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Exploring ‘English’ in an EMI Nursing Program: Native English Varieties, ELF, and Translingual Practices

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Abstract

English Medium Instruction (EMI) has been implemented globally as a strategy for the internationalization of Higher Education Institutions to promote global competence and mobility. However, the concept of ‘English’ within the EMI context has been scrutinized, as studies reveal that the definition of ‘English’ in EMI is often contextual. This shift has brought English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) into focus. Given the limited research in Indonesia exploring EMI through the perspectives of ELF and translingual practices, this study examines these concepts within the context of the nursing EMI program. The study draws on a rich dataset, using in-depth interviews with international nursing students to analyze the conceptualization of English, ELF, and translingual practices. Findings reveal a disparity between students’ preconceived notions and actual practices. Students commonly perceive ‘English’ in EMI as a native variety shaped by exposure to popular culture such as movies, songs, and social media. However, ELF practices emerge as essential strategies for achieving effective communication, emphasizing adaptability and mutual understanding. Translingual practices manifest in the form of ‘gado-gado’ English—a blend of languages—which is seen as a creative and dynamic linguistic choice but also criticized as being less proficient or standardized. This study highlights the complexities of EMI implementation and advocates for a dynamic and flexible approach to navigating multilingual classroom contexts.

Keywords: English as a Lingua Franca, English Medium Instruction, nursing, translingual practices.

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1. INTRODUCTION

English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) has been globally recognized as a strategy to internationalize higher education, foster global competence, and facilitate knowledge and skills mobilization in university settings (Doiz & Lasagabaster, 2023; Hillman et al., 2023; Lasagabaster, 2022; Macaro et al., 2018; Sahan et al., 2021). Over the last decade, thousands of EMI programs have proliferated, often interpreted as endorsing an English-only policy (Sahan et al., 2021). A prevailing assumption is that “English” in EMI represents a monolithic entity with fixed norms, favoring anglophone English and elevating native English varieties. This issue has sparked debates about which English should be employed in EMI programs.

Many also believe that EMI inherently improves English proficiency by immersing students in an English-speaking environment. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in expanding circles have adopted EMI with the assumption that English proficiency will develop organically as a ‘by-product’ of EMI. However, EMI researchers argue that such assumptions lack sufficient evidence. Galloway and Rose (2021) caution that EMI curricula do not inherently include English language development as an objective. EMI, they assert, is not a language learning methodology. Sahan and Rose (2021) reinforce this, stating that the assumption that English proficiency will develop alongside subject matter learning in EMI remains unsubstantiated.

To address the challenges of proficiency and communication in EMI programs, a growing body of research advocates viewing ‘English’ in EMI not solely as native varieties but as English as Lingua Franca (ELF). ELF is integral to EMI practices, particularly in multilingual contexts. Dafouz and Smit (2016) emphasize that the discourse in multilingual universities is central to reconceptualizing ‘English’ in the EMI program. Consequently, ‘English’ in multilingual EMI settings diverges significantly from its usage in Anglophone countries (Han, 2023). Rather than adhering to rigid norms, ‘English’ serves as a medium for delivering academic content through codeswitching, translingual practices, and ELF strategies to negotiate meaning. These practices facilitate dynamic communication and highlight the critical role of “English” as an academic lingua franca in a multilingual context outside the anglophone world (Kuteeva, 2020).

In Indonesia, EMI programs are expanding rapidly across public and private universities. Government accreditation standards prioritize the number of international programs and students, pressuring universities to introduce EMI. The Indonesian government, coining Macaro’s (2015) metaphor of bullet train, states, “The train has arrived in Indonesia slightly later than in many of its Asian neighbors, ... but now that it is here, it needs to be recognized, understood, and managed” (Lamb et al., 2021, p. 14). In this process, EMI has been introduced massively to HEIs and has been measured as part of the university performance index. This issue has led universities to brace themselves and begin opening international programs by deliberately changing the language instruction from Bahasa Indonesia to English, often with no clear guidance on how this transition should be managed.

To date, despite the rapid expansion of the EMI programs, neither an educational policy nor a manual has been issued by the relevant governmental bodies to guide the implementation of EMI. Moreover, there has been no official determination of the extent to which EMI can catalyze internationalization. On the contrary, there is a widespread belief that EMI will miraculously improve students’ language proficiency (Sah, 2023). Additionally, unrealistic expectations demand native-speakers-level English proficiency as the outcome of EMI, which often leads to rejection of any English production in the classroom that falls short of this standard. As a result, EMI classes frequently end up in silence, as students fear making mistakes when speaking English.

It is crucial to educate people that internationalization is not synonymous with ‘Englishization.’ English in the classroom as a by-product of communication is also valid English, as emphasized by researchers in EFL and translingual practices. Therefore, significant opportunities exist for research into English production in EMI classes to contribute to the improvement of EMI practices in Indonesia.

ELF and translingual practice in EMI have been researched in various international contexts (Dippold et al., 2019; Kuteeva, 2018; Murata, 2019). However, a noticeable gap exists

in Indonesia. In this country, ELF and translingual practices are not widely recognized, and native-speaker English norms are often preferred, affecting interactions, relationships, and pedagogical practices. [Murata and Iino \(2017\)](#) suggest that more research in an academic context should focus on exploring the use of ELF and translingual communication theoretically and pedagogically. Against this background, this research aims to contribute insight into ELF and translingual practices in EMI from the Indonesian perspective.

This study explores Indonesian undergraduate nursing students' conceptualization of English and ELF practices in their EMI program. The increasing popularity of EMI programs in nursing education has been reported in countries where English is spoken as a foreign language ([Suliman & Tadros, 2010](#); [Wilang & Nupong, 2022](#)), providing the impetus for this research. The EMI program examined in this study has been operational for three years, with the participants being first-year students. These students were selected for the international class based on their perceived English proficiency, which also served as a motivating factor for this research. This study seeks to contribute to understanding the dynamic nature of 'English' in the EMI program and to provide insights into adapting flexible pedagogical approaches aligned with the multifaced linguistic realities in Indonesia.

The research, designed as a qualitative study, gathered extensive data through diary writing and semi-structured interviews with undergraduate nursing students. The guiding research questions are as follows:

1. What are the students' conceptualizations of English in their current undergraduate EMI nursing program?
2. To what extent do students demonstrate ELF practices in the language used in their current EMI in the undergraduate nursing program?
3. To what extent do students demonstrate translingual practices in the language used in their current EMI in the undergraduate nursing program?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 English-Medium Instruction (EMI)

English-medium instruction (EMI) is defined as teaching academic content in English in contexts where English is not the first language (L1) spoken by a majority of the population ([Dearden, 2014](#); [Macaro, 2019](#)). EMI has been introduced as a means of internationalization, where universities offer courses in English. The teaching and learning process of academic subjects is conducted in English. The underlying agenda behind the introduction of EMI includes attracting international students, reducing barriers to student and staff mobility, preparing for the international job market, and improving universities' global rankings ([Lin et al., 2023](#)).

The phenomenon of EMI has transformed English from being merely a language learned to becoming the medium for teaching academic disciplines, a process referred to as the 'Englishization' of curriculum, which is viewed as a hallmark of internationalization in higher education ([Galloway & McKinley, 2022](#)). Unlike traditional language-learning approaches, EMI does not focus on English language acquisition as a primary objective. [Thompson and McKinley \(2018\)](#) examine the distinction between language learning and EMI, clarifying how EMI integrates content delivery without emphasizing language instruction. Therefore, EMI is not designed for language learning, and the assumption that English proficiency will naturally improve alongside subject matter instruction is not entirely justified ([Sahan and Rose, 2021](#)).

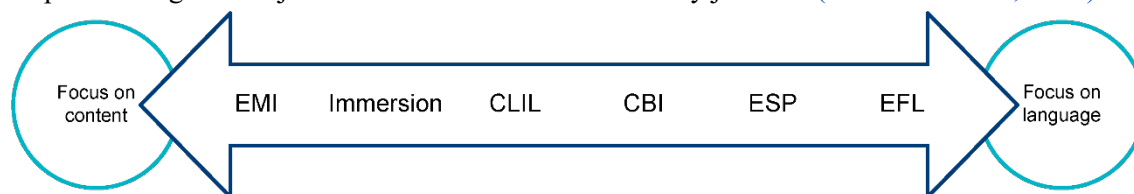


Figure 1. Continuum of EMI in practice (Adapted from [Thompson and McKinley, 2018](#)).

English proficiency challenges remain a major issue in EMI programs. Galloway and McKinley (2022) question the criteria for language proficiency required before entering an EMI program and the expectation of significant language improvement by its conclusion. EMI curricula often lack standardized language proficiency criteria. To address this, Macaro (2019) proposes four models of EMI language support: the preparatory year, ostrich, concurrent, and selection models.

2.1.1 Native 'English' norms

Many EMI programs enforce an English-only policy, arguing that extensive exposure to English is necessary for students to learn the language effectively. As a result, EMI often operates with varying levels of English proficiency while emphasizing "English-only" practices, sparking debates (Siegel, 2020). This policy reflects a monolingual approach that reinforces the concept of native-speakerism, favoring native speakers as teachers and promoting neoliberalism (Han, 2023).

Murata and Lino (2017) report that EMI lecturers and students often aspire to achieve native-like English proficiency, viewing it as desirable. Replicating native English norms and emulating education systems in anglophone countries are usually benchmarks for successful EMI programs. Native English is perceived as a model, a goal, and a source of inspiration. However, Han (2023) argues that teachers in multilingual EMI settings should prioritize content delivery over achieving perfect native-like English, which is often unrealistic.

Despite these concerns, studies report a persistent desire for native English in EMI. For instance, German students in EMI programs prefer native English-speaking teachers, perceiving them as more competent in the instructional language (Gundermann, 2014). Swedish students react negatively to non-native accents, which they associate with lower teaching proficiency (Kuteeva, 2020). Similarly, Chinese students assume that native English-speaking teachers adopt more interactive teaching approaches (Qiu & Fang, 2022).

EMI is deeply rooted in the ideology of standard English and aims to promote internationalization by embracing linguistic heterogeneity. However, an exclusive focus on native-English norms risks fostering homogeneity. To address this, Jinghui (2023) advocates for the re-adjustment and reconceptualization of language policies in EMI practices to create more inclusive and effective curricula. Dafouz and Smit (2016) propose the concept of English-medium education in Multilingual University Settings (EMEMUS) to incorporate multilingual context into EMI practices.

2.1.2 English as Lingua Franca

English as Lingua Franca (ELF) is defined as the use of English in communication by individuals from different lingua-cultural backgrounds, typically in the expanding circle of countries (Cogo, 2012; Cogo & Pitzl, 2016). In a globalized world, ELF facilitates fluid networks and movements where meanings are negotiated. Therefore, ELF is not an English variety; it does not aim to dismiss native English speakers but instead provides a platform for non-native speakers to communicate effectively in English. Sahan (2020) concludes that ELF serves as a communicative strategy between teachers and students from diverse linguistic backgrounds in an EMI setting.

Several studies have offered valuable insights into using ELF in EMI practices where neither teachers nor students are native speakers. Harada and Moriya (2020), using an applied thematic analysis design, find that instructors' speech rate and organization significantly contribute to linguistic understanding and content comprehension within the classroom context. Additionally, the favor for local teachers has increased as ELF promotes meaningful communication across various proficiency levels in EMI programs. Xu and Xiao (2023) find that students perceive local teachers as more helpful for students with lower listening and language proficiencies. Evans and Morrison (2011) report that students in Hong Kong favor local teachers because they speak with an understandable local accent, unlike native-speaker teachers who often

use complex English and speak at a faster pace. Students' familiarity with the local accent and the teachers' sensitivity to their needs and difficulties enhance understanding. Similarly, [Karakaş \(2017\)](#) demonstrates that ELF facilitates content comprehension and communication between students and lectures.

2.1.3 *Translingual Practices*

[Garcia and Wei \(2014\)](#) define translingual practice as involving two or more languages, codes, or varieties to achieve communication purposes. Although translingual practices and ELF share similarities in their use within multilingual contexts, they are based on different basic concepts ([Canagarajah, 2015](#)). Translingual practices assume that successful communication transcends English uniformity and static monolingual conceptualization. [Macaro \(2019\)](#) states that translingual practice or code-switching occurs because the speakers find it easier to switch between languages to communicate within linguistic and cultural contexts rather than relying on a single language. Code-switching is applicable to bi- and multilingual students and teachers.

[Kuteeva \(2020\)](#) conducted a study involving 80 local and international students at the end of their first year in an EMI program, where translingual practices frequently occurred between English and Swedish. Students and teachers primarily engaged in translanguaging when dealing with specific terminology. The findings reveal contrasting attitudes toward translingual practices among students. While some students found it helpful, international students expressed feelings of inferiority to 'Swenglish' and felt compelled to learn Swedish to integrate into the elite English-Swedish translingual community.

[Sahan \(2020\)](#) conducted research on ELF interactions in English-medium engineering classrooms by recording real-life classroom interactions. The study suggests that teachers and students should prioritize communication goals and content learning over strict adherence to native English norms. Code-switching, as demonstrated in the study, highlights how users draw upon their bilingual and plurilingual resources—languages they speak besides English—to establish effective communication rather than focusing solely on linguistic correctness.

2.2 **EMI in Indonesia**

EMI in Indonesia was introduced later than in other Asian countries, and thus Indonesia is still in its beginning phase and trying to grapple with the concept, and its implementation can fit the multilayered Indonesia context ([Lamb et al., 2021](#)). The government has instructed higher education institutions (HEIs) to accelerate internalization, identifying EMI as one of the means to gain international recognition by promoting the mobility of international students, staff, and research. However, this study reports that EMI has long been integrated into the education system without proper coordination, planning, or monitoring. Furthermore, when the government began encouraging HEIs to adopt EMI, it failed to provide an official or legal policy regarding the position.

[Bolton et al. \(2023\)](#) conducted a study at Binus University involving 458 undergraduate students who responded to a questionnaire, along with 15 students who were interviewed. The findings reveal that international programs have been adopted at the university for some time. Yet, the term 'EMI' was not familiar to students and teachers due to its infrequent use. The students report low difficulty in learning through an EMI system, as many had attended private schools where English and Chinese were the mediums of instruction. Since middle- and upper-class students primarily attend the university, these findings cannot be generalized to the broader struggles associated with EMI. Nevertheless, students are reported to engage in significant codeswitching and codemixing in their language use, inside and outside the classroom.

[Simbolon \(2018\)](#) conducted a study on the stakeholders in Indonesian HEIs where an EMI program was discontinued after four years. The finding highlighted a gap between policymakers' perspectives and institutional policies regarding English proficiency. The study called for specific language proficiency regulations to guide universities' EMI programs. Overall, language proficiency issues remain a significant challenge for EMI in Indonesia, as reported in previous

studies (Al Hakim, 2021; Coleman et al., 2023; Puspitasari & Ishak, 2023; Santoso & Rindu Kinasih, 2022; Simbolon, 2021).

3. METHODS

The study participants consisted of 50 first-year EMI program students, purposively selected as a sample (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The study did not disclose the cohort of the students and used pseudonyms to maintain anonymity. English proficiency and gender were excluded as factors in the data analysis.

This study employed two data collection techniques: diary writing and semi-structured interviews. At the beginning of the term, students were advised to voluntarily write anonymous diary reflections in English about their experiences in the EMI program. The diary writing served as context familiarization and data triangulation for the subsequent interview data. This approach does not only capture the experiences of the participants, but also making sense of these experiences during the process of the EMI thus provide the engagement with the constructed study (Olorunfemi, 2024). At the end of the term, the diaries were collected. The researchers reviewed the diaries to familiarize themselves with the context and construct semi-structured interview questions. Excerpts from the diary reflections were integrated into the analysis of the interview data to enhance validity by converging information from different sources.

Ten participants volunteered for interviews to discuss their diary reflections, with written informed consent obtained beforehand. The participants were invited by providing an online form to complete; those who expressed interest filled out the form and were then scheduled for a one-on-one interview session. The interviews explored participants' conceptualization of English in their program and the practices observed in their international program's classroom settings.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia, i.e., participants' L1, to create a comfortable environment and alleviate potential pressure, as the researcher who interviewed them was also their English teacher. The teacher-researcher, being a non-native English speaker, emphasized a relaxed and conversational tone during the interviews. The sessions were conducted during the term break after academic scores were published, minimizing any potential power dynamics, as there were no further English courses in the upcoming term. The interviews lasted between 15 and 30 minutes, were audio recorded, and manually transcribed.

The data analysis focused on identifying the participants' conceptualization of English and the emergence of ELF communicative strategies and translingual practices, such as code-mixing and bilingual practices. The diary entries and interview transcripts were thematically analyzed to extract meaningful patterns. The researchers familiarized themselves with the data by rereading it thoroughly. Codes were then generated to identify patterns representing the data's meaning. Similar codes were collated to form themes, and excerpts were drawn to support and finalize these themes after careful review and revision. The findings included excerpts from the diary entries and interviews to ensure the result's validity and credibility.

All interview transcriptions were shared with participants to confirm their accuracy and ensure the reliability of the data analysis. Additionally, a research partner experienced in qualitative analysis reviewed the methodology and analysis during the study's initial and final stages. This procedure upheld the study's objectivity through investigator triangulation to produce reliable and credible results (Bans-Akutey & Tiimub, 2021).

4. RESULTS

4.1 'English' Conceptualization in EMI

The data on the conceptualization of 'E' was recorded numerically to illustrate the majority of student's preferences for English in the EMI context. The results are displayed in Table 1. It presents the primary distribution of students' 'E', as conceptualized from the collected data.

Table 1. The primary distribution of students' 'E'.

'E' concept	Frequency (N=50)	Percentage (100%)
Native Speaker English Varieties (American English)	43	86%
Native Speaker English Varieties (British English)	3	6%
Others (Indonesian English, local dialect (Javanese))	4	8%

The analysis revealed a strong emphasis on native-speaker English varieties (American and British), which students associated with 'proper' or 'good' English. Overall, most participants perceived American English as the most acceptable and prestigious variety in their EMI program. This preference is unsurprising, as Indonesian schools have long adopted curricula from the United States, and American popular culture has significantly influenced the media.

Before enrolling in the EMI program, students generally assumed that the English taught in school was American English. They often compared this assumption to experiences with teachers who spoke British English, which sometimes surprised them. One participant reflected in their diary that they were pretty confused because their lecturer had used a British accent while they were speaking primarily with an American accent. When asked to elaborate on what English is familiar to them, one participant went on to explain:

- (1) "I used American [English] all the time when I studied English based on my experience of learning it in high school because it is the most basic English to learn, right?"

Interestingly, participants often connected American English to their early education, claiming it was the language they encountered throughout the stages of education (kindergarten, primary, and secondary). Diary entries also emphasized that "American English is familiar to their ears", making it more comfortable to listen to and use. Participants noted that exposure to American English through media, movies, and games reinforced this preference. One participant explained:

- (2) "From my own experience, American English was used in daily teaching and conversation. I think it's because we accustomed to watching and listening to American TV shows, music, et cetera. Even the movies we watched when we were kids were American movies. For example, we love to watch 'Home Alone', 'Baby's Day Out', princess movies, Disney cartoons, or other movies every holiday season".

Conversely, participants often perceived British English as 'too thick' or 'too difficult', only becoming aware of it later in life. Many diary entries highlighted the struggles of British English speakers. However, a small percentage of participants viewed British English positively, describing it as 'very cool' and 'fascinating.' One participant expressed their admiration for British English:

- (3) "I often tried to speak British English. I love British English because when I was a kid, I watched 'Harry Potter' many, many times, even though I forgot what the whole story was all about. Since then, I have loved the British accent or British English; it sounds so satisfying, mature, and classy at the same time. I think it is such a cool accent for me to use daily".

Interestingly, although British English is not explicitly taught in schools, one participant still perceived it as 'classy' English and sought to learn it through movies and YouTube. The participant's diary entry reflects this perception, detailing the challenges and triumphs of learning British English. Despite lacking support, she persevered and continued using it in her daily communication. She began noticing progress when her friends jokingly remarked that she now spoke with a slight British accent. Such comments show an ongoing assumption among students that having a particular native accent conveys a higher level of sophistication. Therefore, despite being rejected by their friends, some students remain committed to mastering such accents.

Surprisingly, four students held different opinions toward the conceptualization of English in their EMI program. These students claimed to have no specific preference for any English variety, offering a refreshing view of cultural influences in English communication. They

expressed enjoyment in listening to and using English in mixed norms, a practice they considered acceptable, especially among students with lower proficiency. For example, one participant described Indonesian English as 'fun', acknowledging that all lecturers and students in the EMI program are collectively learning English. The following excerpt illustrates this viewpoint:

- (4) "When explaining the material, ... they mixed English with Indonesian, so I like this class because it is fun and excites me. Then, it doesn't matter to me for any English because we are all in a better learning process here. All lectures and students can learn from each other, even though sometimes I find it funny to hear classmates speak English with their regional accents".

4.2 English as a Lingua Franca Demonstration

The data analysis unfolds the emergence of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) in shaping classroom interactions. Almost all students indicated that ELF serves as an effective medium of communication between lecturers and students. One participant described a positive experience of receiving support from a lecturer when trying to communicate in English. He appreciated the lecturer's assistance in bridging lexical gaps and fostering successful communication.

- (5) "When I asked questions at first, I hesitated and did not know what words to use, but the lecturer always helped and encouraged me to be more courageous and confident in delivering it even though I stuttered".

As teachers and students learn English together, other students also expressed appreciation for their lecturers. One participant described the sense of partnership in the learning process, noting that the lecturers actively engaged in communication and supported their understanding.

- (6) "We can understand the lecture more easily, see the access used, and understand what was said; we were invited to work together when we didn't know the vocabulary used. We ask and are more comfortable with local lecturers because they understand us better. ... many lecturers are available whenever we need them".

Another participant mentioned that, although lecturers sometimes struggled with complex vocabulary, they adapted by choosing simpler, more contextual words. This approach made the materials easier to understand. The participant also observed that lecturers used fillers to allow time for finding suitable vocabulary.

- (7) "Sometimes there are many words that they forget, so they use the word 'eeee' or 'emmm' to think for a while, but it doesn't matter. They can sort out familiar words in Indonesian, making it easier for many people to understand. They will also use words that are as simple as possible so that we can better understand English".

The lecturers' understanding of the students' struggle stems from their own experiences as learners of English. Professionals in academic settings employ communication strategies that aligned with ELF principles. For instance, when lecturers notice students struggling, they repeat and repeat explanations at a slower and more moderate pace.

- (8) "Lecturers will repeat the explanation when we don't understand, and they will teach it slower every time, as it helps us learn better and saves time. When Indonesian lecturers see their students confused, usually, the lecturer will repeat the explanation in a language that is easier for us to understand.

These findings illustrate how mutual understanding is fostered through the EMI program. Students considered themselves as having low English proficiency and valued the support provided by lecturers and fellow friends and lecturers in the classroom. The EMI context necessitated the use of communicative strategies, as reflected in diary entries. One student wrote:

- (9) "Local Indonesian teachers speak more slowly, so knowing what they are talking about is easier. They also know the barriers to using English, so they find ways to teach effectively, such as speaking more slowly, providing subtitles, etc. So, it helped me to understand English better".

The lecturers' support through the acceptance of English produced by the low-proficiency students lowered the expectations of a 'perfect' English class. Instead of pressuring or silencing students, lecturers adopted strategies such as speaking slowly and using subtitles in learning videos. As a result, students gained the confidence and support they needed. Although they struggled with linguistic challenges, they succeeded in promoting effective communication.

4.3 Translingual Practices Demonstration

Although multilingualism brings ELF research closer to translingual practices, these two approaches have distinct conceptual foundations (Canagarajah, 2015). Translingual practices involve combining two or more languages, varieties, and codes to achieve communication goals. In this study, translingual practices encompass student's and teachers' use of English, Indonesian, and some Javanese—a local language—in various ways.

All participants commented on the benefits of English and Indonesian. Although the initial pressure of joining the EMI program was challenging, the fact that the nursing lecturers are Indonesian and understand the students' struggles helped ease the burden. Students and teachers exchanged information effectively, even when certain English words proved challenging to articulate. This mutual understanding motivated students to learn, as they felt grateful for the lecturers' efforts. In a diary entry, one student expressed their appreciation for a mixture of languages, which encouraged them to study diligently.

- (10) "They (teachers) will mix the language so that we will understand it well. As students, we must be grateful for that and learn diligently".

During interviews, two participants used the term '*gado-gado*'—an Indonesian salad that mixes various vegetables with peanut sauce—as a metaphor to describe the blending of languages, codes, and varieties during classroom interactions.

- (11) "The lecturers told us not to worry about our ability to communicate in English because they were the same as us, who were still very new to using English as a language of communication. So, the lecturers said to us that we could use mixed language, aka *gado-gado*, to help us communicate more easily with them".
- (12) "We still can use '*gado gado*' language or mixed English and Indonesian. I guess if sometimes we didn't understand the material if the lecturer explained it in English, we could still ask them to explain it again but using mixed language so that we could understand them".

The nursing subject, which is full with unfamiliar medical terms, mainly benefits from translanguaging, as it allows explanations to be tailored to the student's cultural context. One student described how a Javanese lecturer creatively used a local Javanese expression to explain an idiom, making it easier for students to grasp.

- (13) "There may be mispronunciations due to regional accents or lack of knowledge, but the positive impact of having a local teacher lies in their understanding of the students' difficulties. Students from Java often add 'th' to every word. A local teacher is more likely to be aware of this. For example, when we have a local teacher, we can understand common local expressions more easily. For 'piece of cake', which means easy, the teacher might say '*gampil/culi*' [which means 'easy'] so students can better understand the meaning".

Excerpt (13) indicates that the Javanese teacher, knowing most of the students are Javanese, was translanguaging using Javanese words to ensure the students could understand the material. Before providing an explanation, the teacher started by saying, "It is *gampil*" or using the tip of the finger to indicate that something is not really hard by saying, "*cui!*". However, the excerpt above serves as two-edged swords of translingual practices in the EMI program. The first sentence of the student's statement, "There may be mispronunciations to regional accents or lack of knowledge", indicates the student is aware of the mispronunciation. While this may imply a sense of linguistic superiority, the student acknowledges the cultural understanding demonstrated by the teacher, which aids vocabulary comprehension.

On the other hand, one participant with relatively advanced English proficiency expressed frustration with translanguaging, perceiving it as an excuse for the lecturers' lack of proficiency. In a diary entry, this student wrote:

- (14) "Because it wasn't uncommon for some lecturers to stop using English in the middle of the class, I did not know the exact reason. Some said that because they wanted us to understand better, they went back to explaining in Indonesian until the end of the class or because they couldn't explain it in English well enough".

5. DISCUSSION

Native English speakers' varieties are often conceptualized as 'good' English. While ELF and translingual practices are also present, they occur to varying extents and are closely tied to language use. Although students often feel inferior to the native English varieties, they firmly believe that these should be the standard they strive to emulate when they achieve enough English proficiency.

Regarding the first research question, findings indicate that most students uphold the ideology of standard English. In this study, American English is perceived as the English taught to them since primary school. However, no specific references explain why American English dominates the Indonesian education system. One explanation offered by students is the influence of American popular culture. Movies such as 'Home Alone', 'Baby's Day Out', and productions by Marvel and DC, which have aired on Indonesian television for years, contributed to this familiarity. Additional exposure comes from American music, shows, and social media content. Another historical reason could be the United States' emergence as a dominant global power after World War II. This influence may have led stakeholders to favor American English for public consumption in Indonesia. Furthermore, the first Indonesian-English dictionary, compiled by American linguist John M Echols, introduced American English spelling and vocabulary, which continues to influence English usage in Indonesia.

On the other hand, some students prefer British English, conceptualizing it as 'classy' and 'cool'. It is also interesting to note that exposure to popular culture has influenced students' conceptualization of English. For example, one student who attended public schools rather than those following the Cambridge Curriculum developed an interest in British English through British movies, Youtubers, and cultural content. She also exercises her investment in learning British English (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Norton, 2000). In her diary, the student described her fondness for British English, sparked by the 'Harry Potter' movie, and her determination to continue practicing it despite occasional ridicule from peers. She turned sarcastic remarks about her British accent into motivational tools, reinforcing her commitment to learning.

The emergence of English influenced by local cultural practices in the classroom offers a new dimension to the discussion of ELF and translingual practices. Findings indicate that students often appreciate Indonesian English for its clarity and relevance in the EMI program. One student describes it as enjoyable and motivating, making the learning process more engaging. These findings align with previous studies suggesting that native English varieties often serve as aspirational models for EMI programs (Han, 2023; Murata, 2019). However, they also shed light on power relations, social interactions, and learning.

Students and teachers are fully aware of the weight of internationalization inherent in the EMI program. Despite their linguistic limitation, they struggle to fit into the EMI program by holding onto the native speaker's ideology while living through the practicality of Indonesian English. This balance will be further explored in a discussion on ELF and translingual practices.

This study offers preliminary insights into the complex realities of ELF and translanguaging practices among nursing students in the EMI program. Together with findings from previous studies, the data suggest the need to move beyond the fixed standard English norms and accept the emergence of localized English varieties alongside established native varieties (Chen et al., 2022; Kuteeva, 2020; Qiu & Fang, 2022; Xu & Xiao, 2023). Participants reported that their teachers understand their struggles, as evidenced in diary entries and interviews.

Teachers often repeated explanations, simplified vocabulary, slowed their speech, supported students' language production, provided corrective feedback, and showed tolerance for errors, reflecting their shared challenges with the students.

Key communicative strategies typical of ELF are evident in the EMI settings, including meaning reconstruction, negotiation, clarification, the use of fillers, and rephrasing (Mauranen, 2012). Excerpts 5-9 indicate the emergence of the EFL typical communicative strategies like clarification, rephrasing, and repairs (Björkman, 2014), repetition and simple vocabulary use (Cogo & Dewey, 2012), and the use of filler like 'emmm' (House, 2010). Participants agreed that having native English-speaker teachers would be beneficial, but they decided that local teachers were currently more helpful given their English proficiency level. This view aligns with findings from Evans and Morrison (2011) and Xu and Xiao (2023), which emphasize the advantages of local teachers who understand the struggles experienced by students.

The main contribution of ELF research to EMI is believed to lie in identifying strategies that promote heterogeneity in multilingual settings. Furthermore, ELF strategies, long recognized in SLA research (Macaro, 2019), enhance the efficiency of communication in EMI contexts. Translingual practices have become common among students and lecturers due to their shared linguistic challenges. The sudden implementation of the EMI program left the students and teachers in shock. To address this, teachers encouraged students to switch between English and Bahasa Indonesia, promoting bilingualism that included English, Bahasa Indonesia, and even Javanese.

In excerpts 9-10, teachers demonstrated an understanding of students' struggles by engaging in what they referred to as '*gado-gado*' English. The term '*gado-gado*', which describes a popular Indonesian salad mixing fresh vegetables with peanut sauce, is culturally apt for illustrating the code-switching practices in the EMI program. This '*gado-gado*' English provides a 'delicious' blend of languages that facilitates communication. Students benefit from translanguaging because their teachers, aware of their difficulties, adapt their teaching to incorporate translingual practices. This finding aligns with Chen et al. (2022), who argue that bilingual states and translingual practices enhance students' understanding of content.

However, as Kuteeva (2020) observes, translingual practices may be helpful in some contexts but undesirable in others. Diary entries from two participants have different views regarding the translingual practice. While one viewed it as helpful regarding complex vocabulary, the other associated it with linguistic incompetence. The latter regarded the practice as below the standard and as just an excuse to teach in Bahasa Indonesia. The practice only happens because teachers cannot deliver lessons entirely in English.

Thus, translingual practices represent a double-edged sword in the EMI program. On the one hand, they empower students by facilitating engagement and understanding, particularly for those with lower English proficiency. By leveraging their first language (L1) and other semiotic resources, these practices fill gaps in English competence. On the other hand, it is not always empowering, but it shows the limited English proficiency of the teachers.

This study utilizes diary writing and interviews as methods for data triangulation, enhancing the validity and depth of its findings. Diary entries provided context for EMI practices and informed the construction of semi-structured interview questions. Triangulating excerpts from diaries and interviews add validity and credibility as the researchers corroborated the two different sources to create convergence. Cross-referencing data from diaries and interviews enabled a more comprehensive understanding of participants' conceptualization of English and their communicative practices. This triangulation also strengthened the thematic analysis, as arguments were made strong as they appear in two sources, thus allowing for a more nuanced understanding of the data.

This study revealed that students in the EMI program strongly preferred native-English varieties through the educational systems and exposure to the cultures through media. However, as they recognized the prestige of using native speakers' English, British and American, they engaged and benefited from using ELF and translingual practices, especially when interacting with fellow students and local teachers who share their linguistic challenges.

Raising awareness among the EMI policymakers, teachers, and students about 'gado-gado' English and the role of ELF and translingual practices could address issues such as silent classrooms and support the broader implementation of EMI programs. Adopting ELF-and translingual-informed approaches to language teaching can further equip students with strategies tailored to different contexts. ELT practitioners and teacher trainers should provide training informed by these practices to foster broader linguistic awareness and prepare EMI teachers and students for effective communication.

6. CONCLUSION

This study provides a fresh insight into EMI research in Indonesia by exploring students' conceptualization of English, ELF, and translingual practices within an undergraduate nursing program. The findings reveal how students construct their ideologies of 'good' and 'classy' English. Simultaneously, the study highlights the crucial roles ELF and translingual practices play in supporting both students and teachers in navigating EMI programs. They are on the same boat and placed in the EMI settings to accelerate HEIs internationalization. ELF and translingual practices challenge the idea of a fixed norm and move along with the heterogeneity concept.

While this study offers valuable insights into ELF and translingual practices in Indonesia, its findings are limited to the nursing discipline. Broader research across different academic fields and contexts is needed to capture the diversity of EMI experiences and to fill gaps in Indonesia's EMI scholarship. As EMI is just starting its debut in Indonesia, and native English speakers are still considered the only goal, this study should be kept in mind by the policymakers, teachers, and students involved in EMI on how the ELF and translingual practices could help direct through the EMI dynamics.

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