

## The Ideology Towards English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) Adoption in Higher Education in Malaysia: A Case Study

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### ABSTRACT

*English as a medium of instruction (EMI) has been implemented in the context of higher education in non-native English-speaking countries mainly to attract international students through internationalisation while helping local students achieve success in the job market and pursue further education both locally and globally. In the context of Malaysian higher education, Malay has been adopted as the medium of instruction (MOI) and should be implemented in public and private universities. However, EMI has been adopted for some of the programs in public universities, and private universities adopted English as their MOI. Therefore, the purpose of this case study is to uncover the institutional (university language policy) and individual level (lecturers) ideologies about English and EMI adoption in a public research university (Purple University, pseudonym) in Malaysia. Data were collected from the two oldest and largest schools of the university with an emphasis on undergraduate degrees, the School of Management and the School of Industrial Technology. In order to establish triangulation in the data collection methods, data were collected through interviews with lecturers and content analysis of university websites, admission requirements in the EMI program, and curriculum analysis. Six themes emerged from the findings of the study, including English as the language of choice for MOI, EMI and the internationalisation of higher education, English as an academic language, the role of EMI in the development of English language communication, and the economic and social relevance of English in Malaysia. The study also revealed that despite the lack of a defined language policy governing the use of English in Malaysia, there is agreement on the adoption of EMI at the meso and microlevel stakeholders of the university.*

*Keywords: Language ideology; language policy; English medium instruction; medium of instruction; higher education; internationalisation*

### INTRODUCTION

Globalization has given universities scholarly, political, social, and economic reasons to implement English as a medium of instruction (EMI) as standard practice (Rahman & Singh, 2021a). EMI has been adopted and applied in non-native English-speaking contexts as a result of the growing phenomenon of internationalisation in higher education (HE) over the last decade, and is a subject of educational and linguistic studies (Kirkpatrick & Liddicoat, 2017; Karim et al., 2021; Macaro et al., 2018; Rahman et al., 2018). Since English is the most widely spoken language, internationalisation in higher education has made the spread of the language easier (Altbach & Knight, 2007). English has become the unifying global language in higher education as a result of

the high value placed on the language (Brumfit, 2004). Due to these factors, English has been designated as a universal medium of instruction (MOI) (Dearden, 2014).

EMI is still a developing phenomenon that is constantly being described and redefined. However, Pecorari and Malmström (2018) identified four characteristics central to EMI settings, of which three are related to English: 1) English is the language used for instructional purposes. 2) English itself is not the subject being taught. 3) Language development is not intended as a primary outcome. 4) For most of the participants in the setting, English is a second language (L2). According to Kuteeva (2020), since English is the language used for instructional purposes, it is necessary to define the EMI setting not as the content or the subject itself, but as the second, foreign, or additional language for the participants in the context. This is particularly in line with the definition of EMI settings proposed by Macaro (2018). According to him:

The use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions where the first language of the majority of the population is not English. (2018, p. 154)

Internationalization of higher education has often been implemented and enforced in countries where English is a non-native language primarily to meet the requirements of restructuring educational systems to ensure compliance with the trend of attracting international students (Evans & Morrison, 2017; Rahman et al., 2020a). On the other hand, teaching local students English or teaching content through this global language is likely to assist them in seeking higher education in English, while also supporting them to thrive in the job market, both locally and globally (Macaro et al., 2018; Rahman et al., 2021, Khairul Faiz Alimi et al., 2021). In either case, since English is the language used for instruction, an EMI setting must be described as the second, international or additional language for participants in the context (Kuteeva, 2020). Furthermore, contextual analysis of these second or additional languages is also important, since prior studies have identified sociolinguistic problems, including language-related beliefs and attitudes, suggesting a measurable attitude (positive and negative) with regard to the use of EMI (Ali & Hamid, 2018; Rahman & Singh, 2021a; Sah & Li, 2020), and giving rise to educational challenges for teachers and learners (Rahman et al., 2021; Rahman & Singh, 2021a; Sharma & Canagarajah, 2020). Therefore, the adoption of higher education policies in relation to language changes in each context should be studied through language policy lenses to evaluate how stakeholders, such as universities, academics, and students in these contexts, responded to the adoption of EMI (Spolsky, 2009). This study reveals the ideology of the language at the institutional level (university language policy) and individual level (lecturers) towards the introduction of EMI at a public research university in Malaysia.

## LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY

Language ideologies, according to Silverstein (1979), are the articulated collection of opinions or beliefs about a language by its speakers as the justification of perceived language systems and usage of that language in society. In other words, language ideology reflects the choice of language that has been deemed appropriate for use or practise in a particular culture or communication context. According to Spolsky (2009), ideology is the "values or status given to named languages, varieties, and features" (p.4) that play a critical role in this language's selection by its speakers. As a result, language management and language policy and planning (LPP) have become a more regional phenomena (Rahman & Singh, 2020; Rahman et al., 2020a). Therefore, while

implementing English as an MOI policy, the language ideologies of the higher education stakeholders must be acknowledged, as eventually they will implement the policy into practice. Recognising the significance of ideology in the language policy orientation of the stakeholders, Ricento (2000) stressed the need of avoiding, discounting, or relegating language ideology to the category of external influences while doing an empirical study on language policy.

Several studies have identified sociolinguistic issues worth investigating through the lens of language policy, such as language ideology in the adoption of MOI in higher education in a given context based on deliberate language alteration. In the same vein, the language ideology of the stakeholders was instrumental in the adoption of EMI in different higher educational contexts such as in Bangladesh (Rahman & Singh, 2021a; Rahman et al., 2020b), China (Hu & Lei, 2014; Song, 2019), Japan (Aizawa & Rose, 2019; Bradford, 2016). Therefore, the adoption and implementation of EMI in a university or program must be understood considering the language ideology of the stakeholders.

In recent years, several trends in higher education have influenced linguistic ideology, culminating in the widespread use of EMI in higher education (Rahman & Singh, 2020). A common explanation for the adoption of EMI documented in the literature is the positive beliefs and attitudes related to EMI of stakeholders related to EMI (Rahman & Singh, 2020). In her research, Song (2019) revealed that international students studying in China have a favourable attitude towards the adoption of EMI, although they were not satisfied with the quality of instruction. In several countries, the need to internationalize higher education and create international educational hub structures by recruiting foreign or international students also seeks to enhance this phenomenon (Evans & Morrison, 2017; Bolton & Kuteeva, 2012). On the other hand, countries such as Bangladesh and Taiwan (e.g., Rahman & Singh, 2020; Lin, 2019) aim to meet the growing need for English-proficient graduates in the domestic and international markets. It is commonly assumed that the attributed value of English in today's world and the advantages of language consumers in the new global language order have propelled English as the MOI globally (Zhang, 2018).

Fuelled by several higher education aspirations aligned with the English language-related aspects identified by Pecorari and Malmström (2018) for EMI, it is, therefore, important to find out what language ideologies stakeholders possess, and how these language ideologies influenced EMI adoption in selected programs in the public research universities, where the Malay language should be used as the MOI. Although language policy researchers have studied the context of Malaysia extensively, however, there is a paucity of research that investigated the adoption of EMI in Malaysian higher education in relation to the language ideology of stakeholders (for an exception, see Ali & Hamid, 2018). EMI programs are currently increasing due to Malaysia's internationalisation policy in higher education (Singh, 2019). Therefore, it should be explored that how stakeholders perceive the adoption and implementation of EMI at the institutional and individual levels in Malaysian universities.

## INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA

The internationalization of higher education is a crucial strategic catalyst for Malaysia's higher education policy. Malaysia is currently a popular study destination for students from South and Southeast Asia, and the Middle East (Rahman et al., 2021; Singh, 2016). The Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) has also stated its intention to become a globally accredited hub for

tertiary education and to accept 250,000 international students by 2025, as reported by Rahman et al. (2021). English has played a significant role in helping Malaysia achieve its ambition of becoming Asia's educational hub by providing a lingua franca to international students. Although the government has not officially approved EMI in Malaysian public research universities, it is considered a *de facto* language policy in higher education (Rahman & Singh, 2021b). Currently, in Malaysian public universities, EMI has been adopted for some of the programs in public universities, and private universities adopted English as their MOI (Ali & Hamid, 2018). The ideology is perfectly in line with the vision of Mahathir Bin Mohammad when his government launched new initiatives in 2003- that was the decision to have MOI of Mathematics and Science delivered in English in all state schools in Malaysia from 2003, relegating nationalistic language ideology (Rahman & Singh, 2021b). The rationale behind the policy that he recommended was primarily based on the notion that students would be exposed to English in higher education and job places in Malaysia and abroad (Gill, 2006; Rahman et al., 2021).

Malaysia's MOI problem has long been discussed, and parallel views on MOI can be observed in society as well as among higher education policymakers. Gill (2006) conducted an earlier study in Malaysia that looked at the elements of the transmission of MOI policy from the macro-level to the meso-and micro-levels and identified a lack of written directives on the EMI policy in public universities. According to the findings, several academics were opposed to the transition in MOI from Malay to English due to a nationalistic attitude toward the language ideology, whereas 65 percent of lecturers supported the change because they perceived English as the language of science and technology that would help students land jobs (Gill, 2006). Furthermore, the findings of the analysis of the EMI-based program in the study by Ali and Hamid (2018) indicated similar distinct points of view. According to the study, while the lecturers were required to use English as an instructional medium, it was not used as the sole language of teaching in the classes due to the frequent switch from Malay to English. Despite this, perspectives on EMI's efficiency in delivering educational results varied greatly. Ali and Hamid (2018) concluded that the linguistic environment is insufficient to allow students to improve their English communication skills, which ultimately created a blended MOI in the classroom. Furthermore, the official language in Malaysia is the Malay language, and in the context of Malaysian higher education, the Malay language is officially recognized as the MOI and the instruction is implemented in public universities (as is the case in the present study). It is essential to understand why and how English medium instruction has been adopted in several programs in public universities (as is the case in the present study). In this context, the purpose of this case study is to uncover the institutional and individual level (lecturers) ideologies about English and the preference for English as the MOI in a public research university in Malaysia.

## THE CASE STUDY

Purple University (a pseudonym) is one of Malaysia's most prestigious universities. The university has approximately 30,000 students enrolled in various first-degree and graduate courses (course work, mixed-mode, and research). Purple University offers a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs and has attracted more than 3,000 international students from more than 71 countries around the world due to its impressive track record of achievement in maintaining world-class education quality with global recognition (Purple University website, 2021). Purple University has seen an upsurge in foreign students as a result of the internationalisation thrust, and

their English-medium programs have also expanded. The university is now offering more undergraduate and postgraduate courses in English than in Malay. Data for the case study were collected from two university schools: the School of Management and the School of Industrial Technology, both of which offer Bachelor of Management and Bachelor of Technology degrees, as well as other postgraduate programs, such as master's and doctoral programs. The undergraduate programs and the lecturers who teach these courses were the focus of this research. The case study approach was being used, as it provides a thorough understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Furthermore, Purple University was selected in this study given that their case was contextually bounded, which is a significant criterion for selecting a case (Yin 2017).

TABLE 1. Participants' information

Code	Nationality	Discipline	Experience (years)	Educational qualification	Country of previous degree
EMIL1	Malaysia	School of Management	4	PhD	Malaysia
EMIL2	Bangladesh	School of Management	3	PhD	Malaysia
EMIL3	Malaysian	School of Management	12	PhD	Malaysia
EMIL4	Indian	School of Industrial Technology	7	PhD	India
EMIL5	Malaysian	School of Industrial Technology	8	PhD	Malaysia
EMIL6	Malaysian	School of Industrial Technology	13	PhD	Malaysia

Data was collected from the two oldest and largest schools in the university, with an emphasis on undergraduate degrees. The School of Management offers a Bachelor of Management in English, which is one of the most internationalised programs considering international teachers and students. Similarly, the School of Industrial Technology offers a Bachelor of Technology in English. While many other schools offer Bachelor level programs in English, given the vision of becoming a global university and the best entrepreneurial university in the world, these two schools were chosen based on participant accessibility and online data availability. Multiple sources of data were gathered to increase the robustness of the case study from a variety of publicly accessible documents, including the Purple University website and brochures for the university's focal programs, as well as semi-structured interviews with six lecturers (see Table 1 for details of the lecturers). The use of two data sources allowed for the triangulation of the data collection methods (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Language policy analysis is an established approach to explore macro- or meso-level ideology, which previous studies have adopted (see Ali & Hamid, 2018; Hu & Lei, 2014; & Rose & Mckinley, 2018; Zhang, 2018). At the microlevel, in-depth interviews have widely been used to explore the individual lecturers' ideologies of stakeholders (see Aizawa & Rose, 2019; Rahman & Singh, 2020). Since language-related ideology mediates between policies and practice (Spolsky 2009), in-depth interviews were conducted with EMI teachers, given the utility of interviews in capturing participants' views about any phenomenon and extracting rich data for case study analysis (Creswell & Poth 2017), which will explore how lecturers react ideologically and respond to the focal university's EMI policy and their ideology regarding the need, purposes, and outcomes of EMI.



Data were analysed using a thematic approach (Creswell & Poth, 2017). Transcribing, coding, categorizing, and defining the themes and data reporting for each study purpose were all part of the data analysis. First, the audio-recorded data were transcribed, resulting in a total of 4754 words, and all documents such as website content, language requirement for admission, and program curriculum were collected for analysis. A transcription member check was performed to determine the reliability of the data analysis, which is a crucial strategy to establish validity in qualitative research (Yin, 2017). Second, the data were narrowed down to 'relevant text' (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003) from the transcription and analysed documents. The data were then coded, filtered, and reduced based on the study's emphasis- institutional and individual lecturers' ideology toward English and adoption of English as MOI. Data coding involved initial coding and pattern matching between codes (Saldaña 2015). The data were further classified into meaningful units based on the coding to group distinguishable patterns found in the data. Finally, these coded and categorized data were integrated for each of the study's themes. During the reporting, findings for each theme are presented in parallel to highlight patterns of institutional policy adoption and lecturers' conceptualisations to achieve the triangulation of the findings. For example, themes related to the institutional level highlighted general trends and focused on institutional policies in relation to English and EMI, and also triangulated the findings with the views of individual lecturers on those policies in relation to English and EMI. This presentation order also encourages the positioning of English and EMI in relation to other actors and events related to EMI policy, through a contentious comparative analysis with studies undertaken in other contexts and discussion of the results through using conceptual lenses.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the analysis and analyses, as well as discusses the objectives proposed earlier, under the following themes that emerged from the data.

TABLE 2. Corresponding Objectives and Themes of the Study

Objective of the study	Stakeholder level	Source(s) of data	Themes highlighting institutional and individual lecturers' ideologies
Uncover the institutional and individual lecturers' ideologies about English and the preference of English as the MOI.	Institutional (University policy)	Document analysis of website content, language requirements of admission, analysis of program curriculum, semi-structured interviews.	<i>English as the language of choice for MOI</i> <i>English, EMI, and internationalization/globalization</i> <i>The role of EMI in the development of English language communication</i>
	Individual (lecturers)	Semi -structured interview	<i>Social value attached to English</i> <i>English as the language of academia</i> <i>Economic value of English and EMI</i>

## ENGLISH AS THE LANGUAGE OF CHOICE FOR MOI

Although Malay is the official language of Malaysia, English is widely used in Malaysian higher education, especially at Purple University. Purple University's admission criteria specifically differentiate the level of English required to enrol in programs such as the Bachelor of Management and Bachelor of Technology degrees. The following excerpt (Figure 1) was taken from the English language prerequisite sub-section of the Purple University's entry qualification in English medium program. This policy of maintaining a standardized English test as a gateway to entry into programs or universities where English is used as the medium of instruction has been widely implemented (see Bradford, 2016; Hu & Lei, 2014).

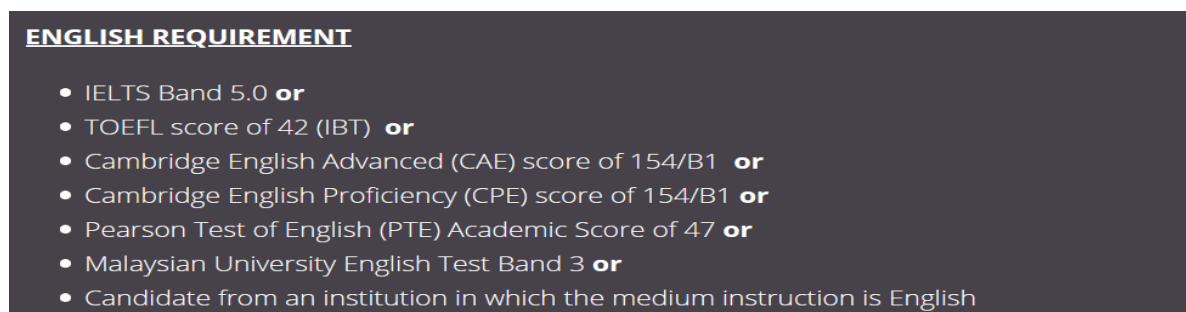


FIGURE 1. English requirements for English medium programs.

In their interviews, lecturers also emphasized on the university's English language policy, as shown in the following excerpts:

Which language is used as the medium of instruction in undergraduate programs?

[...] English is adopted in several programs of the university. Our Bachelor of Management program is an international program in which the medium of instruction is English. (EMIL3)

English is the preferred language for local students and parents as the MOI and also for the university. (EMIL5)

They [lecturer] must utilise English in classroom instruction, and students must also communicate entirely in English as well. (EMIL1)

As a key strategic shift from Malay MOI to EMI policy, all courses, except a few that are identified as Malay-medium courses, have been designated as English-medium courses. The number of English medium programs significantly exceeded the number of Malay medium programs (Purple University website). Such a scenario in other Asian countries is evident. For example, in the case study of Rahman and Singh (2020) in Bangladesh, the focal private university has adopted EMI explicitly instead of the national language Bangla, despite there being no macrolevel directive that English could be used as MOI.

## ENGLISH, EMI, AND INTERNATIONALIZATION/GLOBALIZATION

Internationalization has frequently emerged as a buzzword, as lecturers frequently stated the importance of English. Malaysia's aspiration to become a regional hub of higher education has positively influenced internationalisation. As a result, more international students as well as academics are attracted to Malaysia for higher studies and work or research. Thus, English has

become the tool of internationalisation, as there is a need for a common language of communication and instruction. As EMIL1 pointed out: *"You rarely find a classroom without international students today, automatically, you cannot speak Malay anymore,"* Furthermore, EMIL5 pointed out that *"You do not need a language policy to implement it."* Due to the presence of international students in the classroom, English becomes the lingua franca for classroom instruction. This, perhaps, is the reality of internationalised classrooms globally (Rahman & Singh, 2021a). As EMIL2 stated, *"internationalisation is necessary for higher education, so is English."* In line with the phenomenon, Coleman (2006) pointed out that by 2025 almost seven million students are estimated to be studying outside of their home country. As a result, students with mixed first languages will increase, as will the use of English for instruction.

According to the rationale provided by the lecturers, using English in higher education appears to be linked to the benefits of internationalisation, and teaching or studying the language will turn a graduate into a global citizen. This is what Brumfit (2004) indicated as a unified code of higher education, and according to Altbach & Knight (2007), aspirations such as being a major international player in higher education and preparing students for greater mobility outside the country fuelled such EMI and internationalisation ideologies. On the same ground, EMIL6 believes that *"English is a passport to today's globalised world."* EMI was adopted as a constructive tactical endeavour to prepare students for the demands and desires of economic globalisation, as well as to generate a workforce capable of working both domestically and internationally. Haidar (2018) found similar ideologies related to language in Pakistan, where English is perceived to bring endless opportunities to the world. Sah and Li (2018) explained the phenomenon as a linguistic capital in his study, which is driven by contemporary neoliberal ideologies in education. It seems that a similar discourse on English has also been instigated in Malaysian higher education.

#### THE ROLE OF EMI IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION

Although students from both national and international backgrounds (nearly all of whom are from non-native English-speaking countries) initially find it difficult to use English as MOI, considering that the entire class population is non-native English speakers, EMI adoption is widely perceived as beneficial for English language proficiency. The lecturers interviewed in this study also appear to have similar views on the use of English in teaching content and its relationship with the improvement of English language communication. According to EMIL1 *"EMI helps students to learn the content in English, the language of today's international business [...] and it helps them to be better communicators and negotiators in workplaces."* In the same vein, EMIL4, who is a lecturer at the School of Industrial Technology, believes that *"the language of science and technology is English. It is also important to learn vocabulary in English. Therefore, they would find it easier to communicate in written and oral communication while transferring knowledge."* Similarly, EMIL3 believed that *"the ability to demonstrate English language competency is advantageous for higher education students who wish to pursue higher education or employment prospects abroad, and EMI would help them in this regard."*

At the institutional level, one of the language-related ideologies that justify EMI could be found in the following objectives and outcomes of the Bachelor of Management program: *"to possess excellent communication skills (in English) to manage, process, analyse and apply information for decision making"* (Purple University Website). Furthermore, the content analysis of the program curriculum indicated that students need to complete *ten credit hours* of LSP courses



to support EMI programs. Such language-related beliefs, perhaps not explored in the context of Malaysia regarding EMI, are evident in other contexts. These views were predictable and consistent with commonly held expectations that EMI would improve English learning (see Peng & Xie, 2021). According to their meta-analysis, it is plausible that students' English learning can be aided by regular exposure to the English language. EMI's optimistic beliefs and mentality were combined with the dominant teaching ideology of the English language in non-native English-speaking countries, that is, learners would learn English simply by being exposed to it (Lei & Hu, 2014). Interestingly, although, it was evident in the interview data, and relevant studies that English language development is indirectly influencing the EMI related ideology of the university and lecturers. This somehow contradicts the prominent conception provided by Pecorari and Malmström (2018) and Macaro (2018). According to their view, EMI does not necessarily intend to develop English language proficiency. However, one of the popular ideologies regarding EMI is that language development of learners occurs through the exposure of the language. Thus, EMI would help students become proficient in English.

#### SOCIAL VALUE ATTACHED TO ENGLISH

The lecturers noted that the social values associated with English had a significant impact on student enrollment, causing universities to implement the EMI. Students and their parents demand English as an MOI in higher education in English due to the prestige of the language. As EMIL5 believed, *"In Malaysia, you would hardly find parents who do not prefer English medium schools and universities."* According to EMIL1, *"There is a widespread assumption among these stakeholders that English is a respectable language and a prosperous passport for the future."* EMIL6 explained interestingly that *"English is related to social status. No English medium means no English, and no English equals no value in Malaysia."* Both parents and students believe that English and EMI-based university programmes are valuable. Such an ideology related to English and EMI in society and education is evident in other Asian countries (see Hu & Lei, 2014; Haidar, 2019; Song, 2019). More recently, Sah and Li (2018; 2020) and Rahman and Singh (2021a) reported such views in Nepal and Bangladesh, where the role of English as a form of linguistic capital is evident, which highlights the popular views of English supremacy in society. Such adoption of EMI is often criticized due to the inequalities and divisions it creates in society through education.

#### ENGLISH AS THE LANGUAGE OF ACADEMIA

As previously said, English is the language of internationalisation and has developed as the primary language of higher education worldwide. The availability of books, journals, and/or other instructional resources in English is crucial to reinforcing the importance of English in academia. As one of the lecturers reiterated:

Language proficiency is essential for university graduates in order to achieve the necessary qualifications. We must strengthen our English-language programmes to ensure that students can study in English and accomplish academic achievement at home and around the world (EMIL2)

Another factor that appears to have aided in the introduction of EMI in higher education is the highest conceivable means for university instructors to advance their careers by focusing on publications in international journals to promote their research activities in order to earn

professional growth. As EMIL6 stated, *“If you want to write in international journals and participate in international conferences, you have to write and present in English.”*

In addition, since instructional materials are published in English, teaching, and learning content in English makes terminology easy to understand and use. For instance, books published by the international publishers are written in English; therefore, these books are easier to teach in EMI contexts. The spread of English as a language of advanced knowledge and higher education is due to its position as the academic *lingua franca* in today’s world. Language-related attitudes similar to these could be found in other contexts where EMI has been adopted. Due to the obvious benefits associated with English proficiency, English has been viewed as a need in academia in Bangladesh (Rahman et al., 2020b). Their findings indicate that the widespread opinion at the university they investigated is that English is desired at both the institutional and individual lecturers’ levels. This ideology related to English in Malaysian academia will spark the discourse of neoliberalism in higher education and its relation to the global knowledge economy, English, and the associated inequalities.

#### ECONOMIC VALUE OF ENGLISH AND EMI

English has also become the global business *lingua franca*. The economic benefits of English were mentioned several times during the interview. EMI courses are widely sought after in Malaysia, particularly by students who have completed their education in English-medium schools and have a strong command of the English language. According to EMIL5: *“In today’s globalised environment, the advantage of the English medium programme is that the EMI programme prepares students better for workplaces where English is used for communication.”* The phenomenon is well demonstrated in the study of Zainuddin et al. (2019), in which employers and students agree that English plays a significant function in employability. Furthermore, EMIL3 stated: *‘Compared to Malay based education, our graduates have stronger interpersonal communication abilities in English, which are essential for skilled positions in the private sector locally. We should not overlook the reality of today’s world.’* English-proficient graduates are in high demand in the private sector, where international business is an essential service. A similar parallel can be drawn in the contexts of Bangladesh (see Roshid et al., 2022) and Vietnam (see Doan & Hamid, 2019), where there is an increasing demand for higher levels of English proficiency in the job market, particularly in the growing private sector where English is the medium of communication. Thus, English is more than just the preferred medium of instruction; it is also driven by commercial relevance.

#### CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was to uncover Malaysian university (institutional level) and lecturers’ (individual level) language-related ideologies concerning English and EMI acceptance and implementation in their universities. Understanding the ideology of speech community stakeholders is critical, as Spolsky (2009) points out. The acceptance of language policies is influenced by the beliefs and attitudes of the stakeholders about the language. For this reason, Spolsky (2009) asserted that language policy is not made from the top down, and that all of these policies necessitate a more comprehensive framework encouraging an stakeholders’ interest in the way language is used throughout society. Several themes emerged from the study findings,

including the choice of English and EMI in Purple University, EMI and internationalisation of higher education, English as an academic language, the role of EMI in the development of English language communication and the economic and social relevance of English in Malaysia, which were discussed in light of related critical lenses and relevant concurrent studies.

Although there is no clear guideline governing the use of English as MOI in higher education at the macro level, Purple University teachers in Malaysia are considered to have positive views about English and EMI. There is agreement regarding EMI among micro-level stakeholders, and English was used in the Purple University. Widely consistent with previous work on the implementation and adoption of EMI in Asia and around the world (see Aizawa & Rose, 2018; Ali & Hamid, 2018; Hu & Lei, 2014; Rahman et al., 2020b; 2021a; Rahman & Singh, 2020), where the goal is multifaceted.

The concept of developing graduates who are internationally prepared, vocational graduates who can contribute to local economic success, and individual graduates who can blossom via higher education has been essential in EMI lecturers' positive approach. Their fervent belief that high levels of English proficiency will help Purple University and its students on an individual level has served as a rationale for a positive attitude toward English. English has been recognised as the MOI to meet these crucial demands. The current study demonstrates how lecturers, as crucial stakeholders in the issue of MOI, orient themselves towards the globalising ideologies of their institutions.

The findings also highlighted the deeply rooted reality of postcolonial contexts, including Malaysia, where the social and associated economic value of English is inevitable and the ideology of the language essentially contributed to this addition of value. Therefore, in this study, language ideology appeared to be a critical component in the creation of LPP, particularly because it has the capacity to provide the social foundation from which attitudes toward language can evolve (Ruiz, 1984; Spolsky, 2009). Although language ideology often reflects the socially justified preference for language, universities cannot always go by popular choice. They need to play their role in preserving and uplifting the language and culture of a given society, especially in the context of Purple University and Malaysia. Although a nationalistic monolingual approach (Malay only) toward language policy has long been a matter of debate in the society of Malaysia (Rahman & Singh, 2021b), such a monolingual approach toward English only MOI policy should also be critically discussed and empirically studied. Future studies, in the context of Malaysia, can also focus on topics pertaining to EMI teacher education to determine what influences teachers' language-related ideologies, beliefs, and attitudes, as well as how this change occurs over time, as recent studies have done in other contexts (Ferrell, 2020; Rahman et al., 2022).

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