Teachers' and Students' Perception on the Impact of EMI on Business English Development: A Case Study of a Business Communication Course in a Private University of Bangladesh

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

I hereby declare that this thesis is the student's own work and effort. All sources of information incorporated here have been duly acknowledged. This thesis has been submitted with my approval.

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DECLARATION

This thesis is a presentation of my original research work. Wherever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due reference to the literature, and acknowledgement of collaborative research and discussions.

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Abstract

The worldwide use of English has led to the change of its status from a second language to English as a lingua franca (ELF). English used in the Business world is referred to as Business English. A number of countries have adopted English as a medium of instruction in higher education in order to ensure economic growth and stand out on an international level. English medium instruction (EMI) is believed to be facilitating learners' cognitive and language development in English. The purpose of this study was to examine the teachers' and students' perceptions of EMI and whether they find it useful for improving learners' Business English under the Business Communication course in a private university in Bangladesh. In order to accomplish the purpose of this qualitative case study, it required semi-structured interviews and classroom observation to collect data. By analyzing the data, it was found that both teachers and students believed EMI to be necessary for better career opportunities and found it useful for English language competence development. The findings of this paper hope to add to the existing knowledge of the readers and fill the gap found in the previous literature conducted on the impact of EMI pertaining to Business English.

Keywords: English medium instruction, Business English, perception, language competence development, Business Communication.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the study:

The need for English in the contemporary world cannot be denied. It is nowadays the language of trade and commerce, science and technology, modernization, globalization, and internationalization. As a result, English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in education is adopted by many countries in order to prepare its citizens with Basic English communication skills. One of the primary causes for the encouragement of policymakers to implement English medium instruction is to internationalize higher education offered in their respective countries (Deaden, 2014, p. 29). There is a significant influence of globalization on English language learning and its use in the education policies of countries like China, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Vietnam, and Taiwan (Nunan, 2003, p.610). Bangladesh is not an exception to such an effect. The dominance of English in the South Asian region and Bangladesh can be observed from the time of British Colonial rule (Rahman, 2022, p. 21). As English is the global lingua franca (Seidlhofer, 2005, p. 339), it is needed for a country's economic development. That is why Bangladesh is emphasizing improving its English language proficiency and as a result, has adopted English as a medium of instruction.

The term English as a lingua franca (ELF) refers to the way of communicating in English among speakers who speak different first languages (Seidlhofer, 2005, p. 339). In Bangladesh, the status of English has shifted from being considered a foreign language (EFL) to that of a lingua franca (ELF) in many situations due to its increased use over the past two decades (Rahman, 2022, p. 20). English is the most dominant lingua franca in the business world and fluency in the English language has become one of the most important skills to possess for business students nowadays. The prominence of the English language in the business world

occurred in a gradual process. Business structures began to change rapidly in the 1990s with the cross border merging of international collaborations and labor market unions (Kankaanranta & Salminen, 2013, p. 19). The continuous development that has occurred in the various fields of commerce and technology has brought a drastic change in people's perception of the use of the English language as well as English language programs around the globe. According to Monghode & Woldemariam (2015), these new "demands" or "needs" of learners from particular occupations are addressed by the emergence of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (p. 151). Business English is often referred to as English for Business Purpose (EBP) in the context of business which falls under the umbrella term English for Specific Purpose (ESP) (Bhatia & Bremner, 2012, p. 1).

According to Kankaanranta & Salminen (2013), the majority of multinational, multicultural, and multilingual firms decided to adopt English as a lingua franca when a variety of significant concerns needed to be managed internationally (p. 19). This requires the development of business English of the employees to initiate effective business communication. According to the SUNDAY TIMES (2011), companies in Sri Lanka place a high value on English proficiency in the workplace. Ninety-five percent of employers feel that improved English proficiency increases organizational productivity, and sixty-six percent of employers reject applicants who don't speak English well (as cited in Pengnate, 2013, p. 2). That is why; all the countries are putting extra importance on developing English language proficiency for their students. English plays a significant role in the creation of possibilities for empowering individuals and organizations, which ultimately contribute to a nation's poverty reduction, economic growth, and sustainable development (Roshid, 2018, p. 327). The aim of improving

the economy for a country like Bangladesh, the adoption of English as a medium of Instruction is a primary option (Rahman, 2022, p. 24).

1.2 Problem statement:

Several studies have explored students' perception of EMI focusing on the pros and cons of its implementation. Phuong & Nguyen (2019) studied the students' perception of the benefits and drawbacks of EMI classes in Vietnam, Zhang (2021) studied students' perception of EMI in China while Kym & Kym (2014) did this in Korea. In Bangladesh, Murtaza (2016) studied students' perception of EMI and its challenges at a Private University; however, the paper only focuses on the challenges and students' preferences. It lacks the exploration of students' language development. On the other hand, Rahman et al. (2021) explored the beliefs and attitudes of university lecturers towards EMI in Bangladesh and Malaysia. The language management, language ideologies, and practices in EM institutions are explored by Sarkar et al. (2021). There is a lack of research on the impact of EMI on students' Business English competence development in Bangladesh. Moreover, a lack of research is also noticed regarding teachers' perception of EMI and its impact on students' language development.

Despitasari (2021) conducted research in the Indonesian context on the perception of students of a Business Communication course on EMI in terms of a variety of aspects, including English for learning, career advancement, internationalization, and global identities. The students shared a positive view of the importance of English for their career advancement and did not perceive English as a threat (p. 34). However, there is no mention of the impact of EMI on students' English language development. Despite the wide adoption of EMI in higher education, there remains a gap, particularly in understanding the impact of EMI on learners' Business English development in the Bangladeshi context. Hence, the purpose of this paper is to get a

notion of the perceptions of both teachers and students on EMI and understand its impact on undergrad students' Business English development within the Business Communication course in the light of content and language-integrated learning (CLIL) in a private institution of Bangladesh. By doing so, this study intends to contribute to the existing gap in the Bangladeshi context by exploring teachers' and students' perceptions of EMI and its impact on developing learners' Business English.

1.3 Significance of the study:

Though EMI is widely researched, a lack of research is observed on its impact on developing Business English, especially in the Bangladeshi Context. Therefore, this study aims to explore this side and provide an in-depth understanding of the influence of English medium instruction on learners' Business English proficiency development. The readers will be able to consider both the teachers' and students' points of view on EMI and construct their understanding of its effectiveness on learners.

1.4 Limitations:

Though this study answers the raised research questions, there are some certain limitations. This study could not explore the point of view of all the students doing the Business Communication course due to time constraints. The research questions are tried to be answered by analyzing the responses of a particular number of teachers and students which leaves out the others.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This study investigates how EMI influences university business major students' English language skills development in Bangladesh. Studies on related areas such as English Medium Instruction and its impact on developing learners' language competency have been reviewed to find the current scenario of research in this context. The literature has addressed the linguistic ideologies underlying the adoption of EMI in higher education, the challenges and outcomes of implementing EMI, and its impact on developing Business English. By analyzing what has previously been examined, these studies assisted in identifying a research gap for this paper.

2.1 EMI in Higher Education across the world:

English Medium Instruction (EMI) refers to the use of the English language as a medium of instruction to teach academic content in countries where the first language of the population is not English (Dearden, 2014, p.04). It is considered a key strategic policy in higher education (Rahman et al., 2021, p. 1213) as it aims to create a capable workforce by preparing university students so that they can work both domestically and internationally fulfilling the demands and goals of economic globalization (Rahman et al., 2021, p. 1219). English, as a result, has become the universal second language and the primary medium of instruction in higher education worldwide (Brumfit, 2004, p.165).

Several studies on EMI have been conducted globally. For instance, in Europe, the immense possibilities of EMI such as internationalization, teaching and research materials, student exchanges, employee mobility, employability, and the market in international students, etc. are considered to be the reasons for adopting EMI programs and courses in higher education (Coleman, 2006, p.4). According to Marsh & Laitinen (2005), the opportunity to engage in international exchange programs within the context of higher education is one of the primary

reasons to start adopting English-taught courses in non-English-speaking countries of Europe (as cited in Tamtam et al., 2012, p. 1418). EMI is believed to offer opportunities for local students to study abroad and such graduates with foreign degrees are likely to flourish in following their career ladder at the international level (Tamtam et al., 2012, p. 1418). Coleman (2006) also stated in this regard that the opportunity to study abroad is an opportunity to prepare students for international opportunities (p. 5). Furthermore, the EMI strategy in higher education raises an institution's profile by hiring foreign employees and accepting students from all over the world which enables the institution to gain an opportunity to secure increased funding for its advancement and conducting research (Tamtam et al., 2012, p. 1418). Similarly, Coleman (2006) argued in his paper that English facilitates the recruitment of international students and employees which ultimately leads to more institutional prestige, increased success in garnering funds for research and development, and improved employability for local graduates (p. 5). As a result, EMI courses are gradually becoming popular in Europe. A study commissioned by the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA) in 2007 found that around 2400 courses were offered in European institutions and most of them were for postgraduate programmes (Islam, 2013, p.128). While in Europe EMI implementation has been widely researched, there are few studies done on the implementation of EMI in Asian countries. Studies by Tsuneyoshi (2005) & Lassegard (2006) showed that South Asian countries like India, Malaysia, Singapore, and Hong Kong have widely adopted EMI for higher education while in other Asian countries like China, Japan, and Korea EMI is not widely accepted, however, it is gaining popularity due to internationalization of higher education (as cited in Islam, 2013, p.128). Rahman et al. (2021) also mentioned that Malaysia, like any other Asian country, is trying to be the center of higher education in Asia. The goal of the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) as

Munusamy & Hashim (2019) stated, is to become an international higher education hub, and their aim of attracting at least 250,000 international students to Malaysian universities by 2025 (as cited in Rahman et al., 2021, p. 1215). In order to attract foreign students and internationalization of higher education MoHE is using EMI policy as the main strategy.

2.2 EMI in Higher Education in Bangladesh:

The dominance of English in the Bangladeshi region is rooted in British Colonial rule since both the British and later the Pakistani rulers used English as the official language of instruction and communication (Rahman, 2022, pp. 21-22). After independence, Bangla was declared the official language of Bangladesh, and English was restricted from usage in official, social, and educational domains (Rahman, 2022, p. 22) due to the predominance of the nation's monolingual identity (Rahman et al., 2019, p. 2). Bangladesh as a lower middle-income nation (Rahman, 2022, p. 21) recognized the importance of English for internationalizing a country's economy and promoting economic solvency (Rahman & Pandian, 2018, p. 894) and adopted EMI alongside Bangla medium Instruction (BMI) at the tertiary level after the 2010 National Education Policy (Rahman et al., 2019, p. 4). EMI policy implementation draws a line between the education of public and private universities in Bangladesh because whereas the Bangladeshi government is not permitting the exclusive use of EMI in public universities due to post-independence nationalist and modernist policies, private universities are using English exclusively as a medium of instruction from the early 1990s (Islam, 2013, p.127). Dearden (2014) also found in his study that EMI is more popular in private universities than public universities not just in Bangladesh but also in other countries (p. 8).

To better comprehend the needs and goals of EMI, as well as the views and attitudes of university lecturers toward it, Rahman et al. (2021) carried out a small-scale study in Bangladesh

and Malaysia. They found several factors that affected EMI adoption in both nations. The authors estimated the reason behind the widespread popularity of EMI in higher education to be the benefits of internationalization and globalization, as well as the belief that mastering English will make a graduate a global citizen due to the economic and social value of the language (Rahman et al., 2021, p. 1220). The significance of English in the internationalization of higher education was often emphasized by the professors during the interviews. The interview data made it clear that instructors in both nations had positive views on the use of EMI and English in higher education, particularly when it came to obtaining a career or pursuing further education (Rahman et al., 2021, p. 1220). One of the lecturers who participated in their study stated English is "a passport to the world today" (Rahman et al., 2021, p. 1220) which further signifies the idea that English language proficiency can provide access to global opportunities. Moreover, Rahman et al. (2021) mentioned that due to the language's widespread academic use, its economic and social value, and role as the universal language of teaching, English is now required and as a result, adopted in many higher education institutions across the globe (p. 1220).

As Bangla is the mother language of the people of Bangladesh, the implementation of EMI is quite challenging. Islam (2013) in his paper critically examined the language practices and implementation of EMI in a private university in Bangladesh. The findings of the study indicated that English dominated both classroom and outside activities and the institutional policies influenced by the policy of higher education in the private sector were believed to be the reason behind the hegemony of the use of English over Bangla (Islam, 2013, p.132). Moreover, the global identity of English, and the availability of teaching materials in English also influenced the use of EMI. However, dealing with EMI in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) contexts can be challenging, as it has to deal with the widespread use of local languages

(Rahman et al., 2021, p. 1223). Based on the interviews of the study, it was determined that the percentage of English instruction in university classes varied depending on the students' and lecturers' English proficiency levels, and the educational backgrounds of both the lecturers and the students (Rahman et al., 2021, p. 1223). Islam (2013) also found that many students confronted problems due to EMI given their low English proficiency and observed that Bangla would have been more helpful and effective regarding academics (p. 131). Bangla is preferable not just because it is their first language, but rather they find it easy to understand the academic contents. Some even took the help of materials written in Bangla whenever available and also argued that a dual medium of instruction would have been more appropriate (Islam, 2013, pp. 131-132). As a result, lecturers preferred using Bangla alongside English in classrooms as most of the students could not understand full English lectures (Rahman et al., 2021, p. 1223). Rahman et al. (2021) also stated that since Bangladeshi professors primarily believe that students should concentrate more on subject matter than proficiency, they are unwilling to assist their students in overcoming English-related difficulties (p. 1223). As an alternative, they are using more Bangla in the classrooms. However, neither the teachers nor the students denied the demand for English in the job market. Sarkar et al. (2021) also did their research on teachers and students of a Bangladeshi institute concerning their perspective on EMI. The positive effects of English Medium Instruction (EMI) in the educational system are acknowledged by both professors and students of that institution. Students perceive EMI as an essential tool for succeeding academically, pursuing higher education overseas, and securing jobs in multinational organizations (Sarkar et al., 2021, p. 1262). They view it as a means of developing their language proficiency, especially the students who are from Bangla medium backgrounds. Islam (2013) also found in his study that both teachers and students believed that EMI practices are capable of

developing student's language skills as students have noticed that their listening, speaking, and writing skills have improved after taking EMI courses (p. 131). However, there is a concern regarding the future benefits of EMI that is it may be helpful for developing language skills, but sometimes it overlooks the acquisition of substantive knowledge. As Dearden & Macaro (2016) defined the aim of EMI is to teach through ENG with no direct reference to improving students' English language proficiency (p. 456). It was discovered that the emphasis placed on English through EMI had nothing to do with knowledge acquisition, which is the main target of EMI (Sarkar et al., 2021, p. 1262). Lecturers may contribute to this by not clearing the connection of the aim of employing EMI and building disciplinary knowledge (Sarkar et al., 2021, p. 1262). Darden (2014) in his paper also mentioned that large-scale studies in Hong Kong suggest that EMI may help with L2 learning, but is not necessarily beneficial to academic progress (p. 32). EMI is an effective tool for developing language proficiency with some of its drawbacks.

2.3 Developing Business English Proficiency in Higher Education:

Business English is often referred to as English for Business Purpose (EBP) in the context of business which falls under the umbrella of English for Specific Purpose (ESP) (Bhatia & Bremner, 2012, p. 1). While acknowledging the value of English as the language of science and commerce, Kruseman (2003) proposed that English should be the language of instruction in order to prepare students for careers in the globalizing world of today (Coşgun & Hasırcı, 2017, p. 11). Zhang and Yan (2008) also stated that businesses, organizations, and manufacturers who offer a chargeable service speak English as their common language for conducting business (as cited in Guiyu & Yang, 2016, p. 143). According to Monghode & Woldemariam(2015), these new "demands" or "needs" of learners from particular occupations are addressed by the emergence of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) (p. 151). This viewpoint has led to an

increasing number of non-English speaking nations using English as the primary language of instruction in their higher education (HE) institutions (Coşgun & Hasırcı, 2017, p. 11).

English continues to be the international language of choice for business communication across Asian nations as a result of the trend toward globalization and the emergence of e-business and e-commerce (Baharum & Tretiakov, 2007, p. 33). Kankaanranta & Salminen (2013) mentioned that the majority of multinational, multicultural, and multilingual firms decided to adopt English as a lingua franca when a variety of significant concerns needed to be managed internationally (p. 19). This requires the development of business English of the employees to initiate effective business communication. According to The SUNDAY TIMES (2011), companies in Sri Lanka place a high value on English proficiency in the workplace and ninety-five percent of employers feel that improved English proficiency increases organizational productivity, and sixty-six percent of employers reject applicants who don't speak English well (as cited in Pengnate, 2013, p. 2). China’s entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001 brought with it the promise of social and economic advancement towards international standards and integration into the global economy (Pang et al., 2002, p. 201). As China's economy gradually expanded, so did the need for business English, which led to the official approval of the country's Business English Program in 2007 (Guiyu & Yang, 2016, p. 142). The Chinese Ministry of Education has recently specified that in the Business English curriculum, English language learning courses should make up 50% - 60% of students' study; business knowledge, 20% - 30%; cross-cultural communication and humanistic quality, 5% - 10%; and the final year project and professional practice, 15% (Zhu, Lin, & Zhu, 2016, p. 137). Business English took a center place in Malaysia in 1993 when the political leadership announced its intention to make the country a fully developed economy by 2020 (Baharum & Tretiakov, 2007,

p. 33). According to the Malaysia Blueprint 2013–2025, each person who graduates from school needs to be qualified to work in both Malay and English-speaking environments (Rahmat et al., 2015, p. 72). The gradual realization of Malaysia is that using English is one of the most important practices to remain competitive in the global market and to draw in foreign investment (Baharum & Tretiakov, 2007, p. 33).

Many theories claim that learner's language abilities may improve provided that they are exposed to the target language in a meaningful way. English medium instruction (EMI) ensures this exposure to authentic use of language, which can have a good impact on students' language abilities, even if the goal is not to improve the student's language proficiency (Coşgun & Hasırcı, 2017, p. 13). Lightbrown & Spada (2006) talked about connectionist theory which suggests that "learners gradually build up their knowledge of language through exposure to the thousands of instances of the linguistic features they eventually hear" (as cited in Coşgun & Hasırcı, 2017, p. 13). By employing a foreign target language for instance English as the medium language of instruction in various contexts and activities, students are able to develop their own understanding of certain subjects through the process of critical thinking abilities as well as improve their language skills (Pengnate, 2013, p. 3).

Monghode & Woldemariam (2015) ran a study on some selected companies in Ethiopia and found that workers find it difficult to perform daily activities like interacting with foreign clients, creating monthly progress reports, analyzing data from tables and graphs, and utilizing English software as they lack required skills to perform them (Monghode & Woldemariam, 2015, p. 153). The reason behind this was that Basic English courses offered for Business students were no different from other departments and as a result, students could not develop their language proficiency and skills which they would need to perform in future careers (Monghode &

Woldemariam, 2015, p. 153). The participants of Monghode & Woldemariam's (2015) study stated that they preferred learning words related to business, however, the materials used for teaching English were not appropriate for accommodating the needs of business students (p. 180). Liu (2010) by analyzing the conventional business English teaching paradigm, noted that improving business English instruction can be achieved through curriculum reform, methodological adjustments, and the development of improved teaching and learning environments accordingly (as cited in Guiyu & Yang, 2016, p. 143).

2.4 Research Gap:

Due to the emerging popularity and the growing need for EMI in higher education, it has attracted the attention of many researchers in Bangladesh. Some have conducted research on language ideologies behind adopting EMI in higher education, language management and practices, some on teachers' and students' perspectives on EMI, the impact of EMI, etc. Language ideologies, such as the significance of English in the internationalization of higher education, the economic benefits of English in the modern world, and the fact that English is an academic lingua franca, have a direct impact on how policymakers, lecturers, and students view EMI programs offered in higher education institutions (Rahman & Singh, 2020, p. 4). This study on the language ideology of EMI in higher education in Bangladesh claimed that one of the main reasons for universities adopting English as a medium of instruction is the goal of producing graduates who will become proficient in English communication on a worldwide scale, bearing the notion of internationalization in mind (p. 3). Besides, Sarkar et al. (2021) conducted a study on language ideology, language management, and language practices of EMI in Bangladesh. The findings claimed that from achieving excellent grades and seeking higher study abroad to securing decent jobs in multinational companies, students acknowledged that EMI was an

inevitable part of the contemporary educational system in which they were taught (Sarkar et al., 2021, p. 1262). As for language practice, students preferred the use of Bangla alongside English in classrooms (Sarkar et al., 2021, p. 1263). Islam (2013) conducted a study as well on EMI practice in a private university in Bangladesh and found that students observed Bangla would have been more helpful regarding academics due to their low English language proficiency (p. 131). As a result, Lecturers started to use Bangla for their lectures as it was difficult for the students to understand lectures fully in English (Rahman et al., 2021, p. 1223). Murtaza (2016), furthermore, added that teachers do not use English entirely in EMI classes and participant students claimed that they are not good at teaching and communicating in English (p. 7). Students are comfortable with lectures in Bangla as well since they feel shy about asking questions in English (p. 7). Though the students confronted difficulties due to their low proficiency in English, they never denied the importance of EMI classes for developing their language skills (p. 6). Again, the participants of Karim et al.'s (2023) study emphasized the importance of developing BMI (Bangla Medium Instruction) at both public and private universities as the low level of instructional quality and limited English competence of the instructors undermine the value of EMI-driven education (p. 8). Along with these issues, Chowdhury (2021) added that most students struggle to improve their academic performance because of applying EMI rigidly in both classroom as well as examination settings (p. 95).

English is now commonly acknowledged as the lingua franca of worldwide business for a variety of reasons, and the field of business English language fluency (BELF) has attracted a lot of interest (Jenkins et al., 2011, p. 298). The majority of multinational, multicultural, and multilingual firms decided to adopt English as a lingua franca when a variety of significant concerns needed to be managed internationally (Kankaanranta & Salminen, 2013, p. 19). Roshid

(2018) demonstrated in his study how English plays a crucial role in the creation of possibilities for empowering individuals and organizations, which ultimately contribute to the nation's economic growth, poverty reduction, and sustainable development (p. 327). Being able to communicate effectively in English helps job seekers on a personal level to handle the pressures of a competitive job interview, manage their career to secure a decent position, and plays a significant role in obtaining a good salary in the job market (Roshid, 2018, p. 322).

The discussion above shows that language ideologies associated with EMI, language management as a means of enhancing teachers' and students' compatibility with EMI adoption, and the phenomena of EMI implementation in higher education settings have been explored (Sarkar et al., 2021, p. 1254). The existing literature is also widely researched on the challenges and outcomes of implementing EMI and its positive and negative impacts through the perception of students and teachers. Islam & Stapa's (2021) study sought to investigate the state of undergraduate students' spoken English competence in Bangladeshi private universities, the challenges they confront in trying to increase their proficiency, and potential solutions to those challenges (p. 19). Moreover, the contribution of EMI according to learner perception in developing the English language proficiency of business students, attaining employability, and fulfilling workplace communication needs in English has also been explored (Karim et al., 2023, p. 8). While the study of Murtaza (2016) is also based on the general statements of students' perception of implementing EMI in classrooms in a private university in Bangladesh (p. 10), it does not provide any in-depth discussion about the impact of EMI on students' language proficiency. The impact of EMI in developing students' language proficiency has been already explored by these researchers. Karim et al. (2023), additionally, investigated the language development of business students; however, they did not mention any particular contribution of

any specific course. Hence, the purpose of this study is to investigate whether the Business Communication course provided to first-year BBA students is assisting the students in improving their English language competence based on the perception of both teachers and students, which they will subsequently need in the business world.

2.5 Research Questions:

The research questions that this study aimed to answer were created using the papers of Despitasari (2021), Baltabayev (2020), and Karim et al. (2023) as a reference. The research questions are:

1. What are the teachers' perceptions regarding the impact of EMI-based Business communication courses on students' language competence development?
2. What are the students' perceptions regarding the impact of EMI-based Business communication courses on students' language competence development?

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology used for data collection and data analysis for conducting this study.

3.1 Research design:

This study aimed to explore the perceptions of teachers and students on the impact of EMI on Business English development. In order to achieve this goal, a qualitative approach had been taken which allowed an in-depth analysis of teachers' and students' views on EMI. The in-depth analysis necessitated semi-structured interviews and classroom observation to collect data and ensure its validity.

A qualitative case study provides an in-depth understanding of a case by defining, describing, and analyzing it within certain parameters (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.155). In order to conduct this qualitative case study, qualitative data were collected through audiotaped interviews and classroom observation of the Business Communication course. At first, the semi-structured interviews were taken from the teachers and students who were doing that course, and later the data collected by the researcher's observation of the classrooms assisted in comparing and analyzing the data on the impact of EMI on Business English language competence development.

3.2 Participants of the study:

The participants selected for this study consisted of 2 teachers and 8 students from the same institution. The teachers at that time were teaching the Business Communication course and the selected students were doing that course under them. The student participants were chosen randomly for the interviews to maintain diversity in their educational backgrounds so that their answers to the interview questions can be compared and analyzed. As they were from

different educational backgrounds, their perceptions and experiences of EMI differed from each other which helped to come to a probable conclusion of the study.

Table 1:

No.	Teachers	Gender
1	T1	Female
2	T2	Male

Table 2:

No.	Students	Gender	Background
1	S1	Male	Bangla Medium
2	S2	Male	English Version
3	S3	Male	Bangla Medium
4	S4	Female	Bangla Medium
5	S5	Male	Bangla Medium
6	S6	Female	English Medium
7	S7	Female	English Medium
8	S8	Female0	English Medium

3.3 Data Collection:

The data for this study were collected mainly from semi-structured interviews and classroom observation. Both of the teachers were politely approached and asked for permission for the interviews. After that, the interviews were conducted according to the preferred time of both parties. One of the interviews was audiotaped and the other one was a manual interview due to the preferences of the interviewees. Written notes were taken for the manual interview. The

students were randomly selected and asked for permission to take part in the interview. All the interviews of the students were audiotaped using a mobile phone with consent. For the interviews, some open-ended questions were predetermined by the researcher. The questions were explained in detail to the participants when needed. In order to participate in the classes for classroom observation, the teachers were also asked for consent. The classroom observation was carried out over the course of two weeks. Based on the researcher's observations, written notes were taken.

3.4 Data analysis procedure:

The collected data from the interviews and the classroom observation were transcribed and coded thematically to understand teachers' and students' perceptions of the impact of English medium instruction in higher education (Creswell, 2012). The responses of the interviewees were organized thematically and analyzed. The notes taken from the classroom observations were transcribed and later compared with the responses of the interviewees. The comparison of responses and classroom observations assisted the researcher conclude this study.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

4.1 Teacher's perception of the impact of EMI:

It was discovered from the teachers' interviews taken for this study that both of the teachers emphasized how important English is in the modern business world. Proficiency in English is just as essential as other soft skills for succeeding in any corporate setting. Moreover, as the materials available for teaching in higher education are mostly in English, EMI is helpful for students to understand academic content easily.

> T1: *We should be able to communicate in more than one language other than our mother tongue. It will help us achieve more economic growth [...] Students will need English once they enter their workplace as employers nowadays prefer graduates who are fluent in English. Even if they want to learn anything for academic purposes, EMI will help them as most of the materials are available in English.*
>
> *T2: We have given way more importance to the English language [...] to do well in the corporate sector; English skills are needed as much as soft skills. [...] Most of the books used to teach in higher education are in the English language. So EMI is helpful for both teachers and students.*

Both of the teachers who participated in the interviews emphasized the necessity of English in higher education. The global acceptance of English as a common language for communication and the availability of information and teaching materials in English are also mentioned by them. Baltabayev (2020) also conducted a paper on how teachers and students perceive EMI and the teachers participating in that study delivered similar responses. One of the faculties stated English to be the language of international communication while another faculty included "today all the leading achievements, all discoveries, and all scientific literature that we are using and

will use are provided in English" (p. 42). In order to broaden the horizon of knowledge, knowing English is essential.

4.2 Teacher's perception of EMI on students' English language competence development:

The positive impact of EMI on students' English language proficiency development was mentioned by both of the teachers during the interviews. They believed it to be an effective method for improving learners' language competence as they have noticed learners' proficiency improvement in their classes. Furthermore, the basic Academic English courses and the Business Communication course provided in the institution, according to them, will prepare students with Business English that they will need in their future workplace. One of the teachers acknowledged the Business Communication course to be one of the most important courses provided in the institution.

> *T1: I think EMI is an effective method to improve students' English language skills. Only if you are exposed to a language, can you learn it. EMI provides that exposure to the students. [...] I do notice small improvements in my students' proficiency due to EMI as it is not possible to notice great improvements in just one course. [...] The Business Communication course will definitely help them in their workplace as I teach them how to communicate both verbally and non-verbally in a Business context.*
>
> T2: *EMI can be an effective method for improving students' language skills if the students are consistent with the process. [...] If they keep trying, 4 years are enough to improve someone's English language proficiency. In addition, their improvement is visible. [...]*
>
> *In a workplace, 90% of the communication is verbal. In the business communication course, along with written communication, verbal communications are also taught. For*

example, participating in interviews, learning workplace communication, organizational behavior, etc. It is one of the most important courses provided in our university [...].

From the interviews, it was found that both of the teachers considered EMI to be an effective method of improving students' English language competence. T1 emphasizes the exposure to meaningful language for students to learn English. Krashen's interaction hypothesis supports this statement of T1. According to Krashen, language acquisition occurs through the exposure of language in a meaningful way (Krashen, 1982). EMI program provides a scope for practicing English in classrooms; learners' language ability improves as a result. The teacher's statements regarding this can be supported by a study done by Tran (2021). The teachers who participated in that study mentioned that EMI brings linguistic benefits as they noticed an improvement in students' English level due to EMI courses (p. 18).

The interviewees also emphasized the necessity of the basic Academic English courses and the Business Communication course provided in their institution. Academic English courses, according to them, helped build the foundation for students while the Business communication course prepared them for the workplace. Students are taught formal writing etiquette, and organizational behavior in Business Communication, which allows the development of Business English communication skills of the students that will be useful for them in their future workplace.

4.3 Student's perception of the impact of EMI:

The interviews taken from the students indicate that each of the participants emphasized the necessity of English for them. As the majority of corporate organizations are placing a strong focus on their employees' fluency in English as they attempt to compete in the global market, the participants believed that English medium instruction in higher education is preparing them with

English communication skills that they will require in their future workplace. One of the students from a Bangla medium background asserted that EMI provides an opportunity to practice English. Another student who was from a science background, found EMI to be helpful for learning new business terminologies.

Excerpt

S1: *English is a must for business students. Being fluent in English is nowadays a strong skill for one to succeed in their career as companies are trying to compete in the global market. In this regard, English medium instruction is preparing us to communicate effectively in English.*

S3: *No one can deny the importance of English in the modern world. I personally think that English medium instruction is playing a vital role in preparing graduates with effective communication skills in English which will help them grab better career opportunities.*

Students perceived fluency in English to be an essential skill for them. They believe EMI helps with communication skills in English which will give them access to the outside world as it is the language of global communication and ensure better career opportunities for them. One of the participants mentioned that EMI is allowing them to practice English. The student participants of Baltabayev's (2020) study also stated that the English language would provide them with opportunities to get better jobs and many prestigious companies require knowledge of English (p. 43). 75% of the respondents in a study done by Phuong & Nguyen (2019) perceived that EMI programs would increase their chances in the job market (p.93). These studies show that not only in Bangladesh but also in other countries, students perceive EMI to be a useful tool for practicing English.

4.4 Student's perception of their English language competence development:

All the participants acknowledged that their proficiency level in English developed when asked if they think English medium instruction helped them develop their level of English language competence. The participants were confident in their English language skills to perform in their future workplace. They also added that the Academic English and Business Communication courses provided at their university had helped them learn the formal etiquette of writing and Business English required for them. They saw the Business Communication course to be an essential course as this was the only course that taught them formal writing etiquette and organizational behavior.

Excerpt

S1: Yes, EMI definitely helped to improve my English language skills. At first, I was nervous about communicating in English but now I am gradually becoming confident. [...] As we are taught in Academic English and Business communication courses how to write academic content, I am quite comfortable with written communication. I am investing more time in English and I think I am improving.

S6: Yes, my language skills are developing due to English Medium Instruction. The level of vocabulary in higher education is different from schools and colleges. So it helped me learn new vocabulary. I am getting better. [...] These courses really helped me with many things, especially with formal writing. Business Communication is the only course that teaches us organizational behavior. It is something we really need.

The responses of the interviewees indicate that students considered EMI programs to be helpful for improving their English language skills which they will be able to use in their future workplace and avail better opportunities. Moreover, they mentioned that the basic Academic

English course and the Business Communication course assisted them a lot in this regard. The Business Communication course taught them the necessary formal writing formats and etiquettes and how to face interviews, how to behave in a particular situation in their workplace, how to deliver bad news to someone etc. and the Academic English courses helped build their basic foundation.

All of the participants found EMI to be effective. Though some of them agreed that they sometimes face difficulties communicating in English as they are not native speakers, none of them denied the importance of the EMI program for them. EMI helped them with content understanding as well. The study done by Rose et al. (2020) on students' perception of EMI revealed that students found EMI as a successful method of maintaining content learning and lecture understanding, improving English language skills, and enhancing career success. Phuong & Nguyen's (2019) paper revealed the perception of students on EMI that 75% of them believed that EMI lessons sharpen their four English skills, 86.8% agreed that EMI lessons enhanced their general and academic vocabulary, 70.6%, stated that studying in an EMI course enhanced their subject matter knowledge (p. 93). These findings show that EMI facilitates both content understanding and language learning. This goes with the concept of content and language integrated learning (CLIL). It is an educational approach where academic content is taught through the medium of a foreign language (Dalton-Puffer, 2011, p. 183). As in the EMI courses, academic subjects are taught in English, it can be said with reference to the concept of CLIL that EMI does help students with content learning and language development.

4.5 Report on classroom observation of EMI-based Business Communication course:

The classroom observations were conducted to verify the data collected from the interviews. The results found from the classroom observation were coherent with the responses

of the participants. Most of the students have adapted to EMI and they are quite comfortable communicating in English.

The educational backgrounds of students differ in a classroom. As a result, their English language proficiency level also differs from each other. Though students are introduced to EMI from the beginning, their level of adjustment is not the same. It was found from the interviews that students from Bangla medium mainly face challenges adjusting to EMI programs due to their low proficiency level. Those who are from the English medium and English version are already accustomed to English Medium instruction. They are comfortable with both verbal and nonverbal communication in English. Though the Bangla medium students face challenges to some extent, they are not bad at communicating in English. They are trying their best to improve. While doing presentations, it was observed that they were stuttering a little but they finished presenting their task properly. As for the content, they were good with grammar and content writing. After each presentation, a question-answer session was conducted and it was an interactive class where students and the teacher communicated with each other and continued discussing in English. It proves that almost all of them are comfortable interacting in English. Students are trying their best to cope with the EMI system as they know it is effective for them to improve their language competence.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion:

The necessity of EMI was outlined in the National Education Policy of 2010 (Rahman et al., 2019, p. 4) which resulted in the adoption of English as a medium of instruction in Bangladesh alongside Bangla medium instruction at the tertiary level. Though EMI brings a lot of benefits, it has some challenges as well. This paper aimed to explore teachers' and students' perceptions of EMI and whether it is an effective way of improving learners' Business English. For this purpose, required data were collected through semi-structured interviews and classroom observation, and later the data was analyzed and compared to answer the research questions of the study. By analyzing the data, it was found that teachers as well as students acknowledged the significance of EMI for higher education and its positive effects on learners. According to them, EMI accelerates students' cognitive development, content learning, and language competence development which improves their communication skills in English and prepares them to avail better career opportunities. The teachers also emphasized the fact that EMI expands the horizon of learning. Similar results were also found in the papers of Rose et al. (2020), Phuong & Nguyen (2019), and Baltabayev (2020) which supports the findings of this study.

Both the teachers and students considered EMI as an effective method of improving students' Business English proficiency. The students mentioned that studying academic content in English allows them to learn new business terminologies and vocabularies, which is accelerating their language learning. They also mentioned that their communication skills were developing due to the English medium instruction. Teachers also noticed development in students' language development due to EMI. The data found from the classroom observations validates these statements. While doing the classroom observation, it was noticed that the

majority of the students were comfortable using English and they were quite good at doing presentations in English. Students were fluent in asking questions and continued discussion in English. However, a few students were found anxious while delivering their speech. Moreover, while trying to conduct the interviews for this study, difficulties were faced to some extent by the researcher as some of the students were unwilling to give interviews in English due to their anxiety about English. This is the case of students from Bangla Medium. As they are not accustomed to English Medium instruction, it takes time for them to adapt to the sudden change of medium of instruction (MOI) from Bangla to English. Even though they were anxious about English, they did not deny its importance and acknowledged that EMI was helping them regarding this.

That means, lectures delivered in English are allowing students to learn subject matters as well as helping students learn English as a second language, which is the main concept of content and language-integrated learning (CLIL). The focus of CLIL is to teach academic content as well as to facilitate language learning (Dalton-Puffer, 2011, p. 183) where the content and language learning occur simultaneously. Harrop (2012) also talked about the goal of CLIL, which is to increase competency by teaching the material not in a foreign language but rather with and through it (p. 57). EMI can be an effective method of achieving the purpose of CLIL as EMI targets to convey academic knowledge in English, which eventually helps learners develop their English language proficiency (Islam, 2013, p. 131). In CLIL, any language other than the first language can be the medium of instruction while EMI specifically makes it clear that the medium of instruction has to be English (Dearden, 2014, p. 4).

According to Maican (2020), the implementation of CLIL in Business education would greatly support the students to acquire specialized vocabulary items, professional contexts that serve as a

backdrop for language instruction as well as the activities that they would likely engage in their future careers (p. 194). Another goal of CLIL is to improve students' communication skills by having them engage as much as possible in the target language in real-world contexts that are relevant to their academics or future career (Coyle et al., 2009, p. 15). EMI is also doing the same for students. They are learning content through English medium instruction which is facilitating them with new vocabularies as a result their level of English is improving gradually.

5.2 Conclusion:

English language competence is a must in today's globalized world to succeed in a variety of fields, especially business and education. In higher education, English Medium Instruction (EMI) has become a popular strategy to provide students with the language skills they need to succeed in the global setting. The impact of EMI on the development of students' Business English competency was investigated in this study from the perspectives of both teachers and students of a private university in Bangladesh. Relevant data for conducting this qualitative case study were collected through semi-structured interviews and classroom observation. The teachers who participated in the study highlighted the necessity of English in both academic and corporate contexts and emphasized how EMI gives students access to academic resources and facilitates content understanding and language competence development. Students also expressed the same kind of views acknowledging the importance of EMI for better career opportunities and global communication. The findings of the study also suggest that EMI plays a significant role in improving students' language competence by providing them exposure to authentic use of the English language in classrooms. Despite the difficulties faced by some students, the overall consensus of their responses reflects a positive view of the effectiveness of EMI in developing Business English skills.

This study hopes to add to the current knowledge on EMI by offering insights to the impact of EMI on learners' Business English development based on the perceptions of both teachers and students within the Business Communication course. Several papers addressed the perception of students on the impact of EMI on learners' language competence development. However, only a few address teachers' perceptions of students' language development due to EMI. Especially in the Bangladeshi context, research on students' English proficiency development due to EMI is not done up to the mark. Hence, this paper tried to address the views of both parties on the impact of EMI on students' Business English development which will to some extent fill the gaps present in this field of research. This study hopes to broaden the extent of future research in this area. The findings of this study are based on the perceptions of a few teachers and students of a particular Bangladeshi private university. Hence, the findings are limited to only one institution. The researcher hopes that this research can be extended in the future on the impact of EMI on developing Business English or language development on a broader scale involving multiple institutions and a large number of participants. The researcher hopes that it will allow a more in-depth understanding of the impact of EMI on learners' language development.

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Appendix

Interview Questions for Teachers:

1. Can you please share your opinions on the importance of English in Bangladesh?
2. How important do you consider EMI?
3. What is your opinion on the role of English medium instruction in higher education?
4. Are there any difficulties that you encounter when instructing English-language programs?
5. What type of challenges do your students encounter?
6. Can you please share your views on your students' English language proficiency level?
7. Do you consider EMI to be an effective method to improve students' English language proficiency level?
8. Did you observe any improvement of English language skills among your students? If yes, what type of skills?
9. Do you think studying courses in English affects students' content understanding?
10. Can you kindly share your opinion about whether the Business Communication course provided in your university will help students in their workplace?

Interview Questions for students:

1. Can you kindly share your opinion on the importance of English medium instruction for students in higher education?
2. How comfortable are you in communicating verbally in English with teachers and your peers? For example, asking questions, group discussions etc.
3. Are you compostable in preparing and doing presentations in English?

4. Are you comfortable in continuing written communication including, writing emails, business and official letters, emails, reports, and so on, in English?
5. Does English medium instruction have any impact on your content understanding?
6. Do you consider EMI helpful for improving your English language skills?
7. Do you think your English language proficiency will help you to settle well in your future workplace?
8. Do you encounter any difficulties at lectures?
9. Can you please share your opinion about whether the Business Communication course provided by your university will help you in your workplace?
10. Did the prior basic Academic English courses you took have any beneficial effects on doing the Business Communication course?