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Pedagogy in Teaching through English Medium Instruction—Academics' Cases in a Chinese University

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Abstract: As a result of two decades of development, the trajectory of English medium instruction (EMI) research has moved from the identification of problems towards a focus on pedagogy. In response to studies in the literature claiming that the dominant approach in EMI pedagogy is the direct transmission of knowledge, and calls for research investigating classroom discourse in EMI teaching, this study explores the pedagogical features enacted by bilingual EMI academics in a Chinese university's EMI program. The participants were four academics who were teaching a subject in parallel across both EMI and CMI student cohorts. The research employs Paulo Freire's framework of dialogic teaching as the theoretical lens and focused on investigating moments in which the EMI lecturers 'dialogued', engaged, and/or interacted with students in their EMI classes. This research found that, in spite of their varied disciplines, the lecturers mostly implemented expository teaching in their EMI and CMI classes in general. The efforts of individual academics in relation to intellectual equality, the wellbeing of students, and the encouragement of critical thinking through dialogue and interaction were identified. However, due to the academics positioning themselves as experts in subject knowledge, the tendency in their teaching was characterized as monologic rather than dialogic. This research contests a major theme in the literature, which is that the academics' English (EMI teaching), in reference to their first language (L1), is not the major contributor to their pedagogical approach.

Keywords: dialogic pedagogy; English medium instruction; Chinese medium instruction; intellectual equality



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1. Introduction

The number of studies on English medium instruction (EMI) in global higher education (HE) experienced an upward trend over the last two decades as non-anglophone countries sought to advance the international standing and prestige of their institutions [1–3]. Specifically, China, driven by its internationalization of an education agenda, and as a relative newcomer to EMI in HE [4], demonstrated a robust commitment to its implementation. In accordance with national and institutional policies, the past twenty years have witnessed an expansion of EMI in HE in China, “from being a Chinese-English bilingual teaching experience in well-developed socio-economic areas to being used right across the country” [5] (p. 1). This nationwide EMI requisite is a strategy to meet the demand for the modernization of education towards the outside world and for the future; it is responding to the challenges of economic globalization and the technological revolution [6]. Situated within this context, this research adds to three main areas of contestation identified in the literature.

Inquiries into classroom discourse and classroom interaction are important areas to explore in higher education but appear to be limited in EMI research [7,8]. In EMI teaching, classroom interaction is acknowledged as “the centerpiece in the exposition of what it means to overcome the challenges of teaching academic content through an L2” [9]

(p. 227), as “the basic components of classroom practices” [10] (p. 20). In different subject contexts, carefully scaffolded interactive learning significantly influenced the students’ understanding of content in EMI [11,12]. The “ability to create an interactive environment” in an EMI class was considered to be the most important attribute of an academic teacher or lecturer, among many others [2] (p. 24). It can be argued that, with regard to EMI teaching in higher education in China, and anywhere else, providing meaningful classroom interactions for students is also one objective of EMI [8,13].

However, pedagogically, a dominant theme in much of the literature of EMI teaching is the identification of deficiencies such as the lack of interaction and engagement with students in HE classes [8,14,15]. There is limited research evidence determining the specifics of ‘why’ EMI pedagogy is not well-understood. Björkman [16] challenges many current studies as being uncritical and “more investigatory in general” rather than offering specific insight (p. 57). To further Björkman’s [16] argument, Han [17] critiques insufficient research reports on what actually happens during EMI classes, specifically through drawing on observational data from a researcher’s perspective. Building an evidence base of observed EMI practices including how the lecturers position themselves and their students, approach the teaching content, and how they interact and/or engage with their students has the potential to provide guidance for addressing pedagogical concerns in EMI. As some researchers are proposing that professional development (PD) focused on pedagogy will improve lecturers’ pedagogical repertoires and hence improve EMI teaching and learning [8,18], such evidence as described above could assist with a ‘needs-based’ design for individual cases of professional development.

In addition, a number of EMI studies [19–21] focus on ‘English’ and couch EMI as a monolingual education akin to teaching English as an additional language (EAL). Consequently, an English language deficiency for academic lecturers and/or students is a frequent theme in EMI research, when ‘perfect’ English is the requirement or aspiration in gauging the quality or success of EMI classes. This is another area of contestation for this research, which proposes that EMI is multilingual education, where the lecturer’s first language (L1) needs to be acknowledged and respected as making a valuable contribution in EMI classes [17]. This research has taken an innovative approach in investigating this issue by including EMI and CMI (Chinese as the Medium of Instruction) classes where the lecturers deliver subject content to two different cohorts of students. The CMI classes were taken as a reference point in order to investigate how classroom pedagogy was enacted in both EMI and CMI when a subject knowledge was delivered. The intention was to consider whether English as the MI, or the lecturers’ ideologies, contributed to their pedagogical approaches.

Methodologically, much EMI research [22–24] reported in the literature is based on data collected via surveys and interviews giving voice to participants’ opinions and beliefs. Whilst such lived experiences are valuable for understanding a context, a researcher’s substantiating evidence-based observation is not prioritized in practice [14]. The preponderance of EMI research data gathered from opinions and beliefs was scrutinized by researchers such as Macaro et al. [8], warning that the lack of available data on actual classroom discourse, to some extent, can be attributed to such methodologies. This research adopts methods that included observations of EMI practice from the researcher’s perspective and a stimulated recall interview with participants based on the filtering of issues elicited from the observational data. The aims of the research were to address the gaps in the current research in EMI pedagogies, issues and concerns when L1 and L2 are the instructional languages, and the limitations of participants’ opinionated research design in EMI studies.

2. Literature Review: The Status of EMI Pedagogy

The implementation of EMI teaching is acknowledged by scholars as pedagogically “more of a problem than most people dare to openly admit” [25] (p. 453). This is despite the fact that pedagogical strategies play a significant role in providing, or not providing,

opportunities for student engagement and interaction in tertiary-level EMI classes [26]. Research on EMI pedagogy has reported on the prevalence of a transmission-oriented approach, highlighting its counterpoint, an absence of interactive pedagogies [1,9]. A pedagogical shift towards actively engaging students in EMI classes arguably has the potential to ease students' learning difficulties [27]. However, it was noted that attempts to redesign pedagogy or EMI teaching reform presented EMI lecturers with the burden of an additional, unwelcome workload [28,29]. Such a pedagogical shift would need to be embraced by EMI lecturers themselves, whereas Coyle [30] (pp. 101–102) reported that few academic lecturers had considered, as pivotal, the idea of changing the "transmission-oriented approach" towards a more dynamic interactive one. Likewise, Dearden and Macaro [31] purport that an awareness, by EMI lecturers, of the need to reflect on their current EMI pedagogy is not a trend in recent research. With reference to the Chinese research context, some researchers argue that a transmission-oriented pedagogy reflects the 'typical' Chinese conception of teaching and learning [32]. This view is supported by other researchers [33] who identified that Asian students prefer the information-feeding learning style to the active participating learning often welcomed by students born in Anglo-phone countries.

2.1. Transmission-Oriented Pedagogy and Teachers' Language Proficiency

In lieu of the identification of the influencers on the choice of EMI lecturers' predominant transmission-oriented pedagogy, current filtering of the literature confidently indicates that the English language proficiency of EMI lecturers is a major factor [8,13,15,34,35]. For example, Dalton-Puffer et al. [36] reported that lecturers' English constrained flexibility and variability in implementing a discursive approach to EMI teaching, that is, teaching in a second language (L2). Research contending that EMI pedagogy is linked to the English language proficiency of the lecturers continued, to the extent that early approaches to EMI professional development (PD) were predominantly geared towards improving English proficiency. This approach to PD was critiqued in favor of looking beyond English and towards pedagogical guidance and change [37,38].

A line of investigation into the English language proficiency of EMI teachers and subsequent pedagogical choices has expanded from a singular focus on EMI to include both EMI and one's first language as mediums of instruction. An example is Yip et al.'s [15] Hong Kong-based research into EMI and CMI, which affirmed that the 'poor' English capabilities of staff precipitated their adoption of a transmission-oriented pedagogy. They reported that EMI teachers were predisposed towards adopting a more didactic approach, providing fewer interactive activities with scarce student engagement, whereas CMI students tended to be more active in asking or answering questions. Similarly, for pedagogical purposes, Sánchez-García [39] conducted research to explore the relationship between teacher questioning practices and pedagogical objectives in Spanish- and English-medium lectures. The analysis of 16 lectures delivered by two university teachers, both in Spanish and English, yielded results indicating that poorly articulated questions hinder meaningful interaction and prevent the teacher from accomplishing their pedagogical goals. Resonating with this research trajectory is the investigation reported in this paper, where the same lecturers' pedagogical features were observed in both their EMI and CMI classes.

Looking beyond a purely 'English deficiency' phenomenon to explain the predominance of transmission-oriented pedagogy in EMI are those studies that examined the pedagogy of EMI lecturers with excellent English proficiency. Zhao and Dixon's [13] research confirmed that lecturers with overseas qualifications and/or who were highly proficient during their EMI also faced challenges in EMI teaching due to the lack of clear pedagogical goals [13,40]. These findings parallel Hoare's [41] earlier research, which argued that teaching through EMI was not merely the translation of course materials or presenting and reading PowerPoint slides in English. However, the 'what' and 'how' of EMI pedagogy remained mute. It is this point that shepherded the intention of the research

reported in this paper, that is, to move beyond the ‘language deficiency’ conceptualization in favor of observing actual EMI and CMI pedagogical practices.

2.2. EMI Teaching and Learning: Focusing on the Learners’ Pedagogical Needs

Another facet of the pedagogical challenges of EMI relates to the experiences of students. Limited knowledge about learners/students can hinder the pedagogical development of EMI lecturers. Whilst some researchers have reported rational enthusiasm from students in EMI programs [4,31,42,43], it was also reported that in real-time teaching and learning, students’ attitudes are not as positive as anticipated. For example, in Bolton and Botha’s [35] study, students were disappointed with their EMI courses, espousing the reasons that teachers relied too heavily on PowerPoint slides and provided scant elaboration on the topic and key concepts. Similarly, Huang’s [44] study reported that the majority of students were dissatisfied with the EMI courses undertaken in a Taiwanese higher education context. Negative descriptors of EMI courses included non-interactive classes and irrelevant curriculum design, and a lack of resources (double resources) in the first language [8]. Earlier studies found that students self-identified with feelings of isolation and frustration at the lack of pedagogical support in learning [45,46]. These examples provide a snapshot indicating that students’ learning styles or needs are not being addressed when the EMI pedagogy is couched in a transmission-oriented approach. This facet of EMI pedagogical development is yet to be researched and reported on in the field.

2.3. EMI Pedagogy in China Higher Education: A Dearth of Empirical Studies on Classroom Interaction and Engagement

Very few empirical studies have been identified with reference to pedagogical issues in EMI teaching in China’s HE sector. Recent research posits that the majority of EMI research in mainland China relates to policy or relies on interview and survey data, signaling a dearth of classroom data for a contextualized analysis [47]. From the limited research undertaken, inquiries into classroom discourse in higher education appear to be outnumbered by those set in secondary contexts [48,49]. To further scrutinize the empirical research literature relating to interactions in university classrooms, only one study was located with this focus. It was published by Tan in 2007 and examined classroom questioning behavior and techniques by lecturers and the subsequent impact on student development.

In response to the scarcity of research foregrounding classroom discourse in HE EMI teaching, this research was designed to explore and examine the actual pedagogical features of bilingual academics teaching in a Chinese university’s EMI and CMI programs. This research aims to contribute to the development, understanding, and improvement, of EMI pedagogy in the China HE sector, with implications for EMI more generally.

3. Theoretical Framework: Dialogic Pedagogy

The theoretical framework underpinning this research is based on Freire’s [50] notion of dialogic pedagogy. It is described as an approach aimed at “engaging students in classroom dialogues permeated with equality, collectivity, reciprocity, and accountability” [51] (p. 187). It foregrounds the role of dialogue to further students’ thinking, learning, and problem-solving in a rigorous but respectful manner in the process of teaching and learning [52].

For Freire, the central tenet of dialogic pedagogy is reflection and action praxis. That is, human existence is not situated within a silent vacuum but rather transforms through dialogue that represents critical reflections on the world and verbalizes actions for improved transformation. Beyond “idle chatter” the ‘dialogue’ necessitates the transfer of knowledge and ideas equally between the participants. True dialogue does not result if one person “deposits” ideas, expecting others to “consume [s]” these [50] (p. 89). Through the reflection–action praxis, prevailing thoughts may be challenged, and the creation of new knowledge enhanced.

In constructing dialogic pedagogy “the absence of authoritarianism” [53] (p. 16) and promoting intellectual equality within the discourse is essential. This contrasts directly

with phrases developed over time that position students as ‘empty vessels’ needing to be filled and are ‘passive recipients of knowledge’. Educators of dialogic teaching hold that they will learn and know with their students through dialogue in and around the knowledge and/or the objective situation, perception of themselves and of the world [50]. In this regard, a teacher’s role transcends from ‘holding forth’ on their worldview and/or imposing this on students, to dialogue ensuring that the views of both teachers and students are embraced. Students’ perceptions of the world are manifested in their actions and reflect their real-world situations. An educator who is “not critically aware of this situation runs the risk either of ‘banking’ or of preaching in the desert” [50] (p. 96).

Dialogic pedagogy in classrooms requires mutual respect, care, and commitment between teacher/student and student/student in order to be successful. As Freire [50] (p. 90) suggests; “Dialogue, as the encounter of those addressed to the common task of learning and acting, is broken if the parties (or one of them) lack humility.” The role of the academic teacher/lecturer in establishing a harmonious teaching and learning environment is the focus. Establishing positive rapport with students and engaging them emotionally are the building blocks of dialogic pedagogy. For many lecturers in HE, this may require a relinquishing of power in classroom settings, from a position of ultimate authority and a distanced relationship with students to a more parallel relationship characterized by respect and encouragement. There is no place for students to feel intimidated, undervalued, and undeserving. In dialogic pedagogy, learners are encouraged to articulate ideas freely, without fear [54]. Freire [50] (p. 90) captures this sentiment by stating there is no “perfect sage” and no “utter ignoramus” in this world. Through dialogic pedagogy, teachers and students attempt to learn together and will “learn more than they know right now” [50] (p. 90).

Dialogic pedagogy represents collective, reciprocal, and cumulative action where teaching and learning “is not carried out by A for B or by A about B, but rather by A with B” [50] (p. 93). When A is the teacher/lecturer and B is the student cohort, the notion of learning together is substantiated further. To theoretically advance dialogic pedagogy, the balance of power between educator and learners is essential to how learning and knowledge acquisition is approached. According to Alexander [54], the pedagogical action should be a collective rather than an individual effort in learning; it should be the educator and the learners’ reciprocal learning course through intellectual idea sharing; it should be a cumulative knowledge co-constructing process through both the educator and learners’ critical enquiry.

Dialogic pedagogy reflects a view of education that asserts the necessity to co-create and re-create knowledge without the “domination of one person by another” [50] (p. 89). In addition, this construct of education has the potential for the “... liberation of humankind”, requiring “critical thinking” and at the same time, is “capable of generating critical thinking” [50] (p. 89). Accordingly, dialogue creates honest, logical, and accountable communication, and this communication leads to ‘true’ education [50]. Dialogic pedagogy, therefore, has the potential to produce citizens with skills beyond the accumulation of vocational subject knowledge. Whilst transmission-oriented pedagogy focuses on the lecturer’s set subject matter and most often a monologic delivery, dialogic pedagogy endeavors to include and engage students in class with a curriculum that is “[an] organized, systematized, and developed ‘re-presentation’ to individuals of the things about which they want to know more” [50] (p. 93). This is not to ignore issues of accountability in teaching and learning [55]. Specifically, they caution the need for accountability to students, ensuring that they listen and critically examine those contributions to accepted standards of scholarship in managing information via logical connections and rational conclusions, and that knowledge, in that discourse, is based on reliable, publicly available published facts and information [55] (p. 283).

To capture the pedagogical practice of an EMI lecturer, classroom interaction is the centerpiece. The principles of Freire’s dialogical pedagogy endow its capacity in the inquiry of classroom discourse and exploration of the actual pedagogical features of bilingual

academics in EMI and CMI programs. It is foreseeable that it can scrutinize the participants' pedagogical practices, specifically how the lecturers balance the relationship between themselves, their students, and the subject knowledge they are teaching, and how they act and interact with their students subsequently.

Recent studies exploring various applications of dialogic pedagogy are limited in number. Jones and Chen [56] focused on how dialogic teaching principles can enhance the teaching of grammar. Adie et al. [57] analyzed teacher and student interactions in feedback conversations, while Nelson [58] emphasized the utilization of educational technology (EdTech) to create a deeper and broader dialogic space, thereby supporting students' development of their dialogic skills. It can be concluded that research specifically addressing dialogic pedagogy in the education literature is relatively scarce [59], and even more so in the context of EMI settings.

4. Methodology

To investigate how the EMI lecturers 'dialogued', engaged, and/or interacted with students in their classroom teaching, this research is approached through a qualitative case study. Its intention is to explore, uncover and understand the discursive and interactive phenomena in the participant lecturers' classes. This research sought to understand the issues, concerns, and complex pedagogical phenomena in EMI and CMI classrooms from the participants' perspectives. It, therefore, enacted a single-site case study method to design the data collection and analysis approaches. A case study method enables the researcher to conduct "an in-depth analysis of an issue, within its context with a view to understand the issue from the perspective of participants" [60] (p. 12).

4.1. The Research Site and Participants

This research was undertaken in one university in a city in southern China, a university that is currently hosting over 4000 international students from south-east Asia and beyond. In this context, the university has been promoted to its EMI program across multiple disciplines. Four academic lecturers were recruited for this research from undergraduate programs across the disciplines of Tourism Management, Finance, Computer Science, and Mathematics. The participant lecturers had varying lengths of university teaching experience, ranging from 1.5 to 7 years (see Table 1). They were recruited as they were teaching the same subject in parallel, in both EMI and CMI classes, and volunteered to participate in the project.

Table 1. Research Participants.

Participant	Subject Specialty	Experience (Years)	Gender
Fiona	Finance	6	Female
Mandy	Tourism Management	7	Female
Cameron	Computer Science	3	Male
Matt	Mathematics	1.5	Male

Whilst comparing EMI and CMI is not the scope of this research, the intention was to investigate the language of instruction (English or Chinese) as an impact factor in their teaching, particularly in relation to their pedagogical practices.

4.2. The Data Collected

Data were collected through observations of the lecturers' teaching in both EMI and CMI and followed by a stimulated recall interview. The collection of data was conducted by the first author of the paper. Focused observation was considered and chosen as paramount in the data collection as it offered a firsthand account of the actual pedagogy implemented by the lecturers throughout both the EMI and CMI classes. With the lecturers' consent, a

100-min teaching in EMI and a 100-min teaching in CMI were observed, audio-recorded, and accompanied by the researcher's observation notes. The CMI data in this research act as a benchmark to tease out the contributing factors to their pedagogy when teaching in EMI. Based on these observations, some critical incidents that occurred during the lectures taken note of, and a stimulated recall interview was arranged for clarification. Stimulated recall is used primarily "in an attempt to explore learners' thought processes and strategies by asking learners to reflect on their thoughts after they have carried out a task" [61] (p. 14). In this research, the stimulated recall interviews were conducted to uncover the cognitive processes which were not evident through the observation sessions. Bloom's [62] study confirmed that if the recalls were prompted shortly after the event (generally within 48 h), the recall was 95 percent accurate. The stimulated recall interviews were organized immediately after the observations and were guided by the notes recorded by the researcher to provide more detail on the issues observed and the reasons behind particular practices.

5. Findings

The data revealed that in spite of their varied disciplines, the academic lecturers predominantly implemented monologic teaching in both EMI and CMI classes. This was reflected through the proportions of talking time by academic lecturers and students talking and the articulation counts made. Dialogic strategies and/or efforts were observed but in a moderate capacity.

5.1. Monologic vs. Dialogic Teaching

In each of the eight observed classes, the academic lecturers dominated the dialogue in the form of transmitting knowledge, and the students were given fewer opportunities to talk or actively contribute. Table 2 below outlines the observed amount of time in which the lecturers dominated the communication versus the students. Each class was 100 min in total. The observation data were categorized into: the amount of time dominated by the lecturer's talk; the amount of time students spoke; the time the lecturers waited for students' responses and/or silences; and the time spent on activities (informal group talk). All the participant lecturers spoke more often than students in class and their degree of dialogue control was similar in their EMI and CMI classes. Compared to Finance and Tourism Management, Computer Science and Mathematics classes were more lecturer-dominated.

Table 2. Lecturer and Student 'Talking Time' During Lectures.

	EMI (100 min)—Scores below in Minutes				CMI (100 min)—Scores below in Minutes			
	Lecturer	Student	Waiting/ Silence	Activities	Lecturer	Student	Waiting/ Silence	Activities
Finance	63	12	10	15	64	32	4	
Tourism Management	58	28	4	10	70	9	5	15
Computer Science	87	9	4		90	7	3	
Mathematics	96	2.5	1.5		98	1	1	

In the Finance CMI lecture, students were part of the dialogue for 20 min more than in the EMI class. However, the EMI class had 15 min of activity time and the talk was student-led. Overall, the amount of student talk was therefore similar in both EMI and CMI classes. In the Tourism Management EMI class, the lecturer spent the least amount of time talking and this time (58 min) included the lecturer checking the students' attendances. Including time on activities, this EMI class recorded 38 min of student dialogue—the greatest amount of time across all eight observed classes. Her CMI class was more in line with the majority of classes, where the lecturer's talk was recorded as occupying the most time.

Even though both Science subjects exhibited more transmission-oriented features in the EMI and CMI pedagogy, the Mathematics Lecturer occupied almost the entire 100 min in a monologue (EMI = 96 min and CMI = 98 min). Observation of the Mathematics classes revealed that the lecturer spoke whilst writing on the blackboard, in addition to facing the class at the lectern. Students in Computer Science were engaged in speaking slightly more often than in the Mathematics classes, yet both EMI and CMI classes were dominated by the lecturer's talk.

The data were recorded and measured based on the number of words (or characters) lecturers and students articulated in the class, along with the number of times verbal interactions took place between the lecturer and students. Whilst the time distribution may reflect whose speaking dominated in class (Table 2), it cannot provide a more detailed account of the discourse phenomena in these classes (Table 3). A general hypothesis might be that the amount of words spoken by the academic lecturers and students in class would correlate with the lecturer–student time distribution and contribution.

Table 3. Number of Articulated Words in EMI and CMI Class.

Classes Observed	EMI Monologue/Dialogue			CMI Monologue/Dialogue		
	Lecturer (Words)	Student (Words)	Lecturer and Student Dialogue (Times)	Lecturer (Characters)	Student (Characters)	Lecturer and Student Dialogue (Times)
Finance	7456	114	9	12,490	9965	7
Tourism Management	8810	6012	34	18,500	1684	16
Computer Science	11,005	470	23	13,324	374	27
Mathematics	10,466	167	29	11,598	96	27

One outlier was identified in the EMI Finance class where the students dominated the classroom talk for 12 min, with only 114 words spoken. This can be explained, in terms of the observed pedagogy, by noting that although the lecturer tried to engage students, there was little verbalization and output from them. Another example was in the Mathematics EMI and CMI classes. Whilst the number of words spoken by the students in class was low, the number of times lecturer/student interactive dialogue took place was high. This can be attributed to the types of questions being asked. It was observed that students' responses to questions or interactions were always quite short and often single words. Similarly, the Finance and Computer Science lecturers frequently questioned students with "Is it right?" or "Do you understand?" resulting in quick turn-around interactions with students' providing short answers such as "yes" and "hmm".

Another phenomenon noted was that students in the CMI Finance accounted for 32 min of class time and spoke 9965 characters, the largest amount of time and characters across all eight classes observed. However, verbal interactions between students and the lecturer only occurred seven times, the lowest amount among all the observed classes. The seven interactions were actually seven students presenting group assignments. Throughout the student presentations, there was some conversation between the lecturer and the students, but not in terms of meaningful back-and-forth communication. The frequency and type of interaction in class cannot explain the phenomenon fully. The researcher's observations provide the underlying explanations for these numerical data.

5.2. Questioning as a Technique to Create Dialogic Pedagogy

Across the four lecturers' EMI and CMI teaching practices, the main strategy for prompting dialogue or interaction with students was questioning. The following examples are from the recorded data:

Do you remember the income effect? [a few seconds of waiting] . . . Ok, let me explain . . . (translation from CMI class)

And what is meant by the price level? [a few seconds of waiting] . . . ok, the price level is when . . .

When we have a greater money supply in our economy, then the cost of financing will reduce. Does this make sense? [No student responds and the lecturer continues.]

When the economy expands, people will have more income and will have more wealth. Is that right? (Finance Lecturer)

We also talked about what an organizational culture is. Ok? Who can explain? [2 s of waiting time] . . . all right, it comes from employees having a successful experience within the organization and how they associate with this. Correct? [Students show agreement by nodding] (Tourism Management Lecturer)

Hey, Moxin! Can you please repeat the formula once more? (Moxin started to articulate . . .) (Computer Science Lecturer)

Earlier we learned about the reciprocal limit. What is meant by reciprocal limit? Who can explain? [No student responds and the lecturer continues.] Well, let me explain . . . (Translation from CMI class) (Mathematics Lecturer)

The questioning techniques implemented by these lecturers tended to be framed towards checking understanding through direct questions and closed questions requiring a yes or no or short answer. In such cases, it was observed that when the lecturers posed questions, they tended to answer the question themselves after a short waiting period. It is clear that the students mostly kept quiet and the issue of students being hesitant to engage in class was further addressed by the researcher with the lecturers in the Recall Interviews:

Researcher: As I observed that you talked through the whole lesson and there was little dialogue between you and students, have you thought about making a change or are you happy with this kind of teaching and learning mode?

Computer Science Lecturer: I think it is the student's learning habit. Most of the students are comfortable with sitting there and listening and this habit must be from their previous education. I don't see the point for change.

Researcher: I observed that you only asked students question a couple of times throughout your EMI and CMI classes. Can you explain why questioning is not a key strategy? Have you ever tried to encourage them to talk?

Mathematics lecturer: They were just very quiet. They don't like to answer questions. As you can see, they were the same in the CMI. They trained me to ask less questions (LoL). Normally if they concentrate in class, they will have no problem in understanding. Those who don't get it, are the ones who didn't listen carefully.

The data indicate these lecturers held the students responsible for a dialogic class. They attributed their lecturer-centered pedagogy to their quiet students as they argued that this created a comfortable atmosphere for the students. Thus, in their view, asking questions may not be a necessary useful technique in teaching. On the contrary, these lecturers, particularly the Mathematics Lecturer, believed that students concentrating on listening was a good way to learn. This indicates that transmission-oriented pedagogy is prevalent in these EMI and CMI classes under investigation.

5.3. Intellectual Equality

Dialogic pedagogy provides a rationale for educators to undertake and/or develop intellectual relations with their students. This could mean that students are then viewed as intellectually equal to the lecturers themselves; thus, teaching should be extended through

creating space for students to bring their prior knowledge to the new learning environment [63]. The data in this research found that lecturers dominated the classroom discourse in their classes. They positioned themselves as the experts of the subject knowledge. There were many times when the lecturers ‘showed off’ their intellectual power during the lectures. For example, the excerpt below from the Tourism Management Lecturer indicate indicated a strong sense of preaching or the ‘lecturer knows best’:

Ok, let’s go further onto living conditions. 22% of the world’s people can only use electricity resources intermittently and 13%, that is, 13 out of 100 people do not have access to clean water. Coupled with the severity of the epidemic, such living conditions may continue to decline. And finally, overall we have 48% of the world’s population that earn less than 2 dollars a day (English) . . . I want you to keep in mind that you need to see why these numbers are similar, and you need to understand what the other numbers mean. This report is very clear and eye-catching. Then, in the future, can you also produce such data for your customers? You can learn these strategies. (Tourism Management Lecturer)

It was suggested the lecturer could have provided the reading material and assigned the reading task for students to prepare before attending class, allowing spare time in class to be spent engaging in high-order thinking and discussion relating to the learning materials. However, what she did was talk through the material and outline facts and information. She then provided her comment (e.g., this report is very clear and eye-catching). The students were positioned as passive recipients of facts and information. The lecturer seemed uninterested in what the students could offer intellectually and did not give them an opportunity to extend their perspectives. Further, the lecturer’s language such as “I want you”, and “you need to” indicates her view of the students as intellectually inferior. It can be argued that moderate effort was found to achieve intellectual equality among all four lecturers.

5.4. Creating Harmonious Atmosphere

Dialogic pedagogy contains components of caring for students’ wellbeing and creating a harmonious classroom atmosphere [54]. During the observed EMI and CMI teaching sessions with each academic lecturer, it was found that the general atmosphere was tense and serious, and the lecturers mostly concentrated on content delivery. However, there were a few moments when the lecturers initiated dialogues and/or interactions addressing students’ emotional needs. For example, there was one such instance in Computer Science. It was observed that the lecturer directed his talk with the students towards life and it was noticed that he switched the instruction to Chinese language when he did so. In the stimulated recall, he explained:

You know Computer Science is a difficult subject and can be boring. I cannot entertain them too much, but if do have a bit extra time sometimes, I would try to relax them a little bit, and give them some distraction from the frustration and boring content (*Computer Science Lecturer*).

Similarly, in the Tourism Management class, it was noted that the academic lecturer was very tolerant and patient to those students speaking Chinese as a foreign language. One student did not speak Chinese well when answering the lecturer’s question and some students started to laugh at him. The lecturer immediately commented to ensure that this stopped. Further, the lecturer also reacted to the students’ silence in a creative and harmonious way:

Lecturer: Yes, they can ask older employees. Very good. Anything else?

[No response from the students.]

Lecturer: That’s all? Ok. How about you? (Pointing to one student)

[No response from the student.]

Lecturer: So you need time to think about it, right?

[The student nodded. The lecturer turned to another student.]

Student: Me too.

[Students and the lecturer laughed.]

Lecturer: Me Too, eh! It is also a website or social media culture. Is that right?

The lecturer was calm and considerate as she provided an opt-out for the students, which provoked humor. She then included herself in the statement for needing more time, providing a more equal distribution of power. It was observed that the class atmosphere was relaxed after this conversation. Such data were limited but demonstrated some characteristics of dialogic pedagogy in some of these lecturers' EMI and CMI classes.

5.5. Linguistic Democracy

Aligned with intellectual equality are attempts by the lecturers to champion trans-languaging in EMI and CMI classes. This seemed to be the most common feature across all the lecturers' teaching practices. For the Computer Science and Mathematics classes, trans-languaging largely appeared in the lecturers' talk as their classes involved moderate articulations from the students. For the Finance and Tourism Management classes, the lecturers were found to have encouraged their students to take challenges using their second language but also gave the students the opportunity to choose the language with which they were more fluent. The following excerpt from the Tourism Management class shows how English or Chinese, or a combination of both, were used:

Lecturer: I want you to contribute your ideas and challenge the ideas of the opposite team. My requirement, my basic requirement is you try to use English as much as possible.

Student 1: In English?

Lecturer: Correct! Are you nervous when using English?

Student 1: Yeah!

Lecturer: Give it a try.

Student: Ok. I will mix them (Chinese). To be honest, China is good at making cheap stuff. Like in America, this table may cost at least one hundred RMB to get it done, but in China they get it done with fifty RMB. But the fact is Americans are designing the table, but China makes it (Student switched to English)

The lecturer was also observed to teach in English as a mainstay but repeated significant points in L1 (Chinese) and/or provided explanations or examples by switching to Chinese:

To gain a deeper understanding of your organizational culture you need to live in it and be part of the way your organization operates (English). For example, to understand the culture of this university, you need to live in the culture or the environment for a long time. It is how employees learn it. Actually, the reverse question is: How can managers create a well-accepted organizational culture (Chinese)? (Tourism Management Lecturer)

If you want to do global business with a foreigner, you need to respect their religious beliefs, ok? (English). . . . One outcome of this is that I often receive emails from those people asking when our summit will be held again (Chinese). (Tourism Management Lecturer)

Please find your group partners now. Quickly confirm one of your views of globalization (English). Discuss whether you support or oppose this chosen view and then provide your reasons (Chinese). (Tourism Management Lecturer)

The lecturer employed a trans-linguaging strategy in her EMI class and also gave students the liberty to bring their bilingual capability into learning. This seemingly demonstrates her intention to engage and/or scaffold students' learning. On a deeper level, it shows her pedagogical inclusiveness and commitment to linguistic democracy. This distinguished her from the other three lecturers in educational ideology and practice.

5.6. Liberation and Critical Thinking

Dialogic pedagogy through liberating and encouraging students' critical thinking was only found in the Tourism Management classes but not in other academic lecturers' classes. This was reflected in this lecturer's design of a group task for students to debate:

Ok, now I have listed the statistics, numbers and percentages as you can see on the PPT, and I have provided the key terms here about globalization: international, trade, employment, global, plants, etc. So now I am going to divide you into two groups for a debate task. I would like each group to take either pro- or anti-globalization and use the information I listed here. Please refer to the data and use them to support your argument or view of globalization during the debate. (Tourism Management Lecturer)

However, in terms of developing students' critical thinking, the Mathematics Lecturer seemed to believe that he addressed critical thinking more in his EMI than in his CMI class. In the Recall Interview, he reflected on the impact of textbooks in EMI and CMI on his teaching:

The original English textbook is quite detailed but the assignments challenge the students' critical thinking. These are very different from those designed exercises in Chinese textbooks. In the Chinese textbook, I used for CMI students, the exercises are straightforward and technical, and the students have no problem at all, but those assignments in the EMI textbook are more complicated and often test students' analytical skills. I would have to always explain the steps and guide them (Mathematics Lecturer).

The Mathematics Lecturer indicated that his pedagogical adjustment in his EMI and CMI classes was due to the differences between the prescribed CMI and EMI textbooks. It seems that the EMI textbook was designed with more emphasis on critical thinking and analytical competence whereas the CMI textbook focused on training students' skills and techniques. This excerpt revealed that different teaching materials or textbook selections in CMI and EMI teaching may contribute to lecturers' pedagogical modifications.

6. Discussion

In terms of the instruction language, or whether EMI or CMI was applied, a minor pedagogical difference was found. This is contrary to previous research findings that lecturers are more didactic when teaching in L2. In Yip et al.'s [15] study of EMI and CMI teaching in high schools, they found that teachers adopted a more didactic approach with fewer interactive activities and scarce student engagement, whereas in CMI, students tended to be more active by asking or answering questions. These researchers, therefore, argued that 'language deficiency' triggered teachers' adoption of a transmission-oriented pedagogy. Dalton-Puffer et al. [36], through their research, also argued that academic lecturers' English constrained their discursive approach to EMI teaching. However, in this research, it was found all the lecturers, when using CMI, tended to be more monologic. This indicates that when language is not a barrier, the lecturers tend to dominate the classroom discourse more. This finding challenged work by Pun and Macaro [11], which suggested that teachers in EMI schools with a higher frequency of L1 usage tended to adopt more interactive teaching approaches. In EMI, the lecturers taught similar content as that taught in CMI but with fewer illustrations and/or fewer examples. This may imply, on the one hand, that English constrained their expression, or, on the other hand, that lecturers covered

less information in EMI class than they did in CMI. This suggests that EMI does not make the lecturers more expository when compared with their approaches to CMI.

Engaging students is a central tenet of dialogic pedagogy. In this research, the academic lecturers made little effort to engage students in both EMI and CMI classes. Three strategies were found in one or another individual lecturer's teaching approach. A typical one was using questioning as a technique to engage students, and this strategy was not successfully employed in either the EMI or CMI classes. This finding contradicted research conducted by Lo and Macaro [12], who claimed a notable reduction in the frequency of questioning when the language of instruction switched from Chinese to English. According to dialogic pedagogy, questioning is significant in a road map towards "alternative discourse strategies" in teaching and learning [64] (p. 64), and knowledge is negotiated and constructed through advocating for meaningful, evocative, and scaffolded questioning [65]. This research, however, found that most of the lecturers' questions were related to classroom management and/or fact-checking instead of being used to stimulate high-order thinking. The finding supported research conducted by Sánchez-García [39], which suggested that there was a significantly higher number of questions related to classroom management and organization in the EMI class compared to the L1 (Spanish) class. The lecturers were also observed to often show insufficient patience or waiting time for students to respond. Their pedagogical effort did not achieve the purpose of collective, reciprocal, and cumulative knowledge co-construction and intellectual idea sharing as scholars of dialogic teaching promoted [54].

Further, the academic lecturers occasionally tried to implement classroom management by using humor. They also used and allowed the use of a trans-languaging strategy with the intention of engaging students, and/or reducing the barrier to learning that English instruction may cause. They demonstrated their care for individuals and particularly linguistically disadvantaged students. This created a harmonious connection with the students and a positive learning environment. These echo some features of dialogic teaching as Freire [50] (p. 90) signals. That is, to build dialogic pedagogy, teachers need to abandon their power in the classroom, moving towards matching the students emotionally, demonstrating respect and encouragement, and even "liberating and generating space for "critical thinking" [50] (p. 89). Nevertheless, it was observed that in these lecturers' belief systems, they were the experts in subject knowledge, and they believed they knew what to teach and what students should learn. From the perspective of intellectual equality, none of these lecturers acknowledged and/or positioned students as having the knowledge to contribute to their own learning. Rather, the students were viewed as 'passive recipients of knowledge' [50] and empty vessels to dump knowledge in. The lecturers are therefore the knowledge-holders depositing their ideas for students to "consume" [50](p. 88). This research indicates that engaging students intellectually [63] and promoting intellectual equality within the classroom discourse is at the early stage of consideration in these lecturers' EMI and CMI teaching practices. This may need to be addressed in future professional development for bilingual academics.

7. Conclusions

This study employed dialogic pedagogy to examine the moments when four academic lecturers engaged and interacted with students throughout their EMI and CMI classes. Individual lecturers' efforts regarding intellectual equality, students' wellbeing, and the encouragement of critical thinking through dialogue and interaction were identified. However, due to the lecturers' positioning themselves as experts in subject knowledge, the tendency of their teaching was characterized as monologic rather than dialogic. This research also found that dialogic teaching was to some degree influenced by the nature of the subject taught by the lecturers. In terms of disciplinary factors, the lecturers in Computer Science and Mathematics were observed to dominate the classroom talk for relatively longer amounts of time than the lecturers in Finance and Tourism Management. The lecturers in

disciplines closer to social sciences were more likely to create activities to develop students' critical thinking than their colleagues in the field of, or close to, natural science.

8. Limitations

A key limitation of this research is that students' learning styles or needs were not addressed when the EMI pedagogy was couched in a transmission-oriented approach. This facet of EMI pedagogical development is yet to be researched and reported in the field. The other limitation is that only a small number of lecturers participated in this research due to the screening process. Future researchers may consider including data through focus group discussions with EMI students and expand such research to cases from multiple universities.

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