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Impact of Online Learning on International Students' English Language Concerns

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Purpose

To learn how, if at all, online classes have an impact on international students' English language usage.



Literature Review

- Foreign language classroom anxiety (Horwitz, 1986)
- International students' English language concerns affect academic performance (Khanal & Gaulee, 2019; Trice, 2004; Zhao & Ng, 2016)
- Most students experience challenges navigating online classes (Pather et al., 2020)
- International students' cultural features affect English usage (Kung, 2017; Louie, 2005; Yan & Berliner, 2013)



Research Design

- Exploratory research using survey (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Fowler, 2009)
- Online questionnaire survey using interval-level and continuous responses
- Topics:
 - Confidence volunteering in English
 - Enjoyment of interacting with native English-speaking classmates
 - Comfort level



Research Design

- Data Collection
 - Email list via International Office; Internet
 - Participants: all international undergraduates
 - 272 surveyed; 124 responses (46% response rate)
 - ($n=91$)
- Data Analysis
 - Descriptive Statistics



Findings

During online classes...

- Q1: Confidence : twice as many students (12% in person; 28% online) were not confident volunteering answers in English
- Q2: Nervousness: 10% more students get nervous when getting ready to speak
- Q3: Interactions: 32% fewer students enjoy interacting with classmates



Findings (continued)

During online classes...

- Q4: Embarrassment: slightly more students (8%) were embarrassed about speaking English
- Q5: Grammar: no difference compared to in-person classes
- Q6: Anxiousness: slightly more students (6%) were anxious when not knowing what the professor says in English



Discussion - Surprises

- Stronger than expected preference for in-person classes
 - negatively impact students' classroom engagement
- Grammar not a concern
 - In spite of advanced level of English ability, students still had language concerns



Implications

- Inform the online pedagogical practices and curriculum design by faculty
 - purposeful about engagement practices
- Inform academic and intercultural training for international students
 - classroom discourse
 - student and teacher expectations





Thank you!
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