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## АНГЛИЙСКИЙ КАК СРЕДСТВО ОБУЧЕНИЯ АКАДЕМИЧЕСКИМ ДИСЦИПЛИНАМ В РОССИЙСКИХ ВУЗАХ

***Аннотация:** в статье рассматривается быстро развивающаяся тенденция введения в учебный процесс в вузах тех стран, где английский не является родным языком для населения, новой дисциплины «Английский язык как средство обучения академическим дисциплинам». Опираясь на исследования, проведенные факультетом педагогики Оксфордского университета под руководством J.Dearden и при содействии Британского Совета, автор пытается представить данное явление, дав его определение, указав цели данной дисциплины, обозначив ожидания стран – участниц данного глобального явления, включая Россию, и новые вызовы для преподавателей английского языка в российских вузах. Исследователь рассматривает некоторые аспекты внедрения дисциплины «Английский как средство обучения академическим дисциплинам», которые получили неоднозначную оценку профессионального сообщества и требуют серьезного изучения и осмысления.*

***Ключевые слова:** английский язык как средство обучения английским дисциплинам, английский язык как иностранный, родной язык, глобальное явление, вызовы, исследование.*

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## ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN RUSSIAN UNIVERSITIES

***Abstract:** the paper deals with the growing global phenomenon of teaching EMI in the countries where English is not the mother tongue for the majority of population. Using the research conducted by Oxford EMI and the British Council, the author tries to focus on the phenomenon of EMI: its definition, aims, national expectations and new challenges for the Russian teachers. The author presents debatable issues related to*

*the EMI incorporating at Russian universities that need further research and rethinking.*

**Keywords:** *English as a Medium of Instruction, EMI, English as a foreign language, EML, first language, global phenomenon, challenges, research.*

Universities today compete on a global scale. And actually, one of the criteria that feature in many university ranking lists is that universities measure their proportion of international student and staff against domestic ones. To meet the current requirements educational systems all over the world have been adopting English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), a new discipline in academic curriculum, to attract foreign students and prepare their students for international scholarship, research and job opportunities. The working definition of EMI reads «The use of the English language to teach academic subjects in countries or jurisdictions where the first language of the majority of the population is not English» [2, p. 2]. It is just a means rather than an end itself. EMI is viewed as a kind of a vehicle, a helping tool, to conduct studies through the medium of instruction, to convey academic content to students.

The reasons for the growth of EMI can be divided into two types of categories. In terms of the first category of reasons, institutions today want to heighten their international profile. They want to recruit students and staff from overseas. And in terms of the other category, university rankings are actually a key reason why EMI happens. It should be admitted that EMI is becoming a rapidly growing global phenomenon which requires thorough research and rethinking.

Julie Dearden, the Senior Research and Development Fellow in EMI at Oxford University Department of Education, headed the research group that collected the data between October 2013 and March 2014. The aim of the research was to map the size and future trends of EMI worldwide. The methodology of the project consisted in asking the British Council staff in 60 countries to provide the information about the current state of EMI in their countries. The respondents answered the questions concerning EMI. The information was obtained from 55 countries.

The results of the research are:

1. EMI is being rapidly expanded in the world.
2. There is some governmental backing for EMI but not in all countries.
3. Public opinion can be described as «controversial» rather than being «against».
4. There are concerns which relate to the fear that the first language (L1) and national identity will be undermined [2].

Moreover, in many countries there is a shortage of linguistically qualified teachers; there are no pedagogical guidelines which might lead to effective EMI teaching and learning; there is no EMI content in initial teacher education. It must be admitted that there is no global understanding of the aims and goals of EMI because it appears to be a phenomenon which is being introduced «top-down» by policy makers and education managers.

Thus, 55 countries and/ or jurisdiction participated in the study. They include Afghanistan, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Macedonia, Malaysia, Mauritius, Montenegro, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United States, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Vietnam, Zambia [2, p. 6].

The study shows that EMI prevails in the private sector which aims at international image prestige and reputation of the institution in question. EMI is allowed in the state sector in Turkey, USA, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Netherlands, Japan, Germany, Kazakhstan, Estonia, and Czech Republic. EMI is forbidden in the state sector in Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Montenegro, Senegal, and Venezuela. As we can see Russia does not participate in this global process. It should be admitted that there is no state policy relating to adopting EMI in Russia, though EMI discipline is incorporated into the syllabus at High School of Economics.

So, what are the national expectations of using EMI at tertiary level in the world and Russia, in particular, as a global trend?

1. The growth of the English language proficiency.

2. Attraction of international students and thus, improvement of international profile and ranking of national universities.

3. Promotion of national science, technology, and culture.

Although the report presents the data that prove successful incorporation of a new discipline EMI at some universities, the EFL teachers in Russia realise that building the EMI capacity will cause new challenges. What are the Russian academic community concerns?

E.N. Solovova [4] in the Panel Discussion «EMI: to Use or not to Use» at XXIII Nate-Russia International Convention and English Language EXPO on June 3, 2017 identified the challenges we are going to face:

1. Promotion of Anglo-Saxon school of thought.

2. A lack of publications in L1 and destruction of national science.

3. The English language expansion and even colonial policy.

In terms of teaching and learning through EMI ELT teachers emphasise the following areas:

- a lack of EMI teachers;
- a lack of resources;
- a lack of clear guidelines for teaching;
- the role of L1;
- subjects to be taught through EMI;
- exams and assessment;
- a standard level of English for EMI teachers;
- the changing role of the teacher;
- the role of language centres and English teachers;
- the changing role of the English language department;

It is obvious that there appears to be a fast-moving worldwide shift in the countries where English is not a native language from English being taught as a foreign language (EFL) to EMI. It implies a conceptual separation between EMI and content and language integrated learning.

The EMI teacher must possess the ability to explain difficult concepts in English and the ability to create an interactive environment. The question arises «Who are EMI teachers now in Russia?». They are young PhD scholars who studied abroad. They are not teachers of English but specialists in other fields (mathematics, science, medicine, etc.). There is the risk that they will not be able to paraphrase or use synonyms in case their students do not understand newly introduced terms. Though teachers from Southampton University claim that a lecture in English is not simply about choosing the right words and ordering them with grammatical precision, but using all the resources at your disposal to make the meaning you require, the issue remains to be controversial. The EMI teachers have to make adjustments to the way they teach and to the structure of their lecture.

They will have to be prepared to adjust their pedagogical approach and adapt their style and methods in order to take account of the needs of their international audience. It is not a question of taking an existing lecture that they used to give in their mother tongue and simply translating it into English. Rather, they have to look at their practice and re-evaluate its suitability for a different kind of audience with different needs. The question needs to be asked as to whether EMI teachers should be language teachers as well as content teachers and therefore whether they should be specifically trained as such.

All things considered, it is a fact that EMI is increasingly being used in many universities. This trend has very important implications for the education of young people. «Yet little empirical research has been conducted into why and when EMI is being introduced and how it is delivered. We do not know enough with regard to the consequences of using English rather than the first language (L1) on teaching, learning, assessing, and teacher professional development» [2, c. 4]. We can conclude that there is an urgent need for a research-driven approach which consults teachers and educators at a national and international level and which measures the complex processes involved in EMI and the effects of EMI both on the learning of academic subjects and on the acquisition of English proficiency.

The researchers from Oxford EMI call on the relevant research community to answer the following questions:

1. What kind of English is being used in EMI and does that matter?
2. What are the implications for teacher education, teacher educators and materials developers?
3. Are there particular language problems associated with particular content areas?
4. What levels of English proficiency enable EMI teachers to provide quality instructions in their respective academic subjects?
5. How would we measure the success of an EMI programme in the tertiary phase?
6. To what extent do language assessment systems need to change? Should we explore the potential of bilingual examinations?
7. What are the psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic effects of students' home language resulting from EMI used in various phases of education? [2].

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