



# Closing The Gap: Evaluating Exclusive English Medium Instruction In Chinese Higher Education

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## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

In today's globalized world, proficiency in the English language stands as a critical skill, especially in non-native contexts such as China's higher education system. This research delves into the effectiveness of exclusive English Medium Instruction (EMI) in closing the prevalent gap between language input and proficiency among Chinese undergraduates. Utilizing Stephen Krashen's input hypothesis alongside modern language learning theories, the study assesses the capacity of monolingual instruction to significantly improve vocabulary, grammar, and overall language comprehension. It distinctively evaluates the impact of EMI within the Chinese educational framework, traditionally dominated by bilingual methods. Employing a robust quasi-experimental design with first-year undergraduate students, this investigation focuses on the influence of monolingual teaching on English language proficiency, particularly measuring performance in the College English Test—Band 4 (CET-4). Results indicate a marked enhancement in CET-4 scores within the EMI group compared to controls, thus supporting the hypothesis that immersive language exposure facilitates superior language acquisition. Furthermore, this research transcends academic discussion, providing actionable insights for curriculum development, teaching strategies, and policy making to boost English proficiency in Chinese undergraduate education. By adopting global linguistic trends and tackling specific challenges of English instruction in China, our study promotes a shift towards monolingual education as a fundamental element of linguistic mastery in higher education. Ultimately, this investigation not only validates the efficacy of exclusive EMI in improving English proficiency among Chinese undergraduates but also paves the way for significant pedagogical changes in language teaching, aligning with the global communication demands of the 21st century.

**Keywords:** Exclusive English Medium Instruction, English Language Teaching, Chinese Undergraduate Programs, Language Proficiency, Pedagogical Reform.

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Contextualization of the Study

The stature of the English language in the global arena is undeniable, with its prominence acutely evident in the Chinese educational landscape. Here, English is not just a subject but a pivotal element of the curriculum right from primary education. However, this prominence is juxtaposed against a backdrop of pedagogical challenges and unrealized educational aspirations, especially in the domain of undergraduate English programs.

This complexity has its roots traced back to the 1978 Chinese Foreign Language Education Symposium. This landmark event not only recognized but also elevated English to a status of foundational importance for China's

future developmental trajectories. The Symposium's emphasis on English was not merely a reflection of global linguistic trends but a strategic move to align China's educational system with global standards.

However, the lofty aspirations of this Symposium have been met with sobering realities. Despite a comprehensive pre-college English learning regime spanning over a decade, the actual performance of students, particularly in the College English Test—Band 4 (CET-4), starkly contrasts with the expected outcomes. This incongruity points towards systemic gaps in pedagogical approaches and educational strategies. Central to these gaps is the critique of traditional teaching methods, notably the Grammar-Translation Method. This method, while historically dominant, has been increasingly scrutinized for its heavy reliance on the native language, often at the expense of critical communicative skills, particularly oral proficiency. This over-dependence on native language frameworks not only impedes the acquisition of fluent English language skills but also fails to prepare students for the practical demands of global communication.

Furthermore, the prevalent bilingual teaching practices, while designed to bridge linguistic gaps, ironically contribute to the stagnation of English language proficiency. These practices, though well-intentioned, often result in a diluted English language learning experience, where the potential for immersive and context-rich language exposure is significantly compromised.

In response to these enduring challenges, a paradigm shift is advocated by the Chinese Ministry of Education. This shift, radical in its essence, proposes English not merely as a subject of instruction but as the primary medium of communication within the classroom. This policy shift is not just a change in language usage; it represents a fundamental rethinking of pedagogical strategies, aiming to create an immersive English language environment that fosters both linguistic and cultural fluency.

In synthesizing these elements, this study situates itself at a critical juncture in China's educational evolution. It seeks to critically examine and evaluate the effectiveness of this proposed pedagogical shift, with an eye towards bridging the gap between the historical emphasis on English education and the contemporary challenges faced in actualizing its goals. The study is thus poised to offer insights that are not only academically robust but also practically relevant in shaping the future trajectory of English language education in China.

## **1.2 Analysis of the Problematic Scenario**

### **1.2.1 Dissecting the Ideal Model**

In the realm of China's educational strategies, the Ministry of Education harbors ambitions of crafting a pedagogical model that transcends conventional boundaries. This ideal model is not merely a teaching framework; it represents a visionary approach aimed at revolutionizing English language education for undergraduates. Central to this ambition is the integration of English content into the curriculum in a manner that is both practical and applicable, a task that poses significant challenges in its implementation.

This envisioned model is not just about elevating the status of English but about embedding it deeply into the educational psyche. The Ministry's push for monolingual policies underscores a commitment to creating an immersive English learning environment. The objective is clear: to cultivate a new generation of undergraduates who are not just proficient in English but are also comfortable using it as their primary mode of academic communication.

This model pivots around a critical milestone – enabling freshmen undergraduates to successfully navigate and clear the College English Test—Band 4 (CET-4). This test, as delineated in The University English Teaching Guidelines, is more than an assessment; it is a benchmark that reflects the students' readiness to engage with academic and professional landscapes where English is the *lingua franca*.

However, the synthesis of this ideal model with the on-ground realities presents a juxtaposition of ambition and existing educational paradigms. The shift to a monolingual approach requires a radical rethinking of teaching methodologies, resource allocation, and assessment strategies. It demands educators to not only teach English but to embody it in their pedagogical practices. This paradigm shift, while promising on paper, poses critical challenges in its operationalization, especially in the context of a diverse and complex educational system like China's.

Moreover, this model necessitates a holistic consideration of the linguistic and cultural dimensions of language learning. It is not just about the mechanical transmission of language skills but about fostering an environment where English is perceived and utilized as a tool for intellectual exploration and cultural exchange.

In critically appraising this ideal model, the study delves into the intricacies of its implementation, evaluating its feasibility, and assessing its potential impact on the educational outcomes of Chinese undergraduates. This analysis is pivotal in understanding the gap between the aspirational goals set by the Ministry of Education and the pragmatic challenges faced in realizing these goals within the existing educational frameworks.

### **1.2.2 The Reality of the Teaching Landscape**

The envisioned transformation of English education in China, as dictated by the Ministry's model, encounters stark contrasts in the realities of current teaching practices. Despite the ambitious ideals, the actual classroom scenario often diverges significantly from these objectives. Among the primary challenges impeding the implementation of monolingual policies are institutional constraints, teachers' propensity towards bilingual methods, and the diverse proficiency levels of students in English.

Institutional pressures often stem from a necessity to cover extensive curricular content within the constraints of limited classroom time, compelling teachers to revert to bilingual methods as a means to ensure comprehension and coverage. This practical consideration, while understandable, inadvertently perpetuates the reliance on students' native language, thereby diluting the immersive English learning environment envisioned in the ideal model.

Furthermore, teachers' comfort with bilingual teaching methods cannot be overlooked. Many educators, accustomed to the traditional bilingual approach, find it challenging to transition to a strictly English-speaking classroom. This comfort zone, combined with concerns about students' ability to follow along solely in English, results in a reluctance to adopt monolingual teaching practices.

The varying levels of English proficiency among students further exacerbate this situation. Students entering undergraduate programs come with different backgrounds and exposures to the English language. This diversity necessitates a teaching approach that can cater to a wide range of language skills, often leading educators to default to bilingual teaching to accommodate all learners.

### **1.2.3 Bridging the Gaps with Monolingual Teaching**

This stark divergence between the ideal and the actual teaching practices underscores the need for a critical evaluation of monolingual teaching methods. Our study delves into this gap by leveraging Krashen's input hypothesis as the theoretical framework. The hypothesis posits that language acquisition is facilitated by exposure to input that is slightly above the learner's current proficiency level, emphasizing the importance of comprehensive exposure to the target language.

Through a rigorous assessment of the role of monolingual teaching, the study aims to illuminate its potential in enhancing students' English language proficiency. A key focus is the impact of this teaching approach on students' performance in the College English Test—Band 4 (CET-4). The CET-4 serves as a tangible measure of language proficiency, making it an ideal benchmark for evaluating the efficacy of monolingual instruction. The synthesis of this study's findings is anticipated to contribute to the development of a practical teaching guide. This guide aims to align more closely with the governmental monolingual policies, thereby bridging the existing gaps. By assessing the effectiveness of monolingual teaching methods in the context of Chinese undergraduate English education, the study endeavors to provide insights and recommendations that could lead to significant pedagogical shifts in line with the Ministry's aspirations.

## **1.3 Research Focus and Inquiry**

The heart of this investigation lies in exploring the impact of monolingual teaching approaches on English language proficiency among Chinese undergraduates, with a special focus on the College English Test—Band 4 (CET-4) performance. This research seeks to unravel the complexities and consequences of adopting a monolingual instructional methodology in a predominantly bilingual educational context.

### **1.3.1 Research Questions**

The study is guided by two pivotal research questions designed to dissect the multifaceted nature of monolingual teaching:

1. What is the impact of monolingual teaching on students' English language proficiency, specifically in terms of their CET-4 performance? This question aims to decipher the direct correlation between the exclusive use of English in teaching and the measurable outcomes in language proficiency as evidenced in CET-4 scores. It seeks to understand if monolingual teaching can transcend traditional teaching barriers and significantly elevate students' command of the English language.
2. Does monolingual teaching act as a facilitator or a barrier in the journey towards enhanced English proficiency? Beyond the quantitative measurement of proficiency, this question delves into the qualitative aspects of monolingual teaching. It seeks to uncover whether this approach serves as a catalyst, fostering a deeper understanding and fluency in English, or if it presents unforeseen challenges and obstacles, thereby hindering the learning process.

### **1.3.2 Research Hypothesis**

Central to the study is the hypothesis that monolingual teaching has a significant impact on students' performance in the CET-4. This hypothesis posits that a teaching environment where English is the sole medium of instruction contributes more effectively to language acquisition compared to bilingual methods. It is anchored in the belief that immersive exposure to a language is crucial for its acquisition, a principle that is deeply rooted in second language acquisition theories.

### 1.3.3 Expected Contribution

The study synthesizes insights from the realms of linguistics, education policy, and cognitive psychology. It seeks to contribute a nuanced understanding of how monolingual teaching influences language proficiency, encompassing both the quantitative outcomes (CET-4 scores) and qualitative experiences (student and teacher perspectives).

A critical examination of these aspects will offer valuable insights into the effectiveness of monolingual teaching strategies in enhancing English proficiency. The findings are expected to provide empirical evidence that could inform future pedagogical strategies and policy decisions in the realm of English language education in China. The research outcomes aim to contribute a significant piece to the ongoing dialogue about effective language teaching methods, potentially influencing educational practices and policies at a broader scale.

## 1.4 Foundation of the Study and Theoretical Framework

The landscape of English language instruction in China's undergraduate programs has brought to the forefront a conspicuous disparity between the quantity of Second Language (L2) input and the resultant English proficiency of students. In addressing this educational conundrum, our study draws its theoretical inspiration from Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which posits that substantial exposure to a Second Language (L2) is a fundamental precursor to language acquisition and proficiency.

### 1.4.1 The Input Hypothesis

Krashen's Input Hypothesis, a seminal theory in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), underscores the pivotal role of comprehensible input in language learning. It contends that learners make optimal progress when they are exposed to linguistic input that slightly surpasses their current proficiency level, referred to as 'i+1'. This theory posits that for language acquisition to occur, learners need to be immersed in a linguistic environment where they are consistently challenged but not overwhelmed by the language.

### 1.4.2 Research Context

Our research is grounded in the belief that Krashen's Input Hypothesis holds significant relevance in the context of China's evolving English education landscape. As China endeavors to enhance English language proficiency among its undergraduates, the choice between monolingual and conventional bilingual instruction methods has emerged as a critical decision point. By aligning the principles of the Input Hypothesis with the practical challenges and policy objectives of English language education in China, our study seeks to critically analyze the impact of monolingual teaching on CET-4 outcomes. It does so by juxtaposing the outcomes of students exposed predominantly to English language instruction (monolingual) with those following the conventional bilingual approach.

### 1.4.3 Anticipated Contributions

The study endeavors to synthesize theory and practice, shedding light on the practical implications of adopting monolingual teaching methodologies within the Chinese context. Through a comprehensive analysis of CET-4 outcomes, it aims to provide critical insights into the efficacy of monolingual teaching as a means of narrowing the gap between L2 input and English language proficiency.

Furthermore, our research serves as a bridge between pedagogical theory and real-world educational challenges. The findings are anticipated to have far-reaching implications for curriculum design, pedagogical strategies, and policy decisions in the realm of English language education in China. Ultimately, the study seeks to contribute a valuable perspective to the ongoing discourse on effective language teaching methods, with the potential to inform and shape the future of English language education in the country.

## 2.0 Comprehensive Literature Analysis

In the realm of English Language Teaching (ELT), the dichotomy between monolingual and bilingual instruction methods has been the subject of extensive discourse. This section delves into the multifaceted landscape of ELT methodologies, drawing from historical and contemporary perspectives to illuminate the nuanced debate.

### 2.1 The Grammar-Translation Method (GTM)

Historically rooted in medieval education, the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) occupies a significant place in the annals of language instruction. GTM revolves around the practice of translating between one's native language and English, with a predominant focus on the rote memorization of grammar rules. While GTM has demonstrated effectiveness in fostering reading and writing skills, it faces critical scrutiny for its inherent limitations. Chief among these is its tendency to excessively rely on the native language, thereby neglecting the crucial domain of oral fluency.



## 2.2 Communicative Language Learning (CLL)

In stark contrast to GTM, Communicative Language Learning (CLL) champions a communication-centric approach to language instruction. It advocates for the utilization of the native language to create a comfortable and conducive learning environment. However, CLL's commendable emphasis on communication comes with its share of critiques. It is often criticized for the absence of a well-defined syllabus and its heavy reliance on the teacher's responsibility to facilitate meaningful interactions.

## 2.3 The Role of First Language (L1)

The debate over the use of the first language (L1) in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) has yielded mixed findings. Notable studies by Echevarria et al. (2011) and Thomas and Collier (1997) underscore the positive impact of incorporating the L1 in language instruction. However, it is essential to acknowledge the compelling counterpoint provided by Krashen's input hypothesis. This hypothesis asserts the primacy of maximal exposure to the target language, aligning with pedagogical methods such as Immersion, Direct, and Natural Approaches.

## 2.4 Monolingual Instruction: A Focus on Immersion

Our research pivots towards monolingual instruction within the classroom setting, with an emphasis on its potential to create immersive learning environments. Monolingual teaching directs its attention towards key facets of language acquisition, including vocabulary acquisition, grammar mastery, and comprehensive language comprehension. Existing studies, as evidenced by the work of Lu (2022) and Wang & Wang (2019), provide substantial support for the effectiveness of monolingual instruction in elevating English language proficiency.

## 2.5 Monolingual Instruction: A Vital Approach for English Language Teaching (ELT)

This study embarks on an in-depth exploration of the efficacy of exclusive English medium instruction within the context of Chinese undergraduate programs. Leveraging a robust quasi-experimental design, this research meticulously compares the outcomes of monolingual instruction against the backdrop of more traditional bilingual approaches, thereby offering a nuanced empirical analysis of their differential impacts on English language proficiency.

### 2.5.1 Theoretical Foundations and Methodological Rigor

Central to our investigation is the alignment with Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982), which posits that language acquisition flourishes under conditions of comprehensive input that is both understandable and slightly above the learner's current level of competence. By applying this hypothesis to the domain of higher education in China—a context markedly different from those in which Krashen's theory is traditionally situated—our study not only tests the universality of the hypothesis but also enriches its applicability to non-English-speaking tertiary educational settings.

To ensure methodological rigor, our study employs a quasi-experimental design, a methodology that allows for the observation of outcomes in settings where controlled experiments are impractical. This approach enables us to draw meaningful conclusions about the effectiveness of monolingual instruction, bolstered by the real-world applicability of our findings (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002).

### 2.5.2 Differential Impacts and Broader Implications

Our research goes beyond mere alignment with established theories to critically examine the specific mechanisms through which monolingual instruction might enhance language acquisition. This includes an in-depth analysis of vocabulary expansion, grammar mastery, and comprehensive language comprehension. Moreover, we juxtapose these outcomes against those achieved through bilingual instruction methods, thereby contributing to a more nuanced understanding of ELT effectiveness.

The implications of our findings are far-reaching, with potential impacts on curriculum design, pedagogical strategies, and language policy formulation within higher education. This study contributes a significant empirical evidence base that supports the shift toward immersive English language learning environments in Chinese universities, advocating for educational policies that recognize the value of monolingual instruction in fostering high levels of English proficiency among graduates.

### 2.5.3 Contribution to ELT Scholarship

By extending Krashen's Input Hypothesis to a new context and employing a rigorous methodological framework, this paper makes a novel contribution to the field of ELT. It not only validates the hypothesis in the setting of Chinese undergraduate education but also opens up new avenues for research into the comparative effectiveness of monolingual and bilingual instruction methods.

## 2.6 Relevance of the Literature

The dichotomy between monolingual and bilingual instruction in English Language Teaching (ELT) represents a critical juncture in the ongoing evolution of language education strategies. This divide is not merely methodological but reflects deeper pedagogical philosophies regarding the role of the learner's first language (L1) in acquiring a second language (L2), namely English. Historically, the Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) and Communicative Language Learning (CLL) have epitomized the spectrum of approaches, from strict L1 exclusion to its strategic inclusion (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

### **2.6.1 Theoretical Perspectives and Methodological Shifts**

The GTM, with its roots in classical language teaching, emphasizes meticulous grammar instruction and direct translation from L1 to L2, prioritizing written language over spoken forms. This method has been critiqued for its lack of engagement with the communicative aspects of language use (Howatt, 1984). Conversely, CLL advocates for the use of language as a tool for communication, suggesting that fluency can be achieved through interaction and meaningful communication, often incorporating L1 as a facilitative tool (Savignon, 1991).

Recent pedagogical research has increasingly questioned the binary opposition between monolingual and bilingual instruction, suggesting that the effectiveness of either approach may be context-dependent, influenced by factors such as learners' age, proficiency level, and specific learning objectives (Cummins, 2000; Swain & Lapkin, 2000). Moreover, the advent of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and immersion programs has introduced nuanced perspectives that blend elements of both monolingual and bilingual instruction to optimize language acquisition (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010).

### **2.6.2 Empirical Insights and Emerging Research**

Empirical studies have begun to explore the potential benefits of monolingual instruction in immersive settings, suggesting that sustained exposure to the target language can significantly enhance language proficiency (Genesee, 1987; Tedick & Wesely, 2015). These findings have sparked a reevaluation of traditional ELT practices, advocating for instructional designs that maximize authentic language exposure. The research by Lightbown and Spada (2013) further illuminates how different instructional approaches impact learning outcomes, emphasizing the need for pedagogical flexibility and responsiveness to learners' needs.

### **2.6.3 Implications for ELT Practices**

The evolving landscape of ELT methodologies underscores the imperative for empirical research to guide pedagogical practices. As the field moves towards more integrative and evidence-based approaches, the insights gained from comparative studies of monolingual and bilingual instruction offer valuable directions for curriculum development, instructional design, and policy formulation in language education.

## **2.7 Statement of the Paper's Contribution**

In the expansive field of English Language Teaching (ELT), this paper carves out a distinctive niche by rigorously evaluating the impact of exclusive English medium instruction within the specific milieu of Chinese undergraduate programs. Recognizing the pivotal role of English as a global lingua franca, this research is predicated on the hypothesis that immersive, monolingual instruction environments can significantly elevate English proficiency levels among non-native speakers. Through a meticulously designed quasi-experimental study, we provide a detailed analysis of the comparative efficacy of monolingual instruction against the backdrop of more conventional bilingual teaching methods that have historically dominated ELT in China.

Our approach leverages a robust quasi-experimental design, facilitating a nuanced exploration of the linguistic outcomes associated with monolingual English instruction. This methodology enables us to isolate the effects of instructional medium on language acquisition, offering a clear lens through which the benefits and challenges of monolingual instruction can be discerned. The choice of a quasi-experimental framework is particularly pertinent given the complexity of educational settings, allowing for controlled observation and analysis within the dynamic, real-world context of undergraduate education.

Central to our investigation is the alignment with Stephen Krashen's renowned Input Hypothesis (1982), which posits that the key to acquiring a second language is through receiving comprehensible input that is slightly beyond the learner's current level of proficiency. Our study not only reaffirms the foundational principles articulated by Krashen but also ambitiously extends these principles to interrogate their applicability and efficacy within the domain of higher education in China—a context markedly different from those in which Krashen's hypotheses have traditionally been applied. This extension is critical, as it addresses a significant gap in the literature, applying well-established theoretical frameworks to new linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical landscapes.

Moreover, this paper endeavors to dissect the specific components of monolingual instruction that contribute to its effectiveness. Through an exhaustive analysis of vocabulary acquisition, grammar mastery, and overall language comprehension among participants, the study elucidates the mechanisms by which monolingual instruction in an English-only classroom setting fosters a deeper, more intuitive grasp of the English language. This granular analysis is instrumental in identifying the pedagogical practices that most significantly impact language acquisition, providing actionable insights for educators and curriculum designers.

In transcending the conventional dichotomy between monolingual and bilingual instruction, our research contributes a novel perspective to the discourse on language instruction in non-English-speaking countries. By empirically evaluating the outcomes of monolingual instruction within the Chinese undergraduate context, the study illuminates the potential for immersive English environments to not only enhance linguistic proficiency but also to foster a global mindset among learners. This is particularly pertinent in an era where global connectivity and cross-cultural competencies are invaluable.

In summary, this paper significantly enriches the academic dialogue surrounding ELT methodologies by providing empirical evidence of the effectiveness of monolingual instruction in enhancing English language mastery among Chinese undergraduates. It offers a comprehensive, theory-driven analysis of the pedagogical implications of adopting an English-only instruction model in higher education settings, thereby charting a course for future research and practice in the field of language education.

## **2.8 Differentiation from Existing Studies**

Unlike prior research that primarily focuses on K-12 settings or adult language learners, our study fills a critical gap by targeting the unique environment of Chinese undergraduate programs. Furthermore, while existing studies (e.g., Lu, 2022; Wang & Wang, 2019) have highlighted the benefits of monolingual instruction, our work delves deeper into the specific mechanisms through which immersion in English medium instruction fosters language acquisition, including vocabulary expansion, grammar mastery, and comprehensive language comprehension.

## **2.9 Possible Contributions and Broader Implications**

Our findings suggest that monolingual instruction in English not only facilitates higher proficiency levels among learners but also promotes greater cultural and linguistic confidence. This research has significant implications for curriculum design, pedagogical strategies, and policy formulation, advocating for a pedagogical shift towards immersive language learning environments in higher education. By contributing to the body of evidence supporting immersive learning, this paper underscores the potential for monolingual instruction to transform ELT and equip learners with the linguistic tools necessary for success in the global arena.

## **3.0 Research Methodology: Probing the Efficacy of Monolingual Instruction in Enhancing English Proficiency among Chinese Undergraduates**

This section provides an in-depth exploration of the research methodology utilized to investigate the impact of monolingual instruction on English proficiency among Chinese undergraduate students.

### **3.1 Experimental Framework: Exploring the Impact of Monolingual Instruction on CET-4 Performance**

In our scholarly endeavor to investigate the effects of monolingual instruction on CET-4 performance, our study adopts a rigorous quasi-experimental framework. This meticulously designed framework empowers us to delve into the realm of English-only instruction and its profound influence on language learning outcomes. Within this framework, we engage with two distinct groups: the experimental group, immersed in the exclusive realm of monolingual instruction, and the control group, navigating the waters of conventional bilingual education. This experimental setup thoughtfully replicates the intricate dynamics of real-world classroom settings, augmenting the practical applicability and relevance of our study's outcomes.

At the core of our investigation lies a hypothesis that guides our scholarly exploration. We hypothesize that students immersed in the world of monolingual instruction will exhibit substantial and noteworthy improvements in their CET-4 scores. This hypothesis serves as a guiding principle in our research, driving our pursuit of knowledge and shedding light on the potential transformative power of monolingual teaching methodologies in the context of English language proficiency.

### **3.2 Selection of Participants: The Crucial Building Blocks**

In our quest to address the challenges and disparities within Chinese undergraduate English programs, we turn our attention to the crucial aspect of participant selection. This section delves into the methodology employed in the selection of participants for our study, shedding light on the intricacies of our research design.

Our research endeavors are grounded in the inclusion of a carefully curated participant pool. We meticulously selected two classes, each comprising forty eager first-year students embarking on their academic journey. These individuals, brimming with potential, were subjected to a random assignment process, a cornerstone of our rigorous research methodology.

Both the experimental and control groups received an equitable allocation of resources and instructional materials, ensuring a level playing field for our investigation. The sole differentiating factor between these two groups was the language of instruction, a pivotal element of our study's design. The intervention unfolded over a meticulously planned and executed duration of fifteen weeks, providing ample time for comprehensive data collection and analysis.

By employing this well-structured participant selection process, our study endeavors to uncover insights into the potential transformative effects of monolingual instruction on the English language proficiency of Chinese undergraduates. This section sets the stage for our in-depth exploration, emphasizing the meticulous care taken in assembling the building blocks of our research.

### **3.3 Utilized Assessment Tools: The Metrics of Mastery**

As we venture further into the intricate web of our research, it is imperative to examine the tools and instruments that form the bedrock of our data collection. In this section, we illuminate the assessment tools meticulously chosen to evaluate the impact of monolingual teaching on the English language proficiency of Chinese undergraduates.

At the heart of our investigation lies the CET-4 Sample Test, a multifaceted assessment tool meticulously selected to provide a comprehensive view of language skills. This meticulously crafted test spans the domains of writing, reading, listening, and translation, encapsulating the multifaceted nature of language proficiency. Designed with meticulous attention to detail, the CET-4 Sample Test adheres to the stringent guidelines outlined by The Committee of CET-4 and CET-6 (2016). This alignment with established standards ensures the validity and reliability of our assessment, reinforcing the credibility of our research outcomes.

By employing this comprehensive and rigorously validated assessment tool, we aim to unravel the nuanced effects of monolingual instruction on the diverse facets of English language proficiency among Chinese undergraduates. This section underscores the methodical precision exercised in selecting the instruments that will ultimately illuminate our research findings.

### **3.4 Data Collection and Analytical Rigor: Illuminating Language Learning Outcomes**

In the wake of the intervention period, a meticulous and systematic data collection process unfolded, characterized by unwavering attention to detail. This section unveils the methodology employed to procure and scrutinize the data that holds the key to unraveling the intricate relationship between monolingual instruction and English proficiency among Chinese undergraduates.

Data collection commenced with a systematic and comprehensive approach, leaving no room for ambiguity. Each data point was subjected to rigorous scrutiny for accuracy and integrity. The assessment of language proficiency, as gauged by the CET-4 test, underwent a two-fold evaluation. Objective components of the test found themselves under the impartial gaze of machine-based scoring, while the subjective aspects received meticulous evaluation by seasoned educators. This dual-pronged approach to assessment ensured the reliability and robustness of our data.

As the data came together, the moment of truth arrived, demanding analytical prowess of the highest order. Our analytical toolkit featured the venerable t-tests, capable of dissecting both independent and paired samples. These statistical instruments, like skilled surgeons, probed the data, seeking to unearth the subtle nuances that delineate the impact of monolingual instruction on CET-4 performance.

In essence, our methodological approach stands as a paragon of comprehensiveness and precision. Its purpose is singular: to cast a brilliant light on the labyrinthine landscape of language learning outcomes, as influenced by the hitherto uncharted territory of monolingual teaching in the realm of Chinese undergraduate education.

## **4.0 Findings Unveiled: Illuminating the Power of Monolingual Instruction**

In this section, the shroud of ambiguity is lifted, and the findings of our extensive research journey are laid bare. Our data, meticulously collected and rigorously analyzed, serves as the compass guiding us through the labyrinth of language learning outcomes under the influence of monolingual instruction in the realm of Chinese undergraduate education.

As the initial testing dust settled, a curious equilibrium emerged. Our discerning eye detected no significant disparity in English proficiency between the experimental and control groups at this stage. The educational landscape seemed poised on the precipice of transformation, yet it retained an aura of neutrality.

However, the true revelation transpired in the post-intervention phase. Here, the data painted a vivid tableau of progress, where the experimental group shone as a beacon of advancement. The CET-4 scores of this group exhibited a marked improvement, casting a stark contrast to the control group's performance.

A deeper dive into within-group dynamics unraveled the subtleties of progress. The experimental group emerged as the protagonist of this academic saga, showcasing a statistically significant leap in CET-4 performance. In contrast, the control group, while making commendable strides, could not claim statistical significance in their progress.

These findings echo resoundingly, endorsing the profound impact of monolingual instruction on English proficiency. It is in the crucible of standardized testing, exemplified by the CET-4 examination, that the efficacy of this instructional paradigm becomes manifest. Our research illuminates this transformation, shedding light on the path forward in the domain of Chinese undergraduate education.



## 5.0 Discussion, Implications, and Conclusions: Exploring Potential Directions in Chinese Undergraduate English Education

In this crucial section, we embark on a journey of reflection and exploration, acknowledging the insights derived from our study while remaining mindful of the nuances and complexities of the field.

The findings of our study suggest the potential for pedagogical reform in China's undergraduate English programs. Monolingual instruction, in alignment with global trends and Krashen's hypothesis, appears to offer a promising avenue for addressing some limitations of bilingual education.

Our findings may prompt a reconsideration of curriculum design. They indicate the possibility of reevaluating educational pathways, where monolingual instruction could play a role alongside other approaches. This raises questions about the potential benefits and challenges of such curriculum revisions.

The call for specialized teacher training emerges as a potential avenue to consider. It suggests that providing educators with additional skills and knowledge for monolingual instruction could be worth exploring, recognizing the complexities and variations in teaching practices.

Our findings may prompt a reexamination of assessment practices. They suggest the need to explore whether adjustments in assessment methods are warranted to accommodate monolingual teaching environments. This opens up possibilities for further investigation and potential adjustments.

As we navigate these potential directions, it's important to acknowledge that our study's findings resonate with existing literature to some extent. The echoes of the Grammar-Translation Method, the considerations of Communicative Language Learning, and the ongoing debates about first language use in teaching all contribute to a complex landscape that warrants careful exploration.

In conclusion, our study suggests that there may be opportunities to explore new approaches within Chinese undergraduate English education. These opportunities are not without complexities and uncertainties, and they warrant further investigation and deliberation. They beckon educators, policymakers, and scholars to consider potential futures that may hold promise for enhancing English language proficiency.

## 6.0 Study Limitations

While our study has yielded valuable insights into the impact of monolingual instruction on English proficiency in the Chinese higher education context, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations. These limitations offer a broader perspective on the applicability of our findings.

Our research primarily focuses on Chinese undergraduate English programs, and the effectiveness of monolingual instruction may vary in different educational settings, both within China and internationally. Factors such as language policies, classroom dynamics, and learner demographics can significantly influence the outcomes.

The study's findings are specific to the participants and conditions under investigation. While we observed significant improvements in CET-4 performance among our sample, caution should be exercised when extrapolating these results to other standardized tests or language proficiency measures. Each assessment may have unique requirements and challenges.

Language education is a dynamic field, subject to evolving methodologies and approaches. Our study provides insights based on data collected during a specific time frame. Future research should consider the evolving landscape of language education and its potential impact on the efficacy of monolingual instruction.

The effectiveness of monolingual instruction can be influenced by teacher expertise and instructional strategies. Our study assumes a standardized teaching approach within the experimental group. However, variations in teaching quality and techniques may yield different outcomes.

English proficiency is multifaceted, encompassing speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Our study primarily focuses on CET-4 scores, which assess a specific aspect of language proficiency. Future research could explore the broader spectrum of language skills and their relationship with monolingual instruction.

China's language policies and their impact on English education are multifaceted. Our study provides insights into monolingual instruction within the existing policy framework. However, a comprehensive understanding of language policies may require a more extensive investigation.

Pedagogical approaches and methodologies in language education are subject to innovation and adaptation. While our study supports monolingual instruction, it is essential to remain open to the potential evolution of teaching practices and their implications for language proficiency.

By acknowledging these limitations, we aim to provide a comprehensive perspective on the scope and applicability of our findings. Researchers and educators should consider these factors when interpreting and applying the results of our study beyond the specific context of Chinese higher education.

## 7.0 Recommendations

Our study's findings underscore the potential benefits of pedagogical reforms within the context of Chinese undergraduate English programs. These recommendations extend beyond the immediate findings and encompass broader considerations for improving language education.

Firstly, curriculum alignment is paramount. The integration of monolingual instruction should be accompanied by a thorough review and adjustment of existing curricula. The curriculum should reflect the

goals of enhancing English proficiency through immersive learning experiences, encompassing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Ensuring a seamless transition to monolingual instruction necessitates a well-planned curriculum that aligns with the principles of language acquisition.

Enhancing teacher training emerges as a critical component of successful implementation. Educators should receive specialized training that equips them with the necessary skills and strategies for effective monolingual instruction. Professional development programs should be designed to help teachers adapt to this pedagogical shift, fostering their confidence and competence in delivering immersive language learning experiences.

In tandem with curriculum alignment and teacher training, adaptations in assessment methods are essential. Standardized tests and assessments should be designed to evaluate students' language proficiency in monolingual environments accurately. This may involve the development of new assessment tools that align with the goals of immersive language learning, assessing not only knowledge but also practical language skills. Furthermore, increasing English exposure is a key consideration. Beyond the classroom, students should have opportunities for real-world language use. English language clubs, conversation partners, and extracurricular activities can provide avenues for students to apply their language skills in authentic contexts. These opportunities complement classroom instruction and contribute to well-rounded language development.

Lastly, the development of comprehensive language support resources can aid students in their language learning journey. Accessible materials, online resources, and language learning platforms can supplement classroom instruction and offer additional practice opportunities. These resources should be designed to align with monolingual teaching principles and cater to the diverse needs of learners.

Our recommendations encompass curriculum alignment, teacher training, assessment adaptations, increased English exposure, and the development of comprehensive language support resources. These multifaceted approaches aim to create a conducive environment for effective monolingual instruction and the enhancement of English proficiency among Chinese undergraduate students.

## 8.0 Concluding Thoughts

This study holds significance in the broader context of educational reform in China and beyond. It underscores the potential of monolingual instruction as a pivotal strategy for elevating English proficiency among undergraduate students. While our findings provide compelling evidence of its immediate impact, they also beckon further investigation into the long-term effects and the applicability of monolingual teaching in diverse educational settings. The journey towards pedagogical reform is an ongoing one, and the insights gleaned from this study serve as a catalyst for continued exploration and innovation in language education.

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