

Christopher Hill  
Chia-Yi Lin  
Hsin Yuan Lai

# Supporting and Learning from Academics

EMI Toolkit

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Christopher Hill  
Faculty of Education  
British University in Dubai  
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Chia-Yi Lin  
Office of Strategic Planning  
National Cheng Kung University  
Tainan City, Taiwan

Hsin Yuan Lai  
British Council Taiwan  
Taipei City, Taiwan

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# Introduction

English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) is a complex and challenging reality of global education. It is an established element of teaching and learning and one that, despite much debate, is still largely underdeveloped. We know the rules of engagement, to an extent; we understand the overarching objectives, to a point; we are capable and informed teachers, as best we can be; and yet, it remains problematic and often frustrating.

EMI delivery raises many questions and creates doubts. Students can doubt both their language capability and subject knowledge, and we, the teachers, can doubt our own capability in language and pedagogy. EMI is about change and adaptation. The classroom dynamic changes; our style and approach changes; our confidence level changes; the quality of the learning experience changes. These are all realities that we cannot avoid or eliminate. We can seek to manage them, however, through a more nuanced understanding of EMI and as a result of a reflective approach to our own teaching practice and delivery.

This book is a work in progress. This book does not have the definitive answers for the perfect EMI teaching and learning experience. This is because EMI has no perfect answer or solution. Teaching itself is complex and ever-changing and subject to the whims and variants of every new class of students and every new day of external factors. Teaching is a calling more than a profession, and those of us lucky enough to be within its world have a responsibility to continue to learn and reflect: to share and explore; to accept that we are not aiming at perfection; to accept that mistakes will be made but to learn and build upon our knowledge and experiences to craft a more meaningful and engaging learning environment for our students.

Through a series of practical and real-world case study chapters, this book seeks to provide the reader with a window into the day-to-day challenges of EMI teaching around the world and to offer opportunities to learn from the examples (successful and otherwise) of global colleagues. Although our context changes from country to country, from class to class, there is a kinship in the community of EMI teachers that provides a framework for engagement and experience sharing.

In this book, we offer varying perspectives and lived examples of EMI design, delivery, classroom management, technology in teaching, assessment and quality

assurance. We provide insights from Taiwan, Uzbekistan, the UK and the Middle East to create a platform for global knowledge sharing.

The book begins with Chia-Yi Lin discussing EMI within the Asian context of higher education and offering a foundation for ongoing review. The core themes of EMI are outlined at the outset of the book to ensure that the reader is able to more fully comprehend the world within which EMI teachers operate and the key constraints, motivations and opportunities that both push and pull activity on a daily basis.

Chapter 2, Christopher Hill then outlines and highlights the key components needed for successful EMI delivery. This chapter, like those that follow, are full of examples and practical initiatives that teachers can adopt, adapt or develop to suit their own specific contexts and circumstances.

In Chap. 3, Christopher Hill reviews EMI pedagogy and discusses classroom management techniques, teaching philosophy and material design and delivery. This chapter examines the role that a teacher plays in the learning process and explores our need to be reflect and self-aware when it comes to content, depth, level and delivery of our material.

In Chap. 4, Christopher Hill explores the world on online EMI teaching and discusses the relative challenges and opportunities therein. The chapter pays particular attention to how we can encourage and improve levels of student engagement through the environment we create and sustain. The chapter also looks at how we can manage the online learning experience and issues of assessment and review that we must consider and develop.

In Chap. 5, Christopher Hill, Chia-Yi Lin, Yuen Ting Wan and Yu-Wen Chen provide both case studies and insight into the role of culture and multiculturalism in international education. The chapter explores the dynamic between teacher and student and offers practical suggestions on how this relationship can be navigated and developed.

In Chap. 6, Christopher Hill discusses the use of language in EMI teaching and develops a series of practical teaching tips and techniques to support further student engagement and knowledge retention.

In Chap. 7, Emad A. S. Abu-Ayyash, Mohammad A. Assaf and Mohammad I. Zabadi provide a detailed review and analysis of the value and importance of providing formative feedback in EMI classrooms. This informative chapter offers considerable insight into the process for developing appropriate and relevant assessment methods and how we can more fully support our students through the use of actionable and informative feedback.

In Chap. 8, Chia-Yi Lin, Yan-Hua Chen, Yu-Wen Chen and Christopher Hill present a series of case studies and reflective insights to illustrate the core issues at play within EMI delivery and discuss the transferability of solutions. This chapter firmly demonstrates the commonality of experience for EMI teachers, irrespective of context of location, and, in so doing, highlights the value in information and experience sharing.

In Chap. 9, Elena Volkova and Christopher Hill provides a case study approach of a long-established international university in Uzbekistan. Elena reviews the history

and associated challenges of creating and maintaining a successful EMI programme, and through a series of first person reflections, she provides incredible insight into the journey EMI teaching undergoes and the roles that are played by teachers, policy makers and students alike.

In Chap. 10, Christopher Hill and Lobar Mukhamedova explores the issue of quality assurance and provides an ethnographic narrative of her journey in supporting the development of transparent and sustainable EMI assessment methods and teaching protocols. As discussed in the initial chapters, the need to understand the broader context and environment of EMI teaching is critical as it shed light on motivational factors, opportunities and constraints. This chapter offers practical advice on how to navigate this journey.

In Chap. 11, Chia-Yi Lin provides an in-depth review of EMI within the Taiwanese context and offers historical and situational analysis as to the realities and future directions of EMI teaching and learning.

This book is a work in progress and an attempt to support EMI teachers and practitioners around the world. The reflective and practical nature of the book is designed to encourage active EMI course design and delivery engagement. We are united in our aims and objectives, and we should look to our community for ongoing engagement, knowledge exchange and support. This book is a practical guide, created in that vein.

Christopher Hill  
Hsin Yuan Lai

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# Contributors

**Emad A. S. Abu-Ayyash** The British University in Dubai, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

**Mohammad A. Assaf** English Department, Emirates Schools Establishment, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

**Yan-Hua Chen** Office of Strategic Planning, National Cheng Kung University, Tainan City, Taiwan

**Yu-Wen Chen** Office of Strategic Planning, National Cheng Kung University, Tainan City, Taiwan

**Christopher Hill** Faculty of Education, British University in Dubai, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

**Chia-Yi Lin** Office of Strategic Planning, National Cheng Kung University, Tainan City, Taiwan

**Lobar Mukhamedova** Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT), Tashkent, Uzbekistan

**Elena Volkova** Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT), Tashkent, Uzbekistan

**Yuen Ting Wan** Office of Strategic Planning, National Cheng Kung University, Tainan City, Taiwan

**Mohammad I. Zabadi** English Foundation Unit, Gulf University for Science and Technology, Mishref, Kuwait

# Chapter 1

## EMI Development in Asian Higher Education



Chia-Yi Lin

Bilingual education is defined as “instruction in two languages and the use of those two languages as mediums of instruction for any part, or all, of the school curriculum” (Andersson & Boyer, 1970). Changing historical and sociocultural attitudes and population demographics are important factors in the evolution of perspectives toward multilingualism in language learning. Relationships between local and international languages within countries, and within each community of speakers, are complex and challenging in equal proportion. For all the obvious gains that the use of English in education brings to the bilingual systems of Asia, the language is often viewed with openly expressed suspicion by planners, politicians, and academics of the region (Tickoo, 2010). Nonetheless, bilingual education is common in countries across the globe and, especially in today’s global marketplace, English learning has only increased in importance. While this has spurred a growing interest in and demand for learning English, it remains a challenge to ensure the attainment of a high standard of EMI achievement while maintaining the quality of education that students receive. The following analysis of bilingual education policy and development in Singapore, Hong Kong, and Malaysia provides a reference for other education systems seeking to develop students’ English language ability without undercutting their intellectual achievements.

### 1 EMI Development in Singapore

When it comes to bilingual nations/regions, Singapore is often viewed as being at the top of the list. Singapore’s successful effort to promote bilingual education and transform the nation into a multilingual country can be traced back to the 1960s, when the government decided to recognize four official languages—English, Mandarin Chinese, Malay, and Tamil. Former prime minister Lee Kuan Yew, widely known as the founding father of modern Singapore, foregrounded the importance of bilingualism when he acknowledged that Singapore could not join the ranks of highly