



## **English Medium Education: a challenge for staff and students**

**at Poznan University of Technology**

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### **I. Why English Medium Education at PUT?**

EME (English Medium Education ) is an approach used by many universities in Europe. Internationalisation has opened up new ways of studying both for academics and students. Countries where English is not the native language have started introducing fields of studies in English. Two reasons for this could be mentioned: firstly, to attract more international students and secondly, to encourage native students to develop new skills, including English. The term 'globalisation' used in many papers brings another meaning to university life: studies have become more popular, more accessible, and more attractive from the students' perspective. However, studies offered in English do not only benefit students. They offer academics, including visiting professors, the possibility of participating in international projects and grants, of raising the quality of their teaching through international teamwork, and finally of creating new opportunities for scientific career development worldwide. EME was introduced at PUT in 1996 and presently, fields of study at 1<sup>st</sup> cycle and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle, as well as within the doctoral school are delivered in English.

### **II. NAWA project**

On November 5, 2018, the Centre of Languages and Communication (CLC) at Poznan University of Technology (PUT) launched a NAWA project entitled "Developing English Medium Instruction skills in an academic setting at Poznan University of Technology". The project consisted of four types of courses for academic and administrative staff and four study visits made to European University Viadrina Frankfurt and Cambridge University. The final activity was the hosting of the conference "English Medium Instruction at European Universities" organised at PUT on February 18-19, 2021.



The following courses were delivered:

1. English Medium Instruction (EMI) – 20 courses with 200 participants
2. Communication in an intercultural setting – 10 courses with 100 participants
3. Communication and Language Competences in the Dean’s Office at PUT – 5 courses with 50 participants
4. Polish for foreign employees and students at PUT – 3 courses with 30 participants.

The project also included study visits to partner universities (two visits to each university):

1. University of Cambridge – September 2019 and January 2021 (24 participants)
2. European University Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder) – July 2019 and February 2021 (24 participants).

The final element of the project was the international conference “English Medium Instruction at European Universities” organised, because of the COVID virus, in hybrid form.

### **III. English Medium Instruction course at PUT**

#### **3.1.A course for academic staff**

The content of the EMI course is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Content of EMI course for PUT academics:**

<b>1.</b>	Welcome to course participants. Information about the course. Placement test and a questionnaire.
<b>2.</b>	What is CLIL and EMI? Connecting content learning and language learning. Assessment issues in CLIL/EMI.
<b>3.</b>	Writing dissertations. Writing reports. Linking words.
<b>4.</b>	Preparation for public speaking. Non-verbal communication - intercultural aspects. Structure of presentations. Visual aids.
<b>5.</b>	Vocabulary and phrases. Problem solving. Asking and answering questions.
<b>6.</b>	Importance of culture and dimensions of culture. Past/present/future-oriented cultures. Time and distance perspectives.



7.	Small talk with students: Offering help. Asking for clarification. Checking comprehension. The language of commands and instructions.
8.	Samples of lectures: presentations and discussion.
9.	Final test. NAWA documents. Course feedback and certificates.

### 3.2. The most important aspects of teaching

In order to prepare good EMI courses for PUT academics in the very near future, the academics were asked about the most important aspects of teaching. Table 2. presents the data from the staff.

**Table 2. The most important aspects of teaching**

1.	Understanding students' English	more than 28%
2.	Participation in discussions	26%
3.	Participation in group/team projects	7%
4.	Others: "intercultural differences during the lectures", "sometimes understanding students", "understanding students' poor pronunciation", "understanding students' native language if their English is poor", "no practice in teaching English", "I have no experience".	

### 3.3. The ideal vision of English Medium Education at PUT

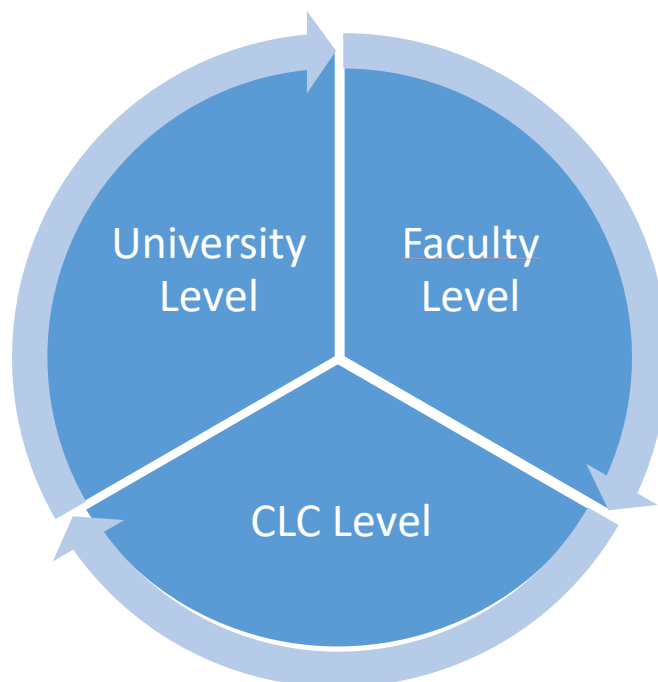


Fig. 1: EME at PUT – author’s own source

### 3.3.1. University Level

A discussion of EME **at university level** provokes analysis of different aspects of its implementation at PUT. Firstly, it is emphasised that there is a need for an EME document in addition to the university’s language policy document. Such a document should clarify the roles of the PUT staff, give some guidelines to faculty representatives, and finally define the financial support for EME from the university authorities. Documents such as an EME policy and vision, a budget and resources for EME development, as well as support from the rector should be provided by the university authorities for academic staff (top-bottom approach).

### 3.3.2. Faculty Level

Once the documents are prepared at university level, the second group of university stakeholders should become well organised. It is the responsibility of faculty authorities to implement EME documents, as well as the language policy documents for a given faculty. The dean should represent the EME policy within the faculty and beyond. At the same time, an



EME leader/ director/manager could be appointed whose responsibility would be to act at different faculty levels, e.g. faculty-institute-chair. The EME leader would create a special team of academics and administrative staff responsible for implementing EME policy within a given faculty.

### **3.3.3. CLC Level**

The final partner in EME policy consists of the language teachers from Centre of Languages and Communication (CLC) who could play different roles in developing EME policy at PUT. Firstly, academic teachers could work, for instance, in an EME team organising tailor-made courses for university staff. The types of courses to support content teachers could be the following: Methodology in EME teaching, Improving speaking skills, Improving writing skills, Presentation skills, English for Academics, and English for Administrative Staff. Further courses could be offered which take into account individual preferences and faculty planning. Secondly, CLC would become an EME support unit both for the university as a whole and for the faculties. The EME team could prepare webinars, lectures and workshops for academic and administrative staff. Using different platforms, such lectures and presentations could be streamed to all interested parties. Thirdly, some CLC academics could work individually (peer review) with faculty content academics. Lecture observation with additional feedback could become a good starting point for discussion with content teachers. Additional attention should be paid to administrative staff and students. These two groups should be given extra support and time for developing the EME philosophy. Finally, CLC could prepare a final Micro-credential Certificate in EME skills which would certify different levels of EME skills among staff groups and students at PUT. The micro-credential certificate could be recognised internationally not only by PUT, but also by other European universities.

## **IV. Conclusions**

The following statements and ideas could be a point of a point of reference for contemporary EME activities at PUT.

- English Medium Education to be known and understood among PUT staff;



- English Medium Education courses to be developed by CLC;
- Content academic teachers should not be afraid of delivering courses in English although this is not their native language;
- Content academic teachers should be given comfortable conditions to deliver different forms of classes, language support if needed, and library resources with good course books that they can recommend to students.
- Students, both Polish and international, should be motivated to study in English for their professional development, for their mobility and to help them become global citizens in the very near future.

There is a saying by Brian Tracy which goes **“It does not matter where you are coming from. All that matters is where you are going.”**

Presently, we are to develop EME principles among PUT staff and students .

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