

IMPACT OF ENGLISH MEDIUM INSTRUCTION ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES OF BANGLADESH: TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

In accord with global demand for English language and increasing tendency of using English medium instruction (EMI) in tertiary education level in the non-English speaking countries like Bangladesh, almost all private universities in Bangladesh offer academic programs in English language without addressing the problems and challenges that Bangladeshi students may face in EMI education system. This study aims to explore the opinions of the teachers about the challenges faced by the students in taking courses in EMI based classes particularly in private universities of Bangladesh. For carrying out the research properly, this study follows qualitative research approach and purposive sampling technique has been used to look into the challenges faced by the students of EMI based Bangladeshi private universities. The data have been gathered through open-ended, face to face, in-depth interview protocol sharing the actual lived experiences of the teachers about the challenges faced by the students in EMI system. The data have been analyzed manually and through the identification of the inductive thematic analysis process of coding themes. The findings of the study identify that EMI creates various challenges for the students and have negative impacts on output of their study.

KEYWORDS: *English medium instruction, challenges, higher education, negative impacts*

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalisation of Higher education (HE) has prompted the practice of English medium instruction (EMI) in nations where English is not regularly spoken in the society (Simbolon, 2023). To address this linguistic situation globally English medium instruction is used as an alternative media to promote academic programs to offer courses conducted in English medium instruction to both national and international students (Simbolon, 2023). So as a global academic lingua franca, English language has been the obvious choice for globalization of higher education (Bowles & Murphy, 2020). English has been taken for granted as medium of instruction to a great extent in private higher education sector in Bangladesh since the early 1990s (Rahman, et al., 2018). In addition to this, in Bangladesh English medium instruction is reasonably highlighted in higher education in National Education Policy-2010 (Nur, 2021) in spite of being Bengali as official, functional and mostly used language. As a result, All Bangladeshi private universities have willingly selected EMI as their only medium of instruction and have chosen English language as their de facto medium of instruction for offering courses to cope up with the global fashion of higher education system (Sharkar, 2019). So as a global phenomenon, EMI at present has a strong presence in higher education sectors in Bangladesh, especially in private universities and eventually private universities in Bangladesh have become the main adaptor of EMI based education (Hamid, & Al Amin, 2022). As a consequence, all private universities in Bangladesh have chosen English language as their de facto medium of instruction to go along with the current international trend of higher education (Sharkar, 2019). But it is clearly observed that introduction of English medium instruction (EMI) in higher education now becomes a very enthusiastic trend in Bangladesh with a view to ensuring globalization of higher education. But in reality we unexpectedly see different of challenges of implementation of EMI in higher education sectors in Bangladesh. For example, Akter and Mitul (2020) in their study have demonstrated that the students, who are mostly coming from Bengali medium background, get frustrated being unable to properly express their views about their courses in

English language and feel alienated in class for their inability to understand English lectures properly. In their study they further have pointed out that EMI brings difficulty not only to the students but also to the teachers (Akter et al., 2020). While the students face linguistic complexities, the teachers are forced to put additional effort for preparing lectures in EMI which, in turn, demands more effort and time in their lecture preparation. Consequently, it becomes difficult for both the students and the teachers to cope up easily with EMI system (Akter et al., 2020). Additionally, it becomes tough for the pupils to cope up with English medium instruction (Akter & Mitul, 2020). For this reason, a qualitative phenomenological research is essential now to explore the real scenarios of English medium based classes to go into the deep of this current issue of using English language in higher education sector.

OBJECTIVES:

RO 1: To explore the challenges in the processes of transition from Bengali to English medium instruction in private universities of Bangladesh

RO 2: To understand the challenges faced by the private university students in transition from Bengali to English medium instruction

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION AND COGNITION OF ACADEMIC LESSON

The medium of instruction for education is a major factor in the success of a teaching-learning environment. On the other hand lack of appropriate medium of instruction is an obstacle on the way to good teaching and learning environment which can lead to poor academic outcome. For example, in a South African EMI context, De Jager and Evans (2013) have noticed that academic misunderstandings mainly can be emerged from the student-teachers' poor oral proficiency and inadequate speech-act realization patterns. Similarly, in a Chinese context, McKinley et al. (2022) emphasizes that switching to EMI based education system cause unfair promotion and opportunities of social and academic issues of in China and it causes unequal access to EMI based classes, poor teaching quality for students and teachers, inadequate learning consequence and poor academic outcomes in Chinese tertiary education level. In their cross-sectional and longitudinal research Espinas and Fuchs (2022) has reviewed the literature on mathematics education and have found that differences in the formation of languages and individual difference in language skill are directly associated with students' understanding of mathematical concepts. This research has revealed clearly that higher medium of instruction proficiency usually leads to better cognition and comprehension of the content and certain better forms of language instruction meaningfully helps improve the performance of the learners in deferent mathematical domains by providing strong evidence of a linguistic route to mathematical development. Krabbe et al (2021) have mentioned that human language plays a pivotal role for the expression of complex proposition and abstract ideas in physics. They also have found that medium of instruction skill correlates with the understanding of complex concepts of physics and so language as medium of instruction is an inherent part of teaching physics related topics (Krabbe et al. 2021).

CHALLENGES OF EMI FACED BY TEACHERS

Internationalization of higher education is considered as priority in many countries prominently in Asia and in the Middle East and it is supported by the governments (Macaro et al., 2018). These initiatives have produced number of challenges of implementation of medium of instruction by various universities of various countries. The most relevant challenges are related to teachers' and students' limited English proficiency level, students academic burden (Aizawa & Rose, 2019; Shimauchi, 2018;). In spite of these challenges, EMI is fast becoming a global phenomenon of education sector (Macaro et al., 2018). This rapid growth of EMI based education has led to research into the internationalization policies of different non-Anglophone countries both at the macro level and micro-level investigations into the perceptions and beliefs of students and teachers regarding the challenges of EMI programs and the impact of EMI programs on academic achievements of the students (Macaro et al., 2018; Feng et al., 2023). That is why the study has mainly focused on the challenges and academic outcomes of EMI programs (Sahan & Şahan, 2021).

Among the five major challenges in EMI classrooms which are identified by Hung and Lan (2017) in their study conducted at a public university in the Mekong Delta in Vietnam, the student's low English proficiency and the issue of engaging in the class discussion are two of them. Meanwhile, Guimaraes and Kremer (2020) in their study in Brazil and Belgium also address these relevant issues in the ways that linguistic challenges may occur in non-English speaking countries and also in English speaking countries where immigrant students struggle with English medium instruction to comprehend content delivered in English language. Meanwhile Cao and Yuan (2020) have shared the personal experience in their study on "Effective ways to meet students' cognitive and affective needs in EMI classrooms" in international business and has asserted that English medium instruction

always generate challenges in teaching the pupils who have less English proficiency and a large number of students show the frustration in participating and doing course assignment.

Tien (2023) has observed that EMI instruction is supported by participants but students have mentioned many encountering challenges. Among which vocabulary problem is most vital issue for understanding technical terms in the textbook or lecture. Soruc & Griffiths (2018) also have found that to address the vocabulary issue students use translation app on their mobile phone. Macaro et al. (2017) in their study on EMI in higher education have raised some questions about the consequence of EMI on content learning to identify the challenges faced by the students coming from secondary education to university academic programmes. Field level stakeholders of EMI express the existing struggles to understand the content of the subject taught to them following western style of instruction (Galloway, 2020). Along with this, the low English proficiency of the students is an argument against EMI implementation (Dafouz et al., 2016).

CHALLENGES OF EMI FACED BY TEACHERS

Five major challenges in EMI classrooms are identified by Hung and Lan (2017) in their study conducted at a public university in the Mekong Delta in Vietnam. These are teachers' lack of language abilities, student's low English proficiency, issue of engaging in the class discussion, shortage of preparation time for lectures and teaching resources. Similarly Bradford (2016) emphasizes on the lack of skilled support staff to maintain the coherence with EMI in doing academic work with diverse participants. Macaro and Han (2020) in their study conducted in China have reported that the switching to EMI from Chinese language comes with some tensions and challenges and they assert that the teachers not having English as their first language teach majority of academic programmes to the students who do not have English as their first language and therefore the teachers and students face the difficulties in teaching and learning through English language. Huang (2020) in his study conducted in Taiwan have got similar result that some students and teachers may not feel initially comfortable in EMI condition which do not conform to long standing conventions in Taiwanese classrooms. Teachers face different kinds of difficulties in EMI based education system. For example, Yildiz (2021) has investigated the factors which cause anxiety of English language speaking in non-English major academics in using English as a medium of instruction in Turkey. Yildiz (2021) also has identified five factors related to EMI situation, such as English proficiency of teachers, learners' behaviors, cultural differences, academics' self-evaluation, fear of negative evaluation by others, and students' lack of an acceptable level of English proficiency. So the question of the competence of teachers to teach in English medium instruction is not merely a question of their own level of English proficiency but of their pedagogical knowledge, and their awareness of the linguistic challenges (Macaro et al., 2019). In addition to this, important evidence is noticed that in the EMI classrooms simplification, scaffolding and translanguaging exist (Dimova, 2020). A clear statement is also given in EMI Handbook prepared by ERASMUS+programme of European union (2020) that the course designing in mother tongue is a time consuming process but preparing syllabus and making course materials in foreign language is more time consuming and so it is pointed out in EMI Handbook (2020) that EMI courses are likely to pose a cognitive strain on the lecturers and on using the language by the students.

CHALLENGES OF EMI IN BANGLADESH

From the very beginning of the implantation of EMI in higher education level in Bangladesh the question of the transition of medium of instruction from secondary level to higher education level is un-researched (Macaro et al. 2018). A great number of recent qualitative studies have explored challenges mainly related to the language ideology, language policy and language management to achieve compatibility for adapting EMI highlighting mostly on the benefits of it (Sarkar et al., 2021) but less importance has been given on experiences of teachers, students, policy makers and administrators and their voices about processes, performance of teachers and students and academic achievement of the students due to the implementation of EMI. Besides, Sultana (2018) in her ethnographic study on students in a private university in Bangladesh explores the context of EMI practice and identity of learners remarking that students find themselves incompatible with internalizing and speaking in classroom discussions activities and noticeable demoralization takes place. But this study also partly bypasses lived experiences of main stakeholders about implementation processes, performance of teachers and academic achievement of students. Besides, Sarkar et al. (2021) have reported in concluding remarks in their study that quality of higher education through EMI in the private universities in Bangladesh has been compromised and most importantly the nation exhibits limited success in instilling EMI in higher education. Though public universities are offering their programmes both in Bengali and English (Rahman et al., 2020), the private universities have incorporated English medium of instruction (Sharker, 2019). Along with this it is also informed by Sarkar et al. (2021) that the perception of the stakeholders of language management level and implementation have been found absent and thus language practice has been suffering in the pedagogy. Rahman et al. (2019) also have observed

the situation of higher education in their qualitative research that descriptions of everyday's experiences of the stakeholders in micro level have been given little or no importance.

Tai and Zhao (2022) in their study have suggested that the students' past experience of medium of instruction from pre-university education play pivotal role in their performances at EMI based university education level. Besides, the two focal factors like sociolinguistic phenomenon and the linguistic problems have not been researched yet as pointed out in numerous interviews conducted by Sah (2022). For example, Lamb et al. (2021) in Indonesian context have highlighted that EMI has got organic occurrence without any coordination, plan and monitoring system and EMI implementation remains lacking. Similarly, Sarkar et al. (2021) in their qualitative study interviewing students and lecturers in private universities in Bangladesh have similarly reported that EMI causes multiple challenges for such a big portion of the recipients of higher education and the content teachers also experience difficulties in conducting the classes by thoroughly adopting EMI curriculum. Similarly with the growth of internationalization of tertiary education and the current trend of global increase of English medium instruction (Dearden & Macaro, 2016) all private universities of Bangladesh since the early 1990's (Rahman & Kaur, 2018), in spite of having Bengali as medium of instruction in the mainstream of pre-university education (Rahman, 2020), have started adopting English as de facto medium of instruction (Sharker, 2019) for a great number of students currently amounting 398737 (Sarkar et al., 2021) pursuing education in private universities under EMI provision. In this circumstance in Bangladesh, all universities especially private universities voluntarily use English as their medium of instruction to conduct all of their academic courses and activities (Chowdhury 2024).

However, it is intelligibly observed that, after passing S.S.C and H.S.C examination from a Bengali medium background the students usually get admitted into privately run universities. Eventually without getting orientation of English language instruction criteria properly they step into English medium settings where they have to read, write and speak in English in the university premises and particularly inside the classroom (Chowdhury 2024). Due to lack of orientation and required English skill the students frequently might find it problematic to organize and express their ideas in a correct way and as a result this may lead the graduating students in uncomfortable academic environment which is a hindrance to gaining good grades in their academic results (Chowdhury 2024). After completing twelve years of pre-university education in Bengali medium instruction, when the students get admission into different EMI based privately run universities, they are confronted with EMI based courses in their academic activities. This may raise the affective filter of the freshers who come from Bengali medium background and usually get poor grades in their academic results (Chowdhury 2024). For this reason, now it is the matter of concern that the educational outcome in higher level study is questionable due to adoption of EMI policy which threatens the development of knowledge in higher education in Asian non-Anglophone countries (Rahman et al., (2018). Most of the research on EMI is mainly based on European contexts and moderately in Asian context also. As Bangladesh is now gradually implementing EMI in higher education level more research on EMI in Bangladesh is needed to find out the challenges and implications of EMI in higher education sectors. The research in this field opens the scope for local students to access international exposure with technology, online resources.

Apart from this, as reported by Sharker (2019), there is a lack of empirical study on the experiences of the teachers and the students about transformation from BMI to EMI in higher education in Bangladesh. Akter and Mitul (2020) in their study at Bangladesh University of Professionals have identified some current specific complexities and barriers confronted by the students and the teachers in implementation of EMI related to the cognitive ability of teachers to perform teaching and to the cognitive ability of students to take notes, to write reports, to respond to questions, to participate in discussions or to understand subject matters which affect negatively on academic outcomes in the tertiary education and all these issues imply that academic performance may be compromised. But Akter and Mitul (2020) have conducted this research mainly based on quantitative method with the help of closed ended questionnaire in very small scale in only one university in Bangladesh. Rahman et al. (2019) in their case study based research on EMI in a private university in Bangladesh have also demonstrated that the construction of knowledge in EMI is difficult for teachers and students. Similarly, according to Rahman et al. (2019) English medium instruction might hinder educational outcomes since the principal aim of higher education is to develop detail and special knowledge of the subjects, not giving the emphasis on language development.

But until now, in Bangladesh the research on teachers' interpretation of performance and students' interpretation of compatibility in micro level in EMI classrooms in higher education level is very limited (Sarker et al., 2021). Bangladeshi students at tertiary level always find English as the medium of instruction at private universities though at their secondary and higher secondary education level their medium of instruction was Bengali. Since there have been lack of research on linguistic transition at university level of education, this study mainly focuses

on exploring the general effects of linguistic transition from Bengali to English at private universities in Bangladesh. The research on the challenges and implication of transition from Bengali to English medium instruction in universities of Bangladesh is very limited which is not enough for theorizing EMI practice in higher education in Bangladesh (Hamid et al. 2022). Therefore, it will not be an exaggeration to assume that there is a grey line in the research on EMI in higher education sector in private universities in Bangladesh. Even more surprising fact is that the current researcher could not easily find the sufficient relevant articles and research papers published related to EMI situation in tertiary education sector in Bangladesh to address the issue of this study. That is why consequences of transition from BMI to EMI and its implementation in higher education in Bangladesh need further investigation (Rahman et al., 2019). To fill up this gap of studies concerning the EMI phenomenon, farther large-scale in depth research is needed regarding the realities of the processes involved in transformation of language instruction from Bengali to English in higher education with a view to critically analyzing and synthesizing the interpretations and perceptions of real challenges experienced by university teachers, students, policy makers and administrators about the transformation from Bengali to English medium instruction and the implementation of EMI in tertiary education level. Therefore the researcher of this study thinks it logical that now it is needed to have phenomenological research in order to identify the different experiences of real challenges of academic performance due to transformation of medium of instruction from Bengali to English in tertiary education level. Now the question obviously arises whether it is really possible to teach courses in a foreign language in tertiary education without losing content of the subjects, whether English can be only language other than mother tongue in the classroom and in campus. For that reason there may be a lot of doubts and queries regarding the implementation of EMI in higher education sectors that must be taken into account (McKinley, Rose, and Curdt-Christiansen 2022).

3. METHODOLOGY

This study aims to explore several perspectives to achieve insights into the real nature of the challenges faced by the students in comprehension of contents, taking instructions and academic performance in higher education. The study is qualitative in approach to analyze stories that are uttered by participants from their everyday academic experiences. Open-ended, face to face, in-depth semi-structure interview protocol has been followed to explore the actual challenges of participants and the interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim in May 2025.

PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLING

The study has followed the non-probability purposive sampling system to select 12 teachers from six different departments of in four leading private universities in Dhaka metropolitan city, the capital city of Bangladesh to identify the realities of EMI on cognition and comprehension and academic performances in EMI environment. This section aims to analyze the teachers' perception on using English as a medium of instruction. A questionnaire consisting of 14 questions was prepared and the teachers were interviewed in open-ended form to get their perspective on the implementation of EMI in private universities of Bangladesh. The interviews are audio recorded. The real names of the teachers are not mentioned in this study to maintain ethics of the research. To illustrate any specific opinion from a particular teacher participant, the researcher use TPN1, TPN2... up to TPN12 to mention the identification of the participant of the semi-structured interviews for references to the reporting of findings of the objectives of the current study. The discussions are based the teachers' perceptions of the challenges of EMI based education faced by the students and teachers in relation to participation in class, comprehension of the texts and lectures, assessment preparation, academic presentation and overall performance of the students. Overall, it is seen that, there are variety of answers by the teachers regarding the challenges of EMI on students' academic performance. Below is the summary of the participants' profiles. The symbolic numbers have been used and potentially personal details have been modified or omitted to protect the identities of the participants to maintain the ethics of the study. The following table shows the detail demographic chart of teacher participants of this study.

Symbolic Numbers	Faculty/Department	Designation	Gender
TPN1	Communication & Media Studies/CMS	Associate Professor	Male
TPN2	Communication & Media Studies/CMS	Lecturer	Female
TPN3	Computer Science & Engineering/CSE	Associate Professor	Female
TPN4	Computer Science & Engineering/CSE	Assistant Professor	Male

TPN5	Business Administration /BBA/MBA	Associate Professor	Male
TPN6	Business Administration /BBA/MBA	Assistant Professor	Female
TPN7	Pharmacy	Assistant Professor	Male
TPN8	Pharmacy	Lecturer	Female
TPN9	Low & Human Rights/LHR	Associate Professor	Male
TPN10	Low & Human Rights/LHR	Lecturer	Female
TPN11	Fine Arts	Assistant Professor	Male
TPN12	Fine Arts	Lecturer	Female

Demographic Chart of Teacher Participants

ANALYSIS METHOD

The analysis has been done manually and through the identification of themes and codes following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phase guide of thematic analysis ('familiarizing oneself with my data', 'generating initial themes', 'searching for themes', 'reviewing themes', 'defining and naming themes' and 'producing the report') was employed to code and analyze the data (P-35). This study has followed the inductive process of thematic analysis without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame, or the researcher's analytic preconceptions (Braun and Clarke, 2006) In this sense, this form of thematic analysis is data driven (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

TEACHERS' EXPERIENCE OF TEACHING EMI

Comprehension of lectures is one of the main challenges found in this study. EMI hampers the students' comprehension of lectures and the analysis of the contents of the main courses. The students are not communicative enough to read advanced texts and that consecutively focus shifts from authentic guidebook to oral lectures. The respondents have reported that they mostly use Bengali for interpreting key words and theories because these are very tough for the students to understand in English as they don't know advanced English much. To compromise the teachers also use Bengali to save time and energy in the class. It has been reported that Students at the private university are struggling with their content study due to lack of English proficiency level. For example TPN5 without hesitation has confessed,

"I don't understand terminologies or theories easily. I explain those things in Bengali in class. It's easier for me to understand. I also prefer Bangle to English when the terminological issues come."

Along with them almost all teacher participants have unanimously agreed that they also do hard work for preparing lectures in English as they sometime feel discomfort in speaking English on some difficult topic. That is why they have to give extra time and effort for preparation to cope up with EMI situation. Among them lecturers are confessing without hesitation that they have to study much, prepare lecture handouts and give extra time for classes. From literature review of this study it has been also observed that insufficient English proficiency, low motivation of teachers and students, faculty members' unpreparedness for English language use, shortage of teaching materials, conservative attitudes etc. are also considered as barriers for methodological innovation and for implementation of EMI (Zenkova & Khamitova, 2017). Besides, most of the respondents have agreed that for teaching in EMI content loss happened due to time constrain. Sometimes they have to cut their lecture shot and avoid many important and relevant points of discussion as they have to be hurry to complete their syllabus in time. Another reason of the content loss as they have mentioned that detail and advanced analysis creates discomfort for some students and they cannot go fast with the lectures and feedback. That is why the cognition capacity of the students is affected. Eventually the lectures give their lectures comparatively slowly due to English language inefficiency of the students. So the researcher here concludes with findings that EMI based education causes the content loss in university academic syllabus which is nothing but compromising the quality of higher education. The following inductive thematic figure 1 displays these problems clearly with evidences.

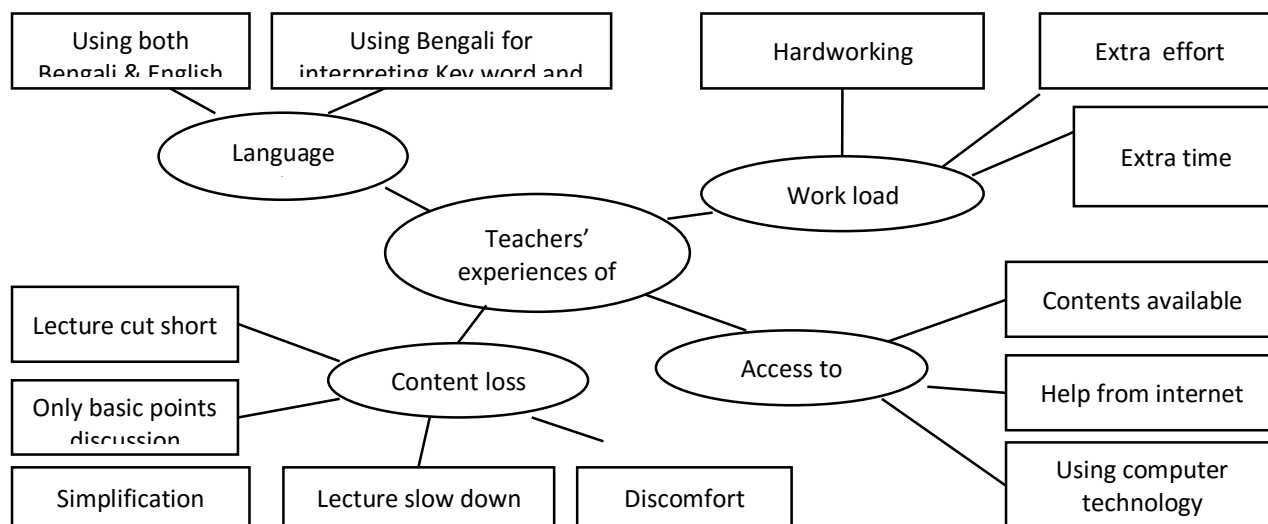


Figure 1: Teachers' Experience of EMI class

STUDENTS' LACK OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

This study has explored that there are varying degrees of concern about English language skill of students and also teachers which affects the quality output of the higher education. One of the important findings of this study is that EMI causes declination of the students' motivation to the learning quality outcomes of the higher education. The students consider English language as a barrier and try to spend extra time and effort in order to comprehend the content. This finding is clearly in line with Alhamami (2023) where he has claimed that poor communication due to low proficiency in English leads to weak comprehension of the course learning and it creates second-rate outcomes. It is also highlighted by McKinley et al (2022) in their study that English medium instruction might cause academic issues negatively such as unfair promotion, and unequal access to students, poor academic outcomes and poor lecture quality. According to the interviewee teachers students struggle with comprehension of the content through English language with which they are not enough efficient to use. This situation adds extra pressure of learning course contents in detail. The teachers constantly have claimed that EMI poses difficulties on the student's cognition. Similarly it is suggested by the teacher participants in the study conducted by Rahman and Singh (2021) that the institutions, which take on an English-only MOI without properly engaging main stakeholders in the context of a private university in Bangladesh, create controversy about the quality service and achievement in higher education. Most of the teachers have agreed that they sometimes use Bengali in class to help students' for understanding of content when it is tough for the students to understand in English. Here, the researcher has identified the code-switching culture of teaching and learning in tertiary education. The learners very often use Bengali language in EMI classes to say something to fellow students and this frequent code-switching from English to Bengali vice versa makes the students feel very comfortable. This finding is again in line with the research done by Alhamami (2023) in Saudi Arabian Universities where it is noticed that code switching happens for better cognition and the students feel comfortable in their classes. Varieties of discomfort for the learners in studying in English medium as they don't have enough skill in English and not is habituated in English reading writing and speaking which are very essential for higher education. The students very frequently switch to Bengali medium as they are very slow in taking notes and understanding topic quickly and properly in time. The respondents are unanimous that the students' language inefficiency affects their learning scope and class participation. Similar findings are noticed in the study conducted by Behforouz & Ghaithi, 2022; Hanh, 2021; Hsu, 2022; Madrid & Julius, 2020) where they have mentioned that due to the lack of sufficient vocabulary lead to problems in listening comprehension and note taking during lectures. TPN12, being the teacher of the department of Fine Arts, has mentioned,

"I think, actually many students cannot understand lectures and cannot follow the lectures properly. They are very shy in conversation and they are confused. So they feel embarrassed and my lecture is becoming short and simple to make them understand. And for that I frequently switch to Bengali language to make them understand the difficult topics."

The following inductive thematic figure 2 obviously displays these problems with students recommended by the teachers.

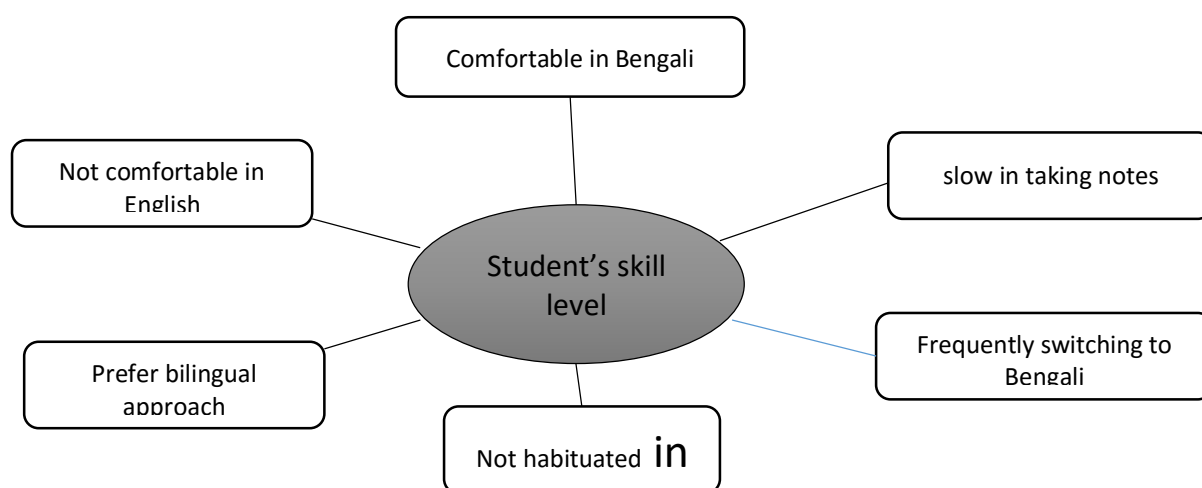


Figure 1: Students' Skill Level

STUDENTS' SPEAKING PERFORMANCE

Macaro and Han (2020) in their study conducted in China have reported that the switching to EMI from Chinese language comes with some tensions and challenges and they assert that the teachers not having English as their first language teach majority of academic programmes to the students who do not have English as their first language and therefore the teachers and students face the difficulties in teaching and learning through English language. The result of this study is almost similar to the observation. Here in this study about speaking performance of the students the teacher respondents show their frustration mentioning their students' shyness in speaking among others in classes and presentation sessions. The teachers have mentioned that the students feel serious hesitation to open up their mouth in English in fear of errors of expression. Therefore, they fumble in oral presentation and are very slow though they seem to know the topic modestly well. These findings are also similar to Yildiz' (2021) investigation in Turkey where five factors such as individual teacher factors (e.g., Teacher's English proficiency), learner factors (e.g., learner linguistic behaviors), cultural factors (e.g., different cultural affiliation), academicians' self-evaluation (e.g., academicians' over-monitoring of their own speech) and learner inadequacies of skill (e.g., learners' lack of an acceptable level of English proficiency) have been identified.

STUDENTS' READING PERFORMANCE

Regarding students' understanding of reading most of the participants in this study have mentioned that students have fear of reading and very slow in reading. Therefore, it can be stated that teachers who participated in this study are quite sure about their students' incompetence. For this reason, teachers sometimes initiate using cooperative learning activities that can enable students to collaborate in groups to understand difficult tasks. Most of the teachers have given their opinions that students are really very low in reading and cannot read as much as they need for their study. The students do not unfortunately comprehend difficult and advanced texts and articles relevant to their study. That is why they minimize their reading materials and contents to manage time and labour. The reason behind is their not having reading habit in English and lack of skill and vocabularies which are needed to understand the detail of the reading contents. The students then follow traditional notes which were written by other students and make very poor performance. Participants also have shared that their students most of the time avoid reading books journals and important articles which are very relevant to their subject content. This may hamper their quality of education and affects negatively on their result. TPN 1, an associate professor of the department of Communication & Media Studies, has shared, "*Most of the students are weak in English language. So they can't understand the lecture properly. They can't comprehend the English text books and they can't take notes quickly in short time. They are slow in reading in English. Some of them struggle a lot. They are very slow in reading. They cannot complete reading in time. They avoid reading the books they are advised by me. They can't comprehend the English text books and they can't take notes quickly in short time. They're very slow in reading in English.*"

CHALLENGES OF WRITING TEST

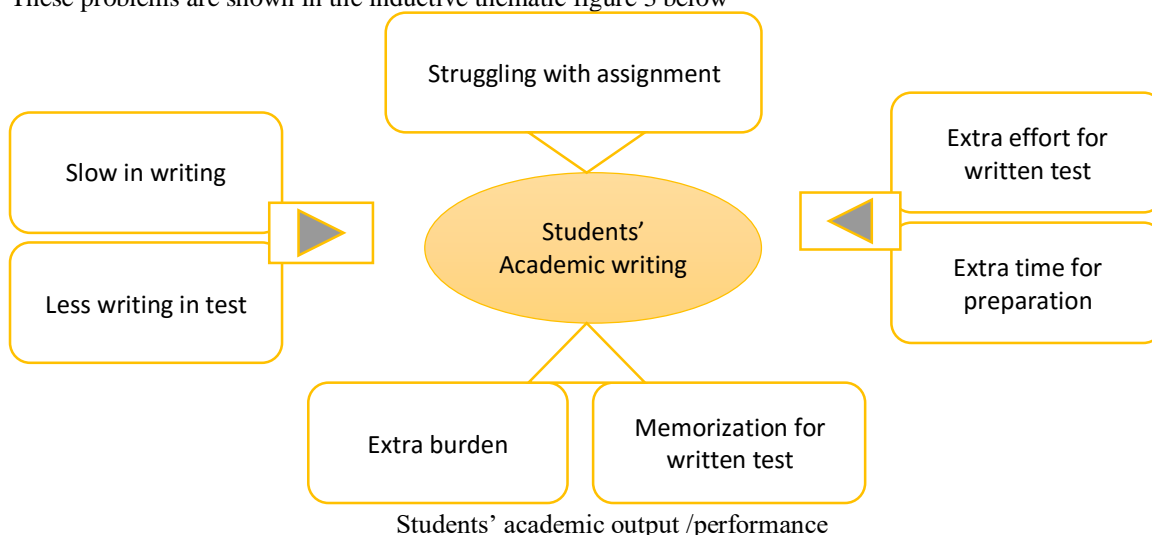
Language inefficiency creates the problems related to writing in written tests and bad feedback from teachers. Most of the teacher respondents have argued that students are very poor in writing and frequently they make spelling and grammatical mistakes. Therefore, their answers are not up to the mark which create problem for answer checking for the teachers. Teachers in this study have also discussed about the ethical and inappropriate use of online academic materials without mentioning the resources of the texts properly. The teachers have added that students do not know the referencing conventions while writing in tests and use wrong information. It creates tough and confusing situation for the teacher for assessment. All interviewees have agreed that they as teachers are not convinced with students writing performance. They in fact have said that students' cognitive ability is not bar for study but the language skill is very low to explain their cognition about the topic smoothly. That is why this kind of crisis occurs frequently. One example is TPN5 replies, *"No, I'm satisfied sometimes but not always. All students are not same. Some are very weak in English. They can't manage to communicate. My feeling is mixed here. But their language skill is very weak and their explanation is not up to the mark for writing critical explanation, I think."*

In fine it can be said that the low proficiency owing to switching from BMI to EMI leads to an inaccurate assessment of students' performance and grades in their courses. Almost all respondents have said that usually students have low performance in examinations, preparation for their assignments, performing at presentation, understanding texts and lecture comprehension. They cannot express their views in class discussions properly due to language barriers. The students also don not get equal opportunities and fare chances to talk like their classmates who are comparatively more efficient in English language.

STUDENTS' ACADEMIC OUTPUT

Concerning challenges of the writing majority of respondents have agreed that most of the students are very slow in writing so they straggle in doing assignment in time in their own ideas. Most of the students try to copy the text in the books and handouts provided by their course teachers and collected from other unauthorized sources. In their assignment the logical presentation is not up to the mark as they try to copy others. In written tests students write up in English is not up to the mark and poor. There are frequent grammatical errors in writing. Sometime the explanation is not relevant to the question and properly written. A good number of participants have claimed that the students memorize the answers of the questions and if the question is critical, then they could not write answer with logic and relevance. As a consequence it is really boring for the teachers to assess the answer scripts with ease and the students are not getting standard marks which are vey essential for their results and professional career. TPN3 has claims, *"Students are not satisfied with most of the scripts they produce. Because they can't make sentences properly and lots of spelling mistakes and grammatical mistakes happen. They can't explain the topic properly in English. Sometimes I fail to understand what they're trying to explain. Then it's tough to assess them properly. They know the topic well but cannot explain."*

These problems are shown in the inductive thematic figure 3 below



SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

This study primarily shows that EMI based education can enhance students' English language which is definitely good for their jobs in future in this global and connected world. But the problems remain with implementation even if we ignore the national cultural issue. In the field level investigation in this study it is clearly found that the students and even teachers have to face many difficulties and challenges to cope up with EMI system for many practical perspectives and many of the participants of the current study have stood against EMI as they believe that EMI is an obstacle for their profound comprehension of the major courses and it has negative impacts on the students' grades which are also very essential for their personal academic success. This perspective of individual students and teachers cannot be ignored at all as they are the main stakeholders. For example, the students do not frequently speak English in class and in campus due to less skill in English language. They prefer Bengali language for informal communication as it is their mother tongue and they have their pre-university education in Bengali, their mother tongue. Interestingly the students frequently use English words and phrases in their Bengali speaking. Besides, the students in campus feel psychological problems in EMI education system in private sector of education which creates class division among the students as the socioeconomic disparity is very prominent in Bangladesh. Some students do not understand English properly, cannot speak and feel humiliated though there is also a contrasting scenario that some of the students are really motivated and enthusiastic in using English and continue their study in EMI. They feel superior to the others and enjoy the prestige of the society to show that they belong to upper class society.

In implementation level in class the students do not properly understand lectures given by their teachers properly in detail. They do not understand many of the important and relevant terms and miss some important points of academic importance. As a result of this teacher-student interaction cannot be developed properly and remains limited in class due to lack of communication and hesitation among students. The students frequently avoid asking relevant questions to know the topic in detail because of their lack of confidence in speaking English. This kind of stagnant academic situation creates social and psychological problems among students, teachers and other stakeholders. Most importantly, we can say that EMI has negative psychological impacts on students. Some suffer from low self-esteem which hinders them from asking questions in class since they feel bored when they do not understand the lectures. They do not want to be humiliated anyway. So most of the time they feel the psychological pressure in their mind of using wrong English. It creates lack of confidence among students. Eventually they cannot share their own opinion properly and cannot give feedback easily. As a consequence they speak less and often miss content of relevant topic. In presentation the students struggle speaking in English. Sometimes they cannot explain the topic properly, they feel nervous and stressed and stuck in executing presentation in spite of knowing the topic well. So their presentation cannot be up to the mark. That is why the teachers are not satisfied with their presentation and the students do not get expected scores. In reading students have to read lots of texts in English. Now and then they go to Google to get support. They take help from Google to translate English to Bengali to understand easily. For that extra time is needed. It spoils their private time and creates restlessness and psychological, mental and physical burden. Unknown vocabularies are main obstacles that hamper comprehension of the topic. They feel tired and dizzy in reading. The study shows the similar result that most of the participants have difficulties of not having skills of vocabulary, pronunciation, and listening and speaking similar to the results of the study in Thailand by Nithidechaiwarachok et al (2022). In written test students cannot answer properly as they are very slow in writing in English and they lose some important contents. They always face trouble in writing correct sentences in limited time given to them in written examination. Eventually their scores are lower than expected. They express the feeling that they are not able to write proper answer in limited time because they do not know how to express ideas in English. The participants are less satisfied with the grades they achieve in examination. Many participants have opined that Bengali medium instruction would help them to do better academic performance because it would be easier for them to gain deep comprehension of the subject. Finally we can say that the result shows that the general English proficiency of students is not satisfactory and a predictor for academic success which is similar to the result of the study conducted in Turkey by Curle, S., Yuksel, D., Soruç, A. & Altay, M. (2020). It is also clear from this study that low English skills in EMI education system instigates content loss, loss of motivation, quality compromise, lower scores.

CHALLENGES OF EMI

The researcher groups it in four kinds of challenges. First, challenges are related to the structure of or competence in English. Second, there are cognitive and motivational issues like lack of interest, fear of making wrong sentences, feeling of under-confident and difficulties in comprehending texts or conversations with others. Third, there are challenges related to the social prestige and status of English. And finally, there are challenges related to resources, environment and support of high fees, lack of good or supportive teachers, rural environment and lack of interaction with English speakers. Two most common difficulties equally are reported by the Bangladeshi teachers that may be termed as teacher issues and student issues. Teacher issues include difficulty in dealing with

students from non-EMI backgrounds, lack of teacher training, difficulties of communication and translation, and disconnect between the teacher and the taught. Student issues include such problems as poor English proficiency, sense of inferiority or exclusion, non-EMI background, and lack of support or resources. An interesting observation by a teacher is about students from elite and posh background performing well and dominating the class, wherein not only poor students but even teachers might feel excluded and even ridiculed in their professional works. The student issues also include a list of their low English proficiency, lack of exposure to English and lack of confidence. Whereas there was a long list of teacher issues such as lack of support from parents and administrators, fear of low results, feeling of alienation and separation within the school, negative attitudes of other teachers, students and administration and lack of teacher development and support. They also have reported many resource-related difficulties, such as lack of separate classrooms and resources, heavy time-taking syllabus, examination-oriented educational culture, and burden of translating test papers to English and vice versa. More specifically, challenges related to academic English are prominent in the participants' oral responses including presentation and interaction among students and with teachers. Other difficulties such as composing essays using appropriate words and phrases for academic style in writing remain lack. One of the dire problems is reported by the respondents of all categories in this study is the students' participation in discussions with their classmates and teachers. The respondents have mentioned some challenges such as speaking, academic writing and vocabulary as chronic problems in EMI contexts in higher education in Bangladesh. According to Cummins (1979) higher education requires cognitive language skill for reading of abstract texts and more articles. At university level in Bangladesh need for higher English language skill for comprehension of the advanced texts of the particular subjects may create linguistic challenges for the students who are studying in EMI context.

Students are always the crucial stakeholders who should be taken into account for implementing EMI based education in higher education but it is not always done properly for policy making that is needed further research (Li Jiang and Jun Zhang 2019). Besides, EMI students might be more prone to develop their linguistic abilities on their own interest (Tai and Zhao 2022). Again we can mention as reference here that the researches, which are done by Sahan and Şahan (2021), have obviously found that the main motivations for learners to continue study through EMI are related to external and internal factors. Out of the external ones, the students in this study have willingly expect more professional opportunities of studying in English medium to be engaged in mainstream international academic communities. As regards internal motivations, they have showed their desire to develop English language skills for betterment in professional life. The difficulty, that the teachers usually face, is lack of linguistic proficiency among students and students often lose chance for knowing more content and lose the detail understanding of the lectures given by the teachers. Even a classroom full of students with enough English skills at different levels may require effective pedagogical skill that teachers also do not always have. That is why adjustment is needed which compromise the quality. Thus in spite of opportunities, linguistic inefficiency has been still well noticed as obstacle on the way of higher education. The main driving force of EMI system is policy of the universities aligning with international trends of higher education though government of Bangladesh does not specify hard and fast rules of using EMI in higher education. Unofficially it is inspired to flourish as de-facto system. The student respondents have mentioned that they are motivated because they want to be in global academic culture through EMI for getting admission in foreign universities for further higher education. It is clear from this study that the students' attitude to EMI is very optimistic and the common belief is that EMI may boost up their upcoming career prospects. In contrast, it is noted in this study that lack of EMI proficiency instigate the negative emotions and feelings in students' mind and the students believe that if it is Bengali medium instruction, they can comprehend the content easily. Another observation derived from participants' interview is that students may have less confidence in talking and writing in English medium as they do not feel comfortable fully. Thus the students in the EMI based classes may feel upset because of low English proficiency level. Besides it is noticed that students' behavior and performance and using English language as the medium of instruction pose many obstacles for performance properly in class discussions and in written examinations. Most of the student respondents in interviews have voiced in response to English language competence to communicate that they have problems in EMI based system. These findings indicate that students may be able to respond properly to teachers' instructions but the lack of English skill is the barrier for them to perform well. This finding reflects the language skill of the students of Bangladeshi private university students who are exposed to EMI based education. Another important issue has raised here and this has indicated that bilingual approach may be installed to improve students' interest in the lesson and make them more engaged in conversation in class.

RECOMMENDATION

This study has observed that lack of English language skill is the main obstacle in taking instruction and academic presentation in EMI based classes for the Bangladeshi students who come from Bengali medium instruction in their pre-university education. Bangladeshi private universities need to address this issue comprehensively to implement EMI policy in real sense for tertiary education level. Besides, English language teaching in pre-

university education level can be rearranged keeping in mind the EMI based higher education system ensuring listening and speaking activities in schools to make the students exposed to English medium environment from their early education life. This can make the students prepare for EMI based classes in tertiary education. Otherwise without making the students ready for EMI based education adopting EMI policy in tertiary education level may create several obstacles for the students who are cooperatively less proficient in English language. Other recommendation is that the new comer students must be given extra support by the university and other academic institutions for English language learning to cope with the EMI based classes. In this study it is shared by the participants that Bengali is comfortable for them to deal in classes for taking instructions and presentations. In that case the researcher recommends that bilingual approach can be introduced in classes to encourage students' participation in taking instruction and academic presentation.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

More in depth critical studies in the field level of EMI based education level are essential to get the highest benefit of EMI based classes to the address of EMI implementation. More similar studies on the students' experiences and academic performances in EMI based classes in public and private institutions in Bangladesh are needed to be taken to cope up with the current global de-facto system of EMI in higher education. Further separate research is needed to investigate the psychological and social effects of the EMI on the students' learning experiences since this is the area that has not been given proper attention in educational research in Bangladesh. More qualitative study is needed to know in details of how students manage to get instructions and take notes from lectures and perform oral academic presentation in their major subjects. In Bangladesh most studies are done on small scale to write articles in journals. That is why a comprehensive research in public and private tertiary EMI based institution could give more practical scenario which can make a platform to share voices of the students from which the real beneficial planning of EMI implementation in classes of tertiary courses could be drawn for national and institutional level.

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