

## The Impact of English as a Medium Instruction (EMI) on English Language Skills Development in Business Administration Students

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### ABSTRACT

*The objectives of this study were to find out whether the use of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) was effective in improving the English Language of Students majoring in Business Administration and to analyse the factors that influence the effectiveness of English as a medium Instruction (EMI) in improving the English Language Skills of Students majoring in Business Administration. This study employed qualitative research which the data was collected using observation and interviews. The collected data was interpreted qualitatively. This study employs purposive sampling. Class II MB 6 and IV MB 6 were the population and IV MB 6 was the sample with 30 students. The finding showed that implementing EMI can improve some aspects of English language skills, namely speaking and listening. On the other hand, some difficulties in understanding the topic delivered occurred. The factors that influence the effectiveness of English as a medium of Instruction (EMI) in improving English Language Skills are the Frequency of using English, the Frequency of listening to English speakers, and the interaction of the students with their classmates where they need to speak English during the classroom activity.*

### ARTICLE HISTORY

Published June 11<sup>th</sup> 2024



### KEYWORDS

English as a Medium Instruction (EMI); Improvement; Language skills.

### ARTICLE LICENCE

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### 1. Introduction

English is the main language in international business communication. So English language skills should be improved since college. Many resources, journals, and information in the field of Business Administration are available in English. So students who can read, understand, and analyze material in English will have wider access to the latest knowledge and research in their field. Mastery of English is also an embodiment of the vision of the Business Administration department, namely creating internationally competitive human resources in the managerial field, so it is considered important to learn and use English in the teaching and learning process to realize what is in the vision of the Department of Business Administration. In line with this, the Business Administration department has formed two classes that use English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI).

The language of instruction in the classroom learning process is very important (Martin, 2003; Saeed & Jarwar, 2012; Rahman, 2018; Youngsun et al., 2024). The use of the language of instruction is directly related to the learning process and outcomes because lecturers/teachers as learning facilitators have the responsibility to lead students to achieve competency through spoken and written language used when explaining, giving instructions and feedback, managing the class, and evaluating learning outcomes (Aswad et al., 2019; Rahman & Weda, 2018; Prihandoko et al., 2019). In line with the study, Dearden (2014) has conducted research under the title English as a Medium of Instruction—a growing global phenomenon that discusses the application of EMI on an international scale that includes countries that do not speak English. In his research, he said that EMI tends to be applied to private schools rather than education. Paris et al., (2022) in his research entitled The Use of English Medium Instruction on EFL Students at Tertiary Education level concluded that students' English language skills increased significantly in terms of using English as a teaching medium/EMI. It also goes to the explanation that EMI has become a prevalent approach to teaching content courses at the higher education level in non-English speaking countries (Byun et al., 2011; Huang, 2013; Dearden, 2015; Fenton-Smith, Humphries & Walkinshaw, 2017; Sosrohadi & Nur, 2020; Junaid et al., 2024).

Another thing that we need to know is that EMI does not guarantee an increase in English language skills from all aspects, as stated by Ibrahim (2001) in his research entitled The Implementation of EMI (English Medium Instruction) in Indonesian Universities: Its Opportunities, its Threats, its Problems, and its Possible Solutions, the implementation of

EMI in universities in Indonesia will improve the general ability of students and lecturers in English is not entirely wrong because using English as a medium for teaching non-English subjects gives students and lecturers more opportunities to use English and the change to use it (understandable output) rather than teaching English as a subject. However, due to its classroom-based nature, there is a big possibility that EMI will not improve the four language skills (Listening, speaking, writing, and reading) equally for both students and lecturers.

In connection with the urgency of English in the world of communication, currently, the Manado State Polytechnic Business Administration Department has formed two classes that use English as the language of instruction in lectures, these two classes are in semesters II and IV of the D4 Business Management study programs. The two classes formed based on students' pre-test results before taking part in the teaching and learning process, namely the TOEFL prediction test. The classes were also taught by lecturers who have good English skills, and some of them were overseas alumnae thus the interaction between students and lecturers in the class in learning activities uses English.

Based on the above explanation, the researcher analyze the application of English as a Medium Instruction (EMI) to improve the English language skills of students majoring in business administration.

The purpose of this research is to find out whether the use of English as a Medium Instruction (EMI) is effective in improving the English Language of Students majoring in Business Administration and to analyze the factors that influence the effectiveness of English as a medium Instruction (EMI) in improving the English Language Skills of Students majoring in Business Administration.

## **2. Methodology**

The researcher conducted qualitative research. This research was carried out in the Business Administration department, D-IV Business Management study program academic year 2023/2024. The population of this research is the D-IV Business Management Study Program, they are class II MB6 and IV MB6 which was a class of EMI users. The sample was selected purposively according to research needs, namely class IV MB 6 with 30 students.

The instruments used were interviews and direct observation in Accounting Courses 2, Marketing Management, Personal Development, and English Practice, all courses where the lecturers use English. In the observation section, the researcher joined the class while noting some primary elements related to the student's competence in English.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

There are two EMI participants that was observed: students and teachers. Since effective teaching and learning processes depend on them. Answering the first aim of this study, to find out whether the use of English as a Medium Instruction (EMI) is effective in improving the English Language of Students majoring in Business Administration. The observation results show an increase since the implementation of EMI in these classes, because this semester is the first year of implementing EMI in the two selected classes. EMI can provide students with an immersive environment where they are continuously exposed to the English language, thereby improving their English language skills. In this regard, Business Administration students need strong communication skills to succeed in their future careers. EMI can help them develop these skills by encouraging them to communicate effectively in English both orally and in writing. Based on the results of interviews with several students who entering the EMI class:

“Having the EMI class helps me in applying my English skills because in previous classes I only used English in English courses so my English skills were not honed. With the EMI class, it really helped me in improving my listening and speaking which was supported by lecturers who taught certain subjects.”

(Interview with Kevin, 2024)

Other students also said that:

“My opinion about EMI is of course very good because we can improve the English language skills of every student in that class. In my opinion, small things that are done or said in English are the first step in getting used to being fluent in English, especially hmm... in terms of speaking, which of course we get used to practicing in everyday life. Likewise with Listening, where every day we listen to lecturers explain using English, and several of our lecturers are overseas alumni.”

(Interview with Feuberi, 2024)

During the interview session, students explained that they experienced an improvement in speaking because the discussion, presentation, and question-and-answer process took place using English. And it makes the frequency of listening to English increasing so, they think that their listening skills have also improved. On the other hand, students experienced several difficulties in understanding certain material as stated by one of the respondents:

“Yes, there were terms such as counting terms or formulas that can make a little confused when using English. And there was also material that should involve a lot of discussion, but because it uses English, many friends don't discuss or express opinions much because they have difficulty speaking English, so the discussion doesn't go very smoothly.”

(Interview with Feuberi, 2024)

As in EMI classes, the material is delivered in English so that some students have difficulty understanding the new material they receive, or the terms or formulas presented by the lecturer. It goes with Wilang and Nupong (2022), Previous studies have shown that EFL students in EMI classrooms encounter many linguistic challenges such as difficulty in comprehending lectures, difficulty understanding textbooks and course materials, difficulty in taking part in classroom discussions, and requiring more time to complete a course. These challenges may have a negative impact on students' success in their learning.

Based on the observation that was conducted by the researcher the implementation of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) has significantly enhanced students' speaking and listening skills. By using English as the language of instruction, students are consistently exposed to the language in both academic and everyday contexts. This exposure helps them become accustomed to hearing and understanding conversations in English, thereby expanding their vocabulary. Additionally, actively participating in class discussions and presentations improves their speaking skills, as they are encouraged to express their ideas and opinions in English. This routine practice strengthens their oral communication abilities and boosts their confidence in using English more naturally and effectively. Consequently, the adoption of EMI not only enhances students' linguistic competence but also prepares them to compete in a global environment where English proficiency is increasingly prioritized.

EMI creates an immersive environment where students are required to communicate exclusively in English. This constant use of the language in classroom settings helps students develop fluency and accuracy. They engage in various interactive activities such as group discussions, debates, and presentations. These activities encourage students to articulate their thoughts clearly and coherently, fostering a more confident use of English. Regular practice in expressing ideas, asking questions, and providing explanations helps students overcome common barriers such as hesitation and anxiety, leading to more effective oral communication.

Listening skills are equally enhanced through EMI as students are exposed to English in a wide range of contexts. Lectures, multimedia resources, peer interactions, and teacher instructions are all delivered in English, providing students with diverse listening experiences. This continuous exposure helps students improve their ability to comprehend different accents, speech rates, and terminologies.

The second purpose of this study aimed to analyze the factors that influence the effectiveness of English as a medium Instruction (EMI) in improving English Language Skills.

### **3.1. Frequency of using English**

Overall, the frequent use of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) offers numerous benefits for students. It not only enhances their language skills but also develops important cognitive and social skills.

One of the primary advantages of EMI is that it encourages students to communicate more actively in English. In everyday classroom situations, such as discussions, asking questions, or presenting projects, students are required to use English. This regular use of the language in real-life contexts helps students to become more fluent and confident in their speaking abilities. They learn to articulate their thoughts clearly, respond to their peers, and engage in meaningful conversations. This active use of English in various academic scenarios fosters a more immersive and practical language learning experience, significantly improving their oral communication skills.

Moreover, frequent use of English in EMI requires students to think and process information in a second language. This constant engagement with English stimulates their cognitive skills, such as problem-solving, critical analysis, and decision-making. For instance, when students are given a complex problem to solve or a case study to analyze, they must navigate through the information in English, which often involves translating and comprehending

advanced concepts. This mental exercise enhances their cognitive flexibility, enabling them to switch between languages and thought processes more efficiently.

Additionally, EMI helps in reinforcing students' understanding of the subject matter. When students are exposed to academic content in English, they have to comprehend and internalize complex ideas and terminologies in the language. This dual-layered learning process—grasping the subject matter while simultaneously improving language proficiency—ensures a deeper and more robust understanding of both the content and the language. For example, understanding a concept in business administration or engineering in English requires students to become familiar with specific jargon and technical vocabulary, thus expanding their academic lexicon.

Furthermore, the use of English as a Medium of Instruction also has significant social benefits. It promotes a multicultural learning environment where students from diverse linguistic backgrounds can interact and collaborate. This exposure to different perspectives and ways of thinking broadens their worldview and enhances their social skills. They learn to appreciate cultural diversity and develop empathy and tolerance towards their peers. Such a multicultural setting prepares students for the globalized world, where they are likely to work and interact with individuals from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

In addition, the frequent use of English in EMI settings encourages collaborative learning. Group projects and teamwork activities conducted in English require students to communicate effectively with their classmates. This collaboration helps them to develop essential interpersonal skills such as teamwork, leadership, and negotiation. Working together to achieve common goals fosters a sense of community and shared responsibility among students, which is crucial for their personal and professional growth.

Moreover, EMI also contributes to the development of students' listening skills. Constantly listening to lectures, discussions, and multimedia content in English helps them to attune their ears to the language. They become more adept at understanding different accents, intonations, and speech patterns, which is crucial for effective communication. This auditory exposure not only improves their listening comprehension but also enhances their ability to engage in active listening, a skill that is vital in both academic and professional settings.

Additionally, the frequent use of English in academic settings prepares students for future career opportunities. Proficiency in English is often a prerequisite for many professional roles, especially in multinational companies and organizations that operate on a global scale. By using English as a Medium of Instruction, students are better equipped with the language skills needed to excel in the global job market. They gain the confidence to participate in international conferences, write professional reports, and communicate effectively with colleagues and clients from around the world.

In conclusion, the frequent use of English as a Medium of Instruction offers a multitude of benefits that extend beyond mere language acquisition. It enhances students' communication skills, stimulates cognitive development, reinforces their understanding of academic content, and promotes social and cultural awareness. EMI fosters an environment where students can thrive academically and socially, preparing them for successful careers in a globalized world. The integration of EMI into educational systems is, therefore, a valuable strategy for developing well-rounded, competent, and globally-minded individuals.

### **3.2. Frequency of listening to English speakers**

Frequent exposure to listening to a second language (L2), such as English, significantly benefits students' mastery of that language. This consistent auditory engagement is crucial for several reasons.

Firstly, frequent listening to L2 helps students become familiar with various accents, intonations, and speaking speeds. English, in particular, is spoken with a multitude of accents around the world, from American and British to Australian and Indian. Exposure to these different accents through listening exercises enables students to understand and adapt to the diverse ways in which English is spoken. This adaptability is essential for effective communication in global contexts, where speakers from different regions may interact. Additionally, the intonation patterns in English, which can significantly alter the meaning of sentences, become more recognizable with regular listening. Students learn to distinguish between different intonation patterns, such as the rising intonation in questions and the falling intonation in statements, which aids in both comprehension and speech production.

Secondly, regular listening to L2 allows students to continuously encounter new words and phrases. Unlike reading, where vocabulary acquisition might be more deliberate and time-consuming, listening exposes students to vocabulary in a natural and context-rich manner. This contextual learning helps in better retention and understanding of

new terms. When students hear words and phrases used in various contexts, they can infer meanings and usages more intuitively. For instance, hearing the word "bargain" in a conversation about shopping gives a clearer and more practical understanding than merely reading its definition.

Moreover, frequent listening activities contribute to vocabulary expansion by exposing students to idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms that are often used in everyday speech but might not be prominently featured in textbooks. These expressions, such as "break the ice" or "hit the nail on the head," add richness to students' language use and enable them to communicate more naturally and effectively.

Thirdly, regularly listening to L2 helps students improve their pronunciation and intonation. Pronunciation involves more than just producing individual sounds correctly; it includes mastering the rhythm, stress patterns, and intonation of the language. Through listening, students can mimic native speakers, picking up on subtle nuances that are difficult to learn through reading alone. For example, understanding the stress pattern in compound words (e.g., "record player" vs. "to record") or in sentences (e.g., "I didn't say he stole the money") comes from hearing them spoken correctly.

Listening also aids in improving fluency. As students hear native speakers converse at natural speeds, they learn to process language more quickly and respond more promptly. This exposure helps in developing the ability to think in the language, reducing the time needed to translate thoughts from their native language to English. Consequently, their spoken responses become more fluid and spontaneous.

Furthermore, auditory exposure helps in internalizing correct intonation patterns, which are essential for conveying emotions and intentions. For instance, the difference in intonation between a statement of fact ("You're going.") and a question ("You're going?") can be subtle but carries significant meaning. By frequently listening to native speakers, students become adept at using these intonation patterns appropriately, enhancing their ability to express themselves clearly and effectively.

In conclusion, the benefits of frequent exposure to listening to a second language are manifold. It aids in familiarizing students with various accents and speaking speeds, enriches their vocabulary through contextual learning, and improves their pronunciation and intonation. These elements collectively contribute to a more comprehensive and practical mastery of the language, equipping students with the skills necessary for effective communication in diverse settings. Regular listening practice should, therefore, be an integral part of any language learning curriculum, fostering a deeper and more intuitive understanding of the language.

### **3.3. Interaction with classmates**

Interacting with practice partners allows students to listen to different speaking styles and accents. Practicing with classmates enables students to use English in more realistic and relevant contexts. They can role-play, simulate real-life situations, or collaborate on group projects. These experiences help students apply vocabulary and sentence structures learned in class to practical situations. Practicing English with classmates also helps develop social skills. Students learn how to start and maintain conversations, listen empathetically, and express their opinions politely. These skills are crucial not only for language proficiency but also for everyday social interactions.

The three points above are the most dominant factors that occur in the classroom that support the effectiveness of EMI. On the other hand, small things can also influence, for example, the frequency of their learning at home or in the community, the learning material support they have, and other factors that may occur.

## **4. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the implementation of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) for Business Administration students at Manado State Polytechnic has been shown to significantly enhance certain aspects of English language proficiency, particularly in speaking and listening skills. This improvement is attributable to several key factors that influence the effectiveness of EMI in this context.

Foremost among these factors is the frequency with which English is used during classroom activities. Regular use of English in discussions, presentations, and group work provides students with continuous exposure and practice, which are critical for language acquisition. Additionally, the frequency of listening to English speakers, whether through lectures delivered in English or through multimedia resources, plays a substantial role. This consistent auditory exposure helps students attune their ears to the nuances of the language, thereby improving their listening comprehension and ability to follow complex discussions.

Another crucial factor is the interaction among students during classroom activities. When students are required to communicate with their peers in English, they not only practice their speaking skills but also develop greater confidence and fluency. This peer interaction fosters a supportive learning environment where students can experiment with the language and learn from each other's mistakes.

Moreover, several auxiliary factors also contribute to the efficacy of EMI. The frequency with which students engage in independent learning activities, both at home and in their community, can have a significant impact. For instance, students who regularly practice English through reading, watching English-language media, or engaging in conversations outside the classroom tend to show greater improvement. The availability and quality of learning materials also play a critical role; having access to comprehensive and engaging English-language resources can enhance students' motivation and ability to learn effectively.

Additionally, the support system available to students, including tutoring services, language labs, and extracurricular activities, can further bolster their language skills. The overall academic environment, including the encouragement and support from faculty members, also contributes to the success of EMI programs.

In summary, while the use of English as a Medium of Instruction in Business Administration programs at Manado State Polytechnic has demonstrably positive effects on students' speaking and listening skills, its success depends on a constellation of factors. These include the frequency and quality of English usage in classroom activities, the extent of auditory exposure to the language, peer interactions, and the broader learning environment. By addressing these factors, educational institutions can maximize the benefits of EMI and support their students in achieving higher levels of English proficiency.

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