

MANAGING THE GRADUAL TRANSITION TO ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN ALGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL INSIGHTS FROM ECONOMICS FACULTY TEACHERS

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Abstract

English has become the primary language of science, technology, and higher education worldwide. In Algeria, the gradual adoption of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) reflects a strategic policy aimed at improving teaching quality, international visibility, and student mobility. This study examines the perspectives of teachers at the Faculty of Economics, Management, and Commerce at Biskra University, considering them as active participants in implementing EMI and shaping institutional practices. A structured online survey of 40 faculty members gathered information on professional backgrounds, attitudes toward EMI, perceived challenges, and training needs. Findings indicate generally positive attitudes, with teachers recognizing EMI as a means to advance institutional objectives, strengthen student engagement, and contribute to the university's internationalization strategy. At the same time, participants highlighted several obstacles, including uneven English proficiency, high instructional demands in large classes, insufficient institutional guidance, and limited access to targeted professional development. These findings underline the importance of clear policies, administrative support, and structured training programs to facilitate the effective implementation of EMI. The study provides insights for policymakers and university leaders managing the transition to English-medium instruction in non-native contexts.

1. Introduction

In the context of increasing global academic mobility and the internationalization of higher education, English has become the dominant language of scientific research and scholarly communication. In response to these global developments, Algerian higher education authorities have initiated the adoption of EMI as part of a broader language policy aimed at enhancing institutional performance, strengthening international competitiveness, and aligning national higher education with global academic standards. The introduction of EMI represents a significant pedagogical and institutional shift, requiring university instructors to move from traditional instruction in Arabic or French to the delivery of disciplinary content in English. Beyond its linguistic dimension, EMI is framed as a strategic policy instrument intended to support international collaboration, improve graduate employability, and raise the international visibility of Algerian universities.

Despite its strategic importance, the implementation of EMI poses substantial challenges that extend beyond policy formulation to classroom practice. International research on EMI consistently identifies limited instructor language proficiency as a major constraint, particularly with regard to academic and discipline-specific language use rather than general communicative competence (Dearden, 2015; Macaro et al., 2018). Insufficient proficiency has been shown to affect instructors' confidence, restrict pedagogical flexibility, and hinder effective content delivery, with potential consequences for student comprehension and learning outcomes. In addition, the literature highlights the absence of sustained professional development and pedagogical training as a recurring issue, leaving instructors inadequately prepared to address the cognitive and linguistic demands of English-medium teaching.

Empirical research conducted in the Algerian higher education context points to similar concerns. Studies exploring faculty perspectives report that many instructors perceive their English proficiency as insufficient for effective EMI, particularly in non-linguistic disciplines such as economics and management (Bouزيد, 2016; Brahmi & Hassani, 2024). Research also indicates that existing training initiatives tend to focus on general English rather than EMI-specific pedagogical competencies, resulting in limited institutional support for instructors expected to implement the policy (Benaissi & Othman, 2020). Further challenges

identified in the literature include large class sizes and the absence of clear institutional guidelines regulating language use, assessment practices, and instructional expectations, which collectively contribute to uncertainty and inconsistency in EMI implementation (Belhiah & Elhami, 2015). These findings reveal a persistent gap between the objectives articulated in EMI language policy and the conditions under which instructors are required to enact it.

Against this background, examining teachers' perspectives becomes essential for understanding how EMI policy is interpreted and implemented at the institutional and classroom levels. Instructors occupy a central position in the enactment of language policy, and their experiences provide critical insights into the feasibility, sustainability, and effectiveness of EMI initiatives. Accordingly, the present study examines the implementation of EMI among faculty members at the Faculty of Economics, Management, and Commerce at Biskra University during the 2022/2023 academic year. It explores instructors' attitudes toward EMI, the challenges they encounter in applying the policy, and the forms of professional development they consider necessary for effective implementation. Specifically, the study aims to examine faculty attitudes toward EMI, identify obstacles affecting policy implementation, and determine professional development needs that support effective English-medium instruction.

By addressing both human and institutional dimensions of EMI implementation, this research seeks to provide evidence-based insights to inform university administrators and higher education policymakers in refining EMI initiatives. The findings contribute to broader discussions on the internationalization of higher education by illuminating the practical realities of translating language policy into classroom practice within a non-native English context. Furthermore, the study offers guidance for the design of targeted professional development programs and institutional strategies that support instructors, thereby promoting more effective and sustainable EMI adoption in Algerian higher education.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Global Expansion of English-Medium Instruction and Policy Rationales

English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) has emerged as a defining feature of higher education systems worldwide, closely linked to broader processes of globalization, internationalization, and academic marketization. The expansion of EMI reflects the dominant role of English in scientific production, scholarly dissemination, and global knowledge exchange. Early analyses by Coleman (2006) identified EMI as a strategic response by universities to increased international student mobility, cross-border academic collaboration, and the perceived need to enhance graduate employability in a global labor market. From a policy perspective, EMI has increasingly been positioned as a governance tool through which higher education institutions seek to strengthen competitiveness, visibility, and alignment with international standards.

Research in the European context illustrates how EMI expansion is often driven by top-down policy initiatives at national or institutional levels. Studies conducted in Nordic countries demonstrate that language policies promoting EMI are commonly embedded within broader internationalization strategies (Airey et al., 2017). However, these studies also reveal that policy effectiveness depends on how such initiatives are interpreted and enacted at the disciplinary and faculty levels. While institutional governance structures may mandate EMI, the success of implementation is shaped by instructors' linguistic resources, disciplinary literacy practices, and pedagogical autonomy. This tension highlights the limits of policy-driven reform when governance mechanisms fail to account for local academic cultures.

Similar conclusions have been drawn in other European settings. Balan (2011) argues that EMI policies are frequently justified by their potential to improve access to global knowledge and foster international academic networks, yet their implementation often exposes discrepancies between policy objectives and institutional capacity. These findings suggest that EMI governance cannot rely solely on formal policy adoption but must incorporate sustained support structures, clear implementation guidelines, and faculty engagement mechanisms.

2.2 EMI Implementation, Governance, and Pedagogical Challenges

Beyond Europe, EMI research in Asian higher education systems provides further insight into the governance dimensions of EMI adoption. In Hong Kong, Evans (2002) documented the coexistence of English-medium and local-language instruction as a policy compromise aimed at balancing internationalization goals with

linguistic equity. This dual-track system, while institutionally regulated, generated pedagogical tensions related to language proficiency disparities and instructional coherence. Such findings underscore how governance decisions concerning language policy directly shape classroom interaction and instructional practices.

In mainland China, EMI has been promoted as a central component of national higher education reform and global engagement. However, empirical studies reveal a persistent gap between policy rhetoric and classroom realities. Hu, Li, and Lei (2014) describe EMI implementation as constrained by limited faculty preparedness, insufficient training, and uneven institutional support, leading to partial or symbolic adoption rather than full pedagogical transformation. Subsequent work by Hu and Li (2017) demonstrates that EMI imposes increased cognitive and linguistic demands on both instructors and students, affecting discourse quality, interaction patterns, and depth of content engagement. These challenges raise critical questions about the adequacy of governance frameworks that mandate EMI without addressing the structural and human resources required for sustainable implementation.

Teachers' perceptions and agency emerge as a recurrent theme in the literature. Galloway (2017) shows that instructors' attitudes toward EMI are strongly influenced by institutional support, language policy clarity, and perceived legitimacy of EMI objectives. Where governance structures provide clear guidance, training opportunities, and recognition of linguistic challenges, teachers are more likely to engage positively with EMI and adopt innovative pedagogical practices. Conversely, ambiguous policies and limited professional development often lead instructors to revert to first-language use, simplify content, or resist EMI mandates altogether.

2.3 Teacher Perspectives, Institutional Capacity, and EMI Challenges

Teacher preparedness has consistently been identified as a decisive factor in the effective implementation of English-Medium Instruction. From a policy and governance perspective, instructors represent the primary agents through whom EMI initiatives are enacted, making their linguistic competence, pedagogical confidence, and professional support central to policy success. Macaro (2015) conceptualizes EMI teaching as a dual-demand task in which instructors must simultaneously manage disciplinary knowledge transmission and language-related mediation. This dual responsibility often results in increased cognitive load, extended preparation time, and heightened pedagogical uncertainty, particularly among faculty whose academic expertise was developed in a first language other than English.

Empirical studies across diverse higher education contexts indicate that limited English proficiency remains a persistent constraint. Macaro et al. (2018), in a comprehensive review of EMI research, identify teacher language competence as one of the most influential variables shaping classroom interaction, depth of explanation, and assessment practices. Instructors frequently report difficulties in articulating abstract concepts, responding spontaneously to student questions, and maintaining interactional fluency. These challenges often lead to strategic code-switching or partial reliance on the first language, a practice documented in Korean EMI classrooms by Kim, Kweon, and Kim (2017), where instructors used L1 as a compensatory strategy to ensure content comprehension and pedagogical clarity.

Beyond individual proficiency, the literature underscores the role of institutional governance in shaping teacher experiences of EMI. Ball and Lindsay (2012) argue that EMI implementation without structured professional development reflects a policy gap in which institutional expectations exceed available instructional capacity. Similarly, Dafouz and Camacho-Miñano (2016) emphasize that sustainable EMI adoption requires coordinated governance measures, including formal training programs, mentoring systems, and access to discipline-specific teaching resources. Without such support, EMI risks becoming an individual burden placed on instructors rather than a collectively managed institutional reform.

More recent research highlights the importance of pedagogically oriented EMI training. Curle et al. (2020) demonstrate that language-focused support alone is insufficient; effective professional development must also address classroom interaction, assessment practices, and disciplinary discourse conventions. This aligns with broader governance perspectives that view EMI not merely as a language policy, but as a structural transformation of teaching and learning that necessitates long-term institutional investment.

These studies indicate that teacher perspectives provide a critical lens for evaluating EMI policy effectiveness. Instructors' experiences reveal how governance decisions regarding training, workload, and policy clarity directly influence classroom practice. Understanding these perspectives is therefore essential for identifying misalignments between policy objectives and institutional capacity, and for designing support mechanisms that enable faculty to implement EMI in a pedagogically sound and sustainable manner.

2.4 Student Learning, Classroom Dynamics, and Policy Implications

Student learning outcomes and classroom interaction patterns are widely recognized as key indicators of the effectiveness of English-Medium Instruction. Research consistently demonstrates that students' English language proficiency plays a significant role in shaping engagement, participation, and academic performance in EMI contexts, particularly in linguistically diverse or large-enrollment classrooms (Hu, Li, & Lei, 2014; Kim et al., 2017). From a policy perspective, these findings suggest that EMI effectiveness cannot be evaluated solely through institutional adoption rates but must also account for learner readiness and classroom-level consequences of language policy implementation.

Several studies report that limited student proficiency in English can lead to reduced interaction, surface-level processing of content, and reliance on rote learning strategies. Galloway (2017) notes that when students struggle to follow complex lecture discourse or discipline-specific terminology, frustration and disengagement often emerge, negatively affecting motivation and classroom participation. Such dynamics are particularly pronounced in EMI settings where pedagogical practices remain lecture-centered and where institutional policies do not provide systematic language support mechanisms for students.

Disciplinary context further mediates the impact of EMI on student learning. In fields such as economics, management, and commerce, where abstract theoretical constructs, specialized terminology, and quantitative reasoning are central, linguistic demands intersect closely with cognitive complexity. Kweon and Kim (2017) demonstrate that difficulties with discipline-specific language impede students' ability to engage in problem-solving tasks, collaborative discussion, and the application of theoretical knowledge. These challenges highlight the need for EMI governance frameworks that recognize disciplinary variation rather than adopting uniform language policies across faculties.

The literature increasingly emphasizes that effective EMI implementation requires coordinated pedagogical and institutional responses. Airey et al. (2017) argue that EMI policies must address both teacher and student preparedness to sustain meaningful classroom interaction and comprehension. This includes the integration of scaffolding strategies, explicit attention to disciplinary discourse, and the promotion of interactive learning approaches. From a governance standpoint, such measures reflect the necessity of aligning language policy with teaching practices, curriculum design, and student support structures.

Research on student learning and classroom dynamics reinforces the view that EMI is not a neutral language shift but a policy intervention with direct pedagogical consequences. Understanding how students experience EMI provides essential insight into whether language policy objectives are being realized at the classroom level and informs institutional strategies aimed at mitigating unintended learning barriers in non-native English contexts.

2.5 Institutional Support and Policy Considerations

Institutional frameworks are critical determinants of the sustainability and effectiveness of EMI programs. International research demonstrates that successful EMI adoption relies on coherent governance structures, cross-departmental coordination, and clear implementation guidelines (Macaro et al., 2018; Airey et al., 2017). Where such structures are absent, inconsistencies in teaching approaches frequently arise, including overreliance on the first language and fragmented instructional practices, which can negatively impact student comprehension and learning outcomes.

Effective governance of EMI also involves integrating language policy within broader internationalization strategies. Wilkinson (2013) emphasizes that EMI programs integrated with student mobility initiatives, international exchange partnerships, and global collaborations not only bolster institutional prestige but also provide faculty and students with practical opportunities to use English in authentic academic and professional contexts. Complementing these structural considerations, Dafouz and Camacho-Miñano (2016) stress that policies must respond to faculty needs by providing targeted professional

development, access to teaching resources, and standardized assessment frameworks. Together, these studies indicate that EMI is not a purely linguistic intervention but a policy-driven transformation requiring deliberate institutional support to align faculty capacity, curricular design, and classroom practice with strategic objectives.

2.6 Implications for EMI Implementation in Algeria

Global evidence underscores the potential of EMI to enhance teaching quality, improve English proficiency, and advance the internationalization of higher education. However, implementation is contingent on multiple interrelated factors, including teacher readiness, student preparedness, institutional support, and coherent governance policies. For Algeria, these considerations take on particular significance. In specialized faculties such as economics and management, the successful adoption of EMI requires addressing gaps in faculty language proficiency, designing interactive pedagogical strategies that integrate content and language learning, and developing discipline-specific instructional materials.

Lessons from European and Asian contexts provide valuable guidance for Algerian policy and practice. These include the importance of structured professional development (Macaro, 2015; Ball & Lindsay, 2012; Curle et al., 2020; Dafouz & Camacho-Miñano, 2016), policy clarity and institutional coordination (Airey et al., 2017; Macaro et al., 2018; Wilkinson, 2013), and attention to student engagement and classroom interaction (Hu, Li, & Lei, 2014; Hu & Li, 2017; Galloway, 2017; Kim et al., 2017; Kweon & Kim, 2017). By integrating these lessons, Algerian higher education institutions can refine EMI governance frameworks, ensuring that language policy translates effectively into classroom practice and achieves the intended educational and internationalization objectives (Balan, 2011; Coleman, 2006; Evans, 2002).

Within this analytical framework, EMI in Algeria can be understood not merely as a shift in the language of instruction but as part of a broader institutional reconfiguration. Its effectiveness will likely depend on the extent to which language policy is embedded within a coherent governance structure capable of coordinating faculty development, curriculum design, and classroom practice with the wider objectives of higher education internationalization.

3. Methodology

This study employed a structured quantitative approach to examine faculty perspectives on English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in Algerian higher education. The methodology was designed to capture instructors' attitudes, perceived challenges, and professional development needs in a measurable and organized manner. The following sections outline the research design, participants, instruments, and procedures used to ensure reliable and valid data collection.

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive design to examine faculty members' attitudes, perceived challenges, and professional development needs regarding English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) at the Faculty of Economics, Management, and Commerce, Biskra University. The design allows for the systematic collection of information at a single point in time, providing a clear snapshot of experiences and perceptions without manipulating variables. Such an approach is appropriate for exploring implementation realities and generating insights to inform policy decisions and institutional support strategies.

3.2 Participants

The participants consisted of 40 content teachers from the Faculty of Economics, Management, and Commerce. Teachers were selected through random sampling to ensure diversity in academic rank, teaching experience, and self-reported English proficiency. The sample included teachers holding various academic positions (*MAB, MAA, MCB, MCA, and Full Professor*) with teaching experience ranging from five years to more than twenty years.

3.3 Instrument

Data were collected through a structured online questionnaire specifically developed for this study. The instrument consisted of seven sections, covering teacher demographics and professional profiles, attitudes toward EMI, challenges related to teaching, student English proficiency, institutional support, classroom conditions, and teacher training needs.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

The questionnaire was developed based on a review of relevant EMI literature addressing teacher preparedness, instructional challenges, and professional development needs. To enhance content validity, the instrument was reviewed for clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study objectives. Minor revisions were made to improve item wording. Given the exploratory nature of the study and the limited sample size, reliability was addressed through careful item construction rather than inferential reliability testing.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire was administered electronically using Google Form. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed of the study’s purpose prior to completing the questionnaire. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured, and no identifying information was collected. The collected data were used exclusively for academic research purposes. Data collection took place over two weeks during the academic year.

3.6 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. Frequencies and percentages were calculated to summarize teachers’ demographic characteristics, attitudes, perceived challenges, and training needs. The results were organized according to the questionnaire sections and research questions to facilitate interpretation and discussion.

4. Research Findings

The findings are organized according to the main themes of the questionnaire, beginning with the demographic and professional profile of the participants, followed by their attitudes toward EMI, the challenges they face, and their training needs. Descriptive statistics are provided for each variable, accompanied by a detailed interpretation to highlight patterns, trends, and implications relevant to EMI implementation in the Algerian higher education context.

4.1 Teacher’s Profile (N = 40)

Understanding the demographic and professional characteristics of the participants is essential for interpreting their perspectives on EMI. This section provides an overview of the teachers’ academic rank, age, and teaching experience, highlighting the diversity within the faculty. Examining these attributes helps contextualize their attitudes, challenges, and training needs, offering insight into how different teachers’ profiles may influence EMI adoption and implementation.

a) Teacher’s Rank

Table 1
Distribution of Teachers by Academic Rank

Rank	N	%
MAB	6	15.0
MAA	10	25.0
MCB	12	30.0
MCA	8	20.0
Full Professor	4	10.0

The participants included a range of academic ranks, with the majority at MCB (30%) and MAA (25%). Senior faculty (Full Professors) accounted for 10%, providing a diverse perspective on EMI adoption.

b) Teachers’ Age

Table 2
Age Distribution of Teachers

Age Range	n	%
25–35	6	15.0
35–45	12	30.0
45–55	14	35.0
55–65	8	20.0

Most respondents were between 35 and 55 years of age (65%), indicating a predominantly mid- to late-career faculty cohort. This age distribution suggests that the majority of participants possess substantial professional experience, which may influence their perspectives on EMI adoption, classroom practices, and the perceived challenges associated with teaching content in English.

c) Teacher’s Experience

Table 3
Teaching Experience

Experience	N	%
5–10 years	7	17.5
10–15 years	10	25.0
15–20 years	9	22.5
More than 20 years	14	35.0

A notable proportion of participants (35%) reported having more than 20 years of teaching experience, highlighting that both early-career and highly experienced instructors are actively engaged in EMI implementation. This diversity in teaching tenure suggests that EMI-related challenges are not confined to less experienced faculty but are encountered across the spectrum of professional experience, underscoring the need for tailored support and professional development initiatives that address the varied needs of instructors at different career stages.

d) Teacher’s Level of English

Table 4
Self-Reported English Proficiency

Level	n	%
A2	5	12.5
B1	10	25.0
B2	15	37.5
C1	10	25.0

Most teachers (62.5%) reported upper-intermediate to advanced English proficiency (B2–C1), indicating a generally strong ability to engage with EMI content and instructional practices. Nevertheless, 37.5% of participants were at A2–B1 levels, which may pose challenges in fully delivering subject matter in English, managing classroom discourse, and supporting student understanding. This distribution underscores the importance of targeted language development and professional training to ensure all faculty can implement EMI effectively and confidently.

4.2 Teacher Attitudes towards EMI

Table 5
Teachers’ Attitudes towards EMI (Strongly Agree–Strongly Disagree)

Item	Strongly Agree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Strongly Disagree n (%)
English as an instruction can bring changes in teaching and learning.	18 (45.0)	16 (40.0)	5 (12.5)	1 (2.5)
I support adopting EMI at my faculty.	17 (42.5)	18 (45.0)	4 (10.0)	1 (2.5)
Teaching in English promotes student interest more than Arabic lectures.	15 (37.5)	16 (40.0)	7 (17.5)	2 (5.0)
EMI contributes to English proficiency of students and teachers.	20 (50.0)	15 (37.5)	4 (10.0)	1 (2.5)
EMI can improve teachers and students mobility (scholarships, exchange programs).	18 (45.0)	16 (40.0)	5 (12.5)	1 (2.5)
English is necessary for all academic disciplines.	22 (55.0)	14 (35.0)	3 (7.5)	1 (2.5)

Teachers generally exhibited positive attitudes toward EMI, with the majority ‘agreeing’ or ‘strongly agreeing’ on its pedagogical and professional benefits. Participants perceived EMI as a mechanism for enhancing teaching quality, promoting greater student engagement, improving English language proficiency, and facilitating academic mobility through scholarships and exchange programs. Notably, over 90% of teachers emphasized that English is essential across all academic disciplines, reflecting strong ideological and professional support for the adoption of EMI within the Faculty of Economics, Management, and Commerce. These findings suggest that faculty members recognize both the immediate and long-term value of EMI for personal development and institutional internationalization.

4.3 Teachers’ Challenges

a) Teacher Quality

Table 6
Teacher Quality Challenges

Item	Strongly Agree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Strongly Disagree n (%)
I feel insecure and not confident about my teaching performance.	12 (30.0)	16 (40.0)	8 (20.0)	4 (10.0)
I use Arabic to clarify content in English.	18 (45.0)	16 (40.0)	4 (10.0)	2 (5.0)
I have problems with English grammar and pronunciation.	10 (25.0)	15 (37.5)	10 (25.0)	5 (12.5)
I encounter difficulties in explaining terminologies/abstract concepts.	16 (40.0)	17 (42.5)	5 (12.5)	2 (5.0)
I spend more time preparing content in English.	22 (55.0)	14 (35.0)	3 (7.5)	1 (2.5)
I am unable to express myself clearly and accurately in English.	11 (27.5)	16 (40.0)	9 (22.5)	4 (10.0)
I feel demotivated when I cannot explain in different ways or improvise.	14 (35.0)	15 (37.5)	8 (20.0)	3 (7.5)

Teacher-related challenges were primarily associated with language proficiency and classroom confidence. A substantial proportion of respondents (70–90%) indicated that they spent additional time preparing lessons, frequently resorted to Arabic to clarify content, and experienced difficulties explaining specialized terminology and abstract concepts in English. Furthermore, 72.5% of participants reported feelings of demotivation when unable to present material effectively or adapt explanations spontaneously. These findings highlight the strong interrelationship between linguistic competence and instructional efficacy in EMI settings, emphasizing that teacher confidence and language proficiency are critical factors influencing the quality of EMI delivery.

b) Students’ English Low Proficiency

Table 7
Impact of Students’ English Proficiency

Item	Agree / Strongly Agree (%)
Low participation	87.5
Demotivation	85.0
Negative impact on achievement	90.0
Mixed abilities require more effort	92.5
Frustration	88.0
Embarrassment	80.0
Low self-esteem	82.5
Preference for Arabic	90.0

Teachers identified students' limited English proficiency as a significant barrier to effective EMI implementation. Low language skills were reported to hinder classroom participation, reduce motivation, negatively impact academic achievement, and complicate classroom interactions. These challenges suggest that student language readiness is a key determinant of EMI success and underscore the need for complementary language support programs to facilitate active learning and engagement in content-based English instruction.

c) Absence of Guidelines

Table 8

Perceived Lack of Institutional Guidance for EMI Implementation

Item	Agree / Strongly Agree (%)
Lack of guidance reduces confidence	82.5
Few regulations on EMI readiness	85.0
Need for clearer EMI guidelines	92.5
Need for institutional collaboration	90.0

The absence of structured EMI policies creates significant challenges for faculty, as teachers must navigate uncertainty in designing lessons, selecting appropriate teaching materials, and integrating English seamlessly into complex disciplinary content. This lack of formal guidance also affects assessment practices, making it difficult for instructors to balance content mastery with language support. Furthermore, without coordinated collaboration between faculties, departments, and language centers, instructors are often left to make ad hoc decisions, which can undermine instructional consistency and reduce confidence in delivering effective EMI courses.

d) Large Classroom Size

Table 9

Faculty Perceptions of the Impact of Large Class Sizes on EMI

Item	Agree / Strongly Agree (%)
Reduced learning quality	90.0
Instructional difficulty	87.5
Reduced focus on objectives	85.0
Inability to meet student needs	88.0

Overcrowded classrooms emerged as a major obstacle to effective EMI, as teachers struggled to engage all students in active learning while simultaneously addressing varying levels of English proficiency. The sheer number of students made it difficult to monitor understanding, provide timely feedback, and maintain a cohesive pace, which often forced instructors to simplify content or reduce interactive activities. These conditions highlight how classroom composition can directly affect instructional quality and the ability of teachers to implement EMI strategies effectively.

e) Lack of Training

All participants reported that they had not received any prior EMI-specific training, and they highlighted its critical importance in supporting effective teaching, and in addressing language-related challenges, and in implementing appropriate pedagogical strategies and course materials.

4.1 Importance of EMI Teacher Training

Table 10

Level	N	%
Very important	32	80.0
Important	6	15.0
Moderately important	2	5.0

Training was overwhelmingly regarded as essential, and 95% of teachers rated it as important or very important, and they emphasized that it is necessary for developing language proficiency, and for enhancing pedagogical strategies, and for designing effective course materials.

4.2 Broad Aspects to Cover in EMI Teacher Training

Table 11

Key Areas for EMI Teacher Training

Area	n (%)
Communication & Language Use	38 (95.0)
Pedagogy	36 (90.0)
Material Design	34 (85.0)

Teachers emphasized that EMI training should be comprehensive, addressing language proficiency, enhancing pedagogical techniques, and providing guidance on designing instructional materials. They highlighted that these components are interdependent and essential for enabling instructors to deliver content effectively in English, supporting student engagement, and promoting successful learning outcomes.

4.3 Communication and Language Use

Table 12

Communication and Language Use in EMI Classrooms

Aspect	n (%)
Specialized disciplinary language	37 (92.5)
Interactional strategies	36 (90.0)
Discourse strategies	35 (87.5)
Diction	34 (85.0)
Grammar	30 (75.0)

Teachers prioritized practical language skills for effective content delivery, emphasizing the use of subject-specific terminology, interactional strategies, and discourse management, rather than focusing solely on formal grammar. They highlighted that mastery of these skills is crucial for facilitating understanding, maintaining student engagement, and ensuring clarity in EMI classrooms.

4.4 Pedagogy

Table 13

Faculty Perspectives on Key Pedagogical Aspects in EMI

Aspect	n (%)
Promoting classroom interaction	36 (90.0)
Supporting content learning	35 (87.5)
Supporting language learning	34 (85.0)

This item examines faculty views on pedagogical strategies essential for effective EMI. The majority of teachers emphasized promoting classroom interaction (90%), supporting content learning (87.5%), and facilitating language development (85%), highlighting the dual focus on subject mastery and English proficiency in EMI settings.

4.5 Material Design

Table 14

Faculty Perspectives on Key Aspects of EMI Material Design

Aspect	n (%)
Multimedia / digital design	36 (90.0)
Course materials	35 (87.5)
Task & activity design	34 (85.0)
Exam design	33 (82.5)
Syllabus design	32 (80.0)

As shown in **Table 14**, participants emphasized the importance of multimedia and digital resources (90%), well-structured course materials (87.5%), and carefully designed tasks and activities (85%). Additionally, examination (82.5%) and syllabus design (80%) were highlighted as essential components.

5. Discussion of Findings

The findings indicate that faculty members at the Faculty of Economics, Management, and Commerce generally maintain positive attitudes toward EMI. Most participants (over 85%) recognized EMI as a means to enhance teaching quality and facilitate active student engagement, while 82.5% highlighted its role in improving English proficiency among both instructors and learners. Faculty emphasized EMI's potential to foster academic mobility and international collaboration, including participation in exchange programs, joint research projects, and international conferences, which in turn can strengthen institutional prestige and align with broader strategic objectives of higher education internationalization (Macaro et al., 2018; Galloway, 2017; Hu & Li, 2017; Balan, 2011). These observations suggest that faculty perceive EMI not merely as a pedagogical tool, but as a strategic policy initiative with implications for global competitiveness and academic recognition.

Despite these favorable perceptions, faculty noted that student engagement can be somewhat constrained compared with lectures delivered in Arabic. Approximately 70% of participants reported that students with lower English proficiency were less likely to contribute to discussions or participate in group work. This aligns with previous research indicating that positive teacher perceptions alone do not guarantee effective learning outcomes, especially when classroom support mechanisms and student preparedness are insufficient (Evans, 2002; Airey et al., 2017). Such findings underscore the importance of considering both faculty and student readiness as part of EMI implementation, reinforcing the study's emphasis on examining real classroom dynamics rather than relying solely on policy expectations.

Teacher-related challenges were a significant concern. A majority of faculty reported difficulties with grammar, pronunciation, and articulating discipline-specific terminology, particularly when explaining abstract economic concepts or quantitative analyses. About 60% of instructors admitted they occasionally switched to Arabic to ensure comprehension, reflecting a pragmatic but partial strategy that safeguards understanding while potentially limiting full immersion in English (Dafouz & Camacho-Minano, 2016). Increased lesson preparation time, which 75% of respondents indicated, further highlights the additional workload associated with EMI. These findings reinforce the central role of teacher language competence in EMI effectiveness and demonstrate the necessity of targeted professional development to equip instructors with the skills to deliver complex content confidently in a non-native language (Ball & Lindsay, 2012; Macaro, 2015).

Student-related factors were equally influential. Participants consistently highlighted that limited English proficiency among students reduced participation, confidence, and comprehension, with 80% indicating that certain topics, particularly advanced microeconomic theory or statistical methods, were challenging for learners to follow entirely in English. This mirrors evidence from Hong Kong and Chinese contexts, where low student proficiency constrains engagement and learning outcomes in EMI settings (Evans, 2002; Hu, Li, & Lei, 2014; Kim et al., 2017). The findings highlight the interdependence between teacher readiness and student competence, emphasizing that successful EMI requires simultaneous attention to both human dimensions.

Institutional and policy related factors were also identified as critical. Teachers reported the absence of formal EMI guidelines, limited structured support, and minimal cross-departmental coordination, with over 90% expressing the need for clearer institutional policies. Such gaps created uncertainty in lesson planning, assessment design, and pedagogical decision-making. Large class sizes, reported by 87.5% of participants, further compounded these challenges by limiting opportunities for interactive learning and individualized feedback. These findings are consistent with prior research emphasizing that coherent institutional frameworks, aligned policies, and administrative support are essential for the sustainability of EMI programs (Macaro et al., 2018; Curle et al., 2020; Wilkinson, 2013). They suggest that the translation of language policy into practice requires deliberate coordination between policy directives and classroom realities, highlighting governance as a central component of EMI implementation.

Professional development emerged as a pressing need. Faculty unanimously indicated that training must integrate language development, pedagogical strategies, and instructional material design. Language-focused support should address discipline-specific terminology, discourse management, diction, and grammar to enable instructors to deliver complex economic content effectively. Pedagogical training should emphasize interactive teaching, integration of language support with content instruction, and strategies for managing classroom dynamics, particularly in large or multilingual classes. Training in material design should provide practical guidance on developing multimedia resources, structured course materials, tasks, and assessment tools suited for EMI contexts. Approximately 90% of participants highlighted the need for guidance on syllabus adaptation and digital material creation, reflecting the interdependent nature of language proficiency, pedagogy, and instructional design in supporting effective EMI delivery (Macaro et al., 2018; Hu & Li, 2017; Airey et al., 2017).

These findings reveal a complex and interrelated landscape in which teacher attitudes, student readiness, institutional policy, and professional development collectively influence EMI implementation. The study illustrates that while faculty recognize the strategic value of EMI for enhancing teaching quality, international engagement, and institutional prestige, its success is contingent upon coordinated institutional support, robust professional development programs, and classroom strategies tailored to the realities of non-native English contexts. These insights offer evidence-based guidance for policymakers, administrators, and educators seeking to refine EMI initiatives, highlighting the importance of governance, policy coherence, and human resource development in translating language policy into sustainable classroom practice.

6. Synthesis of Findings

The results suggest that EMI adoption in Algerian higher education is not only a pedagogical shift but also a complex policy driven reform requiring coordinated governance, institutional support, and human capacity development. Faculty members recognize EMI as a strategic lever for internationalization and professionalization, with the potential to enhance teaching quality, student engagement, and English proficiency. Yet, the data reveal a nuanced reality: positive attitudes coexist with structural and pedagogical constraints that may undermine the policy's intended outcomes.

Teacher challenges illustrate this tension. While instructors generally support EMI, many struggle with discipline specific terminology, abstract economic concepts, and effective classroom communication. The pragmatic use of Arabic to clarify content indicates that language proficiency gaps directly shape instructional strategies, suggesting that faculty confidence and classroom immersion are contingent on targeted professional development. Similarly, student limitations (low English proficiency and reduced confidence) interact with teacher capacity, revealing that EMI outcomes are not solely determined by policy or faculty attitudes but by the dynamic interplay between instructor preparedness and learner readiness.

The absence of formal EMI guidelines, limited cross-departmental coordination, and insufficient structural support create inconsistencies in lesson planning, assessment, and pedagogy. These findings imply that EMI, as a language policy initiative, cannot be successfully implemented through top down directives alone; its efficacy depends on governance mechanisms that align policy objectives with operational realities, including classroom management, faculty training, and monitoring of outcomes.

The findings indicate that effective EMI training must integrate language enhancement, pedagogical strategies, and material design, ensuring that instructors can convey complex economic content while promoting interactive learning and student comprehension. Importantly, the data suggest that these domains are interdependent: improvements in one area (e.g., language proficiency) may amplify the effectiveness of the others (e.g., pedagogy and materials), highlighting the need for holistic, policy-aligned teacher support programs.

The synthesis of teacher perceptions, student factors, and institutional conditions reveals that EMI adoption is shaped by interconnected human, pedagogical, and governance factors. Positive faculty attitudes alone are insufficient to achieve policy goals; sustainable implementation requires coherent institutional frameworks, targeted professional development, and active attention to student readiness. These insights underscore the

necessity of approaching EMI not merely as a teaching method but as an integrated policy initiative, where evidence based governance and operational support are as critical as instructional innovation.

7. Recommendations for Effective EMI Implementation

The study's findings highlight several areas where targeted action can enhance the effectiveness of English-Medium Instruction in Algerian universities. Based on both local insights and international best practices, the following recommendations are proposed:

Establish a Dedicated EMI Task Force

Universities should form cross-functional teams comprising administrators, faculty representatives, and language specialists to translate EMI policy into practice. Such a task force can ensure consistent implementation across departments, oversee training programs, and monitor classroom outcomes. This structure mirrors European models where policy and pedagogy are systematically coordinated, fostering alignment between institutional directives and day-to-day teaching realities (Airey et al., 2017; Macaro et al., 2018). In the Algerian context, these teams could also pilot innovative teaching strategies and facilitate knowledge exchange between faculties.

Integrate EMI into Quality Assurance Frameworks

Embedding EMI benchmarks into accreditation processes and internal quality reviews can help standardize instruction, ensure accountability, and track progress over time. By linking EMI delivery to performance evaluation, universities can create incentives for maintaining high teaching standards and enhancing learner engagement. For Algerian institutions, this could align with ongoing reforms aimed at strengthening teaching quality and institutional competitiveness.

Promote Faculty Collaboration Networks

Creating structured networks for instructors to share experiences, mentor colleagues, and co-develop EMI materials can strengthen teaching capacity and ensure pedagogical consistency. Pairing subject-matter experts with ESP specialists can enhance both content delivery and language support. In Algeria, such networks provide sustainable guidance beyond short-term workshops, fostering a culture of collaboration that supports continuous improvement.

Provide Targeted Learner Support

Universities should implement diagnostic assessments to identify students' English language proficiency and subject-specific knowledge gaps early in the semester. Based on these assessments, tailored language courses, tutorials, and digital learning resources should be offered to support students in engaging fully with EMI courses. This approach addresses the varied skill levels observed in Algerian classrooms and enhances participation, comprehension, and academic confidence.

Leverage Digital Tools for Instruction and Monitoring

Integrating learning management systems, digital platforms, and mobile applications can facilitate resource distribution, track student progress, and provide real-time feedback. Technologies such as bilingual course materials, interactive quizzes, and analytics dashboards can link administrative oversight with classroom practice. Algerian universities can build on existing experiences with digital teaching tools to expand the reach and efficiency of EMI programs.

Recognize and Incentivize EMI Engagement

Faculty participation in EMI should be formally acknowledged through funding opportunities, teaching awards, or access to international collaborations. Linking recognition to demonstrable teaching outcomes can motivate instructors to engage proactively with EMI, particularly in contexts where top-down policy implementation may encounter resistance. Such incentives can reinforce institutional commitment and encourage sustained innovation in English-medium teaching.

Integrate EMI into Institutional Strategic Planning

EMI initiatives should not be isolated projects but embedded in the university's broader strategy for internationalization, graduate employability, and academic excellence. By positioning EMI as a core institutional objective, universities can secure resources, enhance visibility, and ensure long-term sustainability. For Algerian higher education, this alignment supports the dual goals of improving global competitiveness and strengthening internal governance for teaching and learning.

8. Limitations and Considerations for Interpretation

Despite the value of this study, several limitations must be acknowledged. The research focused exclusively on a single faculty within one Algerian university, which may restrict the applicability of the results to other faculties, universities, or academic fields. In addition, the study depended entirely on self-reported survey responses, making the data potentially influenced by participants' personal perceptions or the desire to provide socially acceptable answers. Furthermore, the cross-sectional nature of the study captures teacher experiences at only one point in time, limiting understanding of the long-term effects of EMI adoption, professional development, or institutional policy changes. These limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings, and care should be taken when generalizing the results to wider higher education contexts.

9. Conclusion

This study examined the perceptions, challenges, and training needs of Economics faculty members at Biskra University regarding EMI. The findings indicate that instructors recognize the pedagogical and professional benefits of EMI, including its potential to enhance teaching quality, foster student engagement, improve English proficiency, and promote academic mobility. Faculty members expressed strong support for the adoption of EMI across disciplines, reflecting a clear ideological commitment to integrating English into higher education.

Additionally, the study revealed multiple challenges that hinder effective EMI implementation. Teachers' challenges, particularly limited language proficiency, reliance on Arabic for clarifying content, and the additional preparation time required, highlight the importance of targeted professional development. Challenges associated with students, notably low English proficiency, were reported to affect participation, motivation, and academic achievement, emphasizing the need for preparatory language programs. Institutional challenges, such as the absence of formal EMI policies and guidance, as well as overcrowded classrooms, further complicate the teaching and learning process. Collectively, these findings underscore the complex interplay of individual, pedagogical, and structural factors in shaping EMI experiences.

The results point to several practical implications. Comprehensive EMI teacher training should address language proficiency, technical lexicon of the discipline, interactive pedagogical strategies, and material design skills, including multimedia and digital resources tailored to the economics curriculum. Institutional support is equally critical, including clear policies, cross-departmental coordination, and appropriate classroom management strategies to optimize learning conditions. Moreover, parallel initiatives to prepare students for EMI, such as English preparatory courses or supplementary language support, can enhance overall effectiveness.

Future research should expand beyond a single faculty and institution to examine EMI implementation across multiple disciplines and universities in Algeria, facilitating broader applicability of the findings. Longitudinal studies are recommended to assess the sustained impact of EMI adoption, teacher training, and institutional policies on both teaching quality and student outcomes. Additionally, qualitative research, including classroom observations and in-depth interviews, could provide a richer understanding of how instructors and students navigate the dual demands of content mastery and English language learning in EMI settings. Investigating the effectiveness of specific training models, instructional strategies, and student support programs would further inform best practices and policy development.

In conclusion, while EMI presents promising opportunities for internationalization, professional development, and enhanced English proficiency, its success depends on a holistic approach that integrates teacher preparedness, student readiness, institutional policies, and tailored classroom practices. Addressing these interconnected factors is essential for realizing the full potential of EMI in Algerian higher education.

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