

The Implementation of EMI in Algerian Higher Education: The Role of Teachers' Perspectives in Shaping their Participation in Teacher Training Programs

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Received: 09/03/2026

Accepted: 04/06/2026

Published: 09/06/ 2026

Abstract:

Aligning with the wave of internationalisation, English medium instruction has grown exponentially in a plethora of non-Anglophone countries. In the Algerian context, EMI was also introduced into higher education, leading to a discrepancy in content teachers' views regarding such transition. Accordingly, the current study aims to investigate teachers' perspectives on EMI implementation in Algerian universities. It also seeks to explore whether there is a connection between lecturers' perceptions on EMI and their enthusiasm to participate in training programs. Data were collected through surveying 36 lecturers at the Faculty of Exact Sciences in Tahri Mohammed University Bechar. The findings revealed that lecturers generally hold supportive perspectives on EMI, recognizing its effectiveness and its interactive nature despite its challenges. However, students' preparedness for EMI remains a critical concern. The results also indicated that the way teachers perceive EMI can highly influence their willingness to participate in training programs. Building on this, the study recommends involving content teachers in EMI-related conferences and workshops to help them develop positive perspectives on EMI implementation, adjusting teacher training programs, and providing students with language training courses to prepare them for EMI.

Key Words: English Medium Instruction, Algerian Higher Education, Internationalisation, Teachers' Perspectives, Training Programs

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Introduction

Globalisation has revolutionized various aspects worldwide, often leading to the inevitable expansion of English as an international language. (Sahlane & Pritchard, 2023). Nowadays, English is widely accepted as a *de facto* lingua franca, facilitating communication among individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds (Mauranen, 2017). Such preeminence served as a key driver for Englishizing education in territories, where English is not an L1. In recent decades, several non-anglophone countries promoted the use of EMI to globalise their systems of higher education. (Galloway & Ruegg, 2020).

Aligning with the wave of globalisation like other countries, Algeria has also implemented English as a medium of instruction in tertiary education since 2023. Following this endeavour, a ministerial initiative required all Algerian lecturers to participate in training programs provided in CEIL and online platforms, or to enrol in English departments, thereby ensuring an effective implementation. (Messeded, 2023). Nevertheless, as reported in Snouci & Gacem's (2024) study, such endeavour was abruptly introduced into Algerian universities, leading to the emergence of two divergent teams of lecturers, namely advocates and opponents.

Some teachers endorsed the adoption of EMI, perceiving English as an essential language for scientific and technical disciplines. Alternatively, others voiced their concerns regarding the effectiveness of this new language policy shift and rejected it. (Malki et al, 2025; Mansouri, 2025). Similarly, participation in teacher training programs varied significantly among lecturers. While some demonstrated their enthusiasm to enrol in those programs, others seemed highly reluctant to engage in these initiatives. (Snouci & Gacem 2024; Malki et al, 2025).

Given the above, several studies investigated teachers' perspectives on the implementation of EMI in Algerian higher education. Nonetheless, research on the connection between those perceptions and lecturers' willingness to engage in teacher training programs remains limited.

To address this gap, the current study seeks to scrutinise content teachers' perspectives concerning the implementation of EMI in the Faculty of Exact Sciences at Tahri Mohammed University of Bechar (TMUB). Additionally, it explores the way these perceptions shape lecturers' participation in EMI training programs. To this end, a quantitative method was adopted for the study, involving an online questionnaire administered to 36 lecturers at TMUB. Accordingly, the study addresses the following questions:

- 1- How do lecturers perceive the implementation of EMI in the Faculty of Exact Sciences?
- 2- How do teachers' perspectives on EMI affect their involvement in training programs?

I. Literature Review

1. *Defining English as a Medium of Instruction within Diverse Contexts*

The concept of English Medium Instruction (EMI) has been interpreted by various scholars, each attributing significant importance to a particular context. Dearden (2014) depicts English Medium Instruction as “the use of the English language to teach academic subjects in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the population is not English”. It is evident, however, this definition fails to clearly address the position of English language teaching within the scope of EMI. Correspondingly, EMI is narrowly defined by Macaro (2018) as the use of English to deliver academic content in subjects other than English, within EFL or ESL contexts. This description suggests that the English subject is not, indeed, incorporated within the framework of this new policy.

Nevertheless, the previously mentioned interpretations of EMI raised an intense debate among scholars. It has been argued that those definitions are highly restricted to non-Anglophone contexts, while English-speaking countries are largely overlooked. In this regard, Baker and Hüttner, (2016) contend that the academic journey of multilingual students in English-speaking countries would be undervalued if EMI is narrowed to ESL and EFL settings. (cited in Rose et al., 2021).

2. *The Spread of EMI in Non-Anglophone Higher Education: Key Drivers and Initiatives*

The rapid expansion of EMI in tertiary education has been widely recognised, particularly in non-English-speaking territories. (Dearden, 2014). Such exponential growth may be attributed to two key factors, namely colonisation and internationalisation. Several non-Anglophone countries were, in fact, compelled to use English as the primary medium of instruction during colonialism. The term English medium instruction therefore, was used to describe the obstacles posed by this language policy in those former colonies. (Rose et al., 2021). In other cases, eliminating the impact of colonisation served as a driving force for several post-colonies to adopt English as the primary medium of instruction. A remarkable instance is Algeria’s transition to EMI in order to minimize the linguistic legacy of French colonialism. (Khenioui & Boulkroun, 2023).

Globalisation, on the other hand, has significantly contributed to the widespread use of EMI. In other words, many non-English-speaking countries have adopted EMI to align their higher educational systems with international standards. (Galloway & Ruegg, 2020). In these contexts, however, the implementation of EMI can be both advantageous and challenging.

3. *The Opportunities of English Medium Instruction (EMI)*

The implementation of English Medium Instruction is widely gaining momentum thanks to the opportunities it offers not only to universities but also to teachers and students. Wilkinson and Zegers (2019) assert that receiving academic content in English significantly contributes to the development of students' English language proficiency. (as cited in Ouarniki, 2023). One possible reason is that EMI offers both teachers and students the opportunity to practice the target language through regular use during lectures. In this context, Seddiki (2022) perceives classroom interaction as a process that underpins the establishment of a dynamic environment conducive to effective language development.

Within the same context, Wilkinson and Zegers (2019, as cited in Ouarniki, 2023) also regard EMI as students' initial step toward future employment prospects. In the era of globalisation, English proficiency has become a prerequisite for accessing the labour market, leading to a growing need for teaching and learning this language, particularly in non-English-speaking countries. Additionally, EMI may serve as a foundation for universities to align their educational systems with global standards, which gradually results in the attraction of more international students. Furthermore, EMI has far-reaching benefits for teachers as well. It not only facilitates their participation in international academic circles and conferences but also ensures that their academic papers are published in reputable journals. (Ouarniki, 2023)

4. Perceived Challenges to English Medium Instruction

Despite the perceived benefits of EMI, its success can be hindered by several challenges. Previous studies identified the obstacles pertaining to EMI at the level of language proficiency, resources, guidelines, and pedagogy. An initial barrier to efficient implementation of EMI is lecturers' linguistic ability. In fact, the lecturers' lack of English proficiency often restricts their capacity to use English as the primary language of instruction, thereby exerting an adverse impact on their confidence. (Octaviani, 2019). Similarly, students with limited English language skills have difficulty comprehending content in English, which adversely affects their academic achievement. (Octaviani, 2019). In this respect, Hamane (2023), elaborates that the students' limited understanding of lectures directly contributes to their low achievement.

Another factor that may pose challenges to EMI practitioners is the scarcity of English resources such as textbooks, e-books, activity books, and reference books. These materials can, indeed, determine the success or failure of EMI, as they offer lecturers a structured framework for teaching. Likewise, a lack of adequate planning directives on EMI adoption is commonly observed among the majority of countries. (Octaviani, 2019). Dearden (2014) elaborates on this issue in his study of 55 countries, disclosing that only a minority of them have established clear guidelines for implementing EMI.

Pedagogy can also hinder the effective adoption of EMI. In other words, implementing such a language policy often requires adapting pedagogical practices to the students' diverse cultures and language levels. As a result, teachers may struggle to establish a balance between enhancing their language proficiency and

developing new, appropriate instructional skills. (Ouarniki, 2023), which may, in turn, diminish their motivation to adopt EMI.

5. *Towards Englishizing Algerian Higher Education: The Current Situation of EMI in Algerian Universities*

Following several educational reforms aimed at integrating English into the Algerian education system, the implementation of English Medium Instruction (EMI) has been recognised as a turning point in the history of higher education in Algeria. In fact, the key initiatives for Algeria's incremental transition towards English were not only to globalise its educational systems (Ouarniki, 2023), but also to eliminate the impact of the French language. (Adder, 2024). This suggests that such a language policy change remains unsystematic and requires actual planning. Even though the reform was launched in 2023, EMI has yet to be implemented nationwide among Algerian universities, nor even within the faculties of the same university. For further clarification, only a minority of Algerian university lecturers embraced the adoption of EMI in their teaching practices. As a result, they were immersed in training programs and online courses to guarantee a successful implementation. In contrast, others expressed their concerns about the effectiveness of this new language policy and pursued teaching in Arabic or French. (Naimi, 2025). In this regard, Snouci & Gacem (2024) emphasised the need for the gradual adoption of EMI into Algerian higher education.

6. *EMI and Professional Development in Algerian Higher Education: Training Programs and Lecturers' Attitudes*

In the wake of the transition to EMI, several initiatives were launched by the Algerian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research to prepare content teachers for a successful implementation. (Messeded, 2023). To this end, Algerian intensive language teaching centres (ILTC) were mandated to offer lecturers training courses aimed at developing their language proficiency in English. (Ben-Yelles, 2024). Alongside this endeavour, content teachers were provided with the opportunity to earn a Bachelor's degree in English by studying in English departments (Messeded, 2023) or by engaging in online courses. A notable instance is the development of an online Bachelor's program in English at Abou Bekr Belkaid University-Tlemcen. In September 2023, the online training platform Dual-Edx was also initiated by the ministry to support lecturers in shifting towards EMI. (Ghouali & Haddam, 2024).

Nonetheless, the success of the aforesaid training programs in preparing teachers for this language policy shift remains questionable. For this reason, a substantial body of research has examined the effectiveness of these programs, focusing on teachers' perspectives and attitudes. (see Messeded, 2023; Menezla & Benghalem (2024); Khenioui & Boulkroun, 2023).

Messeded (2023) investigated the teachers' attitudes towards their learning experience in the Department of English at Blida 2 University. Though lecturers seemed enthusiastic about learning English, they expressed concerns about the instructional content, which fails to effectively prepare them for EMI implementation. In a similar vein, Menezla & Benghalem (2024) described the

Algerian teacher training programs as inadequate because they do not equip lecturers with the required English proficiency and EMI- oriented instructional practices.

Similar concerns were raised in Malki et al.'s (2025) study, which disclosed that the content covered in training programs fails to accommodate certain variations among lecturers, including their language proficiency, age, disciplinary orientations, and teaching experience. Moreover, many content teachers seemed reluctant to participate in those programs owing to their professional responsibilities.

7. *Teachers' perspectives on EMI: Previous studies*

The widespread of EMI has underpinned an increasing number of studies aimed at investigating university teachers' perspectives on such language policy transition. For instance, Floris (2014) explored teachers' and students' views on EMI at four faculties at the University of Indonesia. The study found that both teachers and students value the implementation of EMI and regard it as a good initiative. It is evident, however, that students' academic achievement is adversely influenced by their limited English proficiency.

A similar view was reported in Mouhanna's (2016) study, which indicated that despite the lecturers' endorsement of EMI, low English proficiency acts as a major barrier to its success. Along the same vein, Santos (2022) interviewed nine non-English lecturers at the Indonesian university to explore their perceptions regarding EMI implementation. The study confirmed that EMI is perceived as beneficial but demanding.

In the Algerian context, Snouci & Gacem (2024) examined teachers' perspectives on the adoption of EMI in higher education. The findings demonstrated that while lecturers recognise the potential opportunities offered by the shift toward EMI, they perceive it as a top-down policy decision, which suggest that it was imposed on them. For this reason, they regard their involvement in such policy-making processes as a prerequisite for a successful EMI implementation. The study also highlighted lecturers' unpreparedness for this shift, underscoring the need for meticulous planning to ensure its success.

In a similar vein, existing research investigated teachers' insights about EMI, detailing its potential benefits, challenges, and solutions. (Ouarniki, 2023; Hamane, 2023; Harroug, 2025; Mezhoud & Haddad, 2025). Accordingly, the reported perspectives indicate that EMI can create tremendous opportunities, including language proficiency development, employment prospects, global academic cooperation, and direct access to academic resources.

Such language policy change, however, may be hindered due to some challenges, such as low English proficiency, inadequate resources and inappropriate training programs. Correspondingly, the aforesaid studies highlighted the urgent need for not only an incremental shift towards EMI but also professional development opportunities and access to English academic resources to ensure a successful adoption of EMI.

II. Methodology

1. Research Method

Questionnaire

To address the aforementioned research questions, an online questionnaire was administered via Google Forms to 36 lecturers from the Faculty of Exact Sciences at Tahri Mohammed University of Bechar. The key objective of the questionnaire is to examine lecturers' perspectives on the transition to EMI and how they shape their involvement in teacher training programs. Comprising both closed-ended and open-ended questions, the questionnaire covers four main parts, namely the teachers' background information, their perspectives on the shift to EMI, their involvement in the training programs, and the potential challenges to implementing EMI.

2. Participants

The study sample comprises thirty-six lecturers from the faculty of Exact Sciences at the University of Tahri Mohammed, Bechar. It involves both male and female teachers with various teaching experiences at the university.

3. Data Analysis Procedures

Both descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were adopted to the data analysis to capture teachers' perspectives on EMI implementation. Quantitative data were analyzed through SPSS and presented in the form of tables, and graphs, while qualitative data were presented thematically.

III. Results

This section introduces the findings of the current study, noting that the overall number of participants completed the questionnaire. The study involves 52.8% male and 47.2% female teachers with diverse teaching experiences ranging from 5 years to 30 years. Based on the results, nearly half of the lecturers demonstrated a degree of language proficiency, as 44.4 % of them master English, while 36.1% exhibit an average level of proficiency. Alternatively, 19.4% of participants reported having limited English language skills

Figure 1: The lecturers' participation in training programs to improve their English skills

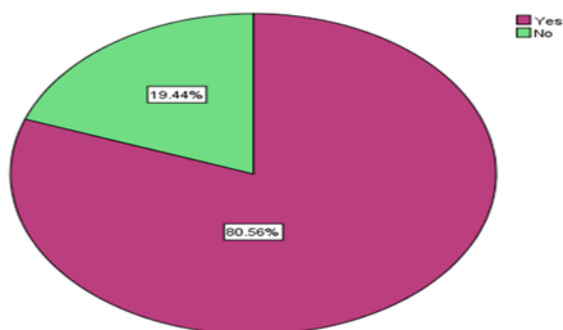
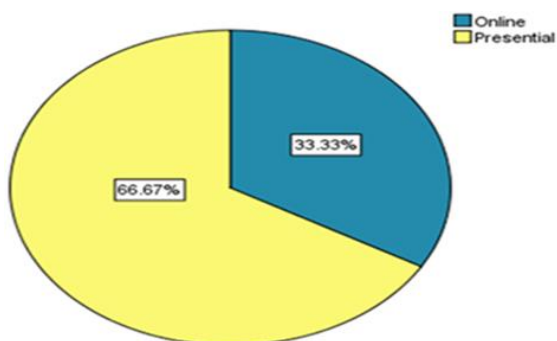


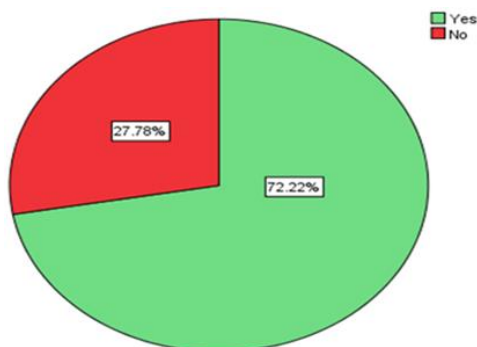
Figure 1 shows that the majority of respondents (80.56%) are enrolled in training programs to improve their English language proficiency, whereas only a few teachers (19.44%) overlook this process.

Figure 2: Types of Training Programs



In this regard, Figure 2 demonstrates that most lecturers (66.67%) attended face-to-face training programs, while 33.33% of them were enrolled in online courses.

Figure 3: Teachers' adoption of EMI



As illustrated in figure3, a positive attitude towards the integration of EMI is held among lecturers, as (72.22%) of them adopted it into their teaching practices. Alternatively, (27.78%) of the participants reported avoiding the use of English in their lectures.

In this regard, content teachers employ a variety of activities to integrate English into their lectures. (See Table 1). 30.6 per cent of the participants prefer using reading texts, while others (8.3%) tend to deliver lectures in English. Similarly, (5.5%) of the informants provide students with English assignments, whereas (13.9%) of them rely on translating some technical terms into English. Some instructors (25%) mentioned that they adopt the overall activities, and only (16.7%) of them reported that they incorporate other tasks.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Reading texts	11	30.6
	Explaining lectures	3	8.3
	Giving assignments	2	5.5
	Translating some technical terms into English	5	13.9
	Other activities	6	16.7
	All of them	9	25
	Total	36	100

Table1: The activities adopted by teachers in EMI lectures

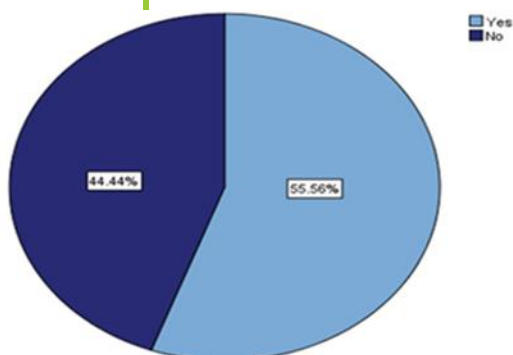
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	No experience	11	30.6
	Less than 1 month	3	8.3
	1 to 3 months	1	2.8
	4 to 6 months	6	16.7
	7 months to 1 year	1	2.8
	1 to 2 years	5	13.9
	More than 2 years	9	25.0
	Total	36	100.0

Table 2: The teachers' experience in studying content in English

Table 2 compares the lecturers' prior experience in studying content in English before implementing EMI. (See Table 2). A total of (30.6%) of respondents stated they have no experience, while others (30.5%) reported an experience that ranges from less than one month to 7 months. Conversely, (38.9%) of participants studied content in English for 1 year or more than 2 years.

At first glance, it is evident that studying content in English varies among participants. On the one hand, some lecturers enrolled in the English department, while others participated in the training programs provided by intensive language teaching centers (CEIL). On the other hand, a group of participants revealed that this endeavour was achieved through either preparing or explaining their lectures in English or through engaging in online courses.

Figure 4: Teachers' perspectives on the effectiveness of teaching content subjects in English rather than other languages



As shown in the chart above, teachers hold contrasting perspectives on the use of EMI. While more than half of the respondents (55.56%) highlighted that teaching content subjects in English is more effective than other languages, (44.44%) of them believe that it is less efficient.

In fact, the privileged status of English served as the driving force for the lecturers' positive attitudes towards EMI. Some teachers contended that English is regarded not only as a global language for communication, but also as the language of science and technology. Other participants, on the other hand, asserted that students generally prefer English.

Figure 5: the students 'readiness for EMI

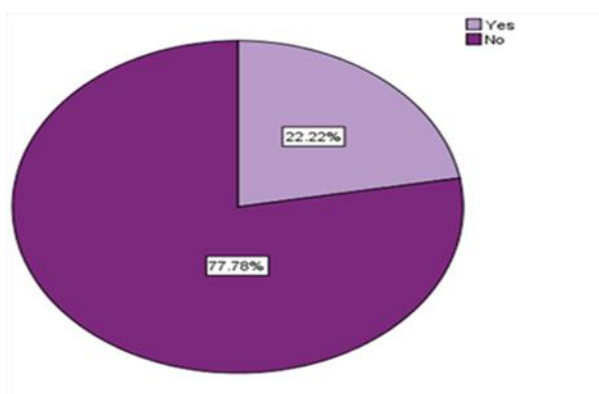


Figure 5 sheds light on the lack of consensus among lecturers regarding the students' readiness for the implementation of EMI in Algeria. Most lecturers (77.78%) agree that students are not adequately prepared to study all academic subjects in English, whereas only a few participants (22.22%) expressed opposing views.

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	5	13.9
Agree	23	63.9
Strongly agree	6	16.7
Strongly disagree	2	5.6
Valid System	36	100.0
Total		

Table3: The role of teachers in developing the students' English proficiency

Table 3 demonstrates the teachers' contrasting views with regard to their contribution to the development of the students' English proficiency. The majority of them agreed (63.9%) or strongly agreed (16.7%). Alternatively, others either disagreed (13.9%) or strongly disagreed (5.6%).

In terms of the interactive nature of EMI, lecturers seem to hold different perspectives. A substantial proportion of participants believe that teaching academic content through English is more interactive than other languages; others assume that the process of interaction is highly determined by students' prior knowledge or gradually develops over time. By way of contrast, a minority of teachers voiced their concerns about this issue, as they think the use of English may impede classroom interaction.

Figure 6: Prerequisites for EMI teachers

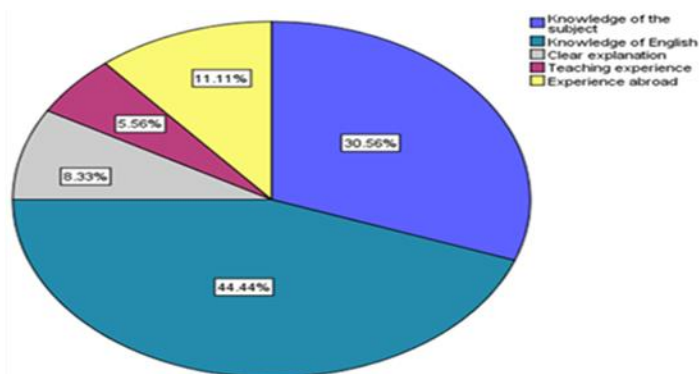


Figure 6 illustrates the participants' divergent opinions regarding the teacher's prerequisites for effective EMI implementation. Language proficiency is the most frequently reported criterion, as the majority (44.44%) said that they require knowledge of English. Alternatively, 30.56 per cent of lecturers prefer to know the subject content in English, whereas others (8.33%) believe they should explain their lectures more clearly in English. The teaching experience is also of paramount

importance to teachers because 5.56% per cent of them indicated that it is essential for them to deliver content in English. Similarly, another group of teachers (11.11%) indicated that adopting EMI requires prior teaching experience abroad.

Lecturers were also asked about the challenges they encountered when they implemented EMI. The majority expressed concerns about the lack of language proficiency, which, in turn, hampers communication, while others stated they struggle to explain scientific terminology in English. Another barrier mentioned by the participants was the considerable time required to prepare their lectures in English.

The data has also disclosed that teachers' opinions vary significantly regarding the implementation of EMI in the Faculty of Exact Sciences. Some participants regard it as a crucial initiative that may not only prove successful but also offer Algerian universities a set of far-reaching benefits. By contrast, another group of lecturers noted that EMI poses several challenges; however, the university is making considerable efforts to prepare both teachers and students for an effective adoption of this pedagogical method.

IV. Discussion

The study's findings provide an insight into three key themes pertaining to the implementation of EMI in Algerian higher education. This involves lecturers' perspectives on EMI, the way these views influence their participation in training programs, and the challenges associated with the shift to EMI.

1. Teachers' Perspectives on English Medium Instruction (EMI)

1.1 Lecturers' Opinions Regarding the Effectiveness of EMI

Based on the study, it is evident that lecturers hold constructive perspectives on the implementation of EMI at the Faculty of Exact Sciences in TMUB. There is a strong consensus among them that English is more effective than other languages for teaching academic content. Such positive perceptions may be attributed to the lecturers' disciplinary orientations, as they are members of the Faculty of Exact Sciences. This is consistent with Ouarniki's (2023) study, which has shown that teaching academic subjects in English is more adequate for certain disciplines, including science. Such a viewpoint was indeed underpinned by the fact that English is widely dominant in several academic disciplines, and most notably in science.

Building on the above, the results suggest that teachers' positive perspectives on EMI may significantly contribute to their endorsement of this transitional language policy. This finding echoes Ouarniki's (2023) argument, noting that the effective adoption of EMI largely depends on how content teachers perceive EMI as well as the attitudes they hold towards it.

1.2 EMI and Classroom Interaction

Along the same vein, analysis has shown that EMI can interfere with classroom interaction, thereby fostering or impeding this process. Several lecturers believe that teaching academic content through English can be more interactive. In this regard, Macaro (2018) perceives interaction in EMI contexts as "the centrepiece of the exposition of what it means to overcome the challenges of teaching academic

content through an L2” p.302. This perspective, however, contrasts with previous research, which revealed major constraints on the interactive nature of EMI compared to MOI contexts.

Lagabster & Doiz (2023) investigated interaction patterns in EMI classrooms at four Spanish universities by analysing the questions that teachers typically raise during lectures. The results demonstrated that certain types of questions tend to reduce classroom discourse, thereby affecting not only content comprehension but also students’ language development.

Similarly, An et al., (2021) conducted a study to scrutinise the impact of EMI on the ways teachers and learners interact in secondary schools in China. The study showed a dominance of the teacher’s discourse, while learners are generally less interactive. This also aligns with Snouci & Gacem's (2024) study, which suggests that EMI may lead to low student interaction.

1.3 The Students’ Readiness for EMI Implementation

By way of contrast to the previous perceptions, the study’s analysis revealed opposing views regarding the students’ readiness for EMI implementation. There is strong agreement among teachers that students are not adequately prepared to study all academic subjects in English. This corresponds to Snouci & Gacem’s (2024) study, which highlighted the stakeholders ‘unpreparedness for the implementation of EMI, particularly students.

In fact, the primary driver of the aforementioned issue may be the linguistic barrier, a finding consistent with previous research, indicating that Algerian EMI students generally lack the required English proficiency to study all content subjects in English. (Ouarniki, 2023; Hamane, 2023; Menezla & Benghalem, 2024; Harroug, 2025). As an illustration, Menezla & Benghalem (2024) demonstrated that students with limited English skills are generally unprepared for EMI adoption.

1.4 Challenges to EMI

Building on the findings, it is apparent that the major challenges that lecturers face in implementing EMI involve not only limited English proficiency but also lack of pedagogical strategies and field-specific terminology. This echoes the findings reported by a plethora of studies (see Ouarniki, 2023; Menezla & Benghalem, 2024). Indeed, those barriers reflect the inadequacy of teacher training programs, as they fail to meet the lecturers’ requirements.

2. Interconnectedness between the teachers’ perspectives on EMI and their participation in training programs

The findings suggest that lecturers show a clear tendency to participate in both online and face-to-face training programs. One possible explanation is that teachers’ positive perspectives on EMI influence their willingness to participate in these programs. Similar views can be observed in Malki et al.'s (2025) study, which reported that positive attitudes were commonly observed among lecturers who voluntarily enrolled in training programs. Alternatively, some teachers questioned the effectiveness of EMI or demonstrated a preference for French, which contributed to their low participation in training programs. These views suggest

that the lecturers' motivation to engage in training programs may be highly determined by their perspectives and attitudes toward EMI.

V. Conclusion

This study explored lecturers' perspectives on EMI and how they determine teachers' motivation to participate in training programs. Correspondingly, the findings indicate that positive perceptions are commonly held among lecturers on EMI, as they acknowledge not only its effectiveness in teaching academic content but also its significance in fostering classroom interaction. Such perspectives, in fact, are deemed to highly determine lecturers' participation in EMI training programs. By way of contrast, the content teachers' perspectives remain skeptical on whether students are prepared for EMI. Additionally, lecturers tend to encounter several linguistic, and pedagogical challenges in implementing EMI, which may impede its effectiveness.

In light of these findings, the study suggests that teacher training programs should be adjusted aligned with the lecturers' needs to ensure an effective EMI implementation. Furthermore, the involvement of content teachers in EMI- related conferences and workshops are also recommended to help them recognize the significance of EMI and develop positive perspectives on it. The study also underscores the need for providing students with targeted language training courses to ensure their readiness for EMI.

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