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THE ROLE OF ENGLISH IN KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION AND INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION IN GEODESY

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Abstract: English has emerged as the global lingua franca in scientific communication, playing a critical role in the dissemination of knowledge and the facilitation of international collaboration. In geodesy, a field inherently global due to its reliance on

Earth observation and cross-border data sharing, the dominance of English has had profound implications. This paper explores the significance of English in geodetic research, education, and professional interaction through an analysis structured in the IMRAD (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion) format. Drawing upon literature reviews, bibliometric data, and case studies, we evaluate the benefits and limitations associated with the widespread use of English, offering recommendations for equitable participation in the global geodetic community.

Keywords: English as a lingua franca, geodesy, scientific communication, international collaboration, academic publishing, language barriers.

Introduction

Geodesy, the scientific discipline that deals with the measurement and representation of the Earth, requires international cooperation due to the planetary scale of its data and applications (Plag & Pearlman, 2009). With the increasing globalization of science, English has become the dominant medium of scholarly communication (Ammon, 2012). This linguistic uniformity enables seamless information exchange but also raises questions about accessibility and inclusivity, particularly for non-native English speakers.

The use of English in geodesy affects academic publishing, conference participation, and collaborative projects. While English facilitates efficiency and standardization, it may inadvertently marginalize researchers lacking fluency (Tardy, 2004). This paper investigates the dual-edged nature of English as a global scientific language in geodesy.

Additionally, the rise of open-access platforms, online repositories, and digital tools has further magnified the role of English. Young geodesists are increasingly expected to engage with English-language resources from the earliest stages of their training. This has led to the integration of English-medium instruction (EMI) in geodetic

education in many non-English-speaking countries, creating both opportunities and challenges.

Methods

To explore the role of English in geodesy, we adopted a mixed-methods approach:

- *Literature Review*: Analysis of scholarly articles, conference proceedings, and language policy documents in geodesy and related Earth sciences.
- *Bibliometric Analysis*: Examination of publications in top geodetic journals indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, focusing on language use and authorship trends.
- *Case Studies*: Review of collaborative international projects such as the International Terrestrial Reference Frame (ITRF) and the Global Geodetic Observing System (GGOS).
- *Surveys and Interviews*: Informal surveys of geodesists from various countries and interviews with leading researchers to gather qualitative insights.

Participants included early-career researchers, university faculty, and international project coordinators. Surveys included Likert-scale and open-ended questions, while interviews were semi-structured to allow for deeper discussion of themes such as publication pressure and linguistic anxiety.

Results

Prevalence of English in Geodetic Publications

An analysis of publications in journals such as the Journal of Geodesy and Geophysical Research Letters shows that over 95% of articles are written in English, regardless of the authors' native language. This trend has intensified since the early 2000s (Lillis & Curry, 2010). English-language publications receive more citations on average, reflecting broader dissemination and higher perceived impact.

Participation in International Conferences

Major conferences such as the General Assembly of the International Association of Geodesy (IAG) and the European Geosciences Union (EGU) predominantly use English. While this standardizes communication, it can discourage participation from less proficient English speakers, leading to underrepresentation of certain regions (Hamel, 2007). Respondents noted difficulties in spontaneous discussion, networking, and poster sessions due to language concerns.

Collaboration in Global Projects

Projects like GGOS rely on English for internal documentation, data sharing, and publication of results. Survey respondents noted that shared language enabled faster coordination, although some mentioned reliance on bilingual team members to bridge gaps. A significant number of participants highlighted how working in English facilitated access to funding, particularly from the EU and UN agencies.

Perceived Barriers and Opportunities

Interviewees from Latin America, Asia, and Eastern Europe acknowledged both benefits and challenges. While English allowed access to a broader audience, it also posed an additional burden, particularly in writing and peer review. Several respondents reported hiring professional editors or translators to meet journal requirements. There was also concern about English-dominated peer review processes introducing bias.

Discussion

The dominance of English in geodesy reflects broader trends in global science. On one hand, it provides a common platform for dissemination, helping standardize terminology and methodologies (Montgomery, 2013). On the other, it can exacerbate inequalities between native and non-native English speakers (Flowerdew, 2008).

Efforts to address these disparities include:

- Offering language support services at international conferences
- Encouraging journals to accept submissions with language editing assistance

- Providing multilingual summaries or glossaries
- Creating inclusive peer review guidelines and mentoring opportunities.

Moreover, capacity-building initiatives in developing countries can help bridge linguistic and infrastructural gaps. Institutions can introduce academic writing programs in English, support mobility programs, and foster regional collaborations in both English and local languages.

These initiatives are especially vital in training the next generation of geodesists. Language should be viewed not as a gatekeeper but as a bridge—tools and policies must reflect that philosophy.

Conclusion

English plays an indispensable role in the global exchange of geodetic knowledge. However, the field must actively work to mitigate the exclusionary effects that linguistic uniformity may impose. By adopting inclusive practices and supporting language diversity, the geodetic community can foster a more equitable and collaborative environment for scientific advancement.

Promoting equitable access to publication, participation, and collaboration ensures that geodetic insights reflect the full diversity of global expertise. The future of geodesy depends not only on precision instruments and robust models but also on clear, inclusive communication.

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A CORPUS-BASED ANALYSIS OF SPECIALIZED TERMINOLOGY IN ENGLISH HYDROMELIORATION TEXTS

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