Exploring the Meaning of 'E' in EMI in Different Perspectives and Its Pedagogical Implications

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Abstract

As the significant language in academic, English play an important role in the internationalization of higher education. Many educational institutions having teach knowledge through English and countless publications and articles are tagged and written in English, the educational process is called English as a medium of instruction or EMI (Kirkpatrick, 2014). In Europe, one important motivator of EMI is Bologna process. Till now, there are hundreds of thousands of non-English-speaking students going to English-speaking countries to go for further education. And this number is still increasing every year. Accordingly, it is necessarily to explore the conception of English and what roles or meanings are tagged in "E" in EMI (Baker & Huttner, 2017). In this paper, diverse roles of English will be elaborated according to relevant literature from scholars and forms arguments of this paper based on above, in the meanwhile, some pedagogical implications of English used in subject instructions will also be concerned in the paper.

Keywords: English as a medium of instruction, English as a native language, English as a lingua franca, English as a lingua franca in Academic, pedagogical implication

1. Introduction

As English is the influential language in many fields and in academic as well (Bjorkman, 2011), in the meanwhile, with the internationalization of higher education (HE), many universities and educational institutions having teach knowledge through English and countless publications and articles are tagged and written in English, the former is called English as a medium of instruction or EMI (Kirkpatrick, 2014). In Europe, one important motivator of EMI is Bologna process, another symbol of internationalization, which primarily aims to promote the flow of teachers and students and standardization of degree as well as credit transport (Kirkpatrick, 2014). According to the data of OESD (2014), there are more than two times of international students moved to other countries to receive undergraduate and higher education in last ten years, half of them were come from Asia, most students that registered in are G20 universities that using English as instructional language (OECD, 2014 cited in Baker & Huttner, 2017). As a consequence, it is essential and vital to explore the conception of English and what roles or meanings are tagged in "E" in EMI (Baker & Huttner, 2017). In this paper, diverse roles of English will be elaborated according to relevant literature and forms arguments based on the above statements, in the meanwhile, some

pedagogical implications of English used in subject instructions will also be concerned in the paper.

2. English as ENL

In many language policies on EMI, it explicitly explained that the instructional language in the classroom is English and only just English (Kirkpatrick, 2014). In official oriented level, English generally considered to be standard English, especially in entry requirements functioned gatekeeping practices like TEFOL and IELTS, it is regarded as native-like English that equated with native English (Baker & Huttner, 2017). In other words, it is monolingual language centred (Baker & Huttner, 2017), the role of English prefers to "English as a native language" (ENL), distinguishing with other languages in EMI courses which means all of the websites, information, assignments, and prospectus are used in English only (Baker & Huttner, 2017). In generally speaking, it refers to American English or British English which "take English to be represented only by a native speaker variety of English" (Kirkpatrick, 2014), based on native speaker norms. This role of English, in EMI, it is exact and sole, "as an ambiguous monolithic entity" (Baker & Huttner, 2017) in the content instruction.

3. English as ELF

Some scholars pointed out that the important role of English in EMI as English as a lingua franca (ELF) has been overlooked, like Kirkpatrick (2014). In the particular subject classroom, there are not only just native English speakers, as Cogo (2008) stated that most English users are non-native English speakers (NNES), the bilingual and multilingual speakers of English are also included (Seidlhofer, 2005 cited in Cogo, 2008). In other words, it is a mode of communication (Seidlhofer & Widdowson, 2007 cited in Cogo, 2008) that hold by speakers who come from different cultural backdrops, with same language choice and in specific communication contexts, such as EMI in different courses contexts (Jenkins, 2009), so that it belongs to every user (Cogo, 2012). From this perspective, ELF is related to World Language (WL) (Cogo, 2008) and acted as a global language (Crystal, 2003, cited in Smit & Dafouz, 2012). Additionally, it is not represented by only one English variation, it has many of them (Kirkpatrick, 2007). In this circumstance of EMI, students and each other and teachers as well in

higher education can share and obtain different but interrelated and globally English variants (Kirkpatrick, 2007), but also acquire corresponding course areas knowledge by making conversations (Smit & Dafouz, 2012).

4. English as ELFA

Related to ELF, as a global language, English as a lingua franca in Academic (ELFA) means English as a lingua franca using in academic setting by mostly the NNES (Mauranen et al., 2010), on the basis of the ELFA corpus (Mauranen et al., 2010), it different from English for academic purpose (EAP) which "focuses more on other areas of academic life", ELFA is in connection with all the language issues, it more concentrates on academic excluding the native English field (Jenkins, 2013). Moreover, it mostly focuses on speaking and speech that different from the EAP for writing (Jenkins, 2013). Consequently, although they all interested in academic having some common ground, they still have distinct differences. With EMI is rapid increasing in a myriad internationally oriented universities and educational institutions as well as regional schools, in fact, not many students aim to get the same English level as native speakers (Jenkins et al., 2011). Therefore, "English is the global lingua franca of academic discourse" (Jenkins, 2013), exerting a strong role in the actual subject interactional environment and communicative tasks among them in EMI programmes (Jenkins et al., 2011), which meet specific learning purposes and students' learning needs, making a success of content teaching.

5. English as Disciplinary Language

As English used in content teaching and students' assessments, disciplinary language is an essential and important aspect in tertiary education no matter the students are L1 speakers or L2 speakers (Baker & Huttner, 2017). The general disciplinary language in particular subject content rather than language, such as disciplinary terminology, specific utterance, academic writing, conventions (Baker & Huttner, 2017). According to Hultgren et al (2015) stated that EMI in higher education is influenced by the context of the country the EMI is applied. Thus, for instance, the research conducted by Baker and Huttner (2017) investigated three countries sites: UK, Austria and Thailand found that even though different students hold different views on English in EMI, it is still

regarded as the disciplinary language and considered cross-linguistic in content teaching in all sites (Baker & Huttner, 2017). Furthermore, nearly half of the participant considered that their teacher also evaluated their language in examinations (Baker & Huttner, 2017). As a result, distinguishing from general English, that is why some EMI universities and institutions provide disciplinary language supports (Karakas, 2017), such as English of business, English of law, accounting English, forming with pre-sessional courses, online programmes and material about content to let students familiar with in advance.

6. English as a Tool or Target?

For the issue of do the English as a "tool" help for content learning or a "target" alongside learning knowledge, different countries sites have different opinions. No authority documents and websites stated which role the English are (Baker & Huttner, 2017). Therefore, it reveals the complexity of "E" in EMI and there are a variety of understanding of English (Baker & Huttner, 2017). In the research of Baker and Huttner (2017), many questionnaire responses reflected the students choose the courses would consider the interest in English, it is one of the factors in students' consideration in sites of Austria, UK and Thai, however, to be specific, in Austria, English is more likely a "tool" in the EMI, not the goal of the studying which reflected on the entry requirements (Baker & Huttner, 2017). Their students also think it is unnecessarily to possess high proficiency in English (Baker & Huttner, 2017). Under the educational context in UK, the situation is more ambiguous that teachers thought there is no need to learn English in particular, but the students implied they obtain both subject knowledge and language improvement, thus, there is a complex relationship between language and content (Baker & Huttner, 2017). In Asian countries, Thailand, both of lecturers and students considered English is not only the target itself, but also a tool to learn content knowledge (Baker & Huttner, 2017). Some said the low level of English would result in the misunderstanding or cognitive difficulty on courses content (Baker & Huttner, 2017). To sum up, no matter in Thailand or UK, it is no clear boundary between language and content teaching, that raise a considerable concern about the explicit and real meanings of EMI and English role which the language should be or not with content learning, moreover, this will also cause confusion between EMI and CLIL (Smit & Dafouz, 2012).

7. The Conception of "E" in EMI in This Research

The number of English speakers of non-mother-tongue are more than mother-tongue users (Mauranen et al., 2010), which unquestionably indicates ELF that called English as a global lingua franca using in various fields and used by different people from the diverse cultural background. That also reflected the high position of the English. Based on the above statements, this research considered "E" in EMI to represent ELF. For the paradigm, ELF belonging to global language as most of the speakers of English are non-native. But it is not excluding the native English speakers (Jenkins, 2011). A useful definition for ELF is that it is a language system which English as an additionally language as the mode of communication by people whose the first language is different, this conception defined by websites of the Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English (VOICE) (Jenkins, 2011). It can be seen that ELF include the native speakers who also use it (Jenkins, 2011). But, to make a communication success, differencing from their mother tongue, they need to acquire the ELF to make interaction successfully in ELF environment (Jenkins, 2011). Therefore, the scale of ELF in both users and its variants are very broad. This in education field, led to a large number of universities use EMI (Jenkins, 2011). It not only let the students in touch with other variety of English, enhancing the intelligibility of them, but also check and confirm whether their own English teacher is local English teacher or not, which sort of English the lecturers are speaking (Kirkpatrick, 2007). Also, using ELF can improve their English proficiency alongside content learning, besides, broaden their cultural knowledge about different English. Moreover, In ELF context, students with different first language to make sure communication success, they will apply and strengthen their communicative skill, as a result, integrating communicative-oriented instruction with EMI, they will have a great mastery of content and English.

8. Pedagogical Implications

The number of the EMI universities and institutions are constantly increasing and still

remain this trend in the next a couple of years (Kirkpatrick, 2014). As a result, to talk about the pedagogical implications of EMI and English using in content teaching and learning is very meaningful. One is that many internationally oriented universities are build up, the context of EMI gives the beneficial condition for growing multilingual and multicultural institutions (Baker & Huttner, 2017). They provide EMI courses and language support as much as possible in order to attract more international students and more educational investment as well as courses fees from them (Kirkpatrick, 2014). In other words, thus, they set and bring EMI courses to students both native or non-native making themselves more internationalised (Baker & Huttner, 2017) which make promote their development and nation progress. For the students, EMI increase the international students' movement in interregional and intercontinental (Kirkpatrick, 2014). It also significantly improves the students' skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in English which should to be maintained continuing, in the meanwhile, it offers plenty of English texts in listening and speaking which give them comprehensible input in English as well as abundant written texts to let them imitate through diverse learning opportunities (Belhiah & Elhami, 2015). From these educational implements and EMI, they will know which the standard English is, what is ELF and identify other variety of English during content instruction. Furthermore, with EMI employed in schools to students, as they comprehensive quality are improve overall, it makes them easier to find the job when into the labour market and achieve their personal intrinsic values (Karakas, 2017). Finally, last but not least, putting English into the subject content teaching, a good situation can be seen is genre or field of English will expand in its scope of use and diversity of variety. But one should be highlighted that during the EMI, educators need to receive students' advices and opinions as the main part of teaching is them (Belhiah & Elhami, 2015), because many students reflected that they cannot understand the content and cope with the demand of the courses. The students' linguistic level and teaching content need take into consideration (Belhiah & Elhami, 2015).

9. Conclusion

The prevalence of English as well as internationalization make the widely use of EMI in secondary education and higher. Many universities and educational institutions integrating English into courses to teaching specific subject. This paper explores the features of EMI, focusing on the role of English mainly and discussed into four sorts of the "E" in EMI: ENL, ELF, ELFA, disciplinary language. Using relevant literature to stated main position of the experts and scholars in this field. Then, the paper talks about it is a tool or target in EMI which appear different situations under different countries sites. The research shows that it is a complex issue as there is no sole or standard norm. Continuing, this paper stated that is English as ELF. Because of its varieties and the large scope of users. Finally, some implications in the pedagogy of EMI are indicated, it shows some advantages of EMI to teachers and students although some aspects need to improve and more suitable for students. Moreover, limited to time and space, the further exploration and investigation need to conduct regard to other possibilities of English in EMI. In this way, the "English" used in EMI will more maximum its positive aspects for students and teachers.

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