A Descriptive Analysis of the Perception of Interdisciplinary Undergrads on Language of Instruction: A Multilingual/Translanguaging View

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Abstract

English is primarily claimed as the Language of instruction at undergrad level across disciplines except for the teaching of oriental subjects. The study aims at analyzing the perception of interdisciplinary undergrads of three disciplines, English, Education and Urdu that to what extent they favor single or more language/s for instructions; multilingualism leading to translanguaging. The study was conducted on one hundred and fifty undergrads (different semesters) through an opinionnaire to understand better their socio-linguistic and socio-cultural needs. The findings of the study enable us to know that students do not favor single language as a medium of instruction after considering various perspective academic and professional factors such as understanding of concepts learnt for societal requirements through the use of first language as well as one more language like English. In light of the results the study suggests that there is no harm to adopt two or more languages for classroom instructions for all the students irrespective of their disciplines so that they may socio-linguistically and socio-culturally feel secure in multilingual environment in the globalized world after completing sixteen years of education.

Keywords: Language, multilingualism, Translanguaging, instruction**,** socio-cultural & linguistic,

Introduction

Language of instruction has always been a center of intellectual debates in our country and varied opinions are available in this context. But at tertiary level English remains a dominant language through which undergrads are imparted education in the second language, English, except the oriental disciplines where the same language is used such as Urdu which is applied in teaching and learning setting. But for these students socio-cultural and socio-linguistic world create challenges which the students come across in the their social or professional life and despite a growing awareness that mother tongue education is more effective than bilingual or second language medium of instruction (Heugh, 2002; Rademeyer, 2005), English as a second language has become the dominant medium of instruction, just like Pakistani society, in the countries of southern Africa where English is also considered

significant as a second language (De Klerk, 2002; De Wet, 2002; Brock-Utne, 2000; Kgosana, 2006; Rademeyer, 2006).

We know that multilingualism is the utilization of more than one language, either by a speaker or by a group of speakers. Multilingualism is the total competence and dominance in another language other than mother tongue. Multilingualism alludes to the language circumstance where the speakers utilize more than two languages within the same setting for comparative purposes. The individuals who are multilingual do not fundamentally have precisely the same degree of capacities in all the languages. Regularly, multilinguals have changing degrees of command of the diverse collections. The contrasts in competence in the different languages might range from command of many lexical things, conventional expressions such as: welcome, simple conversational abilities and the way to get good knowledge of the use of grammar and other mechanics of writing (Bhandari, 2021).

When we debate on multilingualism we are, in fact, referring to code switching, for which Palmer, Mateus, Antonio Martinez, & Henderson (2014) resounded that code-switching is moving between two languages inside or between expressions. This may be seen by instructors in double language instruction. They contend that bilingual undergrads utilize language in complex and energetic ways. In light of this, code-switching may be seen as strict language division as advocates (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2000); be that as it may, it is for the most part recognized by a expansive body of investigation within the field of linguistics that underpins the idea of code-switching as a typical, cleverly, and socially significant linguistic marvel (Blom & Gumperz, 1972; Jaffe, 2007; MacSwan, 2000; Toribio, 2004; Woolard, 2004; Zentella, 1997).

Keeping in view the above references the study intends reflect the opinions of the undergrads about the use of one or more languages during classroom instructions for their better academic and professional needs which they might come across in their perspective life in the global world where a multilingual /translangual approach might have become call of the day.

Statement of the issue

The study aims to understand perception of the interdisciplinary undergrads with regard to the use of one or two languages for classroom instruction by keeping in view the modern multilingual or translangual approach required in the globalized world to socio-linguistic and socio-cultural needs of the students after completing sixteen years education.

Research objectives

The study's major questions are to know that to what extent:

1. The undergrads of various disciplines are satisfied to the use of single language for classroom instructions.
2. The undergrads feel the need of two or more languages in the classroom instructions in light of the linguistic requirements of the multilingual globalized world.
3. Competence in two or more languages provides the undergrads with socio-cultural understanding of the society.

Research question

The study would try answering the following questions:

1. Is it necessary to impart education to the undergrads of various disciplines in one language only?
2. Does the knowledge and performance of two or more languages of the undergrads provide them with socio-linguistic and socio-cultural understanding of the society?
3. Can a blend of two or more languages for classroom instructions be helpful for the undergrads of disciplines other than English?

Theoretical framework and procedure

It is opinionnaire based survey research conducted on one hundred and fifty undergrads with major in English, Education and Urdu to know their perceptions about the use of single or more languages for classroom instructions to develop better socio-linguistic and socio-cultural understating in the globalized world. Hence, the opinionnaire will include some items focused on the use of different languages such as national/regional and foreign language through which they receive knowledge and skills of their respective disciplines. The results have been presented in percentage in accordance with the response of the subjects.

Review of Literature

Students' enrollment at universities has got to be progressively differing, making modern challenges for undergrad speakers. It shows up that university students around the world are considering in a multilingual setting where English involves the prevailing position (Mazak, 2017; Palfreyman & van der Walt, 2016; Kaufhold, 2018). Hyland (2018) contends that, indeed in case it were conceivable within the past to depend on the communicative status of institution leavers for academic considerations, this linguistically, socially, and culturally assorted body of undergrads presently makes such presumptions amazingly answerable. In expansion, higher education faculty educate regularly bolster the utilization of English at postgraduate level so that they can internationalize their universities (Mortensen, 2014; Kaufhold, 2018). Lillis and Curry (2010) have labeled English the default language of Science and scholastic inquiry and dissemination, noticing that it is considered by prestigious educational institutions to be the worldwide language of Science.

So far as interdisciplinary is concerned it is appropriate to consider Lysak's (2016) views who recognizes two approaches to the definition of interdisciplinary. Within the to begin with case, interdisciplinarity is considered as the interaction of a few logical disciplines with their possess subject, expressed device and inquire about strategies. Inside the framework of the moment, the most assignment of the intrigue approach is to recognize zones of logical information that are not secured by the investigation of existing logical disciplines. We back the thoughts of interdisciplinarity displayed within the works of Annan-Diab and Molinari (2017), Mokhova (2016), Slesarenko (2007), Urea (2015) and accept that the utilize of an intrigue approach within the learning handle in higher instructive educate permits the arrangement and improvement of both logical and proficient considering of understudies, and contributes to the arrangement of intrigue information that's essential to illuminate complex logical and specialized issues.

It is significant to understand that in today's globalized world no hard and fast approach could be said as final because of the growing awareness that mother tongue

education is more effective than bilingual or second language medium of instruction (Heugh, 2002; Rademeyer, 2005), and despite this English as a second language has become the dominant medium of instruction in parts of world such as states of southern Africa (where different languages are playing their academic role in the presence of English (De Klerk, 2002; De Wet, 2002; Brock-Utne, 2000; Kgosana, 2006; Rademeyer, 2006).

If we take monolingual approach as one discipline then it's would be important to understand that a single disciplinary point of view frequently has restrictions in that it is driven by the standards and system of a specific teach without thought and consolidation of elective opinions. The single disciplinary see can lead to authority which avoids basic evaluation of their own and others' points of view. In differentiate, intrigue instruction draws on numerous disciplines to procure a profound and intensive understanding of complex issues and challenges understudies to synthesize what each of the disciplines offers some time recently endeavoring to plan endeavors to resolve famous concerns. Locks in understudies and making a difference them to create information, experiences, issue fathoming aptitudes, self-confidence, self-efficacy, and an enthusiasm for learning are common objectives that teachers bring to the classroom and intrigue instruction and investigation advances realization of these targets. Intrigue educating cultivates progresses in cognitive capacity. The most particular instructive benefits of intrigue learning incorporate the capacity to recognize inclination; think fundamentally; endure uncertainty; recognize and appreciate concerns which could be ethical (Antov & Pancheva, 2016).

We got to consider a translanguaging view in the utilization of distinctive languages within the undergrad academic instruction program as Dewey (1934/1980) and Wittgenstein (1953/2012), García and Sylvan (2011) see language as an action created by social relations, instead of a basic framework of structures giving us a set of aptitudes. Concurring to García (2009, 2011), bilingual students' language utilize and learning have been inspected from a straight or monolingual point of view. Being bilingual has been respected as having two diverse language collections, kept more or less separated (García 2009, 2011; García and Sylvan 2011). The distinction between bilingual and monolingual understudies has been decreased to the reality that bilinguals talk an extra language. Be that as it may, García (2009) contends that it isn't conceivable to form a comparison between bilinguals' and monolinguals' language utilize in this way. She argues the concept translanguaging to portray the 'multiple rambling hones in which bilinguals lock in arrange to create sense of their bilingual worlds' (García 2009, p. 45). Concurring to the hypothesis of translanguaging, there are no clear boundaries between the languages of bilingual undergrads. Rather, they are interrelated and interlaced in a energetic way (García 2009, 2011). Bilinguals have 'one phonetic collection from which they select highlights deliberately to communicate effectively' (García 2011). Bilingual students' language use depends on their reason for communication and the setting in which the lessons are conducted. For the most part, when an opportunity is given, bilinguals utilize both of their dialects, and it is for the most part in monolingual circumstances that bilinguals utilize as it were one of their dialects (García 2009).

Johanssen (2013) found that code-switching may be a marvel that exists in bilingual social orders where individuals have the opportunity to utilize two or more dialects to communicate. She proceeds to say that being able to talk more than one dialect, bilinguals can code-switch and utilize their languages as assets to discover superior ways to communicate meaning. Code-switching has moreover been characterized as "the variation of two dialects inside a single talk, sentence, or constituent (Jamshidi & Navehebraim, 2013). Fundamentally code-switching includes the exchange of phonetic components from one dialect into another: a sentence starts in one dialect, at that point makes utilize of words or syntactic highlights having a place to another. This suggests that code-switching loans into a

few capacities such as filling etymological holes, communicating ethnic character and accomplishing specific verbose points (Bullock & Toribio, 2009; Johanssen, 2013). However, Translanguaging has been seen as an awfully normal way for multilingual individuals. According to Lewis, Jones, & Baker (2012), Cen Williams and colleagues were examining methodologies for learners to utilize two languages (Welsh and English) in a single lesson. This led them to come up with the term "trawsieithu" to depict perusing or hearing input in one language (e.g. English) and composing or talking approximately it in another (e.g. Welsh, or otherwise). The term was interpreted into English (and popularized) as "translanguaging" by their colleague Colin Baker (Lewis et al., 2012). Translanguaging has been characterized in simply get data through the medium of one language (e.g. English) and utilize it yourself through the medium of the other language (Lewis et al., 2012). Baker says that (2011) translanguaging is the method of making meaning and picking up understanding and information through the utilization of two languages.

It would not be inappropriate to contend that in a bi/multilingual educational setting, where undergrads are encountered with lectures and academic matters in more than one languages, they are permitted to use their bi/multilingual capability, that's, without centering on one language (van der Walt & Dornbrack, 2011). Hence, academic language capability requires high levels of composition familiarity in English. However, in a multilingual society, the center is always to decide what undergrads think what is good writing.

Findings:

(Almost yes: 1. 2: To some extend: 3: To reasonable extent: 4: Somewhat: 5: Almost No)

Sr. No	Question item	1	2	3	4	5
1	I am speaker of more than two languages.	92%	2%	2%	2%	2%
2	The world is changing very fast linguistic and culturally.	71%	12%	10%	6%	1%
3	Instructions in a single language classroom provide more chances to undergrads grow socially.	7%	10%	8%	5%	70%
4	Students take more interest when taught with the help of single language.	2%	15%	11%	12%	60%
5	English also needs assistance of other languages for students who may understand better academic matters.	5%	10%	6%	10%	69%
6	English is the only language in which students should communicate in and outside the classroom.	8%	8%	10%	6%	68%
7	Students' understanding of the content knowledge is more enhanced when taught through a blend of different languages.	66%	10%	5%	9%	10%
8	Blending of languages is appropriate to transfer content knowledge to the undergrads.	65%	5%	5%	10%	15%
9	All students have equal proficiency in the foreign language such as English because of their social back ground.	7%	3%	10%	10%	70%
10	Foreign language is not an issue for the undergrads with English, education and Urdu as major.	10%	10%	5%	5%	70%
11	Students prefer teachers who are multilinguals with a blend of Urdu and a regional language.	10%	4%	10%	6%	70%

12	Multilingualism leads to translanguaging which is a comfortable way to learn other languages and culture.	65%	5%	10%	5%	15%
13	Instructions in a single language frequently generates boredom.	70%	9%	6%	8%	7%
14	I like to be taught only in English language or Urdu.	15%	5%	5%	10%	70%
15	Students ask teachers to teach with the help of English language only or Urdu.	10%	4%	6%	5%	75%
16	Single language teaching is the only solution to help students understand linguistics and culture in our society.	2%	6%	9%	5%	78%
17	Students appear nervous while speaking English.	72%	8%	4%	9%	7%
18	Single language instruction leaves a lot to be desired for other languages and culture.	70%	10%	8%	6%	6%
19	Students produce better results after receiving instructions in bi or multilingual approach.	70%	8%	5%	9%	8%
20	Blended language teaching approaches may be made permanent for the teaching/learning of undergrads.	70%	8%	5%	2%	15%
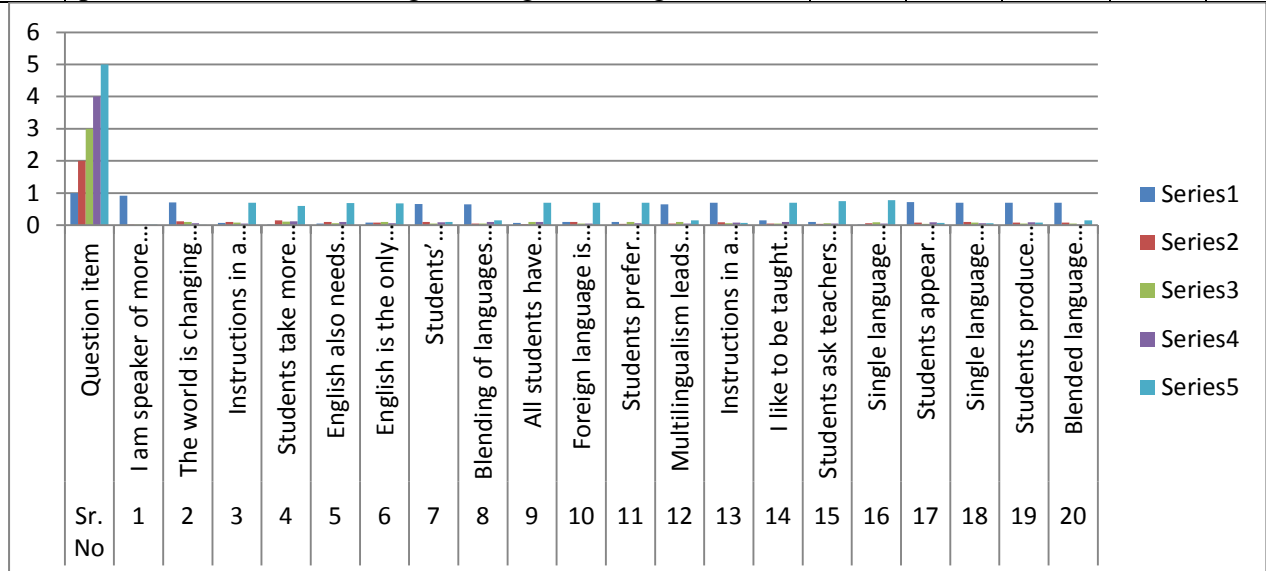
Discussion

As mentioned earlier that language of instructions is always an interesting but hot topic of debates among the educationists. This may be applicable in principle when we talk about the academic requirements of undergrads with major in English but as the findings manifest that some of the respondents whose major is English also favor multilingual approach. And that's why we put before us the following questions which need to be answered while keeping in view today's socio-linguistic and socio-cultural demands of our society as well as of the global village

1. Is it necessary to impart education to the undergrads of various disciplines in one language only?
2. Does the knowledge and performance of two or more languages of the undergrads provide them with socio-linguistic and socio-cultural understanding of the society?

3. Can a blend of two or more languages for classroom instructions be helpful for the undergrads of disciplines other than English?

The findings of the study reflect that the majority of the subjects do not belong to such socio-cultural back ground where English is spoken and understood quite easily rather they are from such lass which is prone to interact in at least three languages such as Urdu, Punjabi and English but irony of the situation is that Punjabi is not included as one of the languages for instruction formally but it is fair enough to say that the subjects feel a comfort zone when they interact in the first language, i.e., Punjabi, however, it's the Urdu language which frequently replaces Punjabi and results show that the majority respondents are of the opinion that they like to interact not only in English but also in Urdu with an assistance of a regional language that could be either Punjabi various dialects.

It is in our knowledge that the Province of the Punjab's population is approximately 120 million and the dominant language is Punjabi but Urdu is given its due status especially at the institutions of higher education where students teacher and student-student conversation is generally in Urdu whereas English primarily used in the classroom either but the ground reality, as has been reflected in the results of study mirror a different scenario because all undergrad don't have same competency in English language skills; though assessment is English but when they demonstrate in English they feel nervous.

Language competence always contains linguistic confidence but we have not seen it as has been opined by the respondents because foreign language speaking anxiety remains with them when they are to interact with the teachers or peers in the classroom. It is because English language is not frequently used outside the classroom in day to day conversation which ultimately changes linguistic behavior resulting in a like for the other languages such as Urdu or Punjabi. For example, despite the fact that assessment is done in English language, except for Urdu undergrads, the responds feel that their results are better when instructions are given through multilingual approach. There is denying the fact that a language is complete package containing the socio-linguistic and cultural norms of the society and it could be one of the reasons that when concepts are conveyed in a variety of languages the understanding level is enhanced as the results reflect. For instance, the subjects say that when instructions are given in a single language the get fewer chances to grow socially. It means that the undergrads with major in Urdu also favor the blend of languages as major concept in English or Urdu language are more or less the same, hence, it could be their desire to grow linguistic and culturally with the help of multilingualism or translanguaging.

While commenting on the answers of the study questions we can state that it is not necessary to impart education by focusing on only a single language for classroom instructions, however, other languages may be included during teaching as the knowledge gained through the use of more than two languages furthers linguistic and cultural understand of the undergrads; hence, as the study reflects a blend of two or more languages could be an appropriate instructional approach.

Conclusion

In the light of the above discussion the study concludes that for multilingualism which leads to translanguaging provides more chances to the undergrads of different disciplines

to enhance their linguistic and cultural skills as in the opinion of the majority respondents, irrespective of their discipline, the use of more than one languages in the classroom proceedings is a better option both for students and teachers because it provides them with opportunities to only to learn various aspects of languages but also the cultural sensitivities of the same languages when utilized along with English as a foreign language.

Suggestions:

1. Multilingual approach may be used at the institutions of higher education; however, the importance of English language skills may not be sacrificed at any cost.
2. Teachers training programs may be arranged by the institutions of higher education to sensitize the faculty with regard to the benefits of translanguaging.
3. Terminologies may be explained in various languages such English and Urdu with a passing reference to Punjabi language.

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