STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND EXPERIENCES WITH ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION FOR DIPLOMA COURSES

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STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND EXPERIENCES WITH ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION FOR DIPLOMA COURSES

ABSTRACT

In 2005, the former Ministry of Higher Education instructed the public universities in Malaysia to implement the use of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) following its execution in private universities. This is due to the fact that proficiency in English is likely related to a country's economic growth, hence, this policy is being utilized as a strategy in language planning. Yet, the number of past studies that were conducted to probe into the students' experiences and attitudes towards the shift in language policies is inadequate. Most of the studies analyzed the educators' perspectives rather than the students who are the major stakeholder directly affected with this policy adjustment. The participants of the present study comprise 100 diploma students from different programmes at the Universiti Teknologi MARA, Tapah. A survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were used to elicit information about the students' learning experiences in terms of challenges and their attitudes towards learning content subjects in English. A mixed-methods approach was adopted to analyse the gathered data in order to reveal the respondents' views regarding the challenges faced in relation to EMI. Despite the positive attitudes towards the implementation of EMI, the students encountered various challenges as part of their experiences in learning such as problems in understanding technical terms and increased anxiety when communicating in English due to their low proficiency skills.

Keywords: English as a medium of instruction, student attitudes, challenges, tertiary education.

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Table of Contents

Abstract iii

Acknowledgements iv

Table of Contents v

List of Tables vii

List of Symbols and Abbreviations viii

List of Appendices ix

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Background of the Study 1

1.2 Problem Statement 3

1.3 Aim of the Study 5

1.4 Research Question 5

1.5 Significance of Study 5

1.6 Limitations of Study 6

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW 7

2.1 English in Malaysia 7

2.2 English as Lingua Franca in Education 8

2.3 English as Medium of Instruction in Asian Contexts 9

2.4 Language Policies and the Education Sector in Malaysia 11

2.5 Past Studies on EMI 13

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY 16

3.1 Research Design 16

3.2 Research Sampling 17

3.3 Research Instruments 18

3.4 Data Collection 19

3.5 Data Analysis 20

3.6 Ethical Consideration 21

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS 22

4.1 Questionnaire Data 22

4.1.1 Attitudes towards EMI 23

4.1.2 Experiences with EMI 27

4.2 Interview Data 32

4.2.1 Important Role of English 33

4.2.2 Increased English Ability and Motivation 34

4.2.3 Understanding and English Proficiency 35

4.3 Conclusion 36

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION 38

5.1 Summary of the Findings 38

5.2 Implications of the Study 39

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research 40

References 42

Appendix 47

APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE 47

APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM 51

APPENDIX C: PERMISSION LETTER TO LECTURER 52

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTION 53

APPENDIX D: EXCERPTS FROM THE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT 54

List of Tables

Table 3.1: Respondents' faculty and programme of study 26-27

Table 4.1: Percentage of responses on medium of instruction of STEM subjects in secondary school 32

Table 4.2: Percentage of responses related to the usefulness of EMI 33

Table 4.3: Percentage of responses related to motivation and confidence 34

Table 4.4: Percentage of responses related to students' academic performance 34-35

Table 4.5: Percentage of responses related to students' attitudes towards course content and lecturers' skill. 35-36

Table 4.6: Percentage of responses related to general challenges in learning using EMI 37

Table 4.7: Percentage of responses related to learning experiences in relation to EMI 37-38

Table 4.8: Percentage of responses related to lecturers' skill and course content as one of the challenges due to EMI 38-39

Table 4.9: Percentage of responses related to students' skills and low proficiency as one of the challenges due to EMI 39-40

Table 4.10: Percentage of responses related to the English language as one of the challenges in learning 40-41

List of Symbols and Abbreviations

EMI	:	English as a Medium of Instruction
CLIL	:	Content and Language Integrated Learning
STEM	:	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
PPSMI	:	Teaching Mathematics and Science in English (Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Sains dan Matematik dalam Bahasa Inggeris)
DLP	:	Dual Language Programme
HIP	:	Higher Immersive Programme To Uphold Malay and Strengthen English
MBMBI	:	(Memartabat Bahasa Melayu dan Memperkukuh Bahasa Inggeris)
MOHE	:	Ministry of Higher Education

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire 57

Appendix B: Consent Form 61

Appendix C: Permission Letter to Lecturer 62

Appendix D: Interview Question 63

Appendix E: Excerpts from the Interview Transcript 64

CHAPTER 1:INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the content of the study and is organized into several subtopics which are the background of the study, the significance of the study, scope and limitation, problem statement, and aim and research questions.

1.1 Background of the Study

It is indisputable that English serves as a global lingua franca for speakers of various first languages to communicate with one another. This dominant position of English is reflected in the steadily increasing use of English in the education domain. The way English is being learnt has changed dramatically around the globe, moving away from the traditional practice of learning English as a foreign language towards using English as a medium of instruction for content-based courses (Dearden, 2015). The current method of language instruction also known as Content-Based Instruction comprises several approaches with English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) being the most common ones. Although both are methods of bilingual learning, CLIL is more commonly used in primary and secondary schools and refers to instruction and learning in any second language, whereas EMI refers to learning and teaching in English (Oxford University Press, 2017).

The use of EMI to teach content subjects at schools and institutions of higher education is surging rapidly in the non-Anglophone nations, as described by Dearden (2015). The introduction and implementation of EMI in higher education is necessary given the growing relevance of English as a global language. Macaro (2015) also described the rise of EMI as an “unstoppable train” due to various factors that have influenced countries around the world to adopt this new policy. The most prominent motives that have contributed to the the wide-spread implementation of EMI in various countries is the desire for international recognition, the need to recruit foreign

prospective students and employees, and to encourage international research and collaboration (Coleman, 2006).

The expansion of internationalisation, which may be considered a worldwide phenomenon, has been fueled by the shift toward an economic purpose. The emergence of the term “internationalisation” which has been integrated into the educational context is now being used to describe a wide range of occurrences, significantly EMI. The English language has risen to become the leading language in the process of globalisation, demonstrating the modern world's interconnectedness. Globalisation and internationalisation are significant factors in fueling the growing use of EMI as they constitute fundamental aspects that underlie the expansion of the economy (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007). The progression of EMI specifically in non-Anglophone countries is interconnected with the intrinsic and extrinsic values of English. Intrinsic values refer to the process of acquiring English due to the functions that it serves whereas extrinsic represent the qualities of utilizing the language as an instrument in achieving a particular objective (Kaplan, 2001). According to Tsui and Tollefson (2007), the evolution of EMI in Asia exhibits extrinsic qualities instead of intrinsic values and this has had a strong influence on language planning in higher education. Higher education institutions have strived to internationalise education to achieve a global reputation by implementing EMI as part of its language policy.Given the many functions it plays in different Asian regions, English maintains a significant function in Asia. Learning English, especially at the university level in Asia, is a major concern since it has far-reaching implications for students' prospects. In Malaysia, the establishment of “Wawasan 2020” in 1991 was to announce Malaysia’s aim of becoming a developed country by the year 2020. One of the issues raised by the then Prime Minister, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad in “Wawasan 2020” was to establish a society that is scientific and progressive (Zaaba et al., 2010). Hence, EMI was initiated in 1996 initially in private

universities preceding the implementation at public universities which occurred in 2005; this transformation was one of the apparent outcomes of the implementation of "Wawasan 2020" (Ali, 2013). However, in 2012, the then Deputy Prime Minister, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, abolished the language policy which involved the use of English as a language of instruction for the teaching of Science and Mathematics at primary and secondary education levels. The use of English as a medium of instruction specifically for science and technology-related programmes at higher education institutions was maintained although Malay remained as the national language. The rise of English as a global language and its prominent role as a lingua franca in the higher education field has become the impetus for the internationalisation of higher education regardless of the complications that may occur due to the adoption of EMI (Duong & Chua, 2016). Consequently, this paper aims to investigate the implementation of EMI in diploma courses at a Malaysian university by focusing on the students' attitudes and their experiences with EMI, particularly the challenges they face, as they are the community that has been directly impacted by it.

1.2 Problem Statement

The difficulties that students encounter when progresing from high school to university have been the topic of extensive research and debate. Most students find the transition from high school to university to be very challenging, which can influence their academic performance as they need to adapt to a new academic environment. Research performed since the 1950s shows that the students' first year is pivotal in the development process of a university student and is a vital benchmark in determining the quality of the students' learning experiences (Reason, Terenzini, & Domingo, 2006). However, only a small number of studies have looked into the first-year students' language-related issues in the EMI context (Macaro et al., 2019). This is due to the fact

that there are several academic contexts where students are taught knowledge in a language other than their native tongue.

Correspondingly, the implementation of EMI is not an entirely trouble-free enterprise as research conducted by Evans and Morrison (2011) revealed; the problems faced by first-year students at a university in Hong Kong involved vocabulary comprehension, listening skills, writing skills, and difficulties to achieve the requirements set by the institution. In addition, Shohamy (2013) has identified several concerns that should be taken into account when adopting EMI as they pertain to higher education institutions in general. For instance, it is debatable whether the lecturers on many EMI programmes have the linguistic expertise to convey the subject content in a second language. The use of materials published in English may help lecturers and students overcome their linguistic constraints to some level but there could be a discrepancy between ingrained cultural ideas and perceptions of learning in the Asian environment and the stance of the writers of the materials. Nonetheless, the extent to which lecturers and students are able to critically engage with knowledge provided in English should also be considered.

EMI implementation in Malaysian higher education must be addressed thoroughly due to its continually changing language policy. As students make the transition from high school to tertiary education, difficulties in learning may arise as they need to adapt to an unfamiliar medium of instruction. Moreover, there is inadequate research conducted from the public university student's point of view as most of the research to date has investigated the lecturer's and high school student's views and perceptions. Taking all of the above into consideration, there is a compelling necessity to probe further into the implementation of EMI in Malaysian higher education and examine its impact on the students' attitudes and experiences. With these research intentions in mind, the following research objectives and questions have been developed.

1.3 Aim of the Study

This is a case study that aims to investigate university students' attitudes and their experiences, specifically the challenges they face, in learning Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects through the medium of English. The participants comprise diploma students from different programmes at the Universiti Teknologi MARA, Tapah.

Firstly, this researcher will administer a questionnaire to assess the students' attitudes and experiences with EMI in general. Secondly, a semi-structured interview will be carried out to further uncover the participants' experiences and challenges faced with the implementation of EMI in their tertiary education.

1.4 Research Question

As the researcher aims to bring to light university students' attitudes and experiences with EMI, the following research questions have been formulated:

1. What are the students' attitudes towards learning their content subjects through English?
2. What are the students' experiences, specifically the challenges they face, with EMI in the context of learning?

1.5 Significance of Study

At present, English is rapidly acquiring economic and cognitive strength and has become a current necessity. The adoption of English as the language of instruction has elevated the language into a highly valued skill, if acquired. However, student voices are rarely taken into account when formulating the language policy in Malaysia. The reason is that in Malaysia, language policy is made through a "top-down" planning

method, in which those with hegemony make decisions with little or no consultation with learners (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997).

Although studies have looked into university students' attitudes and experiences with EMI in various countries (see for example Tatzl, 2011; Ellilli-Cherif & Alkhateeb, 2015; Ekoç, 2018), there are few studies that investigate EMI from the students' perspectives in Malaysia. As this study will focus on the students' attitudes and experiences – specifically, the challenges faced – with EMI, it will undoubtedly make a significant contribution in assessing the implementation of EMI in the context of Malaysian tertiary education from the students' point of view.

1.6 Limitations of Study

While every attempt has been made to ensure that the study is able to elicit detailed accounts of university students' experiences with EMI and their attitudes towards learning content subjects through English, several limitations remain.

Firstly, the number of participants in this research is limited to 100, hence, this may cause the results of the study to lack reliability. This is due to the fact that the selected research site does not have a large number of first-semester students. Apart from that, the participants of this study come from one particular higher education institution, thus, the generalisability of the findings, that is, the probability that the findings of this research are applicable to myriad groups of tertiary education learners, may be affected. Furthermore, the number of questions employed in the research instruments is inadequate to provide a complete understanding of the students' viewpoints. Apart from that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, data had to be collected virtually which meant that the participants may not have been as forthcoming in their responses as they might otherwise have been.

CHAPTER 2:LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter comprise of a review of literature from previous studies which aims to elucidate aspects related to English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in Malaysia. The subtopics for this chapter are English in Malaysia, English as a lingua franca in education, language policy and programs in Malaysia, and past studies on EMI.

2.1 English in Malaysia

Malaysia is an extremely diverse nation due to the converging of various ethnicities, languages, and religions on the Malaysian peninsula, including the Borneo Island states of Sarawak and Sabah; this has resulted in a complicated mix of ethnolinguistic cultures and beliefs. In the late eighteenth century, the British government invaded the Malay peninsula and the colonisation lasted until the mid-twentieth century (Thirusanku & Yunus, 2014). As a result of the immigration of Chinese and Indians to fulfil a need for labour, British government policies built a network of multi-ethnic, multilingual communities in Malaysia (Platt & Weber, 1980). The presence of the British as the ruler influenced the sociolinguistic aspect of the Malay peninsula as English became the official language and the language of instruction up until ten years after Malaysia gained independence. Due to the influence of the British, English-medium schools were established and English was adopted as the language of administration and business; English came to occupy a position of significance in the country.

The British foresaw the need for the locals to be fluent in English as business, trade, and manufacturing industries were developing at that time (Lowenberg, 1986). These locals were employed to fill positions as low-rank workers in the government offices. Gradually, English became the common language among the people. While English has had quite a significant influence in the urban areas, Malay was still the main lingua franca and most commonly spoken language especially between ethnic groups (Asmah

Haji Omar, 1979). Malay was an appropriate option as the emerging nation's official language because it was the language of the majority. Malay and English shared the status as the official language until the post-independence period which unveiled the shift in language policy from English to Malay as the national language, administrative language, and language used in education.

The government took measures to announce the intent to establish a new identity by retaining Malay as the national language and at the same time emphasising the importance of English as the second language. One of Malay's core functions was to operate as a common language for people of multiethnic groups with various native languages, thereby helping in the formation of a national identity. The status of English was relegated to the role of a second language in the educational context which Malaysian students were required to learn as a subject but was not compulsory to pass (Gill, 2006). Although English has been relegated to a subject in the curriculum, the language has always been regarded as a valuable skill due to its economic value.

2.2 English as Lingua Franca in Education

The use of English in various domains has become unavoidable, and past research has revealed that it has risen to prominence as a global lingua franca when compared to other languages. English is increasingly used for various functions and as a dominant language or lingua franca in countries that are developing and aiming for global status (Hashim & Leitner, 2014). The notion of establishing a common language to transcend linguistic disparities is not new, and this assertion is backed up by the fact that non-native English speakers now exceed native speakers by a large margin (Crystal, 2003); inevitably, English has become the main language of instruction. Due to the rapid rise of using English as a medium of instruction, English is now being

acknowledged as an academic lingua franca, particularly used by speakers who learnt English as a second language (Kuteeva, 2020).

The dominant position of English as a lingua franca in the academic field has fostered the internationalisation of higher education in Malaysia. According to Kirkpatrick (2010), the internationalisation plan is only achievable because most Malaysian universities already have a strong English foundation, with little use of ASEAN languages. After all, English is the language for wider communication. Another factor that has promoted the use of English as a lingua franca in public tertiary education is the fact that it is already the medium of instruction in science, medicine, and most other programmes offered by private higher education institutions. (Hashim & Leitner, 2014).

In Malaysia, despite the focus on Malay, English is being prioritised in educational policies and strategies as a second language. In recent years, English is increasingly being viewed as an important tool for personal growth and skills acquisition. For instance, the number of English teachers that were trained locally and abroad has increased, and the standard of the English examination for Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) was improved in order to be equivalent to the 1119 GCE English examination paper (Thirusanku & Yunus, 2014). These initiatives are part of the government's effort to improve and strengthen the students' proficiency in English in order to produce more bilingual students (Pillai & Ong, 2018; Yunus & Sukri, 2017).

2.3 English as Medium of Instruction in Asian Contexts

Although the implementation of EMI is no longer regarded predominantly as the consequence of colonisation, it may be argued that it is nonetheless influenced by neo-colonial influences (Ricento & Phillipson, 2000). In the context of English

language education, Asian countries are largely influenced by the West, specifically the British education system that had been introduced during colonial rule. The objective of EMI policy in higher education institutions in Asia is driven by the desire to internationalise although each country may display differences in their motives and the implementation of the policy itself. For instance, in China, one of the policies is to have a continuous number of students studying abroad and international students studying at their institutions (Hu, Li & Lei, 2014). The reason is that China aims to become an international education hub and eventually achieve global power (Hu & Lei, 2014). In contrast, Bangladesh initiated EMI policy in order to provide better opportunities and career prospects for their students (Hamid & Kirkpatrick, 2016).

In Pakistan, English remains the main medium of instruction for tertiary education (Mahboob, 2017) despite the learners' low proficiency in English. Across social classes, there is a strong desire to educate Pakistani children in English-medium schools as English is the pathway to succeed in higher education (Mansoor, 2005). On the other hand, Thailand fully utilises English as a medium of instruction at every level of education although it is an expanding circle country. Thailand's public higher education institutions are determined to broaden their global perspective and develop an English-speaking workforce for the country (Thitthongkam & Walsh, 2011). In line with the National Foreign Language scheme, Vietnam implemented EMI at 70 institutions in 2008 in order to keep up with the global trend of internalisation of higher education. Vietnam also aims to equip their students, especially tertiary students, with adequate skills for work and further study in other countries (Hamid et al., 2013).

In many Asian countries, EMI policy in higher education and secondary schools typically clashes causing issues to arise afterwards (Mahboob, 2017). For instance, in Malaysia, the commencement of the Dual Language Programme (DLP) in selected

secondary schools, which allows students to choose the own medium of instruction for certain subjects, caused problems when they transitioned to tertiary education in terms of their readiness for EMI. Another important aspect of EMI in the Asian context that needs to be discussed is the injustice that occurs as students who have higher proficiency in English will have better opportunities to learn in higher-ranking universities. Also, the instructors on EMI programmes must have a good grasp of English in order to be able to convey the content in English effectively and this may cause many instructors to be resistant to EMI policy (Zhang, 2018). The mishandling of language policy may jeopardise the students' learning process and their academic performance in higher education due to the lack of planning in policy objectives.

2.4 Language Policies and the Education Sector in Malaysia

It is worth noting that English education in Malaysia has been shaped by politics and the government at all levels of the educational system. Language policies played an important role in shaping the nation's identity and in nation-building. In 1993, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad, the former Prime Minister, had attempted to reintroduce English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in the higher education sector, specifically for the science, engineering, and medical programmes, due to globalization and economic pressure; the aim was to capitalise on English language fluency to facilitate involvement in the global economy However, due to intense nationalist sentiments among Malay scholars, Malay was maintained as the formal language of teaching in all higher education institutions (Ali, 2013). This was seen as a necessary move to preserve Malaysia's ethnolinguistic identity and minimise the threat of English to corpus planning in Malay (May, 2004).

However, following the liberalisation of the higher education sector in 1996, which aimed at promoting Malaysia as an international education hub, English began to play a

more prominent role in tertiary education. Private higher education institutions were permitted to implement EMI in order to recruit more international students due to the internalisation plan for higher education. However, in Malaysian public institutions of higher learning, the shift occurred only in 2005 and was limited to selected programmes such as Science, Mathematics, and Technology (Too, 2017). The difference in language of instruction between private and public higher education has contributed to increasing the disparity between Malays and non-Malays in terms of social and economic factors as most Malays enroll in public education institutions while non-Malays opt for private institutions (Ali, 2013; Gill, 2004, 2005). For instance, private companies are inclined to hire graduates from private institutions due to their higher English proficiency (Ali, 2013).

The rise of English as a medium of instruction for subjects such as Science and Mathematics is due to the growing exposure to scientific and technology-based courses. In Malaysia, the Teaching Mathematics and Science in English policy (PPSMI) was introduced in 2002 in schools as a means to enhance the students' understanding of Science and Mathematics as well as their grasp of English as English was used as the medium of teaching those subjects (Yunus & Sukri, 2017). But, the implementation of the PPSMI policy was eradicated gradually, starting in 2012 and ending in 2014, as many students from rural areas were affected negatively by the policy (Yunus and Sukri, 2017). Then in 2016, the Dual Language Programme (DLP) and the Higher Immersive Programme (HIP) were introduced as new language programmes under the To Uphold Malay and to Strengthen English policy (MBMBI) laid out in the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025. DLP provides students with an option to choose the medium of instruction for STEM courses whereas HIP helps to facilitate students in learning and practising English, especially beyond their classroom.

In the context of higher education, Malaysian public universities were instructed by the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) to conduct science and technology programmes in English for the first-year students commencing in the 2005/2006 academic session (Abu et al., 2008). During the early stages of implementation, students who enrolled in public universities in the STEM programmes found that only 30% of the programmes were conducted in English while the rest was still in Malay. According to the former Minister of Higher Education, Shafie Salleh, the full implementation of EMI in STEM programmes at public universities was concluded in September 2005. A study carried out by Gill (2006) to investigate lecturers' attitudes towards the shift in medium of instruction at the tertiary level showed that the majority of the lecturers did not oppose the implementation of EMI. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of EMI is determined by the lecturers' evaluation and judgment of the policy.

2.5 Past Studies on EMI

The language used as the medium of instruction in education is pivotal as it can influence the students' learning and academic performance. According to Maleki and Zangani (2007), students with inadequate linguistic skills experienced difficulty in comprehending the subject content. A study that was conducted by Evans and Morrison (2011) investigated the challenges that the first-year students at Hong Kong Polytechnic University faced in adapting to the EMI policy. The research concluded that the students managed to become accustomed to learning through English as they transitioned from school to university. The students experienced some difficulties in their studies despite their successful adjustment to English-medium teaching such as difficulties in understanding certain terminology as they were influenced by the medium of instruction at secondary school. The students from English-medium schools managed to perform better academically compared to the students from other educational backgrounds.

Gill, Azman, and Razak (2005) conducted a study to investigate the perspectives of lecturers regarding the implementation of EMI in the faculties of science, engineering, and technology at nine public higher education institutions. A total of 630 academicians from Universiti Malaya, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, and Universiti Utara Malaysia answered a survey questionnaire; the analysis of responses showed that 63% were committed to the shift in language policy. However, there was conflicting response from the public especially from the parents of the first cohort of students who experienced the implementation of EMI. Many parents voiced their frustrations at the lack of preparation and planning when implementing the EMI policy as initially only 30% of the STEM courses in the higher institutions were taught in English while the remaining were taught in Malay despite the fact that English was the medium of instruction in secondary school for these students.

Another significant research in the context of Taiwan's higher education by Yeh (2014) revealed that the students had a moderately positive attitude towards the implementation of EMI and deemed their learning experiences as average. The findings of this study, however, should be interpreted cautiously as most of the students were from Taiwan's top-ranking universities hence the majority of them possessed good skills in English as well as high motivation to improve their fluency. Similarly, in the context of Malaysia, Saeed et al. (2018) found that undergraduate students from four universities exhibited highly positive attitudes towards EMI but the learners were highly influenced by their first language. Students who had early exposure to English had a better learning experience compared to those who preferred to use their first language even in the classroom.

In Turkey, research by Ekoç (2018) revealed that undergraduate and graduate students from a technical university preferred to learn in English despite challenges such as low proficiency in the language. EMI managed to boost the students' confidence and has paved the way to a better future as the students are now well qualified to apply for positions in the international sector. Based on the questionnaire distributed, the respondents acknowledged the benefits of EMI and emphasised that the success of EMI is also dependent on the lecturers' ability and competence to teach on EMI programmes. However, this study only sought responses from students at one university and relied on one research instrument, which may influence the reliability of the findings.

Martinez (2016) investigated the challenges and opportunities that prevailed due to the implementation of EMI in Brazil. The findings revealed that EMI in Brazil is still in the early stages but it seems to be gaining traction due to the implementation of the mobility program "Science without Borders" that has led to the acceleration of EMI programmes at the undergraduate level. Although the opportunity to learn English is considered a privilege due to the fact that teaching English as a second language only takes place in private schools, Brazil is beginning to strategize and plan for EMI as it benefits from the experiences of other countries that have adopted EMI in their education sector.

Based on the review of past studies, it is clear that EMI is vital in higher education as it equips students with language skills that benefit them during their academic programme and increase their career prospects in the future. Although some studies raised concerns regarding EMI (see Shohamy, 2013), it is undeniable that English does have a major function across the sectors due to globalisation and internationalisation. There are few studies that have examined the implementation of EMI in the context of

Malaysian tertiary education, hence, the present study fills a research gap evident in the lack of literature on the subject. The past studies reviewed in this chapter provide the foundation and fundamental understanding for further research to be conducted on learners' attitudes and experiences with the implementation of EMI at a Malaysian public university.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodology employed in the study. This chapter also describes the research participants, research instruments and how the data was collected and analysed.

3.1 Research Design

This study was conducted based on a mixed-method design as it combines qualitative and quantitative methods to answer the research questions. Following the formulation of the research questions, a mixed-method study was decided upon to address the research issue. A mixed-method design is entirely appropriate for researchers to adopt by utilizing different approaches, integrating them as required, and adapting the results to a context that is both diverse and uncertain (Byrne & Humble, 2007). Sieber (1973) stated that the combination of methods within a single research can offer a plethora of potential for mutual gain in each fundamental phase which is designing the research, collecting and analysing the data.

By adopting a mixed-method design, richer and more varied data may be acquired from different sources that allow for the triangulation of the results. Also, the outcomes of the research can be improved by adopting various methods of data colletion. For example, a qualitative method is suited to initiate a study as it reveals the situation's vast, interwoven intricacies. In turn, the quantitative data and instruments embedded in the perspective of the sample can then be generated. Hence, applying a mixed-method approach to this research may help in unveiling the implicit and explicit issues related to English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), as perceived by students of a Malaysian public university (Creswell, 1999).

This study adopts a mixed-method approach by utilizing two different instruments, which are questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire, which will

elicit quantitative data, aims to provide an explanation regarding the students' attitudes and experiences with the implementation of EMI in tertiary education. The numerical data collected from this method will then be analysed using descriptive statistics to illustrate the students' attitudes and experiences with EMI, particularly in terms of the challenges they face with learning content subjects in English. Qualitative data will be obtained through semi-structured interviews in order to probe further regarding the learners' experiences in their EMI programmes. The interview data collected will be used to supplement the data collected from the questionnaire to answer both research questions.

3.2 Research Sampling

A total of 100 diploma students from various programmes at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Tapah were randomly chosen as respondents for the survey based on cluster sampling. For the semi-structured interview session, 10 students were selected randomly from the total number of respondents. The participants are of similar age, 18 years old, as the study focuses on the perspectives of semester 1 students. As the students volunteered to be the respondents, the sample does not reflect the entire population of students at UiTM, or at other institutions of higher learning in Malaysia.

Table 3.1: Respondents' faculty and programme of study

Feature	Percentage
Faculty	Faculty of Applied Science: 38%; Faculty of Computer Science and Mathematics: 42%; Faculty of Accountancy: 19%

Table 3.1 continued

Programme	Diploma in Science: 38%; Diploma in Computer Science: 23%; Diploma in Mathematics: 19%; Diploma in Accountancy: 19%

As displayed in Table 1, the majority of the respondents who volunteered for this research are from the Faculty of Applied Science who are enrolled for a Diploma of Science (AS120) (38%). The other respondents are from the Faculty of Computer Science and Mathematics, enrolled for a Diploma in Computer Science (CS110) (23%) and a Diploma in Mathematics (CS143) (19%). The least number of respondents are from the Faculty of Accountancy, enrolled for a Diploma in Accountancy (AC110) (19%). The students from these faculties were chosen as their programmes are subject to the implementation of EMI in Malaysia. UiTM Tapah was chosen as the research site due to the researcher's past working experience at UiTM Tapah, which eased the process of collecting data.

3.3 Research Instruments

A questionnaire was developed as one of the instruments to examine the students' attitudes and experiences with the implementation of EMI, which would answer both research questions 1 and 2 (see Appendix A). A questionnaire was chosen as the instrument as it could provide insights into what the majority of a community think about a certain topic (O'Leary, 2014). The questionnaire, which was designed based on several studies investigating participants' attitudes and experiences (see Tung et al., 1997; Yeh, 2014; Sultana, 2017; Huang, 2015), was written in English and consisted of three parts with 45 items in total. However, there were some modifications made to some of the items of the questionnaire in order to adapt to the context and setting of the present study. The first part of the questionnaire gathered information related to the

students' backgrounds, e.g., their personal and educational background. The second part of the questionnaire required the respondents to answer each item according to a Likert scale, which consisted of "strongly disagree", "disagree", "strongly agree", and "agree", in order to determine the respondents' attitudes towards the EMI policy. The third part of the questionnaire, which was based on the same Likert scale, set out to elicit information on the respondents' experiences with EMI and the challenges they faced, as they were learning their content subjects in English. A pilot test of the questionnaire was carried out and further modification was made to the questionnaire before administering it to the respondents.

In order to gather in-depth and more comprehensive data, a mixed-methods approach was utilized because it allowed for triangulation, reciprocity, and cross-validation of the results (Ivankova & Greer, 2015). Hence, a semi-structured interview was conducted with 10 out of the 100 students who responded to the questionnaire; they were selected randomly using simple random sampling. After their consent for the interview was acquired and they were assured that their identities would be kept confidential, the interview was carried out on Google Meet following the survey session under the supervision of their lecturer. The interview was carried out in order to seek deeper insights into the students' responses towards EMI. The interview included 7 main questions, but the researcher asked additional probing questions to get more detailed answers from the interviewees (see Appendix D).

3.4 Data Collection

The students who had given their consent to participate in the study were briefed about the study in a Google Meet session, after which access to the questionnaire on Google Forms was given to the students. The students were allocated 30 minutes to

answer the questions online. No multiple answers were allowed to avoid diverse responses. The questionnaire data were then analysed descriptively.

In the case of the semi-structured interview, each of the 10 students was interviewed separately on Google Meet. The researcher put across questions that sought to elicit details on their attitudes and experiences with EMI, in particular the challenges they faced in learning content subjects through English. Each interview session lasted for about 15 to 20 minutes and was conducted in English although the students tended to code-switch into Malay occasionally. The interviews were recorded and each recording was transcribed verbatim and coded accordingly for detailed thematic analysis.

3.5 Data Analysis

The total number of questionnaires received was 105, which exceeded the targeted number. Hence, the questionnaires that were incomplete were removed from the data set. Also, several students who were repeating the semester did not fit the criterion required to be a participant of the study, as this research focused on semester one students only. Therefore, their questionnaires were also not included. The questionnaire data obtained from the 100 respondents was then analysed using quantitative analysis, specifically descriptive statistics, to obtain numerical data to display the distribution of the respondents' responses. First, each question and response were coded accordingly and the codes were listed in a table. Then, the responses for each questionnaire were arranged into the same categories, counted, and tabulated in tables based on the frequency counts. The total number of answers for each question was calculated by using the mean score and standard deviation to determine frequencies.

The recorded interviews which make up the qualitative data were analysed using a qualitative method of analysis, namely, thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke's (2006)

framework was applied in order to identify themes that could clarify the topic or make a point about the issue under study (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). After the recorded interviews were transcribed, the responses related to the topic were coded. Then, the codes were examined so as to discover the themes that were distinctive and could describe the recurring patterns running through the collected data that were pertinent to the research questions (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Each theme was given a title and description in order to explain the interview data. Then, the themes were reviewed and defined so that the information acquired was appropriate to each theme.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

In the present study, the respondents' informed consent was obtained prior to the collection of data; the students were informed that they were under no obligation to participate in the research. To obtain the students' consent, a consent form was distributed to the students through their lecturer (see Appendix). The respondents were allowed to withdraw from the study at any point and were not under any kind of pressure that could have restrained them from opting-out of this research. The respondents' identities were protected as they were not asked to include personal details such as names and birth dates in the questionnaire.

CHAPTER 4:DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected through the primary instrument of this research which is a questionnaire and complemented with a semi-structed interview as an additional instrument. The analysis seeks to address the following research questions and is presented according to the data source.

1. What are the students' attitudes towards learning their content subjects through English?
2. What are the students' experiences, specifically the challenges they face, with EMI in the context of learning?

The findings of this study provide insight into the implementation of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) at a Malaysian public university from the students' perspective and may be used to inform future developments of the policy.

4.1 Questionnaire Data

This section presents the analysis of the quantitative data, which was gathered using the questionnaire; the questionnaire data was analysed using descriptive statistics. The analysis of the questionnaire was carried out according to the section of the questionnaire which consisted of three parts, namely, Part I, Part II, and Part III. Part I asked for the students' demographic profile, Part II inquired about their attitudes towards English as a medium of instruction (EMI) and Part III pertained to the experiences of the respondents with EMI. The generated Cronbach alpha of the questionnaire was 0.70, which indicates that the instrument is fairly reliable.

The respondents were asked to state the medium of instruction used to teach the STEM subjects in their secondary school.

Table 4.1: Percentage of responses on medium of instruction of STEM subjects in secondary school

Medium of instruction of STEM subjects in secondary school	Percentage (%)
Malay	67%
English	31%
Others (Dual Language and Arabic)	2%

As displayed in Table 2, of the 100 respondents, 67% used to learn Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects in Malay, while 31% were familiar with learning these subjects through the medium of English. 2% reported that they learnt these subjects in both languages and also in Arabic. Hence, it can be deduced that the majority of the respondents were not exposed to EMI in secondary school. The impact of this result will be discussed further in other sections.

4.1.1 Attitudes towards EMI

The data regarding the respondents' attitudes towards EMI is presented in this part of the chapter aimed to answer research question 1, which is: "*What are the students' attitudes towards learning their content subjects through English?*". The students' attitude is reflected in their perceptions of the content, structure, and organization of the course that is taught in English (Kruglanski & Stroebe, 2005). The analysis of the questionnaire data in relation to the students' attitudes towards EMI is divided into sections as the statements were grouped according to similarities in terms of its theme or focus.

Table 3 presents the questionnaire responses related to the students' attitudes towards the usefulness of EMI; generally, the respondents agreed that EMI is indeed beneficial to their learning process. Statement 1 concerned the helpfulness of EMI towards learning to which 55% strongly agreed. Meanwhile, statement 9 addressed the same topic but it was negatively worded, hence, 46% of the respondents disagreed. Statement 4 put forward that EMI failed to improve their speaking skills and the respondents disagreed with it. Statements 11, 12, and 14 pertained to how beneficial EMI is in improving the students' thinking process and skills such as listening and communication and they showed strong agreement with these statements. Also, based on statement 15, 46% disagreed that EMI is not helpful for their career in the future. This finding was found to be consistent with a previous study in the context of Turkey by Sert (2008) which reported the students' acknowledgement towards the benefit of EMI specifically in language learning despite being unsure regarding their capability to comprehend the content of the subjects.

Table 4.2: Percentage of responses related to the usefulness of EMI.

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Dis-agree	Strongly Agree	Agree
1	Learning subjects with English as the medium of instruction is helpful for me.	1%	8%	**55%**	36%
4	EMI is not helpful in improving my English-speaking ability.	27%	**42%**	28%	3%
9	EMI is not helpful to students.	39%	**46%**	15%	0%
11	I believe that learning in English can help me develop my thinking process.	1%	3%	**49%**	47%
12	EMI has helped me to improve my English-listening skill.	0%	2%	**55%**	43%
14	EMI is beneficial to improve skills in English especially communication.	0%	3%	**54%**	43%
15	EMI is not helpful for me to prepare myself for working later.	43%	**46%**	6%	5%

The responses that reflect the students' attitudes towards how EMI has affected their confidence and motivation are shown in Table 4. Students strongly agree that they are confident to learn STEM subjects in English as they agree with the statement *"I am confident to learn my subjects in English"*. In the case of statement 7, the students disagreed that they are not motivated to use English to communicate with their lecturer. Moratinos-Johnston (2018) stated that if a learner is optimistic and not anxious with their self-perceived linguistic skill, it will boost their self-confidence as it influences the learner's enthusiasm in communicating with others significantly (MacIntyre et al., 1998).

Table 4.3: Percentage of responses related to motivation and confidence.

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree
2	I am confident to learn my subjects in English.	4%	21%	**56%**	19%
7	I am unmotivated to use English to communicate with my lecturers.	28%	**45%**	18%	9%

According to Table 5, the majority of the students agreed that EMI is vital in improving their academic performance. As revealed by the responses to statements 3 and 8, the respondents realized that their academic performance has improved due to EMI and low proficiency in English may hinder their learning process. In the case of statement 16, 47% disagreed that *"EMI does not manage to provide a platform to communicate in English"*. Statements 17 and 18 illustrate the students' unison that EMI is useful in making them more familiar with English and acquiring difficult technical terms. This finding is similar to findings from the study conducted by Wu (2006) in Taiwan where the students agreed that EMI managed to provide more exposure to the language hence, they are able to improve their fluency and ability to comprehend the learning materials.

Table 4.4: Percentage of responses related to students' academic performance.

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree
3	My academic performance improves when the medium of instruction used is English.	1%	22%	**50%**	27%

Table 4.4 continued

8	Low English proficiency may obstruct learning development.	4%	15%	**61%**	20%
16	EMI does not manage to provide a platform for me to communicate in English with others.	32%	**47%**	19%	2%
17	I am getting more familiar with English through the implementation of EMI.	0%	8%	**64%**	28%
18	I managed to acquire difficult technical terms in my programmes through EMI.	0%	19%	**64%**	17%

Based on Table 6, it can be deduced that the students are satisfied with the delivery of the course content in English and the lecturers' skill in their EMI courses. This is owing to the fact that the lecturer's linguistic competence may influence the process of learning as the subject content is being conveyed in English (Shohamy, 2013). More than half of the respondents are satisfied with their lecturers' skills and proficiency as it does not affect their understanding of the course content as shown in their responses to statements 5 and 20. Statements 6 and 19 pertain to how easy it is to understand the course content in English and the students' level of satisfaction towards it which shows a high percentage of students strongly agreeing. Also, 48% of the students are convinced that learning using EMI is necessary as shown in their responses to statement 10 and 47% disagreed that EMI is impractical based on statement 13.

Table 4.5: Percentage of responses related to attitudes towards course content and lecturers' skill.

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree
5	I am satisfied with my lecturers' English skills.	1%	1%	40%	58%
6	It is easy to understand the content of my course with English-medium teaching.	3%	17%	55%	25%

Table 4.5 continued

10	I am convinced that learning subjects with English as a medium of instruction is necessary at the university level.	3%	2%	48%	47%
13	It is impractical for all of the subjects to be conducted in English.	3%	47%	35%	15%
19	I am satisfied with the content and materials provided in the EMI programmes.	0%	8%	70%	22%
20	My lecturer's proficiency in English does affect my understanding of the programmes.	4%	17%	53%	26%

To respond to research question 1, it can be concluded that the respondents had a positive attitude towards the implementation of EMI for their tertiary learning although more than half of the respondents had Malay as the medium of instruction for STEM subjects in secondary school. This finding is similar to a study conducted by Yeh (2014) where the Taiwanese students demonstrated relatively positive attitudes towards EMI programmes. Since EMI has helped in improving their linguistic skills in English, this has led to positive attitudes towards the use of English as the medium of teaching for their academic programmes. Arsad et al. (2014) also stated that students who are more fluent in the language of instruction perform better than those who are not.

4.1.2 Experiences with EMI

This section presents the analysis of the students' responses to statements pertaining to their experiences with the implementation of EMI, especially the challenges faced, in order to answer research question 2: "*What are the students' experiences, specifically the challenges they face, with English in the context of learning?*". There are mixed responses in describing their experiences as the students who were exposed to English as a language of instruction during their secondary school presumably have a seamless learning experience in EMI programmes.

Table 7 reveals the students' responses with regard to the general challenges they faced when using EMI for learning. Statement 21 relates to whether the respondents faced challenges as a result of learning subjects in English and the majority of them agreed with the statement; whereas the majority of respondents disagreed with statement 22: "*I did not face any difficulties in comprehending the content*". It can be deduced that there is no obstacle in learning using EMI except for the issue of understanding the subject content. Conversely, statement 39 pertained to whether the students took a long time to comprehend the course content due to EMI, to which 43% disagreed.

Table 4.6: Percentage of responses related to general challenges in learning using EMI.

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree
21	I do face challenges as I am learning subjects in English.	1%	8%	**55%**	36%
22	I did not face any difficulties in comprehending my courses' content.	27%	**42%**	28%	3%
39	I had a long time to understand the content of the programmes due to EMI.	16%	**43%**	36%	5%

Based on statements 32 and 34 in Table 8, the students did not have rough learning experiences and they were not anxious and stressed during their learning process due to EMI. However, the opinion regarding whether EMI made them doubt their English skill, as in statement 41, was divided as 37% disagreed while another 37% strongly agreed with the statement. With regard to statement 40, the respondents agreed that the challenges in learning using EMI are manageable; in addition, the majority disagreed with statement 45, *"I had serious issues with the implementation of EMI"*. Statement 45 pertained to whether the respondents thought the issues concerning the enforcement of EMI could be resolved and the majority strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 4.7: Percentage of responses related to learning experiences in relation to EMI.

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree
32	I have rough learning experiences due to EMI.	39%	**46%**	15%	0%
34	I was anxious and under severe stress during my learning process due to EMI.	20%	**52%**	25%	3%
40	The challenges that I faced during learning in English are manageable.	0%	15%	**63%**	22%
41	I started to doubt my ability if I cannot communicate in English during my learning.	10%	**37%**	**37%**	16%
44	I had serious issues with the implementation of EMI.	30%	**51%**	17%	2%
45	I find the problems that surround the enforcement of EMI can be resolved.	0%	18%	**62%**	20%

Table 9 displays the responses of the students to statements regarding the challenges in learning through EMI, which are significantly related to the lecturers' skills and the course content. The lecturers' (lack of) skill is not the major challenge in learning

through EMI as the lecturers' skill in English has helped the students to understand better according to the responses to statement 23. As for statement 27, 41% disagreed that *"It is difficult to understand the lecturers' accents"*. Meanwhile, 35% of the respondents disagreed that their lecturers struggle to explain the subject content, in response to statement 36. Also, the majority of the respondents disagreed with statement 43, which is, "*My lecturers' English ability does not help in understanding the content*". In terms of terminologies, 45% of respondents disagreed with the claim in statement 24 as they think it is easier to understand terminologies in English rather than in other languages. This result is in line with Arsad et al.'s (2014) finding that students become more successful academically as their fluency in the language used for learning improves.

Table 4.8: Percentage of responses related to lecturers' skill and course content as one of the challenges due to EMI.

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree
23	My lecturer's ability in English has helped me understand the content better.	1%	8%	50%	41%
24	It is more difficult to understand terminologies related to my course in English.	11%	45%	38%	6%
27	It is difficult to understand the lecturers' accents.	37%	41%	20%	2%
36	My lecturers struggle to explain the content of the programmes in English.	35%	33%	24%	8%
43	My lecturers' English ability does not help my understanding of the programmes' content.	45%	37%	14%	4%

The respondents also had to respond to statements on whether their English skill is one of the obstacles in learning subjects using EMI, as presented in the Table 10. In response to statement 26, *"My ability to communicate in classes was affected by EMI"*, 49% agreed that their ability to communicate in class does get influenced by EMI. But,

more than half of the respondents agreed that they managed to improve their reading and writing ability as a result of EMI, as in statements 30 and 31. 44% of the students disagreed with statement 35: "*I find it difficult to participate in class discussion due to English being used*" but 40% were anxious to communicate in English, as in statement 37. Also, the students concurred with the suggestion that their skills and proficiency in English is one of the main challenges in learning through EMI, as in statements 38 and 42. This corresponds with Sert's (2008) viewpoint which is poor proficiency in English may impede the benefits that students could obtain from of EMI. Similarly, Wu (2006) found that Taiwanese students also had problems in expressing their opinions and interacting with their lecturers and classmates in their EMI courses.

Table 4.9: Percentage of responses related to students' skills and low proficiency as one of the challenges due to EMI.

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree
26	My ability to communicate in classes was affected by EMI.	12%	29%	**49%**	10%
30	I managed to be better at English-reading skills due to EMI.	1%	7%	**59%**	33%
31	My English writing ability has improved after I started learning EMI programmes.	1%	16%	**57%**	26%
35	I find it difficult to participate in a class discussion if English is used rather than Malay.	16%	**44%**	35%	15%
37	I am anxious to communicate in English during class time with my lecturer and classmates.	12%	31%	**40%**	17%
38	The major difficulties that I faced in EMI programmes are caused by my English skills.	13%	28%	**47%**	12%
42	The challenge in understanding EMI programmes is mostly due to	9%	22%	**58%**	11%

	my poor command of the English language.				

Based on the responses shown in Table 11, it can be deduced that EMI has an impact on the students' understanding but it does not affect their concentration, academic performance, and learning motivation. With regard to statement 25, 40% disagreed that, *"It is harder to concentrate on English-medium subjects";* likewise, 38% of the students also disagreed with the idea that learning English has hindered their academic performance, as in statement 29. However, in response to statement 28, the majority agreed that *"The difficulty in understanding the courses' materials is mostly due to the use of English as a means of instruction"*. Meanwhile, more than half of the respondents also agreed that learning in English has improved their learning motivation, as in statement 33.

Table 4.10: Percentage of responses related to the English language as one of the challenges in learning.

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree
25	It is harder to concentrate on English-medium subjects.	19%	**40%**	39%	2%
28	The difficulty in understanding the courses' materials is mostly due to the use of English as a means of instruction.	13%	34%	**47%**	6%
29	Learning in English has hindered my academic performance.	25%	**38%**	31%	6%
33	EMI has increased my learning motivation.	2%	10%	**61%**	27%

To answer research question 2, the students do not seem to have rough learning experiences due to EMI and during their process of learning, they were generally not distressed. Also, the respondents described the challenges they faced when English was used as the language of instruction as difficulties in understanding the content and

materials of the course. Also, they experienced some level of anxiety when they tried to express their opinions and communicate with their lecturers and course mates due to their limited proficiency in English. These findings are in agreement with the findings from Evans and Morrison's (2011) research as the Taiwanese students in their study also faced problems in understanding certain terms used due to the medium of instruction.

4.2 Interview Data

To further answer the research questions, the transcripts of interviews with 10 respondents out of 100 were analysed using thematic analysis. The present study adopts Braun and Clarke's (2006) 6-step thematic analysis framework as it provides a precise and practical framework with which to conduct thematic analysis (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). The interviews conducted revealed three major themes related to the students' attitudes and experiences, specifically the challenges faced, due to the implementation of EMI. The interviews revealed deeper insights that the survey may have overlooked.

4.2.1 Important Role of English

The major theme identified from the interview sessions was the important role of English for communication, as revealed in the interviewees' responses. Based on the responses, it can be deduced that the majority of the respondents felt that English is important for them to communicate and interact with others, especially with people from other ethnicities who do not share the same first language as them. One of the respondents said:

> "*I do think English could help me on communicating with others that could not understand my language*". (S5, see Appendix E, pp. 64-65)

This perspective is in line with Crystal's (2003) assertion as mentioned in the previous chapter that a common language is required to overcome linguistic differences. From the early years of independence, the language used in education has been utilised

as a mechanism in unifying the multi-ethnic society and as a symbol for the nation's identity as it has been in other multi-ethnic emerging regions (Mead, 1988). The respondents also stated that English is vital for their career in the future as graduates who possess better fluency in English are preferred by most companies (Ali, 2013). As stated by Ekoç (2018), knowledge of English is vital in obtaining exposure and accessibility to technology advancements as well as to communicate globally. One of the respondents stated that:

> *"... in my opinion, EMI is helpful to student especially during study or in career later because English language is most preferable language by company or universities."* (S1, see Appendix E, p. 63)

Thus, it can be deduced that English plays an important role in terms of communication as the learners also need to have better communication skills, especially in English if they are aiming to work in a local or global multinational company.

4.2.2 Increased English Ability and Motivation

Another theme identified from the interviews was the general consensus that the interviewees' ability and skills in English had improved as a result of EMI. The respondents agreed that EMI is vital to develop their English skills such as speaking and writing and boost their confidence level. A response from one of the respondents regarding the usefulness of EMI and its relation with skills is as follows:

> "*Yes, it is because develop English skill can also develop student confidence to talk at public.*" (S8, see Appendix E, p. 66)

It is reasonable to infer that the learners who are learning courses in EMI have greater confidence and mastery of their English abilities, resulting in a better understanding of English-medium lectures in general (Yeh, 2014). Civan and Coskun (2016) also stated that a student's academic performance is highly determined by an

individual's degree of motivation. The following is another excerpt that reveals the viewpoint that EMI had contributed to improvement in the student's English skills. As the interviewee says:

> "*For me, EMI is a must because through that we can develop our English skills whether to speak or writing*". (S7, see appendix E, page 66)

A study that was conducted by Tsang (2004) evidenced that the students in EMI programmes have better English skills compared to students learning in Chinese. Puffer (2011) also observed that the students in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) programmes tend to have a higher score on quizzes in the language of instruction rather than students who are not enrolled in CLIL programmes. In the present study, the respondents have a positive view towards the implementation of EMI as they acknowledge the advantages of being proficient in English especially towards their academic success and future career.

4.2.3 Understanding and English Proficiency

The third theme that was apparent in the interview session is the difficulty in understanding that the students faced due to the implementation of EMI. All of the interviewees agreed that the main issue that they had in learning through EMI is that they had a difficult time understanding certain words or terms that their lecturer used during teaching and this may be caused by the lecturers' use of a plethora of unusual technical terms as stated by one of the interviewees:

> *"Most of the time it's hard to study and find the meaning at the same time."* (S1, see Appendix E, p. 63)

This finding is in line with the findings of Kinyaduka and Kiwara (2013) which revealed that more than half of the students failed to understand the course content as the medium of teaching used is English. Also, an equal number of interviewees agreed

that they did face some form of judgement due to their limited fluency in English whereas the others did not experience this. As one of the interviewees stated:

> "*Yes, I often get judge for my grammar and pronunciation when talking or writing*" (S4, see Appendix E, p. 64)

This response illustrates the repercussions of a weak command of English due to the standard language ideology. According to Milroy and Milroy (1985), this notion has led to the community policing the virtue of standard language and demonising individuals who are not fluent in it, and in a classroom where students are learning a second language, this behaviour can be harmful. Despite that, another student added the following:

> "*If the student is well-performed and well-mannered with their own attitude, then the lecturer will willingly to teach you well*" (S6, see Appendix E, p. 65)

This response suggests that the students did not face any favouritism from their lecturer due to their skill and fluency in English. Another interviewee also stated that:

> *"It is all about the attitude from the student itself. But personally, the lecturers will choose the one who smart in the subjects before admire the one who are proficient in English."* (S5, see Appendix E, pp. 64-65)

The findings of the interview session correspond with the findings from the questionnaire as the students were consistent with their viewpoints; the analysis of the interview data has managed to further answer research question 2 as the students describe in detail their experiences in terms of the challenges faced in learning using EMI. Chun et al. (2017) proposed that academic success in terms of grades and course material comprehension is linked to students who have a high level of English language confidence.

4.3 Conclusion

To conclude, it can be seen that the students have positive attitudes towards the implementation of EMI as it brings positive impact such as improving their academic performance and soft skills. Although students encounter challenges as a result of their EMI experience in tertiary education, their positive attitude toward EMI and desire to enhance their fluency is apparent, as indicated in their responses to the questionnaire and in the interview.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses the summary of the findings, implications of the study, and recommendations for future research.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

This study surveyed 100 students from various faculties that are enrolled in English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) programmes and 10 students out of 100 were interviewed to explore their attitudes and experiences following the implementation of EMI. The students are first-semester students, many of whom had a different medium of instruction used for STEM subjects during their secondary school. As the students transitioned from secondary school to tertiary education, they might demonstrate distinctive attitudes as they are learning using English as a medium of instruction. Also, the experiences that the students encountered during their learning process of course content in EMI are relevant to be examined in regard to language learning and development.

In response to research question 1 stated in Chapter 1, the findings as presented in section 4.1.1 revealed that in general, the students have a positive attitude towards EMI as they are aware of the benefits of EMI if they are aiming to enhance their academic performance and personal skills. The students are also satisfied with the course content and their lecturers' skills in conveying the content of the EMI courses. Students may have a positive attitude towards their learning if they foresee a favorable result. In accordance with this, students who achieve a successful outcome have a more positive attitude towards learning in English as there is a visible correlation between attitudes and actions (Chun et al., 2017).

With regard to their experiences with EMI, the respondents did not have a difficult time in their EMI courses and were not distressed during their lessons, as discussed in

sections 4.1.2 and 4.2.3. The students who had English as their medium of instruction in secondary school had a pleasurable experience of learning through EMI due to their previous exposure to the language as the medium of instruction. However, there was consensus regarding the challenges that the students encountered in learning content through EMI, which included trouble in comprehending course content, particularly certain terminology, as well as the materials. Also, the students were concerned when they had to speak in English as some of them claimed that they have weak command of English. The findings from this study are consistent with Yeh's (2014) study as in the Taiwanese context, the students demonstrated a fairly positive attitude towards EMI, but faced some challenges due to their lack of English proficiency.

5.2 Implications of the Study

This study provides some insights into how tertiary education students, specifically first-year students, view and interpret the crucial aspects concerning English as a medium of instruction. First and foremost, the students are the major stakeholders in the implementation of language policy yet their viewpoints tend to get dismissed. As the process of decision-making regarding the language policy in Malaysia adopts the 'top-down' method (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997), the policy planners should take into account the students' perspectives before they make language-related decisions.

Next, the pedagogical implication of this study is that the lecturers should strive to ensure that their content is coherent and comprehensible to their students. As stated previously, the students had some difficulty understanding certain technical terms, therefore, the lecturers must seek ways to address this problem to ensure deeper understanding of course content by the students. Also, as shared by some of the respondents, the anxiety they experience when having to speak in English should be addressed by using effective approaches to foster their confidence. As proposed by Hsieh and Kang (2007), EMI programmes should be viewed as an opportunity for the

students to develop and enhance their English skills as the students can learn how to communicate in English in real-life contexts.

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

Several recommendations are put forward to be considered for future research related to EMI. First, future research on EMI should consider having a larger sample as this study only engaged with 100 students. This is due to the fact that, the larger the number of respondents, the more heterogenous the attitudes and experiences with the implementation of EMI. A larger sample size provides more accurate and reliable statistics as it is more representative of the population.

Secondly, future studies should include students from a variety of higher education institutions, both public and private, to verify that the data acquired is applicable to contexts other than those explored here. Students from different higher education institutions have varying educational backgrounds and may encounter different modes of implementation of EMI at their institutions, which may influence their attitudes and experiences with it. Therefore, the generalisability and applicability of research can be established.

Next, future studies should consider formulating more detailed interview questions to elicit insightful responses. A limited number of questions may affect the data collected due to the inadequate answers provided by the respondents. Also, the interview questions should be improved so that the answers obtained are not broad and vague.

Last but not least, if the COVID-19 pandemic has yet to subside, the researcher should consider more effective ways to collect the data from the respondents especially the oral data. The researcher may consider using focus groups to gather responses from groups of students instead of individual responses. In addition, because respondents

may be hesitant to provide thorough answers during the interview, the researcher may encourage students to pre-record their responses so that they feel more at ease.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND EXPERIENCES WITH ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION FOR DIPLOMA COURSES

Part I

Course:		Part:	
Previous Secondary School:		Previous Medium of Instruction:	

Part II

Below are several statements regarding ***attitudes towards English as a medium of instruction***. Please read each one carefully and tick the appropriate box to indicate to what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement.

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree
1.	Learning subjects with English as the medium of instruction is helpful for me.				
2.	I am confident to learn my subjects in English.				
3.	My academic performance improves when the medium of instruction was used in English.				
4.	EMI is not helpful in improving my English-speaking ability.				
5.	I am satisfied with my lecturers' English skills.				
6.	It is easy to understand the content of my course with English-medium teaching.				
7.	I am unmotivated to use English to communicate with my lecturers.				

8.	Low English proficiency may obstruct learning development.				
9.	EMI is not helpful to students.				
10	I am convinced that learning subjects with English as a medium of instruction is necessary at the university level.				
11.	I believe that learning in English can help me develop my thinking process.				
12.	EMI has helped me to improve my English listening skill.				
13.	It is impractical for all of the subjects to be conducted in English.				
14.	EMI is beneficial to improve skills in English especially communication.				
15.	EMI is not helpful for me to prepare myself for working later.				
16.	EMI does not manage to provide a platform for me to communicate in English with others.				
17.	I am getting more familiar with English through the implementation of EMI.				
18.	I managed to acquire difficult technical terms in my programmes through EMI.				
19.	I am satisfied with the content and materials provided in the EMI programmes.				
20.	My lecturer's proficiency in English does affect my understanding of the programmes.				

Below are several statements regarding ***challenges faced with English as the medium of instruction.*** Please read each one carefully and tick the appropriate box to indicate to what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement.

No.	Statement	Strongly	Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree

		Disa gree			
21.	I do face challenges as I am learning subjects in English.				
22.	I did not face any difficulties in comprehending my courses' content.				
23.	My lecturer's ability in English has helped me understand the content better.				
24.	It is more difficult to understand terminologies related to my course in English.				
25.	It is harder to concentrate on English-medium subjects.				
26.	My ability to communicate in classes was affected by EMI.				
27.	It is difficult to understand the lecturers' accents.				
28.	The difficulty in understanding the courses' materials is mostly due to the use of English as a means of instruction.				
29.	Learning in English has hindered my academic performance.				
30.	I managed to be better at English-reading skills due to EMI.				
31.	My English writing ability has improved after I started learning EMI programmes.				
32.	I have rough learning experiences due to EMI.				
33.	EMI has increased my learning motivation.				
34.	I was anxious and under severe stress during my learning process due to EMI.				
35.	I find it difficult to participate in a class discussion if English is used rather than Malay.				
36.	My lecturers struggle to explain the content of the programmes in English.				
37.	I am anxious to communicate in English during class time with my lecturer and classmates.				

38.	The major difficulties that I faced in EMI programmes are caused by my English skills.				
39.	I had a long time to understand the content of the programmes due to EMI.				
40.	The challenges that I faced during learning in English are manageable.				
41.	I started to doubt my ability if I cannot communicate in English during my learning.				
42.	The challenge in understanding EMI programmes is mostly due to my poor command of the English language.				
43.	My lecturers' English ability does not help my understanding of the programmes' content.				
44.	I had serious issues with the implementation of EMI.				
45.	I find the problems that surround the enforcement of EMI can be resolved.				

*EMI: English as the medium of instruction

* STEM: Science, Technology Engineering and Mathematics

APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR RESPONDENTS

Title of Research: Students' Attitudes and Experiences with English as a Medium of Instruction for Diploma Courses

Name of Researcher: Nurul Alia Hasni binti Mohd Sani (0182115946/aliamsani@gmail.com)

Research Information

This research has been approved by the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics for research involving human subjects at UiTM Tapah. It should be noted that

participation in this research is voluntary and unpaid. The respondent may withdraw from this study at any time without giving any reason, with no harm intended towards him or her. This study requires recorded data thus, some of the respondents may be recorded orally. The recordings will be kept securely and used by the researcher for this research purpose only. The oral recordings will be deleted after 3 months upon the completion of this study. The information that was acquired due to this study will be kept strictly confidential.

The Purpose of Participation

As part of this project, you are invited to participate in evaluating and providing relevant data for this study. Your participation and cooperation in completing this study will provide data that may be used for the benefit of this research.

Participant Responsibilities and Consent

I, as the participant, voluntarily agree to participate in this study as I have read and understood the informed consent and conditions of this study. I am aware that I may be asked to answer a questionnaire related to this study and interviewed for further investigation. I agree for my responses to be used for this study and if the researcher intends to use my data on other projects, he/she is required to obtain my consent in advance. I hereby acknowledge all of the details mentioned above and give my voluntary consent for participation in this research.

_____

(Name:)
(Email:)
(Date:)

APPENDIX C: PERMISSION LETTER TO LECTURER

Encik Muhammad Khairul bin Ahmad,
UiTM Cawangan Perak,
Kampus Tapah,
Fakulti Akademi Pengajian Bahasa,
35400 Tapah Road,
Perak.

13th April 2021

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT UiTM TAPAH UNDER ACADEMY OF LANGUAGE STUDIES

Dear Encik Khairul,

My name is Nurul Alia Hasni bt Mohd Sani and I am an English Language Studies student from the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics at the University of Malaya. The research I wish to conduct for my Master's research project involves Diploma students' opinions regarding the implementation of English as the medium of instruction (EMI). This research project is under the supervision of Dr. Jagdish Kaur a/p Gurdeep Singh, University of Malaya.

I am hereby seeking your consent to approach 100 students from your classes to be the respondents for this study and they will need to answer a questionnaire and some of them will also be invited for an interview session.

I have also provided a copy of my research abstract, questionnaire and the interview questions for your reference. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at my number 0182115946 or my email aliamsani@gmail.com.
Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,



Nurul Alia Hasni bt Mohd Sani
TQA190040/17202209
Faculty of Languages and Linguistics,
University of Malaya.

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTION

1) What is the function of English in your life? What do you think about it?

2) What is your general opinion regarding EMI? Please explain more.

3) Do you agree with "EMI does help students to develop soft skills"? If yes/no, why?

4) Do you think that you and your classmates faced the same challenges regarding EMI? If yes, what is the most common challenge among you and your classmates?

5) Have you experienced any discrimination or judgments due to your English skills?

6) Do you think the students who are more proficient in English are more favoured by your lecturers? Or is it the one who excels in the subjects despite their English skills?

7) In your opinion, does the enforcement of EMI is helpful to the students? Explain more.

APPENDIX D: EXCERPTS FROM THE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

S1:

1) Uhm, as second language after Bahasa Melayu. It make easier to communicate with people especially from other race.

2) In my opinion, I think EMI helps student exposed to international language and easier student to adapt environment that need to speak English especially when start their career.

3) Yeah, because it giving strength to student's English language, at the same time it will giving extra confident to student to speak out.

4) The most challenging EMI is we cannot understand if lecturer using bombastic word where it is rarely to be used. Most of the time it's hard to study and find the meaning at the same time.

5) No, I don't think my friends are like that.

6) Maybe, yeah, but my lecturer, they still entertain and teach me as usual.

7) Uhm, in my opinion, EMI is helpful to student especially during study or in career later because English language is most preferable language by company or universities.

S2:

1) To communicate with others and gain knowledge, I think. I think English are very important especially when working and study. I think so "la".

2) In my opinion, I think English is an important skill and people should has this skill. I guess EMI is good but since there are many difficult word or sentences in English that I find it hard to understand. I think we should use dwi-language instead.

3) I think yes, since our country has many race such as Malay, Chinese and Indian, we kind of have language barrier. So EMI do help lect and student understand each other more since more people do speak English.

4) I think so. There are many hard and difficult word that we do not understand or know how to use it. I also feel shy to use English in classroom with my friends and lecturer.

5) Yes, I do especially since my high school is at, uhm, kampung and people over there over react when someone speak English when communicate. So, I kind of afraid and shy to speak English more with my friends.

6) I think it depend on the lecturer. If the lecturer teach English and yes he or she like people talk more in English. But if the subject about math or science lecturer will favoured student who is more skills in the subject.

7) Yeah, especially in soft skill. It help student to do presentation and communicate with lect.

S3:

1) Uhm, a lot. For example, to communicate with others, socializing and entertainment with community, increases chance of getting job in multinational company.
2) I think it's a good idea of having this EMI in Malaysia since English is a compulsory subject in all schools. So, most of citizen can understand if it is English.
3) Yes, it can develop soft skills among students, uhm, actually, among everyone who learn English. It is because practice make perfect.
4) No. The problems are small so I think I can handle it. My classmates too.
5) Yeah, because citizen in Malaysia so toxic, they always "pandang rendah" and judge other people. So, I am not comfortable to use English even now in class.
6) Uhm, I'm not sure since my lecturers also mix Bahasa Melayu in the lecture sometime and they don't mind if we use speak Bahasa Melayu in their class.
7)Yes

S4:

1) I think English act as a medium to communicate with all people around the world since it is the international language.
2) Uhm, in my opinion, EMI really help with my learning process. But sometimes it is hard for me to catch up the study since there are several things that I don't understand. But the lecturers always helping all of us to ensure all the students understand on what we learn.
3) Yes, the EMI help in develop student soft skill. While learning, uhm, student also be able improve their English skills. This also will help boost their confident when talking or writing in English.
4) Yes, most common challenge that we faced is the use of difficult and unknown word that we might never know before. So, it hard to understand what the sentences referring to.
5) Yes, I often get judge for my grammar and pronunciation when talking or writing in English. But now I try to use English more so I can be better.
6) Uhm, no, I don't think so. I think all the student receive the same amount of attention and help from the lectures.
7) Yes, EMI help student in their English skills and understand more in their learning since the will learn more especially when related to the world issue or matter.

S5:

1. I do think English could help me on communicating with others that could not understand my language. It is quite important as the communication is the key on everything. The world needs one language that everyone could understand and interact with.
2. I do think that English is important as EMI. It is because the student can blend in with other people when they graduate as the whole industries is for all ethnic and races around the globe.

So, they need to practise from the earlier stages of learning because they practically handle it in their real life after graduate on their course.

3. Yes. Because the students could make the student be 'friendly' and easily approachable to the other people as they could communicate on the same language. With this usual habit, the student can socialize more while having the great soft skills on themselves

4. Yes. It is quite challenging when some terms that being used by the lecturer is quite hard and advance making me and the classmates could not cope with the learning and fully understand on what had being taught.

5. No, I don't think so.

6. I don't think both question is the student who being the lecturers' favourite as many of them did not care much about how fluent you are in English and, uhm, how smart you are in the class. It is all about the attitude from the student itself. But personally, the lecturers will choose the one who smart in the subjects before admire the one who are proficient in English.

7. Yes, it is. It helps a lot, uhm, because the student can practise their English while gain a knowledge in a worldwide language making. They can learn from social media or any other lecturers even they are from different country, races and religion. It also could help the student on developing their confident level as they are not fierce on learning the new language in the EMI.

S6:

1. Uhm, for me to communicate with others is easier and also can enhance my English skills at the same time. Today English is very important language since people interact with each other, uhm, even they are not in the same race or religion.

2. EMI is good since it can develop more thinking skills from the students itself. If they do not understand some terms or word in the content that they study, uhm, they can find the meaning and can gain their knowledge from their research.

3. Yes, I do agree that EMI is developing students' soft skills because they can interact easily with people or strangers in English since they used to it.

4. Yes, sometimes the term and word that been used is quite hard to understand and it's not well explained if we search it in the internet. And, uhm, me and my classmates used Malay during class so our English skill remain the same.

5. Nope, I don't think so.

6. I don't think so. If the student is well performed and well-mannered with their own attitude, then the lecturer will willingly to teach you well.

7. My opinion, it's good and helpful for students since the requirements that had been stated by some companies in Malaysia is they can speak in English well and also will interact students to learn other languages for example Mandarin, Tamil and so on.

S7:

1)In my opinion, English is very important nowadays as it become an international language that be used in all countries over the world. When we have skills to speak in English, it is bonus for us as it will be easier during our daily communication.

2)For me, EMI is a must because through that we can develop our English skills whether to speak or writing.

3)Yes, I totally agree because when we speak English language, we can develop feel of confident in our self as not anyone will confident when they talking in English because they feel shame if the talk in wrong way such as bad grammar and so on.

4)I think yes, but not too major problem because teenagers nowadays already listen to English song. So, through that, slowly they learn English and can use it in classroom.

5)No because they also not too power in English. They accept me as they are.

6)No. Because not everyone can speak English well. But it is not an excuse to not succeed. They can learn day by day, uhm, to be better.

7)Yes, it will help student the most because this language is used almost in all jobs. It is very important to have skill in speaking English so that we can communicate well with foreigner

S8:

1) English could help to communicate with people that not speak in Malay. English also can help me not to be deceived by strangers.

2) EMI could help people out there develop the skill such as understand, talk, and think.

3) Yes, it is because develop English skill can also develop student confidence to talk at public.

4) No. Because we always study together so if there is anything that we don't understand, we can discuss together.

5) Yes, I am easily become blank when talking English in formal. I am always, uhm, "gagap" when I need to present in English.

6) I think no. It is because all students are lecturers' favourite either good or not in English. Lecturers will give the attention to all their students.

7) In my opinion, yes, it is because could help student like me that lack of confidence to gain it. It also can give a new experiences and knowledge about English so the students can be smarter.

S9:

1. Uhm, I think it is easy for me to communicate with others. Today English is very important language since people interact with each other even they do not speak Malay.

2. EMI is good to use since it can improve the students' skills.

3. Yes, I do agree that EMI is developing students' soft skills, uhm, because they can interact easily with people or strangers in English

4. Yes, sometimes the term and word that been used is quite hard to understand so my learning is not smooth.
5. Nope
6. Uhm, I don't think so. If the students are well performed and well-mannered with their own attitude, then the lecturer will willingly to teach you well.
7. My opinion, it's good and helpful for students since some companies in Malaysia required they can speak in English well

S10:

1) For me function of English in my life is a medium to interact with others, especially when work.
2) EMI is very important because to make it easy for us to deal with people in others races.
3) Yes, because indirectly it will help us to be a good teamwork especially in work
4) Yeah, because mostly my classmates are Malay so we rarely use English to communicate so we cannot improve our skill.
5) Yes, so many times. Sometimes people laugh at my pronunciation because I don't know to pronounce some words or when I don't know the word so I cannot speak properly especially during presentation.
6) No but mostly the best student in their subject will be their favoured by lecturer.
7) Yes, it will help people to improve their skill to communicate with people in others races. At the same time, they can be more confident.