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Exploring The Current Status of The English Proficiency Level of Teachers Using English as a Medium of Instruction in Lebanon: Case Study

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ABSTRACT: This research paper dives into the English-speaking capability of instructors in multilingual instructive settings, with a particular center on Lebanon. Within the era of English-medium instruction, this study addresses the central question of how proficient instructors are in spoken English. Whereas English has picked up prominence as the language of instruction globally, there is a lack of research investigating this issue in non-native English-speaking settings. The urgency of this research emerges from its potential impact on students' educational encounters and results. By utilizing the IELTS test, we evaluated the speaking capacities of instructors. Our discoveries uncover that a critical proportion of instructors demonstrated a moderately low level of English-speaking proficiency. This study fills a significant gap within the literature and offers insights into the challenges and suggestions of English-medium instruction in non-native English-speaking nations. In addition, the results of IELTS speaking assessments reveal a critical variability in English language proficiency among instructors in an English-medium instruction setting, with particular concerns regarding low scores in speaking, highlighting the need for targeted professional advancement and custom-made support to upgrade effective communication and instructional effectiveness. Thus, our research has far-reaching implications for instructive policy and informs global language instruction techniques.

KEY WORDS: Speaking abilities, English-medium instruction, IELTS test, teacher training programs, multilingual environments.

I.INTRODUCTION

A) General Background

The worldwide prominence of the English language in today's interconnected world cannot be overstated. It has advanced into a lingua franca, serving as a bridge for universal communication, exchange, diplomacy, and academia (Khan, 2013). In a period characterized by globalization, cross-border collaborations, and the advanced age, English has ended up the common medium through which individuals from different etymological and social foundations interact and trade thoughts. While its role as a worldwide language is verifiable, its impact rises above worldwide diplomacy and business—it reaches deep into the heart of instructive settings, where English serves as a medium of instruction for a wide range of subjects (Baron, 2020). This situation holds true not only in English-speaking nations but expands to countries where English isn't the mother tongue. Thus, the capacity of teachers to successfully communicate and teach in English has developed as a paramount concern, because it specifically impacts students' comprehension, educational attainment, and overall learning encounters (Mutambik, 2018). Inside this setting, the focus on speaking aptitudes inside the realm of English language proficiency expect specific significance, because it is essential to cultivating an engaging, interactive, and conducive classroom environment.

The Worldwide Significance of English: A Lingua Franca for Multifaceted Communication:

To appreciate the significant importance of English language capability in education, it is basic to first recognize its status as a worldwide lingua franca. English has risen above national borders and social boundaries to become a universally recognized implies of communication. Its selection as the preferred dialect for worldwide diplomacy, exchange, and scientific research is a confirmation to its unparalleled reach and impact (Bachir et al., 2011).

Within the domain of universal communication, English plays a significant role in bridging linguistic divides. It serves as an unbiased medium through which people from differing language foundations can communicate viably. Whether it



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is a business transaction between multinational enterprises, a diplomatic discourse between nations, or the exchange of scientific research discoveries, English regularly serves as the dialect of choice for facilitating seamless and proficient intuitive. This phonetic neutrality guarantees that no single nation's dialect predominates, advancing fairness, openness, and inclusivity in worldwide communication (Bachir et al., 2011).

English's centrality is especially articulated within the field of trade and commerce. In today's globalized economy, businesses routinely engage with partners, suppliers, and customers across worldwide borders. English gives a common stage for these intuitive, empowering organizations to explore the complexities of the worldwide marketplace. It encourages the transaction of contracts, the drafting of agreements, and the trade of product information, guaranteeing that commercial exchanges happen with clarity and accuracy (Yu, 2018).

Besides, English is the lingua franca of academia. It serves as the medium through which analysts, researchers, and academics spread their disclosures and engage in scholarly talk. Research papers, conferences, and scholarly journals predominantly utilize English to reach a more extensive, international audience. This inclusivity guarantees that information and insights are available to scholars around the world, rising above etymological boundaries and fostering a collaborative worldwide academic community (Baron, 2020).

In outline, English's role as a lingua franca is foundational to worldwide communication, facilitating diplomacy, trade, and scholarly endeavours. Its neutrality and universality guarantee that different people and substances can communicate successfully, rising above linguistic boundaries and improving cooperation on a global scale. Thus, examining the level of abilities when it comes to using this language as a medium to teach students becomes imperative. This study will evaluate teachers' abilities to convey their lessons through this language using the IELST assessment test.

English as the Medium of Instruction in Multilingual Educational Environments:

The impact of English extends past international diplomacy, trade, and academia; it penetrates the domain of education. In numerous nations, English has been embraced as the essential medium of instruction, even when it isn't the native dialect. This phenomenon reflects a broader trend in education, driven by the crave to prepare students with English language aptitudes and plan them for a globalized world (Bozkırlı & Er, 2018).

In several multilingual educational situations, English serves as the channel through which information is imparted and students engage with different subjects. Science, mathematics, history, and other disciplines are instructed in English, marking a departure from the conventional practice of teaching them only within the native language. This shift is driven by a few compelling reasons (Bozkırlı & Er, 2018):

Firstly, English is seen as a portal to worldwide openings. Proficiency in English opens entryways to higher education institutions, research opportunities, and international career prospects. It improves students' competitiveness within the worldwide job market and prepares them with the aptitudes required to flourish in an interconnected world.

Furthermore, English-medium instruction encourages cross-cultural understanding. It permits students from diverse linguistic and social foundations to interact, collaborate, and learn together. This diversity enhances the educational encounter, cultivating tolerance, empathy, and worldwide awareness.

Thirdly, the globalization of information has made English an essential instrument for accessing information. The endless majority of educational assets, counting textbooks, scholastic journals, and online substance, are accessible in English. Educating in English guarantees that students have free access to these resources, empowering them to engage with the latest research and advancements in their areas.

However, the appropriation of English as the medium of instruction isn't without its challenges. Teachers, especially those whose native language isn't English, confront the demanding assignment of conveying complex subject matter viably in a non-native dialect. The ability to communicate and teach in English has become an essential factor in deciding the quality of instruction and students' learning results (Sarwar et al., 2014).

This paper addresses the basic issue of assessing teachers' speaking capabilities in English, centering on those who teach subjects other than English in English-medium instruction settings. The objective of this study is to evaluate the English-speaking capability of instructors working in multilingual instructive situations. Our research delves into the current status of instructors in Lebanon who, due to the language of instruction, are compelled to utilize English as the medium for conveying complex subject matter.

B) Problem Statement

In education, English's adoption as a medium of instruction plans students for worldwide opportunities, cultivates cross-cultural understanding, and gives access to a wealth of instructive resources. However, non-native English-speaking instructors in this setting face the challenge of interactively teaching complex subjects in English such as linguistic challenges and cultural ones (Oktaviani, 2019). Moreover, our Lebanese context has minimal studies investigating the current status of the English proficiency level of the teachers who are using the English as a medium of instruction (EMI) ;



Not to forget that the effectiveness of using English as a medium of instruction (EMI) in the classroom has not been thoroughly investigated. Examining EMI and content teachers' roles at the "micro level" and how it can aid in comprehending the realities and usefulness of switching to an English-speaking environment (Nicolas & Annous, 2021). Since numerous content Teachers in EFL environments do not believe that they are in charge of teaching English (Nicolas & Annous, 2015)- despite the belief that EMI inherently improves students' English proficiency that originates from the theories of content-based learning (CBL) (Richards & Rodgers, 2014) -Thus this case study, conducted in a Lebanese school, focuses on evaluating the speaking capacities of instructors in Lebanon, who teach subjects other than English in English-medium instruction settings (like Math, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, etc.), utilizing the IELTS test to gauge their proficiency. The central research question is: To what degree do these instructors in Lebanon demonstrate capability in spoken English? The discoveries will inform the quality of education and students' learning encounters in multilingual educational situations.

C) Research Objective and Question:

Objective: The essential objective of this research is to assess the speaking abilities of instructors who instruct subjects other than English in English-medium instruction settings utilizing the IELTS test.

Research Question: To what degree do instructors in Mount Lebanon, teaching subjects other than English in English-medium instruction settings, illustrate proficiency in spoken English?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Impact of Educators' English Language Proficiency on Teaching and Learning:

Various studies have investigated the relationship between educators' English dialect proficiency and its impact on teaching and learning. These studies have highlighted the vital part that educators' dialect aptitudes play in making compelling educational encounters.

In a study conducted by Leong and Ahmadi (2017), the researchers inspected the impact of educators' English language capability on students' comprehension and engagement in English-medium instruction settings. The study found a positive relationship between educators' language capability and students' academic execution. Teachers with stronger speaking aptitudes were better able to communicate complex subject matter, resulting in improved comprehension and higher levels of student engagement.

Another study by Rao (2019) examined the relationship between educators' English language capability and students' language improvement in bilingual educational settings. The researchers found that teachers with higher dialect proficiency levels were more viable in advancing students' language acquisition. Students taught by teachers with better speaking aptitudes displayed faster language improvement and greater certainty in using English.

Teachers educating in English-medium instruction settings frequently experience challenges related to their own English language capability. These challenges can ruin compelling communication and instruction.

A study by Sarwar et al. (2014), investigated the challenges confronted by teachers with restricted English-speaking aptitudes when educating in English-medium situations. The research recognized difficulties in articulating complex concepts, potential miscommunication with students, and decreased classroom engagement as common challenges. The study emphasized the need for proficient development opportunities to address these issues.

In a study conducted by Ali and Celik (2019), the researchers inspected the impact of educators' limited English language capability on classroom elements and student-teacher intelligent. The study found that teachers who struggled with English speaking abilities confronted challenges in building compatibility with students and cultivating a conducive learning environment. This hindered students' motivation and participation.

Procedures for Enhancing Educators' English Language Capability:

Recognizing the centrality of English language capability among teachers, several studies have investigated procedures to progress their language abilities and improve the quality of instruction.

An exploratory study by Baron (2020) explored the viability of language immersion programs for teachers educating in English-medium instruction settings. The study found that immersion programs, which included intensive language training and classroom practice, altogether progressed educators' English-speaking abilities. This, in turn, led to upgraded teaching quality and student performance.

In a study by Yu (2018), the researchers inspected the impact of continuous professional improvement and peer coaching on educators' language capability. The results demonstrated that continuous support and mentorship, coupled with targeted dialect training, helped teachers develop their English-speaking abilities over time. This approach contributed to improved instruction and student results.



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The Role of Institutional Support:

A few studies have highlighted the significance of institutional support in encouraging educators' English dialect proficiency advancement.

A study by Miranda and Wahyudin (2023), investigated the role of educational institutions in giving language support for teachers. The analysts found that institutions that advertised language courses, workshops, and access to language resources contributed essentially to educators' dialect proficiency advancement. This support emphatically affected on the quality of instruction.

In a longitudinal study by Al-Sobhi and Preece (2018), the researchers inspected the impacts of institutional arrangements advancing English dialect proficiency among teachers. The study found that institutions that prioritized language support through approaches such as dialect proficiency requirements for educators and funding for dialect training saw notable enhancements in educators' speaking aptitudes and overall teaching quality.

The literature review highlights the developing body of research that underscores the importance of educators' English language capability, particularly their speaking aptitudes, in English-medium instruction settings. These studies have shown that teachers with strong language aptitudes contribute to improved student comprehension, engagement, and overall learning results. On the other hand, teachers with constrained proficiency confront challenges in viable communication and instruction. Moreover, the literature emphasizes the need for continuous proficient improvement and institutional support to upgrade educators' English language capability. Strategies such as dialect immersion programs, peer coaching, and access to dialect resources have appeared to be compelling in progressing educators' language abilities and, thus, the quality of educating. As the request for English-medium instruction proceeds to develop in multilingual instructive situations, the discoveries from these studies serve as important insights for teachers, educational institutions, policymakers, and researchers. They emphasize the significance of prioritizing dialect proficiency advancement among teachers to guarantee that educating and learning are viable and important in an increasingly globalized world.

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In a period of globalization and multicultural classrooms, the ability of instructors to communicate successfully in English has far-reaching implications for the quality of instruction. Understanding the proficiency levels of instructors in such situations is imperative because it specifically influences students' comprehension, engagement, and overall academic execution (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017)

By focusing on speaking abilities, we point to pinpoint zones of improvement that can upgrade the educational experience for both teachers and learners. Moreover, this study sheds light on the current statues of teachers' English language proficiency level when instructing in a language that may not be their native one, thereby advertising profitable experiences into the dynamics of language in education.

IV. METHODOLOGY

A) Study Design

This paper opted for a cased study approach where it utilized a descriptive research plan to survey the English language speaking capabilities of teachers in a real-world instructive setting. Case studies offer profitable insights in research by giving an in-depth examination of specific people, organizations, events, or phenomena. They permit analysts to investigate complex real-world circumstances, offering a wealthy and holistic understanding that goes beyond quantitative information. Case studies are especially valuable for examining unique or rare events, uncovering intricate details, and generating theories for further research. They encourage contextual understanding, help recognize designs and patterns, and can serve as a basis for theory improvement or refinement. The study was conducted at a School in Mount Lebanon, where a total of 11 instructors participated in the evaluation. Those teachers use English as a means of instructing students in Math, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, etc.

B) Participants

The participants in this study comprised of 11 teachers employed at the selected school in Mount Lebanon. The choice of these teachers was based on their association in direction subjects other than English in English-medium instruction settings. These teachers were chosen to represent a diverse run of subjects to guarantee the study's significance over various disciplines.

C) Procedure

- **Ethical Contemplations:** Prior to conducting the appraisals, ethical endorsement was gotten from the relevant authorities at the selected School, guaranteeing that all moral guidelines and security controls were followed to.

- **Informed Consent:** Informed consent was gotten from all participating teachers, clearly clarifying the purpose of the study, the assessment process, and the secrecy of their scores.
- **IELTS Speaking Assessment:** The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) was chosen as the appraisal instrument to assess the speaking aptitudes of the teachers. The IELTS speaking test is outlined to measure a person's ability to communicate successfully in English.
- **Assessment Sessions:** Individual assessment sessions were planned with each teacher. Amid these sessions, the teachers were inquired to engage in a structured discussion with an assessor. The assessor utilized standardized IELTS speaking evaluation criteria to assess the educators' speaking abilities. The appraisals were audio-recorded to guarantee accuracy and consistency within the evaluation process.
- **Assessment Criteria:** The IELTS speaking evaluation criteria incorporate fluency and coherence, lexical resource (vocabulary), grammatical range and accuracy, and articulation. Each measure is scored on a scale of 9, with 9 being the highest score.
- **Data Collection:** The assessment scores for each teacher were recorded and compiled for consequent information investigation.

Data Analysis

The collected information, comprising of the IELTS speaking scores for each teacher, was analysed utilizing descriptive statistics. Descriptive measurements allowed for the examination of the overall dispersion of scores, as well as the identification of any trends or patterns among the educators' speaking aptitudes.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A) Results

The results of the IELTS speaking evaluations, counting the person scores for each teacher, were summarized and displayed in Table 1 below. The discoveries given insight into the capability levels of the teachers in terms of their English dialect speaking skills.

Participant	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Total score
1	7.5	5	7	5	6.25
2	9	7	6.5	4	6.75
3	9	7.5	4.5	4	6.25
4	9	8.5	5	5	7
5	9	7.5	7.5	8	8
6	9	7	4.5	5	6.5
7	9	9	4.5	4	6.75
8	7.5	7	6	6	7
9	6	6.5	6	5	6
10	9	9	5	6	7.25
11	9	5.5	6	4.5	6.5

Table 1: IELTS Results

B) Discussion

The given findings show the results of an evaluation of the speaking abilities of 11 teachers in an English-medium instruction setting. The teachers were assessed on four language skills: Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking, with a total score speaking to their overall English dialect capability.

Interpretation of Discoveries:

- **Variability in Scores:** The scores demonstrate an impressive degree of variability within the English dialect capability of the teachers. While a few teachers accomplished high scores in multiple dialect abilities (e.g., Participants 5 and 10), others received lower scores, especially within the Speaking skill (e.g., Participants 1, 2, 3, 6, 11).
- **Low Speaking Scores:** Notably, a few teachers received relatively low scores within the Speaking skill. Participants 1, 3, 6, and 11 all scored 5 or lower in this category. This proposes that a critical parcel of the



teachers may confront challenges when it comes to compelling verbal communication in English, which is particularly critical in English-medium instruction settings.

- **Impact on Overall Proficiency:** The entire score provides an overall assessment of the educators' English dialect capability. While a few teachers accomplished total scores above 7 (e.g., Participants 5 and 10), others had lower scores, with Participants 1, 2, 3, 6, and 11 scoring below 7. This demonstrates that a significant parcel of the teachers may have capability levels that are below what is anticipated for effective teaching in an English-medium environment.

Critical Analysis:

- **Speaking Aptitudes as a Critical Component:** The low scores within the Speaking skill are of specific concern, as successful verbal communication is fundamental for teachers in English-medium instruction settings. The ability to communicate complex subject matter, engage students, and make an interactive classroom environment intensely relies on solid speaking abilities. The low scores may show potential dialect boundaries that could hinder educators' effectiveness within the classroom. Instructors are typically selected without prior language proficiency tests, and a critical number are not graduates of education faculties, presenting potential challenges in guaranteeing compelling communication and instructional effectiveness in English-medium instruction settings. This enlistment approach raises concerns about potential language barriers and underscores the need for strategies to support instructors in creating their language aptitudes for effective teaching.
- **Implications for Educating and Learning:** Teachers with low speaking capability may battle to communicate clearly and easily in English, possibly driving to comprehension challenges for students. Ineffective communication can result in decreased engagement, hindered classroom discussions, and challenges in conveying subject-specific substance. This, in turn, may affect students' learning results and overall educational encounters.
- **Professional Improvement Needs:** The discoveries emphasize the significance of investing in professional advancement opportunities to improve educators' English dialect skills, especially in speaking. Proficient development programs, language immersion courses, and continuous support mechanisms can help teachers progress their speaking capability over time. Identifying teachers who may advantage from such opportunities based on their evaluation scores is a significant step.
- **Tailored Support:** It is fundamental for educational institutions to offer tailored support to teachers with lower language capability scores. This support may incorporate dialect courses, workshops, peer coaching, and access to dialect resources. Institutions ought to consider actualizing techniques to address the particular dialect needs of teachers to improve their teaching viability.
- **Balancing Language Capability and Subject Ability:** While progressing English language capability is critical, it ought to be adjusted with educators' subject expertise. Teach ought to aim to support teachers in both areas to guarantee that they can successfully instruct subject-specific content in English-medium instruction settings.

In conclusion, the discoveries of the assessment highlight the variability within the English dialect capability of teachers in an English-medium instruction setting. The low scores within the Speaking skill emphasize the need for targeted mediations and proficient development to improve educators' speaking skills, eventually improving the quality of instruction and the learning encounters of students in multilingual educational situations.

VII. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has shed light on the basic issue of educators' English language capability, with a particular accentuation on their speaking abilities, inside English-medium instruction settings. The assessment of 11 teachers at the selected School, Lebanon, has revealed a range of language capability levels among members. While a few teachers illustrated proficiency over various dialect abilities, there were recognizable challenges in speaking proficiency, with some teachers scoring outstandingly lower. These discoveries hold significant suggestions for educating and learning, especially within the setting of English-medium instruction. The low speaking capability scores raise concerns about educators' capacity to successfully communicate and engage students, possibly influencing learning results. To address these challenges, suggestions incorporate investment in professional improvement, tailored institutional support, and a balanced approach to dialect capability and subject expertise. This study underscores the significance of educators' dialect capability in multilingual instructive settings, emphasizing its role in improving the quality of instruction and guaranteeing students' significant learning encounters in a globally interconnected world.



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