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## Lecturers' Motivation of Using English Medium Instruction to Support Internationalization of Indonesian Universities

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to explore lecturers' perceptions about the use of English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in Indonesian universities. This qualitative case study employs semi-structured interviews of 15 participants who are teaching at EMI programs: five in science, five in social, and five in economics departments. This study identifies that using EMI provides opportunities for lecturers to raise their meta-linguistic awareness in English, improve their vocabulary, and boost their self-confidence. Also, lecturers' motivation to use EMI is to attract international students, promote universities globally and achieve an international standard of education. This finding reflects both cultural and instrumental forms of investment contributing

to the use of EMI in Indonesian higher education. Thus, cultural and instrumental forms of capital can enhance the individual and professional identities of lecturers.

**Keywords:** *Indonesia, English medium instruction, motivation, lecturers.*

## **Introduction**

Recently, researchers have shown an increased interest in the use of EMI in much higher education particularly in the countries where English is not their first language. According to Oxford Research Group (2021) that English Medium Instruction (EMI) is the use of English instruction to teach subject contents other than English subject in nations, where English is not the dominant language of their citizen. This research adds to the debate of the social dimension of motivation in using EMI. Scholars have explored the importance of investment in English (Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton, 2000; Norton Peirce, 1995; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007). In particular, the use of EMI can become additive bilingualism (Baker, 2011; Lindholm-Leary, 2012; Lo Bianco, 2010; Mary, 2011; May, Hill, & Tiakiwai, 2004), which is the mastery of an additional language. Those authors indicate that the use of EMI can bring about an added value to native languages.

The spread of global English has been motivated by globalization (Block & Cameron, 2002; Coleman, 2006), internationalization of universities and privatization of higher education (Hamid, Nguyen, & Baldauf, 2013). Block and Cameron (2002) argue that “globalization changes the conditions under which language learning and teaching take place” (p. 5). As a result of the globalization change, it can create new forms of cultures and languages within local contexts (Graddol, 2004). Block, Cameron, and Graddol (2004) view that people learn languages not only for economic reasons but also for gaining new literacy and technological skills, particularly technology used for language teaching and learning.

Previous studies, however, reported that the spread of EMI has been linked to some challenges. Tarnopolsky and Goodman (2012) and Vu and Burns (2014) express concern about the language challenges of EMI, for example, low English abilities of students and lecturers; the others (Tange, 2014; Vu & Burns, 2014) are concerned about pedagogical constraints such as searching for appropriate methods for teaching via EMI and practical challenges such as limited resources. Also, no research has explored investment within the context of EMI in Indonesia.

This present article examines lecturers' investment in using EMI in Indonesian higher education. We will discuss the notion of investment, followed by current debates on English in Indonesian contexts, research methodology, discussion, and conclusion.

## **Literature Review**

### **Concept of Motivation**

The motivation here in this study relates to investment. Investment refers to “a meaningful connection between a learner’s desire and commitment to learning a language, and their complex and changing identity” (Norton Peirce, 1995, Norton, 2013a, p. 6). Norton’s definition is drawn from Bourdieu’s (1977) notion of capital. Pittaway (2004) extends Norton’s investment into “engaging investment as a process of leveraging learners’ identities to help them achieve their goals and realize the potential for personal and professional growth” (p. 216). Those definitions can be applied to the context of lecturers because they keep learning English as a foreign language aiming for a medium of instruction.

Insights from Bourdieu’s work (1977), the economics of linguistic exchanges, placed linguistic competence as part of “symbolic capital” (p. 646). Bourdieu (2008) described three fundamental forms of capital: “economic capital, cultural capital and social capital”(p. 281). He describes that economic capital is reflected in the form of ownership entitlement; cultural capital is indicated regarding professional skills and knowledge, and social capital is reflected in the kind of social engagement and networking return. Bourdieu (2008) asserts that the return of capital forms can be gained immediately, such as with services, or in relatively long periods such as social networking. These types of capital seem particularly relevant to the question of how lecturers in higher education contexts expend their considerable efforts, time, and strategies to ensure that lecturers gain their return of investment by achieving graduate attributes that are highly appreciated in particular national and global markets.

In return for learners’ investment, Norton signals that:

If learners invest in the target language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wide range of symbolic resources (language, education, friendship) and materials resources (capital goods, real estate, money), which will, in turn, increase the value of their cultural capital and social power’(2013, p. 6).

We argue that if lecturers in this study invest in the use of EMI, in return for their investments they will likely gain cultural skills, which can increase their professionalism and their identity as lecturers.

In a more recent study, Lee (2014) concluded that the investment in language learning strategies influences an individual way of participation within the centre of academic communities. Applying the concept of investment in this study suggests that investment in the context of EMI may create space for lecturers to improve their language skills and knowledge. Investment within EMI provides opportunities for lecturers to learn, to use, to practice English, and to construct meanings of subject matters in teaching.

### **English Medium Instruction in Indonesia: Current Debates**

There are two major debates on EMI in Indonesia. The first group argues that the introduction of English in the context of bilingual programs may disadvantage vernacular languages (Kirkpatrick, 2012) and has minimum benefit cognitively for learners (Ibrahim, 2004). On the other hand, the use of English in the context of bilingual education can bring benefits for learners educationally and psychologically (Dewi, 2012; Lamb & Coleman, 2008; Lauder, 2010; Lo Bianco, 2012; Santoso, 2006; Setyorini & Sofwan, 2011). Within this debate, this research draws on the latter argued that the use of English in a bilingual context can perpetuate the bilingual development of each learner socially and educationally

Since the implementation of the new educational act in Indonesia in 2003, English is introduced as a medium of instruction in many different levels of education. Dewi (2012) explored the impact of the use of English in bilingual programs in Indonesian universities. She identifies that the use of English in bilingual programs helps learners to grow as an intercultural minded person and learn the appropriate cultures of western that mediate the development of intercultural competence. Also, Abduh & Rosmaladewi (2008, 2019) add that bilingual programs in higher education can help learners to possess bilingual identities that are useful for future employment.

English in the context of bilingual instruction is considered the changing tool for individual transformation. Several studies conducted by Lamb (2004a, 2004b, 2009) and Lamb and Coleman (2008) identify that the acquisition of English literacy can prepare many Indonesians for better employment and a better future career. Lamb and Coleman claim that many Indonesian transform to be more open and can learn new literacy and things through English (2008). Further, Renandya (2004) argues that the mastery of the English language symbolizes modern citizens and identity.

Educationally, the use of English in the form of a bilingual context brings benefits for learners. The use of English in higher education provides learners opportunities to practice their English and learn new literacy and understand the current development of technology and knowledge globally (Santoso, 2006; Setyorini & Sofwan, 2011) and contribute to positive academic atmosphere in higher education (Floris, 2014). These studies indicate that the implementation of English in bilingual programs in universities proves to be beneficial for Indonesian educators and their identities

### **Internationalization of higher education**

A study conducted by Morosini, Corte, and Guilherme (2017) that the motivation of internationalization relates to two important themes: mobility and global citizenship education. The mobility in this research deals with the movement of academics and students from the countries in the northern hemisphere to countries in the southern hemisphere. Also, global citizenship relates to the acquisition of knowledge and skills by young academics, students, and senior academics to be able to interact effectively and successfully in global partnership and engagement. This research suggests that motivation of internationalization of higher education promotes intercultural engagement as part of mobility and global citizenship motives. What we can learn from this study is that the motivation of the internationalization of higher education aims to increase the mobility of academia. The improvement of mobility can enhance the opportunities to acquire global citizenship education that results in acquiring multicultural competencies to support globalization.

Similarly, Abduh, Basri, Ramly, and Rosmaladewi (2021) investigated the importance of multicultural education in the context of the internationalization of higher education. The research indicates that multicultural education encompasses policy to promote equality and respect diversity, strategies to facilitate intercultural dialogue, curriculum, and community participation. The role of multicultural education in the internationalization of higher education implies the teaching of English as a medium of instruction (EMI). Consequently, EMI plays an important role to support multicultural education that enhances the acquisition of multicultural competencies in global interaction and partnership. What we can decipher from the information from this study is that multicultural education in the context of EMI can encourage the acquisition of intercultural global competencies that are needed for global interaction and engagement.

In addition, Rosmaladewi and Abduh (2017) have investigated the roles of collaborative culture in the internationalization of higher education. The research identified that

simultaneous and structural collaborative work contributes to the harmonization of curriculum, teaching, and learning and research to support the internationalization of higher education. The research also encountered that individual and balkanized cultures can slow down the internationalization of universities where partnership and collaboration are strongly recommended for academic and non-academic staff. The collaborative academic cultures enhance the acquisition of intercultural competence (Saud & Abduh, 2018). From this research, it can be learned that collaborative cultures are essential to support the internationalization of higher education.

## Method

This research applies the qualitative case study. This case study is applicable because it uncovers the current phenomenon and change (Yin, 2009). The implementation of EMI policy is a complex phenomenon due to the many higher education institutions involved. Such a complex event is better explored through the interpretive case study (Walsham, 1995). Klein and Myers (1999, p. 69) assume that “knowledge of reality is gained only through social constructions such as shared meanings, documents, tools, and other artifacts” which suit the application of the interpretive case study. Therefore, the interpretive case study is appropriate for this study to uncover the case of EMI in Indonesian higher education.

## The study context and participants

This study investigated lecturers’ motivation and perception of using EMI in their teaching. This study took place in three Indonesian universities within three different departments: Science, Social Science, and Economics Departments. Fifteen lecturers (see Table 1) who teach in three Indonesian universities participated in this study. 90% of lecturers in this study graduated overseas and had experienced using English in native English-speaking countries. This study seeks lecturers’ views on the implementation of EMI: What are lecturers’ investments in using EMI in their teaching?

Table 1. Participants’ profile

Participants	Age	Sex	Educational background
1	30s	M	Master
2	30s	M	Master
3	30s	M	Master
4	50s	M	PhD
5	50s	M	PhD
6	30s	F	Master



7	40s	F	PhD
8	40s	F	PhD
9	50s	M	PhD
10	40s	F	PhD
11	30s	F	Master
12	40s	F	Master
13	50s	M	PhD
14	40s	M	PhD
15	30s	M	Master

### **Instruments of data collection**

Primary data gained through semi-structured interviews lasted approximately from 45 minutes to one hour. The interviews were mostly done in Indonesian because participants preferred to use Indonesian. The interview transcriptions were returned to participants so that they had the opportunity to read and verify transcriptions. The diverse variety of participants contributes to providing more convincing and accurate conclusions (Yin, 2009), and offers a comprehensive understanding of the case (Patton, 2002). The fieldwork was carried out recently, and several contacts such as emails and phone contacts were made to additional gain data. During field visits, documents were also collected to support the primary data.

### **Data analysis**

Open coding was initially used to code data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) which was then thematically analyzed and arranged followed the method outlined by Attride-Stirling (2001). The first stage is to read the whole data, and then perform initial coding. The next is searching the themes and reviewing the emergent themes by making connections between them and making a comparison between categories and codes. The core categories are refined and articulated to achieve meaningful and theoretical types of participants.

### **Findings**

The findings of the study can be categorized into two major themes: cultural investment and motivation, and instrumental motivation (Figure 1). The cultural investment covers a wide range of sub-themes: improve vocabulary, chance to practice speaking, raise metalinguistics awareness and promote self-confidence. Also, the sub-themes of the instrumental motivation include adopt the global academic culture, familiarize with EMI, attract international students, and achieve international standards

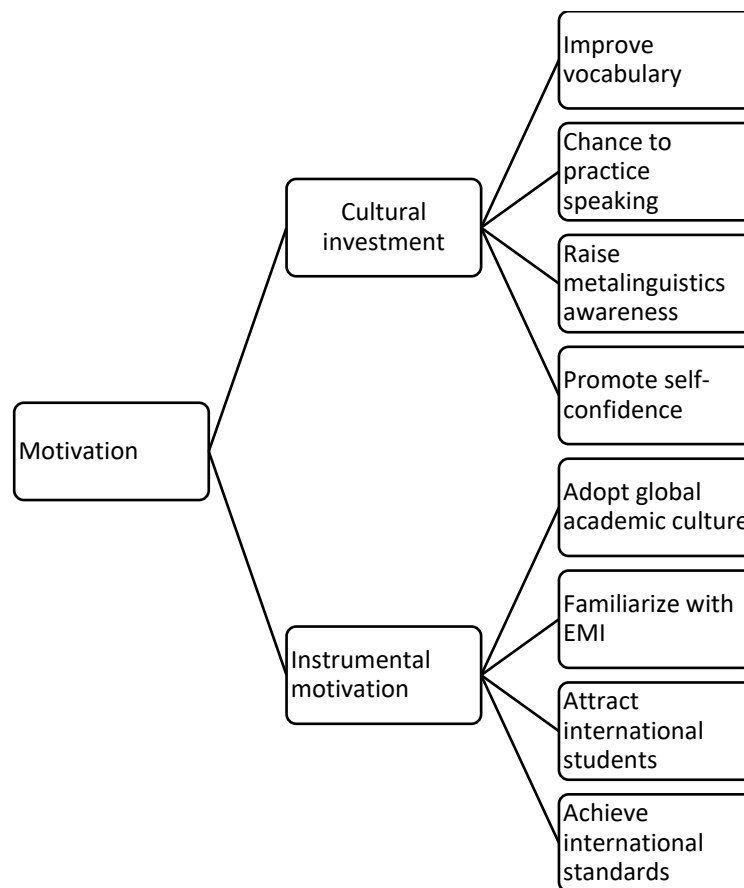


Figure 1: Cultural and instrumental investment of using EMI

### **Cultural investment**

Cultural investment contributes to the teaching and learning in EMI programs in Indonesian contexts. Lecturers by and large share their ideas on the essential topics of cultural capital. The following section describes the four most crucial kinds of cultural capital related to teaching and learning in EMI contexts.

#### ***Opportunities to improve vocabulary***

Lecturers discuss the contribution of cultural investment to enrich their lexical items. The lexis of English includes 1) generic (common) vocabulary that is used to describe objects in daily lives; 2) academic words that are used in academic reading and journals; and 3) specific terms or individual glossaries that are used to describe particular meanings of the unit content.

One of the participants has developed a greater basic vocabulary since the application of English as the medium of instruction in the bilingual education program. Gifran argues that ‘this program is strongly beneficial for the further development of my English words.... for example, the words *understand* can be replaced by *grasp, get, catch...*’ He says ‘the visible

practical advantage of teaching in bilingual programs is a desire to improve vocabulary'. This reflects the opportunities for lecturers to keep improving their basic vocabulary in English.

Regarding academic words, lecturers frequently learn academic lexis from scholarly journals and textbooks. The enrichment of academic vocabulary will more likely impact improving reading fluency. Andre, for example, claims that 'because I know most of the academic words in the articles it truly assists me to read faster and grasp better'. Also, his educational background of Mathematics education inevitably aids him to be more familiar with academic Mathematics readings.

Not only in reading, but also understanding academic lexis contributes to lecturers' writing. Mariah articulates:

*I think I get some new words whenever preparing and reading teaching materials. I read articles and underline unfamiliar words and sometimes try to guess the meaning based on the contexts of its use. Often, I check the thesaurus and bilingual dictionary for the definition. Then I try to put them in my paper.*

Finally, the opportunity to develop greater familiarity with technical or specialist glossaries does occur when the technical words or specific terms are used in particular contexts. Maria argues: 'The specific words can mean different things in different settings. So, it is important to know the types of readings and the contexts where the words are used. She provides the example of words in Accounting: 'interest can mean a charge for loan or bonus, or can mean curiosity about something'.

### ***Chances to practice speaking***

The implementation of EMI programs opens up spaces to practice speaking. Lecturers have used these occasions to enhance their speaking skills. Lecturers use these opportunities to practice expressions they have learned so far. Ningrum comments in detail about these speaking opportunities. She says, "Words and expressions are quite formal, but are mostly influenced by our local accents and dialects". For instance, she provides some words that are influenced by her local accents. Aspirational markers influence many words 'h' likes: 'go' is pronounced, 'g<sup>h</sup>ou' and 'come (k<sup>h</sup>Λm). Andre claims that 'it is hard to speak naturally like native speakers, but I at least try to imitate them as much as possible.

Similarly, Gifran states:

*This program triggers me to speak English correctly. Even though I am not an English lecturer, I am trying very hard to talk as good as possible. Also, it is to train me to deliver teaching materials in an accurate grammatical sentence...that is always not difficult, but it is good to speak and be understood.*

### **Raising metalinguistic awareness**

Lecturers in this study have become more aware of word stress and intonation and producing meaningful sentences. Since the implementation of the EMI program, participants have tended to rehearse some difficult words they find hard to pronounce. Lecturers tend to prepare specific notes relating to the pronunciation of some specific difficult vocabulary, as Bahrin suggests:

*I repeat myself several times for certain words that I find hard to pronounce. It is sometimes funny, but it is the way to do it. I look to my e-dictionary which provides the sound of the correct pronunciation of the words...If I mispronounce the words, it means different things, or it could be meaningless. I say to my students that even though this class is not an English subject, but focusing on how certain words are pronounced is important....*

Even though it is challenging work, some participants are more conscious of producing meaningful sentences with understandable pronunciation when they are delivering the lecture. With the intensive EMI classes they teach, they try to improve their sentence production correctly to convey meaningful utterances, Akiro says: "I am more concerned on how to utter meaningful sentences. So every sentence I speak, it represents meaningful things...I believe I am more meaningful on it. That's the improvement for me".

### **Promoting self-confidence**

The implementation of the EMI policy enhances the confidence of lecturers. Lecturers raised their self-esteem through their enthusiasm for taking part in academic events. Many lecturers who teach in this program are confident enough to deliver their papers in English outside the classroom in national and international seminars. Tasrif argues:

*I am more confident in presenting a paper in English since I used it as the medium of instruction in my classroom. The class is just a practicing lab for my English. I am more prepared to face any English occasion rather than before. This also stimulates me to present a paper abroad.*

### **Instrumental motivation**

Instrumental (motivational) investment becomes an essential aspect of the implementation of EMI programs. Lecturers in this study are strongly motivated to internationalize Indonesian universities. Fatiha best describes the context of the instrumental capital:

*The internationalization of education such as policy, curriculum, programs, teaching staff and facilities is ...you know that... our motivation to respond to the fast-growing economy right now happening in our country and the world, we are the biggest market of education... We don't want just the object, but the subject that plays essential roles in the internationalization of higher education.*

The following section elucidates the instrumental capital that participants identify.

### ***Desire to adopt the international academic culture***

It is interesting to note that lecturers are motivated to import an academic culture that is relevant and appropriate within Indonesian higher education contexts. Two important academic cultures identified by participants were developing critical thinking and avoiding plagiarism.

Culturally, Indonesian students by definition tend to accept what their teachers say to them. They typically obey the whole message delivered by their teachers during the teaching and learning process. Due to such cultural conditions, lecturers are often inspired to break cultural barriers. Lecturers desire to encourage students to engage with theories and knowledge critically and appreciatively. Sutimin explores the ways of teaching students to think critically. He suggests “students should be taught ways to look at weakness and strengths of the theories they learn as is done by other international students overseas. Without this, they will fall behind regarding what other people do in the rest of the world”. More importantly, he says that “students should be engaged in findings the gaps of the theories they learn. By doing so, it will raise their critical thinking awareness”. This demonstrates the cultural situation among Indonesian students.

### ***Familiarising students with English medium instruction***

The desire of Indonesian higher education to implement EMI programs is to get students used to the English medium culture. The reason for this is that most students will take international exposure programs where students will stay for a certain period in English-speaking universities or partner universities abroad. These EMI programs help to expose students to English-speaking cultures.

Similarly, the lecturer of Basic Social Science, Sutimin argues that ‘EMI gives them (students) chances to familiarize and discuss content in English. Thus the students are better prepared when they are taking classes in English speaking universities’. Such circumstances also impact on students’ preparation for taking international tests. He claims: “the constant use of English no doubt influences students’ ability, particularly academic English required in the IELTS or TOEFL tests”.

### ***Motivation to attract international students***

Attracting international students to study here can create an international and global atmosphere within local university contexts. Hadi claims that:

*We need to create a real feeling of an international atmosphere where many overseas students are studying here. It’s not impossible in the future to create such conditions since we have a lot of appealing factors internally that attract international students...let’s say...teaching them local culture, dances, traditional music, and multicultural Indonesians.*

Similarly, Maria argues that “the use of EMI is an example of internationalization within Indonesian contexts.” She asserts that “internationalization through the medium of instruction will attract overseas students.” Maria says that “our programs here offer not only the use of EMI but they also offer increased engagement with local culture and the local community that makes our programs unique.”

### ***The desire to achieve international standards***

Lecturers expecting to teach and learning through the English medium instruction is equal to the international standard used in developed countries. The quality of education and international curriculum, the capacity to engage in research and publication, the strengthening of highly qualified lecturers, and international accreditation, are essential features of a global higher education system. Regarding international curriculum, Sudiron claims:

*The harmonized curriculum of EMI programs is to facilitate the internationalization of education. I believe that English is a powerful means, regarding global trends, to the internationalization of universities around the world. So it’s important to be part of it, and our students really can catch up with the global updates.*

Most participating lecturers share a common understanding that those Indonesian universities’ contributions to the academic and the development of science are slightly less detectable in the

world today. Therefore, Gifran argues that “the use of English in teaching inspires me to improve my research and publication in English too....so that what happens here can also be heard by others in other parts of the world”. However, Maria feels less optimistic about publications in English. She suggests that “it is hard to work that way since English is not our second language”. Also, Fatiha relates to the university rankings. She says, “It is not an easy job to upgrade our university ranking, but the use of EMI and the increasing research publications using English, hope that it lifts our university status.” This implies that EMI stimulates lecturers to apply the international standard of education in their teaching.

## **Discussion**

The cultural investment in this research deals with the acquisition of language skills and knowledge. This concept of cultural investment is in association with earlier studies (Bourdieu, 1977, Bourdieu, 2008, Norton, 2013). Concerning the acquisition of language skills and knowledge, participants in this study not only gain both receptive and productive language skills (Baker, 2011) but also what Canale and Swain (1981) categorize as grammatical competence. For this competency, participants in this study are concerned with mastering academic lexis, syntax, and metalinguistic awareness. The mastery of grammatical skills enhances participants’ self-efficacy to write and to present their works in academic and non-academic settings, particularly in English medium events. As a consequence, participants in this study wish to fully engage and grasp the content of the literature and texts available in English, which enables them to participate in English global communities.

Also, participants’ commitment in this study through the use of English-medium instruction is a means of promoting Indonesian higher education to the global world on the one hand, and to bring in essential features of world educational practices on the other. This idea reflects the concept of instrumental investment (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991; Norton, 2000, 2013). We argue that this instrumental aim may impact the conflicting roles of higher education institutions, because many Indonesian institutions may not be ready to adopt world academic practices due to the limited quality of their human resources and cultural constraints. Despite their limitations, the desire of participants to institutionalize adaptable educational practices is an instrumental investment. In return for their instrumental investment, participants will gain greater access to global engagement through partnerships and mutual collaborations.

The findings in this research further extend the earlier investigations in Indonesian contexts. The findings in this study identify the acquisition and the use of English literacy not only

preparing Indonesians for a better future (Lamb, 2004a, 2004b, 2009; Lamb & Coleman, 2008), but also facilitating the internationalization of higher education, promoting Indonesian culture and identities globally, and enabling them to become part of global communities.

Further, the roles of bilingual instruction in higher education can perpetuate the establishment of internationalization of higher education. Internationalization via the use of English alongside the use of the national language as a medium of instruction can provide opportunities for students to acquire multicultural competencies (Abduh, et.al, 2021). More importantly, the findings have positive implication of the use of EMI in Indonesian higher education (Floris, 2014) and the acquisition of intercultural competences (Saud & Abduh, 2018). Thus, multicultural competencies can assist the success of global partnership and engagement of higher education institutions. Internationalization can promote a positive global environment for universities in teaching and learning, curriculum, extra-curricular activities, and research programs.

## **Conclusion**

Lecturers' motivation to use EMI for their teaching not only benefits lecturers personally but also institutionally. Personally, and professionally, lecturers create opportunities for themselves to improve language competence including raising meta-linguistic awareness, improving their vocabulary, and boosting their confidence. This reflects the concept of cultural capital (Norton, 2013). Also, lecturers' motivation to use EMI is to attract international students, promote universities globally and achieve international standards of education. The finding reflects the instrumental investment (Norton, 2013) of Indonesian lecturers in applying EMI in their teaching. Our in-depth exploration of the phenomenon and the results can contribute to understanding educators' perception of and motivation for engaging in EMI. Future studies are recommended into uncovering learners' investment within the context of EMI implementation. Future research also needs to be carried out within the broader population and how learners' investment in language learning contributes to their future identities.

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