

# An Evaluation of Algerian EMI Teacher Training Experience with DUAL English Language E-learning Platform

Dr. Abdelhak Chenini  
Department of English Language and Literature  
Mohamed Khider University, Biskra, Algeria

## Abstract

This study evaluates Algerian university teachers' experiences with the DUAL English Language E-learning Platform as a training tool to adopt English as a medium of instruction (EMI). It attempts to explore its effectiveness, challenges, and pedagogical impact. Drawing on qualitative data from interviews with instructors across multiple universities, the research identifies key factors influencing platform adoption and usage as an EMI teacher training tool. Findings highlight both the platform's potential in enhancing English language teaching and learning and the barriers faced, including technical limitations, insufficient training, and institutional support. The study concludes by offering recommendations for optimizing the integration of EMI in Algerian higher education, contributing to broader discussions on digital transformation in English language EMI teacher training programs.

**Keywords:** DUAL; EMI; English language teaching; teacher training

The rapid shift towards EMI in higher education has prompted the adoption of various teacher training methods. DUAL English Language E-learning Platform was introduced to enhance the teaching and learning of English. However, despite its potential, there is limited research examining how Algerian university teachers experience this platform in practice. The core problem of this study is to understand the effectiveness of the DUAL platform, as an EMI teacher training tool, from the perspective of instructors, as well as to identify the challenges and obstacles they face in its adoption and use. Key issues include technical limitations, insufficient training, and a lack of institutional support, all of which may hinder the platform's full potential. By addressing this gap in research, the study aims to evaluate how the DUAL platform impacts English language pedagogy, the quality of instruction, and the learning outcomes for students, providing critical insights into the challenges of integrating EMI within the Algerian higher education system.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to offer valuable insights into the realities faced by educators as they navigate medium of instruction transformation in higher education. By investigating teachers' firsthand experiences with the Dual platform, the research highlights critical factors that either facilitate or hinder the successful integration of EMI in their teaching. Given the growing emphasis on the

integration of EMI by the ministry of higher education, this study also contributes to broader discussions on how technological advancements can reshape language learning practices and teacher training experiences.

## **An Overview of EMI**

English as a Medium of Instruction, as the term suggests, refers to using the English language to teach different academic subjects other than English itself in non-English speaking countries (Dearden, 2015). The adoption of EMI has become a significant trend in global education, particularly in non-native English-speaking countries and the globalization of education has prompted many nations to adopt EMI as a strategy for enhancing national human capital. In Vietnam, Dang et al. (2013) explore how EMI initiatives aim to improve English proficiency among future educators, reflecting a broader trend in which EMI is seen as a vehicle for internationalization. This is further supported by the work of Doiz et al. (2014), who illustrate the link between EMI and socio-political dynamics, emphasizing the need for policies that consider historical and spatial contexts. The experiences of professors and students in Latin America also shed light on the growing significance of EMI. Kedzierski (2016) notes that while EMI can enhance language and intercultural competencies, it also presents significant challenges that require institutional support and innovative pedagogical strategies. This aligns with the findings of Coyle et al. (2010), who advocate for the integration of content and language learning to improve educational outcomes in multilingual contexts. In a similar vein, most Arab world universities use EMI to teach some branches such as science, medicine, and technology, however, the implementation of EMI remains uneven across these countries due to historical, political, social, and educational factors (Alhamami, 2024).

The integration of English as a Medium of Instruction within the Algerian higher education system has gained traction in recent years. This shift reflects broader global trends toward the adoption of English for academic discourse and instruction. The incorporation of EMI in higher education is largely driven by the globalization of knowledge and the necessity for students to engage with international academic communities. Universities in Algeria are increasingly adopting English to attract global partnerships and enhance their academic offerings (Bouhania, 2020).

## **DUAL English Language E-learning Platform**

The increasing integration of technology into education has transformed teaching methods and learning environments, particularly in language education. In Algeria, the adoption of e-learning platforms such as the DUAL English Language E-learning Platform has become a significant development in enhancing English language instruction. Dual is a cutting-edge online English learning platform established by

Algeria's Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MESRS). It offers a variety of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) aimed at enhancing the academic and professional skills of Algerian university teachers and students. As an attempt to digitize education and provide continuous professional development opportunities, Dual offers accessible, high quality online courses tailored to the needs of the Algerian academic community. (<https://dual.mesrs.dz>)

Dedicated to a specific audience, courses are structured into sessions that target specific skill levels and academic needs. These courses aim to enhance strategic reading among university teachers, covering strategies like making inferences, using background knowledge, and evaluating information. Moreover, they guide users through the fundamentals of academic writing, focusing on developing ideas, structuring paragraphs and essays, and understanding a variety of writing types and styles. Furthermore, the designed courses provide English language training tailored to specific disciplines, including social sciences and humanities, science and technology, engineering, business, biology and medical sciences...etc. (<https://dual.mesrs.dz>)

One of Dual's key features is its versatility where it allows users to engage in learning at their convenience by offering both self-paced learning and tutor-led sessions. Learners who prefer independent study can access a wide range of interactive materials, including video lectures, quizzes, assignments, and discussion forums, allowing them to progress at their own speed. For those seeking personalized guidance, the platform provides tutor-led courses where experienced instructors offer live sessions, feedback, and mentorship, ensuring a structured and supportive learning experience. Another feature that goes beyond traditional course content is interactivity; Dual fosters a dynamic learning community where students can interact with peers, participate in discussion boards, and collaborate on language exercises to facilitate engaging and effective learning experience. The platform also incorporates achievement badges and progress tracking, to keep learners motivated and engaged. The last is a strong commitment to accessibility; Dual is designed to work seamlessly across devices, allowing users to learn anytime and anywhere, whether on a computer, tablet, or smart phone. (<https://dual.mesrs.dz>)

## **Theoretical Framework**

In order to achieve the main objective of the research which is understanding the extent to which DUAL influences EMI teaching practices, the learning experience, and the overall quality of English language education in Algerian universities, this study is grounded in several key theories and models related to e-learning, technology adoption, and language education. The theoretical framework provides a lens through which the effectiveness, challenges, and pedagogical impact of the DUAL English Language E-learning Platform can be understood. These theories are:

### *Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)*

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), developed by Davis (1989), is a widely used framework for understanding how users come to accept and use technology. According to TAM, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are the primary factors that influence technology adoption. In the context of this study, TAM helps explain how Algerian university teachers' perceptions of the DUAL platform's ease of use and its benefits in enhancing English language teaching affect their willingness to integrate it into their teaching practices.

### *Community of Inquiry (CoI) Framework*

The Community of Inquiry (CoI) Framework (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000) is another important theoretical model for online and blended learning environments. The CoI framework emphasizes the importance of three core elements for effective e-learning: cognitive presence (the extent to which learners can construct and confirm meaning through reflection and discourse), social presence (the ability to project oneself in a meaningful way in the online environment), and teaching presence (the design and facilitation of learning). This framework is relevant for examining how the DUAL platform supports or hinders these three dimensions in the context of English language learning.

### *Constructivist Learning Theory*

Constructivism (Piaget, 1970; Vygotsky, 1978) asserts that learning is an active, social process where learners construct knowledge through interaction with their environment and others. In the context of e-learning, constructivism suggests that digital platforms like DUAL can foster a more engaging, interactive, and collaborative learning experience. The platform's design and functionality are examined through this lens to explore whether it supports learner-centered, interactive activities that enhance EMI teacher training.

### *Diffusion of Innovations Theory*

Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory (2003) explains how, why, and at what rate new ideas and technology spread within a community. This theory is particularly useful for understanding the adoption of e-learning platforms in higher education, as it considers the characteristics of the innovation representing DUAL platform, the communication channels, the social system referring to Algerian universities, and the rate of adoption by individuals or teachers in this research. The framework helps identify the factors influencing the rate at which university teachers adopt the DUAL platform as an EMI teacher training method and the challenges that may slow its diffusion.

### *Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)*

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) (Shulman, 1986) refers to the intersection of content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, highlighting the importance of understanding how to teach specific subject matter effectively. This theory is relevant to the study because it emphasizes the importance of teachers' knowledge and ability to integrate English as a medium of instruction into their teaching practices to enhance student learning. It helps to frame the study's exploration of how teachers adapt their pedagogical approaches when using English language in their instruction.

By integrating these theoretical frameworks, the study examines how the DUAL English Language E-learning Platform is perceived and used by Algerian university teachers, and how these perceptions and practices influence the effectiveness of the platform in enhancing English language teaching and learning. These theories provide a comprehensive understanding of the key factors influencing the adoption and impact of the platform, as well as the broader implications for transformation in the language of instruction in higher education.

### **Methodology**

This research employs a **qualitative research design** to explore Algerian university teachers' experiences with the DUAL English Language E-learning Platform as an EMI teacher training tool. The study aims to gather in-depth insights into the platform's effectiveness, challenges, and pedagogical impact, focusing on teachers' perceptions and practices. The research is **exploratory** in nature, aiming to understand the underlying factors influencing the adoption and use of the DUAL platform in English language teaching. A qualitative approach is chosen to allow for a detailed examination of teachers' personal experiences, opinions, and challenges, which cannot be fully captured through quantitative methods.

### **Participants**

The study includes **university teachers** who have experience using the DUAL platform across several Algerian higher education institutions. A purposive sampling technique is used to select participants based on their familiarity with the platform, ensuring that the sample is representative of teachers from different disciplines and teaching contexts. Moreover, the participants were selected according to their orientation towards using English as a medium of instruction in their teaching.

### **Data Collection**

**Semi-structured interviews** are the primary data collection method. Interviews allow for flexible, in-depth conversations that enable participants to express their experiences and views in their own words. The interview questions are designed to explore various

aspects of the platform's use, including its perceived benefits, challenges, and impact on teaching practices. Interviews are conducted in person or virtually, depending on accessibility, and are audio-recorded for accuracy.

### ***Data Analysis***

The data is analyzed using **thematic analysis**, which involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes within the data. Thematic analysis allows for the organization of teachers' responses into meaningful categories, providing insights into common experiences, challenges, and suggestions for improving the use of the DUAL platform. The analysis is carried out in a systematic, iterative process to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the data.

### ***Ethical Considerations***

Ethical guidelines are followed throughout the research process. Participants are informed about the purpose of the study, and their participation is voluntary. Informed consent is obtained from all participants, and confidentiality is maintained by anonymizing interview data. Additionally, participants are given the right to withdraw from the study at any point without consequence.

### ***Limitations***

While this study provides valuable insights into the experiences of teachers using the DUAL platform, it is limited to a specific group of participants in Algerian universities. The findings may not be generalizable to other contexts or countries. Additionally, the research is based on self-reported data, which may be subject to bias or limitations in recall.

## **Results**

The findings of the study reveal both opportunities and challenges associated with the DUAL English Language E-learning Platform as an EMI teacher training tool. Key results include:

### ***Effectiveness of the Platform***

Teachers reported that the DUAL platform has the potential to enhance English language teaching and learning. Specific advantages highlighted include its ability to provide diverse instructional materials, facilitate interactive learning, and support flexible teaching approaches. Teachers also appreciated the platform's features for tracking their progress and delivering feedback. The teachers expressed their satisfaction with the platform's content and how it smoothly helped them to integrate EMI in their teaching regardless of their specialty.

### ***Challenges in Platform Usage***

According to the participants' responses, several barriers hinder the effective use of the DUAL platform. The highlighted challenges are summarized into the following:

***Technical Limitations:*** Teachers frequently cited issues such as unstable internet connectivity, slow platform performance, and compatibility problems with devices. These technical limitations slowed down the completion of the course and affected the teachers' learning progress rate.

***Insufficient Training:*** Many participants expressed a lack of adequate training on how to use the platform effectively, leading to underutilization of its features. Such a barrier might lead to questioning Algerian university teachers' IT literacy, which is not the main focus of our paper, and how it might influence their use of the platform to learn the English in order to be able to use it as a medium of instruction once they complete the training.

***Institutional Support:*** A lack of institutional support, such as limited access to resources and inconsistent policy frameworks for e-learning and EMI integration, was identified as a major obstacle. University teachers have always been struggling with institutional support especially when it comes to pedagogical matters where they encounter obstacles that would hinder the pedagogical process and the achievement of the teaching and learning objectives.

### ***Teachers' Perceptions and Adaptations***

While teachers recognized the potential of e-learning tools, they also expressed concerns about adapting their teaching methodologies to align with the platform's content. Some teachers developed their own strategies to overcome pedagogical challenges, demonstrating resilience and creativity to implement EMI in their classrooms.

The analysis of the findings underscores a dual narrative regarding the use of the DUAL platform in Algerian higher education. On the one hand, the platform demonstrates significant potential to enhance the quality of English language instruction through interactive and flexible digital tools. On the other hand, its effectiveness is hampered by systemic and infrastructural challenges. The **technical limitations** highlight the need for improved infrastructure, including reliable internet access and upgraded digital tools. Moreover, the issue of **insufficient training** suggests that teachers require continuous professional development tailored to e-learning methodologies. Furthermore, the lack of **institutional support** reflects broader challenges in the digital and linguistic transformation of education, including policy gaps and resource allocation. Add to that the fact that the DUAL platform offers valuable opportunities

for enhancing English language teaching; however, its full potential can only be realized through targeted interventions to address the identified barriers. The study contributes to a growing body of research on digital education in developing contexts and provides a foundation for future improvements in EMI implementation.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed to optimize the integration of e-learning tools like the DUAL platform in Algerian higher education as an EMI training method:

**Enhance Technical Infrastructure:** the government is required to invest in improving internet connectivity and digital infrastructure across universities and ensure the platform is optimized for a wide range of devices and environments, particularly in areas with limited resources.

**Provide Comprehensive Training for Educators:** universities are invited to develop and deliver professional development programs focused on the effective use of the DUAL platform and to include modules on e-pedagogy, digital content creation, and troubleshooting technical issues.

**Strengthen Institutional Support:** higher education institutions need to establish clear policies and frameworks for e-learning and EMI integration at the institutional level. Moreover, they are recommended to provide resources, such as dedicated technical support teams and access to digital tools, to assist educators in using the platform effectively.

**Foster Collaborative Communities of Practice:** universities should encourage collaboration among educators to share best practices and strategies for overcoming challenges. Create online forums or workshops where teachers can discuss their experiences with e-learning tools.

**Monitor and Evaluate Platform Usage:** the ministry of higher education is required to implement regular assessments of the platform's effectiveness and user satisfaction in addition to giving more attention to feedback from teachers and students to make continuous improvements to the platform and its implementation.

These recommendations aim to address the identified challenges and enhance the adoption and effectiveness of e-learning platforms in Algerian universities, contributing to the broader goal of digital transformation in language education.

## Conclusion

The results highlight that while the **perceived usefulness** of the DUAL platform as an EMI teacher training tool was generally acknowledged, the **perceived ease of use** was undermined by technical and infrastructural challenges. This disparity reflects TAM's prediction that both factors must align positively for successful technology adoption. The adopted theoretical framework provides a useful lens to understand the adoption dynamics of the DUAL platform. The findings reinforce the importance of addressing both technical and institutional barriers to improve teachers' perceptions of ease of use and usefulness of Dual platform, thereby increasing their willingness to adopt and integrate EMI in their teaching and assessment.

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