

Aligning Policy and Practice: Linguistic and Pedagogical Strategies for the EMI Classroom

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Abstract

The growing internationalisation of higher education has positioned university lecturers at the “interface between institutional demands and students’ expectations” (Tange, 2010, p. 141). This change process can produce evolving institutional language policies as English medium education in multilingual university settings becomes a common practice (Dafouz and Smit, 2016). The interrelationship between language policy and practice can be critical as non-native English-speaking lecturers deal with issues concerning language proficiency, developing ways to increase student understanding and ensuring that programme quality is maintained (Doiz et al, 2011). This paper presents the results of a research study into EMI teaching practices at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano. A vertical approach to data collection was adopted using semi-structured interviews, classroom observation, and video stimulated recall (VSR). Post-observation interviews employed Coyle’s (2005) critical incident technique, offering lecturers a chance to reflect on examples of good practice and/or problem areas in the EMI classroom. The results of the study showed that despite apparently high levels of individual self-awareness on the challenges of teaching in English, there appeared to be varying levels of effectiveness displayed by lecturers with the capacity to draw upon appropriate linguistic and pedagogical strategies necessary to meet the needs of multilingual and multicultural student audiences. Problems relating to levels of language proficiency, reliance on a limited range of pedagogical approaches, and lack of cultural awareness could be identified as tensions illustrating a gap between EMI teaching practices in the classroom context and language policies at institutional level. Nevertheless, there was also clear evidence of successful alignment between language and didactic strategies underpinning the concept of “language policy as practice” (Bonacina-Pugh, 2012), when classroom practice mirrors institutional language policy which could have wider implications for diverse EMI settings.

1. Introduction

English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in the domain of higher education is not a new phenomenon, as Graddol (1997) noted over two decades ago, citing it as “one of the most significant educational trends world-wide” (p. 45). In Europe, the adoption of English as the language of instruction in higher education institutions (HEIs) has been systematically mapped (Maiworm & Wachter, 2014) illustrating the enormous growth in the number of English-taught programmes being offered across European universities, tripling in the decade from 2002 to 2012, with over 2,300 programmes representing a growth rate of over 300% (Doiz et al., 2011).

English-medium instruction across Europe highlighted the “imperative of internationalization” (Coleman 2006, p. 4), the increasing use of English used as a marketing tool to make universities more competitive (Phillipson, 2003, p. 47), in the shift away from an exclusive use of the national or dominant language for teaching and learning, to be replaced by English (Dafouz & Smit, 2012, p. 2) for the purpose of attracting international students. The “Englishization” of higher education signalled the marketization of tertiary education as decisions surrounding language policy within the institutional environment created new challenges for lecturers tasked with using English to communicate academic content (Hultgren, 2014).

As institutional language policies evolved, academic teaching staff found themselves positioned at the “interface between institutional demands and students’ expectations” (Tange, 2010, p. 141), facing the challenge of adapting both linguistic repertoires and pedagogies to ensure alignment of teaching, learning and assessment in the multilingual and multicultural learning environment (Lauridsen & Lillemose, 2015). The interrelationship between language policy and practice was likely to be a critical factor when non-native English-speaking lecturers had to deal with issues concerning language proficiency, developing ways to increase student understanding and maintaining programme quality (Doiz et al., 2011). Whilst EMI programmes in general, prioritised the acquisition of subject knowledge, rather than the development of English language skills (Coleman, 2006, p. 4), lecturers remained responsible for expanding their students’ knowledge of discipline-specific lan-

guage to gain the communicative skills necessary for successful completion of courses taught through English (Airey, 2011).

The main focus of this small-scale qualitative research study carried out at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, a trilingual university located in a bilingual region in northern Italy, was to investigate lecturers' linguistic and pedagogical strategies used in the EMI classroom and the extent to which they aligned with institutional language policy. The two key research questions informing the study were: (1) What factors inform lecturers' linguistic choices and pedagogical strategies employed in the EMI classroom? (2) How are language policy and teaching practice aligned in the EMI classroom?

Conceptually, this paper draws on two different models: teacher cognition, what teachers know, believe and think as exemplified through classroom practice (Borg, 2003) and the concept of practiced-language policy, which locates language policy at the level of language practices (Bonacina-Pugh, 2012). These two complementary models are appropriate for examining teaching practice in a multilingual tertiary setting as they offer a way to uncover the different factors influencing lecturers' instructional choices in the EMI classroom and the role played by language policy in co-constructing meaning in learning spaces where English is employed as the medium of instruction.

2. Theoretical Approaches

2.1 Teacher Cognition in EMI

The construct of teacher cognition, broadly defined as what teachers know, believe and think, positions teachers as "active, thinking decision makers who make instructional choices by drawing on complex, practically oriented, personalised and context-sensitive networks of knowledge, thoughts and beliefs" (Borg, 2003, p. 81). Links between teacher cognition and classroom practice have been found to exist in "symbiotic relationship" (Borg, 2003, p. 91) but it has been argued that contextual factors also play a significant part in influencing practice and the extent to which teachers can implement instruction congruent with their cognitions. Studies in the field of teacher cognition have

identified language management (e.g. explaining vocabulary, creating contexts for meaningful use) to be an overriding focus of teachers' pedagogical thoughts (Gatbonton, 1999), but awareness of the broader institutional context was also found to have a direct impact on teachers' decision-making in regards to lesson planning and content in response to what Burns' (1996) refers to as "organisational exigencies" (p. 162). Accumulated teaching experience emerged from the literature as a key factor informing teaching practice with practitioners' personal history of knowledge and information gained through trial and error providing guidance on what will work and will not work in the classroom (Crookes & Arakaki, 1999, p. 16). Teachers' capacity to transform subject-matter content into a form appropriate for teaching and learning, referred to as pedagogical content knowledge, broadened the concept of teacher cognition to encompass the idea of blending of content and pedagogy adapted to the diversity of interests and abilities of learners in the classroom environment (Shulman, 1987, p. 8 cited in Borg 2006, p. 22).

2.2 Practiced Language Policy

The concept of "practiced language policy" (Bonacina-Pugh, 2012) highlights the interconnection between language policy at the level of language practices embedded in classroom discourse. As a construct it provides an appropriate theoretical lens to examine lecturers' discourse in multilingual teaching and learning spaces where English is the medium of instruction. Spolsky's (2004) model of language policy found at the levels of language management, language beliefs and language practices assumes an integrated approach, with each component, that is, 1) language management ("the formation and proclamation of an explicit plan or policy, usually but not necessarily written in a formal document, about language use"), 2) language beliefs ("what people think should be done"), and 3) language practices ("what people actually do") (Spolsky, 2004, p. 1014) operating together, rather than as separate entities. While classroom discourse can be construed as socially constructed, it is shaped by institutional language policies and the language choices made by individual lecturers according to their own language beliefs and ideologies. In Spolsky's model the "real language policy of a community is more likely to be found in its practices than [sic] its management" (Spolsky, 2005, p. 2163).

Looking for instances of practiced language policy in the EMI classroom required the researcher to focus on those communicative exchanges demonstrating how institutional language policy can be “interactionally constructed in practice” (Bonacina-Pugh, 2012, p. 217). In exploring policy at the level of practices the aim was to “look at what people do and not at what they think should be done or what someone else wants them to do” (Spolsky, 2004, p. 218).

3. Literature Review

A considerable body of research on English as a Medium of Instruction has emerged in recent years (see Coleman, 2006; Smit & Dafouz, 2012; Dearden & Macaro, 2016; Macaro et al., 2018) highlighting the critical role played by university lecturers responsible for implementing evolving language policies connected to English in diverse higher educational settings. Much of this research has centred on stakeholders’ perceptions towards EMI in countries experiencing rapid growth in the use of English as language of instruction and on ways in which institutional language policies directly impact teachers’ professional practice. Two Danish studies (Tange, 2010; Werther et al., 2014) outlined the challenges faced by lecturers’ teaching their disciplinary content through English as a second language. One major issue identified was the lack of systematic planning at an institutional level, resulting in staff having little warning prior to delivering their courses through English (Werther et al., 2014, p. 10). Limited language proficiency, minimal EMI teaching experience or awareness of the difficulties teaching through a second language also emerged as contributing factors linked to poor classroom performance. The absence of dedicated language training or strategies designed to support lecturers implementing EMI policy affected lecturers’ ability to meet institutional expectations (Werther et al., 2014, p. 13) and mirrored earlier concerns identified by researchers about lecturers’ attempts to transform management strategy into sustainable teaching practice (Airey, 2011; Tange, 2012). Low levels of linguistic proficiency (teachers and students), general lack of experience or under-

standing of the implication of teaching through English, and limited support for EMI programmes in the institutional context also emerged as recurrent themes (Dearden & Macaro, 2016) in the EMI research literature.

An early study on the effect a change in instructional language might have on teaching performance (Vinke et al., 1998) reported that Dutch lecturers' felt "less capable of expressing themselves clearly and accurately" (p. 387) due to linguistic inflexibility, and an inability to adapt one's language to different instructional situations. This was evidenced in observational data which revealed a change of instructional language tended to reduce the redundancy of lecturers' subject matter presentation, and slowed down the rate of speech, clarity and accuracy of expression (Vinke et al., 1998, p. 392). Studies exploring the link between lecturers' attitudes towards teaching in English and professional practice confirmed "the irrefutable need to take stakeholders' underlying beliefs into account when aiming at successful educational innovations" (Smit & Dafouz, 2012, p. 6). An investigation into lecturers' beliefs surrounding language use and proficiency in a Spanish multilingual university introducing English as a third language of instruction also highlighted the need for EMI stakeholders to receive teacher training, although the form this type of training should take was not clearly defined (Fortanet-Gomez, 2012, p. 59). One possibility mooted in a research study exploring Italian lecturers in ICLHE contexts was to offer methodological training as part of a collaborative effect between English language and subject-matter specialists to support EMI practitioners in developing more self-awareness of the type of language issues they faced in the EMI classroom (Costa, 2012, p. 43).

In Italian higher educational contexts, the use of English as language of instruction is much less advanced than in many northern European countries where English Taught Programmes (ETPs) have been in place for several decades (Costa & Coleman, 2012). In 2007, the Conference of Italian University Rectors' (CRUI) annual survey noted a "poor propensity" to set up Bachelor's degree level courses in English, whilst there was "fairly good vitality" in the provision of English-taught courses at post-graduate level (CRUI, 2007, p. 1). A decade later, CRUI's 2016–2017 survey confirmed a rapidly increasing number of Italian universities delivering programmes taught in English (CRUI,

2018). According to Costa & Coleman (2012), the main drivers behind the growth in EMI courses were linked to universities' desire to raise their international profile (32%), attract foreign students (21%), and prepare Italian students for the global market (24%). However, what the findings revealed was that most university administrators (77%) did not prioritise training programmes for academic staff, with only 8% offering any form of methodological training; moreover, whilst 30% of survey respondents voiced concerns about the levels of English language competence of lecturers and students, only 15% of Italian universities provided formal language courses (Costa & Coleman, 2012).

Language policy decisions surrounding the introduction of English medium of instruction programmes in Italian higher educational settings could be imposed from above, as was the case in the Politecnico di Milano's shift to an English-only formula for all postgraduate and doctoral courses as part of its 2012–2014 Strategic Plan, with English providing the "instrument to attain these objectives" (Molino & Campagna, 2014, p. 162). Other initiatives focused on designing more inclusive language policies and support programmes, occurred at the University of Modena, where a combination of teacher training support and financial reward offered an incentive to encourage lecturers to teach through English as the language of instruction and be active participants in implementing language policy (Long, 2012). The University of Padova adopted a participative approach in developing its EMI language policy, encouraging academic staff teaching through a second language to reflect on their own teaching practice and access language support and pedagogical training to acquire the strategies necessary to engage students more actively in the EMI classroom and adjust to the new reality of the multicultural and multilingual learning space (Guarda & Helm, 2017, p. 903), an approach that directly contrasted with that adopted by the Politecnico di Milano in its attempt to introduce EMI policy excluding key stakeholders from the language decision-making process.

A constant theme emerging from studies on EMI practices in Italian higher educational settings was the need for universities to design language policies that offered a layered approach in supporting students' and lecturers' teaching and learning through English. This could encompass programmes

that integrated language and content, the provision of pedagogical training and language support for teachers and learners to expand their linguistic repertoires rather than focus on a “monolingual mindset” (Molino & Campagna, 2014, p. 169), goals that were less likely to be achieved by applying a “top-down imposition of English-medium instruction” (Pulcini & Campagna, 2015, p. 85).

4. Data Sample and Analysis

The study used a mixed-method approach including classroom observation, video stimulated recall and semi-structured interviews to investigate EMI lecturers’ use of linguistic and pedagogical strategies and how they aligned with institutional language policy. Academic staff, who had previously participated in an intensive training course for EMI practitioners conducted by the British Council as part of the university’s professional development programme between 2015–2017, were invited via email to participate in the research study. A total of 5 participants were involved in this small-scale qualitative study, 3 EMI lecturers teaching in the Faculties of Education, Computer Science and Economics and Management, as well as 2 faculty staff tasked with managing and implementing institutional language policy. The EMI lecturers had varied levels of experience of studying, teaching and researching through English as members of their respective global academic networks. LEC1 and LEC2 appeared to have significant experience (>15years) teaching in EMI contexts, whilst LEC3 had less exposure (<10years) delivering discipline-specific content using English as the medium of instruction. The lecturers had different L1’s, with two lecturers identifying themselves as self-reported trilingual speakers. Data collection took place between January and June 2018.

4.1 Method: Observation, Video-Stimulated Recall, Interviews

Observation makes available direct information as opposed to self-reported accounts (Dörnyei, 2007) and unstructured classroom observation in educational settings enables the researcher to collect descriptions of teaching and get an overall impression of lecturers’ language proficiency and teaching strat-

egies employed in the EMI classroom (Kling Soren, 2013). Three lectures (each between 2–3 hours duration) were video recorded but not transcribed. In addition, the researcher took field notes with brief notations on the types of activities taking place and the classroom atmosphere.

Video stimulated recall (VSR) drawing on video recordings of particular observed practices plays a valuable role in promoting the reflective practices of teachers (Reitano & Sim, 2010). In observing their own teaching through short video excerpts, practitioners are encouraged to activate prior knowledge and experience (Kleinknecht & Schneider, 2013, p. 15), reveal tacit knowledge about their pedagogy, and access an alternative way to “see” their practice (Tripp & Rich, 2012). One of the key aims of this study was to explore the connection between language beliefs and language practices in the EMI classroom, and VSR offered the potential to provide a minimally intrusive means to study classroom phenomena, allowing the teacher to “relive an episode of teaching” (Calderhead, 1981 cited in Reitano & Sim 2010, p. 218) and gain access to participants’ decisions during teaching. An individual video-stimulated reflective interview was organised with each participating EMI lecturer between March and June 2018. Each post-observation interview lasted approximately 1 hour and short video excerpts (2–3 minutes in length) were used to guide the participants’ reflections during the interviews, which were recorded and subsequently transcribed.

Adapting Coyle’s (2005) critical incident technique (CIT), which involves lesson observation, provided opportunities for practitioners to reflect on “learning moments”, which act as triggers for collaborative reflection and discussion between the participant and researcher. Semi-structured interviews provide “privileged access to a linguistically constituted social world” (Kvale, 1994, p. 147). Individual interviews were carried out with two senior staff offering a unique perspective on how language policy related to English as a medium of instruction was both shaped and implemented in this institutional setting. A set of 4–5 open-ended questions to guide the discussion together with a diagram modelling the university’s language policy acted as additional prompts. Both interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Applying a thematic analytical approach in the first stage of open coding, I looked for discernible themes when reviewing the lecturers’ post-observer-

vation interview transcripts. A number of themes emerged from the data set and were categorised as follows: language; interaction; pedagogy; language policy; reflection. I applied a similar approach to the data set from the semi-structured interviews with the language managers and identified two overarching themes: language and policy. Written student evaluations relevant to one lecturer were also included in the first stage of analysis and two themes emerged: language proficiency; teaching effectiveness. In the second stage of analysis the different data sets were triangulated to identify any shared themes.

5. Findings

5.1 Linguistic and Pedagogical Strategies

Research Question 1: What factors inform lecturers' linguistic choices and pedagogical strategies employed in the EMI classroom?

In educational contexts, the instructor's choice of language may be categorised according to purpose, disciplinary specific language, language of instruction and classroom management. Developing ways to enhance language awareness has been found to assist teachers and students to communicate more effectively in EMI learning contexts (Dafouz, 2017), particularly, specific types of communication-enhancing strategies such as commenting on terms and concepts, task content, discourse structure, and signalling importance and the use of questions (Björkman, 2010, p. 80).

The findings of this study showed that lecturers drew upon different strategies in helping students to extend their knowledge of discipline-specific vocabulary. LEC1 introduced disciplinary specific language in a deliberately structured way, highlighting its application to academic and professional contexts, displaying a conscious perception of language learning and language use (Garrett, 2006, p. 293):

LEC1 It is finance you know. However, I do start from zero. I don't use any technical language but slowly I build up the vocabulary and try to use abbreviations.

RES From the start of the course?

LEC1 Exactly, so I start with 'net present values', you explain them that this is 'NPB' and they have to remember because I repeat it all the time. On the blackboard I try not to write the words but abbreviations so that makes them a bit more attentive and trying to understand what does it mean...finance people talk in abbreviations it's the language in newspapers

RES So you're almost getting them used to a familiar environment?

LEC1 Yeh but not that much for example when you go to the real business to be a practitioner and you hear them talking 70% of the words they say is financial jargons. So, I really put very few, but do because I think it's quite important for them to feel comfortable then later, when they read the financial news, or anything there connected to finance, they'll feel comfortable because they know what it's all about

In the Faculty of Economics and Management, at both micro (classroom) and meso (departmental) levels, English was regarded primarily as a communicative 'tool' enabling students to gain access to future professional discourse communities. Such views mirrored earlier studies that found business teachers perceived English as essential to the pursuit of academic studies in business-related subjects (Dafouz, Hüttner, & Smit, 2016).

Despite having the necessary specialised terminology related to his disciplinary field, LEC2 was unable to access sufficient general lexis to make comparisons or indicate relationships across professional domains:

LEC2 [...] sometimes something I feel, you know, if you make a comparison with some completely different domain then my feeling is I'm not very fluent with the vocabulary in this other domain and then it's difficult to make comparisons you need the vocabulary there to explain it of course my vocabulary is rather limited to computer science terminology yeh I sometimes try to avoid this because it's risky sometimes I would love to be able to include more of these things because this would be a good way to explain a relationship or...

Where there appeared to be a gap between the lecturer's proficiency in respect to disciplinary and general lexis, this could lead to tensions in the learning context. In the case of LEC3, this was reflected in student course evaluations highlighting concerns about the instructor's overall linguistic capability:

the professor lacks of the basic knowledge of the English grammar and vocabulary

I think that the professor struggles in explaining himself on the subject because of his low competence in English and therefore he cannot fully express himself on the things he wants to say

the language competence in English of the professor is very inappropriate making it hard for students to follow him as he talks

a great problem was the understanding of the language spoken by the professor

However, it was also evident from students' positive responses in the same end-of-course evaluations that in adopting a variety of didactic approaches, LEC3 could, to some extent, mitigate against the problem of having a restricted linguistic repertoire: ("I have really appreciate the support...video, power point and book"; "Moreover he gives several ways in order to understand topics covered during lessons..."; "Very good videos of the lessons available online").

The findings showed considerable variation in the type of pedagogical strategies utilised by the lecturers participating in this research study across different disciplinary areas. Levels of interactivity and participatory learning were not necessarily tied to the individual lecturer's level of English proficiency. The experiential dimension of teachers' knowledge (Golombek, 2009, p. 156) emerged as a key driver behind the choice of pedagogical strategies used in the EMI classroom:

LEC1 Well, from my experience I really don't expect much interaction from the second year students[...] I've tried during the start of my career to ask questions and give them points for asking questions and answering them...but then it's really a waste of time and it's not engaging many people...so, from my experience, interac-

tion within a large group of students is not really useful, especially when they are actually starting the topic off.

Although LEC1 considered the use of questions as time consuming, he did employ simple questions strategically “to see if people follow me, or at least think about the topic and not about something completely unrelated”, which supports previous research on the use of questions in multilingual learning contexts as a didactic tool to monitor student engagement and facilitate comprehension (Björkman, 2010). From LEC2’s perspective, interactivity occurred not only when students’ actively participated in asking questions, but also through other forms of classroom engagement:

LEC2 [...] this was not a very interactive class this year so there were one, two people, three people not very interactive but at least they were always sitting here and you have the feeling they are listening to you.

LEC3 displayed a much higher frequency in his use of open and closed questions and had a clear rationale for incorporating this pedagogical approach into his teaching practice: “the goal of interacting with students many times is also to present experiments, for which, in that situation, you are part of the knowledge that is being created there” (LEC3). However, the data revealed instances where LEC3’s inability to correctly frame a question could lead to disfluency:

LEC3 I was making a kind of summary to a question but I was losing the point I was creating a question starting from a nowhere position maybe I started from a point then I thought that I should switch to another one and therefore the sentence is a nonsense I was aware that there was something wrong but maybe I was not able to get what was going on.

Each of the lecturers participating in the study were observed to use a variety of pedagogical strategies to enhance learning in the EMI classroom, including the use of anecdotes, demonstrations, exercises, experiments and quizzes. One interesting finding was that a lecturer’s language proficiency was not necessarily the only determinant in influencing the level of interactivity. This was

the case for LEC3 who, despite his restricted linguistic repertoire, appeared to be much less risk averse than LEC2 about introducing a wider range of didactic strategies into his teaching practice. Experimentation in the classroom setting can lead to greater levels of student participation but can also create misunderstanding if the lecturer is unable to structure tasks in a clear and transparent way for students. Concerns about the adequacy of lecturers' English language skills have emerged in other studies on learning in EMI contexts (Guarda & Helm, 2016), and research has shown that choices surrounding pedagogical and interactional strategies adopted by EMI practitioners are likely to be "highly context-dependent" (Dafouz, 2018).

5.2 Language Policy

Research Question 2: How are language policy and teaching practice aligned in the EMI classroom?

The notion that the "real language policy of a community is more likely to be found in its practices than [sic] its management" (Spolsky, 2005, p. 2163), was the driver to investigate how lecturers enacted EMI language policy in the international classroom. The findings revealed instances of alignment between language policy and practice as lecturers demonstrated a strategic use of linguistic and pedagogical choices to ensure effective communication in the EMI classroom context. However, there was also evidence that a restricted linguistic repertoire could cause misalignment in meeting the students' expectations with regards to English medium instruction. In such cases, institutional efforts to re-align EMI policy and practice through direct intervention took various forms: providing professional development courses, language support, or, more drastically, terminating teaching contracts.

If we consider in more detail the notion of alignment, it was noteworthy that all of the study's participants fulfilled the main criteria of the university's EMI language policy to only use English for instructional purposes. Where there was apparent divergence between lecturers was in varying levels of conscious perception or sensitivity to language for teaching, learning and use (Garrett, 2006). Having access to a sufficiently wide linguistic repertoire

(disciplinary specific and general lexis) enabled LEC1 to be strategic in matching his linguistic choices to the needs of his students:

LEC1 Yeh I can speak faster I can use slang all the mighty power of British English but then it would just be complicated for them for me it's better to speak clearly, slowly, pronouncing the main themes, and then avoiding using complicated words but from the lexical choice I try to be versatile.

For LEC1, this strategic approach was also apparent in the choice of instructional language and pedagogical strategies used to enhance students' understanding, a teaching style that resulted in positive end-of-course evaluations and institutional recognition as an outstanding teacher. Those lecturers able to successfully adopt a strategic approach to language, as a tool for teaching, learning and professional use to match the needs of the multilingual learning space, reflected a form of practiced language policy (Bonacina-Pugh, 2012) with classroom practice in alignment with institutional and learners' expectations.

The data showed that LEC2 was less strategic in his use of language, due in part to his lower proficiency in English and more limited linguistic repertoire. He was also risk-averse to trying out a wider range of pedagogical approaches in the EMI classroom and, as a consequence, might be seen to offer students a more limited learning experience. Although LEC2 generated positive feedback from his students, his style of teaching could be considered as partially aligned with the institution's EMI language policy.

In the case of LEC3, there was clear evidence of a gap between institutional policy and practice, seen in student evaluations which highlighted the lecturer's inadequate language skills to effectively deliver academic content:

In general, the course is really hard to follow because of the difficulties in understanding the professor's way of speaking

Maybe it would be better if the course is taught in Italian the English of the prof is very bad

Such misalignment between language policy and practice resulted in direct intervention at the departmental level, compelling the lecturer to attend a one-week intensive EMI training course as part of his professional development. Although LEC3 used a range of pedagogical techniques in the EMI classroom, his weaker language skills and reduced awareness of the role language played in the multilingual learning context had the potential to impede student learning and prevent students from developing their disciplinary literacy, necessary for both academic and professional domains. In this institutional setting, negative student feedback relating to the lecturer's linguistic competence could result in the provision of additional language or pedagogical support, a change in the language of instruction or, in a worst-case scenario, the non-renewal of teaching contracts:

LP1 When the feedback is very negative they have to change language and they will give their lesson in their mother tongue if there are really big problems the Deans always try to choose those who can really do it.

LP2 If you have a negative student evaluation you're out for three years, you cannot even apply here it's not so much about what boxes they tick it's much more about the comments at the end...if you have comments of five students in a class of fifty and those five students say 'the teacher doesn't speak English' then you should not teach in that language.

Language policy operates in a "complex ecological relationship among a wide range of linguistic and non-linguistic elements, variables and factors" (Spolsky, 2005, p. 2155). It was apparent that language managers perceived the need to exhibit a shared responsibility in implementing EMI programmes to ensure they matched the expectations of different stakeholders (institutional, faculty, students):

RES Whose responsibility do you think it is? The individual teacher?

LP2 Yes definitely, you have the individual and then you have the institutional situation the person starts to teach in a certain language and we see oh oh that's not so good, we usually change that in other faculties I realised they just don't change

this because it's a position that is there so you have to provide that person with teaching and at the end of the day the individual says I am not going to change language so nobody makes really tough decisions.

The university's evolving language policy was designed to address the needs of each of the target group of stakeholders as part of a three pillared approach. Students were provided with intensive and semi-intensive language courses at each phase of their academic career; faculty had the opportunity to participate in dedicated professional development courses and language courses and a range of ESP programmes were offered at postgraduate level to improve students' academic writing and speaking skills. In contrast to previous research illustrating a general absence of structured language support or pedagogical training for EMI practitioners in Italian universities (Costa & Coleman, 2013), it was significant that in this multilingual university, resources were readily available for faculty engaged in delivering courses through English.

The university's commitment to internationalisation was underpinned by its language policy which had as its goal to enable students to integrate language and content, "not on one side language and on the other side content, but they have the knowledge in the three languages" (LP1). In positioning English as one of the official languages of instruction, a *lingua accademica*, institutional language strategies were also designed to provide support for staff and students to become effectively trilingual in a diverse range of languages, creating what Phillipson (2006) refers to as "balanced forms of multilingualism" (p. 27). Although the university's website promoted English as the *lingua franca* of scientific communication, it did not appear to "take for granted the position of English as the default option" (Tange, 2010, p. 139).

Nevertheless, in spite of the generous provision of linguistic and pedagogical support, language managers expressed doubts about the university's ability to achieve full alignment between language policy and practice:

RES Do you feel positive that there can eventually be better alignment between the university's language policy and the needs of each faculty?

LP2 I'm not so sure, on paper you always get this progress by increasing the levels to B2 C1, on paper it looks all nice for me, the only measurement is not if you do

strategic alignment in lectures and so on the point is, what is working for the students five years later. Can they use it? It's much more about looking at the way they get aware of some information, how they filter information, and how they decide what to use and managing that process in favour of content. It is much more how you motivate people to listen to content than the content itself.

Enhancing students' learning puts the focus on content, and acquiring the disciplinary knowledge necessary to successfully transition to a professional environment with language utilised as an effective communicative tool.

6. Conclusion and Implications for other EMI Contexts

Drawing on two conceptual models, Teacher cognition (Borg, 2003, 2006) and Practiced language policy (Bonacina-Pugh, 2012), this paper has examined the linguistic and pedagogical strategies used by lecturers in the EMI classroom and ways in which EMI policy and practice are aligned in a trilingual university (Free University of Bozen-Bolzano) located in Northern Italy. A vertical approach to data collection was adopted, involving classroom observation, video-stimulated recall and semi-structured interviews, and produced a rich data set. The qualitative thematic analysis revealed instances of alignment of institutional language policy and teaching practices enacted in the EMI classroom, confirming Spolsky's (2005) idea that the "real language policy of a community is more likely to be found in its practices than [sic] its management" (p. 2163).

Lecturers were observed using a variety of pedagogical strategies to enhance learning in the EMI classroom, introduced disciplinary-specific language in a deliberately structured way, highlighting its application to academic and professional contexts, thereby displaying a conscious perception of language learning and language use (Garrett, 2006), and made use of questions as a didactic tool to monitor student engagement and facilitate comprehension. However, there was also evidence of misalignment between policy and practice when tensions emerged in the EMI learning context as a result of student feedback related to lecturers' inadequate English language skills

which impacted student learning. In such cases, institutional efforts were taken to re-align EMI policy and practice through direct intervention, which could involve compulsory attendance in language courses, professional development, or termination of a teaching contract.

The findings showed there was provision for linguistic and methodological support included as an element of the university's three pillared language policy and high levels of awareness by senior managers tasked with implementing language regarding the challenges facing lecturers tasked with teaching academic content through English as a second language. Locally-appropriate solutions designed to expand the linguistic repertoire of students and lecturers were being developed at the institutional level to provide adequate support mechanisms for faculty positioned at the interface between institutional demands and students' expectations (Tange, 2010). The study found instances of classroom practice that mirrored institutional language policy through full alignment of linguistic and pedagogical strategies to meet students' expectations. However, it was apparent there was further need for ongoing language and methodological support when the lecturer's English language proficiency failed to match student expectations or where lecturers' more restricted linguistic repertoire prevented them from using varied pedagogical strategies in order to enhance students' EMI learning experience.

The study's limitation is that it was a small sample, focused on a single institution and so the findings cannot be generalised. However, this research study's mixed method approach resulted in a rich data set reflecting EMI teaching practice and language policy taken from an authentic teaching and learning context. The findings confirm the value of using video stimulated recall as a professional development tool for EMI practitioners to actively reflect on teaching practice and develop more self-awareness about the impact linguistic and pedagogical choices can have on student learning. The concept of "language policy as practice" (Bonacina-Pugh, 2012), when classroom practice mirrors institutional language policy, has wider implications across a range of different HE settings as the prevalence of English-medium of instruction programmes continues to expand.

Notes

The following abbreviations used in the interview extracts refer to:

RES = Researcher; LEC = EMI Lecturer; LP = Language Managers

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