FROM LANGUAGE CONFLICT TO EDUCATIONAL SECURITY: A STUDY OF ENGLISH-MEDIUM INSTRUCTION IN THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

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Abstract. *This article examines how English-medium Instruction (EMI) in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP) creates tension between experiences of language conflict and the desire to ensure educational security. Based on interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) and the narratives of eight IB DP graduates (aged 19–24) selected through purposive sampling, the early adaptation phase is characterized by experiences of "language shock," terminology barriers, and identity duality, which precipitate academic insecurity. Later, these risks are transformed through strategies employed by students: translanguaging (incorporating the native language as cognitive support), institutional support (language labs, peer feedback), and community emotional security. Such practices gradually promote the development of academic English (CALP) and reduce anxiety. The final results include educational security, linguistic capital, and a strengthened multilingual identity. EMI remains ambivalent in the context of the IB DP—both a source of conflict and a security-creating environment—but security is consistently strengthened when targeted scaffolding, multiple language practices, and inclusive multilingualism policies are applied.*

Keywords: *English-medium instruction (EMI); International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP); language conflict; educational security; translanguaging; phenomenology.*

Introduction

Macaro (2018) and Galloway et al. (2020) claim that English-medium instruction is one of the most discussed phenomena in the international education space today. Its spread is closely linked to the processes of globalisation, internationalisation and academic mobility, but at the same time it brings new conflicts, dangers and challenges. According to Hill (2012) and IBO (2024), the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP) is a distinctive site for analysing the phenomenon of EMI, as English functions

not only as the lingua franca of academic discourse but also as a focal point for social inclusion, cultural identity, and educational security.

Education researchers emphasise that language conflicts in the context of the IB DP arise from several interrelated sources. First, Cummins (2000) and García & Wei (2014) assert that there is the dominance of English, which often marginalises students' native languages and cultural practices. Second, there are pedagogical challenges: most subject teachers are not specifically trained to integrate language and content teaching, so EMI practice often becomes superficial and insufficiently sensitive to students' language needs, according to Clegg & Simpson's (2016) research. Thirdly, there is the aspect of identity and social security – some students experience emotional insecurity or the risk of academic exclusion due to limited language proficiency, claim Llinares & Morton (2017).

However, García & Wei (2014) and Cummins et al. (2015) assert that the experiences of graduates show that these conflicts can not only be overcome but also converted into a learning resource in learning. Research reveals that translanguaging strategies, linguistic support and an inclusive approach to multilingualism create the conditions for a safe and successful learning environment). Thus, EMI in the IB DP becomes an ambiguous phenomenon – both a source of conflict and a means of creating educational security.

The aim of this article is to analyse how EMI practices in the IB Diploma Programme affect the dynamics of linguistic conflicts and how they can ensure educational security. Educational security term is used to denote learners' felt predictability and control over academic demands in EMI, operationalised as: (a) linguistically mediated access to content (CALP), (b) psychological safety to participate, and (c) confidence to perform assessed tasks. We treat it as a dynamic attainment emerging from translanguaging, scaffolding, and institutional supports. The article is based on theoretical models (sociocultural theory, Bourdieu's concept of linguistic capital, translanguaging theory, CLIL methodology) and a phenomenological study of graduates' experiences, which reveals the influence of EMI on their academic, linguistic and cultural development.

Theoretical foundations for the analysis of language conflict and educational security. Analysing the language conflict and educational security, the following concepts should be discussed. In this context, five key approaches emerge: sociocultural theory, P. Bourdieu's concept of linguistic capital, translanguaging theory, the content and language integrated learning (CLIL) model, and the asset-based pedagogy paradigm. Combining these theoretical perspectives makes it possible to view EMI not only as a language policy, but also as a social and cultural process involving the interaction of power, identity, language, and knowledge.

Sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky's sociocultural theory states that learning takes place in the context of social interaction and language. In this model, language is not only a means of communication, but also a cognitive tool that shapes thinking and identity. In an EMI environment, this theory allows us to understand that language conflicts arise when a student's language skills do not match the complexity of the tasks. In such cases, **scaffolding** – assistance provided by a teacher or fellow student to help move from the current language level to a higher one, according to Wood et al. (1976) – becomes particularly important. Thus, sociocultural theory reveals that educational security is only ensured when teachers recognise students' "zone of proximal development" and provide appropriate support.

Linguistic capital theory (Bourdieu, 1991). Bourdieu emphasises that language is not neutral – it is a form of social power. Macaro (2018) states that in the context of the IB DP, English becomes a prestigious form of "symbolic capital" that provides access to higher education and international opportunities. However, this capital is often created at the expense of other languages, causing a conflict between the dominance of English and the devaluation of the native language, accorting to Heller's (2007) reaserach. This poses a threat to students' linguistic identity and social security. Therefore, Bourdieu's theory helps to analyse EMI not only as a pedagogical practice, but also as a political and power structure practice.

Translanguaging theory (García & Wei, 2014). Translanguaging offers an alternative to the monolingual approach. According to García and Wei (2014), students should be encouraged to use their entire system of linguistic competences rather than using "one language at a time" separately. In an EMI environment, this means that the mother tongue is not an obstacle but a resource. Researches by Creese & Blackledge (2010) and Cenoz & Gorter (2020) show that translanguaging strategies reduce anxiety, strengthen learners' identity and ensure greater academic security. Thus, this theory emphasises that language conflicts can be overcome by allowing students to flexibly combine their multilingual repertoire.

CLIL model (Coyle, Hood & Marsh, 2010). CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) offers a systematic integration of language and content based on the "4C" model: Content, Communication, Cognition, Culture. Dalton-Puffer, (2011) acknowledge that unlike traditional EMI, CLIL clearly defines language goals, integrates language learning into each discipline, and ensures consistent support. In the context of the IB DP, CLIL principles allow academic content to be combined with language development, thereby strengthening educational security and reducing conflicts arising from insufficient academic language skills.

Asset-based pedagogy (Cummins, 2015; García & Wei, 2014). This paradigm emphasises that students' linguistic, cultural and social resources are

not obstacles but valuable assets. MacSwan (2020) argues that unlike the "deficit" approach, which sees linguistic differences as a problem, asset-based pedagogy enhances inclusion, student self-esteem and the quality of education. In the context of the IB DP, this means that multilingualism should be seen as an added value that creates a safe and fair educational environment (see Table 1):

Theoretical model	Key concepts	Significance in the context of EMI IB DP	Relevant literature
Sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978)	Zone of proximal development, scaffolding	Language shock is reduced through support and social interaction	Vygotsky (1978); Wood et al. (1976); Lantolf & Thorne (2006)
Linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991)	Language as symbolic capital, prestige	English as a privilege, marginalisation of the native language	Bourdieu (1991); Heller (2007)
Translanguaging (García & Wei, 2014)	Multilingual repertoire as a resource	Native language as cognitive and emotional support in an EMI environment	García & Wei (2014); Cenoz & Gorter (2020)
CLIL model (Coyle et al., 2010)	4C model: Content, Communication, Cognition, Culture	Integration of language objectives into subject teaching	Coyle et al. (2010); Dalton-Puffer (2011)
Asset-based pedagogy (Cummins, 2015)	Language and culture as assets rather than deficits	Native language strengthens self-esteem and educational security	Cummins (2015); MacSwan (2020)

Table 1. *Theoretical models for analysing language conflict and educational security (by the authors)*

In summary, these theoretical models form a critical basis for the analysis of EMI in the IB DP space. Sociocultural theory explains the learning process through interaction, Bourdieu through structures of power and capital, translanguaging through a flexible linguistic repertoire, CLIL through the integration of language and content, and asset-based pedagogy through inclusion and the appreciation of linguistic diversity. All of them emphasise that educational security is inseparable from linguistic justice and the recognition of diversity (see Figure 1).
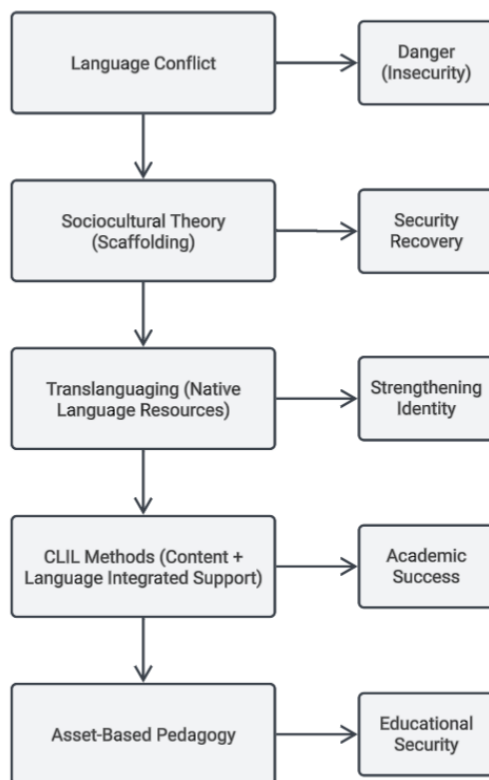
Figure 1. Transitions in the EMI environment: from language conflict to educational security. (by the authors)

Figure 1 shows how the EMI environment transitions from linguistic conflict to educational security. In the initial stage, students experience insecurity due to language barriers. On the other hand, scaffolding restores a sense of security, while translanguaging helps to sustain a connection with culture and supports identity development. CLIL methods promote academic success while resource-based pedagogy plays in favour of multilingualism. This creates educational security based on the integration of linguistic, academic, and cultural resources.

Research Methodology

Creswell & Poth's (2018) approach is particularly suitable for analysing the processes of linguistic conflict, educational insecurity, and identity formation experienced in the context of EMI, as these experiences are subtle, contextual, and difficult to measure using quantitative methods

Research question: How did IB DP graduates experience situations of linguistic conflict, and how did they manage to transition from insecurity to educational security through translanguaging, visualisation, and institutional support strategies?

Research design and rationale. A qualitative phenomenological approach (Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, IPA) was used, which is suitable for revealing subtle, contextual experiences of linguistic conflict, educational (in)security, and identity change according to Smith et al. (2009) and Creswell & Poth (2018).

Participants and selection. Purposive selection was chosen; as this research is exploratory, a relatively low number- 8 IB DP graduates (R1–R8), aged 19–24, were included, ensuring cultural and linguistic diversity. Anonymous coding (R1–R8) was used to ensure confidentiality.

Data collection. Semi-structured interviews focused on graduates' experiences of transitioning from linguistic insecurity to educational security, emphasizing translanguaging, visualisation, and institutional support strategies (formulated in the research question). Interviews lasted 45–75 minutes and were conducted online in English. Sessions were audio-recorded and verbatim transcribed; identifying details were removed. Where brief L1 segments occurred in quotations used for analysis, translations were checked by a second reader for accuracy.

Data analysis. The analysis was carried out in stages according to IPA principles: (1) idiographic exploration of individual cases and initial observations; (2) identification of emergent themes; (3) clustering of themes into subordinate and superordinate structures; (4) cross-case analysis to identify recurring patterns. The final scheme formed superordinate themes (e.g., "overcoming linguistic conflict" and "creating educational security") based on participant quotes, i.e. a qualitative data analysis was carries out.

Theoretical framework. The interpretation of the results was based on sociocultural theory by Vygotsky (1978), the concept of linguistic capital by Bourdieu (1991), translanguaging by García & Wei (2014; 2017), the CLIL model by Coyle et al. (2010), and asset-based pedagogy by Cummins 2000; 2011), which explain how support strategies transform conflict into security.

Ethical aspects. The participants in the study were informed about the objectives of the study and were given guarantees of anonymity and confidentiality. The data were coded using the labels R1-R8. The interview material was stored in accordance with academic ethical standards.

Data Analysis

To reveal how IB DP graduates experienced linguistic conflict and sought educational security while learning English as the primary medium of instruction, the interview data collected was analysed using interpretative

phenomenological analysis (IPA). This methodology allowed us to highlight the meanings of individual narratives, combine them into more general themes, and relate them to theoretical frameworks. The analysis process took place in stages – from the initial coding to the formation of emergent and superordinate themes, and the results reveal the students' strategies, emotional experiences, and the impact of the institutional environment on their linguistic and cultural development.

Table 2 reveals the main IB DP graduates' experiences of linguistic conflict that emerged in the early stages of learning. The analysis revealed three main trends: initial academic and emotional shock related to increased workload and feelings of insecurity; barriers in academic language terminology that hindered understanding of subject content; and experiences of native language loss that threatened identity and self-awareness.

Emergent theme	Subordinate theme	Verbatim quotes
Initial academic and emotional shock	Feeling of insecurity at the beginning	R2: "From the very beginning, the workload was much greater than I had expected." R3: "Sometimes I didn't understand what was expected of me, even though I was prepared." R5: "The exam questions seemed more difficult because of the English language, not because of the content." R6: "One word changed the entire meaning of the question." R7: "During the first month, I felt that I would not even be able to read the assignment to the end."
Terminology barriers	Academic language difficulties	R1: "In physics, I couldn't understand the terminology until it was translated into Russian." R4: "My first grade in English was a 2, but that motivated me to work twice as hard." R8: "At first, the terms seemed insurmountable, but over time they became natural."
Experience of native language loss	Threats to identity and self-image	R7: "Sometimes it felt like I was part of two worlds, but I didn't feel completely myself in either of them." R8: "I felt more confident in English than in Danish, but at the same time I realized that my native language was disappearing."

Table 2. *Early linguistic conflict – superordinate theme. (by the authors)*

Narrative analysis. The experiences of graduates show (see Table 2) that the first weeks in the IB DP environment were marked by a strong academic and emotional shock. Early participation in EMI precipitated academic insecurity primarily through discipline-specific terminology and assessment

phrasing. R5 claims: "The exam questions seemed more difficult because of the English language, not because of the content.", R6: "One word changed the entire meaning of the question." This aligns with the BICS–CALP gap and the need for scaffolded movement within the ZPD. While most respondents reported shock, a minority indicated rapid habituation after initial weeks; this suggests differential sensitivity to disciplinary lexis and prior exposure. Respondents (R2, R3, R5, R6, R7) emphasized that the new learning environment seemed particularly intense: the workload was much greater than expected, and the wording of the tasks caused uncertainty. R7 was particularly candid in stating that at first, he did not even feel capable of reading the assignment to the end. This shows emotional insecurity in the transition phase. Another significant challenge was academic language terminology. The respondents emphasized that the initial low assessment in English language courses was demotivating, but it encouraged hard work. These experiences show that terminology was not just an additional obstacle—it had a direct impact on students' achievements and self-esteem.

Also, some of the graduates emphasized threats to their identity and self-image. R8 reflected that English gave them more confidence than their native language, but at the same time, they realized that Danish was disappearing from the academic sphere. R7 expressed concern that living between two linguistic and cultural worlds prevented them from feeling completely themselves. Such narratives reveal a field of identity tension that becomes an integral part of education in the EMI context.

Analytical reflection. These data confirm Cummins' (2000) distinction between basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and academic language proficiency (CALP). The experiences of graduates show that even with solid everyday English skills, the barriers of academic terminology and workload cause intense feelings of insecurity.

From the perspective of Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, shock and insecurity were symptoms of the "zone of proximal development": students were placed in a situation where their abilities were tested beyond their comfort zone. This experience, although stressful, facilitated faster progress.

Bourdieu's (1991) concept of linguistic capital helps explain the threats to identity. English acquired the highest capital value in the IB DP environment, while native languages such as Danish or Latvian were marginalized. This created a situation where students felt competent in global discourse but weaker in academic contexts in their native languages.

According to García & Wei (2014), identity tensions can also be analysed in light of translanguaging theory. Graduates' reflections show that translanguaging was not necessarily integrated institutionally, so the native language was sometimes experienced as disappearing rather than as a resource. Without a conscious language policy, there is a risk that EMI will

strengthen academic security in English but weaken cultural and linguistic heritage in the long run.

Table 3 shows the support strategies IB DP graduates used to overcome the challenges of linguistic conflict. The respondents' accounts reveal three main trends: the use of their native language as a translanguaging cognitive strategy that helped them understand complex content; institutional support provided by language labs and classmates; and the importance of emotional community support, which created daily cultural safety and a sense of belonging in an international environment.

Emergent theme	Subordinate theme	Verbatim quotes
Use of native language in learning	Translanguaging as a cognitive strategy	R3: "I explained the concepts to myself in Latvian, then repeated them in English." R1: "I only learned physics terms when they were explained in Russian." R4: "My first English grade was a 2, but that motivated me to work twice as hard."
Help from language labs and friends	Institutional support system	R6: "The language lab was a real lifesaver; you could get personal explanations there." R7: "I asked my friends to review my essay, only then did I understand how it sounded from an academic point of view."
A sense of community support	Emotional support from an international environment	R4: "The international atmosphere at school was like a daily cultural safety net." R7: "At the boarding school, we all felt like family, we studied together and supported each other."

Table 3. Strategy constellation transforming conflict into security – superordinate theme. (by the authors)

Narrative analysis. The graduates' responses (see Table 3) showed that they overcame linguistic and academic difficulties through various support strategies. One of the main ones was translanguaging, i.e., incorporating their native language into the learning process. R3 explained that they first clarified complex concepts in Latvian and then repeated them in English. R1 stated that physics terminology only became understandable through explanations in Russian. This shows that the native language acted as a cognitive bridge to academic English. Translanguaging acted as a cognitive bridge from L1 conceptual grasp to L2 academic expression; institutional supports externalised private strategies into shared routines (language labs, peer review); community belonging buffered anxiety. Together, these reduced perceived task risk and enabled sustained CALP development.

Institutional support also played an important role. R6 emphasized the importance of the language lab ("The language lab was a real lifesaver"), while for R7, the help of classmates in reviewing essays allowed for a better understanding of how the text sounded in an academic context. These experiences show that support structures in the context of the IB DP were not only formal but also informal, involving mutual assistance among students. No less important was the emotional support of the community. R4 stated that the international school environment offered daily "cultural security," while R7 emphasized the family atmosphere that prevailed in the dormitory: everyone studied together and supported each other. This suggests that learning in an EMI environment is not just an academic challenge—it is strongly linked to psychological safety and community.

Analytical reflection. These coping strategies reveal that student success in an EMI environment is based on sociocultural interaction. Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory shows that the help of teachers, friends, and the community were essential mediators that allowed students to overcome the barriers of the "zone of proximal development" and reach a higher level of academic and linguistic abilities.

Translanguaging practices confirm García & Wei's (2014) insights that the linguistic repertoire of multilingual students acts as a resource rather than a disadvantage. Graduates' accounts show that these strategies were particularly important in the context of science and academic writing. However, they were mostly student initiatives rather than systematic school policy.

The dimension of institutional support corresponds to Cummins' (2015) concept of "identity texts": language labs and peer feedback allowed students to see their texts as legitimate elements of academic discourse.

A phenomenological analysis of IB DP graduates' experiences revealed that the first weeks of study in English were most often associated with language shock and feelings of insecurity. Graduates described themselves as "lost" or "confused" due to the intensive use of academic English. One respondent of Dutch origin recalled that he "did not understand half of the concepts" in his first history lesson and that it took him two months to become more comfortable with academic English. R4, a Latvian, emphasised that he often misinterpreted the wording of assignments, which directly affected his academic performance: "one word can change the whole meaning of a question." Such examples show that language conflict in the first phase of the IB DP becomes an "educational hazard" that threatens not only achievement but also the emotional security of students.

On the other hand, graduates also identified strategies that allowed them to turn this risk into a source of educational security. First, translanguaging. A respondent from the Netherlands said that he learned biology terminology with

his classmates using bilingual dictionaries and even created a game with cards in Dutch and English. Similarly, R7 emphasised that she understood physics concepts better when her tutor explained them in her native language and she then 'translated' them into English. This assistance was in line with Cummins' (2000) model, which emphasises the difference between BICS and CALP: everyday English language competence was sufficient, but it was only through targeted academic language support that students achieved the required cognitive level.

Graduates also emphasised that the EMI IB DP experience had a long-term impact on their educational security. R4 mentioned that he feels "completely free" in English at university and even helps other students who do not have IB experience. Similarly, R8 from Sri Lanka said that her English results had improved from 2 to 7 points in two years, which gave her confidence when applying to universities abroad. Such stories confirm Macaro's (2018) insights that the impact of EMI is twofold – initially accompanied by risk but eventually becoming an asset that opens up international opportunities.

In summary, the experiences of graduates reveal a clear dynamic: linguistic conflict → danger → strategic overcoming → educational security. This transformation takes place through personal strategies (translanguaging, support from friends), institutional assistance (language laboratories, additional consultations) and consistent development of academic English.

Interaction between theoretical models and empirical insights. The phenomenological study revealed that in the context of EMI IB DP, linguistic conflicts are an inevitable part of the initial experience, but over time these conflicts transform into sources of educational security. When analysing this dynamic, it is necessary to ground it in theoretical models.
Vygotsky's sociocultural theory allows us to understand that the students' "zone of proximal development" was greatly expanded: in the first few months, the students felt insecure because the tasks exceeded their linguistic abilities. However, properly applied scaffolding – with the help of both teachers and friends – became a bridge to a higher level of linguistic and academic development, claim Vygotsky (1978) and Lantolf & Thorne (2006). Bourdieu's theory of linguistic capital explains why graduates perceived the EMI experience as ambivalent: English was perceived as necessary "capital" for academic success and social recognition, but at the same time it marginalised native languages and created a sense of anxiety about identity, according to Bourdieu (1991) and Heller (2007). Cummins' (2000) BICS/CALP model confirmed the graduates' experiences: although everyday communication in English was not a problem, academic language (CALP) became a real "threat" that jeopardised learning security. For example, Tomass described how one misunderstood term in a history exam led to the loss of the

entire assignment. García and Wei's translanguaging theory found direct resonance in the graduates' narratives: many acknowledged that their native language was constantly used as an "internal filter" when learning English (e.g., Aleksandra from Russia first mastered physics concepts in her native language and then transferred them to the English context). This confirms that a multilingual repertoire not only reduces conflict but also becomes a cognitive and emotional resource, claim García & Wei (2014). The CLIL model by Coyle et al. (2010) appears to be a normative guideline, but most respondents noted that language integration with the subject was not always systematic in schools. Emilia noted that feedback from English teachers was helpful, but that in most subjects there was a lack of support for language. This is consistent with Macaro's (2018) insights into fragmented language learning in an EMI environment.

Figure 2 presented reflects the dynamic process of EMI experience in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, showing how students' path of linguistic and cultural adaptation transforms from initial insecurity to academic success and identity strengthening. (See Figure 2.)
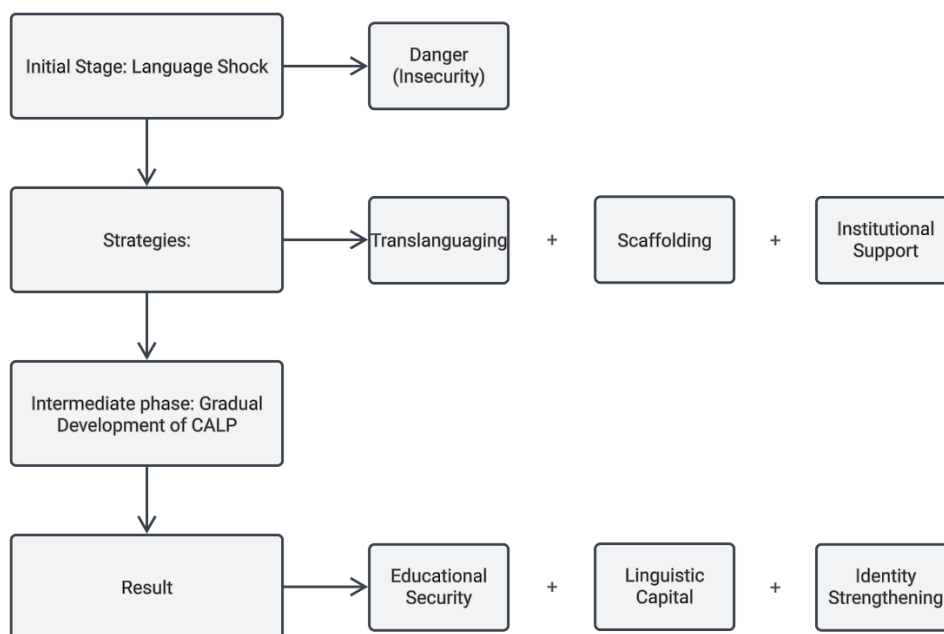

Figure 2. *The trajectory of EMI experience in the context of IB DP: from language shock to academic security and identity strengthening (by the authors)*

This is consistent with Cummins' (2000) theory of the difference between BICS and CALP: students who had everyday communication skills encountered difficulties in transitioning to academic language. Strategy phase

(see Figure 2): to overcome these challenges, students used several interrelated strategies:

- Translanguaging – incorporating the native language into learning as an auxiliary cognitive support tool (García & Wei, 2014).
- Scaffolding – gradual contextual support provided by teachers and classmates (Vygotsky, 1978), enabling students to reach a higher linguistic and academic level.
- Institutional support – additional consultations, language labs, and cultural events helped stabilise the learning process and ensured psychological well-being.

Intermediate phase: CALP development. Thanks to these strategies, there was a gradual development of academic language (CALP) skills, with students learning not only to convey information, but also to argue, critically analyse, and write academic texts in a structured manner.

The figure shows that the process ends with three key results (see Figure 2):

- Educational security – students gained confidence in their language skills and ensured opportunities to successfully continue their studies in an international context.
- Linguistic capital – English language competence has become symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1991), opening up academic and professional prospects.
- Identity strengthening – the integration of multilingualism and cultural heritage through translanguaging and reflection strengthened personal identity and helped students find their unique voice in global discourse.

So, Figure 2 illustrates how, in the context of EMI IB DP, students' experiences move from initial insecurity to academic stability, with translanguaging, scaffolding, and institutional support playing a key role, and the final results manifesting themselves through educational security, linguistic capital, and identity strengthening.

Table 4 summarizes the strategies identified in Tables 2 and 3 and the trajectory shown in Figure 2, bringing them together into a clear "strategy → mechanism of action → intermediate (process) results → final results" logic. The matrix shows that overcoming language conflict in an EMI environment is not a one-off event, but a dynamic combination of interrelated measures that gradually leads to educational security.

- Translanguaging (L1 as a cognitive bridge). This group of strategies acts as L1 conceptual mediation, helping to transition to L2 academic expression. Such a transition reduces anxiety and accelerates the acquisition of academic language (CALP) vocabulary and genres. In the long run, this is associated with educational security and agentive multilingual identity. Theoretical basis – García & Wei

translanguaging, Cummins BICS–CALP, Vygotsky ZPD and scaffolding.

- Institutional support (language labs, peer review). Formalized routines and feedback cycles "expose" individual strategies and turn them into common rules of practice. This leads to clearer interpretation of tasks and better-quality academic writing, and ultimately to educational security and the accumulation of linguistic capital. Theoretical underpinnings – Vygotsky (sociocultural mediation) and Cummins & Early's "identity texts."
- Community/affective support. A sense of belonging cushions perceived risk, promotes perseverance and motivation, and ultimately fosters sustainable self-efficacy and strengthens identity. This link is supported by sociocultural theory and Bourdieu's concept of capital (social and linguistic capital).

Strategy cluster	Mechanism of action	Process outcomes (intermediate)	End outcomes	Theoretical anchors
Translanguaging (L1 as cognitive bridge)	L1 conceptual mediation → L2 academic expression	Reduced anxiety; accelerated CALP vocabulary/genre uptake	Educational security; agentive multilingual identity	García & Wei; Cummins (BICS–CALP); Vygotsky (ZPD/scaffolding)
Institutional support (labs, peer review)	Externalised routines; feedback cycles	Clearer task interpretation; improved academic writing	Educational security; linguistic capital	Vygotsky; Cummins & Early (identity texts)
Community/affective support	Belonging buffers risk perception	Persistence; motivation	Durable confidence; identity strengthening	Sociocultural theory; Bourdieu (capital)

Table 4. *Strategy–Outcome Matrix. (by the authors)*

In summary, the table emphasizes that translanguaging, institutional mechanisms, and community safety do not act sequentially, but synergistically: process changes (decreased anxiety, clearer understanding of tasks, increased linguistic genre competence) cascade into educational security, linguistic capital accumulation, and agentive multilingual identity (see Table 4).

Conclusions

Phenomenological analysis revealed that the EMI IB DP experience is twofold:

- In the initial stage, it is often perceived as a source of linguistic conflict and danger, causing feelings of insecurity, fear of academic failure, and dual identity. Graduates' accounts show that complex terminology, exam requirements and the "English-only culture" policy can make the learning environment a risky process.
- In a later phase, these same challenges transform into sources of educational security. Once they have overcome the initial shock, mastered academic English and discovered support strategies, graduates gain not only linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991) but also self-confidence, which remains with them throughout their university and professional lives.

Thus, in the context of EMI IB DP, language conflict is not just a threat – it becomes a constructive challenge, the overcoming of which creates long-term educational security.

In the context of EMI IB DP, linguistic conflict and risks inevitably exist, but they can become a catalyst for learning if schools and teachers apply the right strategies. Educational security is only ensured when EMI practice is aligned with the principles of linguistic justice, inclusion and multilingualism assessment. In this way, English in the IB DP becomes a language of opportunity and international dialogue rather than a language of hegemony.

In EMI IB DP, language conflict is not merely a threat; under conditions of structured support and recognition of multilingual repertoires, it can become a constructive challenge that frequently culminates in educational security, the accrual of linguistic capital, and a more agentive multilingual identity.

Limitations of the study. Like any qualitative study, this study has certain limitations. First, the sample size was small but sufficient for the phenomenological research, thus the insights gained reveal individual experiences but do not cover the entire scope of the programme. Second, participants represented several countries but not all regions, so the results may not reflect global diversity. Because interviews were retrospective, recall bias is possible. Finally, the purposive sample and the researchers' practitioner background limit broad generalisation; we therefore frame claims as analytical generalisations to comparable EMI-in-IB contexts. These limitations indicate that the findings reveal a deeper understanding rather than allowing for broad generalizations of the results.

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