



**English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI)**  
**Module 2: Task 2 – Complete 5 Readings**  
**Article 2.3: *Textbook or Materials Selection for an EMI Course***

One of the most important decisions in any course is which textbook(s) or material(s) to assign for required reading. In an EMI course, this decision is even more complicated. Not only does the course designer and/or instructor need to choose materials based on how well the content fits the course requirements, but the level of the English itself must be considered as well. Often, it is not possible to find the “ideal” EMI course textbook or materials, particularly given cost and accessibility with obtaining the book. In these cases, course designers might choose to put together parts of different books or online sources into a course packet (keeping copyright rules in mind) that is either printed off or available online in a learning management system or library for shared use. No matter which material(s) are chosen for an EMI course, it is almost certain that the instructor will need to provide in-class support for students on how to learn the content, since it is in a second language for them. Study guides, outlines, and in-class tutorials on understanding information and thinking critically in a second language will be helpful for students. Remember that increasingly, instructional videos are freely available (in English) for students on many topics, and are often more easy for students to understand as well as being more interesting for them than readings.

***Use the following steps and questions to guide you in choosing materials for an EMI course.***

1. Review the Student Learning Objectives and Course Description for your EMI course.
2. Review the Assessments, Assignments, and Grading for your EMI course.
3. Collect and review your options for a textbook or materials that you could require for your EMI course. Ask yourself:
  - a. Does the content in the materials meet the content required in your student learning objectives and assessments/assignments?
  - b. Are the materials written at a level of English that is likely to be understandable to your students?
  - c. Is the material affordable for your students or your institution? Is there a less-expensive digital version of the book available? Could you use an older edition of the textbook, if it is less expensive and still available? Could you use a free or low-cost alternative, often also more customizable, such as [Flatworld](#), [Bartleby](#), [Wikibooks](#), or [Openculture](#).
  - d. Can you find the content you need to cover in several different publications or online sources, or do you need to have students purchase a textbook?



- e. Do the materials have sufficient visuals (such as graphs, images, figures, or tables) to help students understand the content?
- f. Are the images or examples in the materials relevant to the global world at large, or specific to just a few cultures (e.g., the US or UK)?
- g. Do the materials have any online support, such as quiz questions for review?
- h. Do the materials have comprehension questions, chapter outlines, or definitions of key terms to help support your students while reading for understanding?
- i. Do the materials allow for student-centered learning—meaning: Are there discussion questions or case studies that you can ask students to talk about during class? Are there projects that allow students to apply book concepts to their own lives or communities? Do you see opportunities to connect the materials to students’ future careers or experts in your community?
- j. If you are using a purchased textbook, how much of the book will you require for your EMI course, vs. optional reading? If a textbook has to be purchased (by either students or the institution), it should be widely used and required in the course.
- k. Can you or your department begin to write materials in English or create instructional videos in English that meet course needs?

*“Experienced teachers realize that textbooks function as a co-instructor and bring to the classroom their own pedagogy that can turn a teaching experience from rewarding to burdensome, or vice versa.”*  
*(Keenan, 2012, p. 117)*

**Copyright**

U.S. copyright laws can be complicated, but must be considered if U.S. textbooks or online materials are being used in a course. Copyright is a legal term and process. It differs from plagiarism, which is not a legal process. Plagiarism involves academic honesty and being sure that you put the name and other important information from a source when you use source ideas. Copyright is about control over how a work is being used and has financial implications. It covers both published and unpublished works. The following offers a brief introduction to considerations with U.S. copyright. See the University of Maryland (2019) site for more information.

In general, the following types of works fall under copyright protection. Notice that these are not just books, but include plays and images or art as well. Also note that any work created on or after January 1, 1978, is automatically covered by U.S. copyright, even if there is no copyright statement. This list includes most things that are found online, such as a professional or even student webpage:

- Literary works, textbooks
- Musical, dramatic, and dance-related works (including sound recordings)
- Artworks, such as pictures, paintings, graphic, and sculptural works
- Motion pictures and other audiovisual works
- Architectural works

There are some categories of works that can be copied, performed, or distributed *in the classroom only* without obtaining permission. These include:

- Facts
- Works that are covered by a license or contract that permits classroom use (e.g., library databases that an institution usually pays a fee for)
- Articles in journals that say they allow non-profit educational use without permission (Check the copyright page of the journal)
- All other works if your use meets the criteria for fair use or the classroom exemption (Note: this can be a vague guideline and relates to the purpose and character of the use of the work; the nature of the copyrighted work; the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and the effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work).

Other sites allow educators or the general public to freely use their work/resources, such as these open educational resources:

- Works in the public domain
- Most works created or paid for by the United States government (check to make sure the work was not contracted and produced by another entity)—note that all of the materials that are used in this course have the CC BY 4.0 license, which means that they can be revised, remixed, reused, and redistributed freely without permission and in any courses.
- Works available in a commons or institutional repository. (e.g., Washington Research Libraries Consortium Institutional Repository, [Public Library of Science](#), [Creative Commons](#)) or that have an open Creative Commons license (meaning the author has granted permission for a work to be shared more openly)

Many courses have a course pack that is put together for the students. A course pack is a collection of parts of different resources. Unless a resource clearly states that it is free of most copyright and licensing restrictions, you should assume that you would have to get permission in order to use a part of the material in your course pack. When a course pack is put together, all materials should include the original copyright notice and attributions to the source. A course pack should never include an entire book or journal just so that students don't have to pay for that resource. Course packs are also not supposed to include standardized tests, lab manuals, or student workbooks.

## References<sup>1</sup>

Keenan, L. H. (2012). Textbook pedagogy: Some considerations. *Classical World*, 106(1), 117-121.

University of Maryland. (2019). *Copyright and fair use guidelines*. Retrieved from <https://sites.umuc.edu/library/libhow/copyright.cfm>

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