



Use of Either Exclusive English or English Mixed with Native Language in Classroom of Medical Colleges of Non-English Speaking Countries: A Debate

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English is a Germanic language with Latin and Greek influences. Now a days, as the world being interconnected, the importance of English as a second language in every country is increasing [1]. The process of linkage between globalization and English started with the British and American English-speaking empires and continues today with the internet [1]. Because of the powerful speed of the English language to spread over the globe, it is assumed that nearly half of the world's population will be proficient in English by 2050 [2,3]. The English language is used in the political, economic and educational spheres of the world [3-5]. As corporations expand the scope of operations to various countries, English is then necessary to communicate among international colleagues to compete in the global marketplace [5]. As English is the primary language of academia and international academic publications, many nations have made English an official language or chief foreign language in schools [4]. Countries intending to develop their economy by exporting and attracting foreign capital should adapt English in their education policy. In academic contexts, it was estimated that more than half of academic papers published each year are written in English with an increasing trend every year. English is currently the undisputed language of science and technology, and scientific journals in many countries are now switching from the vernacular to English [6]. In specific disciplines, English appears to be the universal language of communication. For example, 98% of German physicists now claim English as their de facto working language. They are closely followed by chemists (83%), biologists (81%), and psychologists (81%) [7,8].

English has increasingly been adopted by European universities at various levels of learning in recent years to standardize degrees across EU countries and to attract foreign students who want English as a medium of instruction. Majority of textbooks, course literature and peer-reviewed journals in most disciplines are published in English [9,10].

There are two schools of thought in regard to use English in non-English speaking student's class room. One group supports that English should be the only medium of instruction, whereas other group advocates using 'both English and native language' as medium of instruction. 'English only' group's argument is that, if English is used exclusively, learners will acquire the English in the same way as they acquired their mother tongue, as they are being immersed in that language [11,12]. They believe teachers should not deprive students of opportunities for genuine exposure to the English language and they should use the English for all interaction in the classroom. They find that the exclusion of the native language will ensure maximized exposure to English input and enhance its acquisition [12]. In contrast to the 'English only' methodology, counter group argue that the inclusion of the native language in the classroom along with English has been theoretically justified, verified by research, and pedagogically accepted, while its exclusion is based on unexamined assumptions [13].

Experts explained that students should be exposed to as much

English as possible, so that students will be more comfortable in English-rich communication [14]. Study found that students who used English strictly in classroom were more active in class participation as they found no other alternative language to use. However, if students are allowed their choice of either English or native language, they will naturally choose their native tongue. In addition, it has now been proven that enforcement of a strict English-only policy with students has a great positive impact on learning [14]. The greatest use of English was found to occur in the science faculty, where 23% of students reported that either half or all/almost all of their lectures were given in English [15]. Some undergraduate students offered a rather negative assessment of taking lectures in English, with reference to their teachers' poor language skills [16]. The use of both English and native language, which policy makers like, was sometimes seen by the students as confusing because they found it difficult to sit examinations in one language when the course literature was in another language [17].

Students are generally in favor of using English exclusively in classroom and their preference is positively related to their own English proficiency. Such exclusive English language policy provided these students with the chance to use English as the sole means of communication, rather than merely conducting an academic exercise. If teachers allow native languages to be used in classrooms, student opportunities to learn English are lessened. The responsibilities of a teacher are to give the students maximum exposure to English to yield their proficiency in English language [14].

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