

An exploratory study on the issues of EMI assessment in Taiwan

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Abstract

Employing English as the medium of instruction (EMI) for academic subjects has become a global trend. EMI is increasingly being used in education across levels, which has important implications for educators and policy makers. Yet little empirical research has been conducted into EMI's delivery and effect on teaching, learning, assessment, and teacher's professional development (British Council, 2014). In Taiwan, EMI is increasingly being promoted at the tertiary level, and the aspect of examinations and assessment has been identified as an important issue by EMI teachers in Taiwan. To increase the effectiveness of EMI in Taiwan, it is desirable to establish a clearer picture of the current role of EMI assessment. As an initial attempt, the present study collected baseline information by interviewing three professors who taught EMI courses in the subjects of business, engineering, and medical science, respectively. This paper will report the answers to important questions, including the following:

1. Which language, L1 or English, is assessment conducted in?
2. What forms does the assessment take?
3. What are the assessment criteria? What is being assessed, the English or the subject content?
4. What has been done to help students who are weaker in English?
5. How confident are the teachers in designing assessment tasks and evaluating students' performance?
6. How is feedback provided after assessment?

It is hoped that the findings of this exploratory study will not only provide direction for further studies on EMI assessment, but also stimulate further discussion of how the assessment literacy of EMI teachers could be enhanced.