

**Language as a 21st-century skill and the state of EMI at Polytechnic
institutions of Bangladesh**

by

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A thesis submitted to the BRAC Institute of Languages in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in TESOL

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Declaration

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3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Abstract

EMI plays a vital role in teaching communicative English language. This study depicts the actual scenario of the English communicative language classroom of Polytechnic Institutions in Bangladesh. It also investigates the challenges that teachers and students face while using EMI in the language classroom to meet the need of the 21st century. While designing with a qualitative method, teachers, and students from private polytechnic institutions in Bangladesh have been interviewed by open-ended questions. Moreover, English language classes of different private polytechnic institutions have been observed to understand the actual scenario of the English language classrooms. Regarding teaching the English language, the main goal of the polytechnic institutions is to produce skilled learners so that the English language can be used properly both in their personal life and professional fields. This paper is expected to assist the teachers in finding out the possible solutions for the identified challenges while using EMI in communicative English language teaching at polytechnic institutions.

Keywords: English as a medium of instructions, communicative; language; learning; teaching; polytechnic.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

EMI refers to the use of the English language as the primary medium of instruction in the field of the academic teaching-learning process by instructors and students. Dearden (2014) stated that EMI stands for English language instruction, which is used in many countries to educate academic courses where they do not use English as the primary language. The English language has been acknowledged as the most widely spoken language around the world and in this age of globalization, dynamism, and change, no other language dominates today's world like the English language regarding academic and different professional sectors in Bangladesh (Bhuiyan & Khan, 2022) because today the English language is regarded as the universal language or in other word as "Lingua Franca" around the world by the majority of people. Due to the greater economic and social advantages it offers, English is regarded as an instrument of authority and power (Mansoor, 2009). In other words, globalization, social advancement, and academic benefits are all linked to the English language in the modern world (Hu & Lei, 2013). To internationalize educational facilities and provide students with opportunities to join the international academic community and the corporate world, policymakers considered employing English as a Medium of Instruction (Dearden,2014). The primary objective of polytechnic institutions when it comes to teaching the English language is to create competent students who can use the language correctly both in their personal and professional lives and EMI plays a vital role in teaching communicative English language which makes it necessary to use English as an MOI because language acquisition happens when the language learners are exposed to comprehensible language setting which contains I+1 (Krashen, 1982) which acknowledges that

exposure to the target language enhances learners' chances of becoming more proficient in terms of learning a language but in reality, both teachers and students in English language classrooms prefer to use their native tongue instead and that creates a barrier in the communicative teaching-learning process. Moreover, English language proficiency is essential for the development of the country's financial system as well as its human resources (Hamid, 2010) and so, helping teachers and students to achieve their goals is crucial for our nation's growth. Thus, to accept and ensure EMI for an appropriate English language teaching-learning environment, this study using the qualitative approach investigates the state of EMI by observing classes and taking interviews of teachers along with the students of Polytechnic institutions of Bangladesh to identify the issues so that the teachers can create an effective English language learning classroom for producing skillful English language users which will aid them in their academic and career success for contributing to the development of the country.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Today it is a crying need to have basic English language skills to cope with the modern world because the English language dominates most sectors for instance, educational, business, technological, medical, social, research, various jobs, etc. (Eza, 2021). Communicative language teaching through EMI is one of the most effective ways to enhance the learners of all four English language skills so that they can use the language proficiently in the real world. In Bangladesh, most English language teachers face problems in teaching communicative English using EMI. Like other educational institutions, polytechnic institutions' policies also give emphasis on using the communicative manner in terms of teaching the English language so that the learners can enhance their English language skills. Moreover, the perception that English has both local and global advantages is emphasized in various EMI studies on higher education

regarding non-English speaking nations (Evans & Morrison, 2016; Bradford, 2018; Botha, 2015). Moreover, the sign of a progressive nation is to produce skillful workers which match the primary goal of the polytechnic institutions. Furthermore, due to my own personal working experience as an English instructor in one of the private polytechnic institutions of Bangladesh, I have discovered that the primary objective of EMI is to enhance the learners' English language skills and it can be really helpful to the efficient teaching-learning of English language. In addition to this, to contribute to the development of our country, it is essential to assist teachers along with learners to reach their objectives because, unlike other core subjects' policies of polytechnic institutions, teaching communicative English language is also given high priority so that the learners can enhance their language proficiency level to perform better in the practical world and it is very beneficial to use EMI to teach communicative English language. Therefore, this study explores the true scenario of communicative English language classrooms regarding EMI at polytechnic institutions. In order to assist the teachers, it will identify the root cause of the barriers in terms of using EMI in a communicative language learning classroom. In addition, this study has provided some possible solutions to the identified problems which can help the teachers to produce a communicative language teaching environment so that the struggles faced by the teachers can be reduced regarding using English as MOI for an effective teaching-learning process.

1.3 Significance of the Study

Students' prospects of finding work are facilitated through EMI as the English language dominates most of the job sectors (Tamtam et al.,2012). Nowadays, it is very essential to have all the four English language skills such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing to cope with the world regarding professional fields as well as personal development (Costa & Coleman, 2013)

and MOI can play a crucial part in a language classroom because it is one of the most essential elements for creating a productive communicative language environment to produce skillful language learners. Thus, this research aims to determine the real situation and the state of EMI in communicative English language classrooms in Polytechnic institutions of Bangladesh because the main goal of the polytechnic institutions regarding teaching the English language is to produce skilled learners so that the English language can be used properly both in their personal life and professional fields to make a contribution to the country. Therefore, the findings of this study will be significant to help teachers to produce more proficient language learners who can meet the demand for 21st-century skills.

1.4 Purpose of the study

This study intends to find out the actual scenario and the state of EMI in communicative English language classrooms in Polytechnic institutions of Bangladesh to assist the teachers so that they can produce more skillful language learners to meet the need of 21st-century skills.

1.5 Research Questions of the Study

This study has investigated the following questions to explore the actual scenario of English language classrooms at polytechnic institutions regarding using EMI.

1. What is the state of EMI in English language classrooms?
2. Do the teachers and students struggle with using EMI in an English language classroom?
3. What are the necessary measures to reduce the challenges of using EMI in English language classroom?

1.6 Rationale of the study

All four of the English language skills—writing, speaking, reading and listening—must be mastered in order to function in today's world, both in terms of professional fields and personal development (Islam, 2013). The role of MOI in a language classroom is very significant because it is one of the most crucial components for fostering a productive communicative language environment that develops proficient language learners, and EMI can enhance the English language skills which helps both the teachers as well as the students for being more productive in the English language teaching-learning process. The curriculum of BTEB (2022) clearly states to stress on the communicative English language teaching but in reality, techniques used by the teachers and students are not suitable for the effective language teaching-learning process. Therefore, the rationale of this study is to encourage EMI in order to create communicative English language environments, which will enable teachers and students to teach and learn English more effectively.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The initial intention of this study was to explore both public and private Polytechnique institutions of Dhaka for class observations and interviews of teachers along with the students. However, it was not possible to collect data from public Polytechnique institutions due to the lack of access and as a result if that the private Polytechnique institutions in Dhaka are the only ones used for this study. Additionally, because of the limited time and access, it was not possible to investigate the impact of EMI in other courses. Therefore, this study is only based on English language classroom.

1.8 Definition of terms

The acronyms are listed and defined below which are used in this study to help the readers as well as the academics to understand their context of use.

BTEB: Bangladesh Technical Education Board

STT: Students' Talking Time

TTT: Teacher's Talking Time

GTM: Grammar Translation Method

Chapter 2

Literature review

This chapter explains the impact, role, and state of EMI regarding global to local context. In addition to this, it also provides an explanation about theoretical framework; history and curriculum of BTEB.

2.1 Value of EMI globally

As English has become a more widely used language and as attention has shifted to globalizing higher education, English has emerged as the MOI preferred in programs for higher education around the globe (Doiz et al.,2013). A great number of EMI researches have been undertaken for getting the insight into the difficulties of learning and teaching in an EMI environment (Kirkgoz, 2009) so that it is possible to understand how students perceive the effects of EMI on their language proficiency (Kim et al.,2016). Undergraduate and graduate programs are also offered and taught in different higher educational institutions using EMI (Earls, 2016). In addition to this, the majority of outer circle nations now apply and prefer English as their primary language of instruction (Brumfit, 2004). Byun et al. (2011) suggested to consider the English as the prime language of instruction so that students might be better equipped for careers abroad in the rapidly globalizing world of today because English is becoming more widely acknowledged as a crucial qualification in a variety of professions, including commerce, diplomacy, and academia because most of the people speak the English language widely all over the world. Driven by ambitions involving establishing itself as a crucial player in the field of higher education on a global scale, producing English-speaking pupils for job opportunities, and assisting pupils who are preparing for more opportunities around the world where the predominant medium of instruction and

interactions is the English language (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Moreover, by experiencing the linguistic features in numerous different contexts, learners steadily increase their linguistic expertise. Similar to this, in an EMI setting, students build a progressively more powerful network of 'connections' between these aspects since they are repeatedly exposed to the features of the language, in particular, situational or linguistic atmospheres (Lightbrown & Spada, 2007). Through English people make insight interchange, knowledge growth, and opportunities for career progression on a worldwide scale (Montgomery, 2004).

2.2 State of EMI in non-English speaking countries

An increasing number of countries that do not speak English are converting their higher education institutions to use English as their primary medium of instruction; this trend is known as the "Englishization of European Higher Education" a term coined by Coleman (2006) to describe this development. Many researchers have also showed keen interest to use EMI as an effective tool in terms of teaching the English language around the globe (Tang, 2020). The substantial number of EMI-established institutions has increased throughout Europe (Wächter 2015). British colonialism in prior centuries played a part in the spread of English in Asia (Altbach, 2004). Moreover, for establishing quality education, Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN) has recognized the English language as a primary medium of communication as well as the official language (Luanganggoon et al., 2018). In nations like Bangladesh, China, Pakistan, South Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam where the large number of people do not consider or speak English as their main language of communication, EMI is becoming a growing phenomenon in the educational sectors for instance universities, secondary schools, and even some primary schools (Rahman & Pandian, 2018). Bangladesh experienced a rise in donor-funded English language projects since Communicative English Language Teaching was

introduced in the late 1990s (Kabir et al., 2020). English has been designated as the MOI in Pakistan for higher education (Sultana, 2009). Through some of the leading universities, Japan offered the Global 30 project which aimed to provide programs using EMI to attract foreign students (McKinley, 2017). Kirkpatrick (2011) stated that English has become entrenched in the Philippines' higher education structure and is not likely to alter. Hong Kong offers a significantly more effective picture of the growing importance of English in academic circles (Kirkpatrick, 2007). Though the language policy of Ghana, states to use English as an MOI however, in actual scenarios native language is preferred instead of English both by teachers and students in practical English language classrooms (Ewie & Eshun,2015). Similarly, in Korea, teachers prefer the Korean language instead of using EMI in the classroom (Cho,2012). At the institutional level, EMI is introduced without clear policies and stakeholders' discussion regarding teacher language proficiency levels or other aspects of teacher expertise in several non-English speaking countries (Briggs et al.,2018). Moreover, the majority of Turkish students choosing to enroll in EMIs have risen drastically (Cosgun & Bahar, 2017). Furthermore, a great deal of educated individuals in Saudi Arabia speak English at a subpar level, hence the country has intended to use EMI to raise that level (Al-Sultan, 2009).

2.3 Historical Account of MOI in Bangladesh

After the independence of Bangladesh in 1971, the first constitution recognized the Bengali language officially as the national language. It was also instructed to use the Bengali language as the medium of instruction in educational institutions all over the country (Moore, 2003). Consequently, the importance of the English language was overlooked by the Bangla-centric sentimentalities and the scarcity of English language proficiency was severe therefore, in 1991 English was made a mandatory subject from grade 1 (Hamid& Erling,2016) and in the late

1990s CLT was introduced (Farooqui, 2008). The demand for pursuing higher education increased in the early 1990s but it became very difficult for the new nation to meet the needs with the small number of public universities (Rahman et al., 2019). Thus, the government allowed and encouraged the establishment of private educational institutions (Alam et al., 2007). In the late 1990s, the lack of English language competency was very acute and as a result of that, English subject was made compulsory at the undergraduate level of public universities for first-year students (Hamid & Baldauf, 2014). Moreover, the government followed the private university act to establish and operate the private universities in 1992 and the university grant commission (UGC) does not provide any particular instruction regarding MOI in any of its acts (Rahman et al., 2019). In light of this, many English medium schools emerged and from the beginning until now the government does not interfere regarding the plan and policy as they are run privately not by the government (Moore, 2003).

2.4 Role of EMI in Bangladesh

English as a medium of instruction or EMI is one of the most essential parts of communicative English language teaching. The fundamental objective regarding EMI is elevating the learners' English proficiency level for better communication (McKinley & Rose, 2022). In Bangladesh, English is used as a medium of instruction as well as communication both in educational and different professional fields though it is a foreign language (Tonni, 2021). More specifically, in terms of educational sectors, EMI is mostly used at the tertiary education, and starting from primary through secondary level, Bangla is the language of instruction as well as for the interactions. Communication skills are considered as the key to success in this real world where the English language is the means of communication and the people of Bangladesh believe and know that those who have more knowledge in English get more opportunities in

developing their careers (Arafath & Rukanuddin, 2019). In short, Crystal (2012) stated, a crucial part is played by the English language for communication in this age of globalization. Similarly, like Bangladesh, most of the other countries across the world embrace the English language as their main medium of instruction as well as communication for both academic and professional requirements.

2.5 State of EMI in Bangladesh's higher education

Most students in higher-level education in Bangladesh find English as a medium of instruction (EMI) difficult in their learning process (Sultana, 2014). Using EMI is important to teach communicative English language and thus the goal of this study is to find out the possible solutions to implement EMI in English language classrooms for an effective teaching-learning process. Most of the polytechnic institutes in Bangladesh do not have any proper material for communicative language teaching; moreover, lack of proper language skills, training, and techniques, the teacher along with the learners do not embrace EMI in their English language classroom settings. Furthermore, it is difficult to implement the language policy outcomes because of the complex situation, lack of knowledge and realization about the value of the English language, inadequate teachers' training for communicative teaching purposes, lack of using technology, insufficient salaries, and unfavorable working conditions (Hamid & Erling, 2016). But it is fortunate that the language in education policy of the polytechnic encourages teaching English for communicative purposes (BTEB, 2022) but in real classroom settings, it is challenging to accomplish the intended learning results due to a lack of supervision and instruction. Limited research is done on teachers' and students' language practice, ideologies, and MOI policies for Polytechnic institutions of Bangladesh. Proper implementation of MOI policies is important to establish both macro and micro-level practices for students' content

knowledge along with the development of English language proficiency in a globalizing world where the English language dominates most of the languages (Hamid et al.,2013).

2.6 History, Policy and Aim of BTEB

In 1960, for the development of vocational and technical education, the director of technical education was introduced in East Pakistan. Through the Act. No. 1 of 1967 “The East Pakistan Technical Education Board” was established and came into effect in 1969 which is now known as “Bangladesh Technical Education Board”. The characteristic of vocational or polytechnic institutions is to make the students practice more than the theory to produce skillful employees (Herawati, 2017). Similarly, “Bangladesh Technical Education Board” (BTEB) focuses on bringing out vocational students as skillful workers and according to the current English language curriculum-2022 of BTEB is to produce skillful English language learners to help them in their professional fields. According to BTEB, the Bengali language is instructed to use as MOI but regarding teaching the English language, the policies of BTEB-2022 clearly indicate that the teacher's role is not only to teach the rules of language merely but also to develop all the four language skills such as reading skill, writing skill, listening skill and speaking skill of learners by using different types of language practicing activities so that learners can use these skills in real-world and communicate effectively.

2.7 Theoretical Perspective of the Study

The theoretical framework of this study follows Stephen Krashen’s “Second Language Acquisition Theory” or “Input Hypothesis (i+1)” which is based on second language acquisition. It focuses on “acquiring” language not on “learning”. The process of acquiring second language through Krashen’s input hypothesis is similar to acquiring the first language of a baby. It focuses

on exposing the learners to the comprehensible interaction naturally rather than focusing on the grammatical rules; more specifically it motivates the learners to use the language for communication (Oller & Krashen, 1988). In this input hypothesis, Krashen suggested that students can improve their second language speaking more when they receive the comprehensible second language input which is one step advanced from their present second language competency level (Gong, 2023). For instance, $i+1$; here, i represents learners' present language competency level, and 1 stands for one-step advanced second language input. Krashen explained in his hypothesis that students receive the language best when they develop the language naturally by exposing them to more complex language situations; more specifically one step ahead of their current linguistic competency level (Dunn & Lantolf, 1998). Moreover, as all the learners are not at the same linguistic competency stage consequently, Krashen also suggested in his second language acquisition theory that by applying this $i+1$ input hypothesis, every student will improve their present linguistic understanding (Tricomi, 1986). Therefore, the theoretical perspective of this study is developed on Stephen Krashen's theory where he put emphasis on the environment for the communicative language teaching-learning process in terms of second language acquisition.

In summary, according to Krashen's (1982) input hypothesis ($i+1$), language learners need input that is at their level of proficiency and then marginally above it in order for the process to be both understandable and challenging; Krashen claimed that the manner of acquiring a second language is comparable to learning a first language; Krashen furthermore stated that the emphasis is placed more on natural communication than the grammatical structure when learners are expressing and comprehending meaningful contact in the target language. Similarly, this study focuses on the second language acquisition process using the target

language English as a medium of instruction in a communicative English language teaching classroom which focuses more on communication goals instead of language structure that helps learners acquire concepts more effectively.

Unfortunately, the majority of Bangladeshi vocational students exhibit inadequate English language communication skills. Therefore, this study intends to depict the actual scenario of the English communicative language classroom of Polytechnic Institutions in Bangladesh in terms of using EMI. Moreover, it aims to investigate the challenges that teachers and students face while using EMI in the language classroom to meet the needs of the 21st century. Furthermore, this paper is also expected to assist the teachers in finding out the possible solutions for the identified challenges while using EMI in communicative English language teaching at polytechnic institutions so that through EMI the teachers can develop the English language skills of vocational students properly to help them to use the skills both in their personal and professional fields to make contribution to themselves and to the country as well.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

This chapter explains the entire methodology process which was used in this study. It explains the research design, sampling, data analyzing procedure, ethical consideration, tools and data collection process.

3.1 Research Design

Research design reflects the process of gathering and analyzing data regarding the study (Simba, 2019) and the type of research design should be founded on the research goal and questions for obtaining authentic results (Nunan, 2013). The expression of human experiences, ideas, stories, perspectives, opinions, and images is reflected in qualitative data, which are non-numerical (Quinlan et al.,2019). Therefore, this study follows the qualitative method because the intention and research questions of this study are to understand and perspective of teachers along with the learners regarding EMI in communicative English language classrooms which matches the characteristics of the qualitative approach. In addition, in the field of research work, the qualitative approach is considered as one of the most reliable ways to obtain valid and accurate data. Moreover, the qualitative approach enables the researchers to reach the primary goal of the study which is to understand the stakeholders' perspective thus this study plans to apply the qualitative method to get the authentic data; furthermore, the flexibility and authenticity of the qualitative method regarding collecting the responses enable the participants to convey their opinions, ideas, thoughts, and experiences in their own words (Creswell & Puth, 2018).

3.2 Sampling

This study has followed non-probability sampling, more specifically the non-proportional quota sampling because it is less restrictive and makes the study easier as well as quicker to get the result. There is no strict rule for the total number of participants in a study; however, ten to fifty participants are considered ideal based on the interview questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Consequently, sixteen face to face interviews are taken from each of the participants. More specifically, seven communicative English language teachers who have a minimum of two to seven years of experience and nine first-semester students from different polytechnic institutions are the participants of this study.

3.3 Tools and data collection

Collecting data from different sources makes the result more authentic, reliable, and valid and for this reason, data collection of this study will be through previous research studies, surveys, class observations, and semi-structured interviews of the participants; more specifically, data will be collected from primary and secondary sources as well. Semi-structured interviews allow researchers to get an in-depth insight into the participants' perception, understanding, experience, thoughts, and feelings which can be done more accurately through open-ended questions (Creswell et al.,2003). Furthermore, this study uses the qualitative approach for the interview questions which include open-ended questions and lastly, class observations are based on naturalistic observation to get an authentic result.

3.4 Data analyzing procedure

The result of this study is determined through a qualitative approach. In total, sixteen participants are interviewed individually through semi-structured questions. Among sixteen participants, seven are English language teachers and nine are vocational students from different private polytechnic institutions. Moreover, the teachers' questionnaire contains nine open-ended questions and the students' questionnaire contains six. The responses from the participants are penned and recorded by the author. In addition, five classes are observed based on naturalistic observation for in-depth insight.

3.5 Ethical considerations

To enhance the research validity and maintain scientific integrity, this study has protected the rights of every participant. The participants and target institutions are well-informed about the study's purpose and the process. The identity of the students, teachers, and institutions are hidden such as names, family backgrounds, financial status, etc. in other words no personal data are used without their consent and are confidential which defines the ethical integrity of a research paper according to Denzin, and Lincoln (2018). This study has not caused any psychological, physical, social, or any kind of harm to the participants. Lastly, this study has reported accurate results and it is free from plagiarism.

Chapter 4

Findings and analysis

Research findings reflect the crucial results or the outcomes of academic studies (Al-Marzan, 2021); in other words, the findings of an academic study represent the perception, beliefs, criticism, opinions, feelings, thoughts, and suggestions from the primary and secondary sources, for instance, participants along with the relevant materials (Numanee et al.,2020). Overall, data of the interviews regarding the study are investigated through the qualitative content analysis method (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Dörnyei, 2007) which demonstrates the major themes of this study for instance: the state of instructors in English language teaching; state of students in English language learning; state of English language classes of vocational students and challenges faced by students and teachers for using EMI.

4.1 State of Instructors in English language teaching

| Teachers no. | Age | Gender | Educational Background | Experience | Time duration and MOI of interview |
|--------------|-----|--------|------------------------|------------|------------------------------------|
| T 1 | 32 | Male | MA in English | 3.5 years | 30 min Bengali |
| T 2 | 35 | Male | MA in English | 2.5 years | 30 min Bengali |
| T 3 | 40 | Male | MA in English | 7 years | 40 min Bengali |
| T 4 | 28 | Female | MA in English | 2 years | 30 min |

| | | | | | |
|-----|----|--------|---------------|-----------|-------------------|
| | | | | | Bengali |
| T 5 | 28 | Male | MA in English | 3 years | 40 min Bengali |
| T 6 | 30 | Female | MA in English | 4 years | 30 min Bengali |
| T 7 | 43 | Male | MA in English | 6.5 years | 40 min Bengali |

Figure 1: Table of English Instructors

All of the seven teachers (Ts) preferred using Bangla in the interview sessions; one of the teachers was very much concerned about the medium of instruction in the interview. Among seven participants, only one teacher (T3) uses the EMI in the classroom and the rest of them (Ts) stated that due to their lack of English-speaking fluency, they hesitate to use EMI in the classroom.

“Frankly speaking, I am also a product of Bengali medium institutions; I practiced only writing and reading throughout the academic years of my school and college which is the reason for my poor speaking fluency.” (T1)

Though the curriculum of BTEB instructs to all the polytechnic institutions to consider all the courses as skill-based courses but unfortunately, they do not consider English as a skill-based course; they give less importance and effort to improve its condition as a result of that they produce very poor English language users from polytechnic institutions. None of them think that the institution is aware of the usage of EMI and they do not monitor the classrooms for improvement rather they just focus on making the students pass the exams.

“My institution never interferes with the medium of instruction because I think, it does not give much importance to this matter due to the lack of knowledge about it. Moreover, the curriculum’s instruction is to focus on four skills but sadly practical exams for these two parts are only for 10 marks, 6 for listening and 4 for speaking; and the more concerning issue is that no institution takes these practical exams, we are instructed from the higher authority to give the marks so that the student can get more marks or pass the exams.” (T3)

Moreover, all of Ts agreed that though the curriculum of BTEB (2022) states to teach English so that the students can communicate properly using all four skills but sadly the materials are irrelevant in teaching the English language because the materials are not related to students’ vocational area. T5 mentioned that most of the polytechnic students tend to participate in the public services after getting their degrees where the interview questions regarding the English course are based on grammar, reading and writing part mostly and that is one of the major reasons the material which are used to teach the English course are based on grammar, writing and reading parts only avoiding the speaking along with listening skills. Besides, all of the Ts also stated that the syllabus is insufficient to make communicative English language teaching more effective.

“The books that we are instructed to follow are for practicing grammar and translation, basically it focuses on the reading and writing parts only; students feel bored in the classroom as the themes of the books are not related to their area of study such as textile, electrical, computer, tourism, and hospitality, etc.” (T5)

Furthermore, two of the teachers stated that our institution should ensure a positive teaching-learning environment both for the students as well as for the teachers in terms of

teaching the English language communicatively. They also emphasized that institutions should not focus on passing the exams only, rather they should try to focus on educating them truly so that they can contribute to the development of the country and make the world a better place for themselves and for the future generation as well.

“Our institution should give the same effort to the English course as other practical courses to improve its condition. They need to consider English as a skill-based course. They should provide us a teacher-friendly environment where we can study out of the classroom and do fewer other promotional activities of the institution to get the students. They should consider the students as learners, not products.” (T7)

Except for T2 and T3, the responses of the other five teachers reflected that they did not participate in any training, workshops, or seminars regarding communicating language classrooms. In addition to this, seven of the instructors showed positive attitudes about using EMI as they consider it as an essential part of effective English language teaching but they were also concerned about the practice of EMI in the classroom successfully because their English language proficiency level is low regarding speaking skill. Lastly, each of them suggested that less administrative workload, more training sessions, workshops, and technical support can help them in terms of applying EMI and teaching the communicative English language smoothly.

4.2 State of Students in English language learning

| Students | Age | Gender | Educational Background | Time duration and MOI of interview |
|----------|----------|--------|---|------------------------------------|
| S 1 | 17 years | Male | Computer Department (1 st semester) | 40 min Bengali |
| S 2 | 17 years | Male | Electrical Department (1 st semester) | 30 min Bengali |
| S 3 | 18 years | Female | Textile Department (1 st semester) | 30 min Bengali |
| S 4 | 16 years | Male | Electrical Department (1 st semester) | 30 min Bengali |
| S 5 | 17 years | Female | Computer Department (1 st semester) | 30 min Bengali |
| S 6 | 17 years | Female | Textile Department (1 st semester) | 30 min Bengali |
| S 7 | 18 years | Male | Electrical Department (1 st semester) | 30 min Bengali |
| S 8 | 18 years | Male | Computer Department (1 st semester) | 30 min Bengali |
| S 9 | 17 years | Male | Textile Department (1 st semester) | 30 min Bengali |

Figure 2: Table of students

The interviews with the students were conducted using Bengali language. Among nine students, the lack of motivation regarding learning the English language is seen in the responses of five students (Ss) and the rest of the Ss believe a good English language proficiency level can help them in both their educational as well as working fields but all nine of students' responses indicate that though the teachers do not use that much of English as MOI but if they (Ts) use then it is difficult for the students to understand lectures. Except for S5, eight of the students admitted that they suffer when they need to use English as their medium of communication as well as instruction.

“My friends and I hesitate to speak in English as our English is not good especially speaking; I also feel uncomfortable to try to speak in English in front of my classmates because if I speak wrong English then they will make fun of me.” (S9)

Furthermore, the students stated that they hold their instructors responsible for their incompetence regarding teaching the English language communicatively and also added that the instructors neglect the speaking along with the listening skill but have the tendency to focus only on grammar, reading skill, and writing skill because they put emphasis on scores and passing the examinations only as the teachers have pressure from the higher authority of the institutions.

“We mostly practice the tense, the right form of verbs, antonyms-synonyms, basically we learn the grammar. Our confidence level is low and the teachers do not show any interest in practicing speaking because they think we are not capable of speaking in English; in fact, they consider it as a waste of time and energy to try to make us speak in English, they do not show any confidence in us at all, they just give us homework, that's all.” (S6)

In addition, one of the students (S5) stated that the institution has hired only one teacher for their English subject, and including S5, six of the students added that the class duration of English classes is not equal to other subjects. Insufficient number of teachers is the result of restricted mindset by not considering the English course as skill-based course and as a result of that they give less importance to English course and provide very limited funding to hire more qualified English teachers.

“We attend English classes for forty-five minutes only but other subjects are for ninety minutes; sometimes even our teacher ends the (English) class within thirty minutes as he is the only English teacher in our institutions.” (S5)

Lastly, all of the students showed interest in learning the English language communicatively so that that they can compete in the job market. All of them agreed that having good English communication skills can definitely help them to get a decent job. However, they also agreed that low self-esteem, low confidence level and also lack of effective learning environment are the barriers for them to learn the language properly.

“It is extremely important for me to improve my speaking and listening skills because the job market is too competitive, and in the job interview I have to create a good impression if they ask questions in English, I need to be confident but I feel hopeless sometimes due to my poor speaking skills. I try to watch English movies with subtitles to improve my listening skill but I don't find any place for practicing my speaking skill.” (S1)

4.3 State of English language classes of vocational students

To find out and explore the actual scenario of the English language classroom, I observed five English language classes of first-semester students regarding the computer and electrical

department of private polytechnic instructions in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The students were aged between 16-18. Among five classes, the number of students was between thirty to forty in three of the classes, and in the rest of the two classes the number of students was between ten to sixteen; the class time duration was between forty-five minutes to ninety minutes.

None of the English language classrooms were well equipped with technological support such as computers, sound boxes, and projectors. Though the curriculum of BTEB 2022 regarding English language teaching instructs teachers to focus on developing the four skills- reading, writing, speaking, and listening through practicing language activities, but the teachers emphasize on improving reading and writing skills only focusing on the vocabulary, grammatical rules, and structures. None of the teachers used only EMI throughout the whole class, four out of five teachers used the native language which is Bengali as a medium of instruction and only one of them used the combination of both Bengali and English as the medium of instruction in the English language classroom. Most of the students were passive learners and classes were not student-centered which indicates that the TTT was much more than the STT. All five teachers preferred the deductive way in terms of teaching grammar and followed the approach of traditional teaching in other words only GTM which made the students unmotivated and bored in the classroom regarding their English language learning process.

4.4 Challenges Faced by Students and Teachers for Using EMI

Based on the previous research results, class observation reports as well as the responses from interviews of teachers and students, this study has found a number of challenges that become the barrier to implementing EMI in communicative English language teaching. Firstly, a large number of engineering students set foot in the tertiary level after passing secondary or higher secondary education; though the students study the compulsory course “English” for ten

or twelve years they do not get enough exposure to the English language because their medium of instruction and communication is in their native language Bengali and a result of that they lack fluency and struggle to communicate in English which hampers their personal, academic and professional needs (Zarin, 2019). Like the students, most of the vocational institute's instructors come from the Bengali medium background having the same experience as the students, and as a consequence, they struggle to use EMI in the English language class and prefer their mother tongue Bengali as a medium of instruction as well as for communication in teaching communicative English language. Secondly, in Bangladesh, ESP teachers rarely get professional training for teaching the language communicatively (Eza,2021). Similarly, insufficient professional training makes the vocational instructors' journey difficult in terms of teaching the English language communicatively using EMI and they fail to motivate the students in communicative language teaching. Thirdly, the classrooms were not well equipped with technological support. Fourthly, many vocational students want to improve their communication skills using English as a medium but the instructors focus on developing grammatical knowledge only instead of enhancing oral communication skills, and consequently, it creates a lack of motivation among the students in learning English (Mahbub, 2022). Fifthly, the class duration and the number of English teachers are not adequate in most of the institutions. Lastly, vocational teachers need more support from the principals and the government (Herawati, 2017). Similarly, in Bangladesh, the English instructors of vocational institutions require proper monitoring and more favorable working condition so that they can focus on academic work and develop themselves as effective communicative language teachers.

4.5 Discussion of the Study

The education ministry of Bangladesh has revised and made several improvements continuously and concentrated on the Bangla medium only overlooking English education in higher education since the Independence Day (26th March 1971) of this nation (Chowdhury & Kabir, 2014). This study has explored the true scenario of the English classroom of private polytechnic institutions of Dhaka and the state of instructors as well as the students regarding using EMI in communicative English language classrooms. Although all the instructors and almost all the students agree that to cope up with this modern world, having communicative English language skills are essential (Islam, 2013) but unfortunately, most of the private polytechnic institutions do not consider English subject as a skill-based course and give less importance to this for making any kind of improvement to the course and as a result of that most of the vocational students do not have the proper English language skills for communication which can hamper their academic and professional fields as well.

In addition to this, almost all the teachers showed a positive attitude toward using EMI as a sole medium of instruction throughout the class time and also agreed that implementing EMI in the English classroom can be useful in terms of teaching the English language which supports the “Second Language Acquisition Theory” or “Input Hypothesis (i+1)” of Stephen Krashen where he stated to put focus on the communication aspects more than the grammatical aspects by exposing the learners to the second language input which is one step advance from the learner’s second language competency level so that they can acquire the language in the best possible way by using EMI in English language classroom however, the findings from the previous studies, interviews, and class observations show that both the instructors and students avoid using EMI in the classroom due to the interference of their native language Bengali along with that the lack of

English speaking fluency. Insufficient resources, lack of language teaching methods, ability, and language proficiency level of both instructors and learners are the four primary elements of obstacles regarding implementing EMI in the teaching-learning process (Vu & Burns,2014). Moreover, because of the restricted learning outcome and psychological strain, students do not feel motivated or interested in their learning process (Kim,2019) and similarly, in polytechnic institutions, as a result of these language barriers, the students do not seem to be much productive in terms of communicating English properly in the classroom or outside the classroom. To overcome the challenges faced by instructors as well as the students proper training for the instructors can impart potential advantages for creating a productive teaching-learning environment (Richards, 2010) along with that knowledge, instructions, observation, and guidance are also needed so that they can reach the goal of their teaching-learning process using EMI which is enhancing the all four English language skills for proper communication.

Chapter 5

Recommendations and Conclusion

Creating a communicative English language teaching classroom using EMI is essential. Therefore, this chapter provides some possible solutions and suggestions in order to accept and ensure EMI for a proper language teaching-learning environment of Polytechnic institutes in Bangladesh to produce skillful language instructors as well as learners.

5.1 Recommendations

This study has explored the state of EMI and depicted the actual scenario of communicative English language teaching-learning conditions in polytechnic institutions in Bangladesh. Due to the lack of proper knowledge about implementing EMI in English language classrooms, instructors face problems to teach English effectively (Maxwell-Reid 2017) but teachers should have an ESP background for teaching ESP/EFL courses effectively so that learners can learn through communicative based language teaching (Balogun et al.,2018). Addressing the English language instructors' professional needs and training can solve the problems connected to non-academic tasks, students, and professionalism along with institutional requirements to enhance the instructors' skills regarding teaching communicative English courses in polytechnic institutions (Sanmugam et al., 2017).

The main barrier to implementing EMI in educational settings at the tertiary level in low- and middle-income countries where English is practiced as an additional language is the English language proficiency level of teachers, learners, principals, and administrators (Simpson, 2019). Similarly, most of the vocational English language instructors of Bangladesh Polytechnic find it difficult to implement EMI in communicative English language teaching and struggle to

successfully achieve the learning outcomes of the English language curriculum of BTEB which is to produce skillful English language users. Specific content-based language teaching material according to the learners' field, proper training, and skills of English teachers are essential to developing communicative English language teaching in the setting of polytechnic institutions (Sanmugam, 2013). To assist the teachers based on the findings the following recommendations are made:

- Organize training sessions, workshops, seminars, etc. on communicative language teaching for teachers.
- Prepare materials regarding the learners' vocational area.
- Reduce the administrative workload of teachers and give more space for academic work.
- Provide a language lab classroom.
- Create a more rewarding environment both for teachers and students.
- Give equal importance to English as other courses.

5.2 Conclusion

Generally, EMI is considered a top-down decision that is popular both for business and research purposes around the world. To implement EMI, proper quality control, motivation, reduced workload, language workshops, individual support for teachers, and intercultural training are needed which can improve the teaching-learning process through EMI more effectively (Adams, 2020). In order to practice EMI, the hierarchy should ensure quality, provide proper space for training and environment. Lack of motivation, CLT-based material, and insufficient English language skills are the barrier to implementing EMI in a classroom setting but proper quality control by the government and other stakeholders can reduce the problems (Kiliçkaya, 2006). Currently, the English language dominates the business and education field

and so in terms of teaching communicative English language, there is no better option to implement EMI in the ELT classrooms at polytechnic institutions in developing countries like Bangladesh. Improving syllabus, content base material, seminars, conferences, workshops, and training regarding communicative language teaching for polytechnic teachers are important to ensure effective practice for EMI. To ensure the quality of programs taught through EMI, it is important to increase pedagogical knowledge as well as English language skills.

5.3 Suggestions for further research

Further investigation is required on the materials which are used in communicative English language teaching so that materials can be prepared according to the learners' vocational areas separately and it is also suggested to find out the condition of polytechnic institutions which are located outside of Dhaka and also the state of public polytechnic institutions all over the country regarding English communicative language teaching-learning process.

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Appendix

Questionnaire for instructors

Work experiences-

- 1.** Is there any difference in present and past scenarios in English language classrooms regarding MOI in polytechnic institutions?
- 2.** What is your perspective on MOI in an English language classroom?
- 3.** What is your opinion about practicing EMI in a communicative English language classroom?
- 4.** Does your institution observe and encourage using EMI in English classrooms?
- 5.** Do you think the communicative English language course syllabus and materials are proper for effective English language teaching? Kindly explain and share your viewpoint.
- 6.** What do you think about the curriculum of the “Bangladesh Technical Education Board” regarding English language teaching?
- 7.** Do instructors face any challenges while using EMI in the classroom? If yes, what are the challenges?
- 8.** Do you encounter any difficulties while utilizing EMI? If so, what difficulties are there?
- 9.** In your opinion, what are the necessary measures to reduce the challenges while using EMI in communicative English language classrooms?

Questionnaire for students

Department-

- 1.** Do the students find it challenging to understand the instructions and lectures if the teacher uses only the English language? If yes, please state the reason.
- 2.** Do the students struggle when they need to participate in using the English language for class discussion and communication? If the answer is yes, kindly state the reason.
- 3.** Do you believe that good command of English language skills will help you in your professional and academic field? Please explain why/ why not and share your viewpoint.
- 4.** What language skills do you practice in the classroom most?
- 5.** What language skills do you want to practice in the classroom more? Why?
- 6.** How do you think you can improve your English language skills?

Consent paper

Date:

Dear Respondents,

The questionnaire is designed to find out how the teaching of English in Polytechnics in Bangladesh can be improved and made more relevant in line with the spirit of communicative competence of the new millennium. Moreover, no personal data will be used or mentioned in the research paper for instance, institution's name, teachers' name or students' name.

It would be highly appreciated if you answer the questions as simply and objectively as possible.

Thank you.

Sadia Tahmid Torra

Brac University

Signature