

ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS CHALLENGES OF INTERNATIONAL PHD STUDENTS – A STUDY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HUDDERSFIELD

Josephine Appiah-Agyekum
Business school
Department of management
u1675623

Background

- Globally, higher education institutions attract significant numbers of international students each year.
- The United Kingdom has targeted a yearly increase of international students to 600,000 by 2030 (Department for Education, 2019).
- International students constitute students from native and non-native English speaking countries; who travel to foreign countries for educational purposes (UNESCO, 2020).
- Although some international students encounter challenge as a result of their studies in foreign countries, students from non-native English speaking countries encounter greater challenges due to English being a second or foreign language.



Source: Interfacealliances.com

Findings

English language challenges of International non-native students:

- Unique skill deficiencies with varying emphasis on reading, listening and writing
- Challenges with comprehension of slangs and colloquial words
- Reduced quality and extent of interaction with peers, supervisors and lecturers.
- Worry over frequent request to repeat sentences.
- Challenges in integrating with social and non-academic life
- Despite challenges, help from peers, supervisors and available academic support mechanisms helped overcome English language challenges
- International students overtime got used to slangs, accent

Study Objective

Explore English Language skill challenges of International post graduate students in University of Huddersfield

Methodology

Interpretivist Ontology

Social Constructionist Epistemology

Qualitative Inquiry

Convenience sampling

Indepth semi-structured interviews

Qualitative content Analysis

Study Implications

1. Importance of peer and academic support in addressing the English language challenges.

2. Inadequacy of English proficiency tests.

3. Further investment and encouragement of student engagement in academic English language support programs.

References:

Department for Education (2019) International Education strategy; *global potential, global growth* Retrieved from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-education-strategy-global-potential-global-growth>

UNESCO (2020) Sustainable development goals; International (or internationally mobile) students Retrieved from <http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/international-or-internationally-mobile-students>