



Exploring the Implementation of English as a Medium of Instruction in Algerian Higher Education: Motivations, Challenges, and Strategies for Success

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Abstract

This research paper investigates the implementation of English as a Medium of Instruction in Algerian higher education in light of the recent Englishization drive. Algeria's recent policy shift towards endorsing English as the main medium of instruction in universities has significant implications for the educational scene in Algeria. Through a literature review and a questionnaire, this research investigates the motivations for change, its implications, inherent challenges and suggested strategies for success. The paper argues that the success of the Englishization shift is subject to empowering content teachers as change forerunners, and offers recommendations for policy and practice, including strategies for supporting content teachers' agency and addressing the challenges emanating from this transition.

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1. *Introduction*

The use of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) has been sweeping over the higher education landscape globally (Crystal, 2004) despite ongoing debates on its impact. With this growing trend towards Englishization, many universities around the world have adopted it due to the perceived benefits it provides such as greater internationalisation, access to a wider range of resources, and growth as the main language of academia.

Recent initiatives in Algeria to promote English as the main medium of instruction (EMI) in higher education indicate a significant shift in the nation's linguistic policy. Starting from September 2023, English will turn out to be the language of instruction in fields such as medicine, science, technology, etc. This transition is a means to adapt to the changing world demands and aims to improve education quality and prepare students for the global job market. While this drive can bring many benefits to Algerian universities, students and faculty, it is not without its challenges for all parties involved. This policy change has sparked much debate and discussion about its motivations, associated challenges, and implications for the Algerian education system.

Drawing on relevant literature and empirical data, this study examines the Englishization movement in Algeria, and

sheds light on the impact of adopting EMI in higher education and its associated challenges and implications, in an attempt to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the motivations behind the recent initiatives in Algeria to promote English as the main medium of instruction in higher education?
2. What are the implications of this policy shift for the Algerian education system, particularly on the role of content teachers in scientific and technical fields?
3. What are the main challenges of the shift to EMI?
4. What strategies can be employed to support the said teachers in adapting to the Englishization drive in Algerian higher education and their changing role?

In doing so, the paper examines the basic motivations behind this move to EMI, and analyses the changing role of teachers in higher education, as they come to be language teachers as well as content teachers. It concludes with recommendations for policy and practice, including strategies for supporting subject matter teachers' agency and addressing the challenges associated with this shift.

2. *Literature Review*

2.1 *Language Policy in Multilingual Algeria*

Algeria has a long and complex linguistic history characterised by multilingualism and diglossia (Bouagada, 2016; Sahraoui, 2020). Algerian Arabic and Tamazight are mother tongues; classical Arabic, Algerian Arabic, Tamazight, and French are national languages; Modern Standard Arabic and Tamazight are official languages while the foreign languages taught in Algeria include French, English, and some other languages such as German, Spanish, and Italian (Sahraoui, 2020).

Invaded by France in 1830, Algeria was subjected to French linguistic and cultural influence for 132 years (Sahel, 2017). The French imposed their language in Algeria through adopting an “all-French” policy (Bouagada, 2016) where French became the language of power, education, and high culture through decrees such as the one of 1892 that forbade to the Koranic schools to accept children during class-hours, and reducing the teaching of Arabic to two hours and half per week (Bouagada, 2016). At the outset of independence in 1962, one of Algeria’s main objectives was the exclusion of what remained of the colonial era (Sahel, 2017) and the promotion of its national identity through ‘linguistic cleansing’ (Berrabah, 2013). Hence, Arabic was declared the sole national language, and Algerian policymakers pursued an Arabisation campaign by taking various measures to spread Arabic in education, replace French with Arabic in public spheres, and bring teachers from the

Middle East to Algeria. According to Sahel (2017), in 1969, there were 1500 Egyptian teachers in Algeria. However, the Arabisation policy was not very successful due to the lack of resources and its abrupt, improper implementation (Sahraoui, 2020). French was still the medium of communication among the elite and educated circles in general (Bouagada, 2016). The result was the spread of what Brann (1990 as cited in Berrabah, 2013) has termed ‘semilingualism’ among people; i.e., the inability to use fluently two different languages one is supposed to master.

In the 1980s and due to the economic growth related to the rise in oil prices that led to openness to the global markets, English started to be taught as the second foreign language in the second year of middle school. In early 1995, right in the middle of the political crisis period, another main event took place: the introduction of English as the first foreign language, instead of French, in primary schools. However, in 2003, a national commission, CNRE, was appointed by the government and French regained its precedent position as the first foreign language and started being taught in the third year of primary school, and English went back to middle school again where it is taught in the first year (Bouagada, 2016; Sahraoui, 2020).

Today, Algeria's linguistic landscape remains multifaceted. Classical Arabic is

the official language, but Algerian Arabic is more commonly spoken in everyday life. Tamazight is recognised as a national language though it is mainly used regionally. Despite attempts to banish it from the scene, French is still widely used in universities, administration, and the corporate world. English is emerging as another foreign language, especially popular among the youth and seen as a language of science and opportunity. Encouraged by the popularity of English amongst youngsters, Bouzid Tayeb, the former minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, declared in 2019 that French is a useless language with no future. He suggested introducing English in universities as the language of instruction through an online poll on his Facebook official page. Two weeks later, results showed that 94% of the voters supported the decision. Consequently, universities were instructed to start replacing French with English in all the headers of official documents (Zerrouky, 2019 as cited in Sahraoui, 2020), and in 2022, Kamel Beddari, the current minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, declared that starting from September 2023, English will be the language of instruction in fields such as medicine, science, technology, etc.

2.2 EMI: Definitions & Motivations for shift

English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) refers to the teaching of academic subjects (other than English itself) in English in educational settings where English is not the first language (Macaro, 2018). Other definitions of EMI have attempted to broaden its purview to include Anglophone contexts, recognizing the established multilingual educational environments due to the rise of English as a second language (L2) speakers in these universities (Galloway & Heath, 2021). However, the degree to which these contexts are comparable is still a topic of heated debate (Galloway & Heath, 2021; Wingate & Hakim 2022).

Different appellations were associated with EMI such as content-based learning, content and language-integrated learning (CLIL), immersion education, theme-based language teaching, and bilingual education (Macaro et al., 2017; Galloway & Heath, 2021). CLIL, a term more frequently used in the European context, views the development of both content and language equally, whereas Content Based Instruction (CBI) and Content Based Language Teaching (CBLT), terms more frequent in the North American context, hold language learning as the primary objective of instruction, despite using authentic content-specific materials as input. However, some educational contexts apply the CBI term in broadly similar ways to CLIL. These programs generally

condition a required language proficiency for graduation; therefore, they explicitly comprise a language objective alongside a subject-learning one. Contrary to CLIL, the majority of EMI definitions do not explicitly state language-learning objectives, even though some agendas enjoin English competence tests for graduation even when no language help is given. Nonetheless, policymakers frequently presume language-learning goals (Galloway & Ruegg, 2020). Besides, the desire to use and improve English is frequently one of the motives for students to join EMI programs.

EMI is an increasingly popular trend worldwide in all educational phases and settings (Dearden, 2015). However, this largely unfettered growth has been particularly conspicuous in higher education (Galloway & Heath, 2021; Macaro et al., 2018). Universities worldwide are increasingly offering both undergraduate and postgraduate programs in English (Earls, 2016; Lasagabaster, et al., 2014). The reasons for this vary depending on the particularities of each context, but in general, they include the perceived need to internationalise universities to increase their prestige (Knight, 2013), the need to attract foreign students due to the decreasing enrolment of national students resulting from changing demographics and national cutbacks in higher education investment, to raise competitiveness between state and private

sectors, and the status of English as an international language, particularly in research publications. Richards and Pun (2021) summarise the main reason for adopting EMI as follows:

- To improve the learning of English
- To provide a common language of instruction in countries with multilingual populations
- To promote economic competitiveness by developing an English-proficient workforce
- To produce graduates with global literacy skills
- To enable institutions to attract international students
- To raise university rankings
- To increase the prestige of an institution
- To promote the competitiveness of universities
- To facilitate regional and international communication
- To develop students' intercultural communication skills. (p. 2)

In Algeria, like in other parts of the world, EMI is promoted in conjunction with government initiatives to improve English language proficiency. This rapid spread of EMI in universities around the world is synonymous with the process known as 'Englishization' (Galloway & Heath, 2021). Although it is often claimed that EMI has a hybrid benefit, allowing students to gain both English and content knowledge (Rose et al., 2019), the term is

often used on content-driven programmes with minor, or no focus on language. Unlike CLIL, which evolved from subject and language educational practices in European schools, EMI has been steered by both top-down and bottom-up educational forces with little consultation from language learning experts and even without language planning implications at times (Galloway & Heath, 2021). Consequently, EMI programs are frequently implemented discretely from language programs, resulting in several language-related difficulties.

2.3. Challenges of EMI

If not done properly, many obstacles would arise that make the implementation of EMI challenging. The potential obstacles stem from all the parties involved: teachers, learners, designers, and authorities.

Teacher quality is one of the challenges in implementing EMI in higher education (Oktaviani, 2019). Current programs do not adequately prepare teachers to immerse in EMI practices or implement it in their classes as training and continuous professional development courses would pain to give their expected outcomes (Octaviani, 2019). The other main issue is the low proficiency level of teachers in general and their lack of adequate oral skills in particular; this is recognised as one of the main factors producing negative outcomes in many EMI settings (ibid.).

Also, teachers might feel frustrated as they will have to spend more time adapting to the new teaching materials and activities, which requires more effort and resources from them (ibid.).

In the best-case scenario, when teachers have the communicative competence needed, students turn out to be an obstacle as they don't understand the lesson delivered in English (Oktaviani, 2019). Their low proficiency in English and their communication breakdowns might lead to a lack of discussion and participation in the classroom which results in low achievement on their part. In most cases, this leads to teachers referring to code switching to bridge the communication gap and restore motivation and interest in the lessons (ibid, 2019).

Regarding designers, it is worth noting that there are limited resources such as textbooks, e-books, activity books, reference materials, and teaching materials in general for teaching EMI classes (Oktaviani, 2019). This adds to the difficulty of implementing EMI in higher education as teaching materials often provide guidelines for teachers on what and how to teach.

Finally, it has been noticed that, in most countries, authorities provide no guidelines on how to implement EMI. In other words, should it be strictly monolingual? Can it be bilingual? Is code switching even allowed?

(Oktaviani, 2019). The lack of guidelines, or worse inadequate guidelines, result in the failure of teachers and learners to achieve the set objectives.

2.4. Implications for Teachers and Students

The wide spread of English as the leading language in higher education worldwide resulted in many university instructors having to teach their courses in English instead of their native language. This is quite challenging for instructors who are accustomed to teaching in their first language as well as for learners who might have performed better academically if taught in their native language. Unfortunately, with the assumption that English proficiency translates to teaching and learning content subjects in English, the bare minimum support is offered to instructors or students switching to EMI.

The discrepancy between what students can understand and what they can convey is a major problem in EMI contexts. According to Richards and Pun (2022), understanding is subject to robust listening and reading skills in connection to the spoken and written genres and text types in their subjects besides the mastery of discipline-specific vocabulary and registers. In parallel, articulating necessitates acquiring the discourse skills necessary to communicate with peers and teachers in EMI classes and a knack to

write within the conventions and practices of particular subject areas.

Learning through EMI entails a double function for the students, who are required to not only comprehend new concepts and processes in their respective specialities but also acquire the necessary skills to access and communicate these in English. For these learners, as noted by (Mohan, 1986), a language-focused approach that disregards subject matter and prioritises language acquisition is insufficient. Rather, an inclusive approach that combines both language and content acquisition, regards language as a vehicle for learning and recognises the significance of context in communication, is recommended.

EMI teachers, on the other hand, must develop an “awareness of language demands, authentic integration of content and language, high expectations and high support, designing explicit and visible pedagogy” (Lin, 2016, p. 78). As content teaching in First Language (L1) instruction, EMI teachers’ skills rest on how effectively they use English resources and communication strategies to display new concepts and information, impart goals and expectations for tasks, monitor students’ understanding and learning, fine-tune teaching where necessary, and offer feedback on students’ understanding and performance (Richards & Pun, 2022). The particularities of the educational setting

also influence the difficulties an EMI teacher encounters. These include learners' familiarity with subject content, English proficiency level, prior experience with EMI, linguistic heterogeneity or homogeneity, and motivation to embrace EMI instruction, all of which will affect the nature of EMI lessons

To this end, EMI teachers need to develop disciplinary competence and disciplinary literacy in English. The latter, defined by Airey (2011), refers to "the ability to appropriately participate in the communicative practices of a discipline" (p. 13). This hybrid nature of EMI courses often entails teaching both content and language at the same time. This fact further burdens the subject matter teachers with new pedagogical tasks of teaching the English language besides their subject matter. Henceforth, content teachers often need to act as language specialists, moving beyond their essential role as content experts; they will need to integrate language learning objectives into their lesson plans, design materials that promote both content and language learning, and provide feedback on students' language use. The new role of content teachers also involves a change in the way they interact with students, as they will need to create an interactive classroom environment that encourages students to use English for academic purposes. This includes promoting collaborative learning activities,

providing opportunities for students to practice language skills in authentic contexts, and providing feedback on students' language use. This status quo requires an understanding of the relationship between content and language learning when teaching academic content, as well as how to integrate language-learning objectives in their lessons.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Method

This study employs a mixed-method approach to investigate the implementation of EMI in Algerian higher education due to the recent Englishization drive, focusing on the motivations, challenges, implications, and possible strategies for success. It consists of two phases. The study's first phase involved a comprehensive literature review of existing research on the Englishization drive and its impact on subject matter teachers' roles in Algerian higher education as well as other contexts. The review included academic articles, reports, and policy documents published between 2010 and 2023. The literature is conducted using online databases such as ASJP, Google Scholar, and ERIC.

The study's second phase involved an online questionnaire survey with English language experts from different Algerian universities. The survey was administered using Google Forms to allow for easy data collection and analysis. A voluntary-

response sampling strategy was used to invite participants from different Algerian universities to take part in the survey through emails and social media posts. The questionnaire is divided into four main sections: motivations for EMI, implications and prerequisites, challenges associated with its adoption, and strategies that can ensure its success in Algeria. A mixture of closed and open-ended questions is used to allow for a more comprehensive understanding of the Englishization drive and EMI adoption in the Algerian tertiary context.

3.2 Data Analysis Procedures

The data collected from the literature review and questionnaire were analysed separately. The literature review was Table. 1 Participant Affiliation

analysed thematically to identify key themes related to the Englishization drive and its impact on subject matter teachers' roles, the accompanying challenges, and underway policies. The questionnaire data were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively to explore the motivations, implications, challenges, and success strategies of EMI as perceived by English language experts from different Algerian universities.

3.3. Participants

The participants in this study were twenty-three Algerian EFL experts from fifteen different Algerian higher education institutions who voluntarily responded to the online survey (Table 1).

Region	Institution	Number of participants
North-centre of Algeria	Algiers University 2	two (02)
	École Supérieure en Sciences Appliqués	one (01)
	ENS Bouzarea	two (02)
	Université M'hamed Bougara Boumerdes	one (01)
Southern Algeria	Zian Achour University- Djelfa	One (01)
	Université Mohamed Boudiaf- M'sila	One (01)
	Aflou University Centre	One (01)
	Quasdi Merbah University- Ouargla	One (01)
Eastern Algeria	ENS Constantine	Three (03)
	INATA – Constantine	One (01)
	Brothers Mentouri University Constantine	Three (02)
	Mohammed Lamine Debaghine -Setif 2	Two (02)
	Mila University Centre	Two (02)
Western Algeria	Tlemcen University	Two (02)
	Djilali Lyabes University- Sidi Bel Abbas	One (01)

The age range of the participants is between thirty (30) and sixty-nine (69) years old, with an average age of approximately 43 years old. Seven participants were between thirty (30) and thirty-five years old; three were between thirty-six (36) and forty (40) years old; ten were between forty-one and fifty (50) years old, and three were above sixty (60) years old. Twenty-one participants (21) in the sample hold a PhD degree, while two participants hold a Magister degree. Three (03) participants were MAA (Maître Assistant A), nine (09) were MCB (Maître de Conférences B), seven were MCA (Maître de Conférences A), and four participants were professors. The sample included eighteen female teachers and five males with varying levels of experience. The least experienced participant had five years of teaching experience at the tertiary level, while the most experienced one had forty years of teaching experience. As this is a convenience sample, the participants might not be representative of all EFL teachers in higher education. However, the sample provides a diverse range of perspectives on the EMI drive and the strategies that can support this shift.

Table. 1 Participant Affiliation

4. Findings

This section presents the study findings in relation to the raised research questions. The findings are organised into six sections

corresponding with the emergent major themes from the thematic analysis of the questionnaire data. These include motivations for EMI, challenges, underway policies, prerequisites, implications, and strategies to support EMI implementation in Algerian Higher Education.

4.1. Motivations for EMI

Our analysis revealed five main themes that motivated the decision to embrace EMI in Algerian Higher Education.

First, political reasons were stated as the main reason for EMI, basically to assert linguistic independence from former colonisers and to align with international standards and trends. In this regard, T 18 explained that “There are several reasons that motivated such a decision. Some are political, to mark linguistic independence from the former coloniser's languages.” T22 supported this idea by claiming that “Firstly, politics: Algeria wants to mark its independence from France by abandoning its language.” T16 and T2 maintained that the reasons for this sudden shift are purely political and warned about unplanned and unexpected outcomes. T16 posits that the decision for the shift is “Purely political and from people who have no idea what all this entails.”

Second, scientific and pragmatic reasons were cited as means to cope with rapid advances in research, improve the visibility of research in Algeria, and enhance the

global competitiveness and employability of graduates. T6 elucidated that the language policy in Algeria is turning to be “pragmatic in terms of adopting a language of instruction that leads to higher rates of visibility for local research and also to contribute in improving the Algerian universities' rankings on the international scale. Moreover, there is a tendency to appreciate the fact English in our modern world is a vehicle for international understanding, communication and knowledge transfer.” In support of this, T22 clarified that “Algerian researchers seek visibility in the academic world and hope that, by publishing in English, their contribution will be more appreciated.” T18 asserted that “an inevitable need to cope with the rapid advances in research in the different disciplines taught at our universities and to improve the visibility of research in Algeria;” hence, acknowledging this as a reasonable scientific and pragmatic cause to shift to EMI.

Third, economic reasons entail training students in the current lingua franca, which is essential for access to international markets and knowledge. T4 considered it “no secret that English is the international language of business, science, and technology. It is the medium of interaction in most intercultural encounters.” T3 upheld that English opens up doors to “international scholarships.” T22 explained that “with Algeria adopting an

open market, it is more than normal to train today's generation in the current Lingua Franca.” T17 further clarified that recognising the “significant role of English in international communication, trade, and education” can justify the Englishization drive in Algeria.

Fourth, EMI is perceived as a means to cope with globalisation, enhance the internationalisation of Algerian universities, and broaden researchers' horizons as explained by T7. T9 further clarified that using EMI permits “to enhance the global competitiveness and employability of graduates by improving English language proficiency and facilitating international collaboration and mobility. In addition, it could be driven by the recognition of English as a dominant language in Academia and scientific research worldwide, leading to the desire to align with international standards and trends.” In support of this view, T11 claimed that adopting EMI at the tertiary level helps “get more visibility, readability and better classification.” T5 saw it as “an attempt from the ministry of higher education to empower visibility and ranking of Algerian researchers and higher education institutions.”

Fifth, English is a dominant language and recognising its importance as a global language and its significant role in international communication, trade, and education is another cited motive for EMI.

T1 posited that “the status of English in the world as the language of modern technology, science and research” makes it a good option for higher education. T19 considered English as a way “to meet the international academic standards, as English has become the language, which ensures scientific visibility”

Other minor themes that were mentioned include the significance of English for education, research, and economy; the world's lingua franca; creating autonomous students; and achieving visibility, readability, and better classification for Algerian researchers.

4.2. Challenges to EMI

Based on the questionnaire responses, the challenges that can be encountered during the implementation of EMI, as mentioned by the respondents, in Algerian Higher Education are:

1. Low proficiency in English among both teachers and students.
2. Resistance from teachers and students due to ideological, methodological, or technical reasons.
3. Lack of suitable teaching materials and textbooks.
4. Lack of enthusiasm and interest on the part of learners.
5. Teachers' age and educational background.
6. The rapid shift to English.
7. The coexistence of classical Arabic, vernacular Arabic, French, and English.
8. Time constraints and staff.

To address these challenges, several solutions were proposed, including:

1. Comprehensive language training programs for both students and faculty teachers.
2. Developing appropriate teaching materials and ensuring ongoing feedback and evaluation.
3. Providing online language training with opportunities for oral communication.
4. Designing workshops that match different levels of proficiency.
5. Reducing teachers' pedagogical load.
6. Rewarding teachers for their efforts.
7. Involving all members of the higher education sector in the shift to English by showing its importance and significance in boosting the quality of training and research-related matters.
8. Creating a supportive classroom environment.

9. Intensive training of teachers with different levels of proficiency.

10. Providing language support programs for both teachers and students.

It is important to note that addressing these challenges needs to be done systematically, and every step needs to be well thought out to achieve the targeted aims.

4.3. Underway Policies to Implement EMI

Based on the questionnaire responses, there is a mixed perception regarding how content teachers are being prepared for teaching their subjects in English. Some responses indicate that content teachers are receiving adequate training, while others suggest that they are not well prepared for this sudden shift. Here are some of the methods that are being used to prepare content teachers for teaching their subjects in English as listed by the participants:

1. Language learning reinforcement conducted with English language teachers.
2. Training in the CEIL (Centre d'Enseignement Intensif des Langues) or via the national platform DUAL run by the CNEAD (Centre National d'Enseignement à Distance).
3. Online training programs.
4. General English training.
5. Collaborations and translation.

6. Reading articles for the preparation of the course.

However, some respondents expressed concerns about the quality and effectiveness of the training programs. They cited that the training is not always clear, the textbooks used are not always helpful, and some teacher trainers are not well-prepared for this, as maintained by T5: “they are taking an English course once a week (3 hours) and most teacher trainers are not well prepared for this, and even the content is not clear, each institution is using a different textbook (adopted textbooks) like interchange and Top Notch which are good but they are not always helpful.” Additionally, some respondents believe that short training will not suffice, and content teachers need more time to be adequately prepared for teaching their subjects in English, as explained by T22 and T 16 “They simply are not. A short training will not suffice”, “In a great rush” respectively. In brief, there is a need for more effective and comprehensive training programs that take into account the different levels of proficiency among content teachers and provide them with the necessary language proficiency development and pedagogical engineering to present their lectures in English.

4.4. Prerequisites to EMI

Three main questions were raised in terms of the prerequisites necessary for using EMI at the tertiary level and its

implications on the content teacher's role and knowledge. The first question prompted participants' views on whether proficiency in English is enough to teach target content in English. Twenty-one respondents answered this question. Thirteen of them believed that good proficiency in English equates to the ability to teach and learn content in English, while eight (08) of them expressed the opposite position.

When asked about the minimum level of proficiency required for content teachers to teach their subjects in English, eight participants of those who answered yes, gave different opinions. Based on their responses, some respondents believe that a full mastery of English is required, while others suggest that a good command of communicative skills in English would be sufficient. Here are some of the suggested levels:

1. B2 (upper-intermediate)
2. C1 (advanced)
3. Upper-intermediate
4. A good level to some extent
5. A2/B1 (elementary/intermediate)
6. B1 (intermediate)

It is important to note that the required level of English proficiency may vary depending on the subject being taught, the level of

complexity of the content, and the teaching context. However, in general, a higher level of English proficiency is likely to facilitate effective teaching and learning of content subjects in English.

The participants who believed that proficiency level alone is not sufficient for effective teaching and learning of content subjects in English enumerated other competencies that may help reach this goal. These include:

1. Effective instructional strategies to facilitate comprehension and engagement for students learning in English.
2. Teaching competencies that would allow teachers to make the transition from teaching in French to English a smooth process and to deal with students of various levels of proficiency.
3. Presentation skills, adequate pedagogy as well as adapting the lectures to students' needs and level of proficiency in English.
4. Design and evaluation of instructional units and tests.
5. Communicative and interactive skills.
6. Technical English related to their study area.
7. Educationally growing in English for both teachers and students.
8. Online teaching and learning.

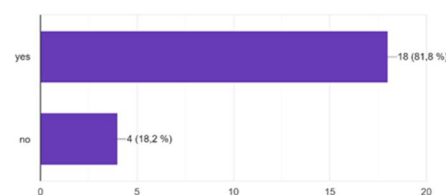
In summary, EMI success requires a combination of language proficiency, content knowledge, and effective instructional strategies that are adapted to students' needs and levels of proficiency in English.

4.5. Implications for Content Teachers

The participants' opinions split when asked whether EMI content teachers can act as language teachers to help students with English difficulties. Ten of them believed that subject matter teachers can assist students with language deficiencies, while ten other teachers believed that the main role of such teachers is content-bound; two participants didn't answer this question. However, most of them (18 respondents) believed that these teachers need to develop disciplinary literacy in English to help their students deal with their language problems; only four teachers didn't consider disciplinary literacy in English a prerequisite for EMI success (Figure 1). This requires a deep understanding of the language demands of their subject area and the ability to support students in developing the language skills necessary to engage with the content.

Figure 1. Disciplinary Literacy in English

Do you think that content teachers need to develop disciplinary literacy in English to help their students deal with their language problems?
22 réponses



The respondents in favour of disciplinary literacy explained that there are different Professional Development (PD) opportunities that can be provided to content teachers to develop the necessary competencies to support their EMI instruction. These include joining online courses and workshops, attending international conferences, participating in PD training programs, and collaborative design and instruction of piloted units with the help of English language teachers. Additionally, training sessions focused on language-based instructional strategies and techniques, mentoring support, and linguistic stays/language homestays can be provided. Below are examples of their suggested answers:

1. Joining online courses, training, and workshops. Collaboration with English-speaking teachers of similar content to share ideas, develop approaches, and practice instruction. Collaborating with EFL teachers for the sake of developing EMI.
2. Attending international conferences, participating in online PD training

programs, webinars, lifelong learning, and practice of the language.

3. Training to develop linguistic skills, interaction and communication skills, and reward be it financial or moral.

4. Collaborative design and instruction of piloted units with the help of English language teachers.

5. Workshops and training sessions focused on language-based instructional strategies and techniques.

6. Workshops, collaboration with language teachers, and mentoring support.

7. Workshops and tutorials in teacher education could be of great help.

8. Intensive training in English as a language and also in TEFL.

9. Linguistic stays/language homestays.

The next question in this section wondered about the strategies that can be used to accommodate learners with differing levels of proficiency. Nineteen (19) respondents answered this question. Here are some of their suggested strategies:

1. Visual aids, hands-on activities, and scaffolding techniques can be used to provide personalized support and promote understanding and participation in the classroom.

2. Peer collaboration and communication are encouraged to enhance language development.

3. Proficiency testing, placement in groups, and instructional processes relying on immediate response to listening and reading materials with information processing activities can be used.

4. Setting clear common objectives, taking individual differences and multiple intelligences into consideration, and varying the task throughout lesson stages to suit the differing levels.

5. Encouraging cooperative learning, providing linguistic assistance, and applying effective feedback may all help the teachers to handle classes with various proficiency levels.

6. Differentiated instruction, hands-on activities, and teamwork can be used.

7. Reading different topics and group discussion can be used.

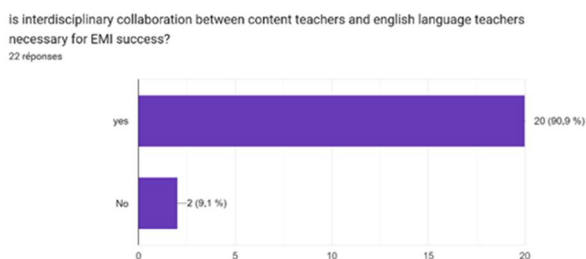
8. Hybrid learning, lots of exposure, including English in tests, and collaborative learning can be used.

In summary, strategies that can be used to accommodate learners with differing levels of English proficiency include personalized support, peer collaboration, differentiated instruction, hands-on activities, teamwork, and effective feedback. It is important to take into

consideration students' individual differences and multiple intelligences and to vary the tasks throughout lesson stages to suit the differing levels.

The majority of respondents (twenty 20) were of the same opinion when it comes to collaboration with English language teachers (Figure 2). They believed that such collaboration is critical for EMI's success; only two teachers saw that the role of language teachers is marginal to EMI's success. This collaboration can take different forms, including co-planning and co-teaching lessons, providing language support to students, and sharing resources and expertise. English language teachers can provide support in developing disciplinary literacy in English, teaching language skills, and assessing students' language proficiency. They can also help content teachers to identify language demands in their subject area and develop strategies to support students' language development.

Figure 2. Interdisciplinary Collaboration



The participants listed different ways to boost collaboration between content teachers and English language teachers

such as regular meetings, joint planning sessions, co-teaching opportunities, exchanging resources and strategies, and working together to create integrated lessons that promote language development within the content area. Additionally, conferences and workshops, collaborative curriculum development, and training and research collaboration are also suggested as ways to enhance collaboration between teachers from different domains. Here are some of their suggested answers:

1. Regular meetings, joint planning sessions, co-teaching opportunities, exchange resources and strategies, and work together to create integrated lessons that promote language development within the content area.
2. Organization of official meetings to discuss issues of mutual interest as well as continuous consultancy from both sides to benefit each other being it for language or content issues.
3. Conferences and workshops where teachers from both domains meet, English teachers working as co-workers where they check the lessons/articles prepared by content teachers.
4. Encouraging co-planning, co-teaching, and collaborative curriculum development to integrate language objectives within content instruction.

5. English language teachers should support content teachers and collaborate to create syllabi for different disciplines.

6. English teachers may help content teachers develop well-structured content, linguistically speaking.

7. English language teachers should have regular meetings with content teachers.

8. Training and research collaboration to improve teaching through EMI.

9. Tutorials and workshop training.

10. Workshops discussion meetings.

4.6. Strategies for EMI Success

Nearly all the participants (twenty-one) believed that a gradual transition to EMI is the best way to ensure a successful implementation (Figure 3). They believed that a road map for a smooth gradual transition is vital. This road map can include:

1. Needs assessment and planning: Assess the language proficiency levels of students and teachers, identify specific challenges, and determine the support needed for a successful transition.

2. Language development and training: Provide language courses for teachers and students, with a focus on developing the necessary language skills for EMI instruction. This can include general

English classes, ESP courses, and terminology classes.

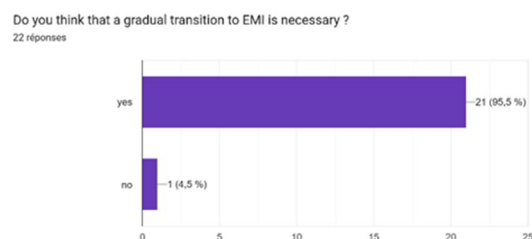
3. Curriculum and materials adaptation: Adapt teaching materials and curriculum to integrate language objectives within content instruction.

4. Supportive classroom environment: Create a supportive learning environment that meets the needs of all students, including those with different language proficiency levels.

5. Assessment, evaluation, and reflection: Develop assessment tools to evaluate students' language proficiency and monitor their progress. Reflect on the effectiveness of EMI instruction and make adjustments as needed.

It is important to consider the context, situation, equipment, readiness, and other factors to ensure a successful transition. Additionally, it is recommended to start the process with teachers and students with sufficient proficiency levels and gradually generalise the process as teachers complete their language training.

Figure 3. A Gradual Transition to EMI



5. Discussion

Algerian higher education is undergoing profound changes with English being used as the main medium of instruction starting from September 2023. However, there seems to be little discussion of its motives and implications on all parties involved, namely students and particularly content teachers and their preparation and readiness for such an endeavour; much less of its implementation and the strategies that can ensure its success. This study was undertaken to fill this void in an attempt to provide an all-inclusive picture of the situation in an attempt to come up with a road map that could feed into the top-down decision-making processes that are underway.

The findings revealed that politics is the main driving force for change, as English is perceived as a means for “decolonisation and globalisation” (Rouabah, 2022). As French still holds strong economic and social capital in Algeria, despite being associated with colonisation, there is a nascent need for a foreign language, particularly English, to extinguish the colonial specter and a means to meet the academic and professional needs of Algeria’s people. The other motives identified by the participants hinge on the potential benefits of integrating EMI at the Algerian tertiary level. These include recognising the role of English as a lingua franca and its significance for education,

research and economy, preparing students for international communication, enhancing their employability in a global job market, and reaching visibility, readability, and better ranking for Algerian researchers and universities. These findings are compatible with earlier literature on the benefits of EMI adoption in other parts of the world such as Malaysia, UAE, Indonesia, etc. (e.g., Deardon, 2015; Ebad, 2014; Macaro et al. 2018; Shudooh 2017).

However, while there was some awareness of this endeavor’s prospective advantages, significant challenges need to be addressed. These challenges comprise the need for language proficiency development among students and teachers, resistance from teachers or students, adequate resources and support, ongoing assessment and evaluation, and addressing equity issues. These findings consolidate the results Ouarniki (2023) sensed by the subject matter lecturers. By identifying these challenges and working collaboratively to address them, institutions can ensure that their EMI instruction is effective and meets the needs of all students.

A peek at the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research’s (MHESR) initiatives to instill English in higher education reveals that they are mostly language driven. Recognising the need for English-proficient instructors, MHESR has triggered an online educational portal

known as DUAL and urged all CEIL centres and universities to kick off whatever language training programs they have at their disposal to prepare content teachers to teach their subject matter in English. However, participants of this study provide a 'critical view' of these schemes, identifying a number of issues that may have been overlooked as the ministry is rushing to implement English-medium programs. The findings of this study and other research (Galloway & Rose, 2021; Ebad, 2014; Rahman et al, 2021; Richards & Pun 2021, 2022) suggest that language proficiency alone may not be enough to guarantee effective teaching and learning of content subjects in English. Lecturers also need to possess knowledge of content-specific vocabulary, concepts, and instructional strategies. They need to be able to scaffold their instruction to sustain students' comprehension and language development. Additionally, students need to have a certain level of English language proficiency to be able to understand and engage with the content being taught. Therefore, while language proficiency is a significant factor, it is not the only one that determines the ability to teach and learn content subjects in English.

In view of the previous, several PD opportunities can be offered to content teachers to help them acquire the necessary competencies to support their EMI instruction. These opportunities include

joining online courses and workshops, attending international conferences, participating in PD training programs, training sessions focused on language-based instructional strategies and techniques, mentoring support, and linguistic stays/language homestays can be provided. Additionally, collaboration with English language teachers was deemed crucial for the success of EMI by most respondents. This collaboration may take various forms such as co-planning and co-teaching lessons, offering language assistance to students, and exchanging resources and expertise. By joining forces, content and English language teachers can establish a nurturing educational setting that caters to the requirements of all parties involved, be they students or teachers alike. These findings support the claims that interdisciplinary collaboration between English instructors and content teachers helps build differentiated and customized instruction as reported in other studies by Khenioui (2021), Lo (2015) and Widodo (2015).

In order to smoothly transition to an EMI approach, it is essential to have a roadmap with gradual stages. This should include needs assessment, planning, language development and training, adapting curriculum and materials, creating a supportive classroom environment, and conducting assessment, evaluation, and reflection. To ensure a successful

transition, it is crucial to take into account the context, situation, equipment, readiness, and other relevant factors.

Overall, the study results accentuate the importance of providing PD opportunities for content teachers to develop the necessary competencies for EMI instruction. Collaboration between content and English language teachers is also crucial for EMI's success.

6. Recommendations: Empowering Content Teachers in the Englishisation Movement

EMI teachers require specialized knowledge and skills that are often neglected in Algerian content teachers' current PD initiatives, which is solely focusing on English proficiency development. Raising teachers' awareness of the link between academic content and language learning and learning how to integrate language-learning objectives with subject-learning objectives are other key components of successful EMI teacher PD that can ensure a successful transition to EMI. By providing appropriate PD opportunities, EMI teachers can be better prepared for the demands of teaching their subjects in English. This not only maintains their sense of professional expertise and competence but also supports their enthusiasm for EMI teaching. Likewise, according to Richards and Pun (2022), EMI teacher professional programs should aim at:

- Gaining insights into how disciplinary-specific content, genres, and academic tasks shape the nature of EMI instruction in their discipline
- Raising awareness of the nature of foreign language instruction
- Learning how to effectively use English to communicate disciplinary content.
- Learning how to include academic and language learning objectives in teaching their subjects.
- Developing teaching strategies that integrate both content and language learning when teaching academic tasks.
- Developing strategies for accommodating EMI instruction to support the learning of students with differing levels of English proficiency.

To achieve these goals, interdisciplinary collaboration between English language teachers and content teachers can act as a navigator to lead curriculum planners to build suitable parameters to implement effective EMI instruction according to Algeria's multilingual linguistic scenery and classroom realities.

7. Conclusion

This paper has shown that EMI provides a distinctive set of opportunities and challenges for teachers and learners alike. The gap between students' understanding and communication in English is a key concern that needs to be considered by teachers who must be aware of language demands, integrate content and language authentically, provide appropriate support, and design explicit and visible pedagogy. To succeed, learners must develop disciplinary competence and disciplinary literacy in English, attained via active participation in EMI classes by understanding and employing discipline-specific terminology, genres, and registers, besides acquiring the skills required to

complete subject-specific tasks in English. To overcome these hurdles, EMI teacher PD should comprise learning to effectively converse disciplinary content in English, combining objectives of both academic and language learning, developing teaching strategies that integrate both content and language learning in their classroom tasks, and building strategies for accommodating EMI instruction to support learners with varying levels of English proficiency. Interdisciplinary collaboration with English language teachers is recommended as a navigator to build effective parameters to support EMI teachers and students. Overall, EMI offers exciting opportunities for students to learn content in a universal language, and for teachers to swell their professional expertise and competence.

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9. Appendix

Questionnaire Link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc8CmYnz89ZTkizuVboSIJHIC2qf4BceWKkDogfn-crGWw-A/viewform?usp=pp_url