Research Roundup & Counter-Narratives: International Students at UCLA

Language Profile

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Which of the following best describes when you learned English?

UGn=797, Gn=797

Source: Dashew Center Biennial Survey of International Students, 2016-17

- Nearly 70% learned English before age 10
- Over 90% learned English before age 16

Undergraduate

- 79% as primary or secondary
- 65% as primary language
- 21% did not use English

Graduate

- 79% as primary or secondary
- 59% as primary or secondary
- 47% as primary language
- 41% did not use English

Source: Dashew Center Biennial Survey of International Students, 2016-17

Frequency of Difficulty
English Language Proficiency
UGn=650, Gn=696


Source: Dashew Center Biennial Survey of International Students, 2016-17

UG

58%: never/rarely
16%: always/MoT

G

52%: never/rarely
19%: always/MoT

• About 80% of undergraduates and 70% of graduate students learned English before the age of 10 which implies a certain level of fluency
• About 80% of undergraduates and 60% of graduate students used English as the primary or secondary language of instruction before coming to UCLA
• Less than 20% of undergraduate and graduate students report frequent difficulty with English
People are respected at UCLA regardless of...

International Graduate Students, n= 653~747

Source: Dashew Center Biennial Survey of International Students, 2016-17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political opinions</td>
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<td>Religious beliefs</td>
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<td>Disability/ability status</td>
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<td>Class/economic status</td>
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<td>Sexual orientation</td>
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<td>Gender/gender expression</td>
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<td>Accent/English language ability</td>
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<td>International/citizenship status</td>
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<td>National origin</td>
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<td>Race/ethnicity</td>
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American:
• “Why is your English so good?”

International student:
• “Many countries speak English too, just with different accents. Most of us grew up speaking English.”

~an example exchange shared at a dinner dialogue

We should arrange for support for those who need it and recognize that learning in a language that is not one’s first, especially when technical terminology is used, can be challenging, however…

…an overwhelming majority report using English from young ages, using English as a language of instruction prior to UCLA, and infrequent difficulty with English, yet…

…the number one campus climate issue for international students is around English language ability and accent.
UCLA’s International Community

Undergraduates:
99 countries, 51% of the world’s countries

Graduate students:
109 countries, 55% of the world’s countries

Scholars:
87 countries, 44% of the world’s countries

Multilingualism

Int’l UG

99% - 2 or more

44% - 3 or more

Int’l G

97% - 2 or more

43% - 3 or more

2016-17 DCISS Biennial Survey

Frequency of Helping Someone Learn about...
International Undergraduate Students, $n = 642$

Source: Dashew Center Biennial Survey of International Students, 2016-17

Your country or countries of origin
- 84% reported Very often/Often/Sometimes

Norms from a culture in which you identify
- 77% report Very competent or competent

Words or phrases in a language you speak
- 69% report Very competent or competent

**Frequency of Helping Someone Learn about...**

**International Graduate Students, n = 679**

Source: Dashew Center Biennial Survey of International Students, 2016-17

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Very often/Often / Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely/Never</th>
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<tr>
<td>Your country or countries of origin</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>18%</td>
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<td>Norms from a culture in which you identify</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Words or phrases in a language you speak</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>35%</td>
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The national diversity of the international population implies rich linguistic diversity as well.

- Nearly all international students speak more than one language and nearly half speak three or more.

- International students often choose to teach others words or phrases in a language they know, which brings value to our campus.

- We can choose to see multilingualism as an asset to our campus rather than a deficit, which may impact campus climate positively.