certificate in English (FCE)
b) Certificate in Advanced English (CAE)
c) Certificate in Proficiency English (CPE)
d) IELTS (6.0 and above)
e) Pearson Test of English 3
f) Pearson Test of English 4
g) Pearson Test of English 5

10. Do you speak English on a daily basis outside of university?

a) Yes
b) No

11. If you chose the answer 'Yes', what is the nature of this? (e.g., writing emails/letters, etc.)

12. When choosing a field of study in which the language of instruction is English, did you have to provide a certificate confirming your knowledge of this language?

a) Yes
b) No

13. If you chose "No," please specify why (e.g., the university did not require such a document, etc.).

Section B. Experience of Studying in English

This section refers to your experience of studying in English.

14. What is your general opinion of the teaching provided in English by lecturers in your faculty/department?

a) Very good
b) Good
c) Neutral
d) Poor
e) Very poor

15. Why did you choose this particular answer? Please justify.

16. How do you assess the professional preparation of your lecturers for teaching in English?

a) Very good
b) Good
c) Neutral
d) Poor
e) Very poor

17. Why did you choose this particular answer? Please justify.

18. What are the most common problems you face in classes taught in English by staff at your faculty/department? (you can mark more than one answer)

a) I have difficulty in understanding the pronunciation of the lecturer/teacher
b) Classes are monotonous and too theoretical
c) Interaction between the lecturer and the students is significantly reduced
d) The lecturer makes grammatical errors
e) The lecturer reads from a sheet of paper or a presentation without paying attention to the students
f) The lecturer does not answer questions asked by students
g) I have the impression that the lecturer wants to finish his/her classes as soon as possible
h) Other:…

19. Do your lecturers provide you with teaching materials in English, e.g., on a remote learning platform (Moodle, Teams, etc.), or via email?

a) Yes
b) No

20. Are the teaching materials provided helpful in preparing for classes?

a) Yes
b) No
c) I don’t know. I don’t use them at all.

21. Would you like to comment on the question above? For example, if you chose "Yes", how helpful are the materials (e.g., the content is easy to understand)? If you chose "No", why are the materials not helpful (e.g., they are written in difficult language)?

22. Do you contact your tutors if you encounter a language problem?

a) Yes

b) No

23. How do you deal with language difficulties? (you can mark more than one answer)

a) I type the problem question into an internet search engine and look for the answer
b) I use an online dictionary
c) I check in reference materials (e.g., grammar textbook)
d) I ask the question to a person more knowledgeable than me
e) Other (pleas specify)

24. Would you expect language support from the university?

a) Yes
b) No
c) Maybe

25. If your answer was "Yes", what kind of support/help would you expect?

26. Is the university where you are studying well equipped with teaching aids (e.g., library, remote learning platform, etc.) in English?

a) Yes
b) No
c) I don’t know

27. If you chose "Yes," please specify what you like about them and how useful they are.

28. What do you think is missing in classes taught by lecturers in English? (you can mark more than one answer)

a) Talking freely with the lecturer
b) A simple explanation of difficult concepts
c) Engaging and interactive classes
d) Pair/group work so that we can discuss the issues during the classes
e) Guidelines on how to prepare for the exam/test
f) Other (please specify)...

Thank you for completing the survey.

Jacek Pradela

Appendix 4 Observation Checklist: Lectures

Date: _____ **Time:** _____**Type of Instruction:** Lecture

Observation Checklist for English-Medium Instruction

Purpose of Observation

- To compare class observations with the online questionnaire results
- To focus on the teacher's classroom language

Subject: _____
Observed Teacher: _____

Background Information	**Comments**		
Student nationality:	Polish	Mixed	
Number of students:			
Seating:	Orderly rows	Café style	
Interaction	Whole-class		
	Pair work		
	Group work		
Structure of the Lecture	**Comments**		
Opening the lecture (getting attention) – Y/N How?	Storytelling		
	Link to a previous lecture		
	Questions / puzzle		
	Other:		
Presenting new content – how? 1. Activities	Lecture		
	Explanation		
	Using the presentation (PPTX)		
Teaching aids:	Data projector		
	Laptop with internet access		
	Presentation (PPTX or similar)		
	Handouts for students		
	Charts, tables, figures – which?		
	Other:		
Structure and signposting	Yes / No		
	Examples:		
Closing – how?	Yes / No		
	Examples		
Teacher's Language	**Comments**		
Code-switching	Yes	No	
	Explaining difficult ideas or words		
	Who code-switches?		

	Students	Teacher	
	Multilingual or monolingual class		
Explanation / Instruction	Does the teacher adjust their language to the students' level? How?		
	Breaking language into smaller parts		
	Repetition		
	Body language		
	Showing / demonstrating		
	Graphic organisers		
Classroom management	Answering students' questions – Y/N		
	Connecting with students How?		
	Timing of lecture stages		

Appendix 5 Observation Checklist: Laboratory Class/Project work/Class

Date: _____ **Time:** _____ **Type of Instruction:** Laboratory Class/Project work/Class

Observation Checklist for English-Medium Instruction (EMI)

Purpose of Observation

- To compare classroom observation data with responses obtained through the online questionnaire
- To document and analyse the teacher's classroom language practices in EMI settings

Methodological note: This instrument is designed to support systematic observation of selected pedagogical, interactional and linguistic features of EMI laboratory classes.

Subject: _____
Observed Teacher: _____

Contextual and Participant Information	**Comments**							
Nationality of students:	Polish		Mixed					
Number of students:								
Seating arrangement:	Orderly rows		Cafe style		Horseshoe		Circle	
Interaction pattern:	Whole-class / pair / group work							
Pedagogical Structure of the Laboratory Class	**Comments**							
Starting a class (attracting attention) - Y/N	Entry test Storytelling Reference to a previous class Asking questions Puzzle Other							
Introducing new content – how? 1. Types of activities								
Use of audio-visual aids	Data projector Laptop computer with internet access Presentation slides or similar Students working with computers Graphic organisers (charts, tables, figures) - which?							

	Specific software		
	Other		
Structuring and signposting	Yes	No	What technique?
Closing	Yes	No	
Teacher Language and Interactional Practices	**Comments**		
Code switching	Yes	No	
	Explaining difficult concepts or words		
	Who code-switches: students or teacher?		
	Multilingual or monolingual class		
Complexity of message	How easy or difficult the ideas conveyed by the language are		
	What questions are asked		
Explanations / instructions	Does the teacher adjust their language to the students' level? How?		
	Breaking the language into small chunks		
	Repetition		
	Body language		
	Showing		
	Graphic organisers		
Involving the learners	Does the teacher involve the learners in the discussion? How?		
	Asking questions		
	Quizzes		
	Performing the tasks		
	Other		