

Exploring the Timing and Strategies of Implementing EMI in Higher Education:
A Case Study of a Public University in Northern Taiwan
大學專業課程英語授課之導入時機與策略探討：以一所北部公立大學為例

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With the recent trend of internationalization in higher education, the number of international students in universities in Taiwan is increasing. To meet the needs of these students from diverse language backgrounds, universities across the island have endeavored to offer English-medium instruction (EMI) courses in various disciplines. However, local students still constitute the majority of the student body in these EMI courses, so their needs and learning experiences should be crucial considerations in the development of EMI policies at these universities. This presentation reports part of the results of a study on the implementation of EMI courses at a public university in northern Taiwan. The participants included faculty members and students from four disciplinary domains at the university. Exploratory interviews were first conducted with five faculty members who were teaching or had taught EMI courses, followed by a questionnaire survey of 369 local students who were attending EMI courses, including undergraduate and postgraduate students. Through the interviews and questionnaire survey, the researchers aimed to investigate the instructors' and students' perceptions on key issues pertaining to EMI in higher education, including the purposes, timing, and strategies of implementing EMI; students' learning obstacles and coping strategies; classroom language use; and the learning and teaching support needed. These perceptions were analyzed in relation to relevant contextual variables, such as disciplines, years of study, English proficiency levels, and past EMI experiences. The data analysis yielded mixed results. Whereas the majority of the respondents recognized the importance and value of EMI courses for the academic and career development of university students, there were diverse opinions among students of different disciplinary domains and school years concerning the appropriate timing and strategies of implementing EMI. Furthermore, over 80% of the students responded that a certain amount of code-switching between English and Chinese would facilitate EMI learning and teaching. This opinion was also supported by their EMI instructors. Moreover, both parties reported the need for more systematic learning and teaching support from the university to facilitate better learning outcomes. In summary, the results highlight the significance of considering context-specific variables when implementing EMI to ensure that the courses provided in each learning context are appropriate and effective.

Biodata of presenters

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