

TUTOR RESPONSES TO ENGLISH

By Christine Ling Bee Fong

Here are some responses from tutors about the transition to English as the main language for instruction and for all learning materials:

“I welcome it very much and fully support OUM in this effort. This shows that OUM is moving into international education. For tutors, I don’t think there is any problem; they just need to refresh again on the English content of the course. For learners, it is undeniable that some of them might face problems in grasping certain terms and concepts in English.

They need to put more effort in looking for meanings and answering questions. On the other hand, learners can take it as a challenge to master English. Most reference books and education materials are in English so this will make it easier for them in doing references and assignments.”

*Ngang Tuong Kiet
Sibu*

“I think this is a very good move by OUM to ensure that we keep abreast with the latest knowledge and skills, which are easily accessed through the Internet in English. Advantages for learners would be that there are more reading materials in English on any subject and that it would be an added value for their career advancement.”

*Clarence Jerry
Kuching*

“It is good to use English for course delivery because it is an international language and in the job market, English language is important for recruitment.”

*Johnadi Tang King Kai
Sibu*



“As a science teacher, I quite agree that science subjects should be taught in English. When researchers and scientists represent the country at an international conference or seminar, we have to present our research and findings in English. Without English, we would be deaf and dumb, not able to present anything even if our research is excellent.”

*Ling Pick Yieng
Sibu*

“Using English as a language to deliver courses as well as to assess learners, to me, is very convenient and easy. Since the language used is direct and simple, the learners definitely have no problems to understand and express themselves either. It has not been an issue for me and my students so far. But those who are from the Bahasa Malaysia medium may face some problems initially. I believe they will overcome

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it in the course of time. The best way to overcome the language problem is by reading intensively and extensively.”

*Ling Moi Hong
Sarawak*

“I think it is a very good idea. It would be very easy for those who are fluent in the language. If those who are not familiar with the English language work hard and are conscientious about picking up the language, I think it would be smooth sailing.”

*Yeo Siok Tee
Batu Pahat*

“The performance of OUM learners will depend very much on their attitude. If they are prepared to work hard to learn the language, it would help.”

*Loh Leh Chiong
Sibu*

“It is a good idea but it would not be easy for tutors and students. Some OUM tutors themselves are not well-versed in English. They might perform badly in their tutoring and affect learners’ performance.”

*Dr Berhan Mohd Salleh
Kuala Lumpur*

“I welcome this transition. The advantage is that students can improve their competency in the English language. Tutors have to guide their students slowly and make them understand the content. Gradually, the learners will be able to cope and their performance will improve.”

*Law Sze Yung
Sibu*

“The transition is very good and stimulating. English is an international language and OUM degrees should be marketable internationally too. Students will be able to get first-hand knowledge and

tutors could impart the materials accurately. As for the performance of the learners – I think it does not matter. Only quality should matter.

Then, students would have to study harder and be more serious in studying. They should be more independent. We as tutors should do our part by encouraging them to study harder.”

*Lau Hieng Soon
Sibu*

“I think this is in line with OUM’s vision to become a renown university and the number one open and distance university in the country. Most tutors won’t face any problems handling the materials in English. In fact, I think they will probably be more comfortable delivering the lessons in English.

Some learners might face problems in communicating and understanding the materials but they will become more marketable since most companies will look for employees who are proficient in English.

Besides, in this globalised world, English is the language of information and development as well as progress. We do not want to be left behind.

We as tutors should encourage students to read and use English whenever and wherever possible. Motivate students to use the language and tell them that there is nothing to laugh at if we falter in using English as everyone makes mistakes when learning another language. Do not penalise students for language errors.

Remind them always that we are not looking at language; rather, we are more concerned with the ideas that they are trying to convey. Encourage students to ask the tutors to repeat or explain again whenever they have problems in understanding any concept or idea that is being taught.”

*Koay Soon Yuan
Batu Pahat*