Teaching without prescribed curricula and without textbooks: a way of expressing pedagogical expertise?

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Abstract

Media and information education (abbreviated as EMI in France[1]) is a cross-disciplinary component of the French education system. One of its goals is to help students develop digital citizenship through critical thinking skills. EMI is not linked to any specific school subject and is integrated into all of them. While the French ministry of education calls for collective coherence without providing the usual tools (curricula, textbooks, programmes), EMI is unevenly approached by teachers through a heterogeneity of practices. Based on ongoing research into the motivations of some lower and upper secondary school teachers involved in EMI, the aim of this study is to determine what types of resources are mobilised, in a pedagogical environment that is built around an active approach. Results show that practice of EMI remains mostly implicit: teachers prefer to use the autonomy allowed by the weak institutional framework to create their own resources rather than relying on institutional resources, thus reinforcing their professional singularity and practising their pedagogical expertise.

Keywords: media and information education, educational resources, cross-disciplinary teaching, active learning, teacher engagement, media literacy

Introduction

Whether used as learning supports for students or for help in lesson design, textbooks remain an essential tool for teachers. Now associated with numerous online resources, textbooks are still deployed. Here, the textbook will not be seen as a learning method, a bank of exercises for students, or a source of modelling reference (Choppin, 2005), but more as a consultation document. Every year in France, secondary school teachers receive free paper or digital specimens of textbooks in their subject area from educa-

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[1] L'Education aux Médias et à l'Information

tional publishers to allow them to choose which textbooks they will order and so enabling them to build up a reference collection. This collection will give them an idea of the expected institutional framework and examples of activities for students, whether for homework or in the classroom.

In the French education system, many school subjects are not covered by textbooks at all or are only covered by a single publisher, such as certain vocational training courses in secondary schools. This is also the case for cross-curricular subjects dealing with social issues, which are the responsibility of every teacher.

Here, we focus on one such cross-disciplinary subject: media and information education (EMI in French). A national expression of an international concern promoted by UNESCO's Information and Communication sector, EMI aims to "shed light on the information landscape in which students evolve" (MENJS, 2022). It is to be contextualised within every school subject, in an educational approach with no explicit division of responsibilities between them, no hours set aside in students' timetables and no specific programmes. Because of its cross-curricular dimension and the absence of a strong formal framework, EMI is voluntary but insufficiently invested in by teachers (MENJS, op. cit.).

Drawing on research into the motivations of secondary school teachers to become involved in EMI, we will examine the types of resources mobilised in the context of EMI and the consequences for its integration into school curricula and teachers' practices.

After outlining EMI's institutional expectations, we will present an initial overview of the place of EMI through a sample of school textbooks to understand whether the visibility given to EMI today is a driving force or an impediment to the commitment of its actors and its implementation in their ways of teaching.

1.   The role of EMI in digital and academic education

1.1   EMI as a voluntary pedagogical commitment

The concept of Media and Information Literacy (MIL) appeared at the end of the 20th century, at UNESCO's instigation, following the rise of mass media, associated with information and communication technologies (ICT), and their necessary mastery by populations at an international level. It has gradually developed into "a basic human right in a digital world that brings integration to all peoples" (UNESCO, 2005): in other words, access to useful information requires new capacities for receiving and transmitting it. Every Internet user must be able to access information that is "reliable, diversified and of high quality" (UNESCO, *op. cit.*) and must also be able to create it and to share it while respecting the rules of freedom of speech and intellectual property.

In 2012, UNESCO suggested five laws for media and information literacy in the digital age[2] based on the main principle that "information is for all". Understanding, creating, or acquiring information must be possible for every citizen, by means of local educational programmes. This progressive and continuous programme (law 5) must be integrated into the educational systems of partner countries. To this end, two online manuals were published for teachers in 2011 and 2021 (UNESCO, 2021). They offer a structured framework of competencies and pedagogical suggestions.

In France, media and information literacy made its appearance in lower secondary school curricula in 2015 (MEN, 2015) as a list of competencies references. A public operator set up in 1983 to promote media literacy in the French educational system, the CLEMI[3] is mandated to train teachers and produce teaching resources to support its implementation in classrooms. EMI is organised into four areas of competence: using media and information independently (media literacy); using information in a literate way (information literacy); becoming media responsible (citizenship and autonomy); producing, communicating, and sharing information (collaboration, creativity).

EMI's aim is to enable students to develop their digital citizenship, an objective underpinned by concern about their media practices. Students are seen as passive users and victims of media manipulation techniques, overexposed to a continuous flow of information published without moderation.

For teachers who choose to become involved in EMI, it is less a matter of passing on academic knowledge from their school subject area than protecting students by helping them to acquire safe practices that can be transposed into their private lives.

As it is not framed by a precise programme or specific course materials, involvement in EMI is understood here as a voluntary initiative on the part of teachers, rather than a contractual obligation. Professional commitment is understood here as an individual act in which the teacher in charge considers her/himself legitimate and responsible for the consequences of her/his activity.

Since involvement in EMI is a personal choice, we felt it important to start from the individual perceptions and professional experiences of secondary school teachers to understand their motivations for becoming involved. We chose a comprehensive approach, through individual semi-directive interviews, so that the respondents could explain and develop the reasons for their commitment, to bring out their motivations through the meaning they give to their practices.

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[2] UNESCO, 2023. Five laws of Media and Information literacy. https://www.unesco.org/en/media-information-literacy/five-laws

[3] At first « Centre de Liaison de l'Enseignement et des Moyens d'Information » [*Liaison Centre for Education and Information Tools*], CLEMI means today « le Centre pour L'Education aux Médias et à l'information » [*media and information education's Centre*]

Alias	School subject	Production	School	Seniority
GROUP 1 : EMI practitioners				
Sophie	French	Publication on Twitter (2019)	Lower secondary school	25 y.
Agathe	French	Media class	Lower secondary school	20 y.
Cathy	HGCE	Online radio	Lower secondary school	15 y.
Alan	Techno.	Online radio	Lower secondary school	17 y.
Anne	Science	Wikipedia publication Contest	Upper secondary school	5 y.
Paul	Maths	Online broadcast	Upper secondary school	28 y.
Esther	HGCE*	Online radio	Lower secondary school	4 y.
Jeanne	Sport	Online radio	Lower secondary school	15 y.
Franck	HGCE	Frontpage Contest	Upper secondary school	14 y.
Leslie	HGCE	Frontpage Contest	Upper secondary school	8 y.
Pascale	HGCE	Online radio	Upper secondary school	30 y.
Rebecca	HGCE	Posters Contest	Upper secondary school	20 y.
Sonia	HGCE	Online documentaries	Upper secondary school	15 y.
Thomas	Science	Online broadcast	Upper secondary school	17 y.
Benoit	Maths	Datavisualization	Upper secondary school	22 y.
Nicolas	HGCE	Publication on Wikipédia	Upper secondary school	15 y.
Pauline	Science	Critical thinking	Lower secondary school	1 y.
Caroline	Science	Controversy	Lower secondary school	9 y.
GROUP 2 : No Practitioners				
Soizic	HGCE		Upper secondary school	22 y.
Diana	English		Lower secondary school	12 y.
Bérénice	Maths		Upper secondary school	22 y.
Marie	Economy		Upper secondary school	2 y.
Eléonore	Economy		Upper secondary school	5 y.
Victor	Maths		Lower secondary school	16 y.

*HGCE: History, Geography and Citizenship Education

Table 1: Interviewee characteristics

Each interview lasted between 40 minutes and an hour. It began with a presentation by the teacher of an activity carried out in class that s/he linked to EMI (see Table 1, "Production" column). The interviewees were divided into two groups: eighteen teachers who defined themselves as practising EMI and six who proclaimed themselves not to be practising EMI.

Based on a group of 24 volunteer teachers from different school subjects and different periods of seniority (Table 1), this research is not intended as a model but rather as a presentation of case studies, the analysis of which may serve as a basis for future research. Difficulties in identifying teachers involved in EMI constrained the constitution of this panel. It is not representative of the general population of secondary school teachers. Gender and type of secondary schools were not considered relevant variables.

We will now describe how these teachers define their involvement in EMI and how they develop their teaching activities in this area without being able to rely on a strong institutional framework.

1.2 From perceived student deficits to pedagogical action

For every encountered teacher, students' use of information in a digital environment is perceived as insufficient, which can potentially endanger their security and welfare online. In this way, teachers agree with ministerial and international concerns, even though they are unaware of the official frame. EMI practitioners (group 1) explain their implication as an answer to students' perceived needs from both an academic and a social perspective: overexposure to screens and fake news, belief in conspiracy theories, and inability to tell the difference between fact and opinion in the classroom and in their reception of social media notifications.

Teachers design a variety of pedagogical situations for the same purpose: to enable students to assess the reliability of a source of information. EMI is thought as an active approach, through publication and/or problem-solving situations (investigation). Students learn through concrete, situated experiences to evaluate information published by the news media or by social media.

This common objective outlines an EMI that focuses on media skills (or *media literacy*). Students must be taught to seek out, exploit and process information through concrete situations to "become aware", to "draw out what is true" (Caroline), while at the same time learning to defend themselves from the media industries (Jeanneret, 2007, in Pignier, 2020).

A citizenship education objective is also mentioned, again in connection with their media environment. The goal is to help students learn to inform themselves, again in response to a perceived need.

> In fact, we realise that with the emergence of social networks and platforms like YouTube, students want to be informed... They do inform themselves, but in a clumsy, vague way, and it's up to the school to give them the tools to inform themselves properly. There's a real appetite to understand current affairs, to get informed, to understand what's being played out, what's being transmitted right in front of them. (Cathy)

Commitment to students does not seem to be linked to school subjects taught, seniority, or gender. We note, however, that all the teachers we met had passed a competitive entrance examination to the French Ministry of Education and are on permanent contracts, a professional situation that facilitates pedagogical projects.

Teachers implement EMI through four types of approaches that are not mutually exclusive: during class sessions; taking up specific methodological support time; being part of an official school program; and running a media group activity.

Involvement in the EMI takes shape in two distinct spaces, in class and outside school time, addressing two different audiences: a restricted audience in the classroom

and volunteer students for the media group. Some teachers work in both areas simultaneously. Most teachers include their EMI teaching actions in their classes' sessions. The time devoted to it is difficult to quantify, from one-off investigative actions to year-long publication projects. Different modalities can be successively invested, until the teacher is satisfied with the pedagogical situation created.

Whether they are asked to construct information for publication (thus learning about the work of journalists) or to process it, students are brought face-to-face with biased or misleading media discourse, as well as cognitive and emotional manipulations, in order to emancipate themselves. Placed in the position of transmitter or receiver of media information, they will become able, through real-life experience, to process information, recognise the strategies associated with its dissemination, which influence its reception, and understand the notions of intention and opinion. To ensure the reliability of information before using or relaying on it, or to protect oneself against it, everyone follows the same approach: identify the author to ensure the credibility of the source and then look for other concordant sources to ensure its veracity.

> I say that [EMI] is about developing the skills needed to distinguish information from opinion, and to take a critical look at information, to be able to take a critical look at information and understand the importance of sources. Finally, the veracity of... How can I put this... Not the veracity, but the... The effect of reliability. That's it: the importance of reliable sources and a diversity of information sources. (Franck)

Some teachers prioritise the immediate well-being of their students, urging them to avoid being passive consumers, protecting them against violent or pornographic content. Others prefer to give their students the analytical tools and practical skills they need to become media practitioners in the immediate future. Finally, the media environment can be presented to students not as a dangerous place but as a place of creation and openness to the world. In this case it is their personal expression and curiosity that the project will seek to foster, with a more distant aim of enlightened citizenship.

It became clear at the start of the interviews with the teachers from group 2 that the meaning of the acronym EMI is little known, whatever the school subject. Two teachers who said they don't practice EMI (Soizic, Diana) are in fact simply unaware of the acronym's meaning and are leading the same type of activities as those who do practice EMI, with the same objective of mastering the media environment. Therefore, we need to redefine our two groups' names, based no longer on the practice of EMI but on the inclusion of this commitment in a recognised and named action, an *enlightened involvement*.

Our interviews also revealed that even among the *enlightened practitioners* from group 1, knowledge of the acronym came after some practice with EMI.

> I've been practicing EMI for as long as I can remember, because in my statistics chapters I always have examples that intersect with it, but it's true that I've only known the acronym since I taught in the "Découverte Professionnelle" section [vocational training course introduction in lower secondary school], with research into media-type written production, leading ultimately to a class newspaper, and in the process I discovered CLEMI. Today, I see the same type of questioning from colleagues, particularly in science, for example, who know nothing about "EMI", and others in history-geography, for example, who say "Ah but yes, so I've already been doing EMI for a long time. (Benoit)

For Leslie, too, it was through "numerous exchanges" with a colleague and a re-reading of the programmes that the acronym made sense. Because, as we will see below, even if several EMI themes and objects are present in the lower and upper secondary school's curricula, the expression is rarely explicitly mentioned in secondary school programmes, except in some incentives for interdisciplinary work in lower secondary school (Bosler, 2023) and never stated in the form of its acronym.

2. How Do Teachers integrate EMI?

2.1. The absence of EMI terminology in textbooks

The cross-disciplinary nature of EMI anchors it in different subject areas, but without explicit references. This situation is reinforced by the lack of mention of the term EMI, or any variation of it, in school textbooks.

An initial preparatory study of history-geography, French, science, mathematics, and English textbooks (in relation to the disciplines of the teachers we met) from four publishers (Hatier, Nathan, Hachette, Belin) isn't sufficiently exhaustive to provide a true panorama of school publishing, but it does enable us to make some initial considerations about the place of EMI in the textbooks teachers and pupils can refer to.

Out of the 20 upper secondary school textbooks consulted, not one mentions EMI or "media and information education", even in suggested activities such as writing press articles (English, tenth grade, Belin, 2019, p. 236). Some chapters, however, are directly linked to objects or concepts common to EMI, as in mathematics tenth grade, as part of Numerical Information (*Informations chiffrées*):
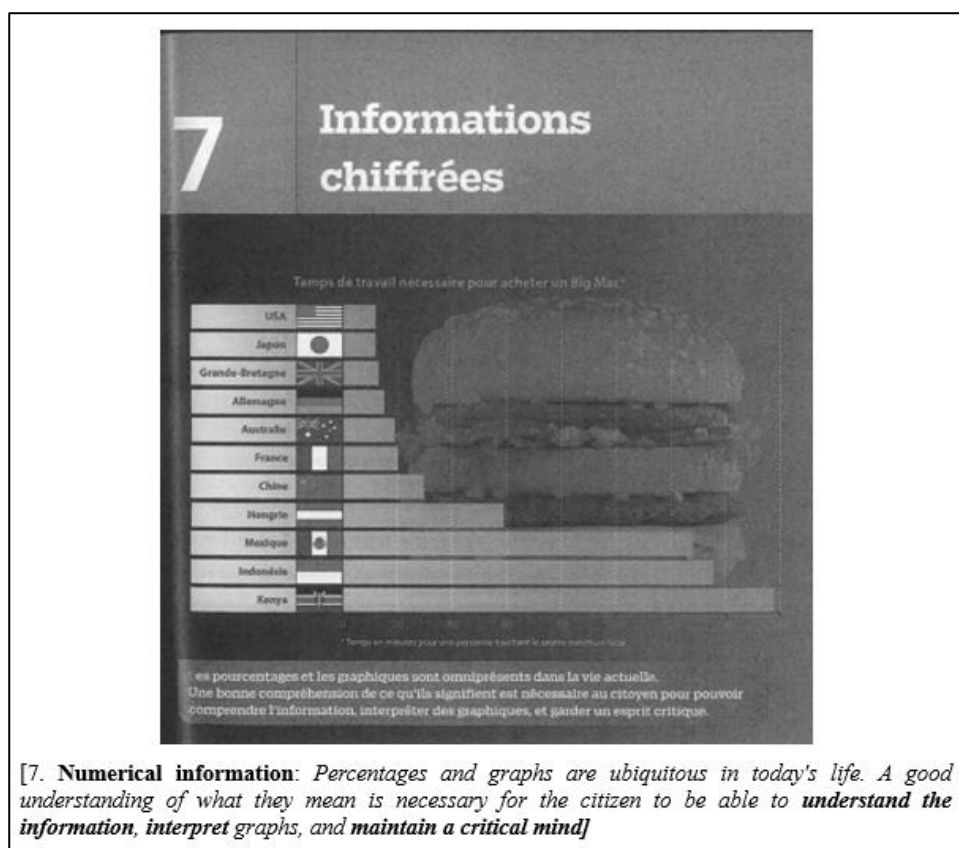
Figure 1: Mathematics tenth grade (Didier, 2019)

The only exception is the 2019 eleventh-grade history-geography-citizenship textbook (Nathan), where a section entitled Going Further, inserted at the bottom of the last page of the chapter Rumours and fake news, how to get through? (p. 242), offers a hyperlink containing the term *Education aux médias* [media education][4].

In lower secondary school, of the 23 textbooks consulted, EMI concepts and notions are not linked to programmes either. Some of the media skills in the EMI resource (MEN, 2015) are presented through a school subject: for example, "Gather and process useful information", "Understand the elements of a debate", and "Demonstrate critical thinking", in a science textbook (Belin, 2022, p. 285). Or they may be associated with another educational field, as for example in the ninth grade history-geography-citizenship textbook published by Hatier (2021), where activities on the themes of "Do a news roundup" or "Information and social media" are presented as part of the preparation for a digital certification (p. 1).

Some textbooks offer EMI-tagged activities that correspond to active pedagogical situations, from verifying information (Figure 2: history-geography-citizenship, seventh grade, Nathan 2017, p. 251) to carrying out a "complex task" in the form of media production or an exhibition (p. 326).

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[4] https://education.francetv.fr/matiere/education_aux-medias/seconde/video/verifier-l-info-le-fact-checking [education.france.tv/ schoolsubject/media-education/11th/video/ To-make-sure-of-information-fact-checking]

Figure 2: History-geography-citizenship, seventh grade (Nathan, 2017)

Other textbooks offer tips or step-by-step guides to create media, also in the explicit context of EMI. Always through an active approach, these activities are an incentive for students to develop their critical thinking skills by controlling and verifying sources of information.

When the activity is not related to media production or an investigation into media information, it is not related to EMI. For example, the sixth-grade history-geography textbook published by Hatier (2016) offers students an online information search activity ("I get information on the Internet", p. 50) by indicating keywords to submit to a search engine and then the page to consult to access the information needed and so answer the questions asked. Students are not asked to check sources or cross-reference them. The other online resource offered (from the online encyclopaedia Wikipedia) has the function of providing additional information, the reliability of which is also not to be questioned. As with the teachers interviewed, the field of information retrieval is not considered to be part of EMI, even though it is present in the 2015 frame reference (MENJS, 2015).

When it is present in lower secondary school textbooks, EMI always refers to practical situations (media production, investigation, reading). The textbooks, following the teachers' practices, reduce it to the field of media skills instead of opening it to media knowledge. The absence of the term EMI may explain the variety of approaches and scenarios proposed to students by the teachers interviewed. Without explicit mention in the course design documents, the understanding of EMI remains fractional and personal.

2.2. EMI, an educational approach without references

EMI is thus very much present in programmes and textbooks for those who know how to look at it. Teachers from group 1 are able to recognise EMI in their school subject programmes. Benoit linked his tenth-grade programme on numerical information with a data visualisation project, an example of his EMI activities, allowing him to jointly develop mathematical skills and reading and evaluating information skills. For Caroline, EMI is an integral part of her school subject. She cites the skills listed in her sixth-grade science textbook as criteria for evaluating her students at the end of the project. Teaching EMI in the classroom also means at the same time teaching one's school subject, even if the presence of EMI in the curriculum is not explicitly made.

> So, there may not be written EMI in my programme, but very clearly when you see the title "information/disinformation" for me it'' like... In my tenth-grade programme, it's written, perhaps you don't have it in mind, it's "Mistrust of information". So, there is no written EMI either, but for me it's in the programme. For me, thats it. (…) But making sure that students increase their ability to inform and be informed, to know how to transmit information that they will source, is obviously at the heart of my history-geography school subject for me too. (Pascale)

Including an EMI project or pedagogical situation in the curriculum also makes it possible to practice EMI not as an additional task, but rather as a step aside. Relying on "real" publications rather than on textbook documents and asking students to apply a critical approach through real concrete situations will give some meaning to taught school subjects by showing that what is learnt in class is useful for understanding the outside world and that the school world is not disconnected from reality. This approach may explain why some teachers practice EMI without knowing it: they do not need to individualise these objects outside their school subject, considering them as already belonging.

EMI is also sometimes spontaneously associated with certain school subjects. Bérénice and Victor explain their non-involment with EMI by a lack of disciplinary dispositions, declaring that they "do not feel themselves suitable" for engaging with EMI. For them, their history and geography colleagues have been better trained to talk about current events with students or to explain their geopolitical issues or background. It should be noted that history and geography teachers are no more aware of the meaning of the acronym than other teachers. Soizic has been involved in EMI for more than 20 years without ever knowing of it. Following our interview, she was relieved to learn that no other members of the team of history-geography teachers at her upper secondary school knew the acronym either.

EMI will also be used to show the usefulness of the discipline. Disciplinary knowledge is necessary in the investigative activities to learn to differentiate truth from falsehood and scientific information from opinion. For analysing the reliability of a newspaper's information, students need to rely on what they have learnt in class. It is also in this way of thinking that the EMI activities in lower secondary school textbooks are proposed, not to acquire new knowledge but to use what has been taught. Therefore, teachers prefer to use press articles rather than the documents proposed by textbooks.

> I use EMI as a trigger situation with an article that illustrates a controversy... For example, when I do the sequence on Gardasil, the vaccine against the papillomavirus, I start with an article from the front page of the newspaper Le Monde. (Thomas)

Thus, disciplinary knowledge is used to decipher current events, and current events anchor the discipline in the world. It is therefore understandable, in this need to link the theoretical knowledge of the curriculum to "real life", that textbooks are not very mobilised. Benoit prefers to use infographics from the news media rather than from textbooks (where they are present, see Table 2), which he calls "real tables". This link between EMI and the outside world is shared by the other teachers and can be seen as a trigger for commitment or as a hindrance. Bérénice, for example, explains her non-involvement in EMI also by the fact that this use of documents relating to recent news requires far too much personal time for research and selection. For her part, she prefers to rely on the textbook documents. For those who want to show that their field is related to current events, the teaching materials must be constantly renewed (Douniès, 2019).

EMI is therefore not considered as additional teaching by its actors, who do not feel the need for specific reference documents. Including EMI in one's own school subject also gives legitimacy to the teacher to invest time in it. If s/he is still in his disciplinary field, s/he does not need further expertise.

Engaging with EMI means being able to build a singular pedagogical framework, an answer to a problem met in class, by relying on one's professional abilities as a course designer. This expertise is also expressed in the ability to select and use non-academic or non-institutional resources for teaching. The teachers' didactic expertise allows them to find traces of their knowledge in the surrounding world to make their school subject more understandable to their students (Barrère, 2017). Using current events as a resource in the preparation of one's courses provides an opportunity to adopt a satisfactory posture of *intellectual craftsmanship* (Barrère, *op. cit*.). Teachers thus demonstrate their intellectual capacities by creating their own tools, rather than relying on more conventional and official resources. It also shows their ability to define the needs of students. They know how to provide a particular solution to a problem encountered by choosing an action from their professional repertoire. If this solution is

recognised as effective and satisfactory, it will increase their toolbox of pedagogical actions and thus strengthen their sense of professional effectiveness (Carraud, 2020).

The positive evaluation of the consequences of this commitment will strengthen the coherence between teachers' vision of their profession and maintain the professional self-esteem necessary to continue to be the main judge of the relevance of the made pedagogical choices (Barrère, 2017), since it is not possible to refer to an official framework. In addition to these intellectual and professional motivations, there is sometimes a desire for *discretion* on the part of the teachers involved in EMI. Their commitment can then be read as a need to get out of a school routine, from institutional norms, from the curricula to be followed and from their role as evaluators. EMI then becomes a creative pedagogical space, where, without a required curriculum, textbook, or report card to fill in, teachers can quietly find professional satisfaction in carrying out a pedagogical project away from the usual school setting.

EMI activities have an educational role whose objective is to bring about a real and lasting transformation of the student's behaviour, with an aim of citizenship integration.

3. Involving with EMI, a way of being a teacher

3.1. The primacy of experience

It is then the empirical effectiveness of the experience that validates the professional practice constructed by the action (Roux-Perez, 2003) and legitimises the investment. Time spent on EMI is focused on concrete situations that make sense for the students to allow them to build tools and references for their future civic life. To motivate students to include this knowledge of action in private practical situations, they are not subjected to a summative assessment to differentiate this practical knowledge from more theoretical school learning. It is the civic consequence of EMI's skills that is highlighted, the fact that "learning to decipher the media is useful, not to get a good grade, but as an enlightened citizenship" (Leslie).

But when the educational framework is defined by the activity, it can happen that the action takes precedence over the pedagogical objective. None of the respondents regretted the lack of reference materials or a precise progression of skills available through textbooks or curricula, even when they're able to find them in the programmes. For some teachers, the collaborative experience with the students is ultimately more important than the targeted EMI skills. There are not necessarily any links between academic knowledge and experiential knowledge. The project will be seen as successful if the quality of the result (the product) is judged satisfactory and if the students have been involved in it, if they are proud of the result. Doing so takes precedence over learning; the completion of the project and the enthusiasm of the students become more

important than the progress of the students in the media field or the academic field. The essential thing is that the students have been made aware that they "get something out of it that is not immediate and marked" (Benoit). Teachers no longer base their authority on their position as an evaluator or on their academic knowledge but on their ability to build an educational framework in which they guide their students towards shared success. The students' commitment to the work is the reward for teachers' investment, the trace that the project will leave in their school memory is the witness of their ability to understand the students and to conform to the self-built image of what a teacher should be.

> When the project is completed, and when I realise that the rendering of their work corresponds perfectly to what I have... To my expectations, precisely, now, I realise that it's because it has borne fruit and that it's... And at the same time, that it motivates the students and that they have invested themselves in the project. (…) I still have students... For example, one who asked me by email in my final year of high school for some work we had done in 2nd grade and who asked me to give her the video link again, because she wanted to keep the good memories of high school. (Sonia)

No explicit evaluation of media skills acquisition is given to the students. The purpose of transforming their media and digital practices becomes secondary, supplanted by the collective adventure. At the end of his data visualisation project, Benoit remains doubtful about the critical thinking skills acquired by his students: "Will they really be vigilant afterwards, and will they really ask the question every time? *I'm not sure*."

Students and teachers alike are thus positioned in an experiential learning (Dubar, 1996) that is anchored in activities where the experience of the project is sufficient. Constructive relationships, accomplishment, and success of the task are more important than the immediate academic results and will validate the continuation with another project the following year with another class. Teachers rely on their didactic and pedagogical expertise to recognise a need and to respond to it effectively. However, it is not through a curriculum, or textbooks made for a large audience, that they will find tools for answering a particular need of a specific class.

The field of EMI is more a place where a logic of action is applied than a logic of learning. By prioritising authentic experiences, it places the emphasis on meaningful action and student engagement, valuing the process and collaborative outcomes over traditional academic benchmarks or summative assessments. For the teachers we met, it is also an important part of their vision of their profession.

3.2. From implicit practice to explicit mention: should EMI be acknowledged?

Being able to evaluate information is, from the interviewee's point of view, a fundamental skill to acquire for the students, and the transmission of this skill is, for them,

an important part of their profession. Two teachers from group 1 practice EMI precisely to assert themselves as teachers exclusively outside their school subject area.

> I didn't want to bring it back to sport, it's a choice. I wanted, also me personally, to detach myself a little from my school subject, to work in other fields. Finally, it was integrated into such a personal process, to tell myself, "Well, sport, OK, it's good now, ... I can also be identified outside my school subject." (Jeanne)

Through the motivations for engaging in EMI, the teachers then reveal their way of *being in the profession* (Barrère, 2002). Agathe integrates EMI into her teaching hours, even if it means "taking time from the programme", believing that it is her "duty" to fulfil its mission. Victor, faced with the same observation of the students' inability to inform themselves, refers them to a teenagers' weekly radio programme, lamenting that his advice is not followed: "I had given it to them, I had told them to go and to listen, but they don't." He connects EMI with a know-how that is outside his own field of knowledge ("For us, it's rather the numbers") and so don't go farther.

However, they both share a vision of the profession that includes the desire to help students understand the world around them, but with different degrees of involvement. Victor wishes not to interfere in his students' private sphere, with their personal media practices, while Agathe will offer her students concrete publishing situations so that they can use these new media skills in "real life". Practising EMI is about teaching and educating; still being a teacher, but in a less constrained framework and with more pedagogical freedom.

Having begun EMI without being aware of it, most often by joining a project led by colleagues already involved, the question arises of the need to resort to textbooks and curricula when action precedes the practice. For the teachers who choose to, they will find through EMI's tagged propositions practical activities around media information and so stay on the familiar ground of their representations. The content of the textbook does not allow them to change or to open their mind or knowledge and thus to overcome difficulties. Placing "doing" before "saying", the implementation of EMI is neither evaluated a posteriori nor discussed, its representations are not questioned.

Practising teachers are satisfied with the current situation, finding links with school subjects for those who want to (and do) use the textbook, or being able to exclude from the pedagogical situation anything that will remind the students of a school frame (and not using the textbook). Using the textbook, a symbol of school, could also confine the situation to the school sphere, whereas the objective is for students to appropriate these skills to change their uses in their private lives and a citizenship to be.

However, to give the acronym an accurate meaning is seen as a positive element for some teachers from group 1. Rebecca believes that knowing about the acronym has "made her practice-aware", even though she never uses it with her students. Thomas

was "aware that he was doing EMI, but without having a clear definition of it" until he joined a professional think tank and thus enriched his teaching methods in the classroom by building a conceptual framework that coincided with his disciplinary methodology. For Leslie, naming and identifying the times dedicated to EMI in her classes allowed her to place herself in a broader perspective of citizenship education and to "point the finger" at it to her students.

Thus, the general absence of the term EMI in textbooks can be explained not by a lack of interest in its content and objectives from educational publishers, but because the teachers involved do not report this absence. Giving more visibility to EMI objects and including them explicitly in a curriculum could, however, allow teachers to raise awareness of their practices to put them into perspective or into question, to organise them into a progression. Students could also link together the scattered contributions of EMI encountered (or not) in different classes and give a global coherence to this rarely named learning. Knowing what educational purpose they are part of would also allow teachers to share their practices more and increase their educational toolbox. Outside the field of educational publishing, the French Ministry of National Education provides many online resources, categorised according to the discipline of Media and Information Education: educational sessions validated by the institution[5], educational videos on the construction of information[6] (Media Keys) or the acquisition of critical reflexes[7] (Know, Think, Analyse Messages). A guide sheet[8] for teachers was published in 2022, and the CLEMI publishes one every year. But these resources are little known and little exploited by the teachers we met. Only five of them occasionally consult the CLEMI website and annual brochures in search of educational guidance.

Involving with EMI responds to a singular situation met in a specific class. The response provided is adapted to this class and cannot be replicated, nor come from a general document that is intended for everyone.

Conclusion

With no disciplinary prerequisites, centred on concrete activities of publication or media analysis, fed by implicit knowledge of action and directed towards a change in pupils' practices, EMI is implemented following a voluntary involvement by teachers. This commitment makes EMI a discreet professional practice, not explained to students and sometimes not explained to oneself. The success of the students acts as a mirror on

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[5] Edubase (2024), discipline [school subject] « Education aux médias et à l'information » / mot-clé [keyword]: « éducation aux médias »: https://edubase.eduscol.education.fr/recherche?discipline[0]=%C3%89ducation%20aux%20m%C3%A9dias%20et%20%C3%A0%20l%E2%80%99information&keywords[0]=%C3%A9ducation%20aux%20m%C3%A9dias

[6] Lumni (2024) Les clés des médias [Media keys]: https://www.lumni.fr/programme/les-cles-des-medias

[7] Lumni (2024) SPAM: https://www.lumni.fr/programme/spam-savoir-penser-analyser-les-messages

[8] MENJS (2022) Vademecum EMI: https://eduscol.education.fr/document/33370/download

the success of the teacher in a stimulating pedagogical situation that values a more social relational dimension of learning outside a certain school routine. The lack of EMI content in textbooks is not noted as a problem by teachers, who often prefer to use "real" and current resources for a real and current class rather than a constructed pedagogical product. Existing institutional resources are underused. In addition, some teachers take part of their motivation to involve with EMI from the pleasure of creating their own resources or from a short escape from the school environment and its usual tools from time to time.

Defined after some practice, EMI becomes visible in school curricula and textbooks as a teaching object only for teachers who have already integrated it as a tool into their professional practice. It is up to those who commit themselves to build a global coherence for it, to recognise it for what it is. Teachers who currently take charge of EMI don't feel the need for specific training since their disciplinary knowledge and their educational skills are sufficient for doing well. However, by being dispersed in the curricula of different school subjects, without explicit attachment to a common objective, there is no official indication to provide teachers with the keys to a progressive and assessable EMI, a way to conceptualise or improve their practices, nor any obligation to provide results that could demonstrate its effectiveness or measure its dissemination.

Biographical notes

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