

Bridging the Gap between English Medium Instruction (EMI) and EMI- specific Language needs in Higher Education: A Study on EMI Lecturer Perceptions, EMI Student Needs, and EMI Pedagogy in a University Setting

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Learning core subjects in compulsory English Medium Instruction (EMI) is challenging for a majority of university students in Sri Lanka since their primary and secondary education is largely conducted in Sinhala or Tamil. Although English is taught as a Second Language (ESL) or an Academic Language (EAP) by designated language teaching units at universities, students' EMI language needs are understudied. Hence, the current study aims at finding the EMI-specific language needs of the first-year undergraduates of the SLTC Research University. Therefore, first-year undergraduates were subjected to a survey. The researchers conducted semi-structured interviews of the EMI lectures followed by classroom observations. The results indicated that the EMI lecturers and the undergraduates perceived that English language knowledge affected the learning of the core subjects. Both parties had high expectations from each other when it came to the conduct of English language, language knowledge, skills and proficiency in the EMI classroom learning/teaching, although a majority of undergraduates were inexperienced and not exposed to EMI learning. Code-switching and native language-based instruction, and native-language-based communication were commonly practiced in EMI classrooms.

Keywords: EMI, EMI- Student Needs, EMI-lecture perceptions.