

English-medium-instruction in Higher Education: Challenges and Strategies for Educators from Non-native English-speaking Backgrounds

Dr. Dang Thi Kim Anh, Monash University, Australia

ABSTRACT

The internationalisation of higher education witnesses a growing phenomenon of university courses using English as a medium of instruction (EMI) worldwide. This switch from teaching in one's mother tongue to teaching in English presents new demands for educators from non-native English-speaking backgrounds (NESB), especially when adequate preparation and support for them to teach subject content in English remain a challenge. An understanding of the challenges facing them and the strategies they adopted to respond to the new demands is critically needed. This paper explores communicative and pedagogical challenges and associated strategies of NESB educators as they shared their teaching experiences within an EMI tertiary context.

This study adopts a Vygotsky's socio-cultural theoretical perspective in conceptualising English as a tool educators appropriate to mediate their teaching. A modified EMI competence framework further elaborates the use of English as a pedagogical and communicative tool. Data were generated through individual interviews and survey questionnaire with NESB educators at an Australian university. Findings revealed multiple challenges facing the educators and strategies they applied to adapt English, as a mediational tool, to effectively mediate their teaching. The study has implications for EMI research, and professional development and institutional support for NESB educators.