MOTIVATION IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS
AND ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

Cătălina RADU [1]

ABSTRACT
People are motivated by different things. In order to benefit from a better educational process, it is important to understand students' and teachers' motivation and to continuously work on enhancing creativity. While there are a series of common drivers to be considered, it is also important to take into account some age and individual specificities and the additional implications of using a foreign language as a medium of instruction, if this is the case, as such a process implies additional challenges and opportunities.
This paper aims at increasing both the learning motivation and the teaching motivation and therefore at improving the educational process. Recommendations of possible actions are based on observations during the educational process in Bucharest University of Economic Studies, on valuable insights of both students and teachers and on a questionnaire applied to students studying business in English.

KEYWORDS: *motivation, education, EMI (English as a medium of instruction), students.*

JEL CLASSIFICATION: *A20, I21, I23, M19.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education makes progress possible in all the domains. It refers to both increasing knowledge and skills and creating attitudes and behaviours.

As a result of internationalization, there has been an increased interest in EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction).

The general aim of this paper is to lead to increasing both the learning motivation and the teaching motivation and therefore to improving the educational process in the context of EMI. There are a series of challenges encountered by lecturers and students when teaching/learning in a second language (Language 2 - one which is used by somebody, but it is not the mother tongue of that person). As a follow-up of my previous studies, I would like to reflect on how potential barriers can be overcome and sometimes even be turned into benefits.

There is no general agreement regarding the role of teachers in the educational process when using English. It is clear that both lecturers and students are at the same time text producers and receivers, as they both participate in the communication process, with the main objectives of expressing ideas, giving and receiving feedback. Therefore my study will look at both perspectives. The main aspects analyzed in the paper refer to:
- the quality of the educational process when using EMI;
- motivation in the educational process;
- the roles of teachers using EMI.

[1] Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Romania, catalina.radu@ase.ro

Working in education is a really satisfying way of living; it means continuously seeing improvements in knowledge, skills and behaviour – and I think this is true both when looking to the others (to the students) and when looking to yourself, as a teacher who is continuously learning. Of course, we learn more when facing more challenges and this is why I have chosen the case of teaching in a foreign language. This is actually my own case, as I teach Management in English for both Romanian students (I share with them the same L1, but I do not to make use of it) and for overseas students at a main business higher education institution in my country (we share only L2 - English, as we have different L1). I am aware of the fact I could be a little bit biased, since I am involved in the process, but I strive to express others' views as well.

The study is based on a critical thinking approach, observation of classroom activities and administration of a questionnaire in May 2014 and May 2015 to students learning business through the medium of English in The Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Faculty of International Business and Economics (REI). I also used anecdotal evidence, through a series of informal talks with teachers using EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction) in our university and with some students, in order to obtain a deeper understanding of the insights comprised in the questionnaire.

This paper has been divided into three main sections - a brief literature review, a case study on motivation and EMI and a series of conclusions and implications.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Emotional Intelligence and Motivation of Students

Education is not only a very important and interesting field, but also one facing continuous changes. Grant, Hackney and Edgar (2010) suggest that the culture of academic institutions should be driven by the changes in the external environment, and methods of teaching should be adapted easily to the every day dynamics of the work market. Alternative methods of teaching should be developed, as it is clear that they are more relevant for students' future work than traditional lecture, seminar and computer laboratory formula.

It is important to notice that we, as teachers, do need to permanently motivate our students. Emotional intelligence is not just a concept and it helps teachers to motivate students and to shape their behaviour (Radu, 2014). Looking for various methods to be used, I found an interesting paper stating that, according to recent studies, although learning styles do exist and are important to be known, there is not any real proof that a particular teaching style indeed helps students of one learning style and not also the others who have a different learning style (Glenn, 2009). It is therefore suggested that, taking into account a particular topic, particular learning outcomes and the characteristics of the instructor, there are teaching methods which might help more for all the students. In other words, a particular instructional technique seems to be the best one for all the students for a particular outcome (measured, for instance, on a scale of marks obtained for a test taken), even if some of them liked the approach very much (for instance, they had a lot of experiments and they represent the kinesthetic learning style), while the others did not enjoy the learning experience so much (as they would have liked more, for example, a visual or verbal approach; however, even if they enjoy it less, it is possible to be better off in terms of understanding the concepts, as proven i.e. by their final grades, through a kinesthetic approach). I cannot say for sure whether matching is necessary or not. However, it is clear that for groups of different students, matching is only partially possible (part of the time being used in such a way to match their learning style) and I consider it is better to use a mix of methods that involve more different learning styles.

Of course, it is not only about teachers motivating students, but also about finding a good match between students' self motivation and teachers' expectations, as previous studies suggested that self motivated students ("who hold values such as intellectualism and academic achievement, and to whom education holds the promise of learning", are more likely to fulfill the ideal of the teachers who motivate and inspire them (Henderson-King and Smith, 2006).

2.2. Teaching and Studying Business in a Foreign Language – Challenges and Opportunities

Teaching business in a foreign language implies a mix between some general challenges teachers encounter - teachers of foreign language and those of particular subjects (in our case, business). It becomes a little more difficult to make students understand the main ideas and to really feel the "pulse" of the class – on the one hand, the complexity of the subject can lead to potential dificulties and on the other hand, familiarity with a particular accent might be a problem, if students come from different countries that the teacher. I could notice that when explaining to and listening to my overseas students. We need to adapt PowerPoint slides and even the classroom assessment techniques in order to have good results.

Challenges when using EMI do not come only from linguistic barriers, although some of them are closely-linked to these, as, for instance, differences in "translating". While it is true that some differences result from a different way of building phrases, cultural dimension also plays a very important role. Participation is different and this might be led by the distance to power dimension (Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov, 2010). Some students do perceive the teacher as a lot more powerful, while others coming from other cultures understand the collaboration slightly differently.

Unfortunately, there are differences between the small groups that tend to form, as it is so easy to stay close only to your own culture. Thus, students tend to socialize more with their colleagues from the same country, this way losing the cultural exchanges from which all would have many benefits. The role of the teacher as a facilitator is very important, since it is important to notice that those small groups that tend to form should not be encouraged.

Cultural exchanges lead to very good results for everybody and need to be encouraged.

2.3. English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI)

English is increasingly used as a medium of instruction in business higher education and in education in general (Evans, 2000; Wachter and Maiworm, 2008). Another similar term is CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), which refers to this idea of using another language in order to teach various subjects (different from language subjects, i.e. business, history, etc.) to foreign students. If it refers particularly to English, EMI is a more precise term.

EMI is a very interesting area, but unfortunately very little conclusive research is available at the moment. In 2014, the University of Oxford developed a new EMI centre - part of the Department of Education (which is very strong in applied linguistics). The British Council has funded some of the initial research (Dearden, 2014). The British Council and Oxford University Department of Education (OUDE) research centre, EMI Oxford, work together in order to better understand "the consequences of introducing EMI on teaching, learning, assessing and teacher professional development" (Dearden, 2014). Surveys were completed by British Council staff in the office of 55 countries and Romania was not taken into account at that moment.

However, Romania and maybe many other countries are also taken into account in another way, since in May 2014 the programme Academic Teaching Excellence was brought to Bucharest by the British Council for Romanian teachers using EMI.

EMI is quite a controversial issue. Many scholars and users of EMI consider an international language for cross-cultural communication as a positive development. Studies have been conducted and in general have showed that English can be improved by repeating the targeted structures - by connecting vocabulary with contents, a series of repeated expressions can be easily recalled (Kashiwagi and Tomecsek, 2015). In most of the cases, teachers admit that EMI contributes to a mix of advantages – an increase in teachers' and learners' English proficiency levels as well as in their fields of study (. However, there are other specialists who put emphasis on losing cultural identities (Zare-ee and Gholami, 2013; Coleman, 2006). Sercu (2004) adds some further potential problems when studying in a foreign language, as, for example, a decrease in the quality of instruction and learning, coming together with an increase in the teaching and study load. As part of

the educational process using EMI, I can understand both perspectives and I consider it is very important to look at the others' perceptions – both students and teachers.

3. CASE STUDY – MOTIVATION AND ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

3.1. Research Methodology

In order to investigate attitudes towards and perceptions of studying business in English, in 2014 I designed a questionnaire delivered online through the GoogleDocs platform. Respondents were students from the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Faculty of International Business and Economics (REI), 1st year and 2nd year of study. The questionnaire was in English and contained 24 questions, out of which most were open questions.

There were 61 respondents to the questionnaire – students in the first and in the second year of study. Most of them were Romanians. However, respondents from Iran, Nigeria and Turkey also completed the questionnaire. Respondents were young (with three exceptions, below 25 years of age), and more than three quarters were males.

In May 2015 I applied an improved version of the questionnaire, with 25 questions instead of 24 and some more open questions.The number of respondents also increased, from 61 to 115 and the proportion between males and females is more balanced this year.

The following chapter will present the findings of my research, combining all the data sources indicated in the methodology presentation.

3.2. Main Findings

The survey shows in both years that an overwhelming percentage of the respondents feel that using EMI is rather a positive element in the educational process.

In order to understand all the results, students were also asked to self-assess with respect to English proficiency, for all the four main areas: speaking, reading, writing and listening skills. While this self-assessment might reveal some interesting aspects, it is important to note that this is rather a perception – a kind of comparison with the desired level, with colleagues and teachers within the Faculty.

I consider it is quite interesting to notice that their perception on their own level of English shows that listening skills are developed more. However, I have to mention that I consider this is not true, at least because of the following reasons:

- Listening skills, even if they are the first to be learnt in our mother tongue as babies and they are the most important communication skills, are also the ones that are developed less in general;
- As a teacher, I can say that most of my students express themselves quite easily when they have to speak; they have some problems with reading and writing; however there are quite many cases in which they are rather bad listeners.

After looking at their self-assessment, it is quite interesting to look at their perception on Faculty developing communication skills, general versus specialized knowledge, and other skills such as critical thinking, computer literacy, case studies, teamwork, individual work.

Students generally consider the roles of teachers using EMI is also to make them better prepared for communication in English; therefore, they should correct the mistakes of English.

The main advantages and disadvantages that were taken into account from the questionnaire design and students' views are presented in the next two figures:
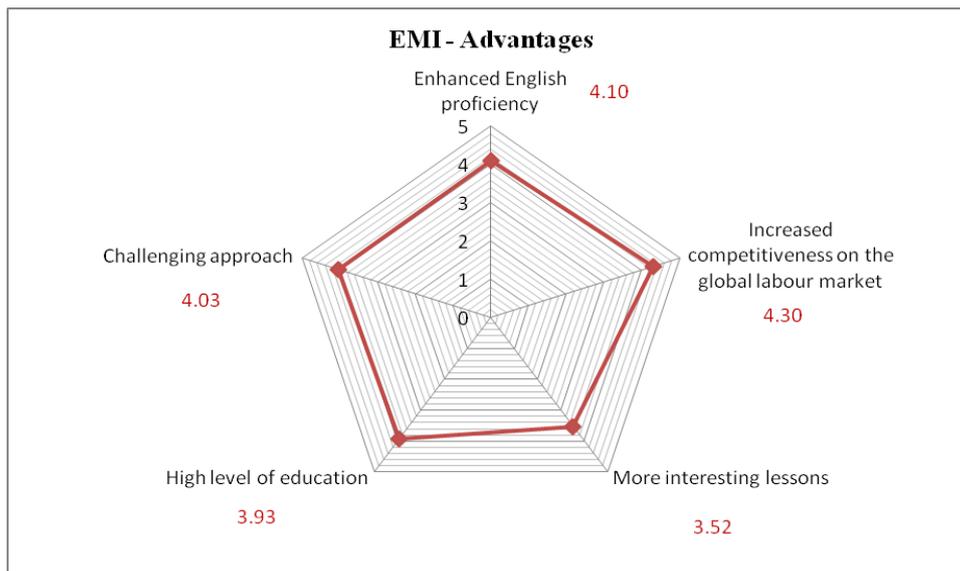
Figure 1. Advantages of using EMI – Average-based radar
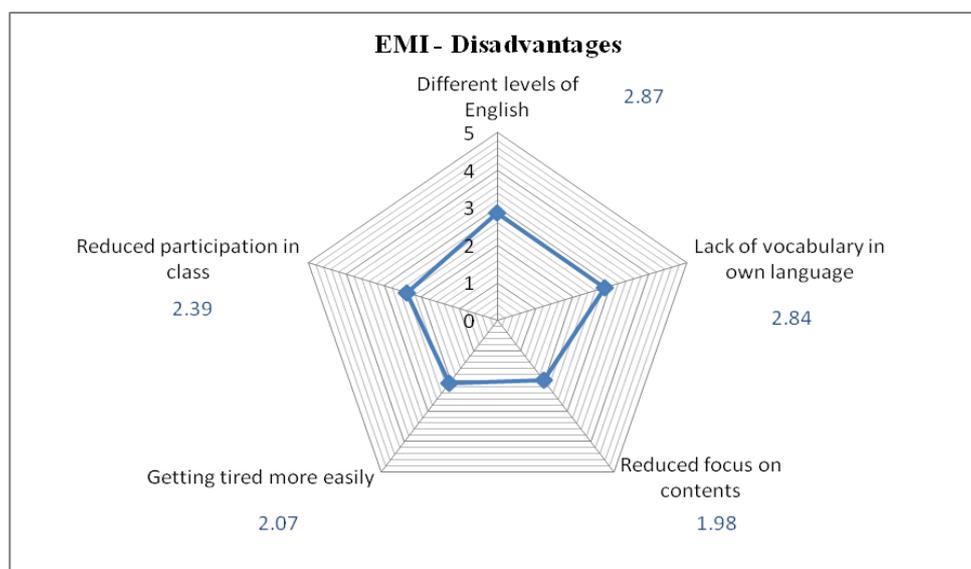
Figure 2. Disadvantages of using EMI – Average-based radar

As it can be observed, students perceive advantages higher than disadvantages. When asked about other potential problems respondents also referred to the difficulties encountered when trying to discuss ideas with people that do not speak English.

4. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Students' responses to the open questions and then the additional explanations were really useful with respect to a series of issues:

- The main reasons for choosing a programme in English (motivation of wanting EMI) – Both in 2014 and in 2015 the most common answers referred to future education abroad, future career abroad and a career in a multinational company, access to international materials (for Romanian students). Some of them also mentioned reasons like finding a common code (for most of the overseas students), just practicing English and also having a good alternative to studying abroad.

- Usefulness or Unsuitability of making use of occasional Romanian language in the programme using EMI – both; it is useful, because in many cases students understand better this way; however, it is also unsuitable, since students are coming to a programme in English in order to practice this language; moreover, in most of the cases, nonnative speakers of Romanian do not understand very well when additional explanations are presented in Romanian. I think one of the strengths of our EMI programmes in The Bucharest University of Economic Studies is the fact that, according to my respondents, generally teachers do not explain in Romanian (maybe a somehow biased approach).

- Should teachers using EMI correct students' mistakes of English? – Generally students would like teachers to do so, although it is not their responsibility to teach English, because this way they improve their language skills; however, there are some who would prefer not to do so, firstly because they want to gain precious time for specialization by itself, and secondly because they do not necessarily perceive teachers using EMI as an authority in terms of English.

- Students consider great teachers should have a series of positive qualities: creativity, good sense of humour, passion, patience, determination, pedagogic skills, wisdom, open mind, preparation, calmness, etc.

- In 2015 students could develop more ideas on two additional topic: firstly, there was an open question referring to studying for obtaining a diploma that might help people get more and even better jobs or studying just because you enjoy something (of course, this leads to differences in the educational processes), and secondly, they could express more ideas on the importance of the teacher-student relationship for motivation (students came with interesting examples).

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