EMI in a trilingual university:

Aligning language policy and classroom practice

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I, Emma Quick confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated language policies and practices around English medium instruction (EMI) at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (UNIBZ). The growing internationalisation of higher education has positioned university lecturers at the 'interface between institutional demands and students' expectations' (Tange, 2010: 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, develop ways to increase student understanding and ensure programme quality is maintained (Doiz *et al.,* 2011). A study examining ways EMI lecturers respond to the challenge of meeting institutional and student expectations around English as a medium of instruction in a trilingual university has relevance for other HEIs confronting the problem of aligning language policy and practice in EMI teaching and learning contexts.

Although the findings showed lecturers and administrators took up varying positions on the use of English as a language of instruction, there was some evidence of alignment between different stakeholders on how EMI should be put into practice. This was most notable where lecturers' adjusted their teaching practice in order to match the needs of students learning through English as an L2. However, there were also instances of individual resistance to an institutional gaze that privileged language and content development as part of the university's commitment to an integrated content and language learning approach in higher education (ICLHE).

While the analysis suggested a gap remained in UNIBZ's efforts to implement language policy at the level of language practices in classroom discourse, it also underlined that simplified notions of EMI cannot necessarily be applied to complex multilingual teaching and learning environments, such as the one under investigation in this study.

IMPACT STATEMENT

This thesis aims to impact both academia and teacher training methodologies concerning EMI practitioners' professional practice. Within academia the implications of this study may increase awareness of the critical role played by language administrators, alongside teaching practitioners, when implementing institutional language policies connected to English medium of instruction. The inclusion of language administrators in this research study, a group of stakeholders who have been largely 'absent' from the EMI literature (Lauridsen and Lillemose 2015), attempts to offer the scholarly community an expanded perspective on the relationship between EMI language policy and classroom practice. The findings suggest that where practitioners and language administrators hold similar beliefs around EMI, this can lead to alignment in transforming institutional language policy into classroom practice to meet the needs of L2 learners. Drawing on Block's (2020) version of positioning theory as a theoretical framework, instances where institutional language policies and processes around second language use were reflected in the teaching practices of individual lecturers, may be construed as evidence of an EMI 'gaze'. Such insights may have implications for EMI teacher training methodologies, highlighting the critical role of language policy and management processes in shaping practitioners' professional practice.

First, the benefits inside academia could occur through collaborative efforts between researchers/teacher educators recognising the important role played by language administrators, alongside teaching practitioners, in implementing EMI programmes in HEIs. With the inclusion of language administrators as participants in future research projects, this could provide scholars with a deeper understanding of how EMI policy and practice operates across diverse educational contexts and address an obvious gap due to the absence of this group of stakeholders in the literature to date. The study reinforced the value of stimulated recall as a research method to explore lecturers' beliefs and practices connected to EMI. Although stimulated recall is currently under-utilised in the field of EMI research (Farrell 2020), this method of data collection could be exploited more fully for the purpose of capturing the 'voices' of EMI practitioners and space to reflect on their own individual professional practice and its relationship to institutional language policies in place regarding English as medium of instruction.

Second, the benefits outside academia could impact teacher educators' responsible for the design and delivery of professional development programmes for faculty teaching through English as a second language. Becoming effective reflective practitioners may need to take account of one's own self-positioning towards English as a language of instruction as well as considering institutional objectives on the role of English for teaching and learning purposes in the multilingual university.

In sum, this study's findings have a potential impact on current and future researchers investigating EMI policy and practice across diverse educational contexts, as well as teacher educators in HEIs tasked with developing professional development programmes to meet the needs of faculty members teaching through English as an L2. Disseminating outputs could be achieved in multiple ways via scholarly publication, and through participation in academic forums dedicated to research connected to integrating content and language in higher education contexts (ICLHE).

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. English-Medium Instruction: An Evolving Phenomenon

The use of English as a medium of instruction in the domain of higher education was identified as 'one of the most significant educational trends world-wide' (Graddol, 1997:45) more than two decades ago. English medium instruction (EMI) has been defined as the teaching of academic subjects through English in contexts where English is not the primary language of communication of the majority of the population (Dearden, 2014; Macaro, 2018; Curle *et al.,* 2020). However, terminology around the use of English for the purposes of teaching and learning in higher educational contexts varies considerably according to its role and function. The continuum below (Fig 1) reflects current perspectives on the distribution of content and language learning aims across various educational programmes e.g. Content and Language integrated learning (CLIL), English for Academic Purposes (EAP), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English as a foreign language (EFL) and Content-based Instruction (CBI).

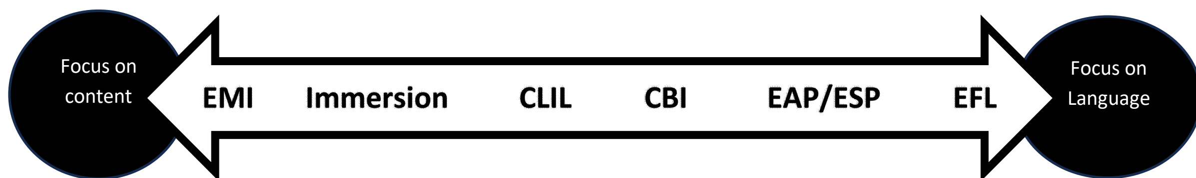


Figure 1. Continuum of programmes that integrate content and language learning (adapted from: Thompson & McKinley, 2018)

Although language learning is not an explicit aim of EMI, its primary focus being the teaching of subject content using English as the vehicle of communication, some scholars have argued that any definition of EMI needs to include the following elements: 1) English is used for instructional purposes, 2) English is not the subject being taught; 3) language development is not a primary intended outcome; 4) the majority of participants in EMI settings use English as an L2 (Pecorari and Malmström, 2018: 499). Dafouz and Smit's (2016: 399) notion of English-medium education in Multilingual University Settings (EMEMUS), enlarges existing definitions of EMI by broadening the focus beyond simply instruction to also include teaching, learning, research and programme administration thus offering a 'label [that] is semantically wider, as it does not specify any particular pedagogical approach or research agenda'. Although the

authors recognised the specific role of English as an academic language for teaching and learning disciplinary knowledge, they adopted a critical stance in suggesting that current conceptualisations of English in English-medium education contexts may be too narrow and need to take account of discursive and social practices such as interaction between teachers and students when co-constructing knowledge in the multilingual classroom using English as an additional language (Dafouz and Smit, 2016: 400).

Such varying definitions reflect the 'highly diverse local realisations' of EMI teaching and learning contexts which may vary according to factors such as national settings, language policies, the range of disciplines taught through English, institutional profiles and stakeholders' proficiency levels (Dafouz and Smit, 2017:4). IntlUni's survey (IntlUni 2015) into the use of EMI in higher educational (HE) settings across Europe identified a spectrum of modalities with English used as a vehicle of communication for teaching and learning. This included English acting as an academic *lingua franca,* parallel language policies where English coexisted alongside national languages for teaching and administrative purposes, and tertiary settings where multilingualism existed to encourage the use of multiple languages. Dafouz and Smit's (2016; 2017) EMEMUS paradigm went further setting out specific factors that may determine the role played by English in HE settings. The first factor – societal - focuses on the wider context in which the higher education institution (HEI) is situated, considering the impact a region's linguistic profile may have on the institution's language choices. The second factor – institutional - takes into account the overall purpose of EMI programmes, while the third factor – pedagogical - highlights teaching and learning aims, either explicit or implicit, in respect to language aims and teaching formats. The final factor – communicational - considers multilingual communicational practices and proficiency levels. However, it is worth noting that some scholars argue that the label 'EMEMUS' should only be applied to multilingual universities where English as a *lingua franca* plays a dominant role in instruction in terms of the wider institutional context (Rose *et al.,* 2023)

Such representations of EMI as those outlined above reinforce Macaro's (2018) argument that there is no 'one size fits all' EMI model, with different forms of EMI potentially operating within the same institutional setting. In university contexts where EMI implementation may vary, studies indicate this may have implications for both the quality of education and learning outcomes (Sahan *et al.,* 2021)

Despite such shifting definitions around the concept of EMI, the role of English as the language of global academic communities and scientific communication has long been recognised, even if the link between internationalisation and the spread of English-taught programmes is perceived as a relatively recent phenomenon (Coleman, 2006). Researchers have argued that the growth of EMI over the past two decades has been driven by internationalisation, English seen as a 'symbol' representing this ongoing process, particularly in the sector of higher education (Hultgren, 2014; Macaro, Curle *et al.,* 2018). One consequence of internationalisation, defined as an intentional process pursued via institutional policies and practices aimed at integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions and delivery of higher education(Wit 2015), has been the spread of English-taught programmes (ETPs) (Coleman, 2006). HEIs seeking to internationalise may adopt strategies that promote student and staff mobility, and establish collaborative research partnerships with other universities in order to develop curriculums with an international focus (Costa and Coleman, 2013). Attracting international fee-paying students as well as giving home students the opportunity to access wider employment opportunities through studying in a multilingual and intercultural learning environment has also provided the impetus for universities to pursue internationalisation (Aizawa and Rose 2019). The historical and political dimensions of EMI also contributed towards institutional decisions concerning the use of English as a medium of instruction in specific HEI contexts (Li cited in Coleman *et al.,* 2018).

The increasing presence, importance and status of English at all levels in the educational domain has been termed a form of 'Englishisation', EMI acting as a driver shaping institutional reactions to internationalisation (Lanvers and Hultgren, 2018). Globally more and more universities have sought to offer undergraduate and postgraduate programmes through the medium of English (Lasagabaster, Doiz, and Sierra, 2014; Bowles and Murphy 2020). The reasons for this are varied and will be examined more fully in Chapter 2. In summary, they include a perceived need to internationalise the university in order to render it more prestigious; to attract foreign students because of falling enrolment numbers of home students through changing demographics, national cuts in HE investment; the need of the state sector to compete with the private sector; and the status of English as an international academic language, particularly in the domain of research publications (Macaro *et al.,* 2018).

From the perspective of European HEIs, the Bologna Declaration (1999) initiated a process aimed at harmonising higher education to provide mutual recognition of qualifications, enhance mobility among students and graduates and enable European higher education institutions to attract international students more easily (Costa and Coleman, 2013: 4). The Bologna process illustrated a long-standing policy focus on internationalisation designed to enhance the international competitiveness of European higher education (Marginson and van der Wende, 2007), by actively pursuing a form of 'academic internationalisation' (Altbach and Knight, 2007), seeking to integrate an international dimension into the sphere of European higher education policy and practice. The result has been a dramatic growth in the number of English-medium courses, the number of ETPs increasing from 2,389 to 8,089 between 2007- 2014 across European HEIs (Maiworm and Wächter, 2014). Scholars have claimed that it is impossible to separate the Bologna Process from internationalisation, or internationalisation from the Englishisation of Higher Education (Costa and Coleman, 2013), while others have raised concerns about the potentially negative impact the expansion of English-medium programmes may have on local languages and cultures (Curle *et al.,* 2020; Doiz, Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2012).

In the European HE context, EMI programmes established in universities may be referred to as Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education (ICLHE) programmes or even 'CLIL in HE' programmes (Macaro *et al.,* 2018). According to Hultgren, Jensen and Dimova (2015), EMI courses conceal a wide variety and complexity of linguistic practices, and are more prevalent in Northern European rather than Southern European countries. Despite its apparent commitment to multilingualism (mother tongue plus two other languages) embedded in the Bologna Process, researchers have noted that 'English has become the main foreign language used as a means of instruction at European universities' (Doiz, Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2011). Attitudes to EMI have been found to be 'far from homogenous'(Hultgren, Jensen and Dimova, 2015: 2), ranging from outright resistance in Italy when the Politecnico di Milano attempted to shift exclusively to using English as medium of instruction for all its postgraduate courses, to concerns voiced around potential domain loss in Nordic countries as the result of a greater degree of commodification at master's level as European institutions competed to attract non-EU fee-paying students' (Dimova *et al.,* 2015). Naidoo and Jamieson (2005) link the use of English as an academic *lingua franca* to the notion of a 'global marketplace of knowledge', students gaining

membership once they have developed sufficient English language skills. Organisations such as the British Council perceived English, not only as a vehicle for further international collaboration and networking in research and educational programmes, but as a means to provide ‘opportunity and access for individuals, institutions and nations educationally, economically and socially’ (Veitch 2021:7) Having collaborated with the British Council delivering EMI courses to content lecturers in Italian HEIs over a period of five years, I supported the organisation’s rather lofty goal to ‘promote better quality EMI which improves, or at the very least, maintains outcomes for students, content lecturers, language specialists, institutions and education systems’(Veitch 2021: 7). However, I also noted the potentially negative impact of EMI on student learning in higher educational contexts where lecturers faced difficulties communicating academic content effectively when teaching through English as an L2.

O’Dowd’s (2018) recent survey of European HEIs found that nearly 75% of universities required faculty to reach a specified level of English proficiency (between the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages level B2-C1) in order to teach their discipline through English as an L2, although only 68% of HEIs were willing to offer EMI lecturers language or methodological training. With an increasing number of European tertiary settings offering EMI programmes, it is lecturers, who are positioned at the ‘interface between institutional demands and students’ expectations’ (Tange, 2010: 141). Recent studies have underlined the role of language as of paramount importance for teaching and learning in EMI contexts (Doiz and Lasagabaster, 2020; Macaro, 2020) and highlighted gaps between language policy and classroom practice in relation to EMI (Lauridsen, 2020). Furthermore, researchers have identified an important group of ‘actors’ occupying a central role in the implementation of EMI programmes, e.g. administrators in upper and middle leadership roles, as being ‘conspicuously absent’ from the EMI literature (Lauridsen and Lillemose 2015: 210). A key objective of this study was therefore to include administrators and lecturers in an investigation of how EMI was implemented in a trilingual university.

1.2 Focus of Research

This research project grew out of my experience as a teacher educator delivering EMI training courses on behalf of the British Council between 2015 and 2019 at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (UNIBZ) to lecturers teaching disciplinary content through English as a second language. The British Council's now defunct Academic Teaching Excellence (ATE) training course was designed to support non-native speaking lecturers teaching through the medium of English facing the 'complex linguistic challenge of teaching and learning in a second language' (British Council 2013). After having completed a one-week certification course at Oxford University's Department of Education in early 2014, I became part of a network of certified ATE trainers across Europe (e.g. France, Germany, Poland, Italy, Austria, UK, Spain). Prior to becoming an ATE trainer, I had developed and delivered a series of language and communication skills courses for the British Council aimed at Italian academics using English as part of their professional practice. This was the starting point for developing my awareness of how internationalisation was impacting the language and communicative practices of academics and researchers as they attempted to integrate English into their teaching and research activities.

Listening to my students' narratives about the use of EMI in their institutional settings helped me to develop a picture of how individuals were responding to this change process and its effect on their workplace and professional roles. A constant theme that kept emerging was the apparent lack of language or pedagogical training at the institutional level to help faculty adapt to teaching academic content through English as an L2. Despite the British Council launching its Academic Teaching Excellence course in 2014, it was only at the end of 2015 that the first ATE training courses were delivered in Italy, suggesting there was little take-up (or interest) from local HEIs to provide EMI training for academic staff teaching their disciplines through English. One factor that may have accounted for this reluctance could have been due to growing debates around the role of English as medium of instruction in Italian higher education that had become part of public discourse due to institutional decision-making around English-only policies, seen by some staff as an attempt to impose one linguistic culture over another (Molino and Campagna, 2014: 165).

The British Council discontinued its Academic Teaching Excellence (ATE) global training programme at the end of 2019, due to a re-evaluation of the organisation's positioning towards English as a medium of instruction (Veitch 2021). However, my professional

experience of delivering ATE training courses in Italian HEIs provided me with a unique insight into the challenges faced by disciplinary experts in various universities teaching in English as an L2. In assuming the ATE trainer role, I had a partial glimpse into the participants' professional context through observing the individual micro-presentations even if the reality of their actual EMI teaching contexts remained very distant.

For the purpose of this study, therefore, my goal was to negotiate access within this institutional setting (UNIBZ), gathering data through observations of authentic EMI classrooms, carrying out interviews with lecturers and administrators to gain a deeper understanding of how EMI was perceived and practised in this unique trilingual HE learning environment. As I had already conducted a number of EMI training courses[1] within this institutional setting, I had established relationships of trust with individual course participants, who were familiar with management processes and classroom practices connected to English medium instruction. Nevertheless, I was conscious there might be considerable challenges repositioning myself as a researcher, not a teacher-trainer, within this institutional context. Managing the expectations of practitioners willing to be involved as research participants in a study of EMI teaching practices would mean adopting a methodological approach that was flexible enough to give 'voice to the participants' (Palaganas *et al.,* 2017: 434), hear what they were saying and also uncover their self-representations. Adopting the role of a reflexive researcher (Attia and Edge, 2017), would require a level of self-awareness in how I positioned myself and was positioned by others throughout the data collection process. For this reason, I chose to use Positioning Theory as the theoretical framework for a research project that was interested in finding out more about 'how people use words (and discourse of all types) to locate themselves and others [in social episodes]' (Moghaddam and Harré, 2010: 2). Consolidating and maintaining the trust I had already built up in my role as teacher-trainer within the site of research would be critical, and could potentially serve as a means to actively engage participants in the research process (Creswell and Miller, 2000) and generate accurate and candid data (Attia and Edge, 2017). Enhancing collaboration was likely to be achieved by making the relationship between the researcher and participants explicit (Jootun, McGhee and Marland, 2009: 45), addressing methodological issues arising as part of the data collection process and being open to adapting strategies that aligned more closely to the overall

[1] Six ATE Courses were delivered at UNIBZ between 2015–2019.

focus of the research project. Given my research aims, the two research questions underpinning this study were:

RQ1: How do administrators and lecturers understand the language policy related to English-medium instruction in this trilingual university?

As English has been employed as one of three official languages of instruction (German, Italian, English),since the university's foundation in 1997, the aim was to involve language administrators and lecturers to get as wide a perspective as possible on the role of English in this unique trilingual teaching and learning setting.

RQ2: How are specific practices associated with EMI pedagogy assigned, taken up or resisted by lecturers in this educational setting?

By examining classroom practices and encouraging EMI lecturers' to reflect on their individual EMI teaching performance, the intention was to try and gain a deeper understanding of how lecturers using English as an L2 took up (or resisted) those rights and duties linked to English-medium instruction in this institutional setting.

1.3 EMI in Italy

The growing phenomenon of EMI, referred to as an 'unstoppable train' (Macaro *et al.,* 2019: 232), has had a significant impact on the Italian higher education sector over the past two decades, resulting in an increased number of degree programmes taught in English at both public and private universities (Costa and Mariotti, 2021). Survey-based studies (Costa and Coleman, 2013; Costa, 2016; Broggini and Costa, 2017) reported that 90% of Italian HEIs had introduced EMI programmes, generally in Engineering and Economics faculties, with the majority found to be at master's and PhD levels. The impetus for this rise in the number of ETPs (English-Taught Programmes) was driven by economic-political reasons aimed at attracting international students and giving locally-based students access to wider employment and study opportunities (Pulcini and Campagna, 2015). However, Italian universities interested in implementing EMI programmes faced specific challenges including 'limited cooperation between lecturers, insufficient language competence of lecturers and students, limited interest of Italian students'(Costa and Mariotti, 2021: 84),

and little training was offered to lecturers in the majority of Italian HEIs (Costa, 2015). Such institutional neglect in supporting faculty teaching through an L2 was due in part to the lack of sufficient institutional resources but also a failure to take account of the role played by language in EMI (Broggini and Costa, 2017). One consequence of a failure to provide linguistic or methodological training for lecturers was the potential to negatively impact teaching quality and the student's learning experience (Costa and Mariotti, 2021).

1.4 Site of Research

The Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (UNIBZ), chosen as the site of research for this qualitative study occupies a unique position in the Italian higher education landscape, as it is the only HEI where English is afforded the status as one of three official languages of instruction for teaching and learning, alongside Italian and German. From its establishment in 1997, languages appear to have been a central feature of institutional policy, included in publicity campaigns that promoted the university's motto, 'dare to be multilingual' (Campisi, 2000). Legally constituted as a multilingual HEI located in South Tyrol, an officially bilingual region (German/Italian), the university's mission was to produce graduates 'who can say that they speak, read and write fluently in three languages' (Campisi, 2000: 485). As part of its official multilingual policy, students were offered academic programmes delivered through modules taught in German, Italian and English (Costa and Mastellotto, 2022).

From the initial founding of the university in 1997, a dedicated Language Centre supported the university's linguistic policies providing support for students through a varied programme of courses: intensive summer language courses, language and culture courses, and language for specific purposes (Campisi, 2000). Academic staff were involved in developing teaching materials in cooperation with the Centre's language teachers to meet the needs of students in trilingual course programmes. Language workgroups were also established to review the effectiveness of the institution's language policy on a regular basis and included representatives from the Language Centre, Deans of each Faculty and researchers engaged in studies on multilingualism. Research into the language and communication practices within this trilingual learning environment a decade after it was established found that the university's official multilingual orientation 'was conjugated in quite different forms in practice' (Spreafico *et al.,* 2008, Working Paper 3,

Dylan Project). Recent studies indicate that UNIBZ has continued to adapt its language models (Costa and Mastellotto, 2022), one example being the new language model introduced in 2015 (see Appendix 2), which adopted a three-pillared approach including the provision of basic language courses for students up to B2 level, specialist and academic language courses for students at C1 level and training programmes designed for lecturers and researchers focused on content and language integrated learning (Mastellotto and Zanin, 2016).

As a result of my previous professional experience as an ATE trainer at UNIBZ, I had some insight into the linguistic environment and type of challenges faced by lecturers teaching through English as an L2. In attempting to uncover how institutional language policy around the use of English as a language of instruction was transformed into teaching practice in the EMI classroom, I decided to involve lecturers and administrators responsible for implementing English medium programmes in the project. For the purpose of this study I understood policy to mean evidence of official statements on how English was to be 'operationalized' (Block and Moncada-Comas, 2019). However, I also took into account Spolsky's (2004:8) interpretation of language policy as encompassing 'language management, language practices and language beliefs'. According to Spolsky's model, language management referred to an explicit plan or policy, e.g. a formal written document, (but not necessarily always found in written form), setting out rules of language use; language practices referred to 'what people do', namely, language used in teaching and learning contexts; and finally, language beliefs that represented the general set of beliefs shared by members of a speech community (Spolsky, 2004: 2161). In an earlier publication he outlined his understanding of what constituted language policy:

> […] the real language policy of a community is more likely to be found in its practices that [sic] its management. Unless the management is consistent with the language practices and beliefs, and with the other contextual forces that are in play, the explicit policy written in the constitution and laws is likely to have no more effect on how people speak than the activities of generations of schoolteachers vainly urging the choice of correct language. (Spolsky, 2003: 2163)

My objective was to identify instances where language policy and practice overlapped, viewed from the perspective of language administrators and lecturers responsible for putting EMI programmes into practice in this trilingual HE setting. The novelty of this study is that it focuses on an HE domain where English was established as one of three official

languages of instruction at the university's inception in 1997, providing a scenario that is, to the author's knowledge, unique in the Italian higher education landscape.

Enacting a trilingual language policy involves 'policy actors' (Ou *et al.,* 2022:13), including administrators, instructors and students, who act as language policy arbiters, exerting agency in shaping language policy and putting it into practice. Examining both language management processes related to the use of English and EMI lecturers' classroom practice had the potential to reveal ways in which individuals 'interpret, negotiate, and contest EMI policy meanings … and make space for their own social practices, communicative needs and identities' (Ou *et al.,* 2022:14). I considered it possible that in the relationship between administrators' perceptions of EMI and individual's lecturers' teaching practice there might be instances that reflected 'practiced-language policy' (Bonacina-Pugh, 2012), where language policy is enacted at the level of language practices in classroom discourse.

1.5 Mapping the Thesis

The remainder of the thesis is structured as follows: Chapter Two gives a detailed overview of literature related to EMI practices and processes, with a particular focus on European higher education settings, given the site where the research study took place is located in a bi-lingual region in North Italy. All sources have been selected in terms of their relevance to the study's research questions outlined above. Chapter Three describes the choice of research methodology used during the data collection, and gives a detailed account of the different phases of this process. It also provides a *raison d'être* behind the choice of applying positioning theory as the theoretical framework to analyse the data and interpret the results. Chapters Four and Five present an analysis of the data guided by the two research questions and outline the key findings. Chapter Six provides a conclusion, addresses the study's limitations and highlights the potential implications the study's findings may have on future research in this field.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The past two decades have witnessed an increasing use of English as medium of instruction (EMI) in higher education as universities seek ways to expand their engagement with the global academic community and address the needs of international students. As Curle *et al.,* (2020) have shown in their detailed literature review of EMI commissioned by the British Council, institutional approaches to EMI vary considerably depending on the local context and factors including the individual HEI's language policies, the proportion of English used for teaching and learning and specific language proficiency thresholds set for both for staff and students. Although one recognisable benefit of EMI is the opportunity for academic staff to demonstrate their ability to teach and publish in English (Coleman, 2006), studies reveal content lecturers have 'serious concerns' related to the introduction and implementation of EMI programmes (Hultgren, 2014; Macaro *et al.,* 2018).

Such concerns are often linked to the language-related challenges experienced by content-lecturers who resist taking on the role of language instructor (Macaro *et al.,* 2016). The adequacy of lecturers' English language skills (Guarda and Helm, 2016) is also another critical issue emerging from the literature, alongside content lecturers' limited awareness of the challenges arising when delivering academic content through a second language (Mastellotto and Zanin, 2021). Despite evidence of locally based initiatives designed to address the linguistic and pedagogic issues facing EMI lecturers (Airey, 2011; Aguilar and Rodriguez, 2012; Guarda and Helm, 2016), the lack of widespread institutional support in the form of structured support programmes exacerbates the difficulties faced by academic staff implementing EMI policy (Costa and Coleman 2013), an issue that will be discussed in more detail in Section 2.5. This chapter will examine EMI research on the issues outlined from a broader European as well as Italian perspective, highlight examples of institutional decision-making around the use of English and the response of EMI practitioners' in managing the varied challenges associated with teaching subject content through a second language.

2.1 Defining EMI

The one constant factor linked to definitions of the term EMI is the use of English as the vehicular language to teach academic content in educational contexts where English is not the first language (L1) of the majority of the population. The most cited definition of EMI highlights 'the use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the populations is not English' (Macaro, 2019: 19), a definition that could be applied to a wide range of educational contexts. While it is generally agreed by scholars that the priority in EMI programmes is content learning, with language learning rarely an explicit goal, alternative definitions have been proposed which incorporate language learning as a key objective. Taguchi's (2014:89) definition puts the focus on 'curricula using English as a medium of instruction for basic and advanced courses to improve students' academic English proficiency'. This broader interpretation emphasises the relationship between content and language in developing students' language skills when learning through English as a second, foreign or additional language (L2). However, language policies (explicit or implicit) around the use of English as medium of instruction within individual HE institutions are likely to determine the extent to which language learning is prioritised alongside academic content knowledge for students learning through English as an L2. Dafouz and Smit's (2016) idea of English Medium Education (EME) expanded the concept of EMI beyond simply that of instruction to encompass educational contexts where English acted as a vehicular language for teaching, learning, research, and programme administration. Pecorari and Malmström's (2018) definition of EMI identified particular features present in HE contexts with English medium programmes as follows: 1) English is used for instructional purposes but is not the subject being taught; 2) language development is not a primary intended outcome; and 3) the majority of participants in the EMI setting use English as an L2. I will draw on Pecorari and Malmström's notion of EMI for this study, due to its appropriacy in investigating the role of English in a trilingual HE context.

2.2 EMI Policy and Practice

The increasing use of English at non-Anglophone universities has led to claims that English has become 'the main foreign language used as means of instruction at European

universities (Doiz, Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2011: 345). However, other researchers have highlighted the fact that English medium education (EME) settings represent 'diverse, individual and complex' learning environments requiring language policies that are context-specific and tailored to meet the needs of different stakeholders (Veitch, 2021:10). The findings from a European wide research project (IntlUni 2015), identified a spectrum of EMI modalities ranging from full EMI programmes that offered local students' opportunities to complete degrees in English in their home university to partial EMI programmes or bilingual education programmes. Thus, EMI did not necessarily mean English-only, with institutional language objectives around bilingual or multilingual practices as part of teaching and learning determining how much English was integrated into the curriculum (Curle *et al.,* 2020). In Denmark, the use of English was not always an explicit part of university language policy, but was found to be the preferred language option for Danish higher education institutions wanting to increase revenue and recruit the best international students and staff (Hultgren, 2014: 76). A distinctive feature of Nordic language policies was the concept of *parallellingualism*, as defined by the Danish Ministry of Culture:

> Central to the solution for the challenges faced by universities is the concept of parallellingualism. The purpose of a parallellingual strategy is to ensure the opportunity for researchers, graduates and students to operate internationally, while continuing to develop a scientific language and terminology in all areas, which is usable in a Danish medium context. (Danish Ministry of Culture 2008: 47 In Hultgren, 2014: 69)

Whilst the passage above does not refer directly to the use of English as the medium of instruction, Hultgren (2014) suggests there is an implicit link through its function as a global academic language for students, graduates and researchers. Roskilde University, offered parallel courses designed to contribute to the development of Danish academic language and 'avoid domain loss' (Roskilde University language policy), which aligned with governmental policy around medium of instruction. For the CercleS Focus Group on Language Policy, a Europe-wide association of tertiary language centres, language policy acted as 'an important strategic instrument in the general context of internationalisation'. However, as a group of language experts, CercleS also noted that several factors needed to be taken into account when developing language policies: i) the local context (linguistic, social and ethnic specificities); ii) the role of different languages in the institutional setting (official/local/working languages; English, migrant languages; languages of tuition and their appropriacy for individual programmes); iii)assessment procedures (entry and exit

language level requirements); and iv) implementation strategies (the kinds of support available to students, academic and administrative staff).

Robert Phillipson's calls for higher education institutions to 'formulate and implement policies to create balanced forms of multilingualism' (Phillipson, 2006: 24), take account of the fact that choices around English play a significant part in the creation of such policies. Such a notion needs to be situated within the wider context of Phillipson's (1992) concept of linguistic imperialism which viewed the dominance of English as potentially leading to structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages. In situations where English was positioned as a 'lingua academica', Phillipson argued that it needed to be balanced by 'strong local language ecologies', reinforced by institutional language strategies that supported staff and students to become 'effectively trilingual in a diverse range of languages'(Phillipson, 2006: 27). Locally appropriate solutions aimed at expanding the linguistic repertoire of students and researchers (Phillipson, 2006) could provide a means of addressing concerns surrounding domain loss arising from the Englishisation of higher education and set standards for language proficiency and classroom language use (Curle *et al.,* 2020). For Veitch (2021), effective EMI programmes required a language policy that outlined not just the role of English, but also other languages, rather than simply offering an 'English-only' policy. She argued that an 'optimal' English Medium education (EME) environment involved the introduction of English Medium instruction from the initial foundation of a university or higher educational institution. In the case where English had a significant role as part of institutional language policy it was important for university management to ensure the policy was 'genuinely international [and] contextually appropriate', and that choices around language use provided a means of enhancing 'mutual intercultural intelligibility' in ELF settings (Jenkins, 2014:121). Dafouz and Smit (2016) argued for a form of EMI that actively embraced the multilingual and multicultural resources available within the international student body, a concept that resonated with the idea of diversifying languages of learning to create a 'language-friendly environment' that prevented English from becoming the sole lingua academica (Phillipson 2006).

2.3 EMI Content Lecturers

2.3.1 Challenges

A considerable body of research has emerged in recent years on the critical role played by academics engaged in implementing English Medium of instruction policy across diverse higher educational contexts (see Tange, 2010; Smit and Dafouz, 2012; Dearden and Macaro, 2016; Macaro *et al.,* 2018). Studies illustrate the multiple challenges faced by staff teaching through English as an L2 including such issues as mismatched expectations (institutional, practitioners, students), the need to simplify content, problems building rapport, or the lack of language awareness concerning the needs of L2 learners (Dearden, 2014; Macaro *et al.,* 2018; Veitch, 2021). A set of institutional expectations related to the level of English proficiency needed to effectively communicate subject-content during frontal lectures were identified in European universities (O'Dowd, 2018) offering EMI programmes. Expectations focused on a lecturer's ability to explain subject-specific concepts clearly, manage classroom situations effectively and use disciplinary-specific vocabulary to support student learning. However, studies showed that academic staff teaching through English self-positioned as content experts rather than language experts and seemed unwilling to take on responsibility as language instructors (Macaro *et al.,* 2016), which Block and Moncada-Comas (2019) attributed to EMI lecturers' limited understanding of language teaching and learning. While adjusting one's teaching practice to meet the expectations of students with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds was viewed as a significant challenge for EMI lecturers (Curle *et al.,* 2020: 35), some scholars argued that, in itself, displaying a high level of proficiency in English did not necessarily ensure the instructor achieved communicative effectiveness in the EMI classroom (Björkman, 2010).

A large-scale study of EMI practices at Copenhagen Business School found that although the majority of lecturers' appeared to experience few problems teaching through English, a view corroborated by students, those lecturers' who received negative student assessments faced specific challenges (Werther *et al.*, 2014). Low language proficiency, limited EMI teaching experience and lack of awareness of the difficulties of teaching through a second language all contributed to poor classroom performance. The absence of dedicated language or pedagogical training to support lecturers was also found to be a

contributing factor restricting lecturers' ability to align with institutional language expectations and transform language policy into sustainable teaching practice (Tange, 2010; Airey, 2011).

Macaro and Dearden's (2016) small-scale study of teachers' attitudes towards EMI in HEIs in Austria, Italy and Poland, reported similar concerns related to linguistic proficiency (teachers and students), the level of institutional support for EMI programmes and lecturers' general lack of experience or understanding of the implications of teaching through a second language. Their findings mirror, to some extent, the results of an earlier study based in a multilingual university in Spain where English operated as a third language of instruction, the majority of lecturers recognising the need for specific teacher training, but lacking any clear notion of what this entailed (Fortanet-Gómez, 2012). Macaro and Dearden's (2016) account reports on data collected from lecturers who were participants in EMI training courses delivered by the two authors. This has implications for studies where researchers have previously acted as trainers, as there is the potential to influence participants' responses or bring in bias when interpreting the findings. Indeed, this issue will resurface in Chapters 4 and 5.

All of the studies noted above address common challenges confronting lecturers teaching their subject content through English as a medium of instruction. What has been less problematized in the literature are the different institutional responses to what Sánchez-Pérez (2020b: xviii) identified as a 'rising concern among teaching staff, who feel pushed toward teaching their subject content through a non-native language, with little or no training'. Costa (2015) and O'Dowd's (2018) respective surveys provide an overview of EMI training available for faculty in European universities, and whilst noting a continuing gap in the provision of both bottom-up and institutional-level training for EMI professors, fail to mention the need for more localized solutions given the unique nature of EMI teaching and learning contexts.

2.3.2 EMI Competencies

The key competencies needed by EMI practitioners delivering content classes to student groups from diverse linguistic and educational backgrounds can be categorized according to specific themes, e.g. pedagogy, communication skills and English language skills.

Adopting a student-centred approach could facilitate student engagement and enable active knowledge construction by students (O'Dowd, 2018), and, in some cases, be more important than lecturers' English proficiency (Airey *et al.,*2017). The use of scaffolding techniques, and introducing simplified language to explain complex concepts was also noted as beneficial in supporting learning in EMI contexts enabling students to achieve higher levels of understanding (Dafouz, 2018). While teaching vocabulary in English was identified as a 'critical challenge' for content lecturers in EMI teaching and learning contexts, lecturers were found to be unwilling to take on the role of language teachers seeing their responsibility as primarily concerned with developing students' disciplinary literacy through the use of subject-specific vocabulary (Airey, 2012; Moncada-Comas and Block, 2019). The need for lecturers' to adjust their language in order to meet the needs of learners meant drawing on accommodation strategies such as repetition and paraphrasing (Curle *et al.,* 2020: 53). Although experts in the specialised language of their disciplinary area, research indicated that EMI lecturers needed access to a broader English lexis that was relevant for the purpose of classroom management, which entailed giving instructions, signposting, and comparing and contrasting language that could enhance their overall communicative effectiveness (Werther *et al.,* 2014). Although studies on EMI practices in more localised HE contexts provide a more nuanced perspective on the type of competencies required by disciplinary experts teaching through an L2, there appears to be no consensus in the literature on what competencies an EMI teacher requires (Macaro *et al.,* 2020). For example, surveys examining students' perceptions of the skills needed by EMI lecturers teaching in multilingual universities emphasized English language competence as a key criterion (Costa and Mariotti, 2018; Mastellotto and Zanin, 2021). These findings were reinforced by Clark's (2017) study which showed that students' prioritised lecturers' language fluency, helping them to avoid false starts and the ability to finish their utterances. Increased familiarity with specialised terminology was also highlighted in student surveys (Ackerley, 2017), together with lecturers' use of paralinguistic strategies to improve comprehension (Clark, 2017). While Guarda and Helm (2016) recognised a student-centred learning approach could be effective as part of EMI teaching practice, they also underlined that teaching large groups restricted the level of interaction and made comprehension checking difficult for lecturers. Introducing student-centred teaching strategies required lecturers to be 'highly proficient in the foreign language in order to understand their students and be able to moderate classroom

discussions' (Guarda and Helm 2016: 908). In summary, the need to develop language mastery and adapt one's methodological approach were widely reported as essential competencies for lecturers' facing the challenge of teaching disciplinary subjects through a second language in bilingual and multilingual HE contexts (Klaassen, 2001; Guarda and Helm, 2016).

2.4 Institutional support for EMI

Limited research has been undertaken at the institutional level on teacher preparation programmes making it difficult to assess the provision of support offered by HEIs to content lecturers teaching through English medium instruction (Macaro *et al.,* 2018). However, researchers agree there is a lack of planning in the form of institutional support (Macaro & Dearden, 2016) or training programmes that adopt a more systematic approach rather than on an 'ad-hoc or day-to-day basis' (Werther *et al.,*2014: 17). A national survey of EMI in Italian higher education (Costa and Coleman, 2013), reported that a majority of Italian universities, both public and private, offered no didactic or language support to staff teaching courses in English, lending support to claims that some HEIs viewed EMI lecturers' pedagogical and language use as of 'secondary importance'(Smit and Dafouz, 2012: 8). In contrast, the University of Copenhagen's (KU) development of an in-house certification tool, the Test of Oral English Proficiency for Academic Staff (TOEPAS), illustrated a local initiative to provide training for faculty members teaching through English as a second language. TOEPAS's stated purpose was 1) to assess if teachers had the necessary English language skills to cope with the communicative demands of teaching at master's level, and 2) to identify the kind of language support or training required to teach at graduate level in English (Kling and Staehr, 2012). The certification process was designed to assess lecturers' fluency, vocabulary, grammar and interaction skills in English for university teaching using test tasks that simulated communicative tasks likely to occur in the target language use situation. In the report on the development of TOEPAS, the authors noted that the most significant challenge facing university administrators creating domain specific performance tests was the fact that they were 'relatively resource heavy and time-consuming to develop and administer' (Kling and Staehr, 2012: 6).

Nevertheless, more recent research suggests that the prevalence of professional development programmes aimed specifically at content lecturers teaching through English as an L2 has expanded in recent years with several providers offering online and face-to-face training courses to support HEIs that have incorporated English medium instruction into their curriculum (Curle *et al.,* 2020). These include short EMI courses (Oxford EMI Training, Cambridge English, University of Leicester and Norwich Institution of Language Education); a modular course developed out of the EQUIIP Erasmus+ project (2016-19) which provided educators in HEIs with dedicated materials (videos, handouts, worksheets) together with a proposed course schedule; a MOOC related to EMI in the form of a four-week practice-oriented online course exploring issues connected to teaching content through the medium of English; and an EMI Handbook (2019) published at the conclusion of the Transnational Alignment of English Competences for University Lecturers (TAEC) Erasmus+ research project which offers materials specifically aimed at EMI lecturers. The British Council's Academic Teaching Excellence (ATE) course jointly developed with Oxford University's Department of Education in 2014 and rolled out globally has been superseded by newer initiatives that partner directly with HEIs to provide bespoke training that addresses local needs (See Veitch, 2021). It is appropriate to question how such broad-based EMI training initiatives offered by external providers might satisfactorily meet the context-specific needs of individual HEIs. According to Veitch (2021) effective support systems aimed at content lecturers should focus on issues around professional identity, and address the relationship between content and language in the EMI learning context.

Although the British Council discontinued its Academic Teaching Excellence (ATE) global programme in 2019, the organisation continues to advocate for 'needs-based support systems for content lecturers', maintaining a focus on the development of lecturers' English proficiency but also taking account of pedagogical, intercultural and communication skills (Veitch, 2021:12). This expanded vision which encompasses intercultural skills aligns to some extent with calls to reposition EMI teacher professional development initiatives and adopt a multilingual vision of teaching and learning (Dafouz 2021).

In the Italian HE sector, research reveals little support available for lecturers in the majority of universities due to insufficient resources and the failure at institutional level to take account of lecturers' proficiency in the language of instruction and the role played by

language in EMI (Costa, 2015). At the level of individual teacher's classroom practice, introducing methodological training for content lecturers has been mooted as a way of developing lecturers' self-awareness of specific language issues and overcoming resistance to adapting their style of teaching (Costa, 2012: 43). More recent research (see Guarda and Helm, 2016) suggests that local initiatives in Italian HEI contexts, such as the in-house EMI training initiative carried out at the University of Padua where lecturers had input into the design and content of professional development courses, can involve different EMI stakeholders and potentially lead to longer-term institutional support systems for faculty involved in delivering English medium programmes.

2.5 EMI in Italian HEIs

As this research study was carried out within an Italian trilingual university, it is pertinent to provide a more detailed overview of the increasing role English Medium Instruction is having across the Italian higher education landscape. In 2006, an annual survey conducted by the Conference of Italian University Rectors (CRUI) concluded that despite increasing levels of educational provision in English it identified a 'poor propensity' to set up Bachelor degree level courses in English, even if there was 'fairly good vitality' in the provision of English taught courses at post-graduate level (38 master's and 189 research doctorate programmes) (CRUI 2006), with the majority of EMI programmes situated in northern and centrally based universities.

Since then, the number of Italian HEIs offering English-taught programmes (ETPs) has increased rapidly. Figures indicated there was a dramatic increase in ETPs between 2014-2016, representing a 72% rise in less than two years. CRUI's most recent survey 2016-2017 confirmed this trend with additional courses created at Doctoral (271) and master's level (192), highlighting the significant increase in EMI courses in less than a decade (CRUI, 2018). Costa and Coleman's (2013) national survey of Italian universities (public and private) identified the main drivers behind this dramatic growth was i) to improve the institution's international profile, ii) to attract foreign students, and iii) to prepare Italian students for the global market. Investing in training programmes for academic staff was not a priority for university administrators, with 77% of respondents indicating they offered no teacher training at all and only 8% of universities offering methodological training.

Although developing English language proficiency was not perceived as an institutional priority, concerns surrounding inadequate levels of English language competence of lecturers and Italian students were noted by over 30% of survey respondents as a major obstacle in implementing English taught programmes which replicates findings from surveys investigating EMI Europe wide (Werther *et al.,*2014; Wächter and Maiworm, 2014). Coleman and Costa (2013) found there was a marked difference in the number of EMI programmes offered by public and private universities based in northern Italy compared to HEIs in southern Italy, which the researchers attributed to socio-economic variations between the two geographic regions. At the governmental level, the benefits of English medium instruction in higher education were promoted as a means to create multilingualism and multiculturalism, resulting in legislation being passed in 2019 (cf. Legge Gelmini 40/2019) designed to encourage HEIs to incorporate internationalization into the curriculum through increasing the number of English Taught Programmes (ETPs). Performance indicators linked to staff and student mobility were also connected to teaching or study delivered in a foreign language (Costa and Coleman, 2013). National efforts to encourage internationalization appeared to be impacting university policy, for example, the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, a private university in Milan, introduced targeted recruitment strategies, promoted greater student mobility, actively positioning itself as an entrepreneurial university by connecting its internationalization strategy to English medium of instruction (Molino and Campagna, 2014: 68).

The internationalization of higher education also appeared to be the catalyst behind the decision of one of Italy's leading universities, Politecnico di Milano, to shift to an English-only formula for all postgraduate and doctoral courses as part of the university's 2012-2014 Strategic Plan (Molino and Campagna, 2014). Pursuing a stated aim to increase research and teaching standards and improve the university's standing, it proposed making English compulsory as the language of instruction for all graduate courses (Molino and Campagna 2014). However, this decision resulted in strong resistance from staff and students who protested against the university's EMI objectives on the grounds that such a language policy restricted academics' teaching freedom, and was discriminatory in professional terms as it penalized lecturers without the requisite level of English language proficiency. Although academic staff were offered the possibility of attending intensive language courses, the absence of clearly defined language learning goals for students or staff or

teacher training programmes reflected the lack of a structured approach in putting policy into practice (Molino and Campagna, 2014).

However, more inclusive language polices and support programmes at the institutional level were being developed in other Italian university contexts. At the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (UNIMORE) a co-ordinated effort to provide long-term training for lecturers teaching through English was initiated in 2011 designed to equip teaching staff with the 'tools needed to internationalize their courses' (Long, 2017:313). Teacher training support focused on methodological and language instruction, together with financial incentives, were used to encourage lecturers to teach in English and participate in professional development programmes (Long, 2015). While its primary aim was to raise awareness of the 'challenges' facing EMI lecturers, the positive response from participants resulted in the programme becoming 'firmly established in the UNIMORE context', as part of ongoing training support available to EMI lecturers (Long, 2017).

A case-study of the University of Padova's Learning English for Academic Purposes (LEAP) project reported that participating lecturers regarded EMI as providing both opportunities for reflection and pedagogical innovation as well as the challenge of teaching in a foreign language (Guarda and Helm, 2017). Launched in AY 2014/2015, the LEAP project sought to include lecturers' attitudes and experiences of EMI in shaping professional development initiatives related to English medium of instruction. This was in stark contrast to the Politecnico di Milano which omitted EMI stakeholders from the institution's language decision-making process. Previously, Helm (2015), had underlined the value of 'tailored training', designed to match the needs of specific EMI teaching and learning contexts, citing the LEAP project as an example of an HE encouraging co-operation between key stakeholders (e.g. policy-makers, teacher-trainers, lecturers) in creating professional development programmes to support faculty confronting the challenge of teaching content through English as a second language.

As a result of the increased use of English medium instruction in Italian HEIs, scholars argued that universities should consider adopting a layered approach to language policy and include the following features: i) ongoing language support for students' and lecturers; ii) integrating language and content as part of professional teaching practice; iii) providing

pedagogical training to lecturers; iv) giving students' the choice of enrolling in parallel courses, and v) expanding linguistic repertoires rather than producing a 'monolingual mindset' (Molino and Campagna, 2014). To avoid the risk of English becoming a 'hegemonizing force', not only with respect to language practices but also teaching methods, there were calls for universities to engage in collaborative approaches involving a wide range of stakeholders in the development of institutional language policies (Guarda and Helm, 2017).

Pulcini and Campagna's (2015) survey of EMI practices at the University of Turin found that faculty teaching science and technology subjects viewed English as the 'lingua franca' of their academic discipline and considered that replacing it with Italian would be disadvantageous for students and teachers. However, although the use of English as a vehicular language met the disciplinary, cultural and professional demands in scientific domains, some scholars argued it could be unsuitable for other disciplines such as humanities (Molino and Campagna, 2014).

More recently, studies examining EMI lecturers' perceptions and practices in Italian higher educational settings (Molino, 2018; Picciuolo and Johnson, 2020) have focused on how language is actually used in EMI lectures and the implications this may have for teacher training. Picciuolo and Johnson's (2020) study contrasted EMI lecturers' perceptions and practices at the University of Bologna and found discrepancies between the lecturers' understanding of the challenges they faced teaching through an L2 and actual classroom practice. For example, there was a gap between practitioners' view of the notion of 'linguistic proficiency', interpreting this as referring to the 'right accent and correct pronunciation', whereas students' judged this on the basis of a lecturer's communicative effectiveness when teaching through English as a lingua franca. Molino's (2018: 952) research examined how Italian EMI lecturers' employed language in the classroom through metadiscourse, those aspects of language contributing to effective communication by 'facilitating understanding of the lecture content and the lecturer's line of thought'. Her findings suggested that employing discourse functions (e,g, introducing and closing topics), and discourse labels (e.g. exemplifying, saying and defining) put less emphasis on the lecturer's language accuracy and more on them achieving communicative effectiveness through the 'strategic deployment of metadiscursive resources' (Molino, 2018:953),

Costa and Grassi's (2022) report of an EMI training initiative at a university in Northern Italy reiterated the need for bottom-up and institutional-level training with a linguistic and pedagogical focus to support practitioners teaching subject content through a non-native language. The authors emphasised the need to chart the evolution of lecturers' perceptions with respect to their EMI training-related needs, both prior to and following, the actual training. Respondents to Costa and Grassi's survey on the training initiative were specifically interested in receiving support on language and methodology, to address their concerns related to fluency, interaction and discourse and the possible effects EMI would have on students' language improvement. More than half of respondees reported that the EMI training initiative had directly impacted course management, e.g. improved lecture organization, classroom management, better-structured lectures and speech control (Costa and Grassi, 2022:145).

The emerging body of research outlined above provides a view of EMI in Italian higher education contexts (see Molino and Campagna, 2014; Pulcini and Campagna, 2015; Guarda and Helm, 2017; Long, 2017; Mastellotto and Zanin, 2021; Costa and Grassi, 2022) and the variety of institutional responses aimed at supporting lecturers teaching through English (and other languages) of instruction. The LEAP project, UNIMORE's professional development courses and other training initiatives including an Academic Lecturing course offered at Ca' Foscari, and training modules offered by CHEI (Centre for Higher Education Internationalisation), illustrate a more participatory, rather than top-down approach, that emphasises collaboration between different EMI stakeholders in developing institutional language policy and practice.

2.6 Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (UNIBZ)

In terms of the European Higher Education landscape, UNIBZ is seen as one of a 'select few' to have an official multilingual policy in which English figures as just one language of instruction (Costa and Mastellotto, 2022), the purpose of its 'unique' trilingual model of higher education being to offer students' academic programmes delivered through either German, Italian and English (Mastellotto and Zanin, 2021). Although there may be varying interpretations regarding the concept of a multilingual university, according to Veronesi and Nickenig (2009) it is likely to be stated in an official language policy document, or found in

specific language measures or interactive practices, both written and spoken, taking place within the educational setting itself. For Dafouz and Smit (2016:399) multilingual universities are regarded as 'sites where bilingual or multilingual education, whether official or unofficial, partial or comprehensive, pedagogically explicit or implicit, may be represented', providing an English-medium educational setting where the focus is on English used as an academic language of teaching and as a means of international communication. Such a perspective reiterates earlier research detailing different types of multilingual universities, those where English is integrated as a further language of instruction or sits alongside study programmes, offered fully or in part, in two languages (Veronesi and Nickenig, 2009:1). HEIs with multilingual language policies include the universities of Bozen-Bolzano, Luxembourg and Catalonia, each pursuing the goal to ensure that the officially recognised languages of instruction were 'equally distributed' (Dafouz and Smit, 2016: 398).

Situated in South Tyrol, an officially bilingual province, positions UNIBZ in '[ ] a very delicate ethnic and linguistic situation', with a majority of German-speaking citizens on a regional level and a vast Italian-speaking majority in Bolzano (Veronesi and Nickenig, 2009: 360). The internal university setting also provided challenges for students as well as academic staff as a result of the institution's trilingual language policy. While German and Italian were taught as second languages with students exposed to authentic input both inside and outside the classroom setting, English was taught as a foreign language with few opportunities for students to interact in English beyond their participation in formal language courses (Prior, 2009).

Establishing English as the third official language of instruction was designed as a counter-balance against the underlying conflict between German and Italian resulting from the region's linguistic history, but also as a means of expanding the university's reach as it represented the 'lingua franca of science' and provided students with a means to gain access to the wider international scientific community (Veronesi and Nickenig, 2009). UNIBZ's mission was to support students to achieve plurilingual competence by the end of their degree programme (Mastellotto and Zanin, 2021). To achieve this objective, the university's language policy set out clearly defined entry level language requirements for new students for the three teaching languages (German, Italian, English). Additionally, exit level competences for all students across degree levels for the three official languages

were introduced in the 2011-12 academic year. UNIBZ's language requirements, deemed as 'among the most demanding in Europe'(Ennis, 2015:359), required students' to achieve a C1, B2+ and B2 level in the three official languages prior to graduation and provided language courses to students' (and staff) at its in-house Language Centre. The university's multilingual language strategy was continuously updated to respond to the 'shifting needs of students, professors, and other stakeholders' (Mastellotto and Zanin, 2021: 215), most recently in 2015 (see Appendix 2). This three-pillared model applied an integrated content and language learning in higher education (ICLHE) approach designed to address the needs of students and staff teaching and learning in the three official languages of instruction.

Nevertheless, research carried out at UNIBZ as part of a broader European study of communicative practices in multilingual higher education settings (Dylan Project) found that 'the official multilingual orientation of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano [UNIBZ] is conjugated in quite different forms in practice' (Veronesi and Nickenig, 2009:12), ranging from strict monolingualism and adherence to the official language of the activity to use of code-switching and multilingual practices. In this trilingual HE setting for all pedagogical events, meaning lectures and seminars, the institutional language policy required one official language be designated for classroom interaction. The research team found that individual choices made about language practices employed across different teaching contexts appeared to be connected to the lecturer's 'own view of multilingualism' against the background of the institutional language policy 'along with one's own assessment of the ongoing event and of participants' language competences' (Spreafico *et al.,* 2008). Applying the "one-language-only-rule" by adhering strictly to the official course language implied that lecturers were in alignment with the institutional language policy. How the instructor shaped their discourse 'lexically, semantically and pragmatically' (Veronesi and Spreafico, 2009) could also be interpreted as a way for lecturers to create a context for students' language learning linked to learning goals set out by the lecturer as part of an individual lesson or reflected in a course programme.

One issue emerging from the literature on multilingual practices in this trilingual university was the role of English. Prior (2009: 275) noted that although it had equal status as one of the official languages of instruction, it was 'still a foreign language' for students as there were few mother tongue instructors and limited opportunities for students to interact in

English outside the English-language classroom, creating 'great challenges' for the students, the English-language teachers, the lecturers in the faculties and the University in general. Other researchers also highlighted the impact such challenges might have on teaching and learning and the difficulty of attempts to 'translate' official language policies into classroom practice in this trilingual teaching and learning environment (Veronesi and Nickenig, 2009). Costa and Mastellotto's (2022: 42) recent study of UNIBZ suggested that its multilingual language strategy was only partially implemented, with 'language policy and language practices not always fully aligned more effort is needed to integrate content and language learning aims across degree programmes'. One unique feature of UNIBZ's declared trilingual strategy is its pursuit of plurilingualism as a primary educational goal (Costa and Mastellotto, 2022), with its three official languages of instruction (Italian, German, and English) equally divided across all degree programmes and compulsory for all students. This differs from other multilingual universities, which according to Veronesi and Nickenig (2009) offer a type of 'hidden trilingualism', where students are offered the choice to attend EMI courses rather than it being compulsory (Lasagabaster, 2009).

From its foundation in 1997, UNIBZ's trilingual language policy recognized English as one of its three official languages of instruction, fitting Veitch's (2021) definition of an 'optimal' English medium education environment where English medium instruction is integrated into language policy from the very beginning. Such an approach also appeared to be in alignment with features identified by Pecorari and Malmström (2018) as reflecting EMI learning contexts, e.g. English is used for instructional purposes, is not the subject being taught and the majority of participants use English as an L2. Where there is obvious divergence is in UNIBZ's stated 'primary educational goal' to support students to develop language competency in all three official languages (Costa and Mastellotto, 2022). This contrasts with the third feature of Pecorari and Malmström's (2018: 499) definition of EMI settings, in which 'language development is not a primary intended outcome'. I would argue that within this HEI setting there were clear examples of EMI taking place in designated learning contexts, with English used as an official course language for teaching purposes and as a means of international communication (Dafouz and Smit, 2016). Supporting students to become fully plurilingual, and responding to the linguistic demands of different stakeholders (e.g. students and academic staff), required that the university's language policy be regularly updated (Mastellotto and Zanin, 2021). However, despite such

measures, research revealed a continuing gap between UNIBZ's language policy and its implementation, and highlighted concerns about the institution's failure to ensure that faculty members teaching through English as an L2 had the language competencies to maintain the quality of disciplinary teaching (Mastellotto and Zanin, 2021). This 'gap' might also have referred to the fact that the university appeared to have no discernible written language policy outlining how English medium of instruction was to be operationalised, offered limited opportunities for students to interact in English beyond the EMI classroom and had very few mother-tongue English speaking academic staff across its five faculties (Prior, 2009).

2.7 (Re) Imagining EMI

Airey's (2016: 73) definition of EMI as 'courses [that] have content-related learning outcomes in their syllabuses, but no explicit English language related learning outcomes' encapsulates one of the features of English-medium instruction. Perceiving language as simply a 'tool' for teaching purposes contrasts with the approach adopted by CLIL, which promotes specific learning outcomes for content and language (Coyle, Hood and Marsh, 2010). The range of terms applying to content courses in English at university level, (e.g. EMI, TIE, EMEMUS, CLIL, ICLHE) and the lack of 'rigorous definitions' to enable shared understanding of the terminology has resulted in differing perceptions of what EMI actually means (Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2010). To this end, the growing use of English in higher education has been viewed as a continuum ranging from English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses up to full EMI or Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education (ICLHE) programmes (Schmidt and Unterberger, 2018) even if relatively few courses appear to strictly follow CLIL/ICLHE criteria, thus achieving both content and learning outcomes (Smit and Dafouz, 2012).

In light of continuing debates around what constitutes EMI, reaching a consensus may, in fact, be less important than accepting the 'situatedness of EMI' (Airey, 2020), understanding that practices around language use are shaped according to the setting in which they are located. The idea that each EMI context has its own characteristics, creating its own 'language regime', its own set of rules, orders of discourse and ideologies (Doiz *et al.,* 2012), reinforces the notion that different forms of EMI may be found across a range of

higher education settings, each displaying varying discourses surrounding its use and the impact it has on teacher-student interaction (Dafouz and Smit, 2016).

This thesis supports Airey's (2020: 343) claim that while teaching and learning in a second language is not special, 'the problem is that content lecturers underestimate the role of languages and other semiotic resources in the teaching and learning of their discipline'. Airey goes further to suggest that the use of English as a medium of instruction is seen as a 'pragmatic means to a content-related end' (Airey, 2020), with language not seen as an explicit learning objective in EMI courses. Even if Airey's (2012) claim that all content lecturers are language lecturers may be overstated, content lecturers are positioned as experts in disciplinary discourse and are likely to provide the only models students will have of this discourse (Macaro, 2020). This then raises the issue of L2 lecturers' responsibility for developing students' disciplinary literacy. Disciplinary literacy refers to the 'ability to appropriately participate in the communicative practices of a discipline' (Airey *et al.,* 2017), providing students with the linguistic tools to make their own disciplinary knowledge claims (Kuteeva and Airey, 2014). However, recent studies indicate that disciplinary experts resist taking on the role of language teachers (see Airey, 2012; Block and Moncada-Comas, 2019), perceiving their primary responsibility as that of subject experts. EMI lecturers may also be seen as often oblivious to their students' linguistic needs (Ellison *et al.,* 2017), reflecting a reluctance to engage with language issues in the L2 classroom. If true, such self-positioning on the part of EMI lecturers directly contrasts with research that shows students' favour lecturers' able to teach content and improve students' written and spoken English proficiency, enhance their vocabulary and utilise language-focused teaching strategies to enhance comprehension of complex content (Inbar-Lourie and Donitsa-Schmidt, 2020). Such misalignment between EMI lecturers' and students' expectations suggests there needs to be shared responsibility between teachers and students to ensure mutual understanding when using English as a lingua franca (ELF) to achieve effective communication in international and intercultural contexts where the speaker's first language is not English (Kuteeva, 2020).

As a researcher in this trilingual HE setting I had a unique opportunity to investigate the role of EMI practices and policies from the perspective of different groups of stakeholders: language administrators and classroom practitioners. I was afforded privileged access based on my previous role as a teacher-trainer on the ATE training course, and this

experience was the catalyst for me undertaking this research project into EMI policy and practice at UNIBZ. The next chapter provides a description of the rationale for the overall research design and explains choices made around the research methodology underpinning the data collection stage of the project.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.0 Introduction

The research design involved an autoethnographic approach using observation and interviews as the data collection methods. The study's two research questions focused on key stakeholders: senior and mid-level administrators tasked with language management and EMI lecturers teaching through English as an L2. The two research questions were as follows; RQ1 - How do administrators and lecturers understand the language policy related to English-medium instruction in this trilingual university?; RQ2 - How are specific practices associated with EMI pedagogy assigned, taken up or resisted by lecturers in this educational setting? An over-arching objective of the research design was to allow space for classroom observations of authentic EMI teaching and learning contexts. A secondary objective was to locate documentation detailing the university's multilingual language policy in written form in order to try and identify language management practices aimed at operationalizing institutional policy around English as an official language of instruction. I was mindful of Spolsky's (2005: 2153) view that language management referred to 'an explicit plan or policy, usually but not necessarily written in a formal document, about language use', suggesting that language management might also be found in the general set of beliefs around language practices within the speech community itself.

It was also essential to broaden participation in the study beyond that of EMI lecturers, to include administrators in upper and middle leadership roles, a group of 'key actors' who have been, to date, 'conspicuously absent' (Lauridsen and Lillemose 2015:210) from the EMI literature. Interviewing administrators responsible for managing and implementing the university's language policy could provide a more detailed perspective of language management processes pertaining to English, either university-wide, or embedded within individual faculties. Senior administrators might also offer deeper insight into the relationship between language policy and practice in this trilingual teaching and learning setting. The intention was not to focus too narrowly on the beliefs of EMI lecturers around English used as a medium of instruction but encourage participants to reflect on aspects of their teaching practice and the reasons for their use of linguistic and pedagogical strategies employed to support student learners in the EMI classroom.

3.1 Research Approach

Adopting a qualitative research approach was designed to capture key voices through naturalist inquiry, using semi-structured interviews and classroom observation of EMI practice. Occupying a dual role of teacher-trainer/researcher allowed me to draw on my partial insider status having already acquired professional experience in this particular institutional context.

Re-positioning as a researcher (not teacher-trainer) when undertaking interviews and carrying out classroom observations provides a continuous challenge and ongoing questioning of one's own taken for granted assumptions. As Asselin (2003) asserts, there is a risk attempting to balance the two roles which could lead to 'role confusion', when the researcher responds to the participants or analyses the data from a perspective other than that of researcher, due to their familiarity with the research setting and/or participants through another professional role. Acknowledging one's subjectivity might be overcome by adopting a reflexive approach, maintaining a state of continuing self-awareness towards the research project itself as the project takes place (Finlay, 2012), enabling the researcher to explain how their own experience has/has not influenced the different stages of the research process (Dowling, 2006). In practical terms, reflexivity in action entails embracing reflexivity by taking account of the different parameters around the interview process, referred to as contextual parameters (Rabbidge, 2017), such as parameters of context, co-construction and sensitivity Context parameters included physical, temporal, social, cultural and institutional influences; co-construction parameters referred to the interviewer, interview, language spoken, knowledge of the interview genre, and production of the transcript; sensitivity parameters focused on rapport, disclosure and empathy (Mann, 2016). By articulating as transparently as possible those contextual features influencing the research project, and how they informed the analysis and presentation of the research results, the researcher can enhance the project's overall 'integrity' (Rabbidge, 2017). Making the researcher's subjectivity 'explicit', by showing how it has influenced every phase of the research process (Olmos-Vega *et al.,* 2023), does not necessarily mean that a subjective position is always a negative influence, but can be perceived as an 'asset' in the active co-construction of data and results. Further, acknowledging reflexivity as a means to achieving greater data transparency and a more honest appraisal of one's own

role in the interview process may also encourage interactionally sensitive approaches'(Rabbidge, 2017: 970).

Walsh's (2003) typology of reflective processes provides a practical way to explore reflexivity using four separate dimensions: personal, interpersonal, methodological and contextual. This involves researchers reflecting on personal expectations and assumptions connected to their research, considering how relationships surrounding the research process might influence both context and results, take account of the impact of specific methodological decisions and recognizing that each project is located in a particular cultural and historical context (Walsh, 2003). For the purposes of this study, I have chosen to place the focus on the first dimension, personal reflexivity, interrogating my own assumptions and expectations around EMI as an influencing factor shaping the different phases of the project e.g. conception, research design, data collection, analysis and interpretation.

I acknowledge that my assumptions regarding EMI were likely to have developed as a result of my experience as a participant in the ATE certification process, an intensive week long course conducted by British Council trainers and academics from the Department of Education, University of Oxford. As this was the first ATE trainer certification course, the materials were trialled by myself and the other 'trainees', all of whom were experienced teacher-trainers, employed by the British Council as permanent employees or working as freelance contractors. A wide range of perspectives on EMI practice and policy were discussed with the ATE course designers sharing their rationale for developing the course materials. Reflecting on the ATE certification process I felt assumptions were built into the ATE course design which privileged pedagogical approaches over EMI practitioners' language skills, emphasising the need for practitioners to introduce student-centred learning approaches as a way of supporting student learning. From my perspective as a language teacher, I was concerned whether promoting an interactive teaching style in the EMI classroom, rather than focusing on developing the instructor's academic language skills for classroom management purposes was an appropriate focus for future ATE course participants, lecturers whose main preoccupation was likely to be their level of proficiency when delivering subject content through English as an L2. Ongoing concerns about this issue continued to emerge after I started delivering the ATE courses along with other colleagues from the British Council in different Italian HEIs from 2015 onwards. It appeared

that the majority of ATE participants had issues about whether their own English language skills were adequate to teach disciplinary content through English as an L2 to heterogenous groups of students displaying varying levels of proficiency.

3.1.1 Ethics

As the study involved people in the data gathering process, ethical approval was required from all participants (3 EMI lecturers and 2 administrators). To this end, participants were provided with a consent form which offered a clear outline of the project's objectives and details of the interview process (e.g. structure, length, information about audio & video recording and the interviewee's right to stop the interview at any time). Students in each of the observed classes received individual consent forms which were collected at the lesson's conclusion. All names were anonymised and generic titles used to describe professional roles in order to protect the confidentiality of each participant.

In a study that drew on positioning theory it was important to acknowledge my relation to the participants' during interaction, e.g. shifting positions between teacher-trainer and researcher, and consider how this might impact the interviewees' own self-positioning. My objective was to report what 'really was said rather than what the researcher hopes or wishes was said' (Rose *et al.,* 2020: 13) and embrace those conflicting opinions emerging out of the reflexive interviewing process. Occupying the role of a partial insider having previously built up relationships of trust as a teacher-trainer enable me to establish an appropriate interviewer-interviewee relationship with each participant. As a novice researcher I was less aware of the need to proceed with caution when attempting to gain access to stakeholders in positions of power (senior administrators), who might be reluctant to participate in an interview process (Rose *et al.,*2020). Ethical considerations also needed to be addressed in instances where individual participants indicated to the researcher that specific comments were 'off-the-record', thus making the data unavailable for inclusion in the thesis.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

3.2.1 Positioning Theory

Positioning Theory (PT) developed more than three decades ago as an *analytic lens* and *explanatory theory* to show how learning and development of identity evolves through discourse (Davies and Harré, 1990; Green *et al.,* 2020). When applied to educational contexts Positioning Theory used as an *analytic lens* can be utilized by researchers to focus on the 'in time and over time' construction of positioning actions of teachers and students in classrooms. Additionally, as an *explanatory theory,* PT presents a set of guiding principles to investigate discourse and interactions in teaching and learning contexts and how social actors assume or reject particular positions (Green *et al.,* 2020).

In its simplest form Positioning Theory is about 'how people use words (and discourse of all types) to locate themselves and others [in social episodes]' (Moghaddam and Harré, 2010: 2). The three key tenets of PT are outlined in this quote from Harré (2011: p. ix):

> A cluster of rights and duties recognized in a certain social milieu has been called a *position.* The corresponding act by which a person claims certain rights and opts for certain duties, or has them thrust on a certain social actor is the act of *positioning.* Sometimes, positioning is a deliberate act of which the actors are aware – more often it *crystallized* out of the background of social practices within which people are embedded. The system of concepts and hypotheses as to the principle with which they are applied is known as *Positioning Theory.*

The notion of *positions, acts* and *storylines* are fundamental to Positioning Theory and provide a practical framework to explore how individuals 'construct themselves and their worlds' (Green *et al.,* 2020: 121) through discourse. Positions encompass 'clusters of rights and duties' individuals assume (or reject) and are 'constituted by their assigned, ascribed, claimed, or assumed rights and duties to make use of the available and relevant discursive tools' (Harré *et al.,* 2009: 8).

Recent studies focused on positioning theory provide more detail on ways these three key tenets can be applied to research in the field of education. In contrast to the view of positions as 'rights and duties', Green *et al.,* (2020) perceive them as 'clusters of *norms* and *expectations*' continuously evolving as individuals assume (or reject) situationally constructed or enacted positions, such as that of "teacher" or "student", which are institutionally defined. The notion of *positions* as fluid and dynamic, shaped by norms and expectations recognised in a specific social milieu resonates directly to this study which explores EMI in a trilingual HE setting from the perspective of lecturers and administrators who are tasked with implementing institutional language policy.

It is through individual *storylines,* that ‘actors can discursively and interactionally position themselves and/or others as well as be positioned by others’ (Green *et al.,* 2020: 121). Taking account of storylines was crucial in interpreting different positions around EMI by participants in this study, as they are likely to reflect the social and discursive practices within which people are embedded informing their actions inside and outside of the classroom. The authors expand the concept of storylines further suggesting they may ‘shape who can say or do what, in what ways, to and with whom, when and where, and under what conditions, drawing on what material and social resources (past, present and implicated for future)’(Green *et al.,* 2020: 121). As their findings revealed, by attending to those features noted above, in developing storylines, the researchers were able to identify ‘*what counts’,* e.g. what was socially, academically, personally and interpersonally significant in respect of developing opportunities for learning from the perspective of teachers and students.

For this study, examining how institutional policies around language use concerning English as medium of instruction, shape participants’ developing *storylines*, was critical to understanding how lecturers and administrators take up *positions* or engage in *positioning* others through ascribing duties for those teaching disciplinary content through English as an L2. Positioning Theory offered a window into the ‘discursive process whereby people are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storylines’ (Davies and Harré, 1999: 37).

In a study examining how EMI stakeholders (administrators and lecturers) perceive the role of English in a trilingual university, drawing on a theoretical construct such as PT, allows the researcher to uncover individual perspectives through personal narratives is appropriate as it offers a window on the ‘discursive process whereby people are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storylines’ (Davies and Harré, 1999: 37).

3.2.2 Block’s Expanded Model of Positioning Theory

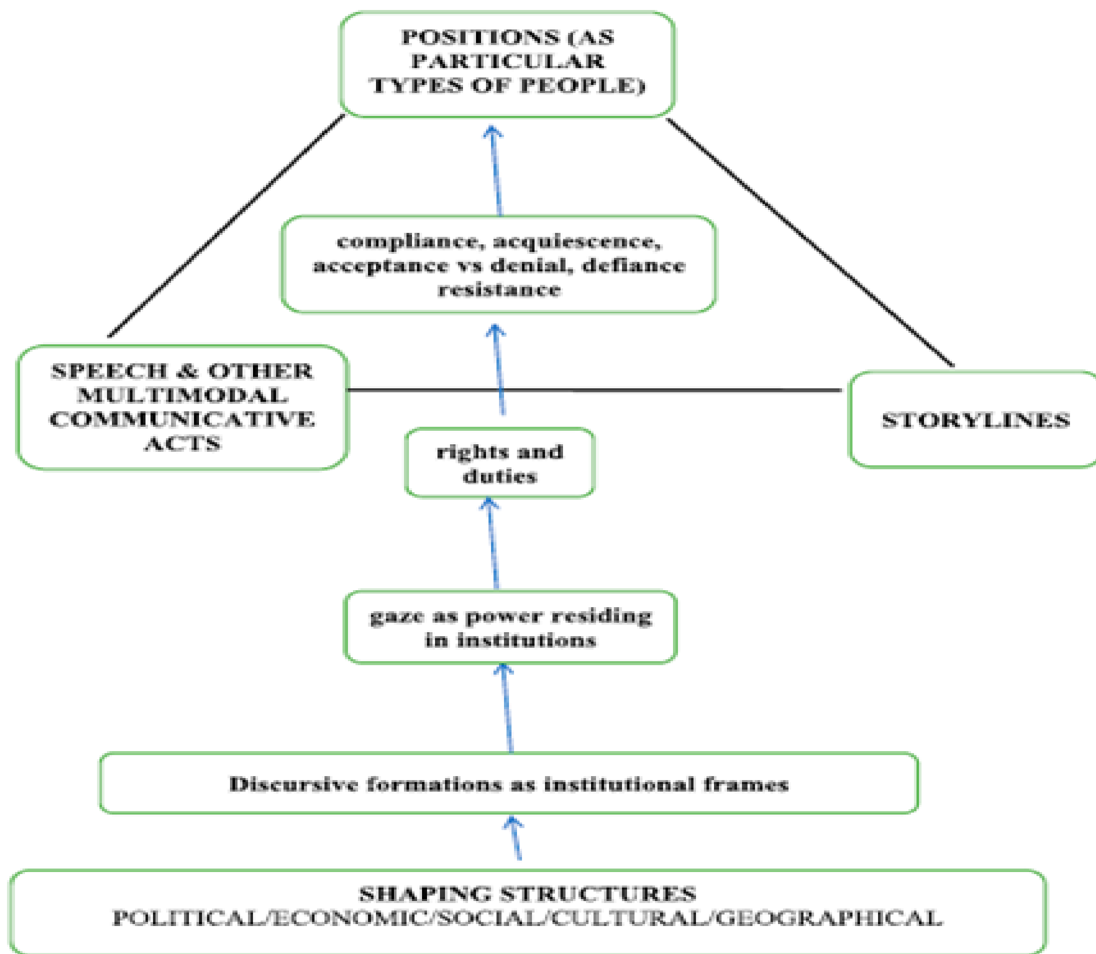
Block’s (2020) expanded version of previous positioning theory models (see Fig 1) forms the basis of the theoretical-analytical framework for this study due, in part, to its added features that include social, political, economic, cultural and geographical factors as the

background to the institutional setting, of particular relevance for the site of research. The inclusion of discursive formations as institutional frames in Block's new PT model are also directly pertinent to an institutional setting that offers students a plurilingual teaching and learning experience and may reveal evidence of discourses around multilingualism.

According to Block and Moncada-Comas (2019: 6), discourse formations represent 'articulated discourses which construct […] accepted and legitimate rules and regulations, practices […] of institutions' found across different genres, styles and media, illustrated through written or spoken word or other semiotic modes. A connection is made between discursive formations and Foucault's (1963) notion of 'gaze', whereby institutional members in positions of power seek to categorize and shape others according to 'dominant discourses of normativity', resulting in subjects' responses which can vary between compliance, acquiescence and acceptance, or resistance (Block 2019:7).

The notion of an 'EMI gaze' associated with discourse formations about internationalization and Englishization has been mooted by EMI scholars (Macaro *et al.,* 2018), with English perceived as both a mediator and a carrier of internationalization, alongside an expectation that EMI lecturers will display the necessary language competence. Acquiring new language skills, in this case English, for use as a communicative tool to transmit subject content not only impacts the academic context but has the potential to challenge stakeholders' conception of their professional identity (Gabriëls and Wilkinson, 2021). Responding to an institutional English-language gaze may also refer to 'ways in which speakers are positioned, understood and evaluated by institutions and their representatives in terms of their proficiency in English' (Yeung and Gray, 2022: 8).

In the context of a trilingual HE setting where English was afforded equal status as a language of instruction, it was appropriate to look for identifiable signs of an 'EMI gaze', transmitted by lecturers or administrators using English as an academic lingua franca or as a communicative tool in this multilingual HE teaching and learning context. However, the central role of rights and duties in the positioning theory model, focusing on how stakeholders responded to an institutional 'gaze' had to take account of ways rights and duties were 'taken up and laid down, ascribed and appropriated, refused and defended' (Harré, 2004:4) by stakeholders to understand how they self-positioned towards this gaze.



(Figure 1): Positioning theory expanded (Block 2020)

Viewed from the base of Block's expanded PT model it is clear that shaping structures (political, economic, social, cultural and geographical) function as influencing factors on discourses and language ideologies in institutional settings. Ricento (2018) posits the idea that, particularly in education, the role of English in non-English dominant countries may be influenced by the particular histories of nation-states and governmental or regional policies around languages in society. Tollefson and Tsui (2018) reinforce this notion by suggesting that medium of instruction (MOI) policies reflect implicit pedagogical and political agendas. The increasing use of English as a medium of instruction across the European higher education landscape following the adoption of the Bologna agreement in 1999 has been well-documented (see see Wächter and Maiworm, 2002; 2008; 2014), the number of English MOI programs rising exponentially. CLIL-type bilingual education has been positively described and highly praised by the European Commission and the Council of Europe as an initiative that promotes "plurilingualism, linguistic diversity, mutual understanding, democratic citizenship and social cohesion" (Council of Europe, 2014). The

European Union's commitment to promoting multilingualism through language teaching and learning, focused on developing plurilingual citizens (two languages in addition to mother tongue), encouraging "every European citizen should master two other languages in addition to their mother tongue" (European Commission, 2012). Such language objectives closely align to UNIBZ's own mission statement which sets out its goal to produce plurilingual graduates by the end of their degree programs, mirroring Cenoz's (2012) concept of a bilingual education policy that seeks to integrate two or more languages or linguistic varieties into the curriculum.

Regardless of whichever investigative lens is drawn upon to examine EMI policies and practices within a chosen site of research, it is crucial for researchers to consider language policy and planning as 'one complex whole' (Spolsky, 2004). In the case of UNIBZ, its institutional language policy was shaped at the local and regional level in order to protect the language rights of minority groups by affording equal status to all three official languages (German, Italian, English) of instruction. The linguistic ecology of South Tyrol, an officially bilingual region in North Italy, ensured that individual language rights were constitutionally guaranteed, mirroring a research project undertaken on the language rights of Italian and Hungarian speakers in Slovenia (Tollefson, 2018), which found that although they were designated as a minority, nevertheless, members had a right to receive mother-tongue medium of instruction MOI, indicating how language policies enacted at regional level could have an impact on language policies within educational settings.

3.3 Research Method

3.3.1 Sampling

The sampling strategy used in this qualitative study was purposive, to the extent that the research site, participants and number of participants were chosen by the researcher intentionally to provide a group of people that 'can best inform the researcher about the research question(s) under examination' (Creswell and Poth, 2018:149). As the study's focus was on how English was positioned by administrators and lecturers as a medium of instruction, the decision was taken to involve members from two key groups of stakeholders: lecturers teaching their academic subject through English as an L2 and senior administrators with management responsibility for implementing university language

policy. Undertaking a qualitative study may only involve a limited number of participants or settings, instead placing emphasis on the relationship between the findings and the case in its entire context. Having delivered a series of ATE training courses at UNIBZ to approximately 50+ participants, including lecturers and administrators, and built up a level of trust in my role as teacher-trainer, I chose to invite previous ATE attendees to take part in this qualitative study and enlisted the support of staff at the British Council who forwarded an invitation via email to prospective participants on my behalf.

The following criteria were using in selecting the final sample group: 1) lecturers (currently teaching EMI classes; representing a variety of academic disciplines; different levels of EMI experience); 2) administrators (medium and senior level with responsibility for developing and/or implementing university language policy). Between 5-7 lecturers expressed interest in being involved in the project, however, only three were currently teaching courses in English and were available during the period allotted for undertaking the classroom observations/interviews (January – June 2018). In the case of the two administrators who agreed to participate, I made a purposeful selection based on existing knowledge I had concerning their individual institutional roles and experience of language policies and practices within UNIBZ (See Table 1).

I experienced minimal difficulty arranging the classroom observations and interviews with the three lecturers (Mikhail, Kurt and Diego) and the mid-level administrator (Ursula). However, it took considerable effort to schedule the interview with the senior administrator (Rudolf) and I only received permission to conduct the interview after another of the project's participants intervened on my behalf. I was aware that in shifting from the role of teacher-trainer to that of researcher I might have to renegotiate the type of professional relationship I had already established and take account of my own expectations, as well as the participants' expectations concerning the nature of the research study and its potential impact on all of those involved. All participants voluntarily agreed to participate in the project and were informed of their right to withdraw from the research at any point and given assurances that their confidentiality and anonymity would be protected. Each participant was provided with a detailed description of the project's objectives and timetable outlining the data collection process.

Table 1 Details of Participants and Data Collection Techniques (Names have been anonymized)

Participant	Disciplinary ar	EMI experience	L1	Observed Event	Data collection method
Mikhail (Lecturer)	Economics & Management	>20 years	Russian	1 Lecture (50+students) VSR Interview	Video-recording Audio recording/ Interview
Kurt (Lecturer)	Computer Science	>15 years	German	1 Lecture (30+students) VSR Interview	Video-recording Audio recording/ Interview
Diego (Lecturer)	Education	<10 years	Italian	1 Lecture (25+students) VSR Interview	Video-recording Audio recording/ Interview
Ursula (Mid-level Administrator)	Education				Semi-structured interview
Rudolf (Senior Administrator)	Economics & Management				Semi-structured interview

3.3.2 Observations

Observations were used as a data collection method in this study and took place between February – June 2018. Observation in an educational setting provides in-depth information about phenomena such as the types of language use and variety of events that occur in classrooms, making available direct information as opposed to self-reported accounts (Dörnyei, 2007). This is particularly relevant in the case of a growing body of EMI research (Macaro *et al.,* 2018) which includes studies of lecturers' attitudes and beliefs towards EMI which are often not generalizable (Werther *et al.,* 2014) or the findings of large-scale surveys which cannot be authenticated (Dearden, 2014). I used unstructured classroom observations of authentic EMI lessons to collect descriptions of individual classroom practice and obtain a general impression of each lecturer's language proficiency and pedagogical approach. The three lecturers' suggested which lecture they wanted to be observed and each session was video-recorded on a digital recording device positioned near the front of each classroom to avoid interference with the flow of the lesson. All students attending the lectures under observation were provided with an information sheet

with background details of the research study and a form seeking their permission to be observed which were collected at the conclusion of each lecture. During each observation I monitored the video recording and made brief field notes on the classroom setting, student mix, level of participation, and general atmosphere.

In my previous role as an ATE trainer I had observed each of the three participants delivering short (15 minute) micro-presentations related to their disciplinary subject and in two cases had provided feedback on specific aspects of their teaching practice applying the criteria included as part of ATE's observation template relevant to interaction, language use, presentation style and pronunciation (see Appendix 2). Although the feedback process was not a recent event, as all three participants had attended ATE courses held in 2015 or 2016, this background knowledge could not be 'unknown' (by me or the participants) and almost inevitably influenced my perceptions of each lecturer's EMI classroom practice. I purposefully wanted to be 'open' to each observation, being present when recording the teaching performance but chose not to use a structured approach when taking field notes or placing the focus on a specific aspect of the instructor's style of teaching. Nevertheless, when reflecting on the experience after the event, it was apparent that I viewed each lecturers' performance through the lens of an EMI 'trainer', consciously or unconsciously, evaluating the instructor's effectiveness according to the construct I had been used to applying when giving feedback during the ATE course, namely, attending to the lecturer's level of interaction, use of language, pedagogical and pragmatic strategies.

The classroom observations were undertaken for the purpose of capturing specific episodes of actual EMI classroom practice, a set of retrievable data that could then provide short extracts for use as prompts for stimulated recall during the post-observation interviews, and not for specifically evaluative purposes (Farrell, 2020). The video recordings of each classroom observation were not transcribed in full as the study did not adopt a methodology that required discourse or conversation analysis. Instead, after each observation I viewed the video recording a number of times in order to identify individual episodes (video extracts of 2-3 minutes duration) that could be used to prompt discussion and elicit feedback from the participants' on aspects of their individual EMI teaching performance (see Section 3.4).

3.3.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

The research interview traditionally positions interactants in specific roles allowing researchers 'privileged access to a linguistically constituted social world' (Kvale, 1994: 147). As a data collection method in applied linguistics research interviews provide a means to investigate constructs such as beliefs, attitudes, identities and experiences (Rose *et al.,* 2020). To increase the reliability of this research method in qualitative studies scholars including Talmy (2010a) have called for more reflexivity in interviews, an act involving the researcher in referencing the self together with wider social influences in order to inform the research. By adopting a more reflexive approach, researchers' can acknowledge their own and their interviewee's social role and the potential to integrate reciprocity into the creation of knowledge (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006: 317). More recently, the collaborative nature of interviews has been foregrounded, with emphasis placed on the idea that co-construction of knowledge and development of identity occurs in both interviewer and interviewee (Rose *et al.,* 2020).

Between January and June 2018, a series of semi-structured and stimulated recall interviews were conducted with participants in this research study at a location (onsite/offsite) decided by individual interviewees according to their respective work schedules. In framing interview questions, careful attention needs to be paid to the possibility of unintentional bias through the subject's expectations influencing the interview but equally the researcher's own expectations must be taken into account. While bias cannot ever be completely avoided, Kvale (1994) notes that it can be counteracted through the researcher constantly reflecting upon their own presuppositions and prejudices in order to limit their effect on the research findings. This is particularly relevant with regard to this study where, as was stated earlier, the boundaries between my role as ATE trainer and researcher and the participants' roles as university lecturers/senior administrators and ex-attendees of the ATE course, became blurred at times during the interviews.

Semi-structured interviews were held with a senior administrator (Rudolf - Faculty of Economics). and mid-level administrator, (Ursula - Faculty of Education). The first semi-structured interview took place off-site (at the participant's request) with Ursula, who was responsible for conducting a review of the university's existing language policy and developing a new language strategy in co-operation with the university's senior

management team. Due to Ursula's professional responsibilities the interview was framed around the process involved in developing UNIBZ's new language strategy (see Appendix 2) and used as a prompt for discussion. Pre-prepared questions covering the following topics were used during the interview (the role of English as an official language of instruction; challenges faced by academics teaching through English as an L2; reasons for developing a new language strategy; which institutional stakeholders were involved in its development). The second interview was carried out onsite with Rudolf, a senior administrator in the Faculty of Economics. Open-ended questions served as prompts to discover the role of English for teaching and administrative purposes within the faculty and identify any language management processes that directly related to English as a medium of instruction. Both interviews were audiotaped and fully transcribed.

3.4 Stimulated Recall Interviews

The decision to use stimulated recall as a data collection method was taken due to its potential to facilitate a discussion of the factors which shape teachers' classroom decisions and action' (Borg, 2006: 313), using stimuli to support participants' recall of specific 'critical' episodes or events which bear immediate relevance to the focus of the study (Sanchez and Grimshaw, 2020).

I decided to utilise video stimulated recall as the primary data collection method based on the LOCIT process (Lesson Observation LO + Critical Incident Technique CIT) designed as a professional development tool (Coyle 2005) for CLIL teachers. The process involves incorporating lesson observation (audio or video recorded) applying a critical incident technique (CIT), enabling experienced teachers to reflect on their teaching practice. In its original formulation teachers select a series of 'critical incidents' (lasting up to 3 minutes in length), defined as an episode (an exemplar of good practice or a problem area) occurring during the observed lesson (Coyle, 2005). The edited video extracts (CIs) are then used as the basis for discussion and reflection in a post-observation interview. Video stimulated recall (VSR) appears to be a relatively under-utilised methodology in the field of EMI research (Farrell, 2020). Studies suggest that using VSR as a tool of self-reflection may develop teachers' ability to employ a critical perspective on classroom practices (Eröz-Tuğa, 2013), help teachers to identify gaps between their beliefs about good teaching and

their actual teaching practices and provide a means to confront one's image of teaching with one's actual teaching (Tripp and Rich, 2012). To this end, retrievable data collected from the classroom observations, in the form of selected video extracts (critical incidents), were used as 'prompts' during the post-observation interviews, the purpose being to enable each EMI lecturer to reflect on aspects of their own teaching practice. Farrell (2020:280) reports that by utilising retrievable data (e.g. video), rather than recalling individual episodes, it 'can inform EMI teachers about what is actually happening in their lessons rather than what they think is happening so that they can examine the efficacy of their teaching'. Participants were not involved in co-selecting the video extracts to be used during the VSR interviews, as this had not been incorporated into the study's methodological design, therefore an adapted version of the original LOCIT technique was applied in this study, with the researcher having sole responsibility for selecting individual episodes from the classroom observations and subsequently used as the basis for discussion.

In selecting the video extracts to use as prompts during the VSR interview, I had to take into account that my status was not that of a neutral observer, having already established a professional relationship as an EMI teacher-trainer with the three lecturers, all of whom had participated in the British Council's ATE training course, and received feedback (from myself or a colleague) on their individual micro-presentations related to their disciplinary area. I selected a series of critical incidents to be used as 'prompts' for discussion during the post-observation interviews based on a set of criteria (Interaction, Language, Presentations Skills, Pronunciation) employed on the ATE's training course used for the purposes of evaluation and feedback related to course participants' simulated teaching performance (see Appendix 1). It is notable that criteria similar to the above categories feature as part of established oral certification tests (e.g. TOEPAS) designed to assess EMI content lecturers' competencies, specifically focused on fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and interaction skills (Dimova 2017), and appear in training materials aimed at developing EMI lecturer competences (EMI Handbook 2019), produced as a result of research undertaken by the Transnational Alignment of English Competences for University Lecturers Erasmus+ project (2017-2020). The set of competences for EMI lecturers included in the British Council's Academic Teaching Excellence course thus aligned with competences incorporated into the TOEPAS certification test and EMI

Handbook developed by TAEC and provided the basis for discussion during the VSR interviews as part of the data collection process.

As a means of data collection, stimulated recall can present a ‘challenging process’ for both teachers (Radisic and Baucal, 2016) and researchers who should avoid leading participants through using prompts that might influence the responses (Kling, 2013). Morton (2012) investigated EMI practices by employing stimulated recall as part of a post-active reflection phase. For the purpose of his study, video extracts were chosen based on issues emerging from a semi-structured interview conducted prior to the VSR interview, where the teacher was invited to reflect on what she was seeing, and not simply reproduce from memory classroom behaviour. In contrast to the approach adopted by Morton (2012), I selected short video extracts based on the four categories as outlined above (Interaction; Language; Presentation Skills, Pronunciation) extracted from the video data collected from the classroom observations. While the intention was to offer the participants a ‘lens whereby teachers see particular aspects of their teaching more clearly (Tripp and Rich, 2012), I acknowledge that the selection of specific episodes used as stimuli was ‘dominated by the researcher’ (Sanchez and Grimshaw, 2019: 318), thus restricting the amount of agency available to participants in choosing specific incidents used for the purpose of stimulated recall. Further, in attempting to maintain a balance between my dual role of teacher-trainer and researcher, there was inevitably some slippage, when certain prompts or questions resulted in me re-positioning myself, consciously or unconsciously, back into the role of trainer, resulting in the participant positioned as ‘trainee’.

Each VSR interview followed a similar trajectory with my opening question to all interviewees asking the informant to consider how they oriented themselves to the four categories embedded in the ATE observation template (e.g. interaction, language, presentation skills and pronunciation using a pre-prepared form with these categories listed in the form of a table together with several sub-categories under each of the four headings). This form was adapted from the one used during the ATE training course (see Appendix 1).

3.5 Analysing the Data

Block’s (2017; 2020) positioning theory model guided the analysis and interpretation phase of the study by providing a set of features that served as the basis to generate specific

categories and subcategories that would compose the coding frame. One of the most important features of Block's model were 'discourse formations', defined as articulated discourses displaying institutional rules and regulations, practices and behaviours that are accepted and legitimized by institutional members (Block and Moncada-Comas, 2019). For the purposes of analysis, discourses were identified in both written or spoken forms, displaying a variety of genres and styles. One possibility could be examples in spoken or written text of UNIBZ's multilingual language strategy operating as a shared belief amongst group members. The second key element related to 'rights and duties', showing adherence to rules and regulations associated with specific discourse formations. In the case of EMI lecturers', a 'duty' might be seen in how they assumed institutional responsibilities associated with teaching through English as a second language. In contrast, a 'right' might be when a lecturer selected on the basis of their disciplinary expertise to teach through English as an L2 resisted institutional requirements to develop the students' linguistic skills as well as their content knowledge. Language administrators were likely to perceive notions of 'rights and duties' associated with the use of English as a medium of instruction from an institutional perspective framed in rules and regulations assigned through the university's language policy or through management processes around language use in local contexts, for example, within individual faculties. A further means of interrogating the data was to use Block's categorization of 'particular types of people' where individual lecturers might show evidence of self-positioning as EMI practitioners taking up specific responsibilities assigned to faculty members teaching through English as an L2 or displaying competencies associated with the role of an EMI lecturer.

Goffman's (1974) concept of frame analysis also guided the analysis of data elicited from the semi-structured and stimulated recall interviews. According to Briggs (1986) the framing of research interviews is centred around the idea of interviews as a model of social interaction, the interviewer specifying the issues to be covered, and the respondent supplying the information. Goffman elaborates on how an individual's framing of an activity gives it meaning:

> Frame, however, organizes more than meaning; it also organizes involvement. During any spate of activity, participants will ordinarily not only obtain a sense of what is going on but will also (in some degree) become spontaneously engrossed, caught up, enthralled. All frames involve expectations of a normative kind as to how deeply and fully the individual is to be carried into the activity organized by the frames. (Goffman, 1974: 345)

However, as Gray and Morton (2018) have argued, informants may depart from this model and break frame at moments during the research interview for different reasons - as a way for the interviewee to avoid a difficult topic, a desire on their part to change the line of questioning because it makes them uncomfortable, or because they consider it irrelevant. The authors go further to suggest that instances of frame breaking in an interaction may signal how the participant wants a frame to be understood or is an attempt to adjust the way in which a frame has been understood up until that point (Gray and Morton, 2018). In cases where the analysis showed instances of frame breaking occur during interactive exchanges, it would be important to understand to what extent the interactants' shifting positionings (participant and researcher) may reflect varying representations of EMI.

The transcript extracts included in Chapters 4 and 5 either reflect interaction from the interviews with language administrators (semi-structured) or video stimulated recall interviews (EMI lecturers) or short episodes of interactive exchanges taken from the observed lessons. Each 'Interview excerpt' was chosen to exemplify an aspect of the individual lecturer's teaching practice, illustrate overlaps between language policy and practice or highlight gaps where EMI practitioners' teaching practice did not appear to align with the underlying objectives of UNIBZ's trilingual language policy evidenced in its mission statement. The transcriptions broadly followed the conventions used in Block. Gray and Holborrow (2012) where sense groups identified in an extract representing discourse between two interactants were indicated with slash marks (e.g. …in terms of teaching and learning it is one third/ we are strictly taking care of that/…).

In Chapter 4 I will provide a detailed analysis of the data in relation to RQ1: How do administrators and lecturers understand the language policy related to English-medium instruction in this trilingual university?

CHAPTER 4 TAKING UP POSITIONS ON EMI

4.0 Introduction

This chapter addresses the study's first research question: *How do administrators and lecturers understand the language policy related to English-medium instruction in this trilingual university?* exploring through an analysis of the data ways in which language administrators and lecturers position themselves towards English as an official language of instruction.

Given the earlier discussion on reflexivity (see 3.1), I will address this aspect of the research process by including periodic moments of reflection throughout Chapter 4. Each reflection (titled *Vignette)* seeks to illustrate an aspect of the role(s) I adopted during the observation or interview phase of the research process. This may encompass decisions made in adapting the research design, or shifts in how I self-positioned during the semi-structured or video stimulated recall interviews. Each vignette is designed to inform readers of the difficulties I encountered attempting to balance the dual roles of researcher/ teacher-trainer and navigate my own and participants' expectations while enabling the participants' voices to be heard. A key challenge studying individuals known to the interviewer in a familiar professional context is that it may affect the way the researcher is perceived, the kind of data that are produced, and the way data may be interpreted. In contrast, the positive aspects of having prior knowledge of the site of research is that there is likely to be an existing level of trust already established between the researcher and participants, leading to more spontaneously produced data. Through using reflection in an intentional way (Schön, 1983), the aim was to engage in a process of reflection-in-action (during the actual data gathering phase) followed by reflection-on-action (reviewing what was collected and how it could be interpreted and analyzed). As part of my role as a teacher-trainer delivering the ATE courses I was required to adopt a critical lens when evaluating the participants' individual micro-teaching sessions. However, I needed to guard against taking on a similar 'judgemental' pose when observing the participants' teaching performances in the EMI classroom, and be able to provide a robust rationale in the selection of episodes (short video extracts of 2-3 minutes duration) used as prompts during the VSR interviews. My individual reflections are 'nested' within a wider reflexive examination on how my self-

positioning at different moments in each of the stimulated recall interviews might have restricted or enabled the informants to reflect on their EMI teaching performance.

4.1 Perceptions of EMI: Administrators

The project set out to investigate how language administrators and lecturers position themselves with regard to EMI in the unique setting of this trilingual university, where English functioned as a language of instruction alongside Italian and German. A position is defined by Harré (2012: 198) as ‘a cluster of beliefs with respect to the rights and duties of the members of a group of people to act in certain ways’. Positioning is thus achieved through discursive processes people engage in during conversations ‘as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storylines’ (Davies and Harré, 1999: 37). The findings did not reveal any formal written language policy specifically aimed at English medium instruction in this institutional context. However, it was possible to uncover institutional expectations around the use of English as a medium of instruction, illustrating clearly the existence of a projected ‘EMI gaze’. Such expectations were located not only in evident institutional perspectives concerning the use of English ‘voiced’ by administrators and lecturers during interviews but were also notably present in the end-of-course student evaluation form which articulated a set of objectives around language and pedagogy linked to L2 lecturers’ use of English as a medium of instruction.

By examining how the administrators involved in this project (Ursula and Rudolf) positioned themselves with regard to English during interaction, two distinct perspectives emerged that reflected the particular institutional roles each of them inhabited. Ursula had assumed responsibility for helping to develop the university’s new language strategy in co-operation with members of the senior executive team. This eventually became UNIBZ’s revised language strategy introduced in 2015 which comprised a three-pillared multilingual model of integrated content and language learning (ICLHE), (See Appendix 2) designed to ‘embed language study across the curriculum’ and offer ‘integrated content and language training (ICL) and support’ for academic staff teaching in their L1 or L2 (Mastellotto and Zanin 2021:222). Pillar 1 covered general language courses to students administered by UNIBZ’s Language Centre. Pillars 2 and 3, covered disciplinary language and academic skills courses and academic teaching strategies for faculty teaching through L1 and L2.

Ursula offered valuable insights into the development of UNIBZ's new language strategy and identified several shaping structures (Block and Moncada-Comas 2019), political, social, cultural, economic or geographical factors that she believed may have contributed to influencing the university's policy on language use, and particularly, English medium instruction. In contrast, Rudolf, who held a senior administrative role in the Faculty of Economics was able to shed light on how language management decision-making in respect to English Medium teaching and learning was operationalized at faculty level.

In the following statement Ursula's use of the pronoun 'we' suggests she is reporting institutional, rather than individual, objectives, aimed at attracting foreign students through providing them with opportunities to study in a trilingual learning environment.

Interview excerpt 1

> we are an international university/we want students to come from all over the world/we want internationalisation but we want also that our students study in three languages to be prepared/ not on the one side language and on the other side content/but they have the knowledge in the three languages (Ursula)

Ursula's designation of UNIBZ as an 'international' university intent on attracting overseas students, highlights the role of internationalisation as a social phenomenon. The use of English as a medium of instruction it has been argued is frequently perceived by language policy-makers as both a mediator and a carrier of internationalization (Macaro *et al.,* 2018). From the perspective of Block's positioning theory model, making English an official language of instruction, as a result of a political decision taken at regional level, could be interpreted as a shaping structure clearly influencing UNIBZ's language policy that offered foreign and local students the opportunity to develop their English academic skills (Arnó-Macià and Mancho-Barés, 2015). Although Ursula suggests that the concept of internationalisation in this specific trilingual higher education context adopts a more integrated approach where both language and content support students to acquire 'knowledge' in three languages she also makes direct reference to political factors as playing a critical role influencing decisions around language use in this HE setting.

Interview excerpt 2

> we are a very small university in a very small province/if we change into an English mediated instruction […]our university[…] we are a very small university of no interest anymore/it couldn't be the mission/the politicians would not agree on that[…] we will lose our uniqueness (Ursula)

Ursula made mention in the above extract of UNIBZ's geographical location, locating the university within an officially bilingual region, where historical rights around language prevented privileging any one language in public educational settings. Although English had legal status as one of three officially recognised languages of instruction within UNIBZ, it was significant that Ursula underlined the university would meet possible resistance from the wider political context if it sought to adopt an English-only language policy. Such a decision would also likely affect its unique position as one of very few fully trilingual universities in Europe if it privileged English medium instruction, which Ursula suggested, could ultimately lead to a loss of status as it would be 'of no interest anymore'. Aside from external pressures at a political level which bound the university via statutory legal requirements to offer all its degree courses in three languages (German, Italian, English), Ursula highlighted internal pressures around language use resulting from certain faculties appearing to prioritise English-only master's degree programmes.

Interview excerpt 3

> so the problem is Computer Science/they have it all in English and they want to have it all in English/we will see/ because the university is trilingual/but professors of some faculties are really pushing only English/we are going a little bit in this direction as are other universities (Ursula)

Ursula regarded the Faculty of Computer Science's support for English-only postgraduate courses as a 'problem', reflecting a lack of alignment with the university's trilingual language policy which promoted degree courses taught in the three official languages of instruction. Nevertheless, there was recognition about the effect that Englishization was having on the higher education sector, Ursula admitting that even UNIBZ was 'going a little bit in this direction', reinforcing the notion that external factors were influencing language practices within this localised HEI setting. What shouldn't be overlooked is that in encouraging English-only master's, the Faculty of Computer Science was in fact reflecting part of UNIBZ's own mission endorsing the role of English as the *lingua franca* of the scientific research community:

> Although particular emphasis is placed on the languages used in the region, the University is also committed to endorsing English, the lingua franca of the international scientific community. (Extracted from Mission Statement of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano)

Although this extract taken from the university's Mission Statement reflects institutional endorsement of English as the global language of scientific communication, it does not seek to privilege English instead highlighting the importance of incorporating regional languages as part of the university's trilingual language policy. It is interesting that UNIBZ's Mission Statement confirms its main aim is to provide a 'multilingual, international education', I was not able to identify a written language policy outlining how 'multilingualism' was to be operationalised through language management processes and practices. Spreafico *et al.*'s (2008) research into multilingual language practices at UNIBZ identified a continuum ranging from classrooms adhering to strict monolingualism where lecturers' only used the official course language to other learning contexts where instructors engaged in code-switching and multilingual practices. Thus, although multilingual classrooms were found to exist in this trilingual HE setting, other studies suggested that individual lecturer's might choose to circumvent UNIBZ's policy of 'one-language-only-rule' in the classroom depending on how they interpreted the notion of multilingualism in practice (Veronesi and Spreafico, 2009). Despite Ursula's use of 'we' during the interview, suggesting she was voicing a broader institutional perspective on the role of English, there is little doubt about the subjective nature of her comments. However, this needs to be set against the administrative role she held, taking on responsibility for managing the process of developing the university's new language strategy which afforded her unique insight into the institutional challenges faced by different stakeholders' enacting EMI within this institutional setting.

We now move on to look at the role of English at the meso (institutional) level by shifting focus to examine language management processes and practices around English and EMI in the Faculty of Economics, seen from the perspective of a senior administrator (Rudolf), who had long-term experience in a leadership role within this institutional context. According to Spolsky (2005:2153), language management refers to 'the formulation and proclamation of an explicit plan or policy usually, but not necessarily written in a formal document about language use'. For the purposes of this study understanding more deeply how EMI was operationalized at the meso level through specific language management practices within one faculty might lead to a deeper understanding of how EMI was enacted at the micro level (classroom). A further reason for examining language management processes was to ascertain whether members of this localized disciplinary speech community (e.g. Faculty of Economics) shared a general set of beliefs regarding language

practices related to English medium instruction (Spolsky, 2005). While decisions about the language used as medium of instruction resided at the executive level within this institutional context, implementing language management practices at the meso level depended on their 'congruity to the practices and ideology of the community in which they were located (Spolsky, 2005: 2161).

The predominant message emerging out of Rudolf's interview was the importance of putting in place language management processes to ensure language practices in L2 learning contexts were in alignment with the university's wider trilingual policy. In practical terms, for Rudolf this meant making sure that English was equally distributed across all undergraduate and postgraduate courses, alongside German and Italian, in its role as an official language of instruction.

Interview excerpt 4

> RES: think about the role of English in terms of teaching and learning activities
> Rudolf: in terms of teaching and learning it is one third/ we are strictly taking care of that/so of the whole study career of students/three years/two years of the Master/ you have a thirty-three/thirty-three/thirty-three distribution of languages
> RES: so you are quite rigid about that?
> Rudolf: yes we're very rigid about it

Unlike Ursula, Rudolf did not make explicit reference to political, social or other factors acting as shaping structures influencing UNIBZ's language policies during the interview. However, the above extract could be interpreted as reflecting an articulated discourse at the faculty level which displayed its adherence to enforcing 'legitimate rules and regulations' (Block and Moncada-Comas, 2019) around language use as a means to implement institutional trilingual policy. Where the analysis showed overlap with the positioning theory framework was in terms of discursive formations around second language use in the Faculty of Economics designed as gate-keeping measures to monitor lecturers' proficiency levels to teach through an L2. For example, where candidates renewing short term teaching contracts failed to meet required language thresholds, their contracts were not renewed as Rudolf made clear: "you didn't satisfy the contract thank you very much that's it". However, according to Rudolf, enforcement of this rule for non-tenured staff did not appear to be applied university-wide: "it is a university rule but I think I'm the only one who exercises it […] the other faculties don't do that I know". While such

language management practices were applicable to all staff teaching their disciplinary subject through an L2/L3, (not only English), it was apparent from Rudolf's response that other faculties did not necessarily adopt such strict measures and was one of the "differentiation points" between the Faculty of Economics' approach to EMI and the other faculties within UNIBZ. In response to my question concerning the application of language thresholds for staff teaching through a second language, Rudolf's position is very clear.

Interview excerpt 5

> we're very rigid about it/so if people in terms of academic merit are ok then the criteria moves to which language they use for teaching/the only thing we are accepting are either mother tongue or certificates (Rudolf)

Research shows that a 'high-level' of proficiency is one of the required criteria used in the selection of lecturers teaching EMI courses (Rose *et al.,* 2019; Macaro *et al.,* 2018). Airey (2011) suggested lecturers should be at C1 level to be effective when using a student-centred lecturing style, although a recent study of European HEIs (O'Dowd 2018) found varying proficiency levels (between B2 and C2) were set as benchmarks in the selection of lecturing staff teaching through an L2. In the EMI literature proficiency is highlighted as one of the critical issues for content lecturers teaching heterogeneous student audiences, weak proficiency resulting in a lack of spontaneity, restricted vocabulary, difficulty explaining subject-specific concepts and classroom management (Werther *et al.,* 2014; Macaro *et al.,* 2019). However, other researchers have questioned whether being highly proficient in English necessarily translates into increased communicative effectiveness in the EMI classroom (Björkman 2010).

The Faculty of Economics also drew on end-of-course student evaluations as a way of monitoring content lecturers' language use and overall teaching effectiveness. The following extract provides insight into why Rudolf believed EMI lecturers' proficiency level had an effect on their comprehensibility when delivering academic content.

Interview excerpt 6

> RES: do you think the students evaluate that? [lecturer's English language skills]
> Rudolf: They do/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 [..] ok you just do not renew the contract
> RES: you would do that if the evaluation was not good?

Rudolf: 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/so if they make an extra effort
RES: you take this into account?
Rudolf: we look through them/every single one
RES: whose responsibility do you think is? /the individual teacher?
Rudolf: 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 actually 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

By taking direct action in response to issues raised around an individual lecturer's' weak English proficiency, it could be argued that the Faculty of Economics took responsibility for ensuring teaching quality was maintained. Student concerns about the inadequacy of content lecturers' English proficiency has emerged as an issue in the EMI literature impacting comprehension and impeding language learning (Klaassen, 2001; Macaro *et al.,* 2018; Aizawa and Rose, 2019). Drawing on Block's positioning model, Rudolf's description of the Faculty's use of students' evaluation feedback as a way of monitoring lecturers' proficiency in the EMI classroom, is an example of an institutional gaze, acting as a surveillance or gate-keeping measure to ensure certain behaviours related to L2 language use were followed.

English acted as an 'internal language' between faculty members within the Faculty of Economics and for all staff-student communication. From Rudolf's perspective this decision was made for practical reasons as "everybody speaks English but not all of us speak German or Italian", and reflected the role of English as "the lingua franca" of Economics and Management. It was apparent that within this highly localized context (Faculty of Economics), English operated as a medium of instruction but also had a broader application, supporting Dafouz and Smit's (2016) argument that English-medium education occurring in multilingual settings can often occupy a number of dimensions: teaching, learning, research and administration.

Although the Faculty of Economics appeared to adopt a strategic approach applying language management practices that aligned with UNIBZ's institutional language policy, Rudolf expressed concerns about the lack of uniformity university wide which suggested

there was a ‘disjuncture between policy and practice’ (Moncada-Comas and Block, 2019: 1).

Interview excerpt 7

> the problem really is/in my opinion/to allow people who are employed on a fixed contract in this university to teach in a language they do not master/that is the core/they shouldn’t be allowed to do that/that would not be so dramatic if the university would not call itself a trilingual university/my problem very often is/that we make a promise/ and/in quite some instances we do not deliver (Rudolf)

In the extract above Rudolf’s projects the idea of a potential ‘gap’ between institutional language policy and practice across the wider university which undermined its mission to provide students with an authentic trilingual learning environment. While both Rudolf and Ursula highlighted the various challenges confronting UNIBZ in seeking to implement its trilingual language policy, it was Ursula who referenced specific external factors acting as shaping structures (e.g. political, social, linguistic) affecting institutional decision-making around the choice of instructional languages, whilst Rudolf focused primarily on internal language management processes operating within the Faculty of Economics designed to ensure that language policy and classroom practices were fully aligned at the meso level.

Vignette (Ursula and Rudolf)

> The choice to involve senior administrators in the study was validated as Ursula brought a broad perspective highlighting expectations of external and internal stakeholders in establishing a trilingual language policy, which was balanced by Rudolf’s more detailed description of language management practices in place in one faculty. What was noticeable was that during the interviews with Ursula and Rudolf, both participants positioned me in the role of teacher-trainer through our shared experience of the British Council’s EMI training course. Ursula illustrated the relationship between UNIBZ’s language strategy, the ATE course and my status as a ‘partial-insider’ with knowledge of the needs of professors teaching through English as an L2. (“…the third pillar/because we need to do some training in German and in Italian Because you have done ATE [British Council course] and you know how many professors came. So we have a lot of Professors who have to come. So we also need to do this in German and Italian, and we need professors who teach in their own mother tongue and they need to change their methodologies” (Ursula). Rudolf’s reference to the ATE course did not focus on my role, instead highlighted his increased awareness of the difficulties faced by lecturers teaching in other disciplinary areas, (“when I’ve been in the British Council course I realised that people/even in their subject area/using the technical language/ were struggling”).

> Reflecting on these two interviews, I realized that although the two participants positioned me as a partial insider, based on my experience of delivering the ATE courses, I had little awareness of the complexities of enacting English medium in a trilingual HE setting. Although Rudolf and Ursula projected an institutional gaze that afforded all three official languages equal status as part of UNIBZ's trilingual language policy, the reality appeared to be much more complex, with faculties such as Computer Science reflecting learning environments closer to Macaro's (2018: 35) definition of EMI, namely, 'the use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions where the first language (L1) of the majority of the population is not English'. Rudolf and Ursula's conception of EMI in this trilingual institutional setting challenged my own assumptions about existing models of EMI, and suggested that UNIBZ's aspirational model, represented in its three-pillared approach to integrated content and language learning in higher education (ICLHE) (see 2.6) represented a form of 'CLIL*ised* EMI' (Block and Moncada-Comas, 2019), where content and language skills were embedded as part of language policy as an institutional objective. Thus, I realised I needed to revisit previously held assumptions about EMI based on earlier experiences in other Italian HEIs and consider interpreting the data through a more nuanced lens, which took account of the university's integrated content and language approach to teaching and learning, based on the goals outlined in its current language strategy.

4.2 Perceptions of EMI: Lecturers

Mikhail, a lecturer in the Faculty of Economics emerged as the participant whose 'talk *about* teaching and talk *in* teaching' (Moncada-Comas and Block, 2019:3) appeared to align most closely with institutional goals around the use of language and pedagogical strategies for teaching and learning in the EMI classroom.

Interview excerpt 8

> I don't use any other language/I can say it in Italian, and maybe even German/but I deliberately don't use any language [other than English] /yeh/I can speak faster/I can use slang/all the mighty power of British English and French equivalence/a few words/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 (Mikhail)

This short extract underpins Mikhail's deliberateness in only using English, the official course language, making a conscious effort to avoid using 'complicated' words or 'slang' in order to ensure the language was as comprehensible as possible for his students. He also adjusted his vocabulary to match students' language level, using scaffolding to provide greater access to disciplinary content.

Interview excerpt 9

RES: now, let's have a look at language.
Mikhail: 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: so you're almost getting them used to a familiar environment?
Mikhail: Yeh but not that much/for example/when you go to the real business/to be a practitioner/and you hear them talking/it's like 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 targeting Mikhail's use of language in the EMI classroom through my initial question in this excerpt, I have self-positioned back into the role of ''trainer', replicating the ATE course experience and by default re-positioning Mikhail as the 'trainee'. The objective was not to recreate an interactive dynamic that was evaluative in purpose, identifying 'good' or 'bad' use of language, but to provide Mikhail with the space to consider the rationale behind his choice of language in presenting the disciplinary content. My second question introduced the idea of discourses used in professional communities of practice, attempting to discover whether Mikhail was purposeful in developing students' disciplinary literacy. From his response it appeared his primary motivation was to enable students to become 'comfortable', or acclimatized to the type of jargon used in the world of finance, their potential future work environment. A secondary aim was to increase students' confidence using this new vocabulary in their preparations to become members of a professional community of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Mikhail was 'projecting' students into the 'real world' by introducing them to some of the discursive features (e.g.'financial jargon') they would encounter once they entered this professional environment after graduation.

In contrast to Mikhail who openly displayed confidence in his level of English proficiency, Kurt, a lecturer in the Faculty of Computer Science, conceded he had full command of the technical vocabulary connected to his academic discipline, but self-positioned as someone who did not have ' nice English' and as the following extract illustrates exhibited a level of self-awareness about the effect his restricted general English lexis might have on student learning.

Interview excerpt 10

I think it is mainly the technical stuff/the vocabulary is ok/I think it's more when I would like this to be a nice comparison with something/everyday things/then/ 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 (Kurt)

Kurt's insecurity about his English language skills, meant he had difficulty projecting the image of an EMI lecturer in full control of the language. From a positioning theory perspective, Kurt's teaching identity, inhabiting the role of EMI lecturer, was only partially realised as he was constrained in his communicative efforts due to his limited vocabulary and negative self-assessment which resulted in the adoption of avoidance strategies to minimise the risk of losing face in the EMI classroom ("I sometimes try to avoid this because it's risky").

During the interview with Diego, a lecturer in the Faculty of Education, he was explicit about positioning himself as someone with weak English language skills ("there is something wrong" and openly admitted that some students were "distressed by my language" and "not generally inspired by my language". He also displayed a level of self-awareness about the "need to change", not only through expanding his vocabulary but also recognizing that adapting his pedagogical style might improve his teaching performance by making it more comprehensible for the students.

Interview excerpt 11

Diego: I believe that I need to improve some words that I use […]there is something that maybe as I told you/ dependent on what is used in the past […] what I saw and what I learnt/but I need to change that/because there is something wrong

RES: One thing I noticed when you were talking much slower the level of grammatical accuracy improved dramatically/the comprehensiveness of what you were saying was much clearer/have you ever thought of slowing down?

Diego: […]yeh I'm aware about my performance while I'm slow/and about my bad performance when I'm accelerating

Examining how lecturers self-positioned, or were positioned by me in the role of researcher/teacher trainer, towards English medium instruction presented a significant challenge in the absence of any formal policy or written guidelines on how EMI should be enacted in this HEI setting. However, I discovered a set of identifiable institutional expectations around lecturers' L2 language use embedded in documentation related to the university's end-of-course evaluation procedure. As part of this process, students were required to answer several questions relating to their L2 instructor's language use. The

form comprised six sections (Course; Lectureship; Interest; Infrastructure; Suggestions & Comments) with three questions specifically related to language and pedagogy listed under the Lectureship category.

The three questions were as follows:

Q1 Was the language used by the teacher the official course language?

Q2 Was the language the teacher used comprehensible?

Q3 Could the teacher with his teaching activities improve your language skills? (applicable only if the teaching language differs from the main teaching language of the secondary school)

In regards to Q1, as part of UNIBZ's trilingual language policy all courses were assigned a designated official course language (according to the three official languages of instruction). While research (see Spreafico *et al.,* 2008) has shown that multilingual learning contexts existed at UNIBZ, particularly in the Faculty of Design where instructors and students were found to participate in plurilingual practices, this study found that the three EMI lecturers adhered to using English as the official course language and there was no evidence of any other language used in the transmission of subject content during their classroom observations. It could be argued that Q2 and Q3 set out institutional objectives around lecturers' language use which students' were asked to evaluate at the end of their respective courses. Although the questions were not specific to EMI teaching and learning contexts, in fact, they applied to all L2 classroom settings, they could be interpreted as a mechanism reflecting an institutional gaze, in other words an 'EMI gaze' where English was used as the medium of instruction, projecting students to use this framework in evaluating each instructor's linguistic and pedagogical performance. Without evidence of any written language policy formally outlining 'discourses of normativity' (Block and Moncada-Comas, 2019: 7), setting out the competencies L2 lecturers were expected to possess, this evaluation process could be seen to function as an instrument of surveillance providing feedback on the individual lecturer's teaching performance. This feedback might then be acted upon at faculty level as a way of monitoring lecturers' classroom performance and to assess their competence to deliver disciplinary content through an L2. The findings showed faculties did intervene, either to withdraw a lecturer's right to continue teaching

through an L2 when they did not meet agreed language thresholds (Faculty of Economics) or compel faculty staff to further develop their L2 proficiency (Faculty of Education).

Prior to the data collection stage of the project I was unaware that such an evaluation process existed and only learnt about its existence during the interview with Diego following my question related to student feedback ("Do you ever get feedback about your language from the students?). Diego appeared very willing to share this information, volunteering to send examples of course evaluations from previous years degree courses, despite expressing disagreement with the institutional process in place designed to evaluate individual lecturer's classroom performance.

Interview excerpt 12

RES: it would be useful for me to see what sort of comments they are making maybe from a selection of courses
Diego: uh huh/ the comments are summarised/there are only a few of them who are writing a statement/generally they are evaluating categories […] there is only one that is about language/could the teacher teach you something about that language/ that foreign language/are you satisfied by the language
RES: what have they got? yes or no?
Diego: they say no/generally no/generally yes/definitely yes/it's a poor point but I also do not agree with that evaluation system

What is clear from Diego's final comment is evidence of his resisting the institutional gaze ('I also do not agree with that evaluation system'), by refusing to acquiesce to the university's 'system' for evaluating an individual lecturer's L2 teaching performance. Whilst Diego did not provide reasons for his resistance to UNIBZ's system of evaluation, and this was not pursued further during the interview, after reading the student evaluations it was apparent there was considerable student dissatisfaction with Diego's English language proficiency. Extracts of the students' comments across several different courses and academic years, serve to illustrate the level of dissatisfaction: "How should we learn English and reach B2 level at the end of this three years when the academic is not able to speak good English?"; "His pronunciation is really bad and he makes a lot of errors, not only in speaking also in the slides are many errors*".* Such comments suggest the students themselves are self-positioning as 'language learners', and not only content learners, viewing the instructor's (Diego) weak English proficiency as an obstacle preventing them from reaching the required language thresholds established by the university prior to final graduation.

One consequence of an apparent gap between the students' expectations of Diego's English language skills and his actual L2 proficiency, was that he was required to attend the British Council's ATE training course ('the Head of the course told me that I have to attend to your course because it is necessary to improve your language'). Diego's resistance to being positioned as a disciplinary expert with a language 'deficit' by the evaluation process could have resulted from a sense of 'role diminishment' (Moncada-Comas and Block 2019: 11), when competent professionals find that their position as content lecturers in the EMI classroom is somehow compromised as a result of teaching in English. Interestingly, Diego did not make any attempt to challenge the students' assessment of his weak English proficiency.

Interview excerpt 13

> Diego: they say my English is incorrect/maybe/but the point I really were discussing is not my pronunciation/it is let's to say my manner
> RES: your tone and intonation?
> Diego: intonation/rather than pronunciation

In the above example Diego is positioned by the students ('they') as displaying language that is judged as 'incorrect' suggesting his teaching performance does not meet accepted teaching standards expected of L2 instructors. Considering this episode from a positioning theory perspective, this could be interpreted as Diego unable to fulfil his duty in the position of EMI lecturer, by failing to use an appropriate discourse connected to his academic discipline, or assume responsibility for developing his students' disciplinary literacy in order to support them in becoming members of an academic community of practice. Another factor to consider is that the students' negative evaluation of Diego's teaching performance suggested that he was unable to produce language that was 'comprehensible', in delivering content, the main criteria associated with Q2 included in the end-of-course evaluation process. Although Diego gives a qualified 'maybe' referring to the students' assessment of his poor English he re-positions himself as someone having poor intonation, an aspect he links to his 'manner' or style of teaching. My follow-up question ('your tone and intonation?') also serves to re-position me into the role of teacher-trainer, by shifting the focus onto specific aspects of his teaching performance in the EMI classroom.

While the issue of student feedback was raised during the interviews with Mikhail and Kurt, in contrast to Diego, who appeared to resist UNIBZ's evaluation process, they both self-

positioned as compliant with the institutional process in place assessing lecturers' language comprehensibility and pedagogical approach in the L2 classroom. This may have been due to both Kurt and Mikhail having received positive feedback on their EMI teaching performance: (Mikhail: ' it's always very good/two years ago I was the best teacher here in the faculty/I usually get very good comments/students who are in employment they use my slides'); (Kurt: 'generally the feedback is also good/so I don't complain about my teaching feedback/they also give feedback the students/so I very openly speak out and say/you should tell everything/so I would simply like to improve it/I got good feedback from them").

Unlike Diego there was little evidence that either Mikhail or Kurt had experienced any instances of role diminishment (Moncada-Comas and Block 2019), instances where their competence as disciplinary experts was compromised in the EMI teaching context due to issues surrounding their L2 language proficiency or failure to meet students' expectations. The question needs to be asked whether institutional expectations around the L2 instructor's language proficiency, which were evident in the questions embedded as part of the course evaluation process (for the purposes of this study when English was used as an official course language) could be perceived as a form of CLIL*ised* EMI (Moncada-Comas and Block 2019), in the absence of an articulated EMI policy. While Q2 under the language sub-heading of the student evaluation form places the focus on the L2 instructor's language comprehensibility and pedagogical activities, it is not made explicit that lecturers' are obliged to adopt an integrated content and language approach. Nevertheless, UNIBZ's language model appears to foreground an integrated content and language approach (see Appendix 2).

According to Mastellotto and Zanin (2021:234) UNIBZ's current language model remains 'aspirational', with ad hoc initiatives put in place in different faculties without any systematic university-wide approach. While its language strategy might be considered a 'work in progress', it suggests there is an underlying CLIL*ised* approach underpinning the university's institutional language policy, specifically as there is provision for ICL methodological training for academic staff to develop their teaching skills. In this trilingual HE setting, English was used as an additional language for the learning and teaching of both content and language, suggesting that EMI classrooms were becoming CLIL*ised* , where language was 'adopted not only for content delivery, but also as a means through which students might improve their English' (Moncada-Comas and Block, 2019:1). While

UNIBZ's language model positions lecturers within an integrated content and language framework, without explicit guidelines on how to transform language policy into practice, what actually occurs in the EMI classroom may be very different from what EMI policy makers and administrators have in mind (Dafouz 2018). Furthermore, in cases where EMI lecturers resist or refuse to be positioned into such a CLIL*ised* role, this may result in 'disjuncture' between language policy and classroom practice, impacting how EMI unfolds on the ground (Moncada-Comas and Block, 2019).

4.3 Rights and Duties around EMI

In this section I will consider how the notion of rights and duties associated with the use of English as medium of instruction were perceived by participating lecturers and administrators involved in this study. Institutional language requirements for all academic appointments applied to all five university faculties as Rudolf reported during interview, 'for six or seven years now everyone who's been hired has a language requirement of a third language in the contract. From an institutional perspective, aligning with institutional and student expectations around language use obliged faculty members to achieve a B2 level in their third language in order to receive promotion or tenure. As the findings from a recent survey of students' studying in this trilingual HE context reported (Mastellotto and Zanin, 2021), students also considered the university had a 'duty' to apply language entry thresholds to both staff and students:

> I would say that we should make a policy of ... for how ... for the people you are going to hire, that is if a professor has been hired at the University of Bolzano he must have a good competence in English ….because if people say: "No I'll do mine. My English sucks a bit but I don't give a damn". No. There is in my opinion ... It is a policy .... If you come to teach at Unibz [...] you have to ... you have to be as particular as a student is, understand. That is, we are ultimately a little bit special as students ...even the teachers should be special. (Original extract in Mastellotto and Zanin, 2021: 227)

However, Rudolf expressed the opinion that although academic staff didn't need to be proficient when teaching through an L2, they did require sufficient linguistic competency in order to meet the needs of students learning disciplinary content through an L2.

Interview excerpt 14

> you do not have to be perfect in language/but if you know your area well/you're pretty familiar to teach that subject in a certain language/whichever it is/it's ok I think/what I

> realized is/that many people are struggling with the basics in terms of terminology/and context/in the very core area/for students/the perception is about maybe one half/thirty percent usually of what you are saying/so what is left? /what arrives at the students/not much (Rudolf)

Both Ursula and Rudolf supported the university's 'duty' to respond to students' negative evaluations of lecturers' language skills by restricting future teaching contracts or requiring academic staff to revert to teaching in their L1 when they failed to meet institutional expectations around their L2 language use.

Interview excerpt 15

> 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 (Rudolf)

Interview excerpt 16

> 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 (Ursula)

Ursula also highlighted the duty of academic staff to assume responsibility to understand what implementing a trilingual language policy entailed, which for her meant developing awareness of the challenges faced when communicating disciplinary content in an L2.

Interview excerpt 17

> because you have to come to us and you have to be bilingual/you have to learn/also as a professor/this is very special/if you came here as a professor you knew this policy/a lot of them weren't aware of what it means to have a trilingual policy (Ursula)

On Ursula's part, there appeared to be an expectation that lecturers would understand 'they have to change' as part of their responsibility of teaching in a trilingual university. This entailed assuming an individual duty to adapt one's classroom practice in order to meet the needs of heterogeneous groups of students with different levels of language ability. Monitoring the classroom performance of faculty teaching through an L2 was embedded in the formal end-of-course evaluations, suggesting that this form of institutional scrutiny, what Gray and Yeung (2022) refer to as 'disciplinary and surveillance mechanisms', illustrated how the university assumed its 'duty' to ensure L2 lecturers met the expectations of various stakeholders (institutional and students) around instructors' language and pedagogical use in the delivery of disciplinary content through a second language.

CHAPTER 5 DEVELOPING EMI STORYLINES

5.0 Introduction

This chapter is focused on addressing the study's second research question: How are specific practices associated with EMI pedagogy assigned, taken up or resisted by lecturers in this educational setting? Drawing on interview data and video extracts taken from authentic EMI learning contexts and applying Block's positioning theory construct, the analysis attempts to uncover each of the participating lecturers' individual *storylines* (Davies and Harré 1990), evident in the social and discursive practices, including use of linguistic and pedagogical strategies, that inform their actions in the EMI classroom.

Two sets of data were analysed using Block's (2020) expanded model of positioning theory: 1) data emerging out of classroom observations displaying actual EMI practices, and 2) data emerging out of video stimulated interviews which used short extracts selected to give each lecturer the opportunity to reflect on their EMI teaching performance. It was envisaged that through each participant's 'talk about teaching and talk in teaching' (Moncada-Comas & Block 2019 :3), their individual *storylines,* or narratives, would serve to illuminate how 'rights and duties are taken up and laid down, ascribed and appropriated, refused and defended' (Harré, 2003:4) in relation to EMI. For the purposes of this study the notion of 'duty' is considered synonymous with the idea of lecturers', either explicitly or implicitly, assuming (or refusing) to take on responsibility for students' facing the challenge of learning disciplinary content through English as an L2. The selection of video extracts used as prompts during the VSR interviews were based on four distinct categories: interaction, language, presentation skills and pronunciation, competencies identified in the literature (Curle *et al.,* 2020) as critical skills for lecturers teaching in EMI learning contexts.

5.1 Lecturers' EMI Narratives

5.1.1 Mikhail

Mikhail, a lecturer in finance teaching in the Faculty of Economics was the first participant to be observed. During the post-observation interview Mikhail was shown a series of video

extracts (2-3 mins) taken from the observed lesson which were selected based on an adapted version of the evaluation template used during the ATE course (see Appendix 1). During the discussion he was encouraged to comment on each video extract to explain what was happening and explaining the reasoning behind his language use and pedagogical approach. Interestingly, Mikhail's storyline revealed that he interactionally positioned himself in the role of disciplinary expert, someone who 'seemed to accept and incorporate into their professional identities their duty to act as model academics for students' (Block and Moncada-Comas, 2019: 9). As the following extract from the interview shows I sought to find out if being a reflective practitioner was part of his teaching identity rather than posing a question inviting Mikhail to reflect on a chosen episode taken from the observed lesson, (e.g. Could you reflect….?):

Interview excerpt 18

RES: do you reflect on your teaching style?
Mikhail: […] well yeh for sure cause our work is listening to the presentations of the others/going to workshops/conferences and so on…so I mean for students/I present the material which I know/I would say perfectly/but still/I would like to make an impression of a confident/and professional lecturer (Mikhail)

Mikhail's response indicated he self-projected as an expert in his disciplinary field, confident in his ability to effectively communicate disciplinary content to students through English as an L2. Part of Mikhail's role as an EMI lecturer was to develop his students' disciplinary literacy, introducing them to linguistic registers including jargon and abbreviations that formed part of the professional discourse used in the field of economics and finance.

Interview excerpt 19

Mikhail: on the blackboard I try not to write the words but abbreviations […] finance people talk in abbreviations/it's the language in newspapers /like the Financial Times/so you have to know abbreviations/and the jargon as well

During the observed lesson Mikhail made frequent use abbreviations, (e.g. "return on equity or ROE"; "fintechs"), introducing new terminology with the aim of enlarging the students' knowledge of features of recognisable financial discourse. Socializing students into the discourse of their future professional domain was found to be one of the 'duties ' of EMI lecturers based at a Spanish university (Block and Moncada-Comas, 2019: 11). In

showing attention to students' acquisition of disciplinary language, Mikhail could be seen to self-position as an EMI lecturer, thus fulfilling what researchers have identified as one of their primary functions, to 'ensure that students understand and learn disciplinary knowledge' (Moncada-Comas and Block, 2019: 3).

Costa's (2012) study of the communicative strategies employed by EMI instructors teaching scientific subjects found they showed a level of attention to language and linguistic awareness when there was potential for students to have difficulty understanding new lexical items. In such instances, the lecturer would make a 'conscious move to explain items in order to avoid these difficulties' (Costa, 2012:31). In the following extract Mikhail describes how he enacts comprehension checking as part of classroom practice:

Interview excerpt 20

RES: [here I pointed to the category '*checks comprehension on a regular basis'* on the prompt sheet]
Mikhail: yes comprehension I do check because usually during the class I do repeat some specific points which were covered in the previous classes/and especially so in the other classes I teach/but here as well I do write on the blackboard the main results/and I repeat/reclassify the main conclusions and so on/so that students are forced to write it again or remind themselves of the things/ or remember and understand it a bit better/so this is the way I check the comprehension

The use of strategies such as repetition, signposting, signalling discourse structure prospectively and retrospectively, are recognized as features of comprehension-facilitating pragmatic behaviour (Björkman, 2011). The strategic use of language to ensure its appropriacy for students with varying levels of proficiency in English can be an indicator of a teacher's "conscious reflection on the language dimension of curricula" (Mastellotto and Zanin, 2021: 228). I would contend that Mikhail's willingness to be versatile by adjusting his level of language and use of pragmatic strategies displayed a conscious effort to support student learning. Such 'deliberateness' was further confirmed in the rationale given for his use of signposting language:

Interview excerpt 21

RES: using signposting language/is that deliberate?
Mikhail: yep/it's the introduction/they have to give the whole picture/why we're doing this/ all my lecture is more or less connected in the framework evaluation

Klaassen (2008: 40) has argued that making content matter accessible for students learning through a second language displays not only the lecturer's' proficiency but also their 'awareness and understanding of the complexity of the pedagogical situation'. The narrative underlying Mikhail's emerging storyline displayed a pedagogical style driven by a desire to connect theory and practice, seen through his use of real-world examples and use of social media to encourage students to engage with financial concepts. As we can see in the next extract Mikhail's employment of social media and Twitter was informed by his own professional experience and use of a didactic approach that engaged students in the learning process. The anecdote in question related to the topic of crowd-funding, which although outside the scope of his lesson, directly connected to his area of research interest intended to show students 'how versatile and how interesting it [the financial sector] is'.

Interview excerpt 22

> RES: you tried to connect the students through this anecdote?
> Mikhail: I try to use the social media/you know/the new hyper economy/Twitter and so on
> RES: with students?
> Mikhail: yeh/with students because they like these examples/Tesla/Apple/companies which everybody knows/when you talk about General Electric might be boring/but [not] when you talk about Apple/the value of Apple company/or Twitter shares

Research suggests that lecturers' communicative effectiveness can be attributed to their pragmatic abilities, as much as their L2 proficiency, when supporting meaning making in EMI contexts (Björkman 2011). Strategies such as signalling importance, commenting on terms and concepts, checking understanding of instructions, and discourse signalling playing a significant role in the communication process through preventing misunderstandings in contexts where English is used as a lingua franca (Mauranen 2006b). Given Mikhail's high level of proficiency in English, it is not unusual that he chose to emphasise presentational skills, not language skills, as one of the most critical factors necessary to communicating disciplinary content effectively through English.

Vignette (Mikhail)

> I observed Mikhail teaching over two consecutive days, and therefore had an expanded view of his EMI classroom practice. Mikhail's strategic teaching approach emerging through his personal narrative, or storyline, constructed discursively during the post-observation interview could be interpreted as illustrating signs of an institutional 'gaze' that prioritized an integrated approach to language and content in L2 learning contexts. By adjusting his

language, incorporating pragmatic strategies to aid comprehension, connecting theory and practice using social media and real world examples, signalled a conscious effort to assume the 'duties' of an EMI lecturer, consciously reflecting on the language dimension of curricula and incorporating methodologies appropriate for students learning disciplinary content through English as an L2. During the stimulated recall interview, there was little evidence of role blurring as Mikhail and I maintained our respective researcher and informant positions. However, towards the end of the interview I repositioned as a teacher-trainer projecting an evaluative stance by concluding the latter stages of the interview with a comment on his teaching performance ("I've only got good things to say"). Due to this reversion into a teach-trainer role this led to Mikhail shifting back into a trainee role and asking for "some constructive criticisms?', thereby reinforcing my role as 'language expert'. This shift in roles, initiated as a result of my comment illustrates the reality of practitioner research, where role blurring can occur, consciously or unconsciously, on the part of the researcher or informant, but which does not, it could be argued, necessarily jeopardize the value of the data produced. In terms of the overall research design, it was apparent there needed to be further adjustment as Mikhail's lengthy responses to questions on his use of language and presentational style left insufficient time to view the video extracts taken from the classroom observation. As the primary purpose for using VSR as a methodological approach was to directly engage participants through reflecting on their actual teaching practice I made the decision to change the structure of the interviews with Kurt and Diego, foregrounding the video extracts to ensure closer alignment to Coyle's (2005) original LOCIT process, designed to enable CLIL teachers to reflect directly on 'critical incidents', or, exemplars of good practice or problem areas present in the observed lesson.

5.1.2 Kurt

Kurt self-positioned as a disciplinary expert with the requisite technical lexis, even if the narrative around his professional identity as an EMI lecturer contained words and phrases that reflected a more negative '*storyline'* in regards to his English language skills, e.g. 'not a nice English', 'rather limited. In acknowledging that his restricted general English impacted his teaching practice, an inability to explain concepts clearly or make comparisons across different domains, Kurt aligned himself with an institutional gaze that required faculty to develop the linguistic competencies to teach their disciplinary subject through an L2:

Interview excerpt 23

RES: most of the courses in this faculty are taught through English I understand?
Kurt: almost 90% of the courses in English/yeh yeh …I think [this] is an exception/the teachers so because they are supposed to teach only their mother tongue/so this is very strange for me/but I don't want to say something wrong/but at least for a long time they were also an exception/which I don't understand/the teachers are teaching/they should be able to teach in other languages/somehow

This aligns with Macaro *et al.*'s (2018) research into EMI practices that found language policy-makers expected lecturers to be proficient when teaching through a second language, and is particularly relevant to a trilingual university where all teaching and learning is carried out in German, Italian and English, as official languages of instruction. Although Airey (2012) has suggested that lecturers teaching STEM subjects generally do not use language as their chief meaning-making resource, relying instead on numbers, graphs and images to co-construct meaning, it was notable that Kurt assessed his English-language skills as impeding his ability to communicate ideas clearly.

Interview excerpt 24

> sometimes/I have the impression that I repeat and repeat the same/so this should require some thinking upfront/how do I explain this concept in a simple but precise way/rather than trying it with four different sentences/which are all not 100% precise (Kurt)

Kurt's concerns about his inability to be 'precise' when explaining key concepts, reflected scenarios identified in Moncada-Comas and Block's (2019) study of Spanish EMI lecturers who talked down their competence in English despite having the necessary technical vocabulary to communicate disciplinary content. Perhaps to surmount what appeared to be his own self-assessed linguistic 'deficit', Kurt adopted a very structured approach in his lesson plan and used comprehension-facilitating pragmatic strategies (Björkman, 2011), including recapping and signalling as pedagogical tools to support student learning. This was apparent in the opening stages of the observed lesson, where Kurt used material covered in a previous lesson:

Interview excerpt 25

> RES: is that the standard approach you would use to open a lesson?/what were you doing there?/were you linking it to the last lesson?
>
> Kurt: yes/this is what I usually do/I do a recap of 5 minutes/sometimes a little bit less/sometimes a little bit more/I repeat very quickly what we learned last time/ and then continue/this is my normal opening (Kurt)

At one point during the interview I reverted back into the role of teacher-trainer by showing a video extract of an exchange that took place during the observed lesson where a student queried information on one of Kurt's slides. My purpose in showing this extract was because I perceived this episode as representing a possible 'critical incident'(Coyle, 2005), one which had the potential to lead to Kurt losing 'face' in his role as 'disciplinary expert'.

A transcript of the exchange taken from the observed lesson illustrates the interaction that took place between the instructor (Kurt) and the student:

<u>Extract of dialogue during observed lesson</u>

> Student: my question is/I don't understand why there is a two at the end here
> Kurt: ok/yes right that's a good point/we come back here to zero and then we go/ah ha/what was it here/ah yes I don't see it /yes/so it looks like ah uhm/ so again the sibling is at one again but here it starts now at one/ I should check the document page/ re-check the document so yeh/it might be honestly/I cannot answer

In seeking to elicit why Kurt had responded as he did to the student's question I 'unconsciously' re-positioned the interviewee back into the role of trainee:

Interview excerpt 26

> RES: now there were a couple of points where some students were querying something on the slide I think/I'd just like your comment on how you handled that
> Kurt: I don't really remember whether it was a mistake on the slides, but I probably solved it/if I can't solve it I apologise
> RES: for some teachers that could be a tension
> Kurt: four or five years ago I was trying to escape somehow/ but I kind of learned if you openly speak out, "Ok, I apologise, I don't know this"/I have checked myself and prepared for the next lesson/they appreciate it and so they/of course if this happens every lecture/then they probably question your competence/but once in a while

Kurt had the option of acquiescing or resisting the 'trainee' role, but his explanation of the episode showed his willingness to reduce the power distance between teacher and learner. Klaassen (2001:74) suggests that students' appreciate lecturers 'whose self-image is congruent with the way in which they are perceived'. Kurt's openness to change and willingness to make adjustments his style of teaching in response to student feedback ('they [the students] also give feedback so I very openly speak out and say you should tell everything') by expanding his competencies, both linguistically and didactically ('I've reduced quite a lot the pace of my language I tended to speak much faster in the past') suggested a high degree of self-awareness, self-positioning as a reflective practitioner who implemented change as a result of reflection ('four or five years ago I was trying to escape somehow but I kind of learned if you openly speak out they appreciate it… of course if this happens every lecture then they probably question your competence…but once in a while').

A further episode where there was an obvious blurring of roles occurred in the interview's closing stages when I again re-positioned as teacher-trainer, shifting from a researcher's role, by asking Kurt to reflect on his EMI experiences using the ATE evaluation template. The following exchange illustrates how the interview dynamic shifted from its original purpose - a data collection exercise involving the researcher and informant - becoming instead a dialogic event between teacher-trainer and trainee, what Gray and Morton (2018) refer to as 'frame breaking', when the researcher reverts to another role during the research interview.

Interview excerpt 27

> RES: what's your overall impression in terms/you know/of the criteria and
> Kurt: well/ I think this is extremely helpful feedback / reflecting about this one is very/ very good/ I now learnt in this hour many interesting things/ which I probably/ hopefully /will remember and improve in the next semester/yeh / I think very helpful to use these kind of small exercises in the classroom/this is good/the voice is a little bit monotone/my moving around all the time and so emphasizing more/ I fully agree/then maybe sometimes making more pauses and sometimes I am quite repetitive I think/some concepts/maybe preparing and then making an important statement/ rather than kind of repeating the same statements/ but not in a clear language/ which might be ok/but thinking a bit more now/ this is an important thing and explaining this in a very linear way/ and then maybe showing an example

Kurt appeared to acquiesce to being re-positioned as trainee which was also reflected in a perception that my comments during the interview acted as a form of 'feedback' related to his teaching performance in the EMI classroom, rather than a means to elicit information for the purpose of research. However, Kurt's stance could also be interpreted as someone who viewed the interview as a sort of 'learning arc', evaluating the feedback as 'helpful', providing a series of practical suggestions by someone inhabiting the role of teacher-educator, not that of researcher, which could potentially contribute to Kurt's professional development in the EMI lecturer role.

An important difference that emerged from Mikhail and Kurt's interview narratives, or storylines, was that Kurt's main focus appeared to be on content learning, a feature shown as representing a key characteristic of an EMI approach (Smit and Dafouz, 2012), while Mikhail's EMI classroom practice displayed more evidence of an integrated approach,

emphasising content and language, which aligned more closely with the overall objectives (e.g. ICLHE) set out as part of UNIBZ's language strategy (Mastellotto and Zanin, 2021).

Vignette (Kurt)

It was clear during the interview with Kurt that instances of a shift from researcher to teacher-trainer role were more frequent than occurred during the interview with Mikhail. From the beginning of the interview Kurt self-positioned as having a language deficit ("…. my language is rather limited to computer science terminology"). However, the way in which the questions were framed contributed to reinforcing a trainer/trainee dynamic ("Do you ever ask the students to recap for you?; Did you leave much of a pause for them to reply?; Could you prepare it in advance; Could you give them an activity to follow up?"), rather than one of researcher/informant. There were several instances of breaking frame, when an interlocutor seeks to 'change the events in the frame to another direction' (Fernqvist 2010). In breaking frame by shifting back into a teacher-trainer role, offering Kurt a series of practical suggestions or changes he might consider incorporating into his EMI teaching practice, it was likely that this led Kurt to interpreting my comments as a form of "feedback", similar to that received during the ATE course. One of the ongoing challenges in conducting practitioner research, particularly when the researcher is investigating the activities of professionals who have previously been their students, is to maintain a sense of detachment, and limit role blurring whenever possible. In my case, perhaps due to my inexperience as a field researcher meant that by repositioning Kurt into a trainee, rather than informant role, I then took on the characteristics of an ATE trainer. There was a lack of self-awareness on my part of the extent to which in attempting to mirror the evaluation and feedback process used during the ATE course during the VSR interviews, this would naturally lead to a considerable degree of self-positioning as a trainer, ultimately re-positioning my informant back to a trainee role. Although I believe Kurt was given the space during interview to reflect on critical aspects of his EMI teaching practice, an exercise that he clearly found to be a positive experience, there is no doubt that a considerable amount of frame breaking took place on my part which could have been avoided if I had adopted a more reflexive approach in advance of the interview.

5.1.3 Diego

Diego appeared to self-position throughout the interview as someone resistant to the institutional gaze around EMI. The background to Diego's participation in the ATE training course could be regarded as underpinning the personal narrative emerging in respect of his role as an EMI lecturer. In contrast to the other ATE course participants, it was made mandatory for Diego to attend this professional development programme to address issues of concern raised by the Faculty of Education about his weak English language skills. While Diego's 'talk about teaching and talk in teaching' (Moncada-Comas and Block 2019: 3),

evident in the discourse taking place in the observed lesson and the post-observation interview, exhibited his acceptance of certain duties associated with the role of EMI lecturer and also illustrated a level of resistance to assume responsibility for his own or his students' language development. Diego's openness in acknowledging his English language skills had been judged insufficient at departmental level, "the Head of the course told me that I have to attend your course [ATE} because it is necessary to improve your language […] because your German students cannot understand you", connected to his previous request for additional feedback in my role as teacher-trainer at the conclusion of the ATE course. It was interesting that during the interview, Diego made a point of referencing this episode, thus consciously re-positioning me back into the role of teacher-trainer as can be noted in the following extract:

Interview excerpt 28

> and if you remember the course that I was attending 3 years ago/if you remember the special question that I make/that I was asking you to evaluate me during the lesson was about this aspect (Diego)

During Diego's classroom observation I was aware of considerable grammatical inaccuracy in his spoken discourse. From a teacher-trainer perspective I had concerns how this might affect student learning and considered it important to highlight this issue during the stimulated recall interview. I selected several episodes showing instances of disfluency that could be used as prompts during the VSR interview. My objective was not to present a critical 'voice' on Diego's teaching performance, but to encourage him to reflect on how his use of language might impact the students' ability to comprehend disciplinary content. The following excerpt shows that in my effort to highlight issues around his language use, this could be interpreted as a deliberate move to position Diego as a 'deficient speaker', shifting roles from that of a 'neutral' researcher, into the role of teacher-trainer judging his teaching performance in the EMI classroom in negative terms:

Interview excerpt 29

> RES: I'm thinking there is a high level of grammatical inaccuracy that I heard in a 3 hour lesson/my interest in terms of research/is whether that could impede understanding
> Diego: Uh huh
> RES: If I hear just a few/I don't think it does/but if I hear quite…

Diego: …quite a lot
RES: I'm wondering if you're aware of it?/I can make my own assumptions/but because I hear quite a lot/that could impede the students' understanding at that moment/during that lesson/not necessarily before or after …
Diego: also something that is also strong from the literature/whenever you are reading a sentence/and there's an error that you may not notice consciously/but you are stopping reading/ because internally or unconsciously/you notice that error /so you stop going further/and then you come back/here in the lesson you cannot stop and come back/because the lesson is progressing

This excerpt clearly illustrates an example where there is a blurring of roles. In the opening sequence I can be seen as self-positioning as a teacher-trainer assuming my 'right' or entitlement to evaluate Diego's teaching performance thus positioning Diego as a deficient speaker through projecting the gaze of the ATE course and making a negative judgement. There is also evidence of tension as I attempt to re-position myself back into the researcher role although the claims being made are not substantiated ('If I hear just a few I don't think it does'). Diego appears to acquiesce when being positioned as a 'trainee' through affirming there was 'quite a lot' of grammatical inaccuracy in his speech. However, from a positioning theory perspective by not responding directly to the question "I'm wondering if you're aware of it?", this could be interpreted as not wanting to confront, or choosing to avoid, the impact his weak proficiency could potentially have on student understanding.

Another example during the interview where I privileged the role of teacher-trainer - not researcher – through re-positioning, occurred when Diego was shown a video extract where there was clear evidence of inaccurate syntax in the formulation of questions:

Interview excerpt 30

RES: Is that clear that question?
Diego: no from two points of view/one the language and one the content
RES: so you can hear it might be a little problematic/in the construction
Diego: the content/the message
RES: how could you ask it in another way/to be clearer
Diego: I'd like to hear the sentence before/because it depends on what has been said before

[Replay of video extract]

Diego: the first one is/how could people evaluate the message?/the second one is/how could people manage to persuade you to think their own way?
RES: why do you think you asked the question in the way that you did?
Diego: maybe because as you could evaluate/maybe I was losing the point/therefore 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

RES: would you have been aware while you were doing that/saying that/or are you aware now?

Diego: maybe I was partially aware about this/I was aware that there was something wrong/but maybe I was not able to get what was going on

This stretch of interaction clearly shows I again self-position in the role of instructor (e.g. 'how could you ask it in another way to be clearer'?), mirroring the 'gaze' I projected when carrying out my teacher-trainer duties on the ATE course. Such strong positioning does not necessarily indicate that I wanted to provide Diego with advice on what he should be doing in the EMI classroom. It could be seen as an attempt to discover whether he understood what was happening through 'reflection on action' and whether he could have addressed the problem through a process of 'reflection in action'. Diego's response that he was only 'partially aware' that something was wrong suggests he may have lacked the necessary tools to reflect on the reasons for his disfluency and its potential impact on student learning. Although it was noted previously that Diego acknowledged he needed to improve his English language skills ('I need to improve some words because there is something wrong'), he also expressed doubts about his own ability to achieve more proficiency in English. The extract below reveals Diego's concerns about his ability to increase his level of proficiency in English, and also serves to highlight his perceptions around the lack of language support for faculty members teaching through an L2:

Interview excerpt 31

Diego: the point of also training in a foreign language/in this case English/it's very very difficult […] maybe I cannot be proficient in this part […] /but then we are talking about the style/and when you are making a criticism about this/because you are going to improve my language/if I'm going to make criticism on this and this/then you're going to change my style/I don't want it

RES: they are not criticisms

Diego: I'm not assuming that/but the thing was that other colleagues of mine would think that

Here Diego makes reference to external assessments of his language proficiency by using the pronoun 'you' ('because you are going to improve my language') to position me as a critical voice highlighting his weak English language skills. From a positioning theory perspective the "you" could be interpreted as myself occupying the role of teacher-trainer entitled to project an ATE 'gaze' and evaluating a 'trainee's' language skills. Alternatively,

it might be argued that the 'you' refers to the institutional EMI gaze which sets out clearly defined expectations for lecturers' teaching through a second language as part of the end-of-course evaluation process, the objective being to develop students' content knowledge and language skills in an L2. By emphasising "I don't want it", this suggests that Diego refuses to acquiesce completely to this EMI gaze, and is resistant to adapting his teaching style or working on improving his English language skills. This resistance contrasted with Kurt's willingness to accept the need to further develop his general English language skills and adapt his classroom practice.

The following extracts reflecting different academic years taken from Diego's end-of-course evaluations (which were voluntarily provided after the interview) highlight students' perceptions of Diego's proficiency in English and its possible impact on their learning:

(Extracts from Diego's end-of-course student evaluations)

> The language competence in English of the professor is very inappropriate making it hard for students to follow him …in general the course is really hard to follow because of the difficulties in understanding the professor's way of speaking..moreover 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 (AY 2014/2015)
>
> A great problem was the understanding of the language spoken by the professor..maybe it would be better if the course is taught in Italian..the English of the prof is very bad (AY 2014/2015))
>
> I did not like this course, since I had difficulties in understanding the professor, not only from a linguistic point of view, but also because I think he explains in a not very clear way. I am not satisfied with this course. (AY 2017/2018))

All three extracts refer to issues surrounding Diego's language competence in the EMI classroom and it was notable that the feedback covered different courses and academic years. While Diego provided a detailed description of the type of questions contained on the evaluation form related to lecturers' language use, as noted previously (Chapter 4) he projected a position of someone who was in disagreement with UNIBZ's method of evaluation on L2 lecturers' linguistic and pedagogical skills ("I also do not agree with that evaluation system").

Interview excerpt 32

Diego: there are only a few of them who are writing a statement/generally they are evaluating categories so that is one page/there is only one that is about language/

could the teacher teach you something about that language/that foreign language? /Are you satisfied by the language used by the teacher?
RES: what have they got/ yes or no?
Diego: they say/no/generally no/generally yes/definitely yes

Diego was obliged to comply with the departmental requirement that he attend the ATE course to address issues related to his weak proficiency in English. The implication of such a directive was that Diego's language skills were not sufficiently adequate to undertake the role of EMI lecturer, although the end-of course reports suggested that he continued to be assigned responsibility for delivering EMI courses.

A lack of alignment between institutional expectations around lecturers' language use in L2 learning contexts appeared in the findings of a study on EMI in a Spanish university which revealed a similar 'gap' between top-down pressure to incorporate EMI programs and bottom-up EMI teacher implementation (Block and Moncada-Comas 2019). Macaro *et al.* (2018) reported that students often express their concerns that instructors' lack of appropriate English proficiency might result in incorrect language learning. Although Diego acknowledged that students were 'generally not inspired' by his use of English and experienced difficulties understanding his language due to his reported 'incorrect English', he attributed such misunderstandings to his intonation and manner, rather than his inability to provide clear explanations related to disciplinary concepts.

It could be argued that Diego lacked the ability to consciously reflect on the language dimension of curricula (Dafouz *et al.,* 2014), but he might also have been affected by a sense of 'role diminishment' (Moncada-Comas and Block, 2019: 11), feeling uncomfortable in a context in which he normally felt competent in the role of disciplinary expert. The EMI classroom may represent a site where content lecturers' lack of proficiency in English compromises their professional identity which in Diego's case led to further institutional scrutiny.

From the classroom observation it was clear that Diego's style of teaching emphasized an active learning approach drawing on a range of pedagogical strategies (e.g. experiments, quizzes, anecdotes, use of questions), to achieve what he referred to as 'learning by doing'. While some researchers report that EMI classes are more student-centred and interactive as a consequence of the content lecturer's desire to increase students' understanding of subject content through dialogue (Dafouz, 2018), other studies have suggested lecturers

tend to compensate for their perceived weaker language competence in EMI contexts (English L2) by focusing on the disciplinary content of lessons and avoiding spontaneous questions and discussions (Helm and Guarda, 2015). However, Diego actively encouraged discussion with his students even though his lack of attention to form may have reduced his communicative effectiveness. The following extract shows a glimpse of a student-centred activity that took place during Diego's lesson observation:

[Extract from classroom observation]

> "There are two groups let's make this half here first group and second group so there are two groups to one group and to the other were given two texts…two texts but with different aspects of evaluation…evaluate whether you are going to count how many uh let's say how many verbs are present in this text (*shifts focus onto the 2nd group)* and you try evaluating uh how many adjectives are present in this text and maybe classify them verbs between actions verb of action and verb of description observation perception and evaluate the adjectives related to positive attitude or negative attitudes (Diego)

During the post-observation interview I encouraged Diego to reflect on how he had set up the demonstration described above:

Interview excerpt 33

> RES: You remember the demonstration?
>
> Diego: […]maybe I could not remember the details/in general it reminds me that I was not effective in determining in describing correctly the example in respect to other years in which the example was clearly congruent with the experiment/therefore, maybe there was a lapse of memory in that situation/I can remember in the first moment I was describing the stereotype the story in a certain way…then I was using it or asking it in another way/and that is something that I was realising/but I cannot remember which is the correct one/ or whether no one was correct to respect of the experiment/so what I did afterwards is to put the paper directly on the Moodle so that you can see it on your own.

Diego may have mitigated to some extent any problems the students encountered during the lesson related to the demonstration by uploading the original paper onto Moodle after the lesson. Although there is no consensus in the EMI literature as to what level of proficiency is required to achieve communicative effectiveness when teaching through the medium of English (Curle *et al.,* 2020), a threshold level of C1 has been mooted by some researchers as necessary to make a student-centred lecturing style possible (Airey 2011). However, despite utilizing the university's learning platform to upload course content, it was likely that continuing issues around Diego's use of language for classroom management purposes still remained.

In terms of Block's PT model, Diego's unwillingness to make an effort to improve his English proficiency in order to explain subject-specific concepts more effectively (Macaro, Jimènez-Muňoz and Lasagabaster, 2019) might be perceived as avoiding one of the 'duties' of an EMI lecturer to make disciplinary content comprehensible for L2 learners. Alternatively, Diego's resistance to altering his style of teaching could be perceived as voicing his 'right' to continue to use the same teaching approach used in his L1, maintaining a teaching identity developed prior to commencing to teach through English as a medium of instruction. The analysis showed Diego's focus was primarily on protecting his 'rights' as a disciplinary expert not to be judged on his language competencies in the EMI learning context. In contrast to Kurt and Mikhail, who placed more emphasis on their 'duty' to align their classroom practice with university language strategy, Diego failed to meet institutional expectations around lecturers' L2 proficiency. Wilkinson (2005) has emphasized the need for EMI lecturers to ensure they are critically aware of the language they use with students in multilingual learning contexts and ensure they regularly adjust their instructional methods. While Mikhail made a point of enabling students to become familiar with specialised financial vocabulary to develop his students' disciplinary literacy (Airey 2016), there was little evidence that Diego prioritized technical vocabulary or encouraged his students to actively use new language in the EMI classroom. This directly contrasts with studies that have found academics teaching in the field of education frequently use terminological clarifications and explicit contextualisation when teaching educational concepts (Dafouz *et al.,* 2016: 136).

What was apparent during this interactive event was that both actors, myself and Diego, discursively and interactionally positioned ourselves via conflicting narratives, through self or other positioning, either in my role as researcher/teacher-trainer(interviewer) or Diego's role as lecturer/trainee (interviewee).

Vignette (Diego)

My attempts at balancing the dual role of researcher/teacher-trainer proved a major challenge throughout the entire data collection phase. This was particularly the case during Diego's interview where there was considerable re-positioning and blurring of roles. In trying to navigate these roles enabling Diego to reflect on specific aspects of his EMI teaching practice, I did not take account of prior knowledge I had in terms of his weak proficiency which I had observed when he was a participant in the ATE course. Despite Diego's validation of my role as researcher, ("it's about your

research… focus on what you need from me”), as a result of numerous instances of frame breaking, evident in the type of questions I posed to Diego during our interaction, this resulted in me self-positioning into the role of ‘evaluator’, making judgements about his EMI classroom practice. This situation was likely to have led to Diego’s reluctance at several moments during the interview to fully engage with the video extracts and in some instances, avoid answering specific questions. Not only was there evidence of Diego’s resistance to the ATE gaze that I projected when shifting back into the role of teacher-trainer but also resistance on his part towards an institutional gaze that projected those duties lecturers teaching through an L2 (in this case English) were expected to assume in order to support the students’ linguistic development. From a positioning theory perspective (Block,2020) Diego clearly wanted to protect his ‘right’ not to have to adapt his teaching style when delivering disciplinary content through an L2. This stance directly contrasted with Mikhail and Kurt’s willingness to align their teaching practice with an institutional gaze that prioritized the needs of students learning through a second language.

5.2 Aligning Policy and Practice

Although the study did not find evidence of a formal, written language policy outlining how EMI was to be operationalised at UNIBZ, institutional objectives linked to lecturers’ use of language and pedagogical approach in the L2 teaching and learning contexts were evident in the university’s end-of-course evaluation process which required students’ to evaluate lecturers’ teaching performance and L2 language proficiency.

The findings revealed a gap between different stakeholders’ perceptions of how EMI was enacted in this trilingual university. In the absence of any formal language policy or pedagogical guidelines associated with English as a medium of instruction, responsibility for articulating EMI appeared to shift to administrators and lecturers, findings similar to those identified in a study of EMI in a multilingual Spanish university (Moncada-Comas and Block 2019). Evidence of this gap between policy and practice could be seen in the case where an individual lecturer (Diego) appeared to fail to meet institutional as well as student expectations around the L2 lecturers’ language competencies and was resistant to the idea of improving his English proficiency level if this meant having to adjust the style of teaching in the EMI classroom. Misalignment between taking on the role of EMI lecturer, but not necessarily accepting the duties associated with such a role, may have been in part due to the limited reach of this university’s multilingual language strategy (Mastellotto and Zanin, 2021). This was certainly true in Diego’s self-positioning as an EMI lecturer, openly

expressing his disagreement with the language expectations set out in the institution's end-of-course evaluation process which emphasized the duty of L2 lecturers' to use appropriate linguistic and pedagogical strategies in order to improve learners' language skills.

Research has shown that using a language other than one's own for high-stakes communication requires investing in the communication process more than when teaching in one's own native language (Björkman, 2011). Mikhail's communicative effectiveness in the EMI classroom which aligned with the institution's integrated content and language approach was achieved through the strategic use of linguistic and pedagogical strategies to support learning and develop students' disciplinary literacy. Additionally, his use of comprehension-facilitating pragmatic behaviour (Björkman 2011) including repetition, signalling discourse structure prospectively and retrospectively and scaffolding language helped to enhance student comprehension. It was notable that this study's findings reinforced earlier research that found high proficiency levels alone may not be the only important factor in achieving meaning-making when teaching in English as an L2 to heterogeneous groups of students (Klaassen, 2001). Kurt's willingness to adjust his teaching style and openness in seeking student feedback as well as his use of pragmatic strategies was likely to have contributed to him receiving positive student feedback on his EMI teaching performance, despite talking down his own linguistic competence in English.

The study's findings highlight the challenges facing administrators and lecturers who assume responsibility for transforming language policy into classroom practice both at meso (institutional) and micro (classroom) levels. Research has highlighted the need for multilingual universities to consider prioritising didactic training for lecturers teaching in an L2 (Mastellotto and Zanin, 2021) and adopting a more reflexive practice perspective to enable EMI lecturers to become more self-aware of the impact their teaching performance has on student learning (Farrell, 2019). The EMI literature indicates that content-lecturer related challenges not only concern lecturers' level of English proficiency but that there is also a need to focus on acquiring lexis related to classroom management e.g. giving feedback and instructions and signposting to enhance students' learning experience (Macaro, Jimènez-Muṅoz and Lasagabaster, 2019*).* Studies have found adopting a student-centred approach can facilitate student engagement in EMI learning contexts (O'Dowd 2018) with some researchers reporting that an active learning approach may be more important than a lecturer's overall level of proficiency (Airey, 2011). However, it could

be argued that this study's findings contradict such a position as it was found that in spite of the EMI instructor's use of an interactive pedagogical approach (e.g. experiments, quizzes, use of questions), learners reported dissatisfaction with the lecturer's weak proficiency and limited vocabulary in English which some considered was an impediment to learning.

Attempting to maintain the dual role of researcher/teacher-trainer throughout the classroom observation and video-stimulated recall interviews proved a major challenge as the interview transcripts and field notes attest to a considerable amount of re-positioning on my part between these two roles. One consequence of self-positioning in the teacher-trainer role was that consciously or unconsciously, I then positioned interview participants in the role of trainee rather than disciplinary expert whose teaching performance was being evaluated by a language expert. Further, it was apparent that I overlooked the possibility that by choosing to adapt the observation template used in the ATE training course to select video extracts taken from the classroom observations and structure the stimulated recall interview, this would inadvertently result in setting up an expectation that interviewees might receive feedback on their classroom practice. On reflection this should have been addressed more fully prior to undertaking the analysis and interpretation stage of the collected data.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION

6.0 Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss the extent to which the research design and data obtained was appropriate in answering the research questions. I will also seek to highlight the study's limitations and implications for future research. The chapter will also address the impact undertaking this study has had on my own professional practice and managing the challenge of occupying the dual role of researcher/teacher-trainer, and the inevitable blurring of these roles that can occur during the data collection stage of a research project.

6.1 Charting the Research Journey

This study evolved out of a professional interest in wanting to deepen my understanding of the interplay between language policies and classroom practices linked to English medium of instruction at the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (UNIBZ), a trilingual university located in the official bi-lingual region of Alto Adige in Northern Italy. The impetus for the project grew out of my previous experience as an EMI trainer at this site of research, the aim being to investigate the role of English in a unique teaching and learning environment from the perspective of key stakeholders (administrators and lecturers) responsible for putting into practice the institution's language policy. Despite an expanding body of research on EMI practices in higher educational contexts (See Jenkins, 2014; Dafouz, 2018; Macaro *et al.,* 2018; Curle *et al.,* 2020), the place of administrators as key agents in this process has often been overlooked (Lauridsen, 2020). To address this gap, this study invited senior and mid-level administrators to participate in order to get a broader perspective on language management practices around English operating in this institutional setting.

One of the objectives of this small-scale practitioner enquiry was to go beyond simply 'imagining' EMI, instead the aim was to try and uncover language policies, processes and practices that shaped how English medium instruction was implemented in this trilingual higher educational setting. It is claimed that practitioner researchers start off with assumptions about what they expect to find out based on their own professional experience

prior to starting any research project (Drake and Heath, 2011). One assumption I held was the belief that I would be able to locate some sort of written language policy or documentation around the use of English, given its status as one of the institution's three official languages of instruction. Because of my previous professional experience as an EMI trainer at UNIBZ I had been able to develop relationships of trust with course participants which gave me access to EMI learning contexts and the chance to engage directly with senior administrators with extensive background knowledge of the university's evolving trilingual language policy. However, in spite of this access, my efforts to identify any formalised institutional language policy about EMI proved unsuccessful which resulted in making a shift to the study's focus, away from solely concentrating on language policy in documented form, and more towards Spolsky 's (2005: 2163) notion that the real language policy of a community is more 'likely to be found in its practices that[sic] its management'. According to Spolsky (2005), unearthing beliefs about language practices and institutional decision making around the choice of language(s) used as a medium of instruction in educational contexts also offers a means of learning more about the language policy of a speech community.

Widening the project's scope beyond searching for language policies or strategies connected to English medium education in written form meant, for the purposes of this study, investigating those language management processes implemented by administrators as evidence of institutional language policy, together with the actual language practices displayed by lecturers teaching through English as a second language in the EMI classroom. In attempting to show connections between language 'policy' and practice around English in this trilingual HEI, I was guided by Spolsky's (2004: 218) advice that the researcher should 'look at what people do and not at what they think should be done or what someone else wants them to do'. I also took into account Bonacina-Pugh's (2012) reworking of Spolsky's ideas which led to her developing the concept of 'practiced language policy', conceptualising language policy as that found also within the language practices of a speech community which departed from earlier notions that language policy was only represented through texts. Bonacina-Pugh (2012: 217) states that language policy is 'interactionally constructed in practice' embedded in the actual language practices of teachers and students in a variety of teaching and learning contexts.

Block's (2020) revised positioning theory model provided an appropriate theoretical framework to examine how English was positioned by institutional stakeholders in this trilingual HE setting, a multi-layered approach that took into account rights and duties associated with using English as medium of instruction, illustrated at the institutional level via administrators' decision-making concerning language management and by individual lecturers in the EMI classroom. Block's model introduced a set of shaping factors (political, social and cultural) that could serve as a lens with which to explore evolving language strategies and/or policies connected to English, officially recognized as an official language of instruction. The concept of an institutional gaze, embedded in discourse, also offered a means to explore the extent to which L2 lecturers' teaching/language practices in the EMI classroom were shaped by language management processes enforced at faculty level. In undertaking this study, I was aware I needed to be mindful of my own positioning of EMI as a result of my professional experience and engage reflexively with existing assumptions that might influence aspects of the project design, data collection phase and the analysis and interpretation of the results. Another critical point was employing terminology linked to EMI that might be inappropriate for a trilingual HE setting and assessing to what extent current definitions of EMI might need revisiting when carrying out a study of English medium instruction in a fully trilingual university. I also recognised that it was important to reflect on my broader professional experience as an EMI trainer across a range of HE contexts, in Italy and the UK, and how this might also have influenced the project's objectives and overall design.

The study's two research questions focused on how key stakeholders (lecturers and administrators) positioned English through classroom practice or as part of institutional language management strategies and lecturers' use of linguistic and pedagogical strategies when communicating disciplinary content to L2 students in authentic EMI learning contexts. The purpose of the research design was to employ a methodological approach drawing on different methods that captured naturally occurring data (classroom observations) and researcher provoked data (semi-structured interviews; stimulated recall interviews). Using extracts from video recordings of classroom observations was chosen to allow the participating lecturers to reflect on their teaching practice looking at specific aspects of the observed lesson. Although studies report that reflection is a 'regular daily activity' for ELT professionals (Eröz-Tuğa, 2013: 176), according to Farrell (2020: 285), reflective practice has been relatively underused as a tool for EMI teacher professional

development nor has it been embraced by EMI policy makers. Reflective practice it is suggested can provide a way into the less accessible aspects of teacher's work, namely, their philosophy, principles and theories. The intention behind the decision to incorporate stimulated recall as a data collection method was to provide participating lecturers' an opportunity to reflect on their individual EMI teaching practice, particularly language use and pedagogical approach, the assumption being that having already participated in the evaluation process that formed part of the ATE training course, they understood what being a reflective practitioner entailed and had some degree of critical awareness about their own teaching. I also wanted to understand further if Gün's (2011:127) claim that 'all teachers, in one way or another, 'look back' at their classes and from their reflections, draw implications for their classroom teaching', resonated with lecturers teaching their disciplinary subject through a second language, in this case, English. The use of stimulated recall in practitioner research can be justified as a valid data collection method as it allows participants' to comment on their individual EMI teaching performance. Additionally, this study utilised an adapted version of a professional development tool (LOCIT) used in CLIL contexts (Coyle 2005) designed to support teachers in learning how to identify both positive and negatives aspects of their classroom teaching. For professional purposes, I was seeking to determine how the study's informants' viewed the notion of themselves as 'reflective practitioners' and to what extent they could engage in critical reflection on their own EMI teaching performance.

After the data collection phase was completed I experienced problems organising the data in a way that allowed for interpretation and analysis. Applying the Positioning Theory model, specifically Block's (2020) adapted framework which had been used to underpin research studies in other European HEI contexts (See Moncada-Comas and Block, 2019; Block and Moncada-Comas, 2019) was extremely useful as its multi-layered approach provided a broad perspective that took into account those social, political, economic and cultural factors, defined as 'shaping structures', which could potentially affect institutional decision-making around language use and language policy related to the use of English medium of instruction. Central to this model was the individual practitioner's own self-positioning and ways they negotiated rights and duties proscribed at institutional level connected to their own professional role. An additional feature was the incorporation of an institutional 'gaze' , embodied in recognised discourses, such as those pertaining to the use of English as medium of instruction. The theoretical model was also self-applied for

the purpose of interrogating my own position as researcher/practitioner in carrying out this research project and ensuring the dual roles of researcher/teaching-trainer were evenly balanced to reduce the level of subjectivity. Being reflexive with regard to my own positioning as an EMI trainer meant reflecting on my actions and values when producing data and writing up the thesis, ensuring that my own beliefs were subject to interrogation in the same way as that of the participants (Seale 1998).

6.2 Limitations

There were evident shortcomings in the research design. The project's scale resulted in a limited number of participants (5), even if the involvement of only a few people is cited as a feature of practitioner research (Drake and Heath, 2011). Wider participation would have provided a broader perspective on how EMI was constructed in this institutional context and the inclusion of faculty members with no previous experience of the ATE course could have provided a 'fresh' perspective on the challenges faced by academics teaching their disciplinary subject through English as an L2.

Extending participation would also have created more distance between the researcher and participants, thus giving further validation to the results. However, in spite of the small number of participants (3 lecturers; 2 administrators), there was reasonably broad representation from three faculties (Education; Economics; Computer Science); the participating lecturers all had different L1s (Italian; German; Russian) and the two administrators occupied both senior and mid-level positions across two different faculties. Practitioner enquiry on this limited scale may not necessarily compromise the researcher's ability to critically engage with information if a level of reflexivity is built in as part of the overall research design (Drake and Heath, 2011). Field notes were taken during the observations even if this was not carried out in any systematic way. Such notations recorded feelings and comments about what I was observing and were informed by my holding a dual role of researcher/practitioner, two identities that were inseparable, as 'each affects the other' (Drake and Heath, 2011: 60).

Another potentially weak aspect of the research design was in assuming that by using video recordings as a data collection method this would stimulate participating lecturers to

critically reflect on their teaching performance. This was based on an assumption that having experienced the ATE evaluation method the lecturers were already familiar with self-evaluation of their own teaching practice and would be able to explain clearly the rationale behind their linguistic and pedagogical choices displayed in the video extracts showing episodes taken from the classroom observation. In reality, two of the participants (Kurt and Diego) clearly positioned me into a 'trainer' rather than researcher role, the expectation being that I would give feedback on their teaching performance, thus mirroring the role I had inhabited during the ATE training course.

In hindsight, the project design needed to be considerably more transparent providing greater detail on the purpose and process involved in carrying out the stimulated recall interviews. Although the intention was to combine subjective and objective methods as part of the data collection process, e.g. video recordings of 'naturally occurring data' (observations) and 'researcher provoked data' (interviews) (Arber, 2006), taking sole responsibility for selecting the video extracts used as prompts during the stimulated recall interviews I introduced a greater degree of subjectivity by inadvertently positioning the participants back into a 'trainee' role. In order to have achieved a higher degree of reflexivity as part of the data collection phase, I could have adopted a more systematic approach e.g. kept a journal, recording comments immediately after each observation or interview, and made more effort to involve lecturers in the selection of observation extracts by organising an initial interview prior to the stimulated recall interviews taking place.

6.3 Research Methods

Arber (2006: 5) has argued for a combined approach in practitioner enquiry that balances closeness and distance through incorporating research methods designed to collect 'naturally occurring data' that exists independently of the researcher's intervention together with 'researcher provoked' data', e.g. interview data. In this study interviews ('researcher provoked data') were used as the primary data collection method, along with classroom observations ('naturally occurring data') using video recordings of authentic EMI learning contexts. Semi-structured interviews conducted with administrators provided insight into the positioning of English in terms of institutional language strategies and management processes embedded at faculty level and it could be argued were an appropriate research

method to address RQ1. In contrast, drawing on 'naturally occurring data' in the form of video extracts from observations later used as prompts for reflection on individual lecturer's teaching practice in the stimulated recall interviews was only partially successful in answering RQ1 and RQ2. This was due to several weaknesses in the research design: firstly, in attempting to apply a uniform approach by structuring the stimulated recall interviews around a set of categories used in the ATE course (Interaction, Language, Presentation, Pronunciation), this resulted in my self-positioning in the role of 'trainer', and thus, positioning participants as 'trainees'; secondly, there was an assumption that the lecturers' would be familiar with the notion of 'reflective practitioner' and the use of video recordings as a tool for teachers' professional development; thirdly, I failed to note research which indicated using video recordings when reviewing individual teaching practice could induce anxiety due to the potential evaluation aspect of this professional development method (Eröz-Tuğa, 2013: 177).

While recent research indicates that developing skills to become a reflective practitioner are being incorporated into professional support programmes for EMI teachers (Dafouz, 2018) the literature suggests that using video recordings to stimulate reflectiveness on one's teaching practice is not a common practice. The choice to use an adapted version of Coyle's (2005) LOCIT tool was based on an expectation that previous participants of the ATE course would be open to reflecting on aspects of their teaching practice. In fact, this modified version appeared in some cases to restrict the level of participant input as it was interpreted as leading to a negative evaluation of the individual's EMI teaching performance. Involving participants in the selection of extracts to be used as prompts for reflection during the stimulated recall interviews may have helped to overcome the participants' reluctance to engage in this process.

6.4 Contribution to Knowledge

Drake and Heath (2011:2) suggest that new knowledge emerging from insider research studies 'comes not from a single research domain but from combining understandings from professional practice, higher education practice and the researcher's individual reflexive project'. By occupying a 'partial insider' role in this research setting through my experience as an EMI trainer, I gained privileged access to key stakeholders, lecturers and administrators, and authentic EMI learning contexts which helped in developing a fuller

understanding of the connection between language policy and teaching practice in this trilingual HE teaching and learning environment. The project's novelty can be attributed to several factors: firstly, the choice of the research site: a trilingual university with English designated as one of its official languages of instruction, unique in respect of the wider Italian higher educational landscape; secondly, the decision to include language administrators in the study, members of a group of key stakeholders directly involved in the process of implementing EMI, who have, to date, been largely 'absent' from the literature (Lauridsen and Lillemose 2015); and finally, using stimulated recall in the form of video recordings as a data collection method to investigate EMI teaching practice, a research method that studies indicate is, as yet, under-utilised in the field of EMI research (Farrell, 2020).

The findings revealed new insights into UNIBZ's language strategies and how English was positioned by lecturers and administrators and how rights and duties connected to faculty members teaching through English as an L2 were taken up or resisted. The study revealed instances where there was alignment in administrators' and lecturers' understanding of how English medium instruction was operationalised, embedded in the language management processes and teaching practices in the Faculty of Economics, UNIBZ's largest faculty. However, the results also showed a 'gap' between language policy and classroom practice around the use of English medium instruction where lecturers displayed resistance against the need to adapt their EMI classroom practice in order to align with institutional and student expectations around the lecturer's language proficiency in L2 teaching and learning contexts.

Drake and Heath (2011) contend that insider researchers engage with new knowledge at all stages of their respective research projects, starting from the conception stage, research methods, data collection and final writing up. Reflecting on each of these dimensions throughout the duration of the project is 'unique to each researcher and their research' (ibid p2). On reflection, my own understanding of EMI shifted as I encountered differing perspectives on what constituted English medium in this trilingual HE setting. Re-interpreting what constituted EMI language 'policy' in the absence of any formal written documentation demanded a broader perspective to encompass language management processes that revealed institutional expectations around lecturers' language use in L2

learning contexts. Existing models of EMI based on my own professional experience delivering the British Council's Academic Teaching Excellence (ATE) course were constantly challenged as I recognised that the needs of students' learning through English in a trilingual tertiary context may not necessarily be met through creating an active learning environment when the lecturer's proficiency level is inadequate for communicating disciplinary content effectively to heterogenous groups of L2 learners. Drawing on Block's (2020) positioning theory model served to reinforce the idea that simplified notions of EMI could not be easily applied to an HEI where English held the status of an official language of instruction but where lecturers and administrators continued to face challenges aligning language policy and practice in responding to the needs of students learning through English as an L2.

Dissemination of the study's initial findings has been shared with the EMI research community, nationally and internationally, through participation in a series of networking events: 1) poster presentation (TAEC Conference, Denmark 2019); 2) contributing a chapter to a publication on EMI and Beyond (University of Bolzano Press 2021); 3) online seminar presentation delivered to members of the Italian branch of ICLHE (ICLHE Italy 2021).

6.5 Balancing Researcher-Practitioner Roles

A defining feature of the study was the difficulty I faced balancing the dual roles of researcher / teacher educator. As a practitioner doctoral student I was having to negotiate interaction in a familiar setting as a result of my previous professional experience as an EMI trainer and in parallel attempting to establish my credentials as a researcher adopting the perspective of a 'partial insider'(Drake and Heath, 2011:61). Although my partial insider status afforded me privileged access to different groups of stakeholders (lecturers and administrators), one constant throughout the project's duration was trying to maintain sufficient distance, balancing the need to get close to the action but also remaining detached in order to capture 'how everyday realities are experienced' (Arber, 2005: 4) when implementing EMI in a trilingual university.

Tensions associated with managing the dual roles of practitioner and researcher can emerge when ‘the insider and outsider identities collide’ (Arber, 2005:2). It has been argued that one of the most emotionally tiring aspects of research is finding a balance between the different roles one occupies and has to play ‘being constantly alert to how one is being positioned by the practitioners in the field as well as positioning oneself to get the best out of the situation’ (Arber, 2006: 7). The need to ‘accommodate twin positions’, balancing the roles of practitioner and researcher requires a boundary between closeness and distance in undertaking observer and participant roles in ethnographic research (Drake and Heath, 2011: 32). In my case the difficulty of establishing a boundary was exacerbated by the fact the project involved researching subjects who were ex-participants on the ATE training courses where I acted as the teacher-trainer. My lack of experience as a researcher likely contributed to the difficulties I encountered trying to maintain a clear separation between these two roles at different stages of the project (e.g. data collection, analysing the data).

The data clearly showed instances of frame-breaking, instances where either the interviewer or interviewee breaks frame in order to adjust the way in which a frame has been understood up to that point, to change the line of questioning or even avoid a difficult topic (Gray and Morton, 2018). At moments my comments could have (un)consciously positioned the EMI lecturers’ as ‘trainees’, as I self-positioned back into the role of ‘trainer’, to some degree mirroring the ATE training experience.

It was notable that similar re-positioning did not occur during the interviews with the two administrators. Instead, I was positioned by the participants as an ‘insider’, someone whose professional background brought with it a level of expertise and understanding of the institutional and individual challenges faced when implementing English medium instruction. During the stimulated recall interviews, at times I experienced feelings of ‘discomfort’ trying to manage instances ‘when expectations about identity are not shared at any given moment’(Arber, 2006:11). This ‘discomfort’ was most pronounced during the interview with Diego, which resulted from my focusing on his grammatical inaccuracy which was interpreted as a negative evaluation of his EMI teaching performance. I failed to be sufficiently reflective in managing this interactive event or realise that my comments might threaten the participant’s professional identity. This exposed a weakness in the research design and the limitations around using video recordings without either preparing participants prior to using this method of data collection or involving them in the process of selecting the video extracts under review.

Having a shared professional history with the research participants may lead to one's role being 'defined and re-defined by myself and by others'(Arber, 2006:11). While I was aware of the challenges in separating the dual roles of researcher and practitioner, I made an assumption that the participants' would have no difficulty re-positioning me into the researcher role, rather than that of teacher-trainer. Although I only occupied the role of 'partial insider' in this site of research, the question of whether 'insiders' can achieve any meaningful degree of critical distance from their workplace or their colleagues' (Drake & Heath, 2011: 19) needs to inform each stage of practitioner enquiry, especially one in which the subjects of the study may have a direct connection to the researcher. The credibility of one's research may not only depend on the degree of reflexivity about one's theoretical and methodological assumptions and how these are experienced in field experiences (Arber, 2006:14) but also the level of transparency the researcher is able to present to readers concerning decisions taken regarding methodology, research methods and interpretation of the findings. Accepting the 'messiness' that carrying out educational research involves when investigating 'real people living real lives' (McKinley, 2019: 880) demands that researchers should be willing to be a transparent as possible when reporting the research processes used to reflect the realities of the contexts they are examining. Assuming a degree of reflexivity requires 'sustained ongoing thinking about research' (McKinley, 2019: 881) acknowledging instances of discomfort experienced by the researcher during the different stages of the research process, when accessing data, interacting with participants, or making methodological decisions.

Adopting a reflexive approach requires acknowledging the impact the researcher has on those researched, interrogating their own beliefs and feelings in the same way they interrogate others engaged in the study building in a degree of transparency about the 'goings on' in the field (Arber, 2005: 13). Croussouard and Pryor (2008) contend that as part of the process of undertaking doctoral study this necessarily involves a change of identity as one engages in the process of becoming a researcher . While it may be that one's professional identity overtakes that of their researcher identity at key moments during the research study, this doesn't necessarily affect the quality of the data but perhaps reveals a key feature of educational research when the researcher appears more invested in an established identity (practitioner) and much less so in their other identity (researcher).). At different stages of the research process, one's identity will be 'defined and re-defined' by the researcher and by others, indicating that identity is not fixed, but is

instead malleable (Arber, 2005:11). The consequence is that in shifting identities and/or roles, whether consciously or unconsciously, this can create feelings of discomfort for the researcher ‘when expectations about identity are not shared at any given moment’ (Arber 2006: 11) leading to misalignment between the researcher’s expectations and those held by members of the host community concerning the researcher’s role.

6.6 Way Forward

Despite the limited scale of this research project and the lack of generalizability to other higher educational settings, the findings revealed that how English is positioned by key stakeholders - lecturers and administrators - is critical in aligning institutional language policy and classroom practice when implementing English medium education in the multilingual university.

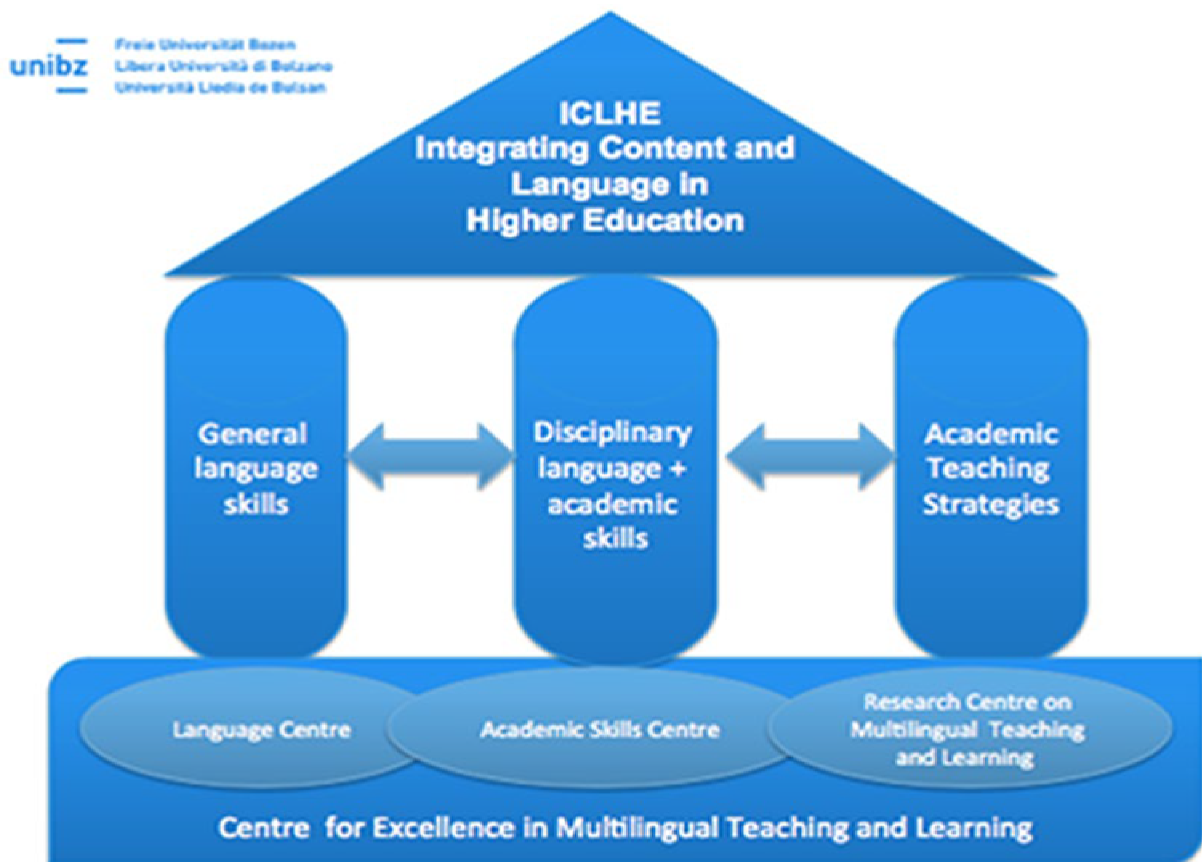
The findings also reinforced previous research (Dafouz, 2018) highlighting the potential of video recordings as a professional development tool used to support lecturers teaching disciplinary content through English as a second language to become reflective practitioners. Future research projects investigating EMI practice might benefit from adopting a more participatory approach inviting participants to engage with researchers in the process of selecting video extracts to use as prompts during interaction in the post-observation interviews. Block’s (2020) version of positioning theory provides researchers with a multi-layered model that can be applied to different EMI educational contexts when investigating language management practices and language policy at micro, meso and macro levels with the potential to gain a deeper understanding of how different stakeholders position themselves towards English in multilingual higher educational settings. Aspects of this model could also be used to shape the design of professional development programmes for EMI practitioners by incorporating the idea of ‘rights and duties’ associated with offering degree programmes where disciplinary content is taught through English as a second language. Such an innovation might help address the ‘gap’ that the study revealed between institutional expectations around L2 practitioners’ use of language and teaching performance in EMI learning contexts, thereby reinforcing the shared responsibility that needs to exist between administrators and lecturers when transforming language policy into classroom practice.

APPENDIX 1: Academic Teaching Excellence (ATE) Template

INTERACTION Overall level of interactivity Question types (rhetorical, open, closed and frequency) Invites questions from participants and gives sufficient time for formulation Checks comprehension on a regular basis	Comments
LANGUAGE (Lexis and Grammar) Uses topic-specific vocabulary (technical language) Assumes background knowledge of topic Lexical choice Grammatical choice Emphasises important points via repetition or signposting	Comments
PRESENTATION SKILLS Beginnings, endings and transition points Body language and gestures Uses humour/jokes/anecdotes Uses appropriate visual aids Rate of speech Pauses	Comments
PRONUNCIATION Words – sound and stress articulation Sentence stress Chunking Tone	Comments

(© British Council 2015)

APPENDIX 2: Language Strategy: Free University of Bozen-Bolzano



Source: (Zanin 2018)

APPENDIX 3: Transcription Conventions

/	indicates the minimal but clear pause between phrases/sentences in normally paced speech
?	indicates rising intonation (including questions)

(Adapted from Block, Gray and Holborrow 2012)

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