

The Leicester Applied Linguistics Guest Lecture series
is pleased to announce a talk by

Magdalena Walenta
on
Beyond Content: Rethinking the Role of Language in EMI



When: Wednesday, 25 June 2025

Time: 13.00 UK

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Abstract

English-Medium Instruction (EMI) is a rapidly expanding global phenomenon, yet its implementation remains complex and multifaceted. While EMI is often seen as a tool for internationalization, workforce preparation, and integrated content-language learning, research suggests that key elements are missing from its methodology. Drawing on longitudinal mixed-method empirical studies conducted in Poland, my talk will explore the factors shaping EMI experiences, identified through an analysis of teachers' and students' practices, beliefs, and EMI program outcomes. The results highlight how language concerns consistently emerge as a major stumbling block to effective content learning. Based on these insights, I will outline strategies to help educators and students navigate EMI's complexities, reinforcing Brumfit's (1997, p. 93) argument that Applied

Linguistics is the "investigation of real-world problems in which language is a central issue" – one that requires collaboration between disciplinary experts and linguists.

Bio-note

Dr Magdalena Walenta is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of English Studies, University of Warsaw. Her research focuses on CLIL/EMI, disciplinary literacy, language processing, and the theory-practice nexus in linguistics. In her book *Form-Function Mapping in Content-Based Language Teaching* (Springer International, 2019) and her IJBEB article (2018), she proposes Content-Based Structured Input (CBSI), a processing-based framework for supporting adult interlanguage development in CLIL. Her recent research explores tertiary EMI, examining the interplay of linguistic, disciplinary, and socio-cultural factors. She also holds an M.A. in Architecture and practiced for 10 years. Straddling both fields, she coordinates EMI programs at the Warsaw University of Technology and trains faculty in EMI methodologies. She is the founder of the English Medium Education Research Group (EMERGE), based at University of Warsaw (<http://www.emerge.uw.edu.pl/>), and coordinator of the Content Educator SIG at ICLHE (<https://www.iclhe.org/rgs-sigs>), fostering international collaboration in EMI-related research and practice.