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ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN EFL CLASS: A STORY FROM TWO EFL TEACHERS IN A RURAL AREA IN PESANTREN IN EAST JAVA

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Abstract: Numerous academics have advocated using English as a medium of instruction (EMI). However, little focus has been placed on how an EFL teacher used EMI in a rural area in Pesantren in East Java. This study details the usage of EMI in EFL classes with students of various ethnic backgrounds, in particular. This study employs a narrative inquiry to examine two teachers' experiences teaching English as a second language over their roughly 16 years in senior high schools and teachers who spend approximately four years teaching English in the pesantren. The information was gleaned from a narrative mediated by a voice note and video call. Thematic analysis was used to examine the data. The findings indicate that there are two aspects to using EMI in EFL classes: (1) looking back, (2) looking both internally and externally, and (3) looking forward. The study's implementation is that the teacher's pedagogical expertise and language ability become the primary supports in EMI classes.
Keywords: *EMI; EFL class; rural area; pesantren.*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the use of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) has demonstrated clear benefits in achieving teaching objectives in EFL classrooms. Yuan et al. (2022) found that the importance of understanding the complexity and diversity of teachers' beliefs in the implementation of EMI in EFL classroom. The teachers had important insights into the development and effectiveness of university curricula and policies to support the efficiency of EMI education by regularly reflecting on their views and methods of instruction. In addition, Malmström et al. (2023) reported that since intelligible interaction between the teacher and the students is required for learning when the medium of instruction is English, the ability of teachers in the EMI environment—that is, disciplinary or "content" teachers—to engage students in English is crucial in this regard. EMI can be used in EFL classrooms and is beneficial when teachers are competent, optimistic, and capable of getting their students involved in English-language conversations. Whenever EMI is implemented in the school, student participation—such as the student's ability to speak English with confidence—becomes crucial. Thus, the use of EMI in EFL classes needs the participation of teachers and students who can interact with English in classrooms.

Previous research has documented that EMI has been adopted in four Asian countries: China, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Indonesia. The implementation of EMI in China was still considered to be "in its infancy" when it is compared with Europe and other regions of the world. This was because Chinese literature has more issues with teachers' poor English language skills and teacher-centered classrooms (Dang et al., 2023). Therefore, implementing EMI in Bangladesh directly contributed to poor teaching proficiency. They found that the teachers themselves are equipped with little English proficiency (Karim et al., 2023). Regarding implementing EMI in Malaysia, novice educators

at Malaysian International Schools found it difficult to oversee many languages in the same classroom (Marudadorai et al., 2023). Likewise, the implementation of EMI in Indonesia was that English teachers were not confident in the content or quality of English, they were working hard to create high-quality resources to aid students in developing their critical thinking skills. They also found that Indonesian was still widely used to assist in students' comprehension of the material (Tai & Zhao, 2024). Thus, EMI use in the four Asian countries is still in its infancy and faces the same obstacle—that is, English teachers' inadequate command of the language.

Considering English is a foreign language and will face many problems, the use of EMI in EFL classes requires preparation in the form of appropriate teaching strategies and sufficient awareness. Coleman et al. (2024) pointed out that the Ministry needed to discover how prevalent EMI was, what strategies were being employed, and what obstacles it faced even though it was recognized that EMI was growing in Indonesian universities. Similarly, Alhassan (2021), one of the main pedagogical challenges faced by EMI content teachers in EMI classrooms was the lack of awareness and attention to students' learning styles. Another challenge was teachers' failure to consider students' preferences and strategies when creating and delivering lessons. Therefore, the effectiveness of EMI is dependent on both teachers' and students' comprehension of English vocabulary as well as their use of learning strategies and level of engagement in the classroom.

In Indonesia, learning English is not limited to prestigious or foreign institutions. Islamic boarding schools additionally include English language instruction and English usage might even become commonplace in daily interaction. Hifasoh et al. (2023) reported that a teacher at the Islamic Boarding School said to successfully carry out the use of foreign languages, every pupil had to engage in daily communication through English and Arabic until proficiency and language activators must offer examples for every pupil when performing daily conversation with a pupil, to ensure all learners can enhance their foreign language skills and make their instructors as well as examples and inspiration themselves to be like what they see". EMI has been implemented in Indonesian Universities and International Schools. However, little research has been done on the experiences and opinions of teachers and students in Pesantrens or schools run by Pesantrens in rural Indonesia about the execution of this strategy. Not much research has been done on Indonesia. This indicates the need for research on the perspectives and experiences of instructors and students in rural Pesantrens, as this will shed light on the advantages and difficulties encountered.

Students at this boarding school must speak Arabic and English on a daily routine. This approach can enhance both teachers' and students' familiarity with various aspects of the English language. Nofita et al. (2024) reported that the Al-Ma'arif Islamic Boarding School supervised and managed pupils for a full day, from bedtime till they went back to sleep, to applied character education in the age of technology. Thus, the boarding schools demonstrate their ability to accept EMI as a regular form of communication as well as their capacity for growth and advancement. Thus, the primary goal of this study is to find out what instructors and students think about the use of EMI in remote Islamic boarding schools. To fill this void, this study aims to gather personal narratives from EFL teachers working in Islamic boarding schools located in rural areas about their experiences with the application of EMI in educational settings. This study's contribution is to demonstrate that EMI works in rural areas.

The following research questions put out to address the study's objectives: (1) How do EFL teachers think about EMI's implementation in East Java's Pesantren? (2) What obstacles and strategies do they face when implementing EMI? (3) What do the teachers at Pesantren hope will happen to EMI in the future?

The application of EMI in language classrooms affects students' learning objectives outside of the classroom in addition to within. Employing English as the medium of instruction rather than the student's native tongue can give them a lot of opportunities to use the language in a variety of everyday contexts and communicative situations, including those with their teachers, other students, advisors, and administrators (Belhiah & Elhami, 2015). This is not to argue that L1 is not necessary while using EMI in the classroom. According to Bolton & Botha (2017) while EMI might involved a more interactive, student-centered style, many teachers still believed that they only needed to translate the course material from the students' L1 to English to teach effectively. This implies that the EFL lesson will be more complicated if L1 is used to help students understand and translate into English.

English Foreign Language classes have employed EMI as a teaching tool. Simbolon (2021) suggested that several aspects of EMI practice have

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Volume 13, Issue 3, October 2025

been the focus of research in a variety of non-English speaking nations. Thus, the nations adopting EMI also come from several nations where English is not the primary language such as Indonesia. Floris (2014) stated that the EMI policy, also known as CLIL, has been in place in numerous institutions and colleges in Indonesia since 2006. A similar idea was additionally stated Simbolon, (2016) that numerous Indonesian Universities have recently started using the EMI program. In Indonesian higher education, however, the practice of EMI is still relatively new. Simbolon (2018) showed that in Indonesia, the EMI concept is not new and has been applied in several ways. It is clear that even though English is a foreign language, EMI has been used in Indonesia for several years.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is taught and learned by non-native teachers in situations where English is not the primary language of communication. Hirpa et al. (2024) pointed out that since teaching and learning activities were implemented inside the limited of a particular educational institution where teaching English as a foreign language and learning was conducted, EFL teaching and learning was more difficult for both teachers and students. As a result, both teachers and students struggle because the language being spoken and acquired is alien, particularly for those pupils who either never hear English or only do so very rarely. Vattøy & Gamlem (2020) stated that understanding the possibilities and obstacles to students' learning in an EFL classroom required interaction between students. This demonstrates the need for teachers and students to fully comprehend one another's interactions because it affects how well students learn in EFL classes.

One theory relevant to explaining students' unwillingness to speak English and their lack of participation is Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982) in a book of Nattinger (2014), according to this hypothesis, emotional elements such as fear, low motivation, and lack of confidence might operate as a "filter" that hinders the processing and mastery of language input. Students' fear of making mistakes and their propensity to keep quiet can be viewed as tangible examples of this affective filter in the context of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) in remote Islamic boarding schools. Therefore, to promote a more organic and pleasurable language acquisition process, educators must establish a safe and encouraging learning environment.

Pesantren or Islamic-based educational institutions, have been growing in Indonesia for several years. Latif & Hafid (2021) pointed out that Pesantren had a lengthy history that even predates the founding of Indonesia and all other nations in the region. Nurkhin et al. (2024) argued that Pondok Pesantren was a distinct Islamic educational establishment that appeared to be run according to traditional methods. Pondok Pesantren, however, have evolved in terms of form and variety. Thus, instruction provided by Pesantren can be described as utilizing traditional approaches that are starting to evolve into more modern methods and include a variety of teaching methods. In Pesantren, education is frequently referred to as "Madrasah". Rohman et al. (2023) in the age of globalization, madrasah graduated may be more competitive if they integrated traditionalism and modernization into their curriculum. As a result, there are two main categories of Islamic boarding schools: *Salaf* Pesantren and *Khalaf* Pesantren

Azizah (2020) stated that the traditional (salaf) Pesantren education system has been in place for hundreds of years and was still in place now. Per the teachings of the books, Pesantren gives pupils practice and insight into the value of moderation in a variety of situations. Similarly, during religious activities like recitation, gamelan, istighāthah, and others, Pesantren teach educational ideals of moderation in religion. Marzuki et al. (2020) stated that the Ministry of Religious Affairs or the state's official education systems have not been opened by the Pesantren salaf. Given the large number of official educational institutions in the area, including Elementary Schools, Junior High Schools, Senior High Schools, and even Universities, it appeared that they will never launch formal education programs. Thus, *Salaf* Pesantren, in contrast to formal schools generally, do not provide formal education.

Rahem (2017) argued that Khalafiyah (also known as the modern) the features of the materials, processes, systems, and facilities used to incorporate new elements—formal education by the national education system's provisions, facilities using contemporary products, and the system using formal mechanisms—make Islamic boarding schools more easily recognized. The teachings offered by modern Pesantren also began to grow, including training and foreign language courses.

Since English is an International language, people from all over the world may speak with each other in it regardless of where they are from. English is a language that many people communicate, even young people. As a result,

English is taught everywhere in the world, even in Indonesian schools. English language instruction is currently highly prevalent in Indonesian schools, particularly in Pesantren. The goal is to develop confidence in the santri when speaking English. English learning needs to be improved and encouraged both inside and outside of the classroom by employing the appropriate strategies. It was clear that the teachers' use of the "giving rewards" technique was boosting students' drive to study, which indicates that the pupils are now more eager to follow the English classes (Machfudi, 2017). It shows that it demonstrates that in order to make pupils more brave and self-assured, teachers must give them prizes as a token of appreciation. Fasya et al. (2023) pointed out that several Islamic boarding schools had a policy of using English as the medium of instruction for subjects that were not in English, or what was known as EMI (English as Medium of Instruction), to enhance the exposure of their pupils to the language. Rahman et al. (2023) argued that Islamic boarding schools offered a setting where students were regularly exposed to English. Some places employ English as a medium of instruction, and in informal contexts, it is encouraged to provide constant exposure and practice. Learning English at a Pesantren involves more than just sitting in a classroom; santri can utilize it daily.

The Pesantren is well-known for both its 24-hour nonstop learning program and its English language instruction, which allows pupils to speak English as their daily conversation under the guidance of English tutors. Octaberlina et al. (2024) found the successful strategy for enhancing speaking or communication abilities in Pesantren EFL classrooms is to use direct communication and extensive practice, such as International Day programs. Iksan et al. (2022) reported that the weekly English with Fun learning technique might help Pesantren pupils become more fluent in the language. Karim et al. (2023) suggested that the inadequacies and weaknesses in indoor English learning activities, particularly in gaining English language abilities, were intended to be supplemented and covered by outdoor English learning activities. In other words, the Pesantren uses English as a daily conversation for the santri every day, both in and outside of the classroom, to develop the student's English skills, particularly in speaking.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design. Qualitative research was characterized by inductive, developing techniques that are formed by the researcher's experience in data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2012). This study used a narrative inquiry approach (Creswell, 2012) to collect personal accounts of people's lived experiences, in addition to documentation and group discussions. A narrative inquiry was employed to examine a person's life story. Narrative inquiry was a collaborative process that involves sharing and retelling stories among researchers (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The objective of this study is to investigate the methods employed by educators and learners in English-based activities and to establish the student's proficiency in speaking at East Java rural Islamic Boarding School.

Initially, we recruited two English teachers in East Java, Indonesia, from different distinct Islamic Boarding Schools in rural areas. Data was gathered from two individuals: Mrs. Hanun and Mrs. Najwa (pseudonym), (complete participant characteristics are shown in Table 1).

Table 1. *Participants' profiles*

Name	Gender	Age	Year of Teaching English
Hanun	Female	42	16 years
Najwa	Female	37	3 years

In light of ethical concerns, pseudonyms were employed. The first participant (Mrs. Hanun) switched to English education as becoming a teacher requires a bachelor's degree in education. She had majored in English Literature and English Education at two different Universities. The other participant (Mrs. Najwa) taught in an English Language Program for three years within a Pesantren. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Islamic Religious Education. She participated in a flagship program in Senior High School where she studied English-Arabic mixed once a week (one week for English and one week for Arabic). Then, she spent an additional four months in Pare studying English. In addition, the participants offered to share their personal stories. Lastly, individuals gave their consent to participate in the study.

The story was used to gather data for this study over ten months (September 2023 to June 2024). The participants were free to share their own experiences with the introduction of EMI in EFL classes, even though we employed certain guiding questions throughout the storytelling sessions. The story served as a point of reference and helped readers visualize how the material might be

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Volume 13, Issue 3, October 2025

examined and presented in the researcher's work (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). Zoom was used to obtain data from participants' stories, which took place multiple times. The first participant, Mrs. Hanun, had 45 to 50 minutes every session, while the second person, Mrs. Najwa, had 20 to 35 minutes. To clear off any confusion, discussions were held in Bahasa Indonesia, with English being used interchangeably.

For a better understanding of the voices and objectives of the participants, we first transcribed the stories and read them aloud numerous times before beginning the analysis stage. Subsequently, we classified the quotations into three distinct categories within the framework of narrative inquiry: looking back, looking both internally and externally, and perspective (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

In addition to conducting the teacher's story, researchers also actively participated in or observed the English Language Institute run by the Pesantren to maintain the credibility of the data. High credibility can also be attained if research participants confirm the truthfulness of the information they have provided (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). To strengthen the credibility of this data, researchers employ many strategies, including:

The researchers met with the first subject five times and the second participant four times, extending the research period. The purpose of this is to help researchers become more comfortable with the participants.

To ascertain if participants' responses from the start to the finish were the same or different, the researchers triangulated their data by including interviews with participants many times at various times. Furthermore, the researchers have the option to thoroughly examine all of the data they have collected to assess the consistency of the responses provided by the participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The three-dimensional space of narrative inquiry—looking forward, looking within and outward, and looking back—is outlined in the study's findings.

Looking back: The experiences and reasoning of the participants

We first focused on the participants' motivations for selecting to become English teachers and their original aspirations for acquiring the language when we investigated their lived experiences. It was intriguing to observe how both individuals expressed their innate reasons for deciding to study English and become teachers. The following is exemplified in the Mrs. Hanun and Mrs. Najwa stories:

Excerpt 1

> My preference for English is the first justification. Although I majored in English Literature at University, I also majored in English Education at another University because I was interested in teaching and having a degree in Education was a requirement for becoming a teacher. So, when you teach with your passion, you don't need a reason to quit. (Story, Hanun, September 2023).

When asked about her reasons for becoming an English teacher, Mrs. Hanun, shared that she loves English and is interested in becoming an English teacher. So, she will never stop teaching. Put another way, a teacher who has teaching at heart will never stop teaching.

Excerpt 2

I was more interested in Arabic when I was in the Islamic senior high school excellent in the Pesantren, but at the time, we had to speak two languages (English and Arabic). At last, I knew the basics of English. My father prohibited me from attending the English language school in Pare at the time because it was too far from our house, but I attended anyway because I gave it a lot of thought and worried about the future of the Pesantren where my parents had established an English-language program. (Story, Mrs. Najwa, January 2024)

However, Mrs. Najwa said that she was just learning English for the future of the Pesantren run by her parents, who wanted to provide an English program as a foreign language in addition to Arabic.

Looking both internally and externally: The implementation of EMI at Pesantren

The participants' personal experiences with the application of EMI in EFL classes were another question asked in this study. During the story, both participants highlighted the challenges and interactions that arise when students and teachers use English in the classroom when the students' first language is anything other than English (Javanese, Madurese, Balinese, etc.). They both admitted that there were many difficulties in the classroom, but they were required to utilize English all the time. Hanun agreed with this as well:

Excerpt 3

Even though each class had a varied level of understanding (excellent 90%-regular 50%), I always speak in English. I do this to help them adapt to hearing

things in English. I usually offered them at least two expressions related to the material being covered in each meeting so they could practice it outside of class and understand it. (Story, Mrs. Hanun, October 2023)

Mrs. Hanun stated that she had to set an example for her kids and begin the process of acclimating them to hearing and speaking in English. Mrs. Hanun introduced a straightforward exercise that required students to learn at least two expressions in every meeting, such as "May I go to the toilet?" and "How do you say this in English...?" to foster a positive learning environment in the classroom. (when pupils are unable to pronounce it correctly in English). To boost their confidence, students practice using English in class conversations with classmates and teachers. Mrs. Hanun also invites children to use English outside of the classroom by encouraging them to do so. She also talked about the difficulties she had:

Excerpt 4

> Of course, there were difficulties, like the general state of the classes. Some pupils choose not to answer at all, and the class as a whole falls silent out of fear of speaking English incorrectly. Some pupils may be able to communicate in English since they participate in an English language program at the Islamic boarding school. To build a classroom environment, I as a teacher must be as creative as possible. (Story, Mrs. Hanun, October 2023)

Hanun clarified from the account that she had challenges similar to those she faced in other classrooms generally. The biggest issue arises when pupils are reluctant to communicate in English, which makes the class inactive. Although the participants' narratives mostly concentrated on their experiences as teachers, the teachers' reflections provided oblique insights into the viewpoints of the students. For instance, according to both professors, a large number of pupils were apprehensive and passive in class, which may indicate that they were nervous or lacked confidence while speaking English. Some students were hesitant to engage or be active because they were afraid of mispronouncing words or using improper grammar. Students started to respond more actively, though, as teachers used English more frequently and employed helpful techniques, such as repeating helpful phrases and offering translations. Some pupils began showing greater confidence and were able to use English outside of the classroom, based on the teachers' observations. This student conduct serves as an indirect example of how pupils perceive and adjust to the EMI method used in the Pesantren context.

Furthermore, Mrs. Najwa also made the following statement regarding the application of EMI both inside and outside of the classroom:

Excerpt 5

> When I spoke in English in class, I translated it into Indonesian so they could grasp what I meant. Other than that, I found it challenging to teach because I did not receive a degree in English education. My knowledge was limited to the fundamentals. However, because they resided in a Pesantren, the pupils were accustomed to using the language in everyday interactions outside of the classroom. They managed to utilize English every day, despite the fact that I was aware of its imperfections. (Story, Mrs. Najwa, March 2024)

When teaching, Mrs. Najwa said that she translated from English into Indonesian to make sure the pupils comprehend the topic. This is because, generally speaking, she struggled because she did not hold a degree in English education. In order to carry out learning in accordance with the goal, it was crucial for educators to be linear and possess a desire. The pupils could converse in English on a daily basis in the Pesantren setting even though the language was not taught in its entirety. She continued by discussing the challenges encountered when instructing the Pesantren's students in English communication:

Excerpt 6

> Among the obstacles encountered in the classroom was the fact that some students do not actively comprehend and engage in the themes being addressed, and I also found it challenging to teach because I only had a rudimentary understanding of English—not pedagogy. The largest barrier to English usage in Pesantrens, however, was that some santri were reluctant to speak in English for fear that they won't be able to openly express themselves or tell tales about their everyday life. I brought in English instructors to accompany and oversee the santri while they used the language in their rooms from the moment they woke up until they went to sleep in order to ensure that they were using it as effectively as possible.
>
> (Story, Mrs. Najwa, March 2024)

Based on Mrs. Najwa's explanation in the aforementioned statement, the primary issue with students using English in Pesantren is their laziness in communicating in a foreign language because there is no supervision and the English teacher, who is not a graduate of English education makes it challenging for the students to use English as an intermediate language in the classroom. Thus, in

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Volume 13, Issue 3, October 2025

order to mentor the pupils, they require an English tutor who goes with them at all times.

The difficulties that teachers and students in this study's rural Islamic boarding schools faced such as teachers' insecurity and students' hesitation to speak because of regional accents occur in other nations as well. In a study by Karim et al. (2023) it was found that the efficiency of learning is impacted by the low English language ability of EMI teachers in Bangladesh. Similarly, Marudadorai et al. (2023) found that because of the variety of languages spoken by students in EFL classes, pupils in Malaysian international schools feel nervous when speaking English. This demonstrates that the difficulties in implementing EMI in Indonesian Islamic boarding schools are comparable to those in other developing nations, particularly with regard to teacher preparedness and students' comfort level with the English language.

Looking forward: English instructors' aspirations and aims

We interviewed the participants about their hopes for the future of the students they were educated about the implementation of EMI after the data collection. After examining the participants' past and present life experiences, this was done to learn about their reflections. The attendees reached a consensus that teaching English involves more than just imparting knowledge; it also involved educating students. They maintained that instruction should be offered to pupils, not just lessons, and that they should subsequently be led and evaluated. Mrs. Hanun, for example, expressed this in the story:

Excerpt 7

> Teachers did more than just give knowledge; they also assessed students' comprehension. Even if it was a small thing, I was happy when pupils got what I was saying. Not only did I teach them English, but I also educated them. Because I want them to become accustomed to acting morally until whenever. (Story, Mrs. Hanun, November 2023)

Mrs. Hanun, an English teacher with a genuine passion for teaching, revealed that pupils desired more than just content knowledge; they also require guidance and education. The next statement was told by Mrs. Najwa, she revealed:

Excerpt 8

> Someday, I hope, the santri would be able to speak English more fluently and comfortably. Perhaps they wish to major in English at a higher education level or perhaps they could get a job where they had to speak English. I consequently demanded that they be able to communicate in English outside of the classroom. If in class, activities were focused on comprehension of the subject matter. (Story, Mrs. Najwa, April 2024)

According to Mrs. Najwa, the purpose of santri's English language education is for the future. santri already know a little bit of English, so at least they will have it when they need something in the future that is related to English.

The study's conclusions describe three facets of the participants' experiences. The study found that the participants' tales from the past, present, and future shaped their perspectives on how they interpreted and carried out the goal of teaching.

The life experiences of the participants were analyzed in light of their desire to teach English. The most self-determined kind of motivation was intrinsic, which entailed finding fulfilment and alignment with one's inner self (Tanaka, 2023). In addition, the first participant expressed assert interest in becoming a teacher. Thus, she asserted, there is no justification for not teaching because it will always exist. The second participant went on to say that studying English is important for the future success of the Islamic boarding school.

As for their personal experiences regarding the implementation of EMI, the participants answered that they faced difficulties with santris who do not understand English so the class became passive. The Higher Education Commission (HEC), in Pakistan was conscious of and working to address the issue of students' low literacy and English language proficiency (Mahboob, n.d.). Thus, students' lack of vocabulary and knowledge of English is one of the challenging factors in EFL classes. This evidence shows that not all students can speak English even in English language programs. Therefore, teachers must be able to manage the class so that it remains active.

The participants also explain that when students want to become more advanced in using English in the classroom and outside the classroom, there needs to be an example from the teacher and habituation from the students themselves. In learning, the teacher needs to give direction and create an English atmosphere in the class and the students can speak English throughout the day in the Islamic boarding school environment even though their English is less than perfect, such as the students' native accents (Javanese, Madurese, Balinese, etc.) in speaking English. Some of his participants struggled to balance the need to sound understandable to those with native speaker

accents and the need to represent their Chinese identity by speaking English with a local non-native accent (KONG & KANG, 2022). This shows that the local accent santris have is something that almost everyone has in speaking English. All survey participants also stress that for children to become accustomed to hearing and speaking English, teachers must be the ones to initiate the use of EMI in the classroom. It also clarifies that Islamic boarding schools need teachers to accompany their pupils to use English effectively. Making sure pupils can speak English daily is the goal of this. Regarding the contextual level of education and the location of students who live in rural areas but are nevertheless able to improve their English both inside and outside of the classroom, the results of this study differ from those of earlier studies. Therefore, these results support the application of EMI in rural Islamic boarding schools.

A significant problem with teacher placement and training in Islamic boarding schools, especially in rural area, is shown by the stark contrast between the two participants, one having a formal background in English language education and the other not. Mrs. Najwa's assignment to teach EMI despite her lack of formal pedagogical experience points to a larger systemic issue. The finding implies that some Pesantren do not prioritize or have access to qualified English teachers. This contradiction highlights the significance of capacity building, continuous training, and more targeted teacher recruitment practices, even though the study does not seek to generalize the findings. To find out if this condition also affects other Pesantren in Indonesia, more research is required.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals the teaching experience of English teachers in the implementation of EMI in rural area boarding schools. The results explain that the experience, extensive knowledge of the teacher, as well as the educational background of the teacher must be aligned to their teaching assignments because they will have an impact on teaching in the EFL class. Based on this finding, Pesantren is a place that is arguably capable of the use of English for students because they are supervised for 24 hours. Our study has limitations in terms of scope in that it used only Pesantren. This study recruited 2 English teachers in the implementation of EMI in a rural Pesantren. Finally, this study provides new insights for English teachers for the use of EMI in English class by familiarizing students first to hear things in English and inviting students to interact in English.

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