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Interpreting English-Medium Instruction in Affiliated Colleges in India from a Third Space Perspective

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English-medium instruction (EMI) as a global phenomenon continues to rapidly grow in non-native English-speaking countries (Dang et al. 2021). In Asia, evidence of this growth can be inferred by the sheer number of EMI-centered journal articles and edited volumes (Barnard and Hasim 2018; Fenton-Smith et al. 2017). I focus this study on affiliated colleges in India, where EMI interests reflect the aforementioned. Organizationally, the Indian higher education system is based on University of London's federal university (Singh, 2003) where universities provide central functions like curricular and exam development and degree conferral. Colleges affiliated to them contain nearly 90% of the system's students and faculty and play a limited policy development role (Altbach, 2009).

Mazrui (1997) outlined a pragmatic outlook, positing the inescapability/utility of English as a means for transmitting education in Africa due to its international dominance. This proposition guides this study. Affiliated colleges are essentially sandwiched between the macro (global narrative) and micro (communal narrative) regarding EMI. While chapters in McKinley and Galloway's (2022) recent edited collection examined EMI in countries from either micro, meso or macro perspectives, this study takes into account all three spaces to better understand/interpret EMI's meaning and value. This study helps consider ways Indian affiliated colleges are on the border between the global, dominant discourse and local/community one as it relates to EMI, equity, vernacular, and policy, while also challenging this macro/micro discourse. Hence, this qualitative study of 46 affiliated college faculty, positions the affiliated college as a third space to interpret English-medium.

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