HOW USING ENGLISH AS THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION AFFECTS TEACHING AND LEARNING AT A TVET COLLEGE: LECTURERS AND STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES

by

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DECLARATION

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this study to my wonderful GOD who gave me wisdom and strength in my academic endeavours. I did not give up when it was difficult; I persevered and continued to do so beyond this world through His grace.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences and challenges of lecturers and students using English as the medium of instruction (EMI) for teaching and learning at a public technical and vocational education and training (TVET) college in South Africa. The study focused on two campuses of a TVET college in Free State Province where English is the only medium of instruction. A qualitative case study approach and purposeful method with in-depth interviews and analysis were employed to understand the experiences of these participants. The findings of the study revealed that the challenges of using EMI which impeded academic performance resulted from a variety of factors. Trends, including restricted comprehension, insufficient English proficiency and limited English vocabulary and academic literacy, emerged as the barriers that posed challenges to the academic performance of students. Based on the study's findings, it is clear that the college lacks interventions to strengthen language capabilities, enhance professional skills and provide academic support services such as multilingual educational contexts. Further research is needed to understand the underlined mechanisms and develop strategies to mitigate their impact.

Key terms: Academic literacy, academic performance, English as the medium of instruction (EMI), technical and vocational education and training (TVET), multilingual educational contexts

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CEFR   Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

CLIL   Content and Language Integrated Learning

DHET   Department of Higher Education and Training

ELF   English as a Lingua Franca

EMI   English as the Medium of Instruction

EU   European Union

NCV   National Certificate (Vocational)

OECD   Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

SNU   Somali National University

TVET   Technical and Vocational Education and Training

ZPD   Zone of Proximal Development

SASL   South African Sign Language

DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

Academic Literacy – Literacy practices privileged by educational institutions, encompassing reading, writing, listening, speaking, critical thinking and knowledge construction; differ from basic or everyday literacies.

Academic Performance – The extent to which a student, lecturer or institution has attained their short- or long-term educational goals.

English as the Medium of Instruction (EMI) – The use of the English language to teach academic subjects/content areas in an educational context where English is not the mother tongue or home language of the majority of students and teachers.

Epistemological Access – Students' ability to use the medium of instruction as a resource to engage with disciplinary knowledge, develop academic literacy practices valued by the institution and construct new meaning. Obstacles to epistemological access constitute epistemic exclusion.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) – Formal, accredited post-school education and training programmes aimed at providing skills and knowledge to work within various trades/occupations in industry. In South Africa, the public TVET colleges fall under the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

Translanguaging – Pedagogical approach that deliberately utilises and leverages students' full linguistic repertoires instead of strictly separating languages. Aims to promote deeper learning and critical thinking.

Code-switching – A practice of alternating between two or more languages or language varieties in a single conversation, text or interaction.

Code-meshing – It describe the blending of multiple languages, dialects of language varieties in a single text, conversation or interaction.

Multilingualism – The ability of an individual or community to communicate effectively in multiple languages.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1   Introduction

Examining the effects of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) at a multilingual technical and vocational education and training (TVET) college in the South African province of the Free State was the aim of this study. Investigating lecturers' and students' experiences and perceptions of using EMI in their educational activities was the main goal of this study.

Even though English is an additional language for most students, it is still the dominant language of instruction in South Africa's higher education system. A recent study conducted at three KwaZulu-Natal institutions by Lewis & Yeo (2023) found that because English is so widely used as a language of instruction and learning, students in higher education who do not speak English as their first language continue to face disadvantages. It is argued that students' participation in class activities and general academic achievement are negatively impacted by their inadequate command of the English language. According to research conducted at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Peng & Guo, 2023) law students struggle to understand study materials, participate actively in lectures, and produce academic written works in the English language.

Similar findings were observed at University of Cape Town (UCT) and North West University (NWU). Munyaradzi & Manyike (2022) indicated that English as a primary medium of instruction diminished effective teaching and learning. English second language (ESL) students have poor content knowledge. Sobane et al. (2022) stated that multilingual education and its implementation in Higher Education (HE) remains a controversial matter and no university in South Africa uses indigenous African languages as the primary or official Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT). Which means that a large proportion of students continue to be disadvantaged because they receive their education in a foreign language. Even though the present Language Proficiency in Higher Education (LPHE) provides an enabling environment for introducing African languages as LoLT and developing curricula in these languages to facilitate conceptual learning and understanding, the reality that a little has been done.

In the South African higher education context, the issue of official languages is multifaceted, reflecting the country's rich linguistic diversity. While English, Afrikaans,

and other languages are predominantly used, this often marginalizes African languages in academic settings. According to Leibowitz (2021), the exclusion of African languages can create barriers to understanding, particularly for students who are more proficient in their mother tongues. This linguistic gap can hinder academic performance and engagement, emphasizing the need for a more inclusive approach that recognizes the value of all official languages.

Incorporating African languages into the teaching of technical subjects presents an opportunity to enhance comprehension and retention among students. Ahmed & Roche (2022) argue that using students' home languages in technical education can bridge the gap between theoretical concepts and practical application. By turning a blind eye to this potential, educators risk creating a void that undermines the educational experience for many students. Huong (2021) supports this perspective, highlighting that the use of familiar languages in technical fields can foster a deeper understanding of complex subjects, thereby improving overall learning outcomes.

Technology can play a pivotal role in facilitating the use of African languages in higher education. Graham (2022) emphasizes the potential of digital tools and resources to support multilingual education, allowing for the development of content in various languages, including African languages. This technological integration not only enhances accessibility but also empowers educators to create a more equitable learning environment. By leveraging technology, institutions can promote the use of African languages in technical subjects, ultimately enriching the educational landscape and supporting a diverse student body (Leibowitz, 2021).

Although there is research on the use of EMI in traditional universities, there is a scarcity of studies on TVET colleges (Adams, 2022; Adegbija, 2021; Chimbutane, 2013; Chokwe, 2013 and Govender and Naidoo, 2023). However, given that a significant proportion of students enrolled in TVET programmes come from diverse linguistic backgrounds, often from underprivileged educational settings, and live in communities where English is not the primary language, it is critical to investigate the role of EMI in this context. The purpose of this study was to explore the implications of using English as the medium of instruction (EMI) at a public technical and vocational education and training (TVET) college in South Africa.

Obtaining a thorough understanding of the perspectives and personal experiences of both lecturers and students regarding the use of EMI provided useful insights. The primary goal of this study was to look into the various challenges that lecturers and students face when working with EMI. Its goal was to shed light on the impact of EMI on students' academic performance and determine whether specific pedagogical approaches or interventions could effectively address these issues. The Language-in-Education Policy in South Africa (1997) promotes the concept of additive multilingualism in schooling. Additionally, the language policy for higher education makes similar points about the use of languages other than English for teaching and learning. However, many universities continue to use English as the sole medium of instruction. Gaining insight into the lived experiences surrounding this complex issue would prove advantageous. The Language Policy Framework for Higher Education (2020) addresses the promotion of multilingualism in the institutional policies and practices of South African public higher education institutions. The Language Policy Framework for Higher Education seeks to promote multilingualism as a strategy to facilitate meaningful access and participation by university communities (students and lecturers) in various university activities, including cognitive and intellectual development. The policy framework aims to promote and strengthen the use of all official languages across all functional domains of public higher education including scholarship, teaching and learning, as well as wider communication in line with Section 29(2) of the South African Constitution (Language Policy Framework for Higher Education, 2020: 5). Despite South Africa having 12 official languages, including the recent inclusion of South African Sign language (SASL) in 2023, English continues to hold a prominent position in higher education.

The examination of the impact of this particular situation on the teaching and learning processes within the TVET framework revealed potential areas that require enhancement. Moreover, this kind of analysis could be extremely beneficial to the larger conversation about language policy and the advancement of equitable inclusive education. Furthermore, such an examination has the potential to make a valuable contribution to the wider discourse around language policy and the promotion of fair and high-quality education. The examination of the impact of EMI on lecturers and students holds considerable importance in enhancing the efficacy of teaching and learning at this college, as well as potentially benefiting other TVET institutions.

Acquiring the viewpoints and experiences of individuals involved in EMI is enlightening in the process of discovering distinct difficulties and viable solutions. The results of this study have the potential to inform the development of interventions to improve pedagogical practices, enhance learning outcomes and, ultimately, foster student achievement.

1.2   Context and Background of the Study

The widespread use of English as a lingua franca has strengthened its position as a means of providing tertiary education on a global scale. This includes its application in postcolonial regions such as Africa (Jenkins, 2014). In South Africa, despite legislation promoting multilingualism, higher education institutions continue to use English as the primary medium of instruction and academic discourse (Leibowitz, 2021). This creates challenges for students who speak languages other than the dominant language spoken at home.

Students who experience linguistic factors such as a lack of vocabulary, grammar knowledge, and comprehension, which lead to psychological factors such as low self-esteem and a fear of making mistakes, do not participate. According to Bhattacharya (2019), language problems are a major cause of poor academic performance. These difficulties are supported by Ahmed & Roche (2022) research, which discovered that students do not speak in class because they are afraid of making mistakes. According to the researchers, this situation reduces students' ability to understand.

The English language's global prominence and influence have increased significantly over the last century. According to Crystal (2012:10), English has achieved an unparalleled and unique status as the dominant language in various domains such as science, aviation, computing, diplomacy, and tourism. The global spread of the English language was made possible in large part by the British Empire's process of territorial expansion from the 16th to the 20th centuries (Bolton & Kachru, 2006:5). Because of this imperial legacy, many former colonies adopted English as their official language and as their primary language of instruction after gaining independence. In order to improve economic competitiveness and promote global integration, policies that support the acquisition of English language proficiency have been developed in a

variety of contexts, not just colonial settings (Piller & Cho, 2013). Jenkins (2014) asserts that English has become the world's most widely recognised language.

The English language has become increasingly important in the context of higher education globally due to two major interconnected trends. To start, internationalising universities has been done so in an effort to increase their reputation abroad and draw in faculty and students from other countries (Knight, 2015:2). Moreover, it is noteworthy that even in countries where English is not the primary language, English has been widely embraced as the medium of instruction for educational purposes (Macaro, 2018:37). Singh (2020:2) claims that there has been a significant shift in the understanding of English proficiency, which is now recognised as a basic academic skill necessary for success and social mobility. However, the effects of EMI on identity, learning, access, and power dynamics are complex and call for ongoing critical analysis in a range of settings (McKinley & Rose, 2022).

After gaining independence, some African nations—Ghana and Kenya, for example— kept English as their official language. English has been adopted by these Anglophone countries as the language of government, education, and the legal system (Bamgbose, 2000:99). Prominent nationalist leaders like Senghor in Senegal and Nkrumah in Ghana advocated for improving the use of colonial languages to advance development goals, prioritise national unity, and facilitate communication throughout Africa in the middle of the 20th century (Phillipson, 2016:9).

During the 1960s and early 1970s, East African countries such as Tanzania, Uganda, and Somalia implemented a series of policies known as Africanisation. Although these policies involved a shift in the language of teaching in primary schools to Swahili and Somali, English remained a significant role in secondary and higher education (Graham, 2022). The adoption of English faces the challenge of a lack of implementation policies at the start of the language's global operation (Bosch et al., 2022). Another challenge is the use of other languages as a medium of instruction (Lewis & Yeo, 2023). For example, in Qatar, Arabic is the native language and is used in the Islamic religion; this suggests that the adoption of English will endanger the Arabic language. According to Peng and Guo (2023), the challenges to implementing English as an instructional language are divided into linguistic, cultural, structural, and identity-related challenges. Tand's findings are in line with Bhattacharya's (2019)

argument that the use of English as a delivery language in Taiwan influences students' perceptions.

The difficulties of implementing English as the primary instructional language in Africa have grown. This was primarily due to a heavy reliance on and borrowing of policies that encouraged the use of English as the delivery language of instruction in higher education institutions (Ahmed & Roche, 2022). However, this approach has some advantages, such as increased competitiveness from local to international levels (McKinley & Rose, 2022).

The challenge of the language of instruction policy in Somalia was influenced by the outbreak of the civil war in the 1990s which led to the destruction of educational infrastructure and learning materials as well as deaths (Graham, 2022). This led to unqualified teachers undertaking teaching using the most suitable language and available resources. English is taught as a subject at the secondary level, while Somali is the language of instruction in primary schools. In tertiary institutions, the language of instruction varies between private and public ones. English is the primary language of instruction at the Somali National University (SNU), however there have been some exceptions where some degree of Somali and Arabic usage has been permitted. This suggests that the language of instruction is not governed by policy. This led to students' attributes as the factor influencing the adoption of English as the delivery language of instruction.

Instead of using Western models and theories to direct the knowledge system, there is ongoing discussion about decolonizing education and advancing indigenous languages so that students can learn about their own cultures, identities, and environmental issues. According to Bosch et al. (2022), we cannot claim for ourselves a commitment towards epistemic justice without delay unless we view the decolonization of knowledge as the collective processes by which disciplinary practices are successful in working against the inscribed epistemic injustices of all knowledge formations. This viewpoint is comparable to that of Bosch et al. (2022), who contend that in order for education reform to be socially relevant in South Africa, it must be directed by and permit the integration of Mode 1 (disciplinary knowledge) and Mode 2 (socially distributed knowledge). This would lead to the production of

knowledge and encourage academics to engage in community service that combines their university research with its application in the larger community.

In South Africa, the apartheid regime encouraged the use of Afrikaans and English, cementing its dominance in education, government, and public affairs. The Language-in-Education Policy, implemented after apartheid, was intended to promote multilingualism and the growth of indigenous languages that had previously been marginalised. The Republic of South Africa's 1996 Constitution recognised eleven official languages. The Language-in-Education Policy of 1997 facilitated the inclusion of students' native languages, with a focus on the early grades. McKinley and Rose (2022) advocate for dual and multilingual education as a means of improving epistemic access, addressing disparities, and preserving linguistic diversity. Scholars, however, argue that these initiatives have failed to fundamentally alter the institutional inclination towards English and Afrikaans as dominant languages of authority and control (Balfour, 2007; Paxton, 2009).

Currently, English is the primary language of instruction in South African universities, despite the fact that it is not the majority of students' native language (Leibowitz, 2021:1). The resurgence of protests under the hashtags #FeesMustFall and #AfrikaansMustFall has reignited debate about educational decolonization, particularly through linguistic transformation, in tandem with calls for tuition-free education. According to Leibowitz (2021:2), while there is political will for multilingual education, significant implementation is lacking.

Studies have substantiated the fact that South African students who attend colleges where English is the primary language of instruction encounter a wide range of obstacles in their learning journey. In their study on law, Hibbert and Van der Walt (2014:3) discovered that language poses a significant obstacle to achieving epistemic access. They observed that students encounter difficulties in comprehending legal terminology and accurately interpreting textual materials. In reading comprehension, vocabulary is one of important indicators to understand the reading texts. Legal English terms have their own distinctive features which makes legal English reading texts challenging for students to comprehend (Huong, 2021: 93). Veretina (2012) views that legal English terminology comprises the use of archaic terms called legalese such as *pursuant to* (under; in accordance with); *prior to* (before); *subsequent*

to (after), etc., which makes it hard for a normal student to understand. Legal English is considered to be challenging to acquire, even for native speakers. Among four skills of legal English, reading has a crucial role in building and developing other legal English skills. Without reading, it is difficult for students to reach a higher level in both legal education and legal practice in the future (Huong, 2021: 93). However, it is the fact that many students find it hard to comprehend the reading texts due to incomprehensible verbiage found in legal documents as well as an arcane jargon used (Schane, 2006: 2).

Graham's (2022) study focused on science students at the University of Pretoria. The study shed light on the difficulties these students encountered when attempting to understand academic discourse in English. Essays frequently include instances of translationese derived from students' native languages. In general, empirical research demonstrates that English imposes an extra cognitive and affective load, impeding both involvement and learning (Leibowitz, 2021; Mkhize & Balfour, 2017).

While universities are frequently the focus of academic research in higher education, TVET colleges also play an important role in the educational system. The 50 public TVET colleges in South Africa enrolled 737 390 students in total, according to Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) Statistics for the year 2019 (Bosch et al., 2022). The majority of students are Black African youth from low-income households who are economically disadvantaged and do not fit the requirements for college admission (Papier, 2010:56). Due to its past adoption from earlier technikon institutions, EMI is widely used in both academic programmes and vocational trades. Nonetheless, studies have shown that a sizable portion of pupils struggle with English literacy, which has a detrimental effect on their academic performance (Netshitangani, 2016:1).

Examining the different experiences that TVET instructors and students have with using English as the main language of instruction provides insightful insights. Individual perspectives highlight specific challenges in their fields that the policy's emphasis on multilingualism has not adequately addressed. Analysing language-related lived experiences can yield important insights for guiding instructional strategies and creating specialised support services for TVET settings.

Additionally, this project has the potential to significantly advance the ongoing conversations about the decolonization of the curriculum, the creation of efficient learning pathways between TVET colleges and universities, and the necessity of ensuring that all students have equitable access to education in accordance with South Africa's more comprehensive post-school education vision. The necessity to investigate how EMI affects the teaching methods at a TVET college in the Free State is what spurred this investigation. This inquiry is based on the background data that has been supplied.

1.3 Problem Statement

The ability to use the language of instruction proficiently is central to academic success, yet research shows that many South African students lack adequate English proficiency by the time they enter higher education (Abasi & Graves, 2008; Evans & Green, 2007). This study explored how using EMI affects teaching and learning specifically within a TVET college context. In South Africa's universities, scholars have observed that the prevalence of EMI presents pedagogical challenges and impacts student performance, particularly for students from disadvantaged educational backgrounds. Mkhize and Balfour (2017) find that English second language university students in KwaZulu-Natal struggle to comprehend lectures and textual materials. Many lack confidence in participating in class or asking questions. Their limited proficiency hinders epistemological access to disciplinary knowledge and academic literacies.

While research on EMI has focused on universities, the landscape of TVET colleges remains underexamined. Yet the student demographic within many TVETs comes from similarly educationally disadvantaged contexts where English is not the medium of instruction and resources for developing academic literacy skills are lacking. This has implications for their learning through the medium of English. As a lecturer at a linguistically diverse TVET college in the Free State, the researcher observes students grappling to engage with course content taught in English. In class discussions, some appear reluctant to express themselves in English and prefer reverting to their home language. Their oral contributions and written work frequently display uneven academic vocabulary and they have difficulty conveying ideas accurately. Some seem to avoid asking questions when unsure. These challenges tend to persist throughout

their studies, suggesting their prior schooling did not adequately develop foundational English proficiency.

Limited empirical research on EMI specifically within the TVET college context exists. While institutions aim to develop students' technical skills, English remains the dominant language of teaching and learning. Investigating the experiences of TVET lecturers and students concerning EMI can help identify the discipline-specific challenges they face. It can also elucidate how EMI impacts teaching practices, learning, academic performance and identity. Understanding these dynamics is important because language barriers can undermine student success and perpetuate inequality. As Papier (2010) notes, TVET colleges serve an important function in South Africa's post-school education and training system by providing alternative pathways. Ensuring that pedagogical strategies support students' academic literacy development alongside technical skills acquisition is key to quality teaching and learning.

This study aimed to help address the research gap by exploring how EMI affects lecturers and students at a Free State TVET college. It was designed to answer questions about the experiences and difficulties they face, determine how EMI impacts learning outcomes and suggest potential solutions. The findings will inform teaching practices and institutional policies that promote epistemological access and student success tailored to the TVET context.

1.4   Rationale of the Study

This study aimed to investigate how the use of EMI affects teaching and learning in a TVET college context. Gaining insight into lecturers' and students' experiences and perspectives is beneficial for several reasons.

Existing scholarship on EMI in South Africa has largely focused on universities. While highlighting the learning challenges students face navigating English-dominant environments, few studies empirically explore the TVET landscape. This is an important omission given that technical colleges serve an expanding student population from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, many of whom lack mastery of academic English literacy.

Understanding the experiences of TVET lecturers and students is necessary to identify specific EMI-related challenges that may impact teaching and learning within different vocational disciplines. Their insider perspectives can illuminate issues which statistics or policy documents may overlook or downplay. Findings can inform tailored recommendations to strengthen instructional practices and academic support services that promote quality teaching and learning using EMI at these institutions.

TVET colleges are an important component of the post-school system, providing alternative pathways to universities. However, scholarship notes that student success rates remain low, with high repetition and dropout rates (Papier, 2010). There are multiple intersecting reasons but language barriers disproportionately impact students from disadvantaged schooling backgrounds. Shedding light on how EMI functions 'on-the-ground' in TVET colleges can help uncover ways to better support students and create more inclusive, socially just learning environments.

Documenting the teaching strategies that different lecturers currently use and gaining their insights on the interventions needed can help build a valuable knowledge base to strengthen instructional practices within and across colleges. While adhering to national curriculum standards, findings may support context-specific recommendations that enable both epistemological access and the development of students' technical skills.

1.5 Aim of the Study

This study aimed to examine the impact of EMI on the educational process within a TVET college. The study sought to explore the perspectives and difficulties encountered by both lecturers and students concerning EMI, specifically focusing on the influence of second language proficiency on teaching and learning. The outcomes of this investigation were utilised to provide suggestions on how language could be utilised proficiently and suitably.

1.6 Research Questions

This study aimed to answer the following main research question:

- How does using EMI affect teaching and learning in a higher education context?

The research sub-questions are as follows:

- What are the experiences and challenges encountered by lecturers and students when using EMI in multilingual and multicultural college classrooms?
- What are lecturers' perspectives on using EMI to facilitate and mediate disciplinary knowledge and what pedagogical strategies do they employ to support students in the process?
- How do students reflect on and perceive the impact of EMI on their own learning, meaning-making and knowledge construction?
- What measures can be implemented by the college to address the identified EMI challenges?

1.7   Research Objectives

The following study objectives aimed to answer the research questions about the research problem:

- To examine the experiences and challenges faced by lecturers and students in teaching and learning using EMI.
- To identify and investigate pedagogical approaches and strategies adopted by lectures to facilitate students' learning.
- To recommend interventions and measures the college could implement to address the EMI challenges.

1.8   Significance of the Study

This study holds significance for various stakeholders within the South African higher education landscape. This study's findings will be beneficial for TVET college students navigating EMI, particularly those from disadvantaged educational backgrounds. By illuminating the specific EMI-related challenges students face across different trades/programmes, it provides insights into areas needing additional academic support. Recommendations aim to inform the development of tailored language assistance services to aid content comprehension and performance assessment.

Centring student voices also enables them to share coping strategies that they have found helpful when learning an additional language. Documenting these tips can

facilitate peer learning. Their narratives can shape training for lecturers on fostering inclusive, multilingual pedagogies. Overall, foregrounding students' experiences aims to promote teaching practices and an institutional ethos that is responsive to and affirming of linguistic diversity.

The findings will be useful for TVET lecturers teaching their subject matter through the medium of English to linguistically heterogeneous classes. Highlighting the discipline-specific language difficulties students face can help sensitise lecturers to potential vocabulary, textual and conceptual barriers. Lecturers can gain awareness of language-related factors impacting teaching and learning. The documentation of the diverse strategies colleagues implement to support EMI can promote pedagogical knowledge sharing. This may encourage reflective praxis and strengthen localised communities of practice. Recommendations also aim to inform professional development initiatives tailored to the TVET context, better-equipping lecturers to scaffold and assess multilingual students.

At an institutional level, the study holds relevance for managers, student support staff and policymakers within the TVET sector. The findings can help assess whether current language policies and academic literacy development initiatives optimally serve diverse student populations. It provides insight into on-the-ground experiences which statistics alone may overlook. Recommendations aim to strengthen academic support programmes, inform enrolment procedures, advocate for curriculum transformation sensitive to students' sociolinguistic repertoires and promote translanguaging pedagogies. The study also underscores the need for sustained research on EMI within TVETs because scholarship in universities dominates. Overall, it aims to spur critical reflection on how to better align the policy goals of linguistic inclusivity with effective implementation.

In summary, this study holds significance for multiple stakeholders within the higher education sector by generating insights to strengthen teaching and learning, foster inclusion, advance policy objectives and promote social justice. While the findings have localised relevance, they also speak to broader debates on decolonising knowledge systems, student success and equitable access central to South Africa's developmental trajectory.

1.9   Delimitations of the Study

This study is delimited to one particular TVET college located in the Free State province of South Africa. It involves lecturers and students from this specific institution as participants. The researcher's insider status as a lecturer affords localised understanding. Thus, the findings cannot be statistically generalised to the provincial or national TVET college sector. Nonetheless, analytic generalisability remains possible.

The study focused specifically on the pedagogical dynamics related to EMI. It did not evaluate technical/vocational competencies or curriculum content per se. The scope was centred on language-related experiences rather than comprehensive institutional evaluation.

Participants comprised lecturers and students within selected courses/programmes at the college. Other staff categories were excluded. The aim was to gain in-depth insights from those directly involved in using EMI in everyday teaching and learning activities. However, administrators' perspectives on language policy implementation could provide an additional angle for future research.

1.10   Chapter Outline

This study is structured as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

This chapter provides the introduction and background to the research topic. It discusses the context, motivation, rationale, significance and key concepts underpinning the study. The research questions, aims, delimitations and definitions are also outlined.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This chapter reviews scholarly debates and literature on EMI in diverse education settings with a focus on the South African higher education context. It also describes academic literacies as the theoretical framework guiding the analysis of the data.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

This chapter details the qualitative research design and case study method used for data collection and analysis. It provides information on the research site, population, sampling, data collection instruments and measures for trustworthiness.

Chapter 4: Presentation and Analysis of Findings

This chapter presents and analyses the results from the interviews and observations. Key themes concerning the existing literature are discussed.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Findings

This chapter discusses the findings of the study.

Chapter 6: Summary, Recommendation and Conclusion

This concluding chapter summarises the overall findings and makes recommendations based on the data. It also highlights the limitations and areas for future research. The chapter concludes by reflecting on the significance of the study for theory, policy and practice.

1.11   Chapter summary

This chapter provided the introduction and background to the study of EMI at a TVET college in South Africa. The context, rationale, significance and key concepts were discussed. The aim was to explore lecturers' and students' experiences with EMI and its impact on teaching, learning and performance. Ultimately, this study identified challenges and recommended interventions to promote epistemological access and student success within the specific TVET landscape.

The next chapter reviews the scholarly literature on EMI in diverse education contexts, particularly South African higher education. Academic literacies are described to establish the theoretical framework to guide the analysis of the qualitative data.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1   Introduction

This chapter focuses on reviewing the scholarly literature on EMI in higher education, particularly within the South African context. The first section (2.2 – 2.5) discusses debates regarding EMI and local and international language policies. The second section (2.6) outlines academic literacies to establish the theoretical framework to guide the analysis of the qualitative data on lecturers' and students' experiences with EMI at the research site. This framework is relevant for understanding issues of epistemological access, identity and power dynamics raised in studies on language-in-education. Overall, the literature review contextualises this study's aim to explore how the use of EMI impacts teaching, learning and performance in a South African TVET college setting where English is an additional language for most students and lecturers.

2.2   Global Status of English in Higher Education

Though not without controversy, the corpus of academic research to date highlights English's growing significance as the dominant language in higher education around the world. As per Crystal's (2012) assertion, the English language has attained an exceptional and singular position as the primary mode of communication in academic and scientific domains worldwide. British colonisation had a significant impact on the historical spread of the English language. There are currently more than one billion people on the planet who speak English to varying degrees of proficiency. Millions of people in this population use English for their academic and professional endeavours (Ahmed & Roche, 2022).

According to Jenkins (2014), the English language has evolved from its historical roots as an imperial and colonial language to its current status as a widely used lingua franca that facilitates communication between people who speak multiple languages around the world. Her research on the phenomenon of English as a lingua franca (ELF) shed light on how non-native English speakers use linguistic tactics to proficiently navigate the process of conveying and comprehending information when engaging in academic discourse with other non-native speakers. This challenges negative attitudes towards the use of 'non-standard' English in multilingual settings.

Curry and Lillis (2018) provide empirical evidence of the rapid global dissemination of academic English in higher education and scholarly publishing, particularly in countries where English lacks historical or formal standing. According to OECD data from 2011, more than 3.7 million students enrolled in tertiary education programmes in countries other than their own. The most popular destinations for these students were English-speaking countries like the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, and Australia.

Nonetheless, Curry and Lillis (2018:4) express concern about the global prevalence of academic English, which raises serious concerns about fairness and power dynamics. The dominance of the English language benefits researchers affiliated with prestigious Anglophone institutions, while marginalising academics from non-Anglophone regions, particularly those in the global south. According to the authors, the global spread of the English language is a multifaceted narrative that encompasses both beneficial prospects and instances of prejudice.

Courses in higher education are offered in English, either fully or partially. For most lecturers and students in these situations, English is a second language. For instance, the majority of English speakers in South Africa speak it as a second language, while 9.6% of them speak it as their first language. In South Africa, there are twelve official languages, including the recently recognised SASL aimed at the rights of deaf and hard-of-hearing persons.

The Global 30 project was launched in Japan with the goal of forcing a few Japanese higher education institutions to teach a portion of their curriculum in English and to increase their enrolment of foreign students. The EMI brand is well-known in Sweden. There, English is used for about 65% of postgraduate courses (Bell, 2021). The majority language is English, and undergraduate and graduate students are taught in it.

The global spread of English has also been strengthened by the adoption of EMI at all educational levels, especially in higher education (Choi & Brochu, 2024). English is now recognised as a new fundamental skill that all students must learn in order to fully engage in a 21st-century civil society. Because English is a language of communication in a globalised world, its spread promotes educational mobility. In the

majority of non-English speaking nations, English is currently recognised as the language that is taught and used the most globally.

In brief, recent academic studies provide insight into the contentious but quickly growing role of English as the primary language of global higher education and knowledge creation, especially in multilingual post-colonial contexts. Scholars have asked important questions about the possible consequences of programmes that promote the English language, especially with regard to issues of power imbalances, inequality in access, and cultural eroding. The conflicts mentioned above are crucial to take into account when thinking about EMI's expansion to include more student populations. Different national policies have used different strategies to negotiate these complex relationships, as discussed in the section that follows.

2.3   Local and International Language-in-Education Policies

2.3.1 Educational policies in African countries: South Africa, Botswana and Malawi

Government decisions about the various statuses, purposes, and uses of various languages at the national or institutional level are included in language policy (AlBakri, 2017). Language frequently embodies identity, values, culture, and power dynamics, which makes these policies socially significant (Bamgbose, 2021). The policy must negotiate complicated factors in multilingual post-colonial contexts to choose instructional languages for students in early grades through higher education (Paschal, 2022).

Afrikaans and English were actively promoted by the apartheid government in South Africa, solidifying their dominance in the fields of education, politics, and public life. The post-apartheid Language-in-Education Policy sought to advance indigenous languages that had previously been marginalised and to encourage multilingualism. The Republic of South Africa's 1996 Constitution recognised eleven official languages, and the 1997 Language-in-Education Policy permitted the use of students' native tongues in the classroom (Kamwangamalu, 2021).

In order to promote epistemic access, address inequality, and honour linguistic diversity, universities were encouraged by the 2002 Language Policy for Higher

Education to create African languages as instructional mediums (Choi & Brochu, 2024). Scholars contend, however, that these measures have mostly failed to change institutions' systemic orientation towards Afrikaans and English, which serve as apartheid-era languages of gatekeeping and power (Paxton, 2009).

According to Kamwangamalu (2022), South African higher education is still overwhelmingly English-dominated, despite the fact that the majority of students do not speak English at home. A significant number of scholars (e.g. Madiba 2013; Makaleka & McCabe 2013; Mkhize & bafour 2017) support the implementation of multilingualism education in higher education and conceptualise diversity or heterogeneity linguistic, cultural, knowledge, experiences as a norm rather than an exception. The authors also problematise students' own languages and knowledge system as a resources that can be meaningfully integrated in curricula for the purpose of teaching, learning and research. Other scholars suggest ways in which university language policies can be designed to accommodate a multilingual approach and the diversity of the student body (Stroud & Kerfort 2013). While there is political will for multilingual instruction, substantial implementation is still lacking (Makalela, 2021). There has been little funding allocated to promote the academic use of African languages. This policy implementation gap continues (Choi & Brochu, 2024).

For example, Bitzer and Van der Walt (2022) examined five South African universities' language policies after 200 2 and discovered that, while documents publicly promote multilingualism, English remains the primary medium of teaching, learning, and institutional culture. Language practices demonstrate that tacit Anglo normativity persists, casting doubt on institutions' genuine commitment to transformation (Bitzer & Van der Walt, 2022:11). Maseko and Moyo (2022) investigated the disconnect between national language policy, which envisions multilingual education, and the continued dominance of English at a Johannesburg university. Despite rhetorical support for multilingualism, English remains institutionally focused and valued as the prestige language of power and mobility.

Even though Setswana is spoken by 80% of the population, English continues to be the official language of Botswana due to British colonial rule. Since language is not mentioned in their constitution, policy is developed obliquely through custom and practice (Nyathi-Ramahobo, 2022). Speaking English is a prerequisite for leadership

positions in the public sector, which disadvantages citizens (Choi & Brochu, 2024). Academics observe a conflict between the progressive policies that are formulated and put into practice, contending that there is insufficient political will to uphold and protect regional languages (Hidalgo et al., 2022). Nyathi-Ramahobo (2020:7), for example, provides a critical analysis of Botswana's 2009 Revised National Policy on Education, which advocates for Setswana literacy up until Grade 4 before switching to English. She contends that although African languages are used, their implementation is still centred on English.

Jotia and Phirinyane (2022) also look at Botswana's language education problems. They contend that rather than making the abrupt switch to English, which would disadvantage students, mother tongue instruction should be reinforced in the foundational early grades. Regarding multilingual education, there is still a gap between declared policy and real classroom practices (Jotia & Phirinyane, 2022:15). Scholars underscore that, in spite of the aforementioned principles, there is still limited room for long-term practice change in Botswana. Although developing early literacy in local languages holds promise for improved educational outcomes, English continues to play a dominant role in society (Jotia & Phirinyane, 2022).

The official post-independence languages of Malawi are Chichewa and English; however, English is still the language of instruction, especially in higher education (Kadango, 2019). Bilingual and multilingual policy implementations have not succeeded, according to (Choi & Brochu, 2024), who blame insufficient data, a lack of resources, and lost opportunities. Despite not being the mother tongue of the majority of citizens, English continues to be the most widely used instructional language (Chimbutane, 2021). For instance, Chimbutane (2013) examined Malawian language-in-education policy documents ranging from the country's educational reform in the 1990s to its 2008 National Education Sector Plan. She discovered that while these documents continuously acknowledged the importance of mother tongue instruction, they lacked a definite commitment to its execution. There is still a gap between policy rhetoric and classroom practices where English is the primary language (Chimbutane, 2013).

Kadango (2019) investigates Malawi's failure to implement home language policies starting in 1994. Subsequent administrations have demonstrated little interest in

encouraging the use of familiar languages at any educational level, despite the stated goals of multilingualism (Kadango, 2019:237). English continues to be the institutional language of choice for political and commercial reasons, even though it is detrimental to ordinary Malawians.

All things considered, the three African contexts under review exhibit a similar post-independence pattern. English continues to play a privileged role in higher education that it was granted during colonial rule, despite national policies that acknowledge indigenous languages and/or encourage multilingualism. Academics have long highlighted the gap in policy implementation that persists despite stated principles, as English continues to be the language of choice. This has consequences for the imperatives of decolonization, inclusion, and epistemic access. To translate policy rhetoric into transformative multilingual praxis, localised solutions that take into account the language realities on the ground require further research.

2.3.2 Educational policies globally

Scholars have placed a great deal of emphasis on the role that language policies play in protecting linguistic diversity in the face of English's widespread global expansion, even outside of the African context. The policies put into place in Malaysia and Spain are examined in this section.

To address the issue of exclusive English instruction in Spain, the European Union (EU) actively supports the implementation of content and language integrated learning (CLIL) as well as the preservation and promotion of national/regional languages (Dafouz & Smit, 2022). The EU warns against the possible risks posed by the predominance of English in universities as it may erode the linguistic vitality of native tongues, according to Choi & Brochu (2024). In order to address this issue, the EU further promotes the adoption of multilingual policies.

Spain has put in place a number of macro-level initiatives to advance and enhance multilingual education. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is one example of a framework that provides guidance for the creation of curricula and examinations to promote plurilingualism in diverse contexts (Council of Europe, 2001). The Council of Europe (2018) states that by instituting credit transfer procedures and language certification requirements, the Bologna

Process has significantly improved student mobility. The expansion of English-taught degree programmes at Spanish institutions is greatly aided by the combination of these frameworks and the distribution of public funds.

Furthermore, this development has brought Spanish language instruction's mandatory inclusion back into the spotlight (Pessoa et al., 2022). Many universities offer EMI courses, but institutional policies aim to preserve a delicate balance by simultaneously promoting the development of official national and regional languages.

However, it is important to note that researchers have found that there are still gaps in the implementation. In order to determine how prepared faculty members at fifteen Spanish universities were to use CLIL teaching methodologies, Fortanet-Gómez (2022) conducted an assessment. The study's conclusions show that faculty members' satisfaction with their CLIL training is noticeably low. Furthermore, a sizable portion of faculty members report feeling under supported in their attempts to provide bilingual instruction (Fortanet-Gómez, 2022:11). The rate at which comprehensive professional development is being implemented has not kept up with the programme expansion.

Malay became the official language of Malaysia following its liberation from British colonial domination. Due to globalisation, English is now being prioritised again both as a major business objective and as a prerequisite for becoming a globally recognised centre of education (Ali, 2022). According to Maarof and Tan (2021), students must be proficient in both Malay and English in order to fully utilise the variety of opportunities available to them in Malaysia's complex multilingual environment.

Ethnolinguistic disputes have caused educational programmes to shift in emphasis. As an illustration, Gill's (2022) study looked into the 2003 policy that mandated the use of EMI for Science and Mathematics in Malaysia. But this policy was later reversed in 2012 in response to strong public opposition, which resulted in the use of Malay as the only language of instruction. Gill (2022:11) highlights the enduring ambiguities surrounding language in the context of policymaking.

Ali (2013) examines the changes in Malaysia's educational system's language policy between the 1970s and the present. According to Ali (2013:100), there is a lack of effective integration of educators' perspectives in the classroom and a failure to take into account the unique sociolinguistic dynamics within local communities when top-

down strategies are implemented. A greater degree of grassroots cooperation is required.

Generally speaking, the analysis of global experiences shows that putting into practice a multilingual policy is a difficult task. It is important to note, though, that experts have noted that issues with power dynamics, a lack of resources, and inadequate teacher preparation continue to pose serious obstacles to the implementation of fair and excellent multilingual education. To create policies that are especially tailored to the special needs and requirements of diverse contexts, more research is required.

As was previously mentioned, EMI is significant to international higher education. The arguments are placed in context in the section that follows by emphasising EMI insights based on academic achievement and the function of language in education.

2.3.3 Implication of language-in-education policy in different contexts

Several common tensions and implications are revealed by reviewing the African and international policy contexts. The declared policy objectives of encouraging multilingualism and the actual language practices, which continue to be English-centric, particularly in higher education, are consistently at odds. Although policy documents emphasise the value of using familiar languages, actual classroom practice has remained English-oriented, as Chimbutane (2013:238) notes in the Malawian case.

The implementation gap endures in a variety of post-colonial contexts for a variety of reasons, including a lack of political commitment, poor teacher preparation, and a dearth of learning resources in African languages (Bitzer & Van der Walt, 2022). This indicates that, even in the face of policy reform, colonial linguistic hierarchies still have an impact. Early grades are frequently the focus of local language promotion policies, while English continues to be the institutional language at higher levels. A two-tiered hierarchy is implied, according to academics, if vernacular languages are restricted to basic education and aren't capable of handling sophisticated academic discourse (Kamwangamalu, 2021). Enacting policies that improve the status and corpus of languages are still crucial.

When students from underprivileged educational backgrounds and low English proficiency suddenly move from home language instruction to English-only university settings, access issues can arise. It is imperative to reconsider transitional models. The possible dangers of cultural and epistemic loss in the face of blind English promotion must be taken into account by policymakers. Centring colonial languages can weaken cultural identity and diminish indigenous knowledge systems, as Wa Thiong'o (1986) warned decades ago. Even now, this is still a pressing issue (Lan, 2021).

Political decisions are always involved when it comes to language policy and planning. They touch on matters of decolonization, power, equity, and identity. Adopting progressive multilingualism policies alone won't be enough to transform institutions; real leadership, resource allocation, and candid evaluation of implementation are also necessary. Whether policy results in social change is also influenced by linguistic attitudes and ideologies (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996). It is highlighted that implementing additive bi/multilingual pedagogies is a promising strategy in a variety of contexts. Translanguaging and CLIL can foster the academic development of marginalised languages, promote epistemic access, and make use of students' entire linguistic repertoires (Choi & Brochu, 2024). But in order to make this a reality, curriculum and faculty development must be continuously funded.

In spite of the principles of de jure multilingualism, there are common tensions regarding de facto English dominance when examining language policy trajectories and outcomes across diverse post-colonial contexts. The results emphasise that in addition to more empirical research to inform context-specific policy and practice, tackling these complex issues calls for multimodal solutions that include political commitment, material resources, grassroots collaboration, pedagogical innovation, and critical deconstruction of lingering linguistic hierarchies.

2.4   Language and Academic Performance

EMI is the use of English as the primary medium of instruction for academic content/subjects in contexts where English is not the mother tongue or dominant home language of the majority of students and lecturers (Paschal, 2022). EMI policies, which align with internationalisation and global competitiveness agendas, have spread

rapidly in universities around the world (Macaro, 2018). Proponents emphasise values such as attracting international students and staff, facilitating publication in English-medium journals, and promoting graduate mobility (Choi & Brochu, 2024). EMI is also viewed as providing linguistic capital and valuable exposure to a global academic lingua franca (Bell, 2021).

However, critical sociolinguists argue that EMI policies are frequently implemented without adequate consideration of potential disadvantages. These include the risks of cultural and epistemic loss, reinforced inequalities, and shrinking local language ecologies (Phillipson 2016). The effects of EMI are still being debated and contextualised. A key issue raised is the language-academic performance relationship, given that EMI is increasingly being used in a variety of settings where English proficiency cannot be assumed. Tensions arise over equity, accessibility, and, ultimately, student learning outcomes (Macaro et al., 2018). This section reviews the scholarship by examining this complex issue in postcolonial higher education contexts.

2.4.1 South African perspectives on Language and Academic Performance

Leibowitz (2010) conducted a study in South Africa to compare the pass rates of students at the University of the Western Cape before and after Afrikaans-medium instruction was switched to English. Together with qualitative information indicating that students could participate in English and understand concepts more readily, the results demonstrated a significant increase in pass rates across faculties. According to her, this emphasises how crucial it is for students to receive instruction in a language in which they are most fluent in order to gain epistemic access. On the other hand, Lewis & Yeo (2023) discovered that University of Pretoria science students had trouble understanding English academic discourse. Academic writing was hampered by the fact that students' essays frequently replicated translation patterns from African languages. The authors came to the conclusion that most students' English language proficiency was insufficient for handling the cognitive demands of science courses (Peng & Guo, 2023)

Hibbert and Van der Walt (2014) also observed that law students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal had trouble understanding legal texts and correctly interpreting important concepts in English. Pupils' incompetence increased stress and affected

engagement and performance in the classroom. Thus, one of the main obstacles to epistemological access for a large number of students is language (Hibbert & Van der Walt, 2014:3). The results of these investigations collectively imply that additional language students at South African universities that use English as their first language encounter pedagogical difficulties that have an adverse effect on participation, performance, and meaning-making. This calls into question equity.

2.4.2 East African perspectives on Language and Academic Performance

In Tanzania, Brock-Utne and Alidou (2011) found that students struggled to comprehend Science and Mathematics courses in English, affecting pass rates. Students indicated that learning through Kiswahili would improve their understanding significantly. The authors argued for mother tongue-based multilingual instruction to enhance conceptual grasp. At the University of Nairobi, Gichuki (2015) investigated factors affecting academic writing in English. The findings revealed that lexical challenges impacted students' academic language proficiency. Students struggled to differentiate every day and scholarly diction. The author recommended strengthening vocabulary learning support within courses to mitigate this.

In Rwanda, Iyamuremye and Ruterana (2012) examined factors impacting English academic writing. Students demonstrated difficulty in accurately using academic style, conventions and expressions in English. The authors maintained that students' limited exposure to English outside of university contributed to their underdeveloped academic literacy and recommended more extensive English preparation before tertiary studies.

Overall, studies from East African universities similarly highlight English proficiency gaps among additional language students as barriers to academic language mastery and performance. The findings signal the need for pedagogical strategies and academic support systems that scaffold English language development within the curriculum.

2.4.3 Asian perspectives on Language and Academic Performance

In Pakistan, Shahzad et al. (2016) investigated correlations between university students' English language proficiency and academic achievement across disciplinary

majors. Statistical results showed a significant positive correlation, indicating students with higher English proficiency scored higher academically. The authors argued that English language teaching should be strengthened nationally to improve higher education outcomes. In Nepal, Giri (2015) examined the challenges faculty and students faced teaching and learning through English. Both groups indicated difficulty comprehending complex academic texts and concepts in English. Students struggled to participate in class and scored poorly. The author emphasised the need for additional English language training to support EMI implementation.

In Taiwan, Wu (2006) assessed English listening and reading proficiency among engineering students. The findings revealed below-average academic English skills which negatively impacted students' ability to succeed in EMI programmes. Wu maintained that enhancing language preparation in secondary school is critical to better equip students for university EMI learning.

Across Asian EMI contexts, studies consistently highlight students' English academic literacy as a persistent challenge affecting performance. Scholars urge interventions to strengthen language proficiency to avoid exacerbating inequity through English-only policies.

2.4.4 Education Implications in Postcolonial Contexts in term of Language and Academic Performance

Several implications emerge from the synthesis of patterns across postcolonial higher education contexts. First, research indicates that instruction in an additional language, such as English, carries cognitive, affective, and academic risks without proper proficiency foundations (Troudi, 2009). The findings caution against assuming that students can seamlessly transition to EMI without adequate preparation. Second, the implementation of EMI must carefully consider any potential impacts on equality and epistemic access. Evidence suggests that English literacy limits mastery of content and academic practices, disadvantageously affecting certain demographics (Tsuneyoshi 2005). Historical injustices should be addressed.

Third, the findings emphasise that academic English proficiency necessitates explicit encouragement and support. Increasing vocabulary, genre skills, and disciplinary discourse conventions improves students' meaning-making and expression

(Bhattacharya, 2019). Teaching academic literacies through the curriculum emerges as critical. Finally, most studies agree that, while EMI does not automatically improve learning, English remains critical for mobility and access. This emphasises the importance of nuanced bilingual/multilingual models tailored to local contexts (Lin & Martin, 2005). Additive approaches that acknowledge linguistic diversity may best serve equity objectives.

Thus, research into language and academic performance reveals both risks and possibilities. The findings refute the technicist view of EMI as an apolitical instructional model that applies universally regardless of context. Adopting EMI necessitates developing students' academic language skills. Finally, implementing EMI in ways that increase rather than limit epistemic access remains critical. To avoid exacerbating inequality in diverse societies, English language promotion requires contextual sensitivity and resource investment.

2.5   Multilingual Pedagogies

A significant body of scholarship argues that promoting multilingual strategies and approaches is vital for epistemic justice in higher education contexts where English functions as an additional language. These approaches view multilingualism as a resource, not a deficit. For instance, Madiba (2021) advocates for translanguaging pedagogy in African higher education contexts. By fluidly using multiple languages, translanguaging enables students to draw from their full meaning-making reservoirs. This facilitates deeper learning and critical thinking compared to restrictive monolingual norms. This section will discuss multilingual approaches, including English-only instruction, code-meshing, code-switching and translanguaging. It reviews key perspectives on leveraging linguistic diversity to enhance teaching and learning where EMI has been rapidly adopted. The discussion starts by contextualising English-only models of education in multilingual education contexts and then outlines the relevance of multilingual pedagogies.

2.5.1 English-only instruction and multilingualism

Scholars increasingly critique monolingual English-only instructional models which pay little attention to students' home language repertoires and sociolinguistic realities. For instance, Adegbija (2021) cautions that adopting EMI uncritically can position local

languages as 'problems' to overcome rather than assets which bring diverse symbolic capital into the classroom. This deficit framing risks perpetuating linguistic hierarchies and inequity. Similarly, Lan (2021) argues that technicist approaches which presume language homogeneity fail to consider how students' varying English proficiency shapes their learning experiences and outcomes. English promotion policies often lack safeguards for linguistic minorities.

Other scholars posit that EMI conducted exclusively through standardised academic English potentially hinders plural approaches to knowledge production. Canagarajah (2021) maintains that this exclusionary academic literacy paradigm erects barriers for multilingual scholars from the Global South seeking to integrate local discourses and decolonise knowledge. Overall, research increasingly highlights the risks of uncritical EMI adoption in diverse settings, from marginalising local languages and knowledge systems to exacerbating power differentials along linguistic lines (Lan, 2021). These critiques underscore calls for multilingual pedagogies which challenge monoglossic ideologies by valuing and leveraging linguistic diversity.

2.5.2 Code-meshing

Code-meshing is an approach to communication that assumes all dialects and languages are equal in their complexity and value. This approach combines or meshes different codes within one context. Code-meshing is used in academic and non-academic contexts; it is not just as literary or linguistic experiment, but also a way to assert one's identity and culture. It can also challenge the idea of standard written English whether it is correct or formal instead of considering English to be a global and fluid language. It embraces the idea that we can use multiple dialect within a single essay. It also begins to address some of the languages imbalances between minority communities and the dominant cultures that tend to dictate students' education. Creese et al. (2022) highlight the value of drawing from students' diverse semiotic repertoires and identities in EMI contexts. They argue that flexible multilingual approaches, such as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), offer richer instructional scaffolding. Canagarajah's concept of code-meshing refers to the practice of multiple languages, dialects, or codes in a single text, speech, or communication event. He argues that code-meshing is a common phenomenon in multilingual communities, where individuals draw on their diverse linguistic resources

to communicate effectively. Canagarajah's code-meshing involves mixing languages, switching codes, blending discourses and translanguaging. He also highlights its potential benefits as enhanced creativity and flexibility in communication, increased accessibility and inclusivity n multilingual contexts, subverting dominant language norms and power structures and creating new forms of language and identity. By embracing code-meshing, Canagarajah argues that we can promote linguistic diversity, challenge language hierarchies, and foster more inclusive communication practices.

2.5.3 Code-switching

The practice of employing different language varieties in one context is known as code-switching. Minority groups frequently employ it when navigating between interactions with the dominant culture and those within their own subculture. The term code-switching has multiple definitions. According to Ahmed & Roche (2022), the term can also refer to switching between dialects because of how widely the definitions differ. Classroom code-switching is defined by Lin (2013:195) as any classroom participant who alternates between more than one linguistic code.

According to McKinley & Rose (2022), code-switching is defined in this study as the practice of bilingual or multilingual speakers using two or more languages in discourse, either by alternating between the two languages with longer units of each language or by introducing words or shorter phrases in each language. Many multilingual lecturers use two languages to impart academic material; they may code-switch to improve comprehension and foster meaningful engagement, or they may switch between the languages on the spur of the moment (Graham, 2022).

2.5.4 Translanguaging

The utilisation of translanguaging, which centres on the intricate interplay between language and the process of acquiring knowledge, presents an additional valuable approach for the examination undertaken in this study. The framework under consideration has emerged as a result of scholarly work in the field of bilingual education. Scholars, such as García and her colleagues, have critically examined deficit models that view the fluid linguistic practices of bilingual students as

problematic, advocating instead for an approach that promotes the strict separation of languages (García & Li, 2014).

Translanguaging, as an approach, acknowledges the inherent ability of students to effectively utilise and blend their diverse linguistic resources to construct meaning and engage in communication (Canagarajah, 2011; Mazzaferro, 2018). From this perspective, the dynamic translanguaging exhibited by emergent bilinguals can be viewed as a valuable attribute that mirrors the inherent nature of linguistic diversity rather than a deficit that should be repressed.

According to Madiba (2022), adopting a translanguaging orientation acknowledges the potential of students' home discourses to facilitate profound learning as opposed to rigidly enforcing language segregation. The appreciation of code-meshing practices, such as the flexible use of multiple vernaculars alongside academic English, is regarded as a means of enhancing the process of constructing meaning rather than perceiving them as shortcomings that necessitate adherence to standardised norms (Lee, 2017).

There is a growing body of scholarly discourse that posits the translanguaging approach as valuable for reconceptualising the prevailing colonial language hierarchies within educational settings. By embracing this approach, educators can effectively address the issue of linguistic diversity and foster a more inclusive approach to instruction (Mazzaferro, 2018). Makalela (2022) proposes the utilisation of translanguaging within the context of South African higher education as a means to facilitate epistemic access and challenge the hegemonic position of English as the exclusive and authoritative language of academia.

Thus, a translanguaging approach follows the imperative to acknowledge and leverage the multilingual realities of students as valuable sources of knowledge rather than obstacles. The text provides insightful viewpoints regarding language, identity and the pedagogy of decolonisation, which aligns harmoniously with the critical academic literacies framework that serves as the foundation for this research endeavour.

2.5.5 Barriers to implementation of Multilingual Pedagogies

While scholarly evidence largely affirms multilingualism's pedagogical value, significant structural barriers impeding its implementation were highlighted. These issues of policy, preparedness and attitudes must be confronted. First, English-centred language-in-education policies at many post-colonial universities powerfully shape instructional norms and practices. Tenets of academic freedom limit top-down prescriptions but many faculties lack training for multilingual teaching (Hibbert & Van der Walt, 2014).

Second, scarce public investment in developing academic registers, vocabularies and higher education resources in marginalised local languages remains a key constraint, forcing reliance on established colonial languages such as English (Brock-Utne, 2021). Finally, some research reveals faculty scepticism and resistance towards an inclusive multilingual approach based on internalised monoglossic language ideologies and deficit views of non-standard usage (Lee, 2017).

Thus, in addition to more empirical studies on multilingualism's efficacy, addressing these systemic and attitudinal barriers remains imperative for impactful implementation to enhance epistemic access. In essence, a growing body of scholarship makes compelling arguments for leveraging linguistic diversity as an epistemic resource to improve learning experiences and outcomes in EMI contexts worldwide. However, realising more just, participatory multilingual visions requires confronting engrained language hierarchies, policies, resourcing inequities and deficit attitudes which continue to marginalise bi/multilingualism as an empowering instructional approach. Ongoing critical reflexivity regarding languages, power and knowledge production is vital.

2.6   Theoretical Framing: Academic Literacy Model

A theoretical framework serves as the foundational structure upon which a scholarly investigation is grounded, facilitating the analysis of empirical data and the subsequent interpretation of the research findings (Grant & Osanloo, 2022). The utilisation of well-established theories congruent with the objectives, context and methodologies of a given project enhances its conceptual depth and analytical acuity. This study draws on the academic literacy model to understand the role of EMI in a linguistically diverse

education environment, particularly how language affects classroom interactions and students' academic performance.

2.6.1. What is literacy?

It is essential to comprehend the definition of literacy to comprehend academic literacy. It should be mentioned that there is not a single, widely agreed-upon definition of literacy. Taking a broad view, (Lewis & Yeo, 2023) assert that the definition of literacy in the past was the ability to sign one's name. According to Peng & Guo (2023), literacy was once used to describe the capacity for reading and writing more than a century ago. According to Bhattacharya (2019), numerous interpretations of the same concept have since evolved, rather than a consensus on what literacy as a concept is.

Early definitions of literacy concentrated on a single literacy and were skill-focused. Thinking about literacy started to shift away from the notion that there was a single kind of literacy that people either possessed (literates) or did not possess (illiterates) around the 1980s (Ahmed & Roche, 2022). Researchers like McKinley & Rose (2022) focused on literacy at the time figuring out the socio-political and cultural elements that structure people's use of literacy as well as understanding people's type of literacy in the context of their local and global relationships.

Instead of focusing on the skills-oriented approach to literacy, this research recognised multiple literacies, which are contested in power relations and vary according to time and space (Street, 2003:77). This more critical perspective on literacies takes into account the social aspects of obtaining and using literacy in addition to seeing it as a general set of technical skills. It highlights the fact that literacy varies and is influenced by both social context and educational settings. It is noteworthy because it opposes the deficient view of the individual, arguing that socially constructed relationships and communication patterns, rather than just the individual, are the real barriers to literacy acquisition and application (Graham, 2022).

Aligning with current research on academic literacy, this study sets aside the view of literacy as discrete, autonomous, transferrable skills and views literacy as a social practice closely associated with disciplinary epistemology, community of practice and identity (see Li, 2022; Gee, 2015; Street, 2003). The conception of literacy learning as both a textual, contextual or socio-cultural practice is informed by the changing

educational goal under the development of the twenty-first-century knowledge economy, which requires learners to be active co-constructors of knowledge rather than passive recipients (Gebhard, 2004 in Li 2022:1). Understanding of literacy as a complex socially and culturally embedded phenomenon that is shaped by and shapes society is crucial for understanding how multilingual students and lecturers' experience and navigate the dominant language of instruction to mediate knowledge. I argue that TVET classrooms reflect the rich diversity of where our students' communities come from; thus, students' languages, experiences, and knowledge must be acknowledged and supported in academic contexts. As Blanton (1994: 228) puts it:

> Whatever else we do with L2 students to prepare them for the academic mainstream, we must foster the behaviour of 'talking' to texts, talking and writing about them, linking them to other texts, connecting them to their own lives and experience, and then using their experience to illuminate the text and the text to illuminate their experiences.

2.6.2 Autonomous and ideological models of literacy

Within the field of academic literacies, autonomous and ideological models of literacy constitute a substantial portion. Street emphasised that there are many distinct literacies and that some are constructed as having more value within contexts than others by challenging the idea that literacy was a singular construct that was independent of the context in which it took place (Bosch et al., 2022). Street's independent definition of literacy is consistent with previous definitions, which see literacy as a collection of neutral, transferable skills that can be learned while ignoring the social and cultural contexts in which literacy functions.

The autonomous model presents a unitary view of literacy, ignoring the fact that, in practice, literacy varies between contexts. Literacy can be reduced to a set of skills that can be explicitly taught if it is considered an autonomous concept. According to Bosch et al. (2022), the autonomous model defines literacy as the technical capacity to interpret and encode text in the same way as the author or teacher, suggesting that the text's meaning is impartial, devoid of moral judgement, and easily understandable by all.

The relationship between the power structures that exist in educational institutions and their literacies is not addressed by the autonomous model in an educational setting. Bosch et al. (2022) presented the ideological model of literacy as an alternative to the autonomous model. Since literacy is merely a social practice and a technical, neutral skill, it is always ingrained in socially constructed conceptions of knowledge.

Adopting an ideological stance on literacy results in the concept of literacy being viewed as dynamic and context-specific rather than a neutral, single entity (Street, 2003). Literacy is a socially constructed concept and not an explanation of truths free from ideologies, power relations, and political influences; rather, it is a set of discourses determined by the context of the situation (Yuan et al., 2021). This is because literacy is seen as a set of social practices embedded across various contexts and situations. From the standpoint of the ideological model, certain forms of literacy are given preference over others since the definition and application of what constitutes literacy are constantly up for debate.

Because literacy is inherently ideological, it is always based on a specific set of values and beliefs. As such, it is important to recognise the potential for literacy to be exploited as a means of controlling the opinions of others (Kim, 2020). It makes sense that some literacies are seen as more powerful or valuable than others if power relations are considered to be relevant in what is valued as literacy. Yani (2022) defines dominant literacies as those that people with higher social status utilise; consequently, these powerful or dominant literacies are not equally distributed along the lines of economic privilege and disempowerment. Academic literacy is one type of strong literacy.

2.6.3 Academic literacy in higher education

Academic literacy occupies a central role in educational contexts, particularly in institutions of higher learning such as TVET colleges. The shift to using EMI poses both opportunities and challenges for teaching and learning processes. Academic literacy is a multifaceted concept that varies across different disciplines and educational contexts. There is no single universally accepted definition of academic literacy; various scholars and educational frameworks have attempted to summarise its essence. These definitions include perspectives that focus only on academic literacy as the ability to read and write, a set of neutral skills, and more recent research

foregrounds this construct as social and cultural embeddedness (e.g., Boughey & McKenna, 2017; Lea & Street, 2006; Leibowitz, 2006). Highlighting the fact that education is mediated through language, Weideman (2018: iii) says that

> academic literacy (sometimes referred to in the plural as academic literacies) can be defined as the ability to use language logically and analytically in an academic context. In this context we use language to gather information, to process that information, and to create new information.

Recognising that learning is a textual and contextual practice, Li (2022:2) defines academic literacy

> as an embodiment of higher order thinking and learning not only serves as a prerequisite for knowledge production and communication within the disciplines but also bears huge significance for individual language and cognitive development. This means that academic literacy development in this sense is considered as a powerful tool for knowledge generation, communication and transformation.

Drawing on these definitions, it is evident that academic literacy involves different skills of understanding, constructing knowledge and participating in academic discourse. In this sense, academic literacy development is considered an important tool that enables knowledge generation, communication and transformation. Academically literate people can make valuable contributions to ongoing discussions within particular academic fields by being able to discuss and analyse formal, academic, and subject-specific jargon. Academic literacy encompasses the following skills: summarising, describing, developing and indicating one's own voice, acknowledging sources, paraphrasing, and presenting information visually (Bosch et al., 2022).

Higher education requires students to engage with various new and innovative writing, values, and belief systems. It is essential for students to familiarise themselves with the specialised ideas, theories, procedures, guidelines, and writing styles of particular fields (Yuan et al., 2021). However, the literacy practices that are valued in the university emerge from specific disciplinary histories, yet students are often expected to master these as if they were common sense and natural (Boughey & McKenna, 2016:1). This means that there is a disconnect between students' linguistic knowledge

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and experiences, and English in classroom practices. As will be evidenced in Chapter 4, this dominant model of literacy characterises students' diverse backgrounds as well as 'decontextualised learners' whose social context is rendered irrelevant, with higher education success seen to be resting largely upon attributes inherent in, or lacking from, the individual (Boughey & McKenna, 2016).

South African higher education institutions continue to face challenges despite the demise of apartheid in 1994, which made education accessible to all students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds. 30 years into democracy, the disadvantaged schools in the townships and rural areas are still characterised by insufficient resources and poor-quality education. The poor level of education received by these students at high school poses challenges for them to read, write and think in English for academic purposes, an additional language for most of them (Sebolai, 2014:51). Due to lack of adequate academic language skills students struggle with academic demands and prerequisites of various subjects or modules. Students face frustration and confusion, difficulty in creating schedules and course plans, limited course options and flexibility and the potential for them to fall behind or take longer to complete their studies. Students who enter without formal education and without acquired academic literacy may suffer from a gap that arises when students find it difficult to apply general guidelines in a particular disciplinary context. If academic literacy is lacking in the classroom, it may have an impact on students' academic progress. This suggests that it could be beneficial to incorporate academic literacy development for students into subject-based teaching and learning.

Academic literacy is found to be essential in promoting academic success and is directly related to higher education, according to Yani (2022). As previously stated, academic literacy, includes a range of interrelated competencies because it encompasses both language and cognition. Achievement tasks are increasingly being developed to assess learning outcomes related to both knowledge and cognitive processes. It is possible to calculate not only the task's overall score but also the scores for the various content areas and cognitive processes if these are included in the design specifications.

Academic literacy encompasses numerous dimensions and can be analysed from various angles. It involves various aspects of reading, writing, and communication

skills students need to succeed in academic settings. Its dimensions include cognitive, integrative, critical, functional, affective, social and cultural. The dimensions are interconnected and essential for students to achieve academic success and become effective communicators in their field of study. They can be analysed by reading and writing assessments, surveys and questionnaires, observations, interviews, discourse and content analysis, case studies and standardised tests. By doing that, lecturers can gain a comprehensive understanding and identify areas for improvement. It is crucial to analyse them to ensure improved student outcomes, informed instruction, equity and inclusion, research and development, accountability and to bridge all the gaps. In order for lecturers to uncover valuable insights to support student success, improve teaching practices and advance literacy education. Writing serves as a means of highlighting the significance of addressing epistemology as a component of academic literacy development. While some students see writing as merely organising ideas and facts, others see it as a means of putting out a strong case as a component of academic work (Kim, 2020).

While students need to be able to demonstrate proficiency in academic literacy practices, such as following the rules for argument, providing evidence for the assertions they make, defining terms, and using a style appropriate for discussion at the university level (Choi & Brochu, 2024), viewing academic literacy only as a set of decontextualized and transferrable skills can be problematic (Paschal, 2022). This stems from socio-economic and educational differences that characterize the South African landscape and the diverse backgrounds of TVET students. Many educational frameworks advocate for the teaching of academic literacy skills in isolation from specific content areas. However, this can lead to a disconnection between what students learn and how they might apply these skills in practical, vocational contexts. According to Jacobs & Hodge 2009, the decontextualization of academic literacy skills fails to recognize that learning is context-specific and that students benefit from seeing how these skills apply in real-world scenarios. In the TVET context, where practical skills are critically important, focusing on decontextualized academic literacy can create a gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. For example, students may be taught to write essays or comprehend academic texts yet struggle to transfer these skills to technical reports or industry-specific documentation relevant to their vocational training (Reddy & Singh, 2018). In a TVET setting, students come from

varied educational backgrounds, including those who have faced systemic barriers to educational success. When academic literacy is not contextualized within the specific field of study, students may experience difficulty bridging the gap between their academic training and the technical competencies required in their fields.

A study by Reddy (2015) highlights that some TVET students perceive academic literacy as an add-on to their vocational training rather than an integral part of their learning process. This perception can lead to disengagement and lack of motivation to develop necessary literacy skills, further hindering their ability to apply these skills in their studies and future careers. The socio-economic conditions that many students face can worsen the challenges of acquiring academic literacy. South Africa's historical inequalities result in many students entering TVET colleges with limited literacy skills, influenced by previous educational experiences (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2016). This backdrop raises the question of how academic literacy programs can effectively support these students if they do not take into account the socio-economic challenges that influence their learning. Supporting the need for integrated approaches, Naidoo (2016) argues for developing academic literacy programs that are contextually relevant and tailored to the specific needs of TVET students. Such programs would not only focus on the acquisition of literacy skills but also on how these skills can be utilised within their vocational training, thereby enhancing both academic performance and employability.

An overemphasis on the skills involved in academic literacy practices at the expense of recognising and acknowledging the power relations that exist in the social contexts in which the practices take place is consistent with Bell's (2021) view of academic literacy, known as the study skills model. The study skills model assumes that literacy is a collection of decontextualised skills that students can learn and then apply in different contexts. This approach to academic literacy, like the early models of academic development, is characterised by a deficit view of students, and the focus is to fix problems with students' learning by focusing on surface features of language such as spelling and grammar (Lewis & Yeo, 2023). When students struggle to meet the outcomes of an introductory course, it is common to assume that they are underprepared or that they need remediation. Many students who have already completed preparatory studies may face difficulties in applying generic skills to a new

context (Peng & Guo, 2023). Students may struggle to understand why practices that previously received positive feedback no longer satisfy the needs of their new environment (Bhattacharya, 2019).

Adapting to new ways of knowing, understanding, interpreting, and organising information is a requirement of higher education learning. Within academic disciplines, reading and writing are essential tools that help students learn new material and expand their subject-matter expertise (Graham, 2022). To acquire the advanced reading and writing skills recognised in academic literacy, students must acquire a variety of skills, such as scanning, skimming, analysing, drawing conclusions, inferring, reading for main ideas, summarising, analysing, and evaluating (Choi & Brochu, 2024).

Language is thought to be one of the most important factors contributing to students' poor academic performance at South African higher education institutions. Issues with education are pervasive, and students enrolling at these institutions need extra help to succeed in their studies (Paschal, 2022). The realisation that for some students, particularly during the transition to higher education, finding an academic voice and identity may be frustrating is the source of some of the concerns. Unquestionably, the development of an intellectual curiosity culture and social integration elements involving the affective component of students' engagement with higher education are critical to their success in any higher education institution (Choi & Brochu, 2024). The ideological model restates what Bell (2021) saw as a set of discourse and language conventions that are culturally specific and are primarily influenced by written forms used in academic institutions like universities. It is crucial to develop integrated and contextualized academic literacy programs that are relevant to the specific fields of study and that take into account the diverse backgrounds of students. Such an approach can help bridge the gap between theory and practice, ultimately improving student outcomes and employability.

2.6.4 Academic literacies model

The utilisation of the academic literacies theoretical framework provides a discerning vantage point for comprehending the intricate interplay between epistemological considerations, identity formation and power dynamics that underlie the multifaceted

realm of language practices and policies within educational establishments (Leibowitz, 2021). The genesis of this theoretical framework can be traced back to esteemed scholars such as Lea and Street (2006) who vehemently criticised the conventional study skills methodologies employed in teaching student writing. These methodologies presuppose that a universal set of communicative abilities can be extracted from their disciplinary content and contexts and subsequently taught in isolation.

On the contrary, an academic literacy approach acknowledges literacy as a social practice (Street, 2003). Lea and Street (2006) explain that the academic literacies model 'is concerned with meaning-making, identity, power, and authority, and foregrounds the institutional nature of what counts as knowledge in any particular academic context' (p. 369). The aforementioned statement elucidates the exploration of the intricate interplay between language and the construction of meaning, which is profoundly influenced by the complex dynamics of power, authority and identity within the realm of academia (Lillis & Scott, 2007). From this vantage point, specific methodologies of interpretation, investigation, persuasion and composition are situated as the canonical scholarly dialogue, bestowing advantages upon specific perspectives while relegating others to the periphery based on racial, socioeconomic and linguistic factors (McKenna, 2021).

The research on academic literacies further elucidates that the practices of literacy are subject to debate and are contingent upon the specific context, exhibiting variations across different disciplines and cultural contexts (Lea, 2004). This stands in stark contrast to acculturation models that portray academia as a uniform culture into which students must assimilate. The utilisation of an academic literacies perspective serves to critically examine how issues about language, literacy and learning are often erroneously framed as deficiencies inherent in individual students rather than recognising their connection to broader systemic inequities and exclusionary practices (Boughey, 2022).

Nevertheless, it has been observed by Leibowitz (2021) that educational establishments frequently embrace a normative practice that prioritises the instruction of exclusive scholarly methodologies rather than adopting a transformative approach that critically examines the literacies that are deemed valuable, the beneficiaries of

these literacies and how discursive spaces can be expanded to accommodate diverse epistemologies and the processes of constructing meaning. The latter is imperative to decolonise curricula and knowledge production in South Africa and other regions, as advocated by Breidlid et al. (2021). There is a need for the higher education curriculum to be responsive to the emerging new world order, one that is characterised by deepening inequalities, exacerbated by technological advances, climate change, pandemics and persistent patriarchy. A transformed higher education curriculum with its sights set squarely on the ravages of coloniality is an important step towards a reconfigured education system within the changing contours of the world we live in (Govenger & Naidoo, 2022). The evolution of decolonial theory has provided the ingredients to not only challenge the dominance of Eurocentrism in the curriculum but also provide the foundation for a broader, inclusive reality of knowledge and truth claims. As such, decolonial theory recognises the pluriversality of the world we live in, with its persistent social and economic inequalities, thus making the quest for epistemic and social justice a key tenet of its foundations. In so far as knowledge and curriculum are concerned decolonial theory challenges epistemic dependence on the West and strives for epistemic freedom and epistemic justice. It arises from a context in which the humanity of the colonised, particularly black people, is doubted and pushed aside or, in Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013: 10), saddled with irrelevant knowledge that disempowers rather than empowers individuals and communities. Decolonial theory imagines knowledge within a new horizon of possibilities that necessitate epistemological, theoretical and methodological renewal.

This study employs a transformative academic literacies framework to investigate the inherent tensions between English-dominant instructional policies and the dynamics observed within a linguistically diverse TVET college environment. The framework above offers a comprehensive set of tools to critically examine matters about epistemic access, identity and empowerment that arise from the dataset.

The academic literacies model views students as novice members who need socialisation in the educational community of practices (Ahmed & Roche, 2022). All students enter their disciplines as novices who are learning a new academic language as they enter a professional community, even though it is true that for some students, the journey to acquire an academic culture is more difficult due to the greater gaps

between their prior experience and their current academic culture. Discipline conventions should not be taught to students as a remedial assignment; rather they are a natural part of learning and support them throughout the course.

The academic socialisation perspective, which focuses on integrating students into the culture of the academy, is associated with the study skills approach. It is thought that students learn by being fully immersed in the academies' procedures, with an emphasis on task interpretation and orientation to learning. This method seems to be predicated on the idea that the academy has a fairly uniform culture, with standards and procedures that must only be acquired in order to gain access to the entire establishment (McKinley & Rose, 2022).

Normative is the term Lillis and Scott (2007) used to characterise a position found in academic literacies research and pedagogy, which is consistent with the study skills and academic socialisation approaches to academic writing (Graham, 2022). The foundation of a normative position is the belief that disciplines are stable and that the student body is homogeneous. In order to introduce students to the ways of knowing and doing in the academy, the focus is on identifying academic conventions (Lillis & Scott, 2007:14). According to Lillis and Scott (2007:10), participation in the current academic environment is only possible through the adoption of the normative stance, which is the default position in many practices pertaining to pedagogy and policy in the academy. They contend, however, that the academic literacies approach has also fostered a transformative attitude towards writing and literacy.

According to Bosch et al. (2022), the term academic literacy tends to hide any of the diversity that exists, thus restricting one to a singular view of literacy as a particular set of practices. However, a body of work referred to as academic literacies has emerged over the past ten years. The focus shifts to how students learn to participate and make meaning in an academic setting when academic literacy is seen as academic literacies, and these literacies are seen as sets of practices (Bosch et al., 2022). Critical thinking, database searching, familiarity with academic norms like referencing, formal register usage, and the capacity to work with various academic genres are all examples of academic literacies. In addition to technology, the idea of multiple literacies is becoming critical (Yuan et al., 2021). The institution-validated value system of academic discourse comprises academic literacy (Kim, 2020).

According to Yani (2022), an academic literacies approach is a collection of instruments, techniques, and people. It is a developing subfield that critically examines communicative practices in the evolving university, especially writing. The study examines the introduction to formal academic literacy practices and the way reading and writing are practised in specific time/space contexts. Most importantly, it is also interested in creative, alternative, and socially just practices where new hybrid writing forms can flourish. In the context of policies relating to access and increased participation in higher education, academic literacies were used to challenge the deficit discourse around students and their reading and writing abilities, signalling the need for a more critical stance on students' production of meaning-making through academic writing.

2.7   Chapter summary

This literature review explored key issues and debates regarding EMI in higher education focusing on the South African context. The first section examined local and international language-in-education policies, revealing tensions between the stated multilingualism goals and the persistent English dominance inherited from colonialism. The policy implementation gap signals the need for more outstanding commitment and resources to elevate the academic status of marginalised languages.

The second section reviewed research on EMI and academic performance. Given the risks of cognitive overload and exclusion for those with lower English proficiency, the findings caution against presuming students can shift seamlessly to English-only instruction. This underscores the need to build students' academic English capacities within the curriculum explicitly. The third section argued for leveraging linguistic diversity through multilingual pedagogies as epistemic resources. However, enacting more inclusive, participatory visions requires confronting systemic constraints and ideologies which continue to marginalise bi/multilingualism.

The second part of the chapter outlined relevant theoretical frameworks. The academic literacies approach was used; it offers valuable lenses for understanding the relationship between multilingual identities and institutional monolingual language of instruction. These critical approaches align with calls to recognise students' multilingual repertoires as intellectual assets rather than deficiencies requiring

correction to dominant academic English norms. The frameworks support the analysis of how EMI impacts teaching and learning in this linguistically diverse context.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

The researcher provides an explanation of the research methodology used in this chapter to look into how using EMI impacts teaching and learning at a TVET college. The study focused on obtaining data about naturally occurring phenomena and used a qualitative method approach to do so (Lewis & Yeo, 2023). The process of triangulating data from various sources, such as observations, interviews, field notes, and document reviews, was employed to guarantee exhaustive and comprehensive results and to improve validity and reliability.

The research design and data collection methods are discussed, along with sampling techniques. Ethical considerations are also addressed and the data analysis tools utilised in the study are outlined. Overall, the chapter details the qualitative methodology that guided the researcher's process of exploring how the use of EMI as the language of instruction impacts the teaching and learning dynamics within the context of a TVET college.

3.2   Research Design

Research design refers to the overall strategy and plan of action that guides the researcher's process of data collection, analysis and interpretation in a study (Kankam, 2019). It encompasses decisions regarding the methodology, methods and protocols used to empirically investigate the research problem and relevant questions (Atmowardoyo, 2018). The design constitutes the blueprint for generating evidence and drawing conclusions related to the phenomenon of interest (Newman et al., 2022).

A sound research design is vital as it enhances the validity and rigour of the knowledge produced and allows the researcher to effectively address the aims of the project (Newman et al., 2022). Key elements include clearly specifying the type of data needed, outlining systematic procedures to gather and examine this data and delineating how it will be analysed to arrive at the research findings (Kankam, 2019). The design must align with the ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning the study (Atmowardoyo, 2018). Overall, the research design provides a logical architecture for the project that strengthens its credibility.

This study utilized a case study design, which involved conducting an in-depth investigation of a contemporary issue within its natural setting, bounded by time and place (Hancock & Algozzine, 2021). Case study research allows for penetrating inquiry into a phenomenon of interest, facilitating the generation of holistic and contextualized understandings (Hyett et al., 2022). The case itself may encompass a process, event, organization, group, or individual relevant to the study. The adoption of the case study approach is particularly justified in the context of this research because it enables a comprehensive exploration of the complexities surrounding English Medium Instruction (EMI) in a specific educational setting. By focusing on a defined case, the study can examine the nuanced experiences and challenges faced by lecturers and students, thereby providing rich, detailed insights that broader methodologies may overlook. This approach not only captures the intricate dynamics of EMI but also allows for the identification of contextual factors that influence teaching and learning, making it an ideal method for understanding this multifaceted issue.

This design was deemed suitable as the researcher sought insights into the localised experiences of lecturers and students regarding the use of EMI within the real-life context of a specific TVET college. Observations, interviews and documents facilitated a rich analysis of this case. Overall, an exploratory case study design provided the opportunity for an intensive, descriptive investigation that illuminated participants' perspectives and the particularities of the setting.

3.3   Research Approach

The research methodology encompasses the whole methodological framework employed in a study and is determined by the researcher's philosophical assumptions and objectives (Atmowardoyo, 2018). The methodology outlines the determination of whether the investigation predominantly utilised qualitative, quantitative, or mixed method approaches to systematically collect and analyse the data required to address the research challenge (Newman et al., 2022). According to Kankam (2019), the approach plays a crucial role in determining the fundamental methodologies related to sampling, data gathering, analysis and interpretation.

The explicit delineation of the research methodology is of utmost importance as it establishes a structure for the production of knowledge and the formulation of

conclusions that align with the researcher's perspective and the characteristics of the topic being investigated (Morgan, 2022). To generate valid and meaningful findings, the chosen approach must follow the study's aims and context (Newman et al., 2022).

The present study employed a qualitative methodology, prioritizing the collection of non-numerical data to explore individuals' viewpoints, lived experiences, and sense-making processes within authentic environments (Atmowardoyo, 2018). The primary objective of the researcher was to gain a comprehensive understanding of the perspectives and experiences of the participants. This was achieved through a thorough investigation of the subject using interviews and observations, which provided rich, contextual insights into the implementation of English Medium Instruction (EMI) at the TVET college.

The adoption of a qualitative approach is particularly justified in the context of this study because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the multifaceted educational phenomenon of EMI. Qualitative research is well-suited for understanding complex social processes, as it captures the nuances of participants' experiences and perceptions (Kankam, 2019). By employing this methodology, the study can yield descriptive insights that reveal how students and lecturers navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by EMI. This depth of understanding is essential for informing effective teaching practices and institutional policies that address the unique needs of the college's diverse student population.

3.4   Site, Population and Sampling

3.4.1 Site

The research was conducted at a TVET college located in the Free State province of South Africa. This site was selected because the researcher had eight years of experience teaching at the college and observing the complex relationships between language proficiency and academic performance among students. The familiar setting and the researcher's insider knowledge and sustained engagement enabled the investigation of this issue; these factors are considered valuable in qualitative research for garnering depth of understanding (Ravitch & Carl, 2021).

3.4.2 Population

The population consisted of all lecturers employed and students enrolled at the TVET College during the academic year 2021-2022. As Peng and Guo (2023) explain, the target population is the entire group of people from which the study sample is drawn. According to the college registrar's records, the institution had around 980 students and 65 lecturers that year.

The target populations were further delimited to particular segments of interest based on the research questions. For lecturers, the focus was on those between the ages of 21 and 35 teaching courses across National Certificate (Vocational) (NCV) Levels 2–4. For students, it was those aged between 18 and 35 enrolled in NCV Levels 2–4 of various vocational programmes. As Malterud et al. (2016) note, narrowing sample parameters in this way enables gathering information-rich cases relevant to the phenomenon being investigated.

3.4.3 Sampling

To find cases from the target populations with a lot of information, purposeful sampling was used (Etikan et al., 2016). With purposeful sampling, also known as judgement sampling, the researcher chooses participants based on predetermined criteria that are crucial for understanding the phenomenon under study (Bhattacharya, 2019).

3.4.3.1   Sample size

The researcher purposively selected a total sample of 12 lecturers and 12 students. This sample size supported reaching data saturation, which occurs when gathering additional data provides no further insights (Lowe et al., 2018). For qualitative research, samples of around 12 participants often enable adequate saturation (Vasileiou et al., 2018).

The sample was divided, with six lecturers and six students participating in one-on-one semi-structured interviews to elicit depth of perspective. The other six lecturers and six students took part in focus group interviews to uncover additional insights through interactive discussion. Three classrooms of students at varying academic

levels were also observed. This multimodal sampling facilitated the gathering of a rich spectrum of data to illuminate the issue from multiple angles.

3.5   Data Collection Methods

The researcher utilised multiple qualitative data collection methods to facilitate triangulation and enhance the credibility of the study's findings (Abdalla et al., 2022). According to Creswell and Poth (2018), employing diverse techniques enables the gathering of rich, comprehensive data and the gaining of multiple perspectives on the issue under investigation. The specific methods included semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, direct observations and document analysis.

3.5.1 Interviews

The researcher conducted two forms of interviews to elicit in-depth insights into participants' experiences and perspectives related to EMI. As noted by Agee (2020), interviewing allows entering into others' perspectives and exploring how individuals make meaning of phenomena they have encountered.

3.5.1.1   *Semi-structured interviews*

The researcher utilised semi-structured interviewing, which employs pre-determined questions complemented by probes seeking elaboration or clarification (Adams, 2022). This flexible approach facilitated focused, conversational dialogue while allowing unexpected themes to emerge (Ravitch & Carl, 2021).

The researcher interviewed a purposive sample of six lecturers and six students individually using a prepared interview protocol to ensure key topics were explored while permitting individuals' priorities and voices to shape the interaction. Informants were asked open-ended questions to elicit their experiences and views regarding the use of English as the instructional medium, including challenges encountered, effects perceived and potential solutions envisioned. All interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent and subsequently transcribed. This enabled the thorough analysis of the qualitative data through coding procedures.

3.5.1.2   *Focus group interview*

A focus group interview is a qualitative technique for data collection. Such a group is comprised of individuals with certain characteristics focusing on discussing a given issue or topic. It provides a setting for a relatively similar group to reflect on the questions asked by the interviewer. Its purpose it to collect high-quality data in a social context, which primarily helps to understand a specific problem from the viewpoint of the participants. The researcher conducted focus group interviews with six additional lecturers and six students who had not participated in the individual interviews. Focus groups enable gathering multiple perspectives through interactive discussion oriented around topics the researcher introduces (Ritchie et al., 2014). This method helped elicit insights through group dialogue built on one another's comments.

The researcher utilised a semi-structured approach, asking pre-determined questions to initiate and guide the conversation while allowing nascent themes to emerge. The focus groups were audio-recorded and transcribed with informant consent. The data underwent coding and thematic analysis procedures. Using both individual and focus group interviews allowed for examining convergence and divergence between individual viewpoints derived from one-on-one settings versus perspectives arising through group social dynamics.

3.5.2 Observation

The researcher directly observed three classrooms of students being taught by participating lecturers to witness the instructional dynamics and interactions related to the use of English-only as the medium of instruction. Non-participant observation was conducted with the researcher present strictly in an observer role with no involvement in classroom activities (Given, 2008). Detailed field notes were taken regarding the teaching approach, the language utilised, student participation and engagement, questions asked, terminological challenges that arose, code-switching and other emergent factors.

Direct observations enabled first-hand insights into language-related phenomena difficult to fully capture through interviews alone (Given, 2008). Analysing the observed classroom dynamics helped contextualise and expand the researcher's understanding of the experiences and issues highlighted by the informants during the interviews.

Comparing observational data with participants' self-reported data added analytical depth and credibility through method triangulation.

3.5.3 Document analysis

The researcher gathered relevant documents, including the TVET college's language policy, teachers' lesson plans, curriculum materials, assignments and academic feedback forms. Bowen (2022) notes that documents provide supplementary research data that ground the understanding of the context. The researcher conducted qualitative document analysis to identify relevant details on the college's language policy mandates, curriculum language expectations and the academic literacy support provided to students. This analysis helped illuminate the policy intentions underpinning the use of English-only instruction and contextual factors influencing the on-the-ground experiences of lecturers and students described during the data collection. Comparing policy documents with empirical findings allowed for assessing gaps between intended and actual practices.

The researcher strategically selected complementary qualitative methods to facilitate triangulation by gathering multiple forms of data on the issue of English as the instructional medium within this linguistically diverse TVET college. Using semi-structured interviews, focus groups, direct observations and document analysis enabled the assembling of rich, vivid insights into the participants' experiences from various angles. Triangulation expanded the study's depth and credibility (Abdalla et al., 2022). The multimodal data underwent coding and thematic analysis procedures to identify key patterns in the dataset relevant to the research questions. This rigorous qualitative approach effectively supported an in-depth exploration of the case.

3.6 Data Analysis

According to Ritchie et al. (2014:270), quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis differ in terms of the existence of established rules or procedures. While quantitative analysis has well-defined guidelines, the analysis of qualitative data lacks consensus on specific rules and methods, resulting in a multitude of potential techniques.

The objective of the qualitative data analysis was to examine how participants derived significance from a particular notion through the examination of their knowledge,

attitudes and experiences. The researcher employed the content analysis methodology as the chosen strategy for data collecting and the content analysis approach to examine the qualitative data that was gathered.

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007), content analysis is a viable approach for examining consistencies and discrepancies in conceptual elements. According to Berg (2004:303-304), the term 'it' refers to the process of conducting a meticulous, comprehensive and methodical analysis and interpretation of a specific collection of data to identify recurring patterns, themes, prejudices and significances. According to Schreier (2015:5), the described approach exhibits characteristics of being systematic, flexible and effective in data reduction.

Content analysis is a research method that enables the researcher to systematically analyse data by employing qualitative coding techniques, hence, facilitating the reduction and simplification of the data. The following procedural steps of content analysis were followed: data was prepared, the theme of analysis was defined, categories and a coding scheme were developed, the coding scheme was pre-tested on a sample, all the text was coded, the consistency of the coding employed was assessed, inferences were drawn based on coding/themes and, finally, the results were presented, interpreted and analysed, which included aligning the findings with the relevant literature. The obtained data were documented to ensure an accurate and reliable representation of the responses. The data that were captured were categorised in a manner that facilitated the identification of underlying concepts within the data. This coding process was employed to establish distinct categories through the application of various coding techniques.

The initial stage of the research involving the qualitative design typically entails the formulation of assumptions about the subject under investigation. To investigate the specific issue at hand, the researcher was required to gather data within an authentic environment that was attuned to the needs and experiences of the participants (Punch & Oancea, 2014). Under the prescribed methodology, the researcher initially endeavoured to acquaint themselves with the responses obtained from the presented inquiries. The responses provided by the participants were thoroughly reviewed multiple times to extract the relevant data. Subsequently, the primary subjects or

concepts addressed in the inquiries were determined and the coding process was executed.

The process of coding was initially performed manually. During this phase, the researcher made determinations regarding the pertinence of the information concerning the research focus. The research encountered challenges in the establishment of quality criteria for the study. To ensure the production of an acceptable study, it is important to observe specific quality difficulties. The following aspects were examined and discussed: trustworthiness, voluntary involvement, secrecy, informed consent, complete disclosure and ethical considerations.

3.7   Research Credibility

The investigator utilised the Cohen et al. (2011) recommended criteria for trustworthiness quality. They claim that determining a research study's "trustworthiness" is similar to determining its validity, which is determined by four main factors: credibility, transferability, dependability/consistency, and confirmability.

In research, the term "credibility" refers to a study's level of validity or truthfulness (Ahmed & Roche, 2022). This can be accomplished by the researcher working in the field continuously for a long time and using a variety of techniques to cross-validate the results. First of all, it is significant that the researcher taught in an EMI setting for a significant number of years at the particular college under investigation. Inspired by their work in this field and personal experience with students' typically poor English language proficiency, the researcher became personally interested in learning about the challenges and experiences faced by teachers and students with regard to EMI. Their research focuses on the effect of EMI on academic performance in particular.

To bolster the study's credibility, the researcher employed a triangulation approach by collecting data from five distinct methodologies. Additionally, they made a deliberate effort to include the perspectives of individuals who had been marginalised by dominant discourses (Grbich, 2010). The inclusion of a comprehensive research design and a meticulous account of the data collection and analysis techniques augmented the validity of this study. The report provided comprehensive insights into the potential obstacles that the researcher faced during the study.

The concept of transferability pertains to the degree to which the findings of the research may be generalised to people and situations beyond the specific sample utilised in the study. The topic of generalisation in qualitative research has been a subject of debate in scholarly literature. In this study, the researcher aligned with the perspective of Ritchie et al. (2014), who argue that qualitative research has the potential for generalisation in terms of the character and diversity of phenomena but not in terms of their prevalence. Nevertheless, Cohen et al. (2011) posit that the responsibility of researchers does not lie in generalisation but rather in offering an intricate portrayal of the participants and the study environment. This serves the purpose of aiding others in assessing the potential for transferability.

This study presented a comprehensive account of the individuals and the contextual factors involved. While the participants exhibited a collective cultural and religious background, it would be inappropriate to assert that their encounters with EMI yielded identical teaching and learning experiences and obstacles. This was due to the presence of distinct characteristics that rendered each setting unique.

The establishment of dependability and confirmability can be achieved by documenting the research design, methodology and data analysis, allowing other researchers to assess the robustness of the study (Richards, 2003). The achievement thereof was facilitated by employing a comprehensive explanation of the setting, participants, data-gathering techniques, procedures and analysis. In addition, a comprehensive transcription of the interviews was included to ensure the research's validity and enable others to assess its rigour.

Ensuring the reliability of the research study was of paramount importance. The research and findings exhibited a high level of reliability and logical coherence (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). In this study, data were collected through various methods including individual interviews, group interviews, observation, field notes and document analysis. These multiple sources of data facilitated triangulation, hence, enhancing the credibility and reliability of the findings.

3.8   Ethical Considerations

McKinley and Rose's study from 2022 complied with research ethics since it took into account moral viewpoints regarding beliefs about what is right and wrong. Gay (2010)

claims that whatever the consequences of their decision to withdraw from the study, participants had the freedom to refuse to take part or to stop at any time. According to Newman (2011), research has an ethical-moral component, which means that researchers have a moral and professional responsibility to uphold by following ethical principles, even if they are not aware of them. This suggests that the foremost responsibility of a researcher is to guarantee the welfare of the subjects, which includes factors like their consent given voluntarily, full disclosure of pertinent data, informed consent, and protection of their rights to confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy.

The study was conducted independently by the researcher, without any instances of replication or plagiarism. The findings were characterised by their integrity and impartiality as they were derived from the collected data. Moreover, the study demonstrated a notable emphasis on treating the participants with a high level of regard. The ethical principles were consistently upheld and their adherence was ensured whenever information was required. The study was authorised by the Principal's office at the college under examination. Data collection commenced after obtaining an ethical clearance certificate from the College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Review Committee at the University of South Africa (Unisa).

3.8.1 Voluntary participation

According to Graham (2022) the research participants in this study were not forced, coerced, or under any obligation to participate in any way because of the principle of voluntary participation. Participants' participation in this research project was entirely voluntary, giving them the freedom to make their own decisions about whether or not to participate (Tuckman, 2011). Both lecturers and students were given the choice by the researcher to either stay involved in the study until its conclusion or to stop at any time (De Vos et al., 2011).

It is crucial to recognise that participants cannot be forced, coerced, or mandated to participate in the study, as stated by Bosch et al. (2022). The investigator implemented strategies to guarantee that each participant had a thorough comprehension of the purpose and consequences of their participation in the research. They communicated

with a commendable degree of candour and transparency, making sure that every aspect of the research was fully disclosed.

The researcher effectively communicated the purpose of the study to the participants, ensuring transparency and avoiding any form of deception or misrepresentation. The researcher provided a comprehensive overview of the research methodology at the outset. Participants were afforded the prerogative to decline engagement or discontinue their involvement in the study at any juncture, irrespective of the potential ramifications to the research endeavour.

3.8.2 Confidentiality

In all research, the researcher is obligated to preserve the privacy of all participants (Babbie, 2010). This necessitated that access to participants' information, such as characteristics, replies, behaviour and any other information that could make them identifiable, was not made public (Cohen et al., 2011). Boysen et al. (2011) propound that confidentiality in research means that anyone studying or reading the research results would not be able to establish the identity of those who participated based on their responses.

In this study, colours were used to represent participants. Participants were given the option of selecting their preferred colour for labelling. Throughout the investigation, those colours were used to distinguish between lecturers and students. This is reinforced by Lewis & Yeo, (2023), who suggest that confidentiality can be attained by gathering the data anonymously, using a technique to link names to data that can be deleted, asking participants to use pseudonyms, and disclosing only group, not individual, outcomes.

The relevance of the research was highlighted and participants were requested to sign a confidentiality agreement form so that they could contribute information without hesitating. Participants' names were not recorded anywhere and no one was able to connect the participants to the responses that were supplied. Answers were also given a code number and were referred to in that fashion all the time.

3.8.3 Informed consent

According to Lewis & Yeo (2023), informed consent indicates that subjects have the option of choosing whether or not to take part in a study. Before they took part in the study, each participant received an explanation of its purpose. They signed a consent form indicating their understanding of the research and their willingness to participate, which was how their consent was obtained (Yuan et al., 2021). Giving participants the option to stop participating at any time without incurring penalties and fully disclosing any risks related to the study helped to further ensure informed consent (Kim, 2020). The participants were made aware of their freedom to leave the study at any moment without fear of retaliation (Bell, 2011). After being informed of and comprehending the potential risks, participants gave their written consent (Yani, 2022).

3.8.4 Full disclosure

The researcher maintained transparency and integrity by providing participants with detailed and accurate information about all aspects of the study. The researcher maintained complete transparency about the study's objective, refraining from engaging in any form of deception or misrepresentation of the subject (Kim 2020). Participants were informed about the potential risks associated with their participation in the research (De Vos et al., 2011; Punch & Oancea, 2014).

No data about the study were concealed from the participants throughout this research endeavour. Each participant was provided with a participation information sheet and a written consent form that outlined the objectives of the research, the potential advantages and the guidelines for participation. The primary emphasis was placed on the human components of the research procedure to recognise and mitigate any potential bias. The interrogatives were carefully formulated and administered in a manner that facilitated the participants' authentic expression of emotions, devoid of any prejudiced influences. The researcher also took measures to establish a conducive atmosphere, thereby fostering a sense of ease among the participants.

The researcher used an approach that fostered a sense of relatability with the students, thereby creating an environment conducive to active participation and voluntary engagement. The students were motivated to engage in the activity through the provision of explanations regarding its potential for providing personal learning. In

addition, the lecturers also provided instruction on the concept of prejudice while actively striving to enhance students' capacity for empathy and promote empathetic communication skills. Finally, the lecturers prioritised the task of addressing any existing disparities and fostering an inclusive environment by actively promoting acts of benevolence. This approach aimed to ensure that students felt comfortable and encouraged to engage in classroom activities without any feelings of intimidation.

3.9   Chapter summary

This chapter provided an overview of the research methods and design that were employed to achieve the objectives of the study. The chapter acknowledged the suitability of the paradigm, approach and style that were used in the study – descriptive research located within a qualitative approach and a case study. Subsequently, the deliberation over the recruitment of participants was outlined. Next, the chapter delved into the methodology for data collection, specifically focusing on the exploration of lecturers' and students' experiences in teaching and learning with EMI.

Additionally, the chapter outlined the data analysis process. The discourse encompassed various key aspects, namely, trustworthiness, voluntary engagement, confidentiality, informed consent and complete disclosure. Finally, the chapter delved into matters about the calibre of study and ethical deliberations.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1   Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses the key findings obtained from the interviews, focus groups, observations and document analysis conducted for this investigative study of the impact of EMI at a TVET college in South Africa. The findings are structured around the main themes that emerged from the data analysis process of the study's research questions. Relevant scholarly literature is integrated to contextualise the results. The aim is to provide an in-depth understanding of lecturers' and students' experiences with EMI and its perceived influence on teaching, learning and academic performance in this linguistically diverse college setting. This chapter focuses on two sections: section A discusses lecturers' views and perceptions from 4.4 to 4.7, and section B discusses students' experiences and challenges from 4.8 to 4.9.

4.2   Research Sample

The research sample refers to the proportion of the target sample that actually participated in the study (Kelley et al., 2003). A high research sample enhances the representativeness of the results and improves the generalisability of the findings to the broader target population. The target sample for this study was 12 lecturers and 12 students, selected through purposive sampling from the TVET college based on meeting specific inclusion criteria relevant to examining their experiences with EMI.

Of the 12 lecturers invited to participate, 11 lecturers fully completed the one-on-one, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, yielding a research sample of 91%. Of the 12 students invited to participate, 10 students fully completed the one-on-one, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, resulting in a research sample of 83%.

Table 1 outlines the target sample size, the actual sample size achieved and the resultant research sample.

Table 1: Research sample

Participant group	Target sample size	Actual sample size	Responses percentage
Lecturers	12	11	91%
Students	12	10	83%

This high research sample of 91% for lecturers and 83% for students indicates that a substantial majority of the intended participant sample was successfully recruited and retained throughout data collection. According to Fincham (2008), a research sample of 60% or higher is considered satisfactory for survey-based studies to generate representative results within standard error margins. Kelley et al. (2003) established that acceptable research samples for rigorous qualitative studies typically range between 60% and 92%.

Therefore, the 91% and 83% response percentages achieved for lecturers and students respectively exceed the common thresholds and contribute positively to the reliability and generalisability of the findings. With over 90% of the target lecturer sample and over 80% of the target student sample participating fully, the results can be considered highly representative of the broader views, experiences and perceptions of lecturers and students at the TVET college within the parameters of interest. Such a robust research sample strengthens the trustworthiness and potential transferability of the findings.

The excellent research samples suggest that the participant samples recruited for this qualitative study very closely matched the initially intended samples, with minimal loss of subjects during data collection. This indicates that the results paint an authentic, reliable portrait of how lecturers and students experience and perceive the use of English-only as the instructional medium within this diverse educational context. The rich insights gathered are well-positioned to meaningfully inform the understanding of the on-the-ground issues associated with English-medium policies in multilingual tertiary settings more broadly.

4.3　Description of Data

This section describes the demographics of the participants, providing contextual information about the sample (Ruel et al., 2016). This allows assessing the diversity and representativeness of the sample. Relevant demographic factors examined here include age, gender, qualifications and teaching/learning experience.

4.3.1　Age

Age is a salient factor in educational research, as perspectives and needs often vary across different career and maturity levels. Table 2 outlines the age distribution of the lecturer and student participants.

Table 2: Age of participants

Age Group	Lecturers (n=11)	Students (n=10)
18–20 years	-	4
21–25 years	3	3
26–30 years	5	2
31–35 years	3	1

The lecturer participants ranged from 21 to 35 years old. This aligns with the focus on younger vocational education lecturers who are still at the start of their teaching careers. Of the 11 lecturers, 3 were between 21 and 25 years old, 5 were between 26 and 30 and 3 were between 31 and 35. The student participants ranged from 18 to 35 years old. Of the 10 student participants, 4 were between 18 and 20 years old, 3 were between 21 and 25, 2 were between 26 and 30 and 1 was between 31 and 35 years old. This age range for students covers typical ages at various academic levels in a vocational college context.

Gathering perspectives from informants across a 15-year age spectrum yielded useful insights into whether experiences with English as the instructional medium differ along career stage and maturity levels. For instance, veteran lecturers may employ different instructional support strategies compared to their younger peers. Mature students may feel more self-conscious about English deficits than younger students. The age composition contributes to result reliability as any potential variations attributable to

age were able to surface. Hence, the sample's age distribution aligns closely with the target populations as the study aimed to focus on younger-to-mid-career lecturers teaching NCV Levels 2 to 4 and their early adulthood students. This age variability within the parameters of interest enhances the result's generalisability.

4.3.2 Gender

Gender is another salient demographic factor, as males and females may encounter educational experiences differently. Table 3 outlines the gender breakdown of participants.

Table 3: Gender of participants

Gender	Lecturers (n=11)	Students (n=10)
Male	6	5
Female	5	5

The sample included both male and female participants in roughly equal proportions. Of the 11 lecturers, 6 were male and 5 were female. Of the 10 students, 5 were male and 5 were female. This close gender balance helps to mitigate potential biases and ensures that the findings reflect both men's and women's viewpoints and experiences relating to English as the instructional medium. Any gender-specific concerns had the chance to emerge. For instance, female students may be more anxious than male peers when speaking English in class or male lecturers may rely more heavily on lecture-based teaching methods than female colleagues. Gender variability strengthens reliability.

4.3.3 Qualifications

Participants' educational qualifications provide useful background context as these qualifications shape their teaching/learning capabilities. Table 4 outlines the lecturers' qualifications.

Table 4: Lecturers' qualifications

Highest Qualification	Number of Lecturers
Bachelor's Degree in Education	5
Bachelor's Degree in Vocational Field	3
Diploma in Education	2
Diploma in Vocational Field	1

All 11 lecturer participants held the post-secondary qualifications required for their teaching positions. Five lecturers held a Bachelor's Degree in Education, 3 held a Bachelor's Degree in their specific vocational field, 2 held a Diploma in Education and 1 held a Diploma in their vocational field. These qualifications indicate their subject matter expertise and pedagogical knowledge essential for effective instruction. Lecturer participants' academic backgrounds help contextualise their experiences and teaching strategies relating to EMI. Those with qualifications focused on education may employ more specialised instructional techniques than those without formal pedagogical training.

Table 5 indicates students' pre-college educational qualifications.

Table 5: Students' qualifications

Educational Level	Number of Students
Grade 12	5
Grade 11	3
Grade 10	2

The student participants had completed various Senior Phase grades before enrolling at the TVET college. Of the 10 students, 5 had completed Grade 12, 3 had completed Grade 11 and 2 had completed Grade 10. Their high school studies provided the foundational skills required for entering vocational programmes. Those with stronger Grade 12 performance likely possessed better initial English proficiency relative to their peers with weaker secondary schooling. Students' pre-college education backgrounds help contextualise their English language capabilities and learning needs when transitioning into an English-dominant post-secondary environment.

Thus, gathering data from lecturers and students with varying but relevant academic credentials provided useful insights into how qualifications shape instructional proficiency and student readiness related to EMI.

4.3.4 Teaching/learning experience

Experience in a role shapes familiarity with related challenges. Table 6 summarises participants' teaching/learning experience.

Table 6: Teaching/learning experience

Years of Experience	Number of Lecturers	Number of Students
1–2 years	2	3
3–4 years	5	4
5–7 years	4	2
8–10 years	–	1

The lecturer participants had 1 to 7 years of teaching experience at the TVET college. Of the 11 lecturers, 2 had 1 to 2 years' experience, 5 had 3 to 4 years and 4 had 5 to 7 years. None of the sampled lecturers had over 7 years of experience, reflecting a focus on earlier-career lecturers. The student participants had been enrolled for 1 to 3 years at the college across varying academic levels. Of the 10 students, 3 had 1 to 2 years' experience, 4 had 3 to 4 years, 2 had 5 to 7 years and 1 had 8 to 10 years. The sample concentrated on students who were still progressing through their vocational programmes.

Gathering data from informants with varying lengths of institutional exposure helped elicit perspectives on whether challenges related to English as the instructional medium evolve across different teaching/learning stages. Experienced lecturers may have developed more pedagogical coping strategies relative to novices. Students with more years enrolled may feel more confident with English over time. The range of exposure fortifies result reliability.

Therefore, the sample's demographic composition – encompassing diversity in age, gender, qualifications and experience – aligns closely with the target population parameters and contributes meaningfully to result generalisability, reliability and

contextual richness. Section A: 4.4 – 4.7 on data analysis look explicitly at lecturers' views and perspectives about how language affects learning and comprehension. This is followed by Section B: 4.8 – 4.9 which discuss students' experiences and challenges with the use of EMI.

Section A: Lecturers' views and perspectives

4.4　How English as a Medium of Instruction Impacts Teaching and Learning in a Linguistically Diverse Higher Education Context

This section focuses on lecturers' perceptions, particularly how the language of instruction impacts students' performance in general, including classroom participation, verbal and written communication, and comprehension. In addition, it will discuss pedagogical approaches that lecturers have reported to use in multilingual classrooms.

4.4.1　Students' limited English proficiency hinders comprehension

Eight participants out of 12 (66.6%) emphasised that the students' lack of English language proficiency greatly impeded teaching and learning:

> *"These students don't have vocabulary to understand what I'm teaching. I end up explaining in mother tongue because English is a barrier."* (Lecturer 7)

> *"Students are struggling to learn in English. Maybe if I can use some Sotho, they could understand the lessons better."* (Lecturer 5)

> *"Students just sit quietly in class. They don't understand but are afraid to ask in English."* (Lecturer 2)

These perspectives indicate that code-switching is often used to compensate for students' limited English proficiency and facilitate comprehension. Where the students' grasp of academic English is limited, meaning-making is hindered. Participants indicated that this language barrier lowers lecturer-student interactivity and impedes deeper learning. Conceptual grasp remains partial without sufficient language proficiency to understand key terminology and complex instructional exchanges. As Emptaz-Collomb (2009) argues, deficits in the language of instruction often obstruct

students' ability to fully engage with disciplinary knowledge and classroom dialogue. Mutasa (2015) also cautions that lecture comprehension deteriorates when students lack English mastery, disadvantaging academic achievement.

Addressing the issue of limited English proficiency requires a multifaceted approach. First, enhancing language support services within the institution can significantly aid students in developing their English skills. Providing targeted resources such as language workshops, tutoring, and access to online learning platforms can empower students to improve their proficiency. Additionally, incorporating language-focused activities into the curriculum can promote active engagement with academic English, facilitating a better understanding of course content. Moreover, training for lecturers on effective communication strategies, including the appropriate use of code-switching, can enhance classroom interactions.

4.4.2 Code-switching used to enhance understanding

Six out of 12 lecturers (50%) reported that code-switching between English and students' home languages aids comprehension:

> *"I teach in English but also try Zulu sometimes. This method helps me get ideas across when students don't understand the lessons in English."* (Lecturer 5)

> *"I use some quick Sotho to explain difficult concepts. It improves their understanding."* (Lecturer 9)

Code-switching involves movement between languages, often for pragmatic reasons, to facilitate communication or enhance meaning (Myers-Scotton, 2006). As Mabule (2015) highlights, code-switching is frequently used in multilingual tertiary settings to scaffold instruction and clarify challenging content. Madiba (2022) also notes that judicious code-switching expands students' learning capabilities by strategically leveraging their full linguistic repertoires.

However, several lecturers felt pressured to minimise code-switching due to the institution's English-only language policy. This finding indicates a potential disconnect between policy and pedagogical realities, as lecturers code-switch out of pedagogical need despite monolingual directives (Nyika, 2015). Canagarajah (2011) argues that

rigid English-only policies suppress multilingualism's affordances and fail to align with on-the-ground classroom dynamics.

The implications of these findings are significant for both teaching practices and institutional policies. Recognizing the benefits of code-switching can lead to more flexible language policies that support effective teaching strategies. By allowing lecturers to utilize multiple languages, institutions can enhance students' comprehension and engagement. Furthermore, training programs for educators should include guidance on effective code-switching techniques, empowering them to navigate language barriers while adhering to institutional policies. Encouraging a more dynamic approach to language use in the classroom can foster a richer learning environment where students feel supported and understood. Ultimately, embracing linguistic diversity not only benefits students but also enriches the academic community as a whole, promoting an inclusive educational experience that acknowledges and values all languages.

4.4.3 Classroom participation and confidence to communicate ideas

Six out of 12 (50%) indicated that students rarely actively participate in class discussions or ask questions, often due to embarrassment over their English skills:

> *"They want to answer the lecturer's question but their English is not good. Thinking that other students will laugh at their mistake so they keep quiet."* (Lecturer 8)

> *"In our classes, students just sit silently. They are scared to talk because their English isn't perfect."* (Lecturer 1)

Second language anxiety refers to the fear or apprehension that students associate with using a language in which they lack proficiency (MacIntyre, 2017). As Tsiplakides and Keramida (2010) note, such anxiety frequently deters classroom engagement and learning opportunities. Madiba (2010) also finds that a student's lack of confidence in speaking English leads to the avoidance of verbal interaction although active engagement is pivotal for effective learning.

Addressing the issue of classroom participation requires a multifaceted approach. Creating a supportive classroom environment can help alleviate some of the anxiety associated with using English. Encouraging peer-to-peer interactions, such as small group discussions, can provide students with a lower-pressure setting to practice their language skills. Additionally, implementing strategies that celebrate mistakes as part of the learning process can foster a more resilient mindset among students. This shift in classroom culture can empower students to take risks in their language use, ultimately enhancing their confidence and willingness to engage. Moreover, lecturers should be trained to recognize signs of anxiety and employ techniques that promote inclusivity, such as using positive reinforcement and providing constructive feedback. By actively addressing the factors that contribute to second language anxiety, educators can cultivate an environment where students feel valued and motivated to express their ideas, leading to richer classroom discussions and improved learning outcomes.

4.4.4 Grammar and academic writing challenges

Nine participants out of 12 (75%) widely highlighted grammar and formal academic writing in English as major challenges:

> *"Writing essays is so difficult. Students make many grammar mistakes and they can't express their ideas clearly."* (Lecturer 10)

> *"These students struggle with basics like tenses and sentence construction. This hinders their assignment quality."* (Lecturer 4)

Academic writing refers to the formal composition styles and textual conventions valued within scholarly disciplines and higher education assessment tasks (Chokwe, 2013). However, research shows that additional language students often lack mastery of the advanced grammatical accuracy, discursive repertoires and writing techniques required for academic writing in English, constraining their performance (Evans & Morrison, 2011; Van Dyk et al., 2021). Poor syntactic control and underdeveloped academic literacy skills in English negatively impact written assignments.

Thus, the responses reveal that EMI presents multiple interrelated linguistic challenges that fundamentally impact teaching and learning processes. Students'

limited English proficiency constrains comprehension, participation and skill development. Lecturers employ improvisational code-switching to mitigate difficulties despite institutional language policies creating tensions. The findings highlight the need for further research and training to optimise pedagogical strategies for English additional language students in tertiary settings.

Improving students' grammar and writing skills requires a comprehensive support system. Offering targeted writing workshops can help students develop their academic writing competencies, focusing on essential aspects like structure, grammar, and clarity. Incorporating peer review processes in assignments allows students to receive constructive feedback from their classmates, fostering a collaborative learning environment. Additionally, integrating technology, such as grammar-checking software and online writing resources, can aid students in identifying and correcting mistakes in their writing. Encouraging lecturers to provide explicit instruction on academic conventions and writing techniques can further enhance students' understanding of what is expected in their assignments. Ultimately, addressing these challenges through multifaceted support initiatives will not only improve students' writing skills but also increase their confidence and engagement in the academic sphere.

4.4.5 Role of Technology

In the context of English Medium Instruction (EMI) within a linguistically diverse higher education setting, technology plays a crucial role in enhancing English language proficiency. With the increasing availability of digital tools and resources, students have access to a variety of platforms that support their language learning both inside and outside the classroom. This theme explores how technology facilitates language acquisition and offers additional opportunities for students to improve their English skills.

> "*I use apps like Duolingo to practice English every day. It makes learning fun, and I can do it anytime I want. I feel more confident when I speak in class because of it.*"
>
> "*Online videos and podcasts help me understand English better. I listen to them while I commute, and it really improves my listening skills.*"

"Our lecturers use technology in class, like slides and videos. It helps me follow along and learn new words. I also join online forums where I can chat with other students in English."

The responses indicate that technology significantly enhances English language proficiency for students in a linguistically diverse context. Participants highlighted the benefits of using language learning apps, online resources, and digital communication platforms, which collectively contribute to improved confidence and skills in English.

The findings align with existing literature that emphasizes the positive impact of technology on language learning. According to Warschauer and Healey (1998), technology can provide students with authentic contexts for language use, which is essential for developing proficiency. The availability of various digital resources allows students to engage with English in meaningful ways, extending their learning opportunities beyond the classroom.

Moreover, Chen and Tsai (2019) note that technology facilitates personalized learning experiences, enabling students to progress at their own pace and focus on areas where they need improvement. This is particularly important in multilingual settings, where students may have varying levels of English proficiency. The ability to access language learning tools at any time helps to bridge gaps in knowledge and fosters a more inclusive learning environment.

Additionally, the integration of technology in teaching practices, as mentioned by the participants, supports diverse learning styles and enhances engagement. As highlighted by Liu et al. (2020), the use of multimedia resources in instruction not only aids comprehension but also enriches the overall learning experience. This aligns with the experiences of the participants who appreciated the use of slides and videos in their classes, indicating that technology is an effective tool for enhancing English language instruction.

4.5 Students' Academic Performance

This theme examines the perceived effects of EMI on students' academic achievement within linguistically diverse tertiary classrooms. It has become increasingly common worldwide for universities to adopt English for internationalisation and competitiveness (Macaro et al., 2018). However, its implementation in multilingual contexts where English is an additional language poses risks of marginalising students with limited proficiency. This study's findings suggest that EMI negatively impacts the academic performance of additional language speakers in four key ways as elaborated in the following sub-themes.

4.5.1 Poor results in English subjects

A predominant finding was that students often struggle in and fail subjects specifically focused on the English language itself. As Lecturer 2 explained:

> "*Students barely pass English class. Grammar, comprehension, vocabulary – they struggle with all aspects.*"

Based on their observations of students' performance, Lecturer 11 concurred:

> "*Most students perform poorly in my English First Additional Language classes. Their foundational proficiency is inadequate.*"

These perspectives align with previous research indicating that additional language speakers frequently lack mastery of the advanced academic English language conventions needed to succeed in university-level language coursework. As Kok et al. (2011) note in their South African study, black students who attended secondary schools with limited English instruction are often underprepared for the high linguistic demands of tertiary English courses, resulting in failure rates of 50% or more. Similarly, Schlebusch and Thobedi (2004) found that black South African students' limited school-level exposure to English severely constrained their university-level English language acquisition and academic literacy development. Thus, the substandard English instruction in under-resourced schools undermines students' preparedness for achieving English language learning outcomes at university.

Addressing the issue of poor results in English subjects necessitates a multifaceted approach that begins with improving foundational language instruction at the secondary school level. Enhancing teacher training programs to focus on effective English language teaching methods can significantly impact students' preparedness for tertiary studies. Additionally, implementing early intervention strategies for students who demonstrate weaknesses in English can help bridge the gap before they enter university. Providing access to supplementary resources, such as tutoring programs and online learning platforms, can further assist students in strengthening their language skills. Moreover, fostering partnerships between universities and local high schools can create a continuum of support, ensuring that students receive the guidance they need throughout their educational journey.

4.5.2 Failure to comprehend assessment questions

Another predominant finding was that students' limited English proficiency frequently hindered their ability to properly understand test and examination questions, negatively affecting their performance. As Lecturer 1 described:

> *"In accounting examinations, they understand the work but don't get the questions. So they fail the test."*

Lecturer 9 provided corroborating observations:

> *"Students often know the content but lack the language skills to engage with assessment tasks."*

This difficulty aligns with research indicating that language gaps often impede students' ability to accurately interpret assessment questions and adequately demonstrate their subject knowledge, resulting in poor test performance. As Tshotsho (2013) notes in her large-scale study at a South African university, students struggle to understand examination questions in English and, thus, cannot properly exhibit their learning. She argues that language presents a major obstacle to successful assessment for additional language speakers across academic disciplines.

Similarly, Mgqwashu (2016) finds that English language proficiency strongly correlates with academic achievement among South African university students across fields and

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asserts that limited proficiency constrains test performance regardless of content knowledge. Thus, as the participants indicated, inadequate English comprehension undermines students' assessment outcomes even when they understand course concepts.

To effectively address the issue of comprehension in assessments, educational institutions must consider implementing targeted strategies that enhance students' language skills. Developing assessment materials that utilize clearer language and simplified structures can help reduce confusion and improve understanding. Additionally, offering practice assessments and workshops focused on interpreting examination questions can build students' confidence and skills in this area. Encouraging collaborative learning environments where students can discuss and clarify questions with peers may also alleviate some of the anxiety associated with assessments. Furthermore, training lecturers to recognize language-related barriers in assessments can lead to more supportive evaluation practices.

4.5.3 Difficulty articulating understanding in writing

Participants further emphasised that students frequently struggle to articulate their understanding coherently in writing during examinations, assignments and other tasks, negatively affecting their performance. As Lecturer 7 described:

"During examinations, they know the work in their head but can't write proper responses in English. So they get low marks."

Lecturer 6 provided similar observations:

"These students understand concepts but battle to express themselves clearly in writing. Their academic language skills are underdeveloped."

These perspectives again corroborate studies highlighting that additional language students' difficulties formulating subject knowledge in formal written English at university hinder their achievement. Evans and Morrison (2011) find that language gaps constrain students' abilities to adequately demonstrate learning in writing-intensive assessments, resulting in the perception that they lack subject mastery despite conceptual understanding.

Madiba (2013) similarly finds that students fail assignments because their limited proficiency prevents the coherent written articulation of their learning, with negative impacts on grades. As Canagarajah (2006) argues, academic literacy in English is closely tied to academic success within EMI environments. Thus, as the findings suggest, underdeveloped writing skills in English impede students' performance on written tasks.

Improving students' ability to articulate their understanding in writing requires a comprehensive approach that integrates language development with content instruction. Implementing writing support services, such as dedicated writing centers, can provide students with the feedback and guidance they need to enhance their writing skills. Additionally, incorporating writing exercises into the curriculum that focus on both form and content can help students practice articulating their thoughts clearly. Encouraging peer review sessions allows students to engage with each other's work, fostering collaborative learning and constructive feedback. Furthermore, providing explicit instruction on academic writing conventions, such as structuring essays and using appropriate terminology, can empower students to express their ideas more effectively.

4.5.4 Anxiety and low confidence

Finally, some participants revealed that language barriers caused anxiety for students and eroded their academic confidence. As Lecturer 4 explained:

> *"Students feel so thoughtless in class because their English is poor. It makes them nervous to participate."*

Lecturer 5 described the related effects:

> *"When you don't understand the language, it's disempowering; students become anxious and lose confidence."*

These perspectives align with previous studies indicating that language-related anxiety frequently undermines additional language students' classroom engagement, self-assurance and achievement. As Ibrahim (2001) found in his study of Egyptian university students, second language anxiety is significantly correlated with lowered

academic self-esteem and performance. Similarly, Woodrow (2006) reveals that speaking anxiety causes Chinese students to withdraw from EMI classroom discussions, hindering their learning and participation. Thus, as participants indicated, limited English proficiency may affect students' confidence, engagement and outcomes detrimentally.

Therefore, the responses indicate that students' constrained English language abilities negatively impact academic performance in diverse ways, with equity implications. Poor English skills appear to hinder achievement in language subjects, assessments, written tasks and student confidence across disciplines. This aligns with research which emphasises that additional language speakers require strong proficiency to succeed in EMI environments. Thus, the findings suggest that more support is needed to ensure multilingual students develop sufficient English mastery to achieve equitable outcomes in tertiary EMI contexts.

Addressing the anxiety and low confidence stemming from language barriers requires a multifaceted approach focused on fostering a supportive learning environment. Creating safe spaces for students to practice their English without fear of judgment can encourage participation and reduce anxiety. Providing opportunities for small group discussions or peer mentoring can help students build confidence in their language abilities through collaboration. Additionally, integrating stress-reduction techniques, such as mindfulness or relaxation exercises, into classroom activities can help alleviate performance anxiety. Training educators to recognize signs of anxiety and implement inclusive teaching strategies will further support students in overcoming these barriers.

4.6   Pedagogic Approaches to Facilitate Disciplinary Knowledge

This theme examined university lecturers' perspectives and pedagogical practices related to using EMI to teach academic subject content to students with diverse home languages. EMI refers to the use of English as the primary language for teaching and learning academic subjects (excluding English language courses) in educational contexts where English is not the first language of the majority of students or teachers (Macaro, 2018).

The widespread adoption of EMI policies in universities worldwide has been driven by motivations of internationalisation, global competitiveness and access to English-medium research and knowledge (Rose & McKinley, 2020). However, its implementation within multilingual student populations where English is an additional language poses risks of marginalising, disadvantaging or excluding students with limited English proficiency from disciplinary content and learning opportunities.

This study provides insight into how university lecturers view and experience the use of EMI to teach subject content knowledge effectively and equitably to linguistically diverse student groups. It also explores the instructional strategies and adaptations lecturers implement to support multilingual students in comprehending and engaging with content delivered through the medium of English. The findings suggest that lecturers not only hold varied perspectives and employ basic comprehension support techniques but also desire further training in pedagogy and multilingual teaching methods to enhance their capacity to facilitate equitable disciplinary learning for all students.

4.6.1 Attributes and adoption of English language

Some lecturers emphasised the value of English as the instructional language for providing students access to international knowledge and academic discourses. As Lecturer 7 stated:

> *"English provides students entry into global academic networks and discourses they'd be excluded from otherwise if teaching only occurred in local languages."*

This perception aligns with arguments from EMI proponents who contend that adopting it enables students to connect with worldwide knowledge communities and content that is overwhelmingly published and shared in English (Rose & McKinley, 2020). From this view, it is seen as facilitating students' participation in globalised disciplinary dialogues and enhancing their access to current research and information within their fields – tools viewed as essential for academic and career success in today's highly interconnected world.

However, other lecturers in the study expressed opposing concerns about the potential for EMI policies and practices to unequally disadvantage or marginalise students with limited English proficiency. As Lecturer 12 explained:

> *"EMI privileges first-language English speakers. Students who battle with English comprehension are clearly disadvantaged and excluded from full participation."*

This view accords with critiques from scholars who argue that EMI implementation often disregards, or insufficiently accounts for, equity implications within linguistically diverse student populations, particularly in developing country contexts (Kioko, 2020). Researchers highlight that students with lower levels of English competence frequently struggle to engage with content delivered through it and achieve academic success on par with their English-proficient peers (Dafouz & Smit, 2020). Thus, while it may support global knowledge access for some, it risks impeding learning for many others.

Enhancing pedagogic approaches in EMI contexts requires a commitment to continuous professional development for educators. Providing workshops that focus on effective strategies for teaching multilingual classrooms can empower lecturers to adopt more inclusive practices. Additionally, fostering collaboration among faculty members to share successful teaching techniques can create a supportive community of practice. Encouraging the integration of technology, such as online resources and language support tools, can also facilitate better comprehension of complex subject matter.

4.6.2 Implications of limited English proficiency

Lecturer 5 further elucidated concerns about the marginalisation of students within EMI environments:

> *"EMI creates a two-tiered system – those who understand English have access, while those battling with English comprehension are left behind."*

The lecturer explained that this divide becomes apparent through observable differences in classroom participation and achievement levels between first-language English speakers and English additional language speakers.

Similarly, Lecturer 2 shared:

"In my economics course with a mix of local and international students, local students rarely answer questions or contribute to discussions because of their discomfort with English. So their participation and learning suffer compared to English-fluent classmates."

This account aligns with research indicating limited class engagement among students with lower English proficiency in contexts, which negatively impacts their learning outcomes (Dafouz & Smit, 2020). Thus, the findings suggest that some lecturers worry about segregation between students along language proficiency lines and recognise that English competence provides academic participation opportunities of which students with weaker English skills are deprived, reflecting concerns about systemic inequities reproduced through uncritical implementation.

4.6.3 Support strategies aimed at enhancing content comprehension

In terms of pedagogical practices, the findings revealed that lecturers utilise various instructional strategies and adaptations to enhance student comprehension and engagement with content delivered through EMI. For instance, Lecturer 3 described intentionally avoiding complex academic terminology and repetitively restating key subject knowledge ideas using simple, conversational English:

"I consciously substitute easy vocabulary and repeat the main concepts in basic English many times during my lectures so all students grasp the core disciplinary knowledge, not just the native speakers."

Additionally, lecturers reported code-switching flexibly between English and the students' home languages as another means of bolstering content transmission. Lecturer 9 explained:

"I'll code-switch to Portuguese or Zulu to ensure the majority understand before switching back to English."

Code-switching for key concept reiteration has been identified as an effective practice for scaffolding multilingual learning in EMI environments when implemented strategically and responsively based on students' needs (Dafouz & Smit, 2020). Lecturers also indicated that they spoke slowly and clearly, emphasised key points

through vocal inflexion, frequently checked comprehension through questions and utilised visual aids such as PowerPoint slides, diagrams and photos to reinforce meaning – all strategies aligned with recommended pedagogical adaptations to support multilingual learning (Dafouz & Smit, 2020). However, the findings suggest that these practices remain limited in scope and lecturers may require additional training to enact a wider repertoire of methods for mediating equitable content knowledge construction through it.

4.6.4 Training and development: pedagogies for multilingual classrooms

A key finding was that some lecturers feel inadequately prepared to employ appropriate pedagogical techniques that promote effective teaching and learning of content through the medium of English across linguistically diverse classrooms. As Lecturer 2 described:

> *"I want to help these multilingual students understand key concepts but I wasn't ever trained on instructional strategies for EMI contexts. I need more professional development."*

This perspective aligns with research indicating that many faculties at universities worldwide lack training in the specialised pedagogical knowledge and skills required for teaching disciplinary content equitably through an additional language medium (Macaro, 2020). Scholars argue that implementing EMI without providing lecturers with ongoing professional development in second language acquisition principles, multilingual teaching methods and adaptive instructional approaches puts student learning at risk, particularly among English additional language speakers with lower proficiency levels. This underscores the need for expanded pedagogy training initiatives aimed at building lecturers' capacities for promoting equitable engagement and achievement within linguistically diverse classrooms (Dafouz & Smit, 2020).

Thus, the study findings reveal the varied lecturer perspectives on EMI for knowledge transmission in multilingual settings. While some view EMI as facilitating global access, others worry that it marginalises students with limited English proficiency. Lecturers use basic strategies to aid comprehension but need further professional development to enact more adaptive, responsive EMI pedagogy promoting equitable learning for linguistically diverse groups. As EMI proliferates worldwide, ongoing

research and training initiatives should continue to strengthen lecturers' pedagogical skills and strategies for ensuring multilingual students are not disadvantaged but provided full participatory access to disciplinary knowledge through instructional mediation techniques appropriate for their language needs.

4.7   Pedagogical Approaches Used by Lecturers to Support English Second Language Students

This theme examined the instructional approaches and techniques lecturers reported adopting to scaffold and assist students grappling with EMI. Within multilingual contexts, lecturers require pedagogical approaches to support additional language students in comprehending content delivered in English (Macaro et al., 2018). The study findings revealed that lecturers employed four main instructional mitigation approaches, though most considered these insufficient given the systemic constraints.

4.7.1 Code-switching

A predominant strategy mentioned by lecturers was code-switching between English and the students' home languages during lessons to aid comprehension. As Lecturer 8 explained:

> *"I incorporate some quick Xhosa to get difficult ideas across when students seem confused."*

Lecturer 3 described similar code-switching into Sotho:

> *"… to help facilitate their understanding."*

This aligns with research highlighting strategic translanguaging as an effective pedagogical technique in multilingual classrooms, leveraging students' complete linguistic repertoires (Lin, 2013). Scholars note that brief code-switching into students' primary languages can scaffold meaning-making and convey challenging concepts more accessible without compromising the predominance of English instruction. For instance, Ferguson (2003) finds that lecturers' use of code-switching in Kenyan universities supported student comprehension and engagement. Similarly, Merritt et al. (1992) reveal that lecturers switch to African languages to clarify and reinforce key ideas during otherwise English-mediated engineering lessons at a South African

university. They argue that judicious code-switching enhances concept retention and academic performance.

Thus, as participants indicated, strategic code-switching potentially enables lecturers to harness multilingual students' stronger home language proficiency to clarify meaning and promote learning within EMI classrooms. However, Adamu (2020) cautions that code-switching practices should balance enhancing accessibility with ensuring sufficient English exposure to build proficiency.

Implementing code-switching effectively requires careful consideration of context and student needs. Educators must be attuned to when students struggle with comprehension and how to use their home languages to facilitate understanding without undermining their English language development. Encouraging students to engage with both their home languages and English can create a richer learning environment, where students feel valued and included. Furthermore, training for lecturers on effective code-switching techniques can enhance their ability to navigate multilingual classrooms.

4.7.2 Group discussions for language practice

Another common strategy was facilitating small group discussions, which lecturers felt enabled students to build English communicative confidence in a safer environment before speaking to the whole class. As Lecturer 10 explained:

> *"Group activities allow students to practice talking in English in a smaller space first."*

This aligns with evidence from Duff (2008) which indicates that collaborative learning tasks promote additional language students' linguistic and academic development by providing low-stakes opportunities to use English meaningfully in discourse. Through interactive group discussions, students can rehearse constructing and articulating ideas in English before presenting them to peers. Sert (2008) similarly found that group work activities enhanced Turkish university students' willingness to communicate in English and improved their fluency, vocabulary and conversational skills.

Thus, well-structured collaborative tasks potentially aid students' English acquisition and confidence. However, several lecturers noted that limited class time posed challenges in incorporating substantial group activities along with required content coverage. This highlights the systemic constraints lecturers face in balancing interactive pedagogies with cramming extensive curricula into condensed teaching hours.

To maximize the benefits of group discussions, institutions should consider adjusting curricula to allow for more flexible class structures. Allocating specific time slots for collaborative learning can ensure that students receive ample opportunities to practice their language skills without compromising content delivery. Furthermore, integrating technology, such as online discussion platforms, can facilitate ongoing dialogue outside of class hours, allowing students to continue practicing English in a less pressured environment.

4.7.3 Explicit vocabulary instruction

Many lecturers emphasised directly teaching academic vocabulary and terminology central to their subjects. As Lecturer 7 described:

> *"I identify important words they must know and teach those definitions in detail upfront."*

This aligns with recommendations from scholars to build students' academic English lexicon through explicit vocabulary instruction focused on critical subject-specific terms and concepts (Coxhead, 2013). Research indicates that additional language students often lack familiarity with the advanced specialised vocabulary ubiquitous in university contexts.

Durkin (2011) finds that the explicit teaching of academic terms and jargon supported British Chinese students' disciplinary language development and comprehension. Hao (2016) similarly advocates intentional vocabulary teaching to strengthen multilingual students' lexical proficiency and academic performance in EMI settings. Thus, as participants recognised, developing students' familiarity with key lexical terms appears vital for learning through English.

However, some scholars critique the overly explicit vocabulary transmission approaches as rote and disempowering, arguing for more dialogic critical language awareness (Cross, 2012). This highlights the debates about vocabulary instruction for additional language speakers.

Balancing explicit vocabulary instruction with more interactive methods can produce more effective outcomes for students. Encouraging students to engage with new vocabulary through contextualized usage in discussions or written assignments can deepen their understanding and retention. Additionally, incorporating activities that promote peer teaching where students explain terms to each other can enhance their grasp of vocabulary while fostering collaborative learning.

4.7.4 Multimodal delivery methods

Finally, some lecturers discussed utilising varied multimodal teaching techniques to complement verbal explanations and reinforce student understanding. As Lecturer 2 described:

> *"I make use of lots of pictures, charts and multimedia. This helps convey concepts through different forms."*

Such approaches align with recommendations to use diverse visual aids, videos, diagrams, demonstrations and other modalities to compensate for linguistic gaps and accommodate different learning styles (Dube, 2016). Multimodal instructional approaches recognise that many additional language students tend to be visual students who benefit from accessing content through varied media. Webb (2006) advocates inclusive teaching through flexible, varied modalities tailored to the diverse linguistic needs within the classroom. Thus, incorporating multimedia and multi-sensory activities potentially supports learning for students who are still developing academic English proficiency.

Overall, lecturers reported utilising several instructional strategies, including code-switching, group work, vocabulary teaching and multimodal delivery, to mitigate language barriers. However, most lecturers considered these approaches insufficient given systemic constraints such as English-only language policies, limited class time and large enrolments. This highlights the need for more pedagogical training,

resources and policy reforms to better support lecturers in scaffolding multilingual students' learning within complex environments.

Section B: Students' experiences and challenges

4.8 Students perspective on the Impact of English as a Medium of Instruction on Their Learning

This section captured students' perceptions of how the use of EMI affected their overall learning process and academic development within the multilingual tertiary context. Their perspectives provided critical insights into multidimensional impacts.

4.8.1 Inability to comprehend lecturers and materials

A predominant issue highlighted by many students was their struggle to comprehend lectures and learning materials delivered in English. As Student 7 described:

"I can't understand most of what the lecturer teaches. So I miss a lot of information."

Student 5 expressed similar difficulties grasping content from English textbooks:

"When I read the English textbook, sometimes I understand nothing. The words are too difficult."

Such perspectives align with research indicating that poor comprehension of instructions and materials in a second language obstructs students from fully absorbing key concepts, significantly impeding the learning process. Tavakoli and Umbarkova (2019) find that Uzbek students' limited English proficiency hinders their lecture comprehension, negatively affecting their knowledge acquisition.

Students emphasised that English instruction constrained their learning by preventing full understanding. Similarly, Hellekjær (2010) reveals that many Norwegian students cannot comprehend complex academic texts in English, undermining their learning. Thus, as the participants indicated, lacking English mastery to fully grasp instruction impedes the knowledge development of students.

A predominant issue highlighted by many students was their struggle to comprehend lectures and learning materials delivered in English. As Student 7 described, "I can't understand most of what the lecturer teaches. So I miss a lot of information." Similarly, Student 5 expressed difficulties grasping content from English textbooks, stating, "When I read the English textbook, sometimes I understand nothing. The words are too difficult." Such perspectives reflect a significant barrier to effective learning, where students feel alienated from the educational content due to their limited English proficiency.

Research supports these observations, indicating that poor comprehension of instructions and materials in a second language obstructs students from fully absorbing key concepts, significantly impeding the learning process. For instance, Tavakoli and Umbarkova (2019) found that Uzbek students' limited English proficiency hindered their lecture comprehension, negatively affecting their knowledge acquisition. This issue is not confined to specific locales; students across various contexts face similar challenges, illustrating a widespread concern in linguistically diverse educational environments.

Students emphasized that English instruction constrained their learning by preventing full understanding. Many reported feeling overwhelmed when faced with academic texts or lectures that employed complex vocabulary and intricate sentence structures. This aligns with Hellekjær (2010), who revealed that many Norwegian students struggle to comprehend complex academic texts in English, undermining their learning. This challenge is compounded by the fact that academic English often involves specialized terminology that may not be present in everyday conversation, further alienating students who are still acquiring the language.

The struggle to comprehend what lecturers teach stems from several interrelated factors. First, students may lack sufficient exposure to academic English prior to entering higher education. Many non-native speakers are accustomed to conversational English, which differs significantly from the formal register used in academic settings. This gap can create a steep learning curve, as students must rapidly adapt to a new linguistic environment that employs jargon and language structures they are unfamiliar with.

Second, the pace at which lectures are delivered can exacerbate comprehension issues. In many cases, lecturers may not be aware of the varying proficiency levels in their classrooms, leading them to present material at a speed that is challenging for non-native speakers to follow. This is supported by findings from Kankam (2019), who noted that the rapid delivery of content in English often leaves students struggling to take notes and process information simultaneously.

Additionally, the cognitive load associated with listening to lectures in a second language can be overwhelming. Research indicates that processing information in a non-native language requires more cognitive resources, which can detract from the ability to engage with the material deeply (Graham, 2022). As a result, students may find themselves focusing more on decoding the language rather than comprehending the underlying concepts being taught.

Furthermore, the emotional and psychological factors associated with language learning cannot be overlooked. Many students experience anxiety and lack confidence when engaging with English in an academic context. This anxiety can hinder their willingness to participate in discussions or seek clarification from lecturers, further isolating them from the learning process. Studies have shown that a supportive classroom environment, where students feel comfortable expressing their difficulties, is crucial for fostering language acquisition and comprehension (Leibowitz, 2021).

4.8.2 Limited classroom participation and engagement

Some students also revealed hesitance in participating in class discussions and activities due to the gaps in their English proficiency. As Student 1 explained:

> *"Our lectures are all in English so I don't ask questions even if I'm confused. My English isn't good enough."*

> "*I feel shy to speak in class because I'm afraid I will make mistakes. So, I just listen and don't say much."*

> *"Sometimes, when the teacher asks questions, I don't understand what they mean. I just stay quiet because I don't want to look foolish."*

"I often want to join the discussion, but I worry about my English. I think my classmates will laugh if I say something wrong."

The interview responses illustrate a common theme of fear and hesitation among students when it comes to participating in class. Participants expressed feelings of shyness and concern about making mistakes, which hinder their willingness to engage in discussions. This reluctance not only affects their learning but also impacts their overall confidence in using English in an academic context.

The limited classroom participation and engagement observed among students can be attributed to several interrelated factors that are well-documented in the literature. One significant barrier is the fear of making mistakes, which often stems from a lack of confidence in language proficiency. Lewis & Yeo (2023) emphasize that students who perceive themselves as less competent in English are less likely to participate in class discussions, creating a cycle of disengagement that further hinders their language acquisition. This aligns with the experiences shared by participants, who noted their reluctance to speak due to the fear of judgment from peers.

Additionally, the complexity of academic language can contribute to students' hesitance to engage. Makaleka and McCabe (2013) argue that when students struggle to understand the nuances of academic discourse, they may feel unprepared to participate meaningfully in discussions. Participant B's response highlights this challenge, as they expressed confusion over questions posed by the lecturer, which prevented them from contributing to the conversation. This lack of comprehension can further alienate students, making them feel disconnected from the learning process.

Emotional factors also play a significant role in classroom participation. Mkhize and Bafour (2017) note that anxiety related to language use can inhibit students' willingness to engage in classroom activities. Participant C's concerns about potential ridicule from classmates reflect a broader issue of social dynamics in the classroom. When students fear negative reactions from their peers, they are less likely to take risks in language use, which is essential for developing proficiency. Creating a supportive environment where mistakes are viewed as opportunities for learning is crucial for fostering engagement.

Stroud and Kerfort (2013) highlight the importance of instructional strategies that encourage participation among linguistically diverse students. They suggest that incorporating collaborative learning activities can help reduce anxiety and promote engagement. When students work in small groups, they may feel more comfortable expressing their thoughts and practicing their language skills in a less intimidating setting. This approach aligns with the experiences of students who might otherwise remain silent in larger class discussions.

Govender and Naidoo (2022) further emphasize the role of teachers in fostering an inclusive classroom environment. They argue that educators should be aware of the linguistic challenges faced by students and adapt their teaching methods accordingly. Providing clear instructions, using accessible language, and encouraging questions can help create an atmosphere where students feel valued and empowered to participate. This aligns with the need for lecturers to be mindful of their students' diverse language backgrounds and to implement strategies that facilitate engagement.

4.8.3 Difficulty developing academic literacy

Additionally, many students discussed their difficulty in developing the advanced academic reading and writing skills in English required at university. As Student 8 shared:

> "*I don't know how to write academically. The vocabulary and style are very different from everyday English.*"

Student 10 expressed related reading difficulties:

> "*When I try reading journal articles, I don't understand most of the words. Academic English is too difficult.*"

These struggles align with research indicating that acquiring a high level of academic literacy and language proficiency in an additional language is an extensive process that requires appropriate scaffolding and support. Evans and Morrison (2011) find many South African students lack foundational competencies in academic English, constraining their learning and development as readers and writers.

Addressing these literacy challenges is crucial for fostering student success in higher education. Offering targeted workshops focused on academic writing and reading strategies can equip students with the skills they need to navigate complex texts and articulate their ideas effectively. Additionally, incorporating peer mentoring programs, where more proficient students assist their peers, can create a supportive learning community that enhances academic literacy development. Encouraging lecturers to provide clear guidelines and examples of academic writing can also demystify the process for students.

4.8.4 Sense of exclusion and disempowerment

Finally, a few students described feeling excluded or disempowered by the English-dominant instructional environment. As Student 2 shared:

> "*Not being able to speak my home language makes me feel shut out. I can't be myself.*"

Student 3 expressed similar sentiments:

> "*Using only English puts me at a disadvantage. I feel disadvantaged and disempowered.*"

These perspectives align with arguments by scholars that suggest that disregarding students' home linguistic capital risks alienating them from knowledge and constructs English as a gatekeeper rather than a resource. Madiba (2010) asserts that enforcing English-only policies implies that students' primary languages have no legitimate place within learning, potentially disenfranchising additional language speakers. She advocates additive multilingual policies to empower students. Thus, as the findings suggest, some students feel marginalised and excluded by English-centric learning environments.

Therefore, the responses revealed the negative impact on multiple aspects of the learning process and academic development of multilingual students. Students emphasised struggling to understand instruction, engage actively in learning interactions, develop academic literacy and feel included – with risks of linguistic marginalisation. This aligns with calls to emphasise EMI's challenges and argue for

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pedagogical reforms enabling equitable learning for diverse students. The findings provide concerning insights into EMI's limitations in promoting quality learning and highlight the need for further support.

Therefore, the responses revealed the negative impact on multiple aspects of the learning process and academic development of multilingual students. Students emphasised struggling to understand instruction, engage actively in learning interactions, develop academic literacy and feel included with risks of linguistic marginalisation. This aligns with calls to emphasise EMI's challenges and argue for pedagogical reforms enabling equitable learning for diverse students. The findings provide concerning insights into EMI's limitations in promoting quality learning and highlight the need for further support.

4.9 Measures That can be Implemented to Address the Identified English as a Medium of Instruction Challenges

This theme explored potential initiatives and actions that can be implemented by the college to address the difficulties identified by students and lecturers. EMI refers to the use of English as the primary language of classroom teaching and learning in contexts where English is not spoken as a first language by the majority of students or teachers (Macaro, 2018). As the findings from the focus group discussions and document analysis revealed, major implementation challenges exist at the college. These include inadequate English proficiency among students, lecturers' limited pedagogy skills and lack of sufficient learning support. To promote more effective and equitable outcomes, participants proposed various improvement strategies across four key areas.

4.9.1 Enhancing students' academic English proficiency

In the context of English Medium Instruction (EMI), enhancing students' academic English proficiency is critical for their success in higher education. Many students face challenges when engaging with academic content due to their varying levels of English language skills. This theme explores how targeted strategies and resources can improve students' proficiency, ultimately aiding their comprehension and participation in the learning process.

Interview Responses:

> *"I joined an English study group, and it has really helped me. We practice speaking and writing together, and I feel more confident now."*
>
> *"I use online resources like grammar websites and writing tools. They help me understand how to write better essays in English."*
>
> *"My lecturer gives us extra materials to read. They explain difficult words and concepts, which makes it easier for me to understand the lessons."*

The interview responses highlight various strategies that students are using to enhance their academic English proficiency. Participants mentioned the benefits of study groups, online resources, and additional materials provided by lecturers. These approaches not only improve language skills but also boost students' confidence in using English in an academic setting.

Enhancing academic English proficiency is crucial for students' success in EMI contexts, and several strategies have been identified in the literature that support this goal. Lewis & Yeo (2023) stress the importance of collaborative learning environments, such as study groups, as effective means for students to practice their language skills. Participant A's experience underscores this notion, as being part of a study group allows for peer support and shared learning, fostering a sense of community that encourages language practice.

Makaleka and McCabe (2013) highlight the role of technology in enhancing language proficiency. Online resources, as mentioned by Participant B, can provide students with accessible tools for improving their grammar and writing skills. These platforms often offer interactive exercises and immediate feedback, which are essential for skill development. This aligns with the findings of Mkhize and Bafour (2017), who note that technology can serve as a valuable supplementary resource that complements traditional learning methods.

Furthermore, the provision of additional materials by lecturers is an important strategy for supporting students' understanding of complex academic language. Govender and Naidoo (2022) emphasize that teachers play a crucial role in scaffolding students' learning by providing resources that cater to their linguistic needs. Participant C's

feedback illustrates how extra reading materials help demystify challenging vocabulary and concepts, thereby enhancing comprehension. This targeted support is vital for students who may struggle with the formal register of academic English.

Stroud and Kerfort (2013) advocate for instructional strategies that promote active engagement with language. They suggest that integrating language learning into the curriculum such as through writing assignments and presentations can significantly enhance students' proficiency. This approach encourages students to apply their language skills in meaningful contexts, further reinforcing their learning.

In addition, Houston et al. (2022) highlight the importance of creating an inclusive classroom environment where students feel comfortable practicing their English. This sense of safety can motivate students to take risks in their language use, ultimately leading to greater proficiency. By fostering a supportive atmosphere, educators can encourage students to engage more actively with the content and with their peers.

4.9.2 Strengthening lecturers' English as a medium of instruction teaching capabilities

In the context of English Medium Instruction (EMI), strengthening lecturers' capabilities to teach effectively in English is essential for enhancing the overall learning experience for students. Many lecturers face challenges in delivering content in a language that may not be their first, which can affect their teaching effectiveness and students' comprehension. This theme explores various approaches and strategies that can be employed to improve lecturers' teaching skills in English, ultimately benefiting both educators and students.

Interview Responses:

> *"I attended a workshop on teaching in English, and it helped me learn new techniques. Now, I feel more confident when I teach."*
> *"I try to use simpler language and explain complex words when I teach. It makes it easier for students to follow along."*
> *"I collaborate with my colleagues to share resources and ideas. This teamwork has improved my lessons and how I present in English."*

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The interview responses highlight the importance of professional development, clear communication, and collaboration among lecturers. Participants noted that attending workshops, simplifying language, and sharing resources with colleagues helped strengthen their teaching capabilities in English. These strategies not only enhance their confidence but also improve the learning outcomes for their students.

Strengthening lecturers' English teaching capabilities is crucial for effective EMI, and several strategies have been identified in the literature to support this process. Lewis & Yeo (2023) emphasize the importance of professional development workshops that focus on teaching in English. Participant A's experience illustrates the value of such training, as it equips lecturers with new teaching techniques and boosts their confidence. Professional development programs can provide educators with the tools they need to navigate the complexities of teaching in a second language, thereby enhancing their instructional effectiveness.

Furthermore, the need for lecturers to simplify their language and explain complex concepts is echoed in the findings of Makaleka and McCabe (2013). They argue that when lecturers use accessible language and clarify difficult terms, it significantly aids student comprehension. Participant B's approach to using simpler language reflects this perspective, demonstrating how effective communication can make a difference in students' understanding of the material. By focusing on clear communication, lecturers can help bridge the gap between content and language, fostering a more inclusive learning environment.

Collaboration among lecturers is another effective strategy for improving teaching capabilities. Mkhize and Bafour (2017) highlight the benefits of peer support and resource sharing in enhancing teaching practices. Participant C's experience of collaborating with colleagues to share resources underscores the idea that teamwork can lead to richer, more diverse teaching methods. This collaborative approach not only helps lecturers learn from one another but also fosters a sense of community that enhances the overall teaching and learning experience.

Stroud and Kerfort (2013) further emphasize the need for continuous improvement in teaching practices, arguing that lecturers should regularly reflect on their instructional

methods and seek feedback. This reflective practice is essential for identifying areas for growth and ensuring that teaching methods remain effective in diverse classrooms. Encouraging lecturers to engage in self-assessment and peer evaluations can create an environment of continuous learning and adaptation, crucial for navigating the challenges of EMI.

Additionally, Govender and Naidoo (2022) point out that institutional support is vital for strengthening lecturers' teaching capabilities. Providing access to resources, training programs, and mentorship opportunities can significantly enhance lecturers' effectiveness in the classroom. Institutions that prioritize professional development demonstrate a commitment to improving teaching quality, which ultimately benefits students.

Houston et al. (2022) stress the importance of creating a supportive environment for lecturers to experiment with new teaching strategies. When educators feel safe to take risks in their teaching, they are more likely to innovate and find effective ways to engage their students. This environment of support and encouragement is essential for fostering growth and enhancing teaching capabilities in an EMI context.

4.9.3 Academic student support

Effective academic student support is essential in enhancing the learning experience for students in English Medium Instruction (EMI) contexts. Many students face challenges related to language proficiency, comprehension of course materials, and adaptation to academic expectations. This theme explores various forms of academic support that can help students overcome these challenges, ultimately leading to improved academic performance and confidence in their English skills.

Interview Responses:

> *"The tutoring program really helps me. I get one-on-one help with my English and my assignments, and it makes a big difference."*

> *"I attended workshops on study skills and time management. They taught me how to organize my work better, which helped me a lot."*

"Our school has a writing center where I can get feedback on my essays. It helps me write better in English for my classes."

The interview responses highlight the significance of targeted academic support services for students. Participants noted that tutoring programs, workshops on study skills, and writing centers greatly aid their learning. These resources not only enhance their academic skills but also build confidence in their ability to succeed in an English-speaking educational environment.

Providing effective academic student support is critical for students navigating the challenges of EMI, and various strategies can enhance this support. Lewis & Yeo (2023) emphasize the importance of tutoring programs that offer personalized assistance to students. Participant A's experience illustrates how one-on-one tutoring can address specific language needs and academic challenges, allowing students to gain a better understanding of course materials. Such tailored support is vital for helping students build their confidence and competence in using academic English.

Moreover, workshops focusing on study skills and time management, as mentioned by Participant B, can significantly improve students' academic performance. Makaleka and McCabe (2013) argue that equipping students with essential skills for managing their studies can alleviate some of the pressures they face in a second-language environment. By learning how to organize their work and develop effective study habits, students can navigate their coursework more efficiently, leading to better outcomes.

Access to writing centers is another essential support service that can enhance students' academic writing skills. Mkhize and Bafour (2017) highlight the role of writing centers in providing feedback and resources that help students improve their writing. Participant C's positive experience with the writing center exemplifies how receiving constructive feedback can enable students to refine their essays and enhance their overall writing proficiency. This support is particularly crucial in EMI contexts, where the ability to communicate effectively in writing is a key component of academic success.

Stroud and Kerfort (2013) further emphasize the need for institutions to implement comprehensive academic support systems that address the diverse needs of students. This approach includes not only language support but also resources that foster critical thinking, research skills, and academic literacy. By providing a holistic support system, institutions can create an environment that encourages student engagement and promotes success.

Additionally, Govender and Naidoo (2022) argue that institutional commitment to student support is vital for creating a positive learning environment. Providing sufficient resources, trained staff, and accessible support services can make a significant difference in students' academic experiences. Institutions that prioritize student support demonstrate a commitment to their success, which can enhance motivation and retention rates.

4.9.4 Reviewing language policy and practices

Reviewing language policy and practices is essential for ensuring that educational institutions effectively support students in English Medium Instruction (EMI) contexts. Language policies can significantly influence how English is taught and used in classrooms, impacting students' learning experiences and outcomes. This theme explores the need for institutions to evaluate and adapt their language policies and practices to better meet the needs of diverse student populations, fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Interview Responses:
> *"I think the school should have clearer rules about language use. Sometimes, we mix languages in class, and it confuses me."*
> *"It would be great if we had more support for learning English. A policy that focuses on helping students improve their language skills would help a lot."*
> *"Our classes sometimes feel too focused on English. I wish there were more ways to use our native languages in learning."*

The interview responses reveal students' concerns regarding language policies and practices. Participants expressed a desire for clearer guidelines on language use,

additional support for English learning, and more opportunities to incorporate their native languages into the educational process. These insights highlight the importance of reviewing and adapting language policies to better serve the needs of all students. Reviewing language policy and practices is vital for creating effective EMI environments, and several strategies can enhance these policies. Lewis & Yeo (2023) emphasize that transparent and inclusive language policies can help establish clear expectations for language use in the classroom. Participant A's comment about the confusion caused by mixing languages underscores the need for institutions to provide explicit guidelines that promote a consistent approach to language in educational settings. By clearly defining language use expectations, institutions can help students feel more secure and focused in their learning.

Moreover, the need for enhanced support for English language learning, as highlighted by Participant B, aligns with the findings of Makaleka and McCabe (2013). They argue that effective language policies should prioritize the development of language skills among students, ensuring that appropriate resources and support systems are in place. This includes offering specialized language programs, tutoring, and workshops that cater to the diverse needs of students. By implementing such policies, institutions can create a more conducive learning environment that empowers students to succeed in their academic endeavors.

Participant C's desire for opportunities to use native languages in learning reflects the importance of recognizing and valuing linguistic diversity. Mkhize and Bafour (2017) emphasize that incorporating students' native languages can enhance comprehension and engagement in EMI contexts. Language policies that promote multilingualism can help students feel more included and respected, fostering a sense of belonging in the academic community. This approach can also aid in bridging the gap between students' existing language skills and the academic English they are expected to master.

Stroud and Kerfort (2013) highlight the necessity of involving stakeholders such as students, lecturers, and language experts in the review and development of language policies. By engaging these groups in discussions about language use and support, institutions can ensure that policies reflect the actual needs and preferences of the

student body. This participatory approach can lead to more effective and relevant language policies that address the complexities of teaching and learning in multilingual environments.

Govender and Naidoo (2022) further stress the importance of continuous evaluation of language practices to adapt to changing student demographics and needs. Language policies should be flexible and responsive, allowing institutions to refine their approaches as they gather feedback from students and educators. This ongoing review process is essential for maintaining effective language support systems that promote student success.

4.10   Chapter summary

This chapter presented the results and analysis of the examination of the impacts of EMI on teaching and learning at a linguistically diverse South African TVET college. Key challenges highlighted by lecturers and students included students' limited English proficiency hindering comprehension of instruction, limited classroom participation, restricted grasp of assessments and reduced overall academic performance and confidence. However, the code-switching approach helped mitigate difficulties. EMI was perceived to disadvantage students without sufficient prior English exposure, raising equity concerns.

The findings provide valuable insights into localised experiences with English-medium policies in post-colonial multilingual educational settings. These issues merit ongoing empirical investigation to inform effective, context-specific educational practices and policy.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an in-depth interpretive discussion of the key findings that emerged from the study investigating the experiences of lecturers and students with EMI at a TVET college in South Africa. The four research objectives outlined in Chapter 1 guide the structure of the discussion. Relevant connections to previous scholarly literature are drawn to contextualise the results and the implications of the findings for policy, practice and theory are considered. The limitations of the study are also acknowledged. The aim is to provide a rigorous, holistic discussion highlighting the significance of the findings and how they advance empirical knowledge regarding the implementation dynamics within linguistically diverse tertiary education settings.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

The following salient findings emerged from the thematic analysis of the participant interviews, focus group discussions and institutional document review:

- Students' limited English language proficiency and academic literacy pose significant challenges to learning, participation and development in the EMI environment.
- Lecturers frequently employ an improvisational code-switching approach in an attempt to enhance student comprehension and scaffold learning. However, rigid English-only language policies create tensions for this practice.
- EMI appears to negatively impact student academic performance in multiple interrelated ways, including impairing achievement in assessments, English language classes, written assignments and student confidence.
- Lecturers utilise basic comprehension support strategies including code-switching, group work, vocabulary instruction and multimodal delivery. However, they consider these inadequate and strongly desire further training in EMI pedagogy and multilingual teaching methods.
- Proposed interventions to address the challenges include strengthening students' academic English proficiency, enhancing lecturers' EMI teaching capacities through professional development, providing additional academic

support for students and critically reviewing existing language policies for alignment with multilingual realities.

The study findings revealed several notable connections to prior scholarship on key dimensions of implementation in multilingual developing world contexts. Students' difficulties comprehending lectures and learning materials due to limited English proficiency directly supported Tavakoli and Umbarkova's (2019) research with Uzbek tertiary students which found that poor lecture comprehension severely constrained knowledge acquisition. Perspectives on the avoidance of classroom participation due to English-related anxiety connected closely with Tsiplakides and Keramida's (2010) study of Greek students which showed that speaking confidence concerns frequently prevented engagement.

The use of an impromptu code-switching approach by lecturers to support student meaning-making substantiates evidence from Ferguson (2003) that demonstrates that strategic native language integration aids comprehension and inclusion in linguistically diverse African university settings. The findings also reflected arguments by Canagarajah (2011) that rigid English-only policies often suppress the pragmatic use of multilingual repertoires.

Challenges in comprehending tests, difficulties articulating written responses and poor performance in language courses strongly echoed the findings by scholars such as Kok et al. (2011), Madiba (2013) and Tshotsho (2013) regarding intersections between English proficiency and academic achievement for South African students. Perspectives on language-linked erosion of confidence supported connections made in other studies, such as that of Woodrow (2006), between second language speaking anxiety and negative learning impacts.

Finally, lecturers' calls for expanded methodology training confirm longstanding arguments made by Macaro et al. (2018) that many faculties internationally remain underprepared with pedagogical techniques suited for diverse classrooms; professional development is necessary.

Thus, key findings closely reflected and expanded upon elements of previous empirical research, demonstrating strong validity and reliability while also providing localised South African perspectives and insights. These key findings make

substantive empirical contributions to knowledge regarding the on-the-ground experiences, impacts and responses to EMI implementation within a developing world TVET setting characterised by linguistic diversity and the uneven prior educational backgrounds of students. The following sections discuss and interpret these results in relation to the four research objectives.

5.3   Lecturers' and Students' Language Challenges

A predominant finding was that students' limited English language proficiency and academic literacy posed significant barriers to learning within the EMI environment.

Many students highlighted their struggles to comprehend lectures, textbooks and other learning materials due to insufficient vocabulary knowledge and grasp of academic English. As noted by Student 5: "*When I read the English textbook, sometimes I understand nothing. The words are too difficult.*" Lecturer 7 corroborated these challenges stemming from students' low academic English levels, commenting that "*these students don't have vocabulary to understand what I'm teaching.*"

These perspectives align with arguments by Tavakoli and Umbarkova (2019) that claim that lacking academic English proficiency severely constrains students' lecture comprehension, negatively impacting knowledge acquisition. When students do not fully understand the terminology, concepts and language used to teach curriculum content, their ability to absorb, engage with and construct disciplinary knowledge is profoundly impaired.

Additionally, the findings revealed that students avoid participating in class discussions or asking questions despite confusion and need for clarification due to embarrassment and anxiety over their limited English abilities. As Student 8 explained: "*I want to answer the lecturer's question, but my English is not good. Other students will laugh at my mistake so I keep quiet.*"

This difficulty mirrors research by Tsiplakides and Keramida (2010) indicating that English language-speaking anxiety frequently deters classroom engagement among additional language students, even when they have substantive questions or points to contribute. Allowing fears over imperfect English to entirely prevent participation

represents a major lost learning opportunity as student involvement and risk-taking in knowledge construction are stifled; yet, the findings suggest this remains common.

Furthermore, many students expressed struggling with the conventions of grammar, academic writing and formal composition styles required for assignments and assessments. As noted by Student 10: "*Writing essays is so difficult. I make many grammar mistakes and can't express my ideas clearly.*"

This substantiates scholarship pointing to academic literacy in English as a persistent challenge for additional language students and negatively impacts their performance in tasks demanding advanced writing proficiency (Evans & Morrison, 2011). When students have not yet gained syntactic control or developed the discursive repertoires demanded in formal academic writing, their ability to adequately demonstrate analytical thinking, knowledge application and communicative skills through this vital educational medium is constrained.

In response to such learning barriers, the findings indicated that lecturers frequently employ an impromptu code-switching approach, alternating flexibly between English and students' home languages, to enhance understanding and clarify key concepts. As Lecturer 5 explained: "*I teach in English but also try Zulu sometimes. This method helps me get ideas across when students don't understand the lessons in English.*"

This instructional code-switching aligns with evidence from Ferguson (2003) and Merritt et al. (1992) that demonstrates the strategic use of students' stronger native language abilities to scaffold meaning-making and reinforce the comprehension of content delivered through English. The findings suggest that lecturers intentionally leverage code-switching to compensate for English deficits and make teaching more accessible while staying primarily within the parameters of institutional English-only policies.

However, the findings also revealed tensions between improvisational code-switching practices and college policies mandating EMI. Several lecturers expressed feeling pressured to minimise code-switching despite perceiving it as pedagogically useful. This reflects arguments by Canagarajah (2011) that rigid English-only language policies often fail to accommodate multilingual realities within classrooms and risk disconnects with on-the-ground instructional needs. When institutional monolingual

ideologies limit lecturers' flexibility to draw on students' full linguistic toolkits as resources, pedagogical responsiveness is constrained.

In summary, although lecturers employ an impromptu code-switching approach to mitigate difficulties, the study found that the limited English proficiency and academic literacy of students pose significant learning barriers across skills domains. Rigid policies create pedagogical tensions. These findings highlight that EMI implementation presents multifaceted linguistic challenges and complexities within linguistically diverse TVET contexts, underscoring the need for further research and training on effective instructional strategies optimised for additional language students.

5.4   Students' Academic Performance

One major finding was students' difficulties comprehending test and examination questions posed in English. As Student 1 described: "*In accounting examinations, I understand the work but don't get the questions. So I fail the test.*" Lecturer 9 concurred, noting that "[l]*earners often know the content but lack the language skills to engage with assessment tasks*".

These perspectives align with research by Tshotsho (2013) that demonstrates that language gaps frequently impede additional language students' ability to accurately interpret assessment questions, resulting in poor test performance even when substantive knowledge exists. When the linguistic medium obstructs the understanding of evaluation prompts, it fundamentally constrains the students' capacity to exhibit their learning. This illustrates how implementation risks reproducing academic achievement inequities if students lack sufficient language scaffolding and development support.

Relatedly, 6 out 12 students (50% of students and 25% of participants) emphasised the challenges they face in answering test and examination questions in writing. As Student 7 explained: "*In examinations, I know the work in my head but can't write proper responses in English. So I get low marks.*" Lecturer 6 made a similar observation, noting that *these students understand concepts but battle to express themselves clearly in writing*.

These findings corroborate scholarship indicating that underdeveloped academic writing proficiency in English acts as a constraint for multilingual students during high-stakes assessments, impeding their ability to formulate responses that adequately demonstrate analytical thinking and knowledge application (Madiba, 2013). When skills in English academic discourse have not been sufficiently developed to the zone of proximal development (ZPD) through scaffolding, it risks putting students at a disadvantage in written evaluations.

Furthermore, the findings showed that students often struggle in subjects focused specifically on English language learning, with high failure rates. Student 2 shared: "*I'm barely passing English class. Grammar, comprehension, vocabulary – I struggle with all aspects.*" Lecturer 11 affirmed this challenge: "*Most students perform poorly in my English First Additional Language classes. Their foundational proficiency is inadequate.*"

These perspectives substantiate research by scholars such as Kok et al. (2011) that demonstrates that black South African students from disadvantaged schooling backgrounds frequently lack readiness for the advanced linguistic demands of post-secondary English coursework, leading to failure rates of 50% or higher. When earlier educational experiences have not provided sufficient scaffolding to develop students' English skills to the levels required for university-level language learning outcomes, their performance and progression are invariably constrained.

Finally, some participants indicated that language barriers negatively influenced student confidence and motivation. As Student 4 explained: "*I feel so stupid in class because my English is bad. It makes me nervous to participate.*" Lecturer 5 discussed related effects, noting that "*[w]hen you don't understand the language, it's disempowering; students become anxious and lose confidence*".

These sentiments mirror studies showing that second language anxiety commonly undermines additional language students' classroom engagement, self-efficacy and academic achievement (Woodrow, 2006). When the instructional language itself affects comfort in participating and self-assurance in one's capabilities, broader learning risks occur.

Briefly, these interconnected findings demonstrate that implementation often carries the significant risk of perpetuating academic underperformance and disempowerment among students who enter college with insufficient foundation in English due to prior disadvantaged schooling contexts. The data reveal that achievement through interrelated mechanisms – constrained comprehension of assessment tasks, limited writing proficiency, poor English language course performance and eroded confidence – is impacted. This substantiates calls for greater support and scaffolding to avoid reproducing systemic academic inequities through English-centric instructional policies in post-colonial multilingual settings.

5.5   Pedagogic Approaches

One prevalent finding was the lecturers' use of impromptu code-switching to reinforce meaning and clarify challenging concepts. As Lecturer 8 described: "*I incorporate some quick Xhosa to get difficult ideas across when students seem confused.*"

This aligns with evidence demonstrating that strategic code-switching provides an inclusive pedagogical technique enabling lecturers to scaffold instruction and engage students' entire linguistic repertoires for multilingual learning and participation (Macaro et al., 2018). As discussed, judicious code-switching potentially allows lecturers to harness students' stronger native language abilities to ensure key terms and ideas are communicated in the most comprehensible manner possible, without fully compromising the predominance of EMI.

Additionally, the findings showed that lecturers often facilitate small group discussions, which they feel enable students to build confidence and practice using English in a low-stakes setting before engaging the whole classroom. As Lecturer 10 explained: "*Group activities allow students to practice talking in English in a smaller space first.*"

This corroborates research by Duff (2008) that indicates that well-structured collaborative learning activities support additional language students' linguistic and academic development by providing interactive peer venues to negotiate meaning and rehearse producing academic discourse. Through group dialogue, students can become more comfortable formulating and articulating ideas in English.

Furthermore, several lecturers emphasised directly teaching key vocabulary and terminology central to their subjects as another comprehension facilitation technique. As Lecturer 7 noted: "*I identify important words they must know and teach those definitions in detail upfront.*"

This accords with Coxhead's (2013) recommendations to build students' academic English lexicon through explicit instruction focused on critical subject-specific concepts and jargon. When students have had limited prior exposure to the advanced specialised vocabulary ubiquitous in tertiary contexts, explicitly developing their corpus of familiar terms provides essential scaffolding.

Additionally, some lecturers discussed utilising multimodal delivery methods including visual aids, PowerPoint slides, demonstrations and multimedia resources to complement verbal explanations and accommodate diverse learning preferences. As Lecturer 2 shared: "*I make use of lots of pictures, charts and multimedia. This helps convey concepts through different forms.*"

This supports Dube's (2016) arguments advocating inclusive lecturing through varied modalities tailored to diverse linguistic needs and learning styles. When students are still building confidence in academic English, reinforcing meaning across modalities strengthens their understanding and retention.

However, despite employing these techniques, overall lecturers emphasised feeling underprepared to teach equitably and effectively across linguistically diverse classrooms and strongly desired additional professional development in pedagogy. As Lecturer 2 explained: "*I want to help these multilingual students understand key concepts but I wasn't ever trained on instructional strategies for EMI contexts. I need more professional development.*"

This desire aligns with calls from Macaro et al. (2018) for expanded EMI methodology training because many faculties have not received preparation in utilising techniques such as code-switching, multimodality and scaffolding specifically suited for additional language instructional contexts.

In summary, while the findings revealed the utilisation of certain basic approaches, lecturers largely felt ill-equipped with appropriate pedagogical techniques and

adaptations to sufficiently ensure quality learning for all students under the existing policies. This underscores the need to strengthen instructional capacities through professional development focused on multilingual, differentiated EMI teaching methodologies.

5.6 Interventions and Measures to Mitigate the Challenges of English as a Medium of Instruction

One prominent proposal centred on strengthening students' academic English proficiency through expanded developmental offerings including bridging courses, intensive tutoring support and remediation classes for students entering college with inadequate designated language benchmarks. As Student 12 suggested: "*The college should start remedial English classes for students who don't meet the minimum requirement. Right now those students just sink or swim.*"

Document analysis revealed an absence of such provision for developing the academic English skills of underprepared intakes. However, research argues that scaffolding and ongoing language development opportunities are essential to equip students with the level of academic English needed for equitable participation and success in EMI tertiary contexts (Dafouz & Smit, 2020). The findings suggest that this area requires urgent attention.

Additionally, participants highlighted the need to build lecturers' competence and confidence in EMI pedagogy through professional training programmes focused on language-responsive teaching strategies. As Lecturer 5 explained: "*We need proper training on how to teach concepts clearly in English to second language speakers. Most of us don't know how.*"

Scholars emphasise that high-quality, tailored methodology training remains scarce, yet vitally necessary, for lecturers to enact practices fostering multilingual learning within increasingly diverse 21st-century classrooms (Macaro, 2018). The study indicates that addressing this development gap could significantly enrich pedagogical quality and responsiveness.

Furthermore, providing additional academic literacy support for students through initiatives such as writing centres, peer tutoring schemes and multilingual learning aids

was proposed. Student 7 suggested potentially starting "*a writing lab where we can get help with assignments in English*". However, documentary evidence revealed limited existing support services. Scholars posit such complementary assistance is essential for scaffolding learning and strengthening performance within environments and should be expanded (Dafouz & Smit, 2020).

Finally, critically reviewing current monolingual language policies and practices to ensure alignment with contemporary multilingual realities was recommended. As Lecturer 2 indicated: "*The college should research if its English-only policy makes sense for our context or just disadvantages students.*" Scholars argue that the regular evaluation of EMI policies is vital to promote flexible, responsive approaches as institutional ecologies evolve (Kioko, 2020). The findings suggest that the college would benefit from interrogating the effects of monolingual policies.

In summary, the findings highlighted four main areas for initiatives to strengthen implementation: enhancing student capacity through language development support, building staff capabilities via pedagogy training, providing additional academic assistance and assessing policies for fit. These initiatives provide direction grounded in empirical evidence to inspire more equitable practices to facilitate quality learning for linguistically diverse students.

5.7   Implications of the Findings

Regarding teaching practices, the data suggest that implementing EMI in linguistically diverse contexts requires strengthening specialised pedagogical knowledge and skills, such as through expanded methodology training initiatives, for scaffolding multilingual learning. Mainstreaming such professional development could enrich instructional quality and responsiveness.

For theoretical conceptions, the study provides localised South African empirical evidence to inform the ongoing scholarly debate regarding the risks versus benefits associated with EMI policies in the Global South. The findings imply that theoretical framings should continue expanding focus beyond technical implementation matters to issues of language ideology, politics and equality surrounding the adoption in marginalised post-colonial contexts.

Finally, the results indicate that future research should further investigate the following: translanguaging practices, professional development for lecturers, impacts on student achievement, interventions to mitigate challenges and multilingual pedagogies. Such research will strengthen the knowledge base on equitable implementation. Mixed methods, longitudinal and comparative studies could enrich insights.

In summary, the findings carry valuable implications for strengthening policy, pedagogy, theory and research to ensure that EMI fulfils its promise of advancing access, inclusion and quality learning in the developing world rather than inadvertently perpetuating academic and sociolinguistic inequities.

5.8 Limitations of the Study

While making substantive contextualised contributions, certain limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study was confined to a single technical vocational college, limiting its generalisability beyond this institutional focus. Second, the sample size, while sufficient for qualitative investigation, could be expanded in future studies to further enhance representation. Third, the geographical limitation to South Africa means that the findings may not fully transfer to other nations in the Global South. Fourth, the cross-sectional snapshot design provides restricted insights into evolving dynamics over time. Longitudinal approaches could strengthen understanding.

Finally, as a qualitative study, the findings are not statistically generalisable to the broader TVET population. However, the study still generated meaningful insights into experiences with policies and practices within this major linguistically diverse vocational education context, providing a strong foundation for future research.

5.9 Chapter summary

This chapter provided an in-depth discussion of the key findings that emerged from the study that focused on examining the experiences of lecturers and students with EMI at a multilingual South African technical vocational college. The findings revealed that EMI implementation presents multi-layered challenges – students' insufficient English proficiency, lecturers' improvisational code-switching practices, risks of exclusion for students with limited prior English exposure and desires for specialised pedagogy training to advance more equitable teaching and learning. The proposed

interventions highlighted strengthening language capacities, enhancing professional skills, providing academic support and reviewing potentially disconnected policies.

These issues warrant ongoing critical investigation to build the knowledge of contextual factors, complexities and responses. However, the study makes an important empirical contribution by highlighting the localised perspectives and dynamics shaping EMI implementation in marginalised multilingual tertiary contexts. The findings provide insights to inspire more informed, responsive policies and practices that better promote access, participation, empowerment and academic success for diverse students. This work aimed to open constructive dialogue and debate on how educational leaders, policymakers and institutions can continually progress towards more just, decolonised approaches to language-in-education policies – approaches that fully embrace, engage and create success for all multilingual students.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1   Introduction

The chapter succinctly highlights the study's main findings, conclusions, recommendations and productive directions for future inquiry based on the limitations and gaps identified. This concluding chapter brings closure to the dissertation by distilling its core contributions to knowledge and practice.

6.2   Research Findings and Implications

Several conclusions were formulated. The study demonstrated that EMI implementation revealed multi-layered linguistic, pedagogical, participation and performance challenges for students entering college with limited prior English exposure and undeveloped academic English skills. Students struggled to grasp concepts and content, engage actively in learning processes, succeed on written assessments and feel included. This indicates that scaffolding measures are needed to provide developmental assistance and mitigate the risks of marginalisation.

Additionally, the study revealed that lecturers frequently improvise with code-switching strategies to aid student comprehension but require expanded training and professional development to acquire strategies and competencies for teaching equitably across linguistically diverse EMI classrooms. Furthermore, EMI was found to negatively shape teaching and learning in multiple interrelated ways, impacting students' classroom participation, academic achievement, confidence and self-efficacy. Targeted support systems are needed to address these risks and foster more inclusive outcomes.

Furthermore, proposed interventions focusing on building students' language capacities, enhancing lecturers' skills, providing supplementary academic assistance and reforming rigid policies could potentially help address the multifaceted EMI implementation challenges highlighted at the college. Finally, the study contributed localised qualitative evidence illuminating the on-the-ground complexities, experiences and responses related to EMI implementation that may inform language-in-education policies, pedagogies and practices in comparable multilingual developing country contexts.

6.3 Recommendations for improving teaching and learning in multilingual settings

EMI holds significance for multilingual language policy and planning. As scholars argue, simply adopting progressive multilingual policies does not automatically transform educational institutions or remove systematic barriers rooted in apartheid's racialised hierarchy of language (Paxton, 2009). Implementation lags behind policy goals. Gaining insight into practice can illuminate the gaps between policy rhetoric and lived reality. It can help assess whether current EMI policies adequately promote epistemological access, mobility and graduate employability without undermining home languages and cultural identities.

Students are the heartbeat of the TVET system, yet their experiences often remain at the periphery of the policy conversations on language, curriculum and decolonisation. This project provided an opportunity to amplify students' voices, enhance their understanding of their linguistic realities and identify negotiations and personal coping strategies when learning through an additional language. In practising their narratives, this study could help to inform student-centred recommendations to improve pedagogical practices and academic support programmes.

Based on the study's findings and conclusions, the recommendations include the following:

- Institutions adopting EMI must provide sufficient developmental English learning support for students needing additional academic language growth at college entry level. Such support should include preparatory courses, intensive tutoring and bridging programmes tailored to scaffolding students' language skills and learning strategies to equip them with the English proficiency required for equitable participation and success in EMI tertiary environments.
- Institutions should implement high-quality professional development programmes for lecturers focused on strengthening their competencies in EMI pedagogies and multilingual teaching methodologies to enrich instructional quality and responsiveness across linguistically diverse classrooms.
- Academic assistance services such as writing centres, peer tutoring schemes and multilingual learning resources should be established to provide

supplementary support for students grappling with learning in English. Providing complementary academic assistance through writing mentors, study groups and multilanguage learning aids can help mitigate EMI difficulties.

- Policies should be regularly reviewed and reformed as needed to enable judicious flexible translanguaging practices so that students' full linguistic repertoires can be leveraged as resources rather than suppressed through restrictive monolingual English-only directives. Allowing translanguaging reflects responsive student-centred policies.

- Institutions must continually engage in action research, programme evaluation and data gathering related to EMI implementation issues to inform responsive evidence-based reforms that proactively address challenges as they emerge. Taking well-researched steps in these interrelated areas can help strengthen EMI outcomes.

6.4   Recommendations for Future Research

The following additional research could enrich and extend understanding:

- Larger-scale quantitative studies with expanded samples could help substantiate results and enhance the generalisability of the findings on EMI experiences across the TVET education sector.

- Complementary longitudinal studies tracking EMI policy impacts, lecturer practices and student perspectives over extended periods of several years could provide deeper insights into evolving dynamics.

- Focused qualitative studies concentrating specifically on documenting lecturers' improvised translanguaging strategies and aims could unpack this complex phenomenon further to inform pedagogical policy and EMI training priorities.

- Comparative studies contrasting EMI experiences and perspectives between college students and lecturers versus their counterparts at feeder high schools could help identify preparation gaps.

- Intervention studies evaluating the outcomes of specific EMI lecturer training programmes could help determine optimal professional development strategies worthy of scale-up.

- Ethnographic classroom studies could generate rich observational data on real-time EMI learning dynamics.

Pursuing such research agendas can expand knowledge of effective EMI policies and implementation. Therefore, investigating EMI has potential value at individual, institutional and systemic levels. Insights can help address inequality, promote social justice, strengthen pedagogical knowledge and better align policies and practices. Centring the experiences of those most impacted also aligns with calls to democratise knowledge production. This rationale underpins the broader significance of exploring how EMI impacts teaching and learning at this Free State TVET college.

6.5   Chapter summary

This study generated important empirical insights into the on-the-ground complexities, experiences and responses related to EMI implementation at a linguistically diverse South African TVET college. The findings illuminated the multifaceted challenges faced by students with limited English proficiency, the improvisational code-switching practices adopted by lecturers to compensate and the proposals to address EMI difficulties through initiatives targeting language proficiency, teaching strategies, academic support and policies. Undertaking additional research could help strengthen responsive evidence-based reforms that fulfil EMI's promise for equitable access and academic success within multilingual educational contexts.

This study makes a substantive contextualised contribution to the knowledge that can inform policymakers, college leaders and educators in comparable developing world contexts undertaking efforts to implement EMI in pedagogically sound and socially just ways attentive to linguistic diversity.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Proposal Approval

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KURUMAN
8460                           FAX  :      (012) 429-4150

                               2019-03-27

Dear Student


I have pleasure in informing you that your research proposal has been approved.  Please register and pay online for
the research component of the degree for the 2019 academic year. Registration for 2019 will open on 3 January
and will close on 29 March 2019. Please refer to the Unisa website: www.unisa.ac.za/studentfunding if you are interested
in applying for a postgraduate bursary.




Yours faithfully


for Registrar
```

Appendix B: Request Letter to Conduct Research

P O Box 2051
KURUMAN
8460

25 April 2019

Department of Higher Education
PRETORIA
0001

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR A PERMISION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH AT GOLDFIELDS TVET COLLEGE

I would like to request for a permission to conduct a research at the institution mentioned above. I am Kgalalelo Thandi Ntshauba, ID number: 850624 0486 082, currently registered as a Masters of Arts in English Studies student at the University of South Africa (UNISA), under the supervision of Professor Pinky Makoe. I am in the process of writing my Masters' thesis, titled: "How using English as the medium of instruction affects teaching and learning at a TVET college." The research will be conducted from 01 June until September 2019.

I hereby seeking your consent to commence with my research, to select my participants (lecturers, students and Head of Departments) accordingly in a fair and justice manner. I will provide all the participants with a consent form to be signed beforehand so that they can participate voluntarily and guarantee them confidentiality and anonymity. I have attached a copy of my research proposal, which includes the aim and objectives, research questions and methodology of my study for referral. I have also provided a copy of the approved letter received from UNISA Highest Degree Committee Human Sciences.

If the college approves my request, the research will take place during free periods/during participants' spare time, the research will not interfere with the teaching and learning process. No costs will be incurred by the college nor participants. Upon completion of the study, I promise to provide the college with a copy of the full research report.

Your approval to conduct this research will be highly appreciated. If you agree, I will kindly request a signed letter of permission acknowledging your consent to apply for Ethical Clearance Certificate at UNISA for me to conduct this research. For more information, you may contact me on:083 5219 546, email: ktpelele@yahoo.com. Thank you for your consideration in this matter

Yours faithfully

KT Ntshauba
NVC Lecturer

Appendix C: Application Form to Conduct Research

higher education & training
Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DHET 004: APPENDIX 1:

APPLICATION FORM FOR STUDENTS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC COLLEGES

1. APPLICANT INFORMATION

1.1.	Title (Dr /Mr /Mrs /Ms)	MRS	
1.2	Name and surname	Kgalalelo Thandi Ntshauba	
1.3	Postal address	P.O. Box 2051 Kuruman, 8460	
1.4	Contact details	Tel	057 910 6700
		Cell	083 5219 546
		Fax	N/A
		Email	ntpelele@yahoo.com
1.5	Name of institution where enrolled	University of South Africa (UNISA)	
1.6	Field of study	Masters of Arts in English Studies	
1.7	Qualification registered for	*Please tick relevant option:*	
		Doctoral Degree (PhD)	
		Master's Degree	✓
		Other (please specify)	

2. DETAILS OF THE STUDY

2.1	Title of the study

How using English as the medium of instruction affects teaching and learning at a TVET college

2.2	Purpose of the study

To investigate how using English as the medium of instruction affects academic performance of students and recommend possible solutions.

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3. PARTCIPANTS AND TYPE/S OF ACTIVITIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN IN THE COLLEGE

Please indicate the types of research activities you are planning to undertake in the College, as well as the categories of persons who are expected to participate in your study (for example, lecturers, students, College Principals, Deputy Principals, Campus Heads, Support Staff, Heads of Departments), including the number of participants for each activity.

		Expected participants (e.g. students, lecturers, College Principal)	Number of participants
3.1	Complete questionnaires	a)	
		b)	
		c)	
		d)	
		e)	
3.2	Participate in individual interviews	Expected participants	Number of participants
		a) Students	
		b) Lecturers	
		c) HODs	
		d)	
		e)	
3.3	Participate in focus group discussions/ workshops	Expected participants	Number of participants
		a) Students	
		b) Lecturers	
		c)	
		d)	
		e)	
3.4	Complete standardised tests (e.g. Psychometric Tests)	Expected participants	Number of participants
		a)	
		b)	
		c)	
		d)	
		e)	
3.5	Undertake observations *Please specify*	Yes, observations will be done. Three lessons will be observed in the classroom	
3.6	Other *Please specify*	Field notes and document review	

2

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4. SUPPORT NEEDED FROM THE COLLEGE

Please indicate the type of support required from the College (Please tick relevant option/s)

Type of support		Yes	No
4.1	The College will be required to identify participants and provide their contact details to the researcher.		✓
4.2	The College will be required to distribute questionnaires/instruments to participants on behalf of the researcher.		✓
4.3	The College will be required to provide official documents. *Please specify the documents required below*	✓	
	- Three consecutive years Final examinations results - Policies		
4.4	The College will be required to provide data *(only if this data is not available from the DHET).* *Please specify the data fields required, below*	✓	
4.5	*Other, please specify below*		✓

5. DOCUMENTS TO BE ATTACHED TO THE APPLICATION

The following 2 (two) documents must be attached as a prerequisite for approval to undertake research in the College

5.1	Ethics Clearance Certificate issued by a University Ethics Committee
5.2	Research proposal approved by a University

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6. DECLARATION BY THE APPLICANT

I undertake to use the information that I acquire through my research, in a balanced and a responsible manner. I furthermore take note of, and agree to adhere to the following conditions:

a) I will schedule my research activities in consultation with the said College/s and participants in order not to interrupt the programme of the said College/s.

b) I agree that involvement by participants in my research study is voluntary, and that participants have a right to decline to participate in my research study.

c) I will obtain signed consent forms from participants prior to any engagement with them.

d) I will obtain written parental consent of students under 18 years of age, if they are expected to participate in my research.

e) I will inform participants about the use of recording devices such as tape-recorders and cameras, and participants will be free to reject them if they wish.

f) I will honour the right of participants to privacy, anonymity, confidentiality and respect for human dignity at all times. Participants will not be identifiable in any way from the results of my research, unless written consent is obtained otherwise.

g) I will not include the names of the said College/s or research participants in my research report, without the written consent of each of the said individuals and/or College/s.

h) I will send the draft research report to research participants before finalisation, in order to validate the accuracy of the information in the report.

i) I will not use the resources of the said College/s in which I am conducting research (such as stationery, photocopies, faxes, and telephones), for my research study.

j) Should I require data for this study, I will first request data directly from the Department of Higher Education and Training. I will request data from the College/s only if the DHET does not have the required data.

k) I will include a disclaimer in any report, publication or presentation arising from my research, that the findings and recommendations of the study do not represent the views of the said College/s or the Department of Higher Education and Training.

l) I will provide a summary of my research report to the Head of the College/s in which I undertook my research, for information purposes.

I declare that all statements made in this application are true and accurate. I accept the conditions associated with the granting of approval to conduct research and undertake to abide by them.

SIGNATURE	
DATE	03 May 2019

4

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Appendix D: Approval to Conduct Research

higher education
& training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

GOLDFIELDS
TVET COLLEGE

Enquiries: DR RS Radile
Email: dobsradile@goldfieldstvet.edu.za
Contact No: 057 910 6000

PRIVATE BAG X 95
WELKOM
9460

admin@gfc.edu.za
www.gfc.za.net

CENTRAL OFFICE
36 BUREN STREET
FLAMINGO PARK
WELKOM
9459

TEL: 057 910 6000
FAX: 057 392 1082

TOSA CAMPUS
14107 NDAKI ROAD
THABONG
WELKOM
9463

TEL: 057 910 6700
FAX: 057 395 1304

WELKOM CAMPUS
CNR PETRUS BOSCH &
TORONTO ROAD
JAN CILLIERS PARK
WELKOM
9459

TEL: 057 910 1600
FAX: 057 353 2298

By email: ktpelele@yahoo.com

16 May 2019

Mrs KT Ntshauba
P.O. Box 2051
KURUMAN
846

Dear Mrs Ntshauba

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT GOLDFIELDS TVET
    COLLEGE

Kindly be advised that permission has been granted for you to conduct research
at Goldfields TVET College under the topic *"How using English as the
medium of instruction affects teaching and learning at a TVET College"*.

The condition of this permission is subject to your compliance with ethical
research considerations as stipulated in your application (Sec tion 6)as well as
non-interference with teaching and learning time/activities at the college.

Goldfields TVET College wishes you success in you studies and would eagerly
await to be informed of the outcome of your research.

Yours faithfully

Mr FS MAHLANGU
PRINCIPAL: GOLDFIELDS TVET COLLEGE

GTVETC-02-2069-09-01	2009/10/04	Page 1 of 1

Appendix E: Lecturer's Consent Letter to Partake in Research

P O BOX 2051
KURUMAN
8460

Departmental Ethics Committee
University of South Africa
PRETORIA
0001

To whom it may concern

LETTER OF CONSENT FOR LECTURERS TO PARTAKE IN THE RESEARCH

I am Kgalalelo Thandi Ntshauba, from University of South Africa, studying Masters of Arts in English Studies. Conducting research is one of the requirements to complete my studies.

The title of my research is: "How using English as the medium of instruction affects teaching and learning at a TVET college". The aim of the study is purely for academic purposes. The objective is to explore lecturers and students' experiences and challenges regarding English as the medium of instruction i.e. how second language proficiency affect teaching and learning. The findings will be used to make recommendations on how they can use language effectively and appropriately.

Participants are selected randomly. College name will not be known, participants' anonymity and confidentiality is guaranteed and the results may be shared with you and the college if requested. The information gathered will be kept confidential and not divulged to anyone including staff members.

List of questions that will be asked for one-on-one interview are as follows: Do you regard teaching using English as the medium of instruction affect academic performance? Most of the students English is not their native language, how do you find teaching using second language? Do students participate in answering the questions in class? What are the most common problems students encounter using English the medium of instruction? And how do you deal with them? Do you have any techniques that can be used effectively to teach using English as the medium of instruction? Explain. What methods do you apply to increase understanding of students in the classroom? Do you get any assistance or support from the Department and parents? Do you think language plays an important role in teaching and learning How? Explain. For focus group interview I will ask the following questions: What experiences and challenges do lecturers and students encounter when teaching and learning using EMI? How does EMI students' experiences and challenges affect their performance? What lecturers do to address these EMI experiences and challenges? What strategies and interventions can be put in place to support and solve these EMI experiences and challenges?

I believe this study will assist on how the problem can be minimised, in order for the academic performance to improve and for the collective success of the education sector. Thank you for permitting and taking part in this research.

Yours faithfully

KT Ntshauba
Researcher

Appendix F: Student's Consent Letter to Partake in Research

<div align="right">

P O BOX 2051
KURUMAN
8460

</div>

Departmental Ethics Committee
University of South Africa
PRETORIA
0001

To whom it may concern

LETTER OF CONSENT FOR STUDENTS TO PARTAKE IN THE RESEARCH

I am Kgalalelo Thandi Ntshauba, from University of South Africa, studying Masters of Arts in English Studies. Conducting research is one of the requirements to complete my studies.

The title of my research is: "How using English as the medium of instruction affects teaching and learning at a TVET college". The aim of the study is purely for academic purposes. The objective is to explore lecturers and students' experiences and challenges regarding English as the medium of instruction i.e. how second language proficiency affect teaching and learning. The findings will be used to make recommendations on how they can use language effectively and appropriately.

Participants are selected randomly. College name will not be known, participants' anonymity and confidentiality is guaranteed and the results may be shared with you and the college if requested. Participating in the study, you will not be disadvantaged in any way in your studies.

List of questions that will be asked for one-on-one interview are as follows: Did you attend English medium high school? Are you happy being taught all your subjects in English? What difficulties do you have with English? Do you speak English at home or socially? How often do you read English books? What are your views on how lecturers teach at the college? Do you do your homework and study for you tests and exams? Do lecturers revert to mother tongue? Do lecturers wait for the students to answer questions in class? For focus group interview I will ask the following questions: What experiences and challenges do lecturers and students encounter when teaching and learning using EMI? How does EMI students' experiences and challenges affect their performance? What lecturers do to address these EMI experiences and challenges? What strategies and interventions can be put in place to support and solve these EMI experiences and challenges?

I believe this study will assist on how the problem can be minimised, in order for the academic performance to improve and for the collective success of the education sector. Thank you for permitting and taking part in this research.

Yours faithfully

KT Ntshauba
Researcher

Appendix G: Interview Questions

KT NTSHAUBA, 41918312

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

QUESTIONS FOR ONE ON ONE INTERVIEWS:

Students:
- Did you attend English medium high school?
- Are you happy being taught all your subjects in English?
- What difficulties do you have with English?
- Do you speak English at home or socially?
- How often do you read English books?
- What are your views on how lecturers teach at the college?
- Do you do your homework and study for you tests and exams?
- Do lecturers revert to mother tongue?
- Do lecturers wait for the students to answer questions in class?

Lecturers:
- Do you regard teaching using English as the medium of instruction affect academic performance?
- Most of the students English is not their native language. How do you find teaching using second language?
- Do students participate in answering the questions in class?
- What are the most common problems students encounter using English the medium of instruction? And how do you deal with them?
- Do you have any techniques that can be used effectively to teach using English as the medium of instruction? Explain.
- What methods do you apply to increase understanding of students in the classroom?
- Do you get any assistance or support from the Department and parents?
- Do you think language plays an important role in teaching and learning How? Explain.
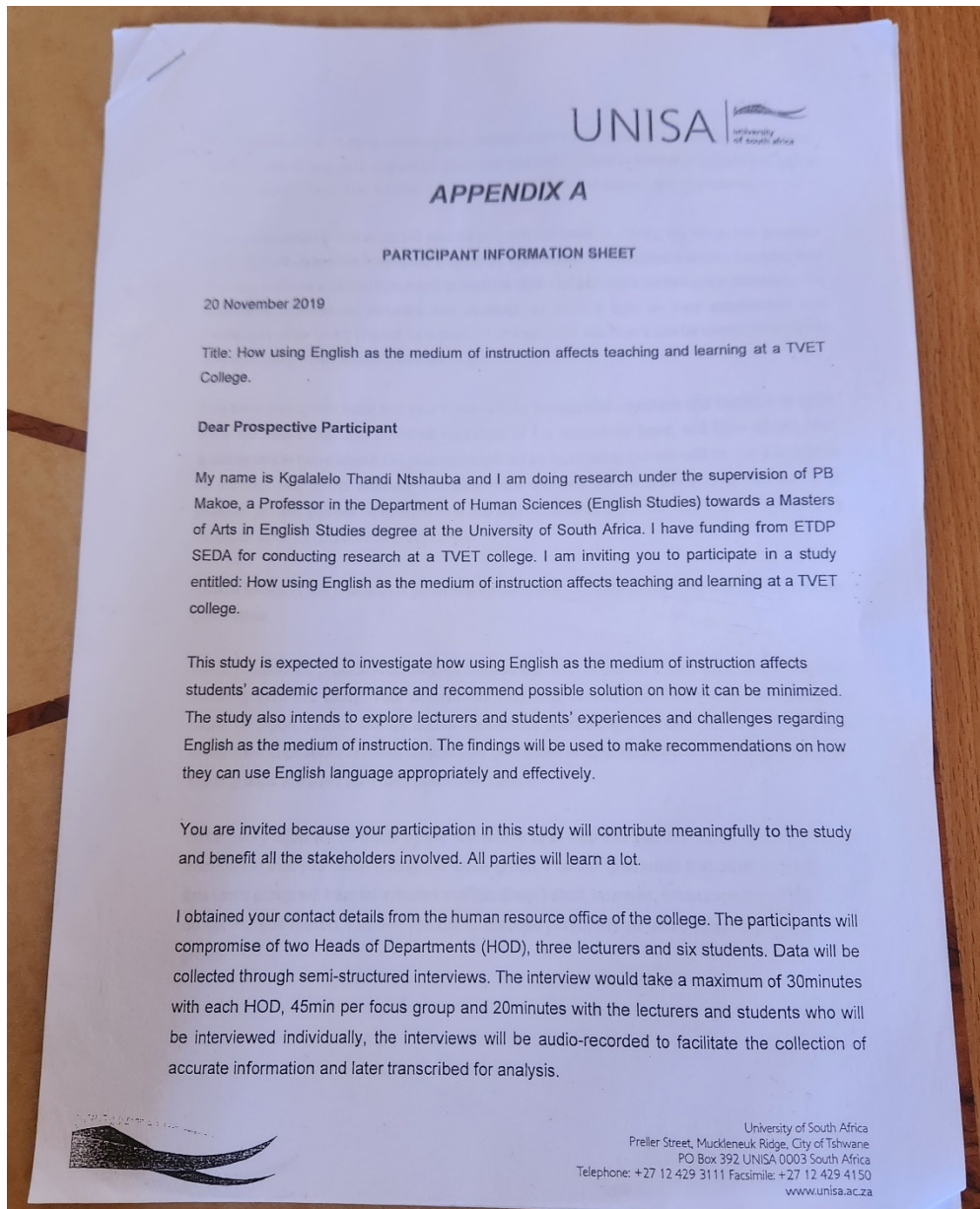
QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW:

MAIN QUESTION: How does using English as the medium of instruction affects teaching and learning?

SUB-QUESTIONS:

1. What experiences and challenges do lecturers and students encounter when teaching and learning using EMI?
2. How does EMI students' experiences and challenges affect their performance?
3. What lecturers do to address these EMI experiences and challenges?
4. What strategies and interventions can be put in place to support and solve these EMI experiences and challenges?

Appendix H: Participation Information Sheet Agreement

UNISA | university of south africa

APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

20 November 2019

Title: How using English as the medium of instruction affects teaching and learning at a TVET College.

Dear Prospective Participant

My name is Kgalalelo Thandi Ntshauba and I am doing research under the supervision of PB Makoe, a Professor in the Department of Human Sciences (English Studies) towards a Masters of Arts in English Studies degree at the University of South Africa. I have funding from ETDP SEDA for conducting research at a TVET college. I am inviting you to participate in a study entitled: How using English as the medium of instruction affects teaching and learning at a TVET college.

This study is expected to investigate how using English as the medium of instruction affects students' academic performance and recommend possible solution on how it can be minimized. The study also intends to explore lecturers and students' experiences and challenges regarding English as the medium of instruction. The findings will be used to make recommendations on how they can use English language appropriately and effectively.

You are invited because your participation in this study will contribute meaningfully to the study and benefit all the stakeholders involved. All parties will learn a lot.

I obtained your contact details from the human resource office of the college. The participants will compromise of two Heads of Departments (HOD), three lecturers and six students. Data will be collected through semi-structured interviews. The interview would take a maximum of 30minutes with each HOD, 45min per focus group and 20minutes with the lecturers and students who will be interviewed individually, the interviews will be audio-recorded to facilitate the collection of accurate information and later transcribed for analysis.

Participating in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a written consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

Your participation in this study will provide you with two benefits. Firstly, the responses provided by HODs will determine how using English as the medium of instructions affects teaching and learning and how it can be minimized to improve students' academic performance. Secondly, the responses provided by lecturers and students will shed a light on their experiences and challenges when using English as a medium of instruction and how it can be used appropriately and effectively when teaching and learning.

You have the right to insist that your name will not be recorded anywhere and that no one apart from the researcher and identified members of the researcher team, will know about your involvement in the research OR your name will not be recorded anywhere and no one will be able to connect you to the answers you give. Your answers will be given a code number or a pseudonym and you will be referred to in this way in the data, any publications, or other research methods such as conference proceedings.

Ethical issues of this research is governed by University of South Africa Research Ethical Review Committee.

All information you provide is considered confidential. Your name will not appear in any publication resulting from this study. Your anonymous data may be used for other purposes, such as a research report, journal articles and/or conference proceedings, please keep in mind that it is sometimes impossible to make an absolute guarantee of confidentiality or anonymity, e.g. when focus groups are used as a data collection method.

While every effort will be made by the researcher to ensure that you will not be connected to the information that you share during the focus group, I cannot guarantee that other participants in this focus group will treat information confidentially. I shall, however, encourage all participants to do so. For this reason, I advise you not to disclose personally sensitive information in this focus group.

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked cupboard at the college for future research or academic purposes; electronica information will be stored on a password protected computer, future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable.

The will be no payment or reward offered. Any costs incurred by the participants should be explained and justified in adherence with the principle of fair procedures.
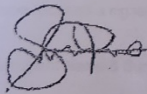
The study has received written approval from the Research Ethics Review Committee of the Unisa. A copy of the approval letter can be obtained from the researcher if you wish so.

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact Kgalalelo Thandi Ntshauba on 083 5219 546 or email ktpelele@yahoo.com. The findings will be accessible for five years.

Should you have concerns about the way in which the research will be conducted, you may contact Professor PB Makoe, pbmakoe@unisa.ac.za, 012 429 45 43 or 079 2833 179.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.

Thank you.

Kgalalelo Thandi Ntshauba

University of South Africa
Preller Street, Muckleneuk Ridge, City of Tshwane
PO Box 392 UNISA 0003 South Africa
Telephone: +27 12 429 3111 Facsimile: +27 12 429 4150

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Appendix I: Participants' Consent Forms

APPENDIX B

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _Lecturer 1 (L1)_ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and I am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

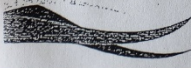I agree to the recordings of the semi-structured interview that I will participate in.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname ....L1........................... (please print)

Participant Signature...Date....................

Researcher's Name & Surname...(please print)

Researcher's signature..Date..04/08/2020

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _Lectuer 2 (L2)_ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and I am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recordings of the semi-structured interview that I will participate in.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname ....L2.......................... (please print)

Participant Signature...Date....................

Researcher's Name & Surname...(please print)

Researcher's signature...Date 04/08/2020

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, __Lecturer 3 (L3)__ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and I am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recordings of the semi-structured interview that I will participate in.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname ....L3........................... (please print)

Participant Signature..Date....................

Researcher's Name & Surname...(please print)

Researcher's signature...Date..05/08/2020

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _Lecturer 4 (L4)_ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and I am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recordings of the semi-structured interview that I will participate in.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname ...._L4_......................... (please print)

Participant Signature...Date.....................

Researcher's Name & Surname...(please print)

Researcher's signature..Date...06 | 08 | 2020

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, __Lecturer 5 (L5)__ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and I am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recordings of the semi-structured interview that I will participate in.
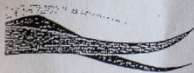
I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname .... L5 .... (please print)

Participant Signature...Date....................

Researcher's Name & Surname...(please print)

Researcher's signature...Date... 10 / 08 / 20 20

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _Lecturer 6 (L6)_ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and I am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recordings of the semi-structured interview that I will participate in.
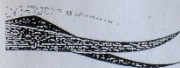
I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname .... _L6_ .... (please print)

Participant Signature...Date.....................

Researcher's Name & Surname...(please print)

Researcher's signature..Date _18/08/2020_

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APPENDIX B

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, __Lecturer 7 (L7)__ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and I am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

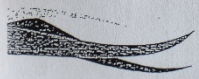I agree to the recordings of the semi-structured interview that I will participate in.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname ....__L7__............................ (please print)

Participant Signature..Date....................

Researcher's Name & Surname...(please print)

Researcher's signature..Date...__14 August 2020__

APPENDIX B

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, <u>Lecturer 8 (L8)</u> (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and I am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the recordings of the semi-structured interview that I will participate in.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname .... L8 .... (please print)

Participant Signature..Date.....................

Researcher's Name & Surname...(please print)

Researcher's signature..Date. 19/08/2020

Appendix J: Turnitin Report

HOW USING ENGLISH AS THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION AFFECTS TEACHING AND LEARNING AT A TVET COLLEGE

ORIGINALITY REPORT

19%	16%	10%	5%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

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