

Resolving the challenges of teaching

at tertiary level through English

IATEFL 2019, Liverpool  
Rachel Appleby

**EMI [English as a Medium of Instruction]**:



“The use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions in which the majority of the population’s first language is not English”. (Dearden, 2015)

**Why EMI is different** - possible unknowns:

* *students’ … level of English, subject knowledge & background cultural*

**Task 1 Teaching in an EMI context**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | True | False | Depends |
| **1** | Seminars / Lectures in which students are actively engaged provide a better learning experience. |  |  |  |
| **2** | The better the spoken English of the lecturer, the better the learning. |  |  |  |
| **3** | Questions such as “Do you understand?” are an effective means of checking if students are on task. |  |  |  |
| **4** | A dictionary definition is generally one of the most effective ways to explain a new term or concept. |  |  |  |

**Task 2 Clarifying new terms / concepts**

*Put the following in an appropriate order for conveying the meaning of a new concept / term.* \_\_, \_\_, \_\_, \_\_

1. Give an explanation or paraphrase
2. Give an example
3. Check understanding (ask for another example; give a mini-task, etc.)
4. Give a dictionary-type definition
5. [*other*] …

**Task 3 Clarifying meaning** (an example). **Leo Selivan** (Brighton, IATEFL 2018) [10:25-11:16]

*Listen to Leo conveying meaning. He’s talking about ‘polysemy’. Which of the above, a) – d) does he do?*

**Task 4 Effective Delivery: stressing key words & pausing**

*How easy is it to understand Leo? Underline* ***key*** *words; add pauses* ***/*** *between phrases (i.e. ‘script’ the text)*

|  |
| --- |
| Well *polysemy* is the fact of having a number of meanings *semy* in other words semantic meanings and *poly* from Greek meaning ‘many’ so *polysemy* is the fact that many English words are polysemous some are close some are distant |

*(NB: punctuation removed)*

**Task 5 Approaching new concepts** (an example). **Tatiana Golechkova** (Brighton, IATEFL 2018) [01:13 – 01:42] *What do you know about ‘student-generated activities’? What do you want to know?*

*Watch Tatiana talk about these.*

A ‘KWL’ chart

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Topic:** | ‘student-generated activities’ |
| K: What do you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ already about this? |  |
| W: What do you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to find out? |  |
| L: (After listening) What have you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_? |  |

**Task 6 Effective Delivery: using discourse markers / ‘signposting’** [01:42-02:52]

*Underline the ‘signposts’ – the words / phrases which help the speaker orientate the audience.*

|  |
| --- |
| Right, today I would like to speak a little bit more about the activities themselves, their benefits for learners, and for the teacher. I would like to speak about the problems that I encountered in my practice, suggest some solutions, and finally again if we have time I will share some feedback provided by my students. Once again, these are the exercises that students create for one another. These could be exercises based on and focused on either the skills or systems. To illustrate more clearly what I mean by that, let me show you what the students were asked to do. |

**Task 7 Interactivity**

*Below are ways of making classes interactive. Tick* ✓ *the ones you’ve used / experienced in this session.*

*Compare your ideas with a partner. Which ideas could you use in lectures?*

*Why is interactivity important in an EMI context?*

* Discuss (with a partner)
* Group-work
* Form-filling
* Guessing
* Hands-up ‘questions’
* Interactive handout (with missing info)
* Online quiz
* Ordering stages
* Using questions\*
* “Think about …” (individually)
* True / False statements
* Voting
* Yes/No Qs

**Task 8 Teacher confidence / Effective learning**

*Below are some of the ideas we’ve focused on in this session. Decide which mostly promote* ***teacher confidence*** *(TC), and which promote* ***effective learning*** *(EL), or which* ***do******both****! Circle your choice.*

1. “Scripting” a text (adding in pauses / ; underlining important words) *TC / EL*
2. Using ‘signposts’ / discourse markers *TC / EL*
3. Using online interactive tools (quizzes, voting etc.) *TC / EL*
4. Getting students to discuss something / work in pairs / groups *TC / EL*
5. Using a 4-step approach to clarifying meaning *TC / EL*
6. Using specific tasks and/or giving/getting examples to check meaning *TC / EL*

**REFERENCES**Dearden, J. (2015). ‘English as a medium of instruction – a growing global phenomenon’. [www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/e484\_emi\_-\_cover\_option\_3\_final\_web.pdf](http://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/e484_emi_-_cover_option_3_final_web.pdf) (retrieved 29 March 2019)

Golechkova, T. (2018, April). *Using student generated activities in class: problems and solutions*. Paper presented at the 52nd IATEFL conference, Brighton. [www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/using-student-generated-activities-class-problems-solutions](https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/using-student-generated-activities-class-problems-solutions)

Huang, Li-Shih, ‘8 easy techniques to help learners practice clarifying their explanations’. [https://oupeltglobalblog.com/2011/10/18/8-easy-techniques-to-help-learners-practice-clarifying-their-explanations](https://oupeltglobalblog.com/2011/10/18/8-easy-techniques-to-help-learners-practice-clarifying-their-explanations/) (retrieved 28 March 2019)

Selivan, L. (2018, April). *Do some words matter more or the frequency fallacy*. Paper presented at the 52nd IATEFL conference, Brighton. [www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/do-some-words-matter-more-or-frequency-fallacy](https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/do-some-words-matter-more-or-frequency-fallacy)

British Council ATE [Academic Teaching Excellence] EMI course [www.britishcouncil.org/education/ihe/what-we-do/professional-development/academic-teaching-excellence](https://www.britishcouncil.org/education/ihe/what-we-do/professional-development/academic-teaching-excellence)

Menti.com [for students]; mentimeter.com [for teachers] – online interactive presentation software

[@SlidesCarnival](https://twitter.com/SlidesCarnival) (slide template)

[www.tinaleaheydesignsuk.etsy.com](http://www.tinaleaheydesignsuk.etsy.com/) – illustration of Liver Building on ppt slides

**FURTHER READING**

Macaro, E. (2015). ‘English Medium Instruction: Time to start asking some difficult questions’. *Modern English Teacher*, 24(2)

Dearden, J. (2017). ‘EMI (and CLIL) – a growing global trend’. <https://oupeltglobalblog.com/2017/02/02/emi-and-clil-a-growing-global-trend> (retrieved 29 March 2019).

For a copy of the PPT slides & handout for this talk, go to ‘Conference Talks’ here: <https://rachelappleby.edublogs.org>

rachelappleby18 @ gmail.com

@rapple18