

Higher Education English Medium Content Teacher Community of Practice (CoP) Webinar Series

**#EmergingEnglish
British Council China**

Selected Q&A List

Webinar #1, 2, 3, 4

June 2020

- **Note: Views expressed below are those of event participants only and do not necessarily represent those of the British Council**

1. Questions about the differences and connection between EMI and EAP/ESP courses (from audience)	Answers (from speakers)
What's the difference and connection between the two courses?	<p>EMI is taught by subject teachers in English. EAP is taught by English teachers focusing on language skills.</p> <p>EMI focuses primarily on subject matter such as economics, engineering, etc. EAP on the other hand, is more language and skill-oriented to facilitate subject matter study or research.</p>
2. Questions about EMIESP/EAP students' motivation, engagement and interaction (from audience)	Answers (from speakers)
How did your students react at the beginning to the student-centred teaching?	<p>Most of them welcomed it. but some of the students who are more introspective didn't get involved much at the beginning. It is my job to help them get familiar with the changing teaching and learning environment.</p>
How can we engage the students to study abroad if the teachers have never been outside the country?	<p>Try to find another teacher or invite foreigners. Also, promotional events of study-abroad programmes can help as well</p>
What different teaching methods do you use in EMI classroom to develop different the thinking of students?	<p>For me, the most difficult part is to push students to read and learn by themselves, so I would give them more open questions and projects to do.</p>
How do you keep students staying focused and driven in the classroom?	<p>Occasional games, but I personally also find that teacher's humour and personality can put students at ease. When Students are more relaxed they are more willing to ask questions and learn more effectively.</p> <p>Get feedback from your students. For example, I learnt from my international students that they like practical things, like internship, labs, and projects.</p>
How would you make the student discussion productive?	<p>I would supervise the discussion all the time. Sometimes it may seem not so productive, especially for the students at higher level. But on the other hand, it helps those students to enhance their interest in this subject, so it helps more or less.</p>

3. Questions about EMI/ESP/EAP students' challenges and supports (from audience)	Answers (from speakers)
How can EMI teachers help students when they have problems with the English understanding or with English expressions during the course?	<p>There are entry requirements for English at the registration stage for the EMI courses and students can be supported through ESP and EAP courses.</p> <p>Be patient for students to express, and encourage them to express.</p>
Would you think Translanguaging (e.g. introducing key term in Chinese) would be a useful pedagogy to support additive bilingualism?	<p>We can begin with some Chinese but try and move to full English as this will better prepare students for an immersive environment. We also have to consider whether there are foreign students in the class who do not speak L1, and how the teacher can code-switch.</p> <p>For very technical terms, it's very useful. Some teachers give students a list of technical vocabulary before the lectures.</p>
If the lecturer cannot speak native or very fluent English? How could we achieve good teaching effect under this situation?	<p>There are other ways to support the language such as the visuals (images, diagrams etc), body language etc. Engaging students will be very important through your materials and presentation style.</p>
Will EMI teachers notice the mistakes in the students' English expressions? How can EMI teachers help students in their English expressions?	<p>We do notice mistakes. For example, when students do presentations in English, and I would comment on their presentation for correcting English mistakes.</p>
How do students preview the content before class?	<p>Give them tasks before the class takes place and prepare some relevant questions for them to answer at the class.</p>
Will you give oral or written feedback on your students' essays?	<p>Oral feedback can be very motivating for students, but it is also important to give written feedback that can be referred to later.</p>
Do your students use Chinese textbook for your online class? Do you think Chinese is more suitable for online class? Or English is more attractive for them?	<p>They use English textbook. I agree that Chinese is more suitable for online class, because the student can easily understand. So, the language level is important for select the language for online class.</p>

4. Questions about EMI/ESP/EAP teachers' challenge and support (from audience)	Answers (from speakers)
How do you handle a big class of 80 students and the time management for it?	<p>I divided my students into groups and picked some of them randomly to present their answers. So, most of my students were a little bit nervous about being asked. I have been using this strategy to keep everyone involved as much as possible. Regarding the time management, it's a little tricky, I divide my knowledge framework into different important objectives. The in class teaching content will be dynamically adjusted according to the progress and the objectives.</p> <p>I once attended a very big class, over 120, what the instructor did is he divided the whole class into like 20 something groups. Lots of peer learning and group discussions. To my surprise, it ended up surprisingly well.</p>
How do we help EMI teachers prepare for their courses (such as course design in English and teaching in English)?	<p>You can organise meetings with a group of teachers teaching the same subject, including EMI and common Chinese-taught subject courses. Also, you may collect syllabus from other universities for reference and have a discussion and make a comparison with the Chinese-taught courses.</p>
What is the most difficult part in teaching students in English in EMI classroom?	<p>Often teaching content obligatory language, particularly where terms are very technical, can be challenging. These can be checked at any point by the student (as learning does not only take place in the classroom!) but students' motivation and engagement can be a significant challenge.</p>
In your classroom, how do you balance between the time spent in students' activities and keeping up with teaching schedule?	<p>For me, I have to book extra time to do the presentation of projects.</p> <p>We would like to include more tutorials time in the teaching plan.</p>
Would you feel embarrassed when you realise you make some grammar mistakes when teaching your students in English?	<p>Perhaps, but this should not be the biggest concern as long as the teacher is clearly understood. Of course, we want to ensure, first and foremost that content is taught. One of the biggest problems is often pronunciation affecting the message. E.g., incorrect stress patterns, intonation etc.</p>
What do you think is the biggest difficulty in the student-centred or problem-solving approach?	<p>For the student-centred teaching, the biggest challenge would be the preparation phase. it's very hard to balance the teaching and researching work. For a problem-solving approach, I find it is very hard to design a right problem, if too easy, the students will lose their interest quickly; but if too hard, it may scare them away.</p>

5. Questions about student learning assessment in EMI courses (from audience)	Answers (from speakers)
Does your assessment focus only on the content or also on the language? Is the assessment in Mandarin or English? How do you differentiate between content knowledge and language knowledge?	<p>Although Chinese students and foreign students are not in the same class right now in my university, we are moving towards to that goal. Therefore, my assessments are now only focusing on content, and I prepare two different assessments for Chinese students and English-speaking students respectively.</p> <p>My assessment is only on content right now. Mandarin for Chinese students and English for foreign students.</p>
How could you assess the students' proficiency with blending learning, especially the online learning part?	<p>I think there are ways to do this formatively through portfolio, progress testing and assignment submission. If anyone has other suggestions, they can add these to the chat.</p>
6. Questions about EMI teachers' professional development (from audience)	Answers (from speakers)
How do you think the EMI course benefits you as a subject teacher?	<p>Since my EMI course is part of EMI program, I can teach in an innovative way. And the textbooks are also very helpful to build the world-class course.</p> <p>Both students and teachers benefit from it. At least it improves my English level, and also makes me communicate more with my students.</p>
7. Questions online teaching (from audience)	Answers (from speakers)
Do you use break out rooms in your on-line classes?	<p>If you are asking for my over 70-student classes, the answer is no. But we are using social media apps at the same time. On those apps, students are divided into much smaller groups.</p>
8. Questions blended teaching and learning (from audience)	Answers (from speakers)
What are the most appropriate conditions for carrying out face-to-face, blended learning and online learning, respectively?	<p>F2f: hands-on & lab work while online: for those who have strong learning ability and highly motivated.</p>

9. Questions EAP/ESP courses and teacher development (from audience)	Answers (from speakers)
Does your university offer dedicated EAP module to students?	It is a good suggestion, but it is difficult to implement for now. We hope students can learn from EMI courses directly.
I am interested to know more about outcome-based teaching, please.	We need to consider what students will do in the future in the field of medicine. For example, we may design the situation to discuss how to improve patient flow in emergency department. Such scenario is very popular for students in clinical medicine.
Are students streamed using English placement tests for your EASP course?	No. But they have had a placement test for General English when they entered our university.
Do you think the professors delivering the lectures in the Medical faculty see their role as both content and language teachers?	I would like to put English teacher as a bridging role in helping students transition from General English to English for Medicine (or other subject) purpose. And this is also what we can do and should do.
Have you had challenges with content teaching as a language teacher?	Yes, I am challenged, but I insist on learning Medicine while teaching.” “I also got support from the teachers and students with medical background. The others are teachers from school of medicine.
How should we assess the students of ESP students, the content or the English ability?	Both ideally if we have the staff with dual-expertise. Otherwise, for ESP teachers with language background, I would say, the language.
Should content knowledge be a major objective for an EAP course? Or can we just use the materials in the content field to train students' language skills?	In my opinion, I would like to use content knowledge as teaching materials to train academic skills in language.
How can general English teachers prepare to be familiar with medicine (or other subject) field?	It is not easy to start with in the beginning. We need continuous help while trying to include the medical (or other subject) content. Working with teachers in subject background is a must.