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The impact of language and culture on fairness in EMI assessment

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Fairness, a critical concept in test evaluation (Kunnan, 2004), arguably becomes even more complex in English-medium instruction (EMI) assessment contexts, where students from diverse cultural, linguistic and academic backgrounds are examined on content knowledge in what is, for most, a foreign or second language. Much previous research on assessment in EMI has focused on issues concerning the possible effects of English language proficiency on the outcome of content exams (Rose et al. 2019), with Aizawa et al. (2025:18) calling for exploration of diverse sets of assessments to “capture the full extent of how the medium of instruction could affect students’ academic outcomes in EMI.” However, Aizawa (2024:30) notes that “familiarity with academic conventions” can also determine success in EMI, with cultural acclimatisation also playing a role, “especially for international students or those unfamiliar with the educational norms of the institution.”

The context of this study is an Italian university, where the percentage of international students has risen rapidly from below 5% to over 8% in the last 5 years, in line with the sharp increase in the number of English-taught programmes. Previous studies on EMI assessment in Italian Universities (Bowles, 2017; Degano & Zuaro, 2019; Mair, 2021; Mair et al., 2025) have drawn attention in particular to oral exams, a practice that international students tend not to be familiar with, which may thus affect their ability to perform well.

To explore issues concerning fairness in EMI assessment, this paper draws on quantitative and qualitative data from student focus groups and a questionnaire administered to 350 international and Italian students enrolled on English-taught programmes across a range of disciplines. The following research questions are addressed:

1. To what extent is language proficiency a concern for students in EMI assessment?
2. What issues concerning fairness arise in relation to written and oral exams?
3. Do Italian students have a more positive perception of oral exams than international students?

The answers to these questions intend to lead to a deeper understanding of issues of fairness in EMI assessment concerning not only linguistic issues but also ‘absence of bias’, which includes possible differing performances based on the test taker’s background and/or group membership, and ‘access’, whereby the test taker’s ability to perform well on a test may depend on familiarity with test taking procedures (Kunnan, 2004: 38). The results of this study have implications both for the professional development of EMI lecturers and for the provision of support for international students acclimatising to the local academic culture.

Keywords:

English-medium instruction, assessment, fairness, oral exams, written exams.

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Teaching the Cold War through Play: Using Metal Gear Solid in an EMI History Classroom

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This research proposal explores the pedagogical affordances of narrative-driven video games, specifically *Metal Gear Solid* (Konami, 1998), as a means of teaching Cold War history and political theory within an English-Medium Instruction (EMI) context at the tertiary level. Bridging game studies and EMI pedagogy, the study examines how interactive digital storytelling can simultaneously cultivate content knowledge and academic language proficiency among non-native English-speaking students.

Set against the backdrop of Cold War-era nuclear brinkmanship, surveillance, and ideological conflict, *Metal Gear Solid* presents a fictionalised but intellectually rich environment that engages players with core political concepts such as deterrence theory, propaganda, the military-industrial complex, and the ethics of war. These themes are articulated through complex in-game dialogue and multimodal semiotics, offering opportunities for learners to interact with domain-specific English in authentic, contextualised ways.

While the use of video games as pedagogical tools has gained traction at the secondary school level, this is evident, for instance, in the Polish Ministry of Education's adoption of *This War of Mine* (11 bit studios, 2014), their integration into EMI higher education remains relatively underexplored. This paper argues that incorporating *Metal Gear Solid* into an EMI history course could in fact increase student motivation, foster multimodal literacy, and promote deeper cognitive engagement with both historical content and language use. The game's immersive storytelling, ethical dilemmas, and numerous dialogic exchanges stimulate classroom debate, critical thinking, and academic discussion. Ultimately, this interdisciplinary approach positions digital games as culturally relevant and pedagogically valuable tools that bridge popular media and academic discourse. The paper concludes by reflecting on the broader implications of integrating entertainment media in EMI curricula, advocating for student-centred, culturally responsive teaching practices that align with the linguistic and intellectual trajectories of today's learners.



Keywords:

Videogames, Metal Gear Solid, Konami, Cold War, teaching, higher education, history.

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'If English were a person, it would be': Exploring Learners' Affective Metaphors in EMI Contexts of EFL Identity Construction

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While substantial research on metaphor in education has focused on cognitive dimensions, conceptualising two ideational domains through mental mapping (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2002), the role of affective metaphors in shaping students' emotional positioning in English-Medium Instruction (EMI) environments remains largely underexplored. These metaphors, linked to the interpersonal metafunction of language (Halliday, 1994), offer critical insights into how learners relate emotionally and attitudinally to English when used as the primary language of instruction. Drawing on Bakhtin's (1981) concept of the prosaic and Cameron's (2003) work on metaphor in educational discourse, this study investigates the metaphorical constructions employed by university students engaged in EMI settings to express their relationship with English. Forty EFL students anonymously participated in a Padlet-based reflective task (Cangero & Cavaliere, 2025), prompted to complete the sentence "If English were a person, it would be..." The resulting EFL Feelings and Metaphor (EFLFM) Corpus (11,068 tokens) was uploaded to Sketch Engine (Kilgarriff et al., 2014) for a mixed-methods analysis. Preliminary results reveal a rich spectrum of metaphorical conceptualisations. A substantial group of participants frame English through type-specific relationship metaphors, drawing on domains such as friendship, romantic involvement, parent-child dynamics and siblinghood. Other participants, however, refrain from explicitly labelling the relationship type, opting instead for evaluative descriptors that reveal attitudinal positioning, such as toxic, ambivalent or utilitarian. Interestingly, friendship metaphors were often associated with feelings of comfort, progress and emotional security, while romantic and ambivalent metaphors indexed higher levels of vulnerability, idealisation or emotional oscillation. Utilitarian metaphors, by contrast, foregrounded instrumental motivations tied to career or communicative efficiency. These findings highlight how metaphor functions not only as a cognitive mapping device, but



as an affective lens through which learners negotiate their evolving linguistic identities and emotional investments in the L2.

Keywords:

Affective Metaphors; English-Medium Instruction (EMI); English as a Foreign Language (EFL); Learner Identity; Emotional Positioning

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Language Gains in EMI and IMI Contexts: The Role of ESP Adjunct Courses

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Recent research examining the effects of English-medium Instruction (EMI) on students' English language development presents "mixed evidence" (Galloway and Rose 2021: 35). While some researchers argue that language learning is often assumed to occur naturally through exposure in EMI settings (Aguilar 2017; Richards & Pun 2022), others advocate for the inclusion of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) adjunct courses to actively support language development (McKinley and Rose 2022). In light of these differing viewpoints, this study explores how ESP adjunct courses influence the linguistic abilities of students enrolled in both EMI and Italian-medium instruction (IMI) programmes. A quasi-experimental study was implemented over a two-month period at an Italian university, involving EMI students as the experimental group and IMI students as the control group. A voluntary 32-hour ESP adjunct course focusing on academic and professional English skills was made available to 118 students enrolled in two Master's programmes in Business. Participants' English proficiency was measured through standardised tests administered both before and after the course. The statistical results showed notable improvements in all groups over time, suggesting that students advanced in their English skills irrespective of the instructional medium or language of content delivery. These findings imply that exposure to EMI alone does not necessarily offer an advantage in developing receptive English skills, pointing to a pattern that deserves further exploration, especially in higher education contexts where English is one of the languages of instruction.



Keywords:

English-Medium Instruction (EMI), Italian-medium instruction (IMI), English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

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From Content and Language to Content and Language(s) Integrated Learning: Exploring the Role of Multimodal Translanguaging Resources

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Due to the dominance of English-only policies, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) education has recently raised concerns about social and linguistic justice, particularly related to the preservation of minority languages and students' linguistic rights (Sah 2022). Indeed, enforcing a monolingual English Medium of Instruction (EMI) in CLIL classrooms can negatively impact students' attitudes towards local languages, as well as their sense of linguistic and cultural identities (e.g. Ou, Gu, and Hult 2021). Nowadays, a shift of focus can be noticed from Content and Language Integrated Learning methodology to Content and Languages Integrated Learning (CLILs) (Candelier et al. 2012) to promote the visibility and development of minority languages. Nonetheless, in this scenario, the point of view of teachers, including their attitudes, perceptions, and needs towards the resources and languages used as a medium of instruction is still generally overlooked. The paper aims at challenging the monolingual EMI policy in CLIL classrooms and promote inclusive, socially just, and multimodal translanguaging practices. Firstly, the results of a survey of research are discussed, giving voice to 35 teachers and trainee teachers enrolled in a higher education course on CLIL, in Italy. By examining the most significant affordances and constraints of this methodology, the survey reveals a sense of linguistic inadequacy perceived by teachers due to insufficient training and/or low language competence. These results are in line with other works published worldwide where teachers required extra linguistic support on behalf of schools to reach the linguistic level set by policymakers to implement a CLIL lesson (e.g. Aiello et al. 2017, McDougald 2015, Lin & He 2017). Secondly, an innovative pedagogical practice, i.e. multimodal translanguaging (García and Li 2014), is propounded to integrate, facilitate and support teachers in designing, implementing, and evaluating a CLIL lesson. Indeed, teachers should adopt a translanguaging stance, recognising the value of students' language and cultural practices as resources for learning to create an inclusive space where they can use their full communicative repertoires. This would allow both teachers and students to overcome the monolingual medium of instruction policy by resorting to their multilingual and multi-semiotic skills, and to fully exploit the digital tools to complement language with a multimodal system of meanings.



Keywords:

Translanguaging, CLIL, EMI, Teachers Training, Multimodal Teaching Resources.

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EMI and Learning Strategies in Workplace Training: Evidence from the Airport Handling Sector

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The use of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in tertiary education has been extensively monitored and studied, with a specific focus on the learning strategies employed by students (see, for instance, Costa et al., 2021; Di Sabato et al., 2024; Macaro, 2021, 2025). Conversely, research on EMI in the field of vocational and professional training is scarce in spite of the role English covers in the training of workers employed in multilingual and multicultural sectors (the few studies concern very distinct contexts; see, for instance, Suliman, 2011; Talaue, 2020). This proposal illustrates a three-year research project aimed at exploring the extent to which scientific and methodological skills in the field of Educational Linguistics can play a decisive role in developing new and effective professional learning environments. The final objective is the creation and implementation of a reference framework based on the use of English and Technologies as Media of Instruction (ETMI) for vocational and professional training.

The first phase of the project was presented in May 2025 at the Open University (UK) and examined data collected in Italy and the UK concerning participants’ English proficiency, and their preferences regarding the use of English and digital media during training courses.

The proposal for the ELT Conference 2025 will present findings from the second phase of the research, which investigates the learning strategies adopted by employees in the airport handling sector during workplace training delivered in English and/or based on international reference



documents in English. Data were collected from staff at an airport handling company at Palermo Airport in Italy, as well as from non-native English-speaking employees at London Luton and London Heathrow airports in the UK. This phase of the project pursues two main objectives: first, to identify and promote the learning strategies employees naturally adopt during courses in English; second, to introduce effective teaching practices developed in EMI academic contexts. The ultimate aim is to inform the design of more effective training courses that integrate content and language, aligning workers' learning preferences with established EMI methodologies from the field of Educational Linguistics.

Keywords:

EMI, learning strategies, workplace training.

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Empowering Multidisciplinary Professors to Teach in English: Strategies for Effective and Inclusive EMI Instruction

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We will present you with a practical approach to preparing professors from a wide range of disciplines for successful English-Medium Instruction (EMI). Drawing on more than 10 years of experience in designing and delivering a professional development course entitled Teaching in English, we will explain a suite of strategies aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of specialized content delivery in English-mediated instruction settings. Participants in our 30-hour courses are university professors, researchers or PhD candidates who are currently teaching in Italian and who will be teaching in English soon; some have already taught in English. The cohort is always diverse: age range is 30 to 60+; they are early-, mid- and late-career; their subjects stretch from Architecture to Zoology, across all the humanities and sciences.



The pedagogical framework for our course has three pillars: (1) clear, effective presentation of concepts; (2) a repertoire of didactic techniques; and (3) strategies for student engagement. Initially, we focus on successfully communicating their complex content and concepts in English, including voice work and targeted language intervention. Secondly, we propose various didactic methods which instructors can use not only to promote deeper comprehension, but also to ensure student retention of the information presented. Finally, we dedicate particular attention to student interaction, on multiple levels.

We have the privilege of presenting new teaching methods to our university colleagues, while improving their language clarity. But first and foremost we task ourselves with forging each cohort into a group. The members must feel at ease in order to critically reflect on the concepts proposed, to discuss their suitability with each other and to share each other's' experiences; this is what builds their courage and their confidence to employ the activities with their own students, not our telling them they should use them.

Our presentation elucidates our three pillars through examples and materials prepared for EMI university professors across disciplinary boundaries: ensuring clear delivery in English, acquiring a gamut of teaching techniques, and generating student engagement. By employing this approach, the EMI professors you teach can create more interactive, student-centered lessons that go beyond traditional lecture formats and foster deeper learning.

Keywords:

English-Medium Instruction, teacher development, learner engagement, multidisciplinary strategies, pedagogy.

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Sustaining Professional Development in EMI: Designing a Moodle-Based Platform for Engineering Lecturers

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As English-Medium Instruction (EMI) continues to expand across European higher education, content lecturers – particularly in STEM fields – are increasingly expected to teach highly specialized subjects in English, often without dedicated pedagogical and linguistic support (cf. Dang et al., 2023). While EMI training programs are now more widely available, the literature still highlights a lack of flexible, sustainable, and discipline-specific tools to support lecturers beyond initial workshops. In particular, asynchronous platforms tailored to specialized domains remain scarce and underexplored in EMI research and practice.

This contribution presents the rationale, design, and structure of a Moodle-based platform created within the I-TEACH@DICAM project (Innovating Teaching through English for Academic Communication in Higher Education) at the University of Bologna. Developed for lecturers in the Department of Civil, Chemical, Environmental, and Materials Engineering (DICAM), the platform was conceived as a follow-up to a year-long series of interactive EMI workshops and responds to a clearly identified need for sustained professional development that is both discipline-specific and sensitive to the local teaching context.

The platform comprises five asynchronous modules focusing on: Effective Communication in EMI; Student Engagement Strategies; Cultural Awareness and Intercultural Communicative



Competence (ICC); Assessment Methods and Challenges in EMI; Lesson Planning and Syllabus Design.

Each module integrates short video lectures, real-world teaching scenarios, reflective prompts, and downloadable resources tailored to engineering contexts. The selection and organization of topics draw both on the literature on EMI pedagogy (cf. Bolton et al., 2024) and on needs analysis data collected during the project's in-person training phase.

Unlike many EMI training initiatives that remain generic or one-off in nature, this platform was designed according to adult learning principles (cf. Hertz et al., 2022; Knowles, et al. 2005), with an emphasis on flexibility, relevance, and engagement. Materials are modular, visually rich, and focused on practical classroom challenges, allowing lecturers to engage at their own pace and according to their immediate teaching priorities.

The design also draws on a review of EMI continuing professional development (CPD) models made publicly available by various international universities and training providers, highlighting a gap in field-specific platforms that offer long-term, flexible access to pedagogical support.

Although the platform is in its final development stage and has not yet been piloted with users, its design contributes to filling a niche in EMI faculty development: offering a replicable, scalable model for asynchronous, discipline-specific support that bridges the gap between theory and classroom practice. It raises questions about how to ensure long-term, meaningful EMI support through blended and online formats – especially in technical fields where pedagogical interventions must be adaptable to both disciplinary demands and institutional contexts.

The presentation will offer an overview of the platform's design methodology and pedagogical grounding, and open a discussion on the potential role of digital tools in sustaining EMI development across institutional and disciplinary boundaries.

Keywords:

EMI faculty development, Engineering education, Moodle platform, Discipline-specific pedagogy, Adult learning.

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Register Awareness in Scientific English: Fostering Learner Autonomy through Stylistic and Lexical Choices

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This paper emerges from classroom practice in the teaching of English for Scientific Purposes to explore how register awareness can enhance both linguistic autonomy and disciplinary engagement within EMI settings. Grounded in CLIL principles and genre-based pedagogy, the proposal reflects on how learners develop greater flexibility and context-sensitivity by learning to recognise and manipulate register-specific features of scientific English.

The observations focus on two key stylistic and lexical areas frequently encountered in scientific texts: nominalization, understood not only as a marker of syntactic density but also as a means of abstraction and authorial distancing (Navak Dezfuli, 2021), and the use of phrasal verbs and lexical bundles (Biber et al., 2004), whose distribution and pragmatic function vary significantly across registers. Through guided rephrasing activities and comparative textual analysis, learners are encouraged to identify how register shapes meaning and aligns discourse with disciplinary norms.

Rather than presenting register as a static norm, the approach emphasises its dynamic and context-dependent nature. Activities highlighting register shifts—such as those between spoken and written modes, or between formal and informal usage—aim to build learners' confidence in adapting their language to diverse academic and professional scenarios. These pedagogical practices not only support linguistic development but also foster a more strategic and self-aware participation in discipline-specific communication.

Keywords:

Register awareness, Scientific English, Genre-based pedagogy, Nominalization, Lexical bundles.

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Exploring EMI Classroom Discourse in Moroccan Higher Education: Language practices and pedagogical implications

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English-taught programs are increasingly becoming popular in regions where English is not the dominant language. In Morocco, despite French's long-standing status as the primary foreign language, the global rise of English and its growing use as a medium of instruction are influencing recent educational policies. The Ministry of Education has initiated a pilot English-Medium Instruction (EMI) program in select secondary schools, and several higher education institutions (HEIs) have also begun offering English-taught programs across various disciplines. This study explores classroom discourse practices in an EMI program for business administration at a Moroccan university, focusing on the interactions between lecturers and students. Drawing on classroom observations and interviews with five lecturers, the study adopts Sinclair's and Coulthard's (1975) discourse model and grounded theory methodology. The findings indicate that while English served as the main language of instruction, lecturers frequently employed translanguaging, using Moroccan Arabic and French alongside English to enhance their teaching and facilitate learning. They noted in interviews that they often switched to Moroccan Arabic and French to check students' understanding and clarify complex concepts. Some lecturers admitted that they sometimes unconsciously switched to French as they were used to it. Students were actively engaged in most activities, demonstrating sufficient English proficiency and subject-matter knowledge. However, during peer collaborations, they usually alternated between Moroccan Arabic and English. Most discussions began with lecturers posing open-ended questions, which stimulated interactions among students and between students and lecturers, fostering active engagement. This study underscores the significance of language proficiency, pedagogy, and context in shaping effective classroom discourse.

Keywords:

English-medium instruction (EMI), higher education institutions (HEIs), classroom discourse, translanguaging, Interactions.

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Monitored autonomous learning in the development of Medical English. A blended learning experience at UniMe

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In today's evolving digital education landscape, developing specialised discursive domains and terminology poses a significant linguistic and pedagogical challenge (Sindoni and Moschini 2022). With English-Medium Instruction (EMI) becoming prevalent in non-Anglophone universities (Macaro et al. 2018), English plays an increasingly central role in shaping disciplinary knowledge and professional opportunities. Despite its centrality in STEM contexts (Ferguson 2007), students in these fields – medicine included – often perceive English as peripheral to their core studies (Briguglio 2014) and engage with it only superficially unless its practical relevance is made explicit (Airey 2011).

This lack of intrinsic motivation presents a pedagogical dilemma that adds to the recent postpandemic challenges (Hughes and Rasulo 2025) in the effective combination of traditional and



technology-mediated perspectives for the teaching of specialised discursive domains such as Medical English.

Given the key role of autonomous learning in fostering the enhancement of motivation and long-term engagement in undergraduate contexts (Bhat et al. 2022; Lai 2017), this study explores the impact of monitored autonomous learning (MAL) for the development of Medical English among undergraduate Medicine students at the University of Messina over two academic years (2023-24 and 2024-25).

The Medical English module, which forms the basis of this case study, adopted a blended learning approach, comprising firstly an initial phase of teacher-mediated meaning construction focusing on the specialised register of Medical English. Secondly, the MAL experience comprised two activities: the guided use of UniMeStone – a proprietary Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) platform that, among others, offers targeted activities in Medical English – and a task-based assignment simulating a medical conference presentation, designed to foster autonomy, research skills, and disciplinary language use. Both activities encouraged students' agency by combining structured teacher-led input with opportunities for independent practice and peer-to-peer learning. To explore both the effectiveness and students' perceived value of MAL, the study compares Medical English exam scores with students' anonymous feedback from an end-of-course questionnaire. Findings indicate an overall positive correlation between active engagement in MAL and satisfactory performance in the final score of the module Medical English. However, responses also highlighted varying degrees of learners' autonomy and time management, indicating the need for further continued support in the navigation of disciplinary meanings and digital tools to promote effective MAL and digital literacy.

By focusing on learners' agency and MAL, this study contributes to ongoing debates in the integration of technology in language education, learner-centred methodologies, and the development of disciplinary and digital literacies in EMI contexts. It also offers practical implications for EMI practitioners seeking to balance the delivery of disciplinary content with language development, especially in linguistically demanding domains such as Medical English.

Keywords:

Medical English, monitored autonomous learning, blended learning, task-based activities, CALL platforms.

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Plurilingual Perspectives on English Medium Instruction in Europe

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English Medium Instruction (EMI) is rapidly expanding in European schools and universities, yet its success depends on recognising the multilingual realities of learners. This talk explores how a plurilingual approach can enhance EMI by integrating English with students’ home languages and the national language of schooling, supporting both subject learning and English proficiency.

Plurilingualism provides a framework for moving beyond traditional monolingual models, encouraging course and assessment designs that reflect how learners actually use multiple languages. By adopting systemic approaches to assessment—of, for, and as learning—EMI can meet local educational needs while aligning with international English proficiency standards crucial for mobility, study, and work abroad.

Drawing on examples from across Europe, I argue that EMI policies and practices grounded in plurilingual principles can better prepare students for real-world communication, foster inclusive learning environments, and respond to the evolving demands of globalised education.

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Preparing Doctoral Students for the Oxford Test of English C1: Reflections on a Blended Learning Approach in EMI Contexts

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This study offers a reflective analysis of a 21-hour blended English language course delivered at the University of Ferrara during the second semester of the 2024–2025 academic year. The course was designed to prepare doctoral students from diverse disciplines for the Oxford Test of English (C1), an internationally recognized language certification. While the immediate purpose was exam preparation, the study also situates this initiative within the broader field of English-Medium Instruction (EMI), in which English is used to deliver academic content to students whose first language is not English (Dearden, 2015; Macaro, 2018). For doctoral students, mastery of advanced academic English is not only essential for success in standardized assessments but also for participation in international academic communities, conference presentations, publication, and research collaboration (Macaro, 2018).

The course combined face-to-face sessions with asynchronous activities and resources delivered through Moodle, supported by AI-enhanced materials. This blended approach addressed the practical constraints of doctoral students, many of whom balance research commitments with limited study time. The analysis explores how students engaged with digital platforms for autonomous study while also negotiating their ongoing need for structured teacher support. A central question was whether asynchronous, self-directed access to learning materials could substitute for sustained live teacher input, a question that resonates strongly with debates in EMI regarding the balance between learner autonomy and pedagogical mediation (Dearden, 2015; Macaro, 2018).



Findings indicate that while the blended learning design promoted autonomy and offered accessible, exam-focused practice, doctoral students still relied heavily on teacher scaffolding to master complex skills such as academic writing, critical reading, and advanced listening comprehension. These results align with research on blended learning in higher education (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008; Hockly, 2018), while also contributing to EMI scholarship by underscoring the limits of digital self-directed learning in contexts where English is the medium of advanced academic engagement.

By situating this case study within EMI research, the paper contributes to ongoing discussions about how blended and digitally mediated approaches can support doctoral students' academic English development. It highlights the dual potential and limitations of online platforms: they offer flexibility and access to resources but cannot fully replace the pedagogical role of instructors in EMI environments. The study suggests that EMI programs in higher education should balance technology-supported autonomy with structured teacher guidance to ensure doctoral students are equipped to succeed both in language certification and in the broader academic use of English.

Keywords:

Blended Learning, English-Medium Instruction (EMI), Doctoral Students, Moodle, Academic English, Oxford Test of English (C1).

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Language, Aspirations, and Inequality: Repositioning EMI in Indian Educational Policy Abstract

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English Medium Instruction (EMI) has played a vital role in shaping India's education landscape, often operating through evolving language policies over the years. With over twenty-two constitutionally recognised languages, language policy has been a critical aspect of national integration efforts in India. The three-language formula (TLF) which mandates the study of three languages, with at least two Indian languages specifically aimed to promote native languages. This initiative is supported by the notion that instruction in mother tongue helps children achieve better learning goals in their early stages of development. However, the socio-economic advantages associated with English have created a pervasive demand for EMI. This paper critically examines how EMI has solidified its position within the rich multilingual environment by analysing policy shifts, instructional practices, and societal attitudes over the



years. It argues that EMI's rise is not merely a linguistic trend but a socio-political phenomenon shaped by market demand, the perceived status of English as a standard language and job opportunities, reinforcing the idea of English as a passport for global citizenship. The demand for English medium education is driven by notion of English as an agent of social mobility and a means of self-empowerment. The situation, however, is aggravated when institutions aiming to provide multilingual environment do not offer English medium instruction in classrooms and EMI remains limited to few private institutions. In such context, English serves as a marker of class distinction among the masses. This paper attempts to portray the complex interplay and tensions between the intended national language policy and the implementation of TLF. It also positions the various language policy intervention and a comprehensive analysis based on its intended recommendations. This paper also offers a strategic response for policymakers to develop inclusive language planning strategies that incorporate both national aspiration and regional linguistic realities.

Keywords:

English Medium Instruction (EMI), Language Policy, Multilingual Education, Three- Language Formula (TFL), Educational Equity.

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“It's OK if English isn't your first language!": Considerations on the fringes of EMI and ESPP

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Learning a second language is neither a linear nor a conventional process. Instead, it is an activity involving inherent difficulties that requires learners to engage with linguistic challenges (Grenfell & Macaro, 2007; Lo Presti, 2024). The adoption and efficacy of specific EMI strategies depend on various factors, including working memory, motivation and the level of linguistic and communicative competence (Macaro, 2001), as well as teaching and learning goals, knowledge of one's learning style, aptitude for study, age and exposure to the language (Grenfell & Macaro, 2007).

With regard to oral English in particular, adult learners are increasingly in need of excellent fluency for professional or study purposes. This issue deserves special attention in consideration of the global use of this language within the domains of work and research, as well as in everyday practice.

This contribution aims to provide a concise yet comprehensive overview of some of the most well-established scientific theories and practices on teaching oral English to non-native adults in an EMI context (Macaro & Searle, 2025). The study of segmental and suprasegmental features of the language from an English-Italian contrastive perspective (Zanola, 2024) aims to outline the distinctive characteristics of an “oral grammar” founded on an in-depth analysis of the English soundscape.

Keywords:

ESPP, Oral English, English Pronunciation, English Prosody, Contrastive Phonetics.

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Ernesto Macaro is Emeritus Professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Oxford and was founding Director of the Centre for Research and Development in English Medium Instruction (now EMI Oxford Research Group) in the Department of Education. Before becoming a teacher trainer and researcher, he was a language teacher in secondary schools in the UK. His research focuses on second language learning strategies and on the interaction between teachers and learners in second language classrooms, particularly in classrooms where English is the Medium of Instruction. He has published widely on these topics.

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