English-Medium Instruction in Northern Cyprus: Problems, Possibilities, and Prospects

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Abstract The increasing waves of internationalization of higher education around the world (especially in contexts where English is not the dominant language) bring about unprecedented pressures for higher education systems around the world, and Northern Cyprus is no exception. As a manifestation of this pressing trend, institutions of higher education in the country revise the contents of their curriculum, create opportunities for staff and student mobility, upgrade their technological infrastructure, and, most remarkably, adopt English as a medium of instruction (EMI). Quantitative increases in terms of institutions and programs adopting EMI over the last couple of decades, as well as qualitative efforts to promote overall effectiveness of instruction provided within these programs, are clear testaments to the validity and relevance of the EMI phenomenon for the local higher education landscape. Departing from this premise and drawing from a local symposium that brought together key stakeholders involved in EMI practices, this chapter presents a critical review and evaluation of the local EMI landscape contextualized in historical, political, economic, and sociolinguistic dynamics. It is argued that hasty, largely unplanned, loosely controlled and regulated, volatile and rather unstable EMI implementations in higher education bring short-term financial benefits for the local economy while damaging the EMI phenomenon *per se*, commodifying education, and denigrating the credibility of Northern Cyprus and institutions of higher education therein.

Keywords English-medium instruction · Northern Cyprus · Higher education · Internationalization · Commodification

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1   Introduction

As English continues to be a global language and a major linguistic actor in the ongoing waves of globalization, it has been positioned as a linguistic flag and a neoliberal euphemism for *marketization*, *privatization*, and *internationalization* of education at all levels (Chowdhury & Phan, 2014). As a manifestation of this ongoing and global trend, we have been witnessing the proliferation of English, particularly in non-Anglophone educational contexts, in various forms and approaches, including EMI (Macaro et al., 2018). Even though there are a plethora of definitions of and discussions around the term,[1] it is commonly accepted as "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" (Macaro et al., 2018, p. 37). Today, EMI is adopted in various forms (see Macaro et al., 2019 for a discussion on language- and content-end continuum), degrees (course, programmatic or institutional levels), in primary, secondary (Eurydice Report, 2006) and tertiary levels (e.g., Wächter & Maiworm, 2014) all around the world from Europe (e., g. Erling & Hilgendorf, 2006) to Asia (e.g. Galloway et al., 2020). Collectively, these recent developments make EMI a *glocal* (symbiotically global and local) phenomenon—a phenomenon prevalent around the *globe* with a wide variety of impacts, manifestations, and implications for the *local* context.

Parallel to the unprecedented expansion of the EMI and related practices in diverse teaching contexts, scholars around the globe began to investigate various issues surrounding this phenomenon and its implications for various stakeholders. Therefore, we witness tremendous growth in moving towards a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon in such areas as follows:

- students' beliefs (e.g., Karakaş, 2016; Kırkgöz, 2014, 2018) and instructors' beliefs (e.g., Başıbek et al., 2014; Earls, 2016; Jensen & Thøgersen, 2011; Kılıçkaya, 2006)
- language proficiency of students (e.g., Kim & Shin, 2014) and instructors (e.g., Macaro, 2018; West et al., 2015)
- language(s) in the classroom (e.g., Karakaş, 2016, 2019; Kirkpatrick, 2014; Macaro, 2020)
- country-specific or areal policy reviews (e.g., Graham & Eslami, 2019; Selvi, 2014)
- critiques of EMI implementations (e.g., Ferguson, 2013; Shohamy, 2012)

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[1] It should be acknowledged that the fluidity of the EMI concept in various contexts with idiosyncratic realities and dynamics brings about a myriad of definitions and points of considerations. Interested readers may refer to Fenton-Smith et al. (2017), Macaro (2018), and Pecorari and Malmström (2018) for conceptual discussions on the problematization of the term. The operational definition adopted in this paper, however, aims to orient the reader with a preliminary scope and understanding of the concept.

- impact on English language development (e.g., Galloway et al., 2017; Rogier, 2012) and content learning (e.g., Hellekjaer, 2010)
- impact on the home language and culture (e.g., Jenkins, 2014; Kirkpatrick & Liddicoat, 2017)
- quality assurance, accreditation, and certification (e.g., Kırkgöz, 2019; Macaro et al., 2020; Staub, 2019)
- sociolinguistic ramifications on identity (e.g., Jahan & Hamid, 2019; Selvi, 2020)

Collectively, these studies scrutinizing different aspects of the EMI phenomenon and EMI implementations are a testament to the bourgeoning of this promising line of inquiry for researchers as well as attest to the importance and multifaceted nature of this phenomenon for various stakeholders, including students, instructors, educational institutions, policymakers, and governments.

The rapid, uncontrolled, and largely unplanned growth of English around the world since the 1950s has brought about an unprecedented demand for the English language, and instrumental and integrative motivations to gain new skills and perceived "linguistic capital" (Bourdieu, 1991) associated with the English language (e.g., professional entry requirements, career opportunities, higher-status, etc.). Therefore, governments and educational institutions at various levels began to devise new modes and adopt new models to cater to this widespread need. As a result, "E"MI programs, especially in non-Anglophone *markets*, are strategically *positioned*, *advertised*, and *marketed* as a gateway to "linguistic capital" and towards a better, more prestigious, higher-status, elite, upwardly-mobile future (Kirkpatrick, 2011). On the one end of the spectrum, the proponents of EMI practices often underscore such benefits as promoting academic internationalization, attracting international students, boosting learning both in linguistic and content domains, creating opportunities for staff and student mobility, widespread availability of instructional and research materials, and greater employability (see Coleman, 2006 for a summary). On the other hand, critiques base their concerns on the divisive nature of EMI (e.g., exacerbating existing sociolinguistic inequalities, forming social elites based on English language proficiency), negative impacts on the local language, culture, identity, and even social structure (see Macaro et al., 2018 for a summary). When arguments coming from both ends of the spectrum are taken into considerations, it becomes even more obvious that EMI is a controversial issue operating at the nexus of educational, linguistic, political, economic, and social strata. Thus, the complexity of making sense of the EMI phenomenon and EMI practices necessitate a closer and more comprehensive look at the local context.

With that preamble, the current chapter opens with an historical portrayal of the linguistic landscape of the island in several periods ranging from the pre-Ottoman periods to the present day. The discussion largely focuses on the local EMI landscape in Northern Cyprus, predominantly in K-12 and higher education. The remainder of the chapter draws upon from a third-leg of a symposium series, focusing on EMI policies and practices in higher education. The chapter has strategically focused on the findings from the local symposium in Northern Cyprus for several reasons. Contextually, Northern Cyprus is a relatively understudied/underexplored

context in the growing EMI literature around the world. Conceptually, the symposium brings together main stakeholders whose voices are the loudest (e.g., EMI instructors, students, instructors of academic English) and those whose voices are unheard in EMI environments (e.g., Ministry of National Education officials, YÖDAK members, and university presidents). Methodologically, the chapter draws upon the symposium report as a principal data source for analysis since the growing EMI literature around the world predominantly uses surveys/questionnaires and interviews as methodological apparatuses. The chapter ends with a conclusion synthesizing the discussion and pointing out some future directions serving as a roadmap for the future of the EMI policies and practices in the local context.

2 EMI in the Local Context: A Brief Look at Northern Cyprus

The present-day interest in, demand for, and access to English and EMI practices in Northern Cyprus exhibit completely different characteristics when considering its historical, political, and sociolinguistic trajectory over the past couple of centuries. The island of Cyprus is at the intersections of three continents (Europe, Africa, and Asia), many civilizations (Mycenaeans, Phoenician, Assyrian, Venetian, Ottoman, and British, just to name a few), and political disputes between Greek and Turkish Cypriots—the two major ethnolinguistic communities on the island. Over the years, the power dynamics on the island have shifted, and the administrative changes brought about important implications on the local language policies and educational practices.

The island was conquered and ruled by the Ottoman Empire for three centuries (1571–1878) before it became first a British protectorate (1878–1914) and eventually a Crown colony (1914–1960). The transference of administrative rights from the Venetians to the Ottomans brought Ottoman Turkish to the island in *official language* status. During the final years of the Ottoman rule, coinciding with the *Tanzimat* (Reorganization) era, Western languages, such as English and French, began to appear as subject matter in local educational curricula.

In British Cyprus, English, alongside Greek and Turkish, held an official language status and occupied a linguistic role in formal/official settings (especially with British officials) and served as a lingua franca between Turks and Greeks, when necessary (Arkın, 2013), even though its sphere of influence was rather limited (Persianis, 1978). The English School (also known as *Αγγλική Σχολή* or *İngiliz Okulu*) founded by an Anglican clergyman, Canon Frank Darvall Newham, in Nicosia in 1900, *Viktorya İnas Sanayi Mektebi* (Victoria Girls High School) founded in 1901 in Nicosia, *Omorfo Öğretmen Koleji* (Morphou Teachers' College) founded in 1937 in Morphou/Güzelyurt, and *Şekspir Mektebi* (The Shakespeare School) founded by Nejmi Sagıp Bodamyalızade in 1943 in Nicosia were prime examples of English-medium schools during this time (Vancı Osam, 2019). These schools

served as stepping stones to instrumental benefits, privileges, and job prospects at governmental institutions (Demirciler, 2003; Feridun, 2000). It could be argued that this period is characterized by the emergence of a multilingual/multicultural trend in education (Pehlivan, 2018).

The establishment of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960 also meant the establishment of Greek and Turkish as official languages of the country and the removal of English as an official language. Even though English lost its official status, it continued to exist as an important linguistic actor on the island. The intercommunal conflicts between Greek and Turkish Cypriots have escalated from 1963 onwards and solidified the divide between the people of Cyprus. During this time, Greeks and Turks designed and implemented their own educational curricula. Three Turkish Cypriot educators working at The English School, which remained in the Greek Cypriot-controlled southern Nicosia, established an English-medium institution, Kösklüçiftlik English School, in 1964 which was later called *İngiliz Koleji* (English College) in 1968 and eventually *Türk Maarif Koleji* (Turkish Education College) in 1973. The political upheaval and intercommunal strife on the island have exacerbated until Turkey's intervention in 1974, the formation of *Kıbrıs Türk Federe Devleti* (The Turkish Federated State of Cyprus) in 1975, establishment of *Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti* (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, abbreviated as TRNC) after 8 years of failed peace negotiations between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. More interestingly, these changes resulted in political, physical, ideological, and linguistic homogenization and partition for Turkish and Greek Cypriot communities living on the island.

Today, the island of Cyprus is a partitioned state constituted by the Republic of Cyprus (*Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία*), a European Union member state claiming *de jure* sovereignty over the entire island in the south, and Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (*Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti*), an independent state recognized only by Turkey in the north. Therefore, while the former has Greek and Turkish as official languages, the latter adopt Turkish as an official language. Educational institutions at all levels (primary, secondary, and tertiary) provide English courses. Furthermore, selective public schools (e.g., Türk Maarif Koleji) and almost all private K-12 schools (e.g., The English School of Kyrenia, Necat British College, Near East College, and TED Northern Cyprus College, among others) adopt EMI.

Institutions of higher education have a special role and importance in the EMI landscape in Northern Cyprus and therefore deserve substantially greater attention. From a legal perspective, Article 36(3) of the TRNC Higher Education Law (2005) describes the government's position governing the medium of instruction at higher education institutions as follows:

> Yükseköğretim kurumlarında öğretim dili İngilizcedir. Ancak mütevelli heyeti veya yöneticiler kurulunca belirlenen program/programlar ve/veya dersler, YÖDAK[2] 'ın onayı halinde, Türk dilinde ve/veya başka geçerli bir dilde de yürütülebilir. [The medium of instruction in

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[2]Abbreviated as YÖDAK, *Yükseköğretim Planlama, Denetleme, Akreditasyon ve Koordinasyon Kurulu* (The Higher Education Planning, Evaluation, Accreditation, and Coordination Council) is a governmental body responsible for planning and regulating higher education in the country.

higher education institutions is English, However, with the approval of YÖDAK, the program/programs and/or courses determined by the Board of Trustees or Board of Directors could be offered in Turkish and/or any other valid language.] (translation by the author)

Together with tourism, higher education is labeled as "a leading sector," extending economic growth and development in the local context (KEI, 2012). For this reason, government officials and promotional materials of these institutions often use the expression *üniversite adası* (a university island) when referring to Northern Cyprus (Baykan et al., 2018). The data provided by the *Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti, Milli Eğitim ve Kültür Bakanlığı, Yüksek Öğrenim ve Dış İlişkiler Dairesi Müdürlüğü* (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Ministry of National Education and Culture Directorate of Higher Education and Foreign Affairs), as summarized in Table 1, indicates that a total of 103,748 students are studying at one of the 21 institutions of higher education on the island (HEFA, n.d.). When broken down in terms of demographic backgrounds, about 12% (or 12,243) of the students are Turkish Cypriots, 48.5% (or 50,286) come from Turkey, and almost 40% of the students are international students coming from 140 countries around the world (HEFA, n.d.). Excluding Turkey from the picture, the top five countries providing international students are Nigeria, Jordan, Syria, Cameroon, and Iran (Ernur, 2019).

We have been witnessing an inexorable, staggering, and largely unplanned growth in the number of institutions providing higher education in Northern Cyprus (see Fig. 1 below). Especially in the last decade, the higher education landscape of the island has changed drastically and is characterized by privatization. In addition to 21 institutions, more than a dozen institutions are currently in different stages of establishment (Büke, 2019). However, as Ekici (2019) acknowledges, "the higher education in Northern Cyprus is largely supplied by profit-maximizing institutions, and the policymakers constantly refer to higher education as the 'key economic sector'" (p. 232) as it leads to more employment opportunities, greater revenues for small businesses, more rental income. For this reason, policies and practices undergirding higher education in the local context are under heavy criticism for leading to the *commodification of education* and converting the north of the island into *ücretli üniversiteler cenneti* (private university heaven) (Maviş, 2013).

From a socio-educational perspective, Northern Cyprus has a unique status—Even though the total number of international students studying in Turkish universities (154,505) is more than three times higher than the students studying at Northern Cyprus universities (41,219), their ratio to the total number of students portrays a drastically different picture—40% in Northern Cyprus whereas only 2.5% in

Table 1 University students in Northern Cyprus in 2019 (HEFA, n.d.)

Origin	Number	Percentage (%)
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus	12,243	11.80
Republic of Turkey	50,286	48.46
Other countries	41,219	39.72
TOTAL	103,748	100

The percentages do not add up to 100 due to rounding
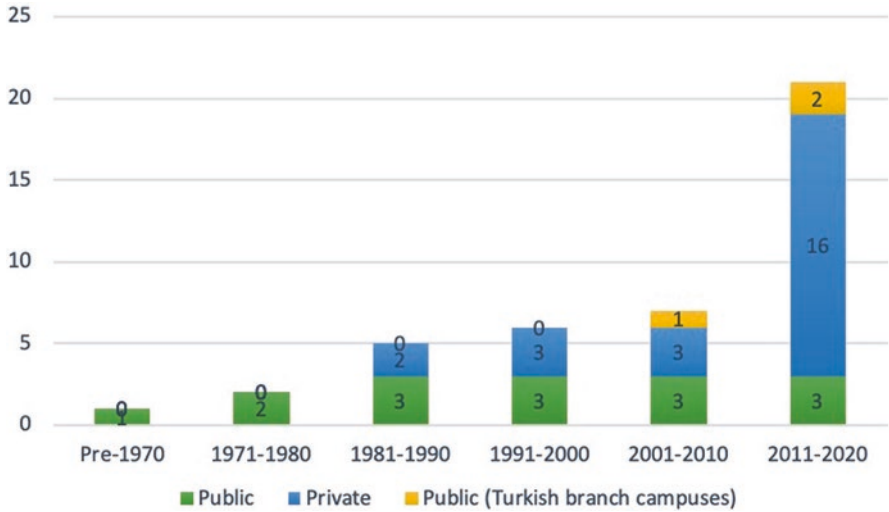
Fig. 1 The aggregate growth of higher education institutions in Northern Cyprus

Turkey. A natural consequence of these numbers is campuses and cities with multilingual and multicultural vibes. Therefore, English stands out not just as a lingua franca in communication but also as an academic lingua franca and a practical choice as a medium of communication. In sum, both demographic figures (quantitatively) and ethnolinguistic diversity among international students (qualitatively) underscore the importance of English as a medium of communication and instruction within and beyond university campuses in Northern Cyprus.

3 The EMI Symposium in Northern Cyprus

Back in 2018, a symposium series, entitled *Üniversitelerde İngilizcenin Eğitim Dili Olarak Kullanımı: Bütüncül Bir Yaklaşım* (English-medium instruction at institutions of higher education: A holistic approach), has been initiated in response to the pressing needs and issues surrounding the EMI phenomenon and practices facing a wide variety of EMI stakeholders in higher education. The inaugural symposium was held in İstanbul (in collaboration with Boğaziçi University and Kadir Has University in June 2018) and followed by an event in İzmir (organized by İzmir University of Economics in October 2018). The third and the penultimate event, before the culminating nation-wide meeting hosted by Middle East Technical University (METU) in Ankara in April 2019, focused on the context of Northern Cyprus. Organized in close cooperation between METU Northern Cyprus Campus and Eastern Mediterranean University, the one-day symposium was held in Turkish at Eastern Mediterranean University in Famagusta, Northern Cyprus, in November 2018.

The symposium in Northern Cyprus brought together key stakeholders involved in the EMI processes (e.g., EMI instructors, students, instructors of academic English) as well as those high-profile stakeholders that are important yet often absent from the mainstream discussions and literature (e.g., Ministry of National Education officials, YÖDAK members, and university presidents). The symposium was organized in three major sections:

1. **The administrators' panel session**, entitled "the role and importance of EMI in institutions of higher education in Northern Cyprus," bringing together high-profile stakeholders (e.g., university presidents/vice presidents and senior-level governmental policymakers),
2. **The practitioners' panel session**, entitled "the problems encountered in programs offering EMI in institutions of higher education in Northern Cyprus," bringing together various stakeholders within institutions of higher education, and
3. **Breakout sessions**, entitled "the problems encountered by and suggestions for improvement for instructors offering courses in English as a medium of instruction programs," bringing together various stakeholders in EMI environments.

3.1   The Administrators Panel Session

High-profile discussants in the first panel session focused on English language teaching and EMI practices in Northern Cyprus and contextualized their discussion in two major areas: (1) the local sociopolitical, historical, linguistic, and geopolitical dynamics creating Northern Cyprus as a unique case in EMI practices, and (2) language policies and language of science in higher education (Vancı Osam et al., 2019).

First, focusing on the historical trajectory of English and EMI practices in the local context presents Northern Cyprus and Turkey as interrelated yet distinct cases. The emergence of English and EMI practices in Turkey could be viewed as a consequence of waves of globalization, internationalization, and global competitiveness. However, English in (Northern) Cyprus has an undeniable role and importance in the historical consciousness, individual and collective memory, educational curricula, and even daily life. The traces of English in British Cyprus (e.g., loyalty to the British Crown, English language skills serving as a gateway for tertiary education in Britain, financial gains and losses for governmental employees based on linguistic skills) influenced the constant restructuring of the island as it transitioned from the British colony to a republic and eventually a political stalemate (e.g., teacher training institutes, EMI practices in public and private K-12 institutions, and giving EMI a legal status by the Higher Education Law). These historical factors eventually enabled local policymakers to strategically position institutions of higher education as highly attractive options for international students. Thus, the number of international students (excluding Turkey) has increased more than tenfold (3813 in

2009 to 41,219 in 2019) (Karabaş, 2015). Furthermore, despite the exponential quantitative growth in international students and EMI institutions (especially private institutions), the qualitative effectiveness of instructional practices at EMI institutions is still questionable. Today, nearly 6000 faculty members (2578 from TRNC, 2195 from Turkey, and 982 from 90 different countries) working in 21 institutions of higher education in Northern Cyprus (Ernur, 2019). Therefore, there is definitely a clear need to support EMI instructors in their day-to-day interactions with the growing student body.

Next, panelists focused on policies concerning the language of instruction and science in institutions of higher education. They referred to EMI as a strategic decision conducive to the sociolinguistic and educational trajectory on the island. On the other hand, participants also acknowledged that this strategic decision comes with a set of consequences—valuing English over other languages (including the local language(s)), contributing to the idea of lessening the importance of local language(s) as a medium of instruction and language of science, influencing the national identity through English as an academic lingua franca. Furthermore, discussants suggested that presenting Northern Cyprus as a *university island* is nothing but a misnomer since this hollow nomenclature only serves to underscore the quantitative increase over the years and perpetuating the widespread perception that universities are established as backbones of the *higher education sector,* bringing *financial revenue* to the country. Instead, the participants agreed that the primary motivation behind the establishment of higher education should be the advancement of science. Finally, senior-level administrators and policymakers voiced the language question surrounding the EMI practices and highlighted the critical importance of high-quality language teaching practices in K-12 (and offered suggestions of such models as sheltered instruction and content and language-integrated instruction) in promoting EMI implementations at the tertiary level.

3.2   Practitioners Panel Session

The second panel session brought together various stakeholders at the forefront of EMI practices in the local context, namely EMI instructors (both social science and engineering), administrators in schools of foreign languages, and undergraduate students taking EMI courses (Vancı Osam et al., 2019).

Students in the panel listed the problems that they faced as follows: the expectation of completing English preparatory school at a relatively fast pace, the difficulty in handling the linguistic and subject-matter demands in the early years of the program, and lack of continued support mechanisms geared towards EMI. Responding to the concerns raised by the students, EMI instructors recognized the extension of undergraduate-level courses to promote students' language development, especially in their areas of specialization. They also recognized the vitality of greater collaborative and concerted efforts between academic programs and schools of foreign

languages. In the long-term, EMI instructors agreed upon the post-graduate benefits of these programs (e.g., wider employment opportunities, greater professional network). In the short term, they believed that EMI practices necessitate a novel approach in terms of instructional design, materials, and practices, both within and beyond the classroom. Finally, panelists argued that the EMI processes and products should be validated by internal and external quality control and assurance mechanisms such as self-appraisals and program accreditations.

Even though EMI environments primarily consist of instructors and students, language instructors (both within the intensive English programs before students begin their studies as well as within modern language programs throughout their academic programs) are largely invisible and overlooked yet important actors in the EMI landscape in higher education. Considering the fact that a great majority of the students come to EMI environments with an established linguistic background in their home languages, instructors in the panel recognized the difficulty that students face in handling both linguistic and subject matter demands in EMI courses. Furthermore, they suggested that the existing *one-year pre-undergraduate intensive academic English program* model is largely inadequate in subject-specific demands in the English language. Instructors of English also raised their concerns with regards to their students' productive language skills (especially in speaking) and acknowledged the importance of the language beyond academic programs and in ensuring multilingual and multicultural campus environments.

In courses where students in EMI courses face difficulties with comprehending the language, and thus subject matter, instructors need to adopt strategies to scaffold their instruction—teaching at a slower pace, making content more accessible and comprehensible by using concept maps and audiovisual materials, using signposts, recycling of the content in a meaningful manner, writing technical keywords on the board or projecting on a slide, and conducting the individual sessions in smaller yet meaningful chunks involving pair and group work divided by different forms of assessment ensuring comprehension (Arkın, 2013). Furthermore, technology-supported approaches (e.g., video recordings of the course materials, blended or flipped learning applications) could be adopted in these environments to maximize student learning. Similarly, in courses where the EMI instructor faces linguistic and instructional difficulties, solutions may include but not limited to providing in-service training for EMI instructors that value comprehensibility and fluency over obsessions with native accent and accuracy, spending more time and energy in course planning, and maintaining a constructive communication channel with the course participants.

3.3   Breakout Sessions

In this segment of the symposium, a total of 5 working groups (each of which consisting of 5–7 participants representing various stakeholders in EMI practices) were established around a hypothetical yet plausible scenario related to EMI

implementations in institutions of higher education (Vancı Osam et al., 2019). Each of these working groups discussed these scenarios and expected to generate a set of solutions under three major categories, namely (1) preventive solutions, (2) immediate solutions (in the classroom), and (3) corrective and improvement solutions. After the initial discussions that lasted for 30–35 min, the group spokesperson for each group presented their groups' viewpoints and solutions[3] in a 5–8-min presentation to the entire symposium attendees. Table 2 below summarizes the solutions in hypothetical EMI scenarios generated by various working groups that participated in the symposium.

4   Conclusion and Future Directions

Referred to as "an unstoppable train which has already left the station" (Macaro et al., 2019, p. 232), the EMI phenomenon, as well as practices, environments and their ramifications, will continue to be at the center of discussions, debates, and even critical engagements. Therefore, developing a critical, comprehensive, and multifaceted look at EMI involving multiple stakeholders will certainly be a worthwhile endeavor at individual, instructional, administrative, institutional, and societal levels. This is a particularly important step in the context of Northern Cyprus, where EMI practices (especially in higher education) are strategically situated at the crux of internationalization in an unrecognized state.

The local higher education landscape in Northern Cyprus is characterized by a set of entangled and contradictory discourses. On the one hand, higher education is seen as a form of "student tourism" (Katırcıoğlu, 2010), mostly privatized and regulated by business families, and creating major thrust in employment as well as in the service sector, which collectively accounts for roughly 40% of the local economy (Mehtap-Smadi & Hashemipour, 2011). On the other hand, the grandiose mission to become a hub for higher education serves as a resilient border-crossing attempt to destabilize its current political status and its ramifications (e.g., restrictions, embargoes, isolations) and connecting the Turkish Cypriot community with the world (Koldaş et al., 2018). Interestingly, in both sets of discourses, EMI practices stand out as an indispensable aspect of the picture and hence the local higher education landscape. However, since EMI is a highly controversial phenomenon placing individuals and institutions at different positions on the ideological spectrum, it is imperative to begin the reflection process by concretizing the rationale behind this choice and addressing the *why?* question in EMI practices. This is particularly important since "many of these EMI programs have been established without any real planning or thought for the potential implications" (Macaro et al., 2019, p. 237).

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[3] It should be noted that the suggestions presented in this section were developed by a diverse group of EMI stakeholders with varying degrees of experience, expertise, involvement in and commitment to EMI processes, and therefore, should be treated with some caution.

Table 2 Preventive, immediate, and corrective and improvement solutions in hypothetical EMI scenarios developed by the symposium attendees

Scenarios	Preventive solutions	Immediate solutions	Corrective and improvement solutions
(1) EMI instructor with high competence in subject matter yet limited competence in English	Awareness raising and promoting linguistic competence in Ph.D. programs EMI competence to be included in employment processes (e.g., EMI teaching demo, EMI certification) Certification training for those lacking competence	Peer support from a colleague with EMI experience and expertise in the same program Reviewing course materials prior to teaching Implementing novel instructional models (e.g., flipped learning, promoting autonomous learning)	Intensive in-service training offered by the institution Developing an action plan between the employer (university) and the employee (instructor) Establishment of an EMI center at the institution of higher education to provide in-service training
(2) EMI instructor with high competence in English and subject matter yet has a heterogeneous group of students in terms of language skills	During the instruction Using audiovisual materials to boost comprehension Encouraging group work by creating heterogeneous working groups Instructional planning of activities to serve as a bridge between what students already know and what they will learn After the instruction Using visually enhanced concept mapping Implementing novel instructional models (e.g., flipped learning)	Making instructional input more comprehensible Toning down the instructional pace Maintaining a constant feedback channel with the students Increasing comprehension by personalized examples Diversifying working groups (e.g., individual, peer, small group, seminar)	Identifying the linguistic needs of the students in EMI programs and developing a roadmap to meet them Promoting collaborative endeavors between EMI instructors and instructors of academic English to meet the linguistic needs of the students in EMI programs

(continued)

Table 2 (continued)

Scenarios	Preventive solutions	Immediate solutions	Corrective and improvement solutions
(3) Both the EMI instructor and the students with limited competence in English	For instructors: Revising the hiring processes to be more sensitive to assessing EMI instructors' general language proficiency (using internationally-recognized tests such as TOEFL, IELTS, PTE, etc.) and actual use of language skills in instruction (through a model EMI demo lesson) Offering a course on the "Pedagogy of EMI" for instructors with no background in education yet currently employed by the institution of higher education For students: Extending the instructional hours allocated to language development Increasing the minimum scores in language proficiency exams to begin EMI programs	For instructors: Offering an intensive "EMI awareness and support" training encompassing linguistic and instructional approaches For students: Offering training on study skills concretized by a cooperative model such as a peer support mechanism	Systematic monitoring of their development and needs at regular intervals Providing institutional support to the instructors offering EMI courses to enhance their effectiveness (in such domains as linguistic competence, instructional language use, approaches and techniques adopted in instruction, development of high-quality instructional materials, among others) Conducting formative and summative appraisals of development through student, peer, and mentor evaluations Institutionalizing the EMI processes and support mechanisms Offering continuous and individualized language support for students in EMI programs
(4) EMI instructor with high competence in English but no experience teaching in English	Revising the hiring processes to be more sensitive to assessing EMI instructors' general language proficiency (using internationally-recognized tests such as TOEFL, IELTS, PTE, etc.) and actual use of language skills in instruction (through a model EMI demo lesson)	Creating opportunities for self-reflection (through video recording) Receiving support from peers with greater experience and expertise (working in the same or different programs), students (with whom they work), and English language instructors (especially on developing effective instructional materials and delivery)	Adopting a holistic and multi-stakeholder model in improving EMI processes (peer mentoring, support by language specialists, institutional support mechanisms)

Table 2 (continued)

Scenarios	Preventive solutions	Immediate solutions	Corrective and improvement solutions
(5) EMI instructor with high competence in and teaching in English but having difficulty in managing a multicultural environment	Emphasizing the importance of establishing rapport with course participants (getting to know students, developing greater awareness about their backgrounds, cultures, beliefs, socio-academic motivations) and extracurricular activities promoting harmony, intercultural sensitivity, and inclusivity (e.g., international student festival)	Supporting small- and group work to minimize ethnic and cultural differences Foregrounding global or international examples in EMI courses Enhancing the accessibility of instruction by adopting a slower pace, more audiovisual materials, and novel instructional models (e.g., hybrid or flipped learning)	Generating institutionalized mechanisms and solutions to support students in EMI programs and institutions (e.g., Teaching and Learning Center) Improving the physical infrastructure of the institution enabling the implementation of various instructional strategies Supporting EMI instructors in developing instructional materials conducive to the multicultural student profile Supporting students through orientations, awareness training, peer and individualized support

Concretizing EMI as a strategic decision in the local context should encourage stakeholders to justify their intentional and rational decisions contextualized in the socio-educational, linguistic, and political dynamics and trajectories in societies therein. More specifically, EMI-related decisions should be informed by needs, necessities, and aspirations rather than hasty moves joining the bandwagon and connecting the dots between EMI and neoliberal discourses—propagating pseudo-internationalization through Englishization, viewing students as customers and sources of revenue, using multiculturalism and multilingualism as euphemisms for EMI, prioritizing institutional and national economic revenues over the quality of education, and fetishizing with institutional rankings and performance indicators (e.g., university rankings, frameworks, etc.).

The falling of this first, biggest, and most important domino piece will knock the rest down—informing the subsequent decisions, actors, processes, environments, and mechanisms, which may all be summarized as the *how?* question. EMI, as a strategic decision, needs a comprehensive and consistent response evident in every aspect of an educational institution, anything from instructional practices to hiring processes. More specifically, it will be very helpful in adopting a framework undergirding the EMI practices, defining goals in the subject matter and English (vis-à-vis other languages in the local linguistic ecology), determining affordances and

constraints in the successful implementation of EMI, and devising support mechanisms throughout the entire process. In social and educational contexts such as Northern Cyprus, where EMI is the norm rather than the exception, and English is used as an intranational lingua franca in multilingual/multicultural campuses and cities, the role, and importance of English transcends EMI classes and permeates into all spheres of life. Moreover, this is an important step towards a more concerted, systematic and comprehensive response involving both visible and invisible stakeholders involved in EMI implementations, which, as Macaro et al. (2019) remind us, is traditionally "'dumped' on the faculty and students with little consultation, preparation, and compensation (Hamid & Nguyen, 2016)" (p. 235). EMI practices need to be strategically recognized, carefully planned, and systematically controlled by respective institutions of higher education, as well as with some support by the national council of higher education and internationally recognized independent bodies of accreditation.

Even though answering both, *why?* and *how?* questions are helpful, they are far from being the entire picture. As a controversial phenomenon situated at the nexus of educational, ideological, sociolinguistic, economic and social strata of societies, EMI as a strategic decision brings about a set of implications at individual, instructional, administrative, institutional, and societal levels, which may be summarized in *what (does it mean for)?* question. More specifically, stakeholders involved in this endeavor need to answer the questions, including but not limited to, the following:

- What are the principles and policies undergirding language(s) in the local linguacultural ecology? To what extent is EMI congruent with these policies?
- What are the micro- (individual stakeholders), meso- (institutional), and macro-level (national) attitudes towards EMI practices?
- Are EMI stakeholders on board with this model? Do we have substantial empirical evidence about their predispositions?
- What do EMI implementations mean for the home language(s) in the local linguacultural ecology? How does it reconfigure the symbolic and instrumental values ascribed to English and languages other than English as a medium of communication, instruction, and science?
- What are the affordances and challenges (to be) faced in the successful implementation of EMI practices?
- Do EMI practitioners come to these environments having received proper professional development geared towards the unique needs of this context? Also, do they continue receiving training and support throughout their instructional experience? Are there tools, mechanisms, structures, resources (physical, human, etc.) in place to maintain these processes?
- Do students come to these environments having received information about the needs and expectations of this context? Also, do they receive training and support throughout their academic programs? Are there tools, mechanisms, structures, resources (physical, human, etc.) in place to maintain these processes?

As a discursive field of neoliberalism, globalization, and human capital (Pennycook, 2016), the "E" (English) in EMI will continue to be both the product and process of ongoing negotiation and reconstruction of identities and complexities embedded therein (Selvi, 2020). From an EMI perspective, Northern Cyprus presents an interesting case with its own idiosyncrasies and contradictions. Even though the remnants of its colonial past are somewhat indistinct today, the historical presence of English as a colonial language alongside local languages (Greek and Turkish, as well as others) has trickled down to societal and educational levels and remained stable in a context of instability over the last century. From a societal point of view, Turkish Cypriot diaspora living in the UK and other English-speaking countries (e.g., the US, Australia, Canada), British expatriate community living on the island, the utilization of English as a lingua franca between Turkish and Greek Cypriots as well as with others coming from different ethnolinguistic backgrounds on the island all contributed to forging and sustaining ties with the English language. From an educational point of view, English managed to maintain its stature in all levels of education—the importance attached to English instruction in the entire K-12 level, the promotion of EMI practices in selective public and private K-12 institutions, and attributing a legal status to EMI in higher education. From a sociopolitical perspective, Northern Cyprus finds itself in a constant transformation as a country whose identity pulled in different directions—stuck between *independent* and *not recognized by international law*, defined through such metaphors as *yavru vatan* (baby motherland) or even *besleme* (servant) by some Turks and as *μικρή-πατρίδα* (our small land) by Greeks, and marginalized in power-sharing arrangements by being labeled as "minority" by their Greek counterparts. Overwhelmed by political isolation and economic sanctions paving the way to deepening the economic and political ties and dependence on Turkey, Northern Cyprus sought new economic spaces for advancement. The dearth of a systematic approach to language and language-in-education policies and planning, and neoliberal economic policies packaged in terms of *internationalization* and instrumentalized in *Englishization* and *EMI* have collectively contributed to the treatment of higher education as an indisputable backbone of the local economy in the last couple of decades. As a result, we have been witnessing hasty, largely unplanned, loosely controlled and regulated, volatile and rather unstable EMI implementations in higher education, bringing short-term financial benefits for the local economy while damaging the EMI phenomenon *per se*, commodifying education, and denigrating the reputation of Northern Cyprus and the institutions of higher education therein.

The one-day EMI symposium in November 2018 was a first and concrete step towards externalizing the opportunities, challenges, and controversies surrounding the local EMI implementations in the local institutions of higher education. The holistic approach bringing together various stakeholders sharing the same common denominator should serve as a viable model for future discussions. The development of a systematic approach to the local EMI landscape necessitates identification fulfillment and constant improvement of principles, resources, processes, practices,

support mechanisms throughout the entire process. Only then we can begin talking about the importance of EMI as a strategic decision for institutions of higher education.

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