

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF L2 INSTRUCTORS: HOW FOREIGN ACCENT AND
CULTURAL EDUCATION AFFECT STUDENT LEARNING AND PERCEIVED
INSTRUCTOR CREDIBILITY

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ABSTRACT

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF L2 INSTRUCTORS: HOW FOREIGN ACCENT AND CULTURAL EDUCATION AFFECT STUDENT LEARNING AND PERCEIVED INSTRUCTOR CREDIBILITY

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Though a great deal of instructional communication research has explored the influence of various instructor traits on student learning, little attention has been paid to the role differences in linguistic background can play in educational contexts. This study sought to inform this underexplored area of research by determining how an L2 instructor's foreign accent influences students' perceptions both of the instructor's credibility and of their own learning, while also evaluating the effectiveness of a cultural sensitivity training designed to reduce students' negative perceptions of L2 speakers. Using a 2 (Intervention vs. No Intervention) x 2 (Accent vs. No Accent) factorial experimental design, participants ($N = 355$) viewed two videos and then completed questions measuring their learning and perceptions of the instructor. Results indicated no significant relationship

between accent and learning nor accent and credibility, though there was a significant positive relationship between intervention and perceived learning. Implications and limitations of these findings are discussed, followed by recommendations for future research in this area.

Keywords: instructional communication, intercultural communication, L2 instructors, credibility, learning, foreign accent, cultural education

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Over the past several decades, colleges in the United States have seen a dramatic rise in the number of students and instructors from other countries. In the last ten years, in fact, the total number of students choosing to pursue postsecondary education (for at least one semester) in the United States has more than doubled, with over a million international students in the U.S. in 2015 (IIE, 2015). While some might attribute such a rise to the competitiveness of an American college education, it is also worth noting U.S. colleges overwhelmingly report a drive toward globalization (IAU, 2010), through study abroad and exchange programs (Altbach & Knight, 2007), the development of overseas campuses (Caruana, 2009), and even the recruitment of international staff (Turner & Robinson, 2008). As a result, college classrooms in the U.S. present unique challenges and opportunities for learning to occur related to not just course content but also to intercultural competence and awareness.

Numerous studies have catalogued the many benefits a diverse classroom environment holds for students' learning engagement (Ginsberg & Levine, 2014), participation and tolerance (Janmaat, 2012), and even behavior and social skills (Gottfried, 2014). Meanwhile, other research highlights the consequences faced by students and educators operating in culturally and linguistically diverse

environments, namely at the postsecondary level in facilitating constructive awareness and dialogue about diversity (Kilaberia, Lee, & Williams, 2012). Though a growing body of research has been devoted to understanding challenges faced by linguistically diverse student populations (Veerman, 2015), less scholarly inquiry has focused on the challenges faced by linguistically diverse instructors. As colleges and universities in the United States push to prioritize and celebrate their classrooms' degree of diversity, a critical examination of the ways instructors are also constrained by cultural and linguistic barriers to effective communication is crucial.

Considering the variety of ways in which such barriers have been described in the extensive research on language, several definitions should be clarified. The phenomenon of multilingualism is referred to in this research by highlighting the extent of familiarity an individual has with one or more languages through the terms *L1*, *L2* and *Generation 1.5*. *L1* generally refers to an individual whose first language learned (spoken, written, or both) is the language spoken in the location in which they currently live (Ferrari & Palladino, 2012). Other terms used to describe such a situation include native speaker (for example, see Kurinski, Jambor & Sera, 2016), natural language (see Green, 1984), and primary language (Hammer et al., 2009). *L2* describes an individual who is speaking a language which they learned secondarily to their primary language (Amengual-Pizarro, 2007). In contexts where English is the dominant language, other comparable terms include non-native English speaker (NNES, Ramkissoon, 2002) and English language learning (ELL,

Gorman, 2012), and English as a second language (ESL, Jaen, 2007). Generation 1.5, a concept developed to describe contexts in between L1 and L2, usually refers to a situation in which an individual begins learning a second language in their prepubescent years (ages six to twelve, when linguistic comprehension usually begins and becomes definitive) and that language becomes their dominant language (Asher, 2011). For the sake of this study, L1 is used to describe a native English speaker, L2 refers to a non-native English speaker and Generation 1.5 refers to an individual who moved from a non-English speaking country to an English speaking country between the ages of six and twelve.

While such definitions clarify a person's dominant language, others help describe the ways in which multilingualism affects speech. For example, multilingualism has been described on an evaluative basis by terms such as *fluency* (Pinget et al., 2014; Prefontaine & Kormos, 1999) which seek to define the extent of an individual's mastery of a language. For L2 speakers, the terms *foreign dialect* and *foreign accent* have been used to describe speech patterns consistent with the speaker's primary language, which, depending on fluency, have been identified as affecting pronunciation, proper grammar, speech rate, and several other aspects of speech (Ulbrich & Messen, 2016). Considering dialect is a term which can also refer to entirely separate languages (Chladkova & Podlipsky, 2011), the current research relies on the term foreign accent to describe speech which links an individual to their L2 status by listeners and audiences. However, it is important to also note a growing body of research acknowledges the presence of a foreign accent is not

necessarily directly related to fluency, as an individual with a high mastery of a secondary language may still have speech influenced by a foreign accent (Major, 2010; Miller, 2011; Verhoeven, 2005).

Though the role of linguistic diversity in educational settings has received little attention from instructional communication scholars, some studies have demonstrated its significance. Operating from an online-learning framework, Kahn and Sanchez (2016) found students were less likely to rate instructors with foreign accents as effective and helpful, despite also finding an instructor's native language had no significant effect on students' learning. Subtirelu (2015) found instructors listed on the popular anonymous evaluation website, RateMyProfessor.com, who were noted as having a foreign accent would have substantially lower ratings for effectiveness and helpfulness. Subtirelu also noted L2 instructors who teach at colleges and universities in the United States are frequently the subject of student complaints, with Goodboy and Myers (2015) having found instructor regional or foreign accent as a significant type of teacher misbehavior as identified by students.

Though the problem is markedly a prominent phenomenon among college students' perceptions of L2 instructors, researchers seem at odds with how to combat it. McLean (2007) argued establishing credibility in the classroom poses unique challenges for L2 instructors, but also operated from the perspective that it is the responsibility of the instructor to overcome these challenges. Kilaberia, Lee and Williams (2012) also maintained utilizing diversity as an educational opportunity as opposed to a hindrance hinges on the ability of instructors to engage

students intentionally within courses and with curricula.

While instructors undoubtedly wield agency in navigating challenges related to language barriers, it is also important to consider how L2 instructors are subjected to stigma related to cultural and linguistic stereotypes. In many cases, foreign accents represent no threat to student learning, yet as the requirement to learn and be proficient in English pervades expectations placed upon L2s who live and work in the United States, negative perceptions of L2 instructors are commonplace (Pleh, 1995). Moreover, for L2 instructors taking on professional roles in college classrooms, student-reported teaching evaluations often make up the bulk—and in some cases the entirety—of content used to make hiring and re-hiring decisions (Rice & Stewart, 2000). As L2 instructors are at the mercy of underlying opinions and assumptions their students harbor toward L2 individuals, and as those perceptions can permeate assessments of an L2 instructor's overall teaching effectiveness, standard teaching evaluations represent a flawed mechanism both as a professional assessment tool and as means of helping educators improve their teaching (Li, Mazer & Ju, 2011). As academic institutions continue to push for greater access to post-secondary educational opportunities for racial, cultural, sexual, linguistic, and other minorities—understood as a celebration of diversity in collegiate environments—university educators and administrators must also make it a priority to find ways to reduce the perceived boundaries and negative interactions based on stereotypes between groups.

Considering the push to create inclusive, positive, safe learning environments

continues to be an expressed goal for college administrators, solutions directed toward eliminating the harmful perceptions students may harbor regarding L2 instructors are clearly needed. Thus, in pursuit of this end, the goal of the present research is to both determine the ways in which the presence of a foreign accent for an instructor influences students' perceptions, as well as test the potential effectiveness of a proactive educational intervention tool directed toward reducing the negative inhibitions students may harbor toward L2 instructors.

To achieve this research goal, this study utilizes a 2x2 factorial experimental design. Participants will be shown educational lecture videos presented with and without a foreign accent and asked to report their perceptions of the presenter's credibility and their own perceived learning from the presenter. The other independent variable in this design is the use of a proactive learning intervention that was developed using health and education programs that are often required for first-year college students as models. This study will find out whether this intervention helps to reduce negative attitudes toward L2 instructors.

This thesis proceeds by first, providing an overview of the relevant research in this area. Second, particular focus is given to literature in overcoming cultural stereotypes, which is condensed into guidelines used to create an original proactive learning tool geared toward reducing negative perceptions of L2 instructors, to be tested in the current study. Next, methods are outlined, followed by a presentation of the study's findings. The paper concludes with a discussion of the relevance of current findings, as well as limitations for this study and directions for future

research in this area.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Communication scholars have attempted to understand challenges that arise in educational settings in a variety of ways. A growing body of research has sought to critically assess the way communicative aspects of teaching and learning are central to achieving effectiveness both on the part of students and instructors. Several studies have examined factors which relate to the role students' attitudes toward and perceptions of their learning environment can play in influencing important outcomes such as cognition (Anderson et al, 2009), information evaluation (Johnson & Labelle, 2016), and motivation (Kerssen-Grip & Witt, 2012), to name a few. Similarly, instructional communication scholars have also come to identify the importance of communication in shaping students' perceptions of instructors, which can in turn influence student behavior (Buckner & Frisby, 2015; Kearney, Plax & Allen, 2002).

Communication research has highlighted the important role communicative variables can play in impacting learning on multiple levels. Several studies demonstrate the significance of the extent to which an instructor demonstrates positive *immediacy* (Andersen, 1979), or "nonverbal behaviors which that either increase or decrease the degree of psychological distance between teacher and students," (Freitas, 1998), on student motivation (Fisher & Katt, 2007), satisfaction

(Arbaugh, 2001), persistence in college (Witt et al., 2014), and cognitive (Frisby & Housley Gaffney, 2015) and affective learning (Martin & Mottet, 2011). Others note the importance of perceptions of credibility, a concept originating with Aristotle and often operationalized in communicative settings, can have on attitudes toward instructors and influencing learning outcomes (Santilli et al, 2011; Schrodtt, 2013). Others still point to the ways in which immediacy and credibility influence one another or function together to affect student learning (Kerssen-Griep & Witt, 2011; Mottet et al., 2007). Considering the pivotal role communication plays in both negotiating the relationship between instructor and student and contributing to improving learning outcomes, analyzing aspects of that communication which may inhibit learning or reinforce negative behaviors and attitudes linked to perceptions of linguistic differences is crucial.

Meanwhile, an additional body of research within the field of communication has paid due diligence to the role accented speech patterns can play in having an impact—or lack thereof—on cognitive and attitudinal information processing. McCroskey (2003) laid an early foundation for analyzing and understanding the influence differences of culture between students and instructors can have in shaping instructional outcomes. Though instructor characteristics which highlight challenges that arise in the face of barriers to effective intercultural communication in educational settings has been noted, few studies have sought to analyze challenges specific to accented speech patterns.

The phenomenon of multilingualism on verbal speech has been widely

explored from the perspectives of psychology, sociolinguistics, and to a lesser extent, communication. Meanwhile, instructional communication scholars have devoted a vast body of research to instructor traits which influence student learning. Though both of these areas separately represent important scholarly inquiry, little research has explored their intersection. To better understand how these areas might interact and overlap, a review of the relevant literature is now provided.

Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs)

Though student evaluations of teaching (SETs, Changfu, Mei & Chen, 2012) remain the subject of expansive academic inquiry and criticism, a particular focus by such critics has been placed on the apparent role student biases can play in their conducting of evaluations of their teachers. Despite this, SETs continue to be relied upon as a means of assessing instructors' effectiveness and of maintaining quality higher education. SETs have been known to be widely used in determining instructor hiring and rehiring decisions (Williams & Cici, 1997), and in essence attempt to measure the value of a given instructor as an educator.

Yet, while proponents of SETs argue that despite their flaws these evaluations are mostly reliable, critics have well documented those flaws. A wide array of factors well outside the control or relevance of the instructor or quality of education provided have been found to be predictably influential of reported evaluations. Factors such as class size, subject matter, time of day, expected grade, attractiveness of the instructor, and even the structure of the questions have all

been noted to play a role in skewing reported measures of instructor effectiveness (Boysen, 2008; Eislzer, 2002; Landrum & Braitman, 2008; Langbein, 2008; Spooren, Mortelmans, & Denekens, 2007). Youmans & Jee (2007) found SET scores would improve if students were given chocolate prior to participating in the evaluations. Buchart et al. (2008) determined teaching effectiveness over a semester did not change SET scores recorded after the first two weeks of a course, highlighting that initial perceptions can be rigid and influential of the educational experience overall. As such, it is also worth noting the significance of cultural factors and biases playing a role in student evaluations of teaching.

A growing body of research highlights the role of inherent instructor traits in determining student biases in reporting evaluations. In a relatively recent study, Foote, Harmon, and Mayo (2003) found gender to play a significant role in impacting SETs, with male instructors receiving more positive evaluations overall than women. Lueck, Endres, and Caplan (1993) provided early evidence that failing to conform to gender expectations can yield negative SETs for female instructors, which also highlights not only the influential role biases related to gender can play on SETs, but also the significance of expectation violation, which is particularly relevant given English fluency would seem to be an expectation American college students hold of their instructors. Additional research also serves to demonstrate the prominent ways in which race—in addition to gender—can play in affecting student evaluations and motivation (Basow, Codos, & Martin, 2013) as well as in contributing to attitudes and stereotypes more broadly (Smith, 2009).

One recent study highlighted the role cultural difference can play in affecting SET ratings (Chang, Zhang, & Chen, 2012). The researchers demonstrated through an analysis of over 60 evaluation forms that many instruments fail to account for cultural or linguistic difference, outlining five critical areas of assessment which rely on interculturally biased assumptions: organization, presentation, interest and motivation, overall effectiveness, and comparative statements. For example, since the expression of interest and motivation can be influenced by our cultural background, an instructor who expresses such emotions and behaviors in ways students are unfamiliar may be rated poorly. Moreover, in the category of presentation, some questions asked students to rate factors which may directly relate to the language status of the instructor such as clarity of voice, the ability to understand the presentation of material, and the interpretation and dissemination of abstract ideas or concepts.

Clearly, student biases toward various communicative elements related to inherent traits of the instructor have the potential to influence ratings reported by students through SETs. As we have briefly seen, accented language has the potential to affect student perceptions of an instructor. Thus, we will next learn of the ways in which linguistic difference has been studied in ways which lend themselves to communicative paradigms, before drawing a directional hypothesis about the nature of the relationship between instructor accent and perceptions of instructor credibility and student learning.

Language, Foreign Accent, & Speech Communication

Researchers have sought to describe and define foreign accent in a variety of ways. Munro and Derwing (1995) describe accent as a “manner of pronunciation” in speech which is related to an individual, region, or language. Gluszek and Dovidio (2010) further explain that accents are typically distinguishable by differences in vocalics, distinctions of vowels and consonants, stress, and prosody (e.g., intonation, rhythm). Goslin et al. (2012) note an accent may be identified with intra-linguistic regions (e.g., “southern accent” of the United States within English), the socio-economic status of speakers in a region, ethnicity, caste or social status, or influence from their first language (e.g., a foreign accent). Christia et al. (2012) point out although aspects of speech such as vocabulary, semantics, grammar, and colloquialisms may be considered under the broader term of “dialect,” foreign accent is often used to describe these terms. As such, foreign accent is used in this research to describe any changes to speech which result from the speaking of a non-native language.

As a result, the phenomenon of non-native speech (i.e., foreign accentedness) has been analyzed from numerous perspectives, most prominently in the field of sociolinguistics (Moyer, 2013). Major (2014) elaborates on the phenomenon of accented speech phonology, identifying for English language learners (ELLs, another common designation for L2 speakers) baseline goals in achieving effective communication stem from a desire both to speak accurately (intelligibility) and to draw attention away from their identity as a non-native English speaker. Hayes-

Harb (2014) describes this tendency as the pursuit of *near-native* speech. Clearly, as a primary indicator of proficiency in a language may in fact be the transcendence of a foreign accent, researchers analyzing accented speech patterns have identified a pressure to conform not merely for practical purposes, but for social purposes as well.

Linguistic scholars have attempted to identify and measure accented speech in a variety of ways. Llanes & Munoz (2014) sought to analyze differences in perceived differences in accentedness between children and adults learning second languages both at home and abroad, asking participants to rate the accentedness of speakers through a number of semantic differential scales targeting factors related to intelligibility, comprehensibility, dialectics, and intonation. Briefly, intelligibility refers to the ability for listeners to accurately identify words spoken, generally measurable by having participants transcribe speakers and counting the number of correct words (Barefoot, 1993; Brodkey, 1972). Comprehensibility is usually described as a perception of understanding, measured simply by asking listeners to report the extent to which they felt they understood a speaker (Munro & Derwing, 1995). Though numeric values assigned to cohorts in the study did not impede researchers' acquisition of results, limitations were found in the assignment of native versus non-native English speakers who seemingly rated scales differently (Llanes & Munoz, 2014). Gallardo del Puerto et al. (2015) crystallized this limitation, noting not only the role homophily—or similarities between speaker and listener—can play in dictating responses to accented speech patterns but also the

importance of linguistic training for non-native speakers seeking to judge such patterns of speech, even going as far as to say non-native English speakers border on naiveté when rating the accentedness of NNES speakers. Considering homophily has also been identified as a communicative construct with the potential to affect credibility and learning (Amsbary et al., 1994; Glascock & Ruggiero, 2006), it is necessary to create questionnaire items to control for this factor when determining the significance of new variables such as language.

Other scholars have argued such differences in accent ratings are the result of range effects of accented samples provided. Hopp and Schmidt (2014) found that accent raters were more likely to perceive a higher level of accentedness simply by being told ahead of time that the samples were “strongly accented” versus merely “accented.” The researchers also found that, though differences in raters’ own language status did not directly influence accent ratings, *familiarity* with foreign accents—a demographic characteristic quantified through experiential semantic differential scales—did. As familiarity is obviously significant in determining outcomes related to language and accent as independent variables, this scale is also ideal as a mediating variable for further inquiries in such areas. Hopp and Schmidt (2014) argued even if a listener’s own linguistic abilities do not have an impact on the extent to which they believe a speaker is speaking with a foreign accent, the amount of exposure to foreign accents that listener has experienced does have an impact on their perception of accentedness. In contrast, Floccia et al. (2014) concluded through several experimental designs though exposure to an accent may

increase intelligibility (or accuracy), it does not increase comprehensibility. In other words, though listeners' ability to understand foreign accented speech improves over time through exposure to that accent, their perceptions of their abilities do not. Regardless, considering this phenomenon occurs largely in the realm of important communicative dynamics—namely between speaker and listener—understanding the way differences in linguistic backgrounds can shape attitudes, behaviors, and interactions remains a critical endeavor for communication scholars.

Moreover, some research has emphasized the potential for linguistic diversity to affect not only communication in the classroom but learning as well. Operating through a framework of building on knowledge of perceptual fluency—a conceptualization of information processing in which listeners' evaluations of a source such as a speaker are dependent on the fluidity of spoken language—Kahn and Sanchez (2016) utilized scales which differentiated perceived learning from actual learning to determine if breaks in perceptual fluency inhibited real learning or merely skewed attitudes negatively regarding the material. First, participants received a pre-test to provide demographic information and answer two questions evaluating their attitudes toward online learning and learning about programming. Next, they were presented with one of two instructional videos, both of which were identical in every way except the use of a native English-speaking narrator for one and a non-native English speaking narrator for the other. Participants then took a post-test which used matching and multiple-choice questions to assess how well the material was learned, before finally completing an attitudes assessment which also

asked them to rate how easy the information was to understand and how effective the instructor was. Results demonstrated a foreign accent—which in this case represented breaks in perceptual fluency—had no significant impact on actual learning (as evidenced by the knowledge test) but did lead participants to rate the instructor as less effective. In this way, because they felt the instructor was less effective, participants indicated feeling as though they had learnt less than they actually did. Thus measuring differences through testing perceived learning and actual learning, Kahn and Sanchez were able to highlight the significance of foreign accented speech in instructional settings.

Clearly, quantifying foreign accented speech and manipulating it effectively can prove difficult for researchers, so it is necessary to reduce uncertainty through experimental designs which seek to utilize accented speech as an independent variable. Nevertheless, sociolinguistic and communication scholars alike have effectively documented the critical role this phenomenon can play not only in affecting the experiences of L2 speakers, but also in crafting perceptions of them by an English-dominant population. Considering the notable ways in which differences in linguistic backgrounds can create barriers to positive interpersonal interactions, identifying strategies for improving intercultural communication across such boundaries is crucial. One promising strategy can be found in cultural sensitivity training programs, which this research seeks to utilize as a potential intervention to reduce negative perceptions of L2 instructors.

Intercultural Communication and Language

Given the variety of instructor characteristics which can influence student learning and perceptions of credibility, it is also important to understand the significance of the ways in which foreign accents are linked to non-dominant cultures, so as to begin to establish a foundation for eliminating stereotypes. Intercultural adaptation research has well documented the ways in which adjusting to a new cultural landscape can create enormous stress and even lead to mental and emotional distress such as anxiety and depression, which in turn can impact the effectiveness of communication management in situations like conflict resolution with members of the dominant culture (Choi, 1997; Oberg, 1960; Oomen, 2013).

As a result, a unique form of communication apprehension—intercultural communication apprehension (ICA)—has been the target of an expansive body of research, attempting to understand factors which contribute to the fear or apprehension toward communicating with those of a different culture. Neuliep & McCroskey (1997) define ICA as “the fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated interaction with people from different groups, especially different cultural or ethnic groups” (p. 174). Neuliep (2012) also found ICA is negatively associated with uncertainty reduction—which holds the potential for contributing to feelings of anxiety (Lin & Rancer, 2003)—and communication satisfaction.

Considering the influential role that apprehension can play in interactions across cultures, examining this communication in educational environments is also crucial, as negative attitudes or apprehension based on perceived or real differences

in culture can regulate interactions between instructors and students of diverse cultures. Though ICA seeks to describe anxiety toward cross-cultural interactions, another area of functional communication research in this area serves to improve individuals' abilities to effectively navigate such interactions.

Intercultural communication competence (ICC) generally refers to the (in)ability for individuals to successfully communicate or interact with others from different cultures. Ngwira et al. (2015) describe ICC as, "the ability to effectively and appropriately execute communication behaviors interacting with individuals from different cultures) (p. 63). Kim (1991) pioneered a model for ICC which ground it in systems-theory; an individual's degree of competence in intercultural communication reflects, "the capacity of an individual's internal psychic system to alter its existing attributes and structures to accommodate the demands of the environment" (p. 168).

In this way, ICC is a skillset through which individuals have the ability to build and improve their knowledge of both cultural awareness and effective communication strategies to engage meaningfully across cultures in positive interpersonal interaction. Critical to this idea, and perhaps most applicable to the strategy of cultural training initiatives, is the notion of improvement. If ICC reflects a spectrum, education represents a potentially effective way of diminishing negative intercultural attitudes, stereotypes, and biases (Arasaratnam, 2006). As such, cultural training programs—though largely applied in business settings—or other learning tools may hold the ability to improve interactions between students and

instructors of different cultures. Considering L2 instructors in the U.S. represent a significant cultural minority group at the mercy of the intercultural competence of majority students.

Understanding the way an individual's culture—including perceptions, assumptions and attitudes toward that culture as well as stereotypes—can influence the way others evaluate that individual's credibility is crucial for identifying steps to reduce negative intercultural interactions. Zhang & Zhang (2013) utilized an experimental design to understand differences between native Chinese and native American instructors with Chinese, American, and mixed classrooms and found cultural perceptions of factors as simple as the use of positive emotions can yield extremely different effects on students' evaluations of instructors.

Similar research has found significant relationships between perceptions of different cultures being represented among instructors between German and American students and instructors (Ghanem, 2015) and French and American students and instructors (Roach, Cornett-Devito & Devito, 2005). In both of these instances, distinctions in culture were identified by students primarily through the apparent use of the dominant language as a non-native speaker of that language (i.e., students identified foreign accents for American instructors speaking German or French, and used that information to process assumptions regarding American culture). As a result, it would appear that though the status as a non-native speaker of a given language does not establish a universal culture in and of itself. Language can in fact be a primary means of identifying a foreign culture leading to effects

which can be understood as universal to the experience of communicating across language barriers.

Considering the significance of language in identifying foreign culture, research aimed at identifying the negative attitudes and stereotypes associated with foreign accents is limited but growing—an inquiry endeavor ideal for examination in educational settings. Myers (2001) pioneered scholarly investigations into “accent discrimination,” or norms, behaviors, and flaws apparent in intercultural communication behaviors which covertly or overtly lead to discrimination based on speaking with “accented” English, finding foreign accents can indeed incite discriminatory behavior. The reinforcement and legitimization of these forms of discrimination are apparent in the way individuals evaluate the credibility, comprehensibility and thus extensions to the efficacy in cross-cultural adaptation of non-native English speakers (Subtirelu, 2015).

Due to the ways in which foreign accented speech can cause those in a dominant culture to devalue or even outright reject non-dominant language learners, this phenomenon represents a unique challenge in the classroom—in which the evaluation of an instructor’s credibility is essential to reducing inhibitions that may potentially cause a withdrawal from learning on the cognitive and, perhaps more importantly, the affective level. As such, some instructional design scholars have called for a re-negotiation of the ways in which non-Western instructors are evaluated by students. Changfu, Mei, & Chen (2012) argue for the importance of controlling for cultural differences in attitudes and evaluations of teaching and

learning. The researchers note that frequently, teaching evaluations privilege Western cultural values and tradition, ultimately urging for a new means of “intercultural evaluation” as a means to account for the numerous different cultures represented in educational settings.

The ability to incorporate global perspectives in evaluations of instructors may be one way of avoiding unfair assessments based on factors beyond the control of instructors, this solution may actually reinforce negative attitudes toward non-dominant cultures, acknowledging that unfair assumptions are made by students about instructors of different cultures without providing a means to change those attitudes. In essence, altering evaluations normalizes the discrimination instead of correcting it. As such, a secondary goal of this research is grounded in developing a means to change the potentially harmful attitudes students may harbor toward L2 instructors. Overall, understanding the role of primary language differences in educational settings is clearly a complex and delicate endeavor. However, targeting and improving communication and interactions across such boundaries remains an important endeavor.

Cultural Education

Identifying and combatting problems related to intercultural interaction has long been an important goal for researchers and practitioners. A wide array of research from business perspectives has focused on Cultural Sensitivity Training (CST) programs, which usually involve educational material to improve intercultural competence between employees or between employees and customers

(D'souza et al., 2016; Lowenstein & Glanville, 1995; Lupano & Solano, 2015).

Another line of research focuses on cultural sensitivity training of healthcare providers and its impact on their work with culturally diverse patients (Garrison et al., 2016; Majumdar, 2004; Majumdar, Keystone, & Cuttress, 1999).

Often, cultural sensitivity training refers to an educational seminar usually ranging from four to ten hours, provided for employees by businesses who conduct the training either internally through human resource departments or externally through private educational training contractors (Garrison et al., 2016). Research as a whole on the evaluation of the effectiveness of cultural sensitivity training is limited, but it is generally accepted as useful for improving intercultural interactions. For example, in an influential study, Wade and Bernstein (1991) found black female clients rated the credibility and relationship characteristics significantly higher for counselors who had received cultural sensitivity training than had not. Cultural education is viewed as a useful tool for professional circumstances, but it also maintains potential for application to other contexts as well.

Though educational environments such as colleges and universities would seem ideal for cultural training, the implementation of such programs is rare. Sachdey (1997) offered one of the few reports of such efforts, analyzing the improvements in intercultural interactions among a group of social work students exposed to a cultural sensitivity training program during their time in a field project in New Delhi, India. Though the participants were noted to have benefited from the

training, the justification was largely their status as social work students, as social work is a profession which requires a high degree of cultural sensitivity (O'Hagan, 1999). Fewer programs have targeted improving cultural awareness and effectiveness of students more broadly, though comparable programs are abundant.

Colleges and universities dedicate significant resources to educational training programs to improve the sensitivities of students. A vast body of research is dedicated to the development of college sexual assault prevention education, with frequent evaluation of its effectiveness through different methods (Beaton, 2015; Jozkowski et al., 2014). Similarly, communication researchers in particular have emphasized the importance of substance abuse prevention education on college campuses (West & Graham, 2005). Specifically, efforts to educate college freshmen of the dangers of issues such as binge drinking, alcoholism, drug use and tobacco use have all been the subject of critical scholarly inquiry (Cummings, 1997; Larimer, Kilmer, & Lee, 2005; So & Wong, 2006; Suerken et al., 2014).

Similar to cultural sensitivity training, scholars generally agree on such programs having some positive impact, though widespread consensus on their value has not been achieved (Rodgers, 2012). Brown (2012) write of the importance of such programs manifesting for college students during their transition to college life, as it is often a very influential period during a young adult's life during which they make important decisions regarding values, behaviors and attitudes. Thus, considering that cultural education has the potential to effectively improve attitudes and interactions across cultures, that language or foreign accent can be understood

as a form of cultural identification, and that college students are particularly susceptible to influential behavior-changing campaigns, the development of a cultural training tool specifically targeting attitudes toward instructors with foreign accents represents a useful opportunity to educate students and improve the experiences of students and instructors alike.

Given the promising potential for a cultural sensitivity training program as an intervention in reducing harmful stereotypes about L2 instructors, such a strategy may help prevent diversity of linguistic backgrounds from negatively affecting important classroom outcomes such as learning.

Learning

A great deal of research from a wide variety of disciplines has sought to determine the influence of various constraints—many of which are inherently communicative in nature regardless of discipline—in educational environments on learning outcomes. However, other research in instructional communication demonstrates the limitations of over-simplifying perceived learning as an evaluation of teaching effectiveness, as learning occurs on multiple levels. Bloom's (1956) Taxonomy of Learning pioneered a conception of sense making in which learning primarily occurs in three domains: cognitive (learning knowledge), psychomotor (learning skills), and affective (learning attitudes). Within each domain exist a progression of stages to indicate the process of learning something for the first time and truly understanding it. For example, in the cognitive domain, learning occurs along stages of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and

evaluation. Similarly, affective learning occurs through the stages of receiving, responding, valuing, organizing, and internalizing. Lastly, psychomotor learning progresses through stages of perception, set (readiness to act), guided response (trial and error), mechanism (basic performance of action), complex overt response (skillful performance of action), adaptation (ability to modify action as needed for related or other purposes), and origination (ability to create new actions to solve distinct problems).

Later, Krathwohl and Anderson (2001) revised Bloom's taxonomy to reflect the cognitive stages of learning to occur in the progression of remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Bensur (2001) highlighted that while all domains of learning exist in connection with—not separate from—one another, measuring affective learning is particularly difficult yet nonetheless important as the attitudes, emotions and motivations behind learning have the potential to be an irrevocably reductive force possibly undermining learning in either of the other two domains. Educational psychologists and instructional designers utilize these categories of learning as goals for outcomes related to educational material and the way it is organized and presented (Beyin et al, 2016).

Cognitive Learning

A great deal of additional research in instructional communication and educational psychology has laid a foundation for measuring learning in an effective and meaningful way. Building on this foundation of understanding learning, researchers can

utilize each category as a means of designing measurements. Some researchers have sought to measure factors which inhibit cognitive learning through varying independent variables related to medium, delivery and frequency of information presentation, often utilizing knowledge tests such as multiple choice exams (Bannert, Brunken & Schoor, 2012; Khan & Sanchez, 2016; Lee, 2014; Uysal, 2016). Fewer studies have conceptualized means of measuring psychomotor learning, usually defaulting to experimental design related to skills-based occupation such as anaesthetics (Coghill, Dashfield, & Langton, 2000). As such, measuring cognitive learning has been the subject of much debate and remains a difficult task for researchers, many of whom rely on either self-reported or performance based instruments.

Self-Reported Measures of Learning

A number of studies utilize self-reported measures of learning, in which participants simply rate the extent to which they perceive themselves to have learned about a given subject of study. One popular method is the Learning Loss scale, which asks participants to report how much they felt they learned versus how much they think they would have learned from an ideal instructor (Richmond et al., 1987). Yet criticism of this approach is not hard to find, with some disputing the extent to which students can be asked to accurately and objectively report their own learning (King & Witt, 2009) and others finding no relationship between the learning loss scale and performative measures of learning (Hooker & Denker, 2014). In response to these criticisms and in an effort to provide a more complete measurement for cognitive learning, Frymier, Shulman, and Houser (1996) developed the Learning Indicators Scale, and later the Revised Learning

Indicators (Frymier & Houser, 1999) that measures behavioral indicators that are typically present when cognitive learning occurs.

Although the reliability of self-report instruments as comprehensive and complete measurements of learning remains contentious, such measures have continued to be popular in instructional communication research. Because self-reported measurements rely on students to self-assess their progress on a cognitive level (by determining the difference in the amount of knowledge held before and after a class, for example), the act of doing so creates the potential to affect other aspects which might influence future learning such as motivation, satisfaction, or attitude toward the instructor (Myers et al., 2014). To highlight that issue, Hess, Smythe, and Communication 451 (2001) lamented instructional scholars for relying too heavily on self-report measures as a means of making broad claims about the relationship between communicative variables such as immediacy and learning more broadly. But despite questions about whether self-perceptions actually measure cognitive learning, they are accurate reflections of students' perceptions of their own learning (Goodboy, 2016), and in comparison to other measures of cognitive learning those perceptions may yield valuable insight into potential biases.

As foreign accent has been negatively correlated with self-report measures for comprehensibility, it is likely an accent will also cause students to perceive themselves to have learned less from an L2 instructor than an *ideal* instructor. As this study's cultural learning tool seeks to reduce negative perceptions regarding L2 instructors, it is likely such an intervention will improve the amount students felt they learned from the instructor. And because the intervention is designed to directly mitigate the influence of

the accent variable on perceived learning, it is likely there will be a significant interaction effect for these two independent variables as well.

H_{1a}: Students will have lower levels of perceived cognitive learning when learning from an instructor with a foreign accent than from an instructor without a foreign accent.

H_{1b} Students who experience the cultural education intervention will have higher levels of perceived learning when learning from an instructor with a foreign accent than those who do not experience the cultural education intervention.

H_{1c}: There will be a significant interaction effect for cultural education intervention and instructor accent on perceived cognitive learning.

Performance Measures of Learning

Measuring students' performance is perhaps the oldest and most widely debated means of assessing cognitive learning. Leaning solely on grades (exams and final exams), for example, is often the accepted standard for determining the extent to which students have learned (Johnson & Mrowka, 2010). Yet, even for institutional purposes, utilizing performance assessments to measure learning have been subject to a great deal of scrutiny. Some critics argue performance measures such as exams prioritize incomplete aspects related to learning (e.g., memorization, test-taking, etc.), while others point to the fact that final grades are inadequate as well insofar as they are influenced by factors beyond the scope of definitive learning such as attendance, extra credit, or cheating (Frymier & Houser, 1999; King & Witt, 2009). Attempting to equate performance with learning may be problematic, but similar to self-reported measures, it is useful for some purposes.

From an academic perspective, measuring performance as an outcome related to learning has allowed researchers to identify factors which might affect such outcomes. Generally, performance measures seek to test knowledge on a given subject, often through multiple choice or true and false questions to test knowledge of some subject as it relates to other variables (Collins & Bissel, 2002; Multon, Brown, & Lit, 1991). For example, in Kahn and Sanchez's (2016) previously mentioned study, participants were asked to answer multiple choice questions about information that was presented either with or without an L2 (accented) narrator to determine if there was a difference in *performance*. Similarly, other studies have used multiple choice exam items to measure short-term learning of content in controlled experiences that were designed to test the impact of factors such as instructor clarity and immediacy cues (Titsworth, 2001; Titsworth, 2004) and the degree to which technology use in the classroom can distract from learning (Kuznekoff, Munz, & Titsworth, 2015; Kuznekoff & Titsworth, 2013).

Despite criticisms regarding the ability to draw conclusions about learning from testing knowledge in this way alone, Pan et al. (2015) argue concerns regarding its validity for the sake of issues such as memory are negligible if seeking to make comparisons instead of exact truth. In fact, performance measures have even been used as a means of evaluating other learning measures, with Hooker and Denker (2014) demonstrating self-report responses recorded using the Learning Loss scale had little to no correlation with performance. As a result, it is crucial when attempting to measure learning to utilize multiple methods, and to be careful when drawing conclusions about what data collected with those methods mean. Ultimately, self-report and performance

measures constitute a number of issues in their usefulness to determining cognitive learning. However, another form of learning plays an equally important part in comprehensively measuring learning, particularly as it relates to attitudes and biases of students toward teachers and instructors. Considering foreign accent has been negatively correlated with listener intelligibility, it is possible that students would learn less from an instructor with a foreign accent. Thus, I propose the following hypotheses:

H_{2a}: Students will have lower levels of performed cognitive learning when learning from an instructor with a foreign accent than from an instructor without a foreign accent.

H_{2b} Students who experience the cultural education intervention will have higher levels of performed learning when learning from an instructor with a foreign accent than those who do not experience the cultural education intervention.

H_{2c}: There will be a significant interaction effect for cultural education intervention and instructor accent on performed cognitive learning.

Affective Learning

Affective learning is an important variable to consider when attempting to understand interpersonal or intercultural interactions in educational settings. Krathwohl, Bloom and Masia (1964) conceptualized affective learning as, “Objectives which emphasize a feeling tone, an emotion, or a degree of acceptance or rejection. Affective objectives vary from simple attention to selected phenomena to complex but internally consistent qualities of character and conscience ... objectives in the literature expressed as interests, attitudes, appreciations, values, and emotional sets of biases” (p. 7). In this way, affective learning is perhaps among the most critical domains of learning insofar as

the underlying psychology of attitudes and biases could be understood as a regulating constraint on motivation to learn in general. As a result, measuring affective learning is crucial when measuring independent variables related to instructors, such as implicit biases, attitudes, and assumptions about individuals that can create evaluative filters that might impact affective learning. Scott and Wheelless (1977) pioneered and validated a scale for measuring affective learning through students' self-reported attitudes and satisfaction, laying the groundwork for incorporating measurements of attitudes and perceptions of learning as a comparative variable grounded in only one domain.

McCroskey's (1987) operationalization and measurement of affective learning revealed two dimensions: affective learning, which measures attitudes toward the content being learned (e.g., bad/good, valuable/worthless, etc.), and instructor evaluation, which includes attitudes toward the instructor (e.g., positive/negative, fair/unfair, etc.). In addition to its well documented positive correlation with cognitive learning (for a review, see Gaffney & Dannels, 2015), affective learning has also been found to be positively related to teacher behaviors such as nonverbal immediacy (Martin & Mottet, 2011) and appropriate self-disclosure (Mazer, Murphy, & Simmonds, 2007), as well as student engagement and intrinsic motivation (Bolkan, 2015). While failure to uphold such behaviors can negatively influence affective learning, it can also be diminished by lack of instructor clarity and credibility (Qin, 2011), and even speech rate which is either too fast or too slow (Simmonds, Meyer, Quinlan, & Hunt, 2006).

Some studies have sought to measure affective learning through questionnaire surveys identifying attitudes toward a learning medium, such as online learning (Sanchez

& Kahn, 2014), as well as content (Sanchez & Kahn, 2014; Willeford & Splett, 2000). Rimland (2013) measured affective learning of research skills by highlighting self-reported confidence as a means of quantifying attitudes toward content learned through a presentation of library instruction at the beginning of a semester and at the end of the semester. But a great deal of research has shown an important link between affective learning and cognitive learning. This study demonstrates that affective learning toward one skill, such as researching, can be influenced by direct education targeted at that skill, which may also be the case for processing information through accented language.

However, effectively conceptualizing affective learning remains a fundamental tension in instructional communication research. Myers and Goodboy (2015) argue instructional communication scholars' reliance on self-reported attitudes regarding an evaluation of instructors and material is ineffective in assessing the extent to which students, "respond to, buy in to, and value the material they are learning." Witt (2015) adds, "When we ask students to rate the course and instructor as *good/bad*, *worthless/valuable*, *fair/unfair*, and *positive/negative*, we only get a hint at progress toward the goal." As researchers establish a push for a more comprehensive conceptualization and operationalization of affective learning, measuring the extent to which students themselves feel they have learned material effectively (i.e. perceived learning) remains an important goal. In combination with an evaluation of the constraining role that underlying assumptions and biases may play, such a conception could lead to an understanding of affective learning in which attitudes toward the instructor her or himself—and any particular traits related to that self—become central to

learning across all three domains.

Thus, it can be inferred that, as foreign accented speech has been measured for breaks in perceptual fluency which negatively influence attitudes toward speakers regardless of information accuracy, and that perceived learning can hinge on affective learning based on underlying attitudes toward instructors and material, students who learn material from instructors with accented speech would be more likely to perceive themselves to have learned less, regardless of actual learning.

Given that we know differences in primary language—particularly in formalized settings such as a workplace or classroom where communicative interactions are perceived to be more functional than interpersonal—can elicit negative responses and attitudes toward L2 speakers, but that significant difference in intelligibility is seldom reported, the following hypotheses are posited:

As foreign accented speech has been noted to elicit negative emotional responses from listeners, students who learn material from instructors with accented speech would be more likely to have negative attitudinal orientations toward an L2 instructor. Like perceived learning, the intervention's cultural training is likely to improve students emotional responses toward their instructor, creating another significant interaction effect between independent variables, this time for affective learning. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H_{3a}: Students will have lower levels of affective learning when learning from an instructor with a foreign accent than from an instructor without a foreign accent learning.

H_{3b}: Students who experience the cultural education intervention will have higher levels of affective learning when learning from an instructor with a foreign accent than those who do not experience the cultural education intervention.

H_{3c}: There will be a significant interaction effect for cultural education and instructor accent on affective learning.

H_{4a}: Students will have lower levels of instructor evaluation when learning from an instructor with a foreign accent than from an instructor without a foreign accent learning.

H_{4b}: Students who experience the cultural education intervention will have higher levels of instructor evaluation when learning from an instructor with a foreign accent than those who do not experience the cultural education intervention.

H_{4c}: There will be a significant interaction effect for cultural education and instructor accent on instructor evaluation.

Credibility

Conceptualizations of credibility in communication—particularly in theories of effective and ethical public speaking—stem from Aristotelian philosophy grounded in *ethos*, or the ethical credibility of a speaker. McCroskey & Teven (1981) conceptualized credibility as “the attitude toward a source of communication held at a given time by a communicator” (p. 24). Given the breadth and depth of literature devoted to credibility as a communicative variable, it is no surprise that some researchers have already laid the groundwork for the role language might play. Nevertheless, credibility has been widely studied and debated, particularly in educational contexts.

Understanding the ways in which students evaluate the credibility of their instructors is key in identifying potential barriers to learning. McCroskey, Holdridge & Toomb (1974) pioneered and validated instrumentation for measuring *instructor credibility* through forty-six semantic-differential scales related to evaluations of different types of source credibility, with the focus being on educational or instructional sources, namely instructors or teachers. In the wake of the development of this instrumentation, instructional communication research has been able to identify multiple factors related to characteristics of instructors which can have significant impacts on student learning, motivation and evaluations of credibility. McCroskey and Teven (1999) later refined this scale to include three dimensions: competence, or the perception of intelligence, training, expertise, and so on; caring, or the extent to which an instructor displays care or concern for her or his students; and trustworthiness, or whether students perceive an instructor to be honest, ethical or moral (McCroskey & Teven, 1999). Perceived instructor credibility has been found to be negatively correlated with variables such as incivility (Banfield, Richmond & McCroskey, 2006; Klebig et al, 2016), immediacy (Witt et al., 2014), and instructor's use of social media (DeGroot, Young & VanSlette, 2015). Meanwhile, researchers have also identified strategies for improving instructor credibility, through techniques like deliberative and intentional forms of self-disclosure (Miller et al, 2014; Myers & Brann, 2009). Perceived instructor credibility can be negatively influenced by factors such as perceived instructor caring (Tevin & McCroskey, 1997), misbehavior and incivility (Banfield, Richmond & McCroskey, 2006; Klebig et al, 2016), instructor immediacy (Witt et al, 2014), and even an instructor's use of social media (DeGroot,

Young & VanSlette, 2015).

Meanwhile, researchers have also identified strategies for improving instructor credibility, both by increasing in awareness of how above factors might negatively influence ethos but also through techniques like deliberative and intentional forms of self-disclosure (Miller et al, 2014; Myers & Brann, 2009). A number of studies have examined the role of instructor behaviors (or misbehaviors) on perceptions of credibility (Klebig et al., 2016; Trad, Katt, & Neville-Miller, 2014; Semlak & Pearson, 2008). Many scholars approach understanding credibility from a functional perspective, seeking to identify actions which might weaken perceptions of credibility so as to avoid them, such as immediacy (Miller et al., 2014), self-disclosure (Myers & Brann, 2009), and even the handling of technology in classrooms or presentations (Schrodt & Witt, 2006).

Though such studies identify the ways in which instructors and educators can establish agency based off of characteristics they might control, less research has been devoted to factors which might lie outside of an instructor's control. Schrodt and Turman (2005) correlated perceptions of credibility and technology use to the instructor's gender, highlighting yet another dimension of personal traits which affect perceived credibility. Another early step toward that end, Patton (1999) lamented the lack of research devoted to the effects of gender and ethnicity on credibility and learning in college classrooms. Patton found a significant relationship between ethnicity and credibility, but not gender and credibility, with participants rating African American instructors as more credible than European American instructors. Myers and Bryant (2004) found in a qualitative study of undergraduates asking them to provide examples of the ways in which their

instructors convey credibility, *verbal fluency* was among the top responses.

Though gender, race, and ethnicity have been studied further for their effects on credibility in communication research, a smaller number of inquiries is devoted to these variables specifically in instructional settings. A number of perspectives have noted negative correlations between race and perceptions of credibility, namely through frameworks of news media (Beaudoin & Thorson, 2005; Miller & Kurpui, 2010), business or marketing (Farr, 2007; Hong and Len-Rios, 2015), and healthcare settings (Spence et al., 2013). Though such approaches have different operational definitions of credibility to fit different sources (such as media), all of this research points to the ways in which factors such as race and gender illicit snap judgments from audiences which tie into their deep-seated psychological biases. Considering that we know such biases can influence behaviors in educational settings, it would follow that individual differences of race, culture, gender, and the like would affect the way instructors of those differences are perceived in classroom settings, and, subsequently the attitudes and motivations of students.

Given that differences in linguistic backgrounds have been found to also elicit such biases, understanding the impact of accented language on credibility in instructional settings remains to be seen. Though some studies have come close by examining linguistic differences in such settings (Kahn & Sanchez, 2016; Subtirelu, 2015), none have attempted to adequately account for the role of credibility. One study laid a foundation for the significance of speech-related factors in determining credibility perceptions by finding that the rate of speech of an instructor had the potential to

influence affective learning, recall, and perceived credibility (Simonds et al., 2006). As the rate of speech might affect intelligibility, it is logical that it might affect perceived credibility and perhaps even listeners' recall abilities. But the fact that even a speaking style which relies on a faster rate of speech in instructional or educational settings can influence affective learning highlights that students maintain *expectations* of verbal speech abilities of their instructors, which then also manifests as a necessity for credibility (Finn & Ledbetter, 2013). Ultimately, as biases and negative perceptions related to individual factors constrain perceptions of credibility in the minds of students, the following was hypothesized:

H_{5a}: Students will rate instructors with a foreign accent as having lower instructor credibility than instructors without a foreign accent.

H_{5b}: Students who experience the cultural education intervention will rate instructors with a foreign accent as having higher credibility than students who do not experience the cultural education intervention.

H_{5c}: There will be a significant interaction effect for cultural education intervention and instructor accent on perceived instructor credibility.

Credibility remains a central variable in effective instructional communication, and though a growing body of research seeks to not only characterize but also offer strategies to achieve greater levels of perceived credibility among students, less focus has been placed on the role of student attitudes and biases and finding ways to reduce or eliminate them. Considering language creates a unique circumstance in which students' expectations as well as their biases can have a significant impact on the perceptions of L2

instructors (Myers, 2001), addressing this issue must be approached for all actors involved, notably students.

CHAPTER THREE: METHOD

Participants

All participants ($N = 358$) were students recruited from an introductory communication courses at a large public university in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States.

Because taking one of these courses is a general education requirement for all students, regardless of major, the students enrolled in these courses represent a fair cross-section of all majors and types of student. All students enrolled in these courses were invited to participate in this study, which was one of several options that students could complete to earn research participation credit for the course.

Information was collected regarding the participants' age, year in school, gender, race or ethnicity, and language status. Of the 358 students who completed the survey, 78.2% ($N = 280$) were between the ages of 18 and 20 years old. For year in school, 61.5% ($N = 220$) were freshmen, 18.7 percent were sophomores ($N = 66$), 9.8% ($N = 35$) were juniors, 8.7% ($N = 31$) were seniors, with 1.7% ($N = 6$) "Unsure". In terms of gender, 41.6% ($N = 149$) were male and 56.4% ($N = 202$) were female, with four participants selecting "Other" and three preferring not to disclose. Participants were also 38.0% ($N = 136$) white, 20.4% ($N = 73$) East-Asian, 10.9% ($N = 39$) Black or African American, 8.9% ($N = 32$) Hispanic or Latino, 8.7% ($N = 31$) South-Asian or Indian, and 13.1% ($N = 47$) reporting other races or preferring not to disclose. In terms of the sample's linguistic background, 64.5% ($N = 231$) were L1 English speakers, 24.3% ($N = 86$) were

Generation 1.5 English speakers, and 9.5% ($N = 34$) were L2 English speakers, and 1.7% ($N = 6$) reported that they were not sure which category best described them.

Materials

The experimental design in this study called for the development of two key research materials which were utilized as independent variables: a training intervention and two video lectures (one presented with a foreign accent and one without).

Intervention

Given that cultural training programs are often quite lengthy and the effectiveness of such a specific program has yet to be found, this research sought to develop a condensed proactive learning tool in the form of a brief, ten-minute video modeled after an evidence-based training approach which has proven effective in other intercultural training endeavors. In an expansive study of improving gender sensitivities of veteran affairs workers, researchers developed an evidence-based cultural training program to improve the interactions between veterans affairs workers and female veterans (Fox et al., 2016). This approach emphasizes the importance of combatting misinformation to diminish perceptual biases. As such, the training is centered around a presentation of evidence, or examples, which correct any misconceptions held about the given population (Pernell-Arnold et al., 2012).

From this model, an educational module script (see Appendix B) was developed to combat five aspects related to language discrimination as found in the previously documented research, altered for applicability to L2 instructors. It acknowledges untrue perceptions such as that instructors with foreign accents are not fluent in English, that understanding instructors with foreign accents is impossible, and that it is harder to learn

from an instructor with a foreign accent. (Barefoot, 1993; Brodkey, 1972; Gallardo del Puerto et al., 2015; Hayes-Harb, 2014; Llanes & Munoz, 2014; Moyer, 2013).

From these misconceptions, the training material outlines each in its significance as a negative mindset, is followed by evidence which contradicts the myth, and then clarified through real life examples reported from various news media, magazines and books. The information presented in the intervention video informs participants about such myths, noting, first, that while instructors with foreign accents may sound different, but their mastery of English vocabulary and grammar often far surpasses the vast majority of native speakers. Second, it points out that research shows repeated exposure to an accent makes comprehension easier over a short period of time. Finally, it also presents information about studies which demonstrate no correlation between accented speech and learning, and in classroom environments in which texts, presentation slides and other written material is provided by an instructor, comprehensive learning is still primarily the responsibility of students. (Amsbary et al., 1994; Floccia et al., 2014; Glascock & Ruggiero, 2006; Hopp and Schmidt, 2014).

Though cultural training refers to multiple hours of educational lessons and exercises, the purpose of the research at hand called for the development of a video to test the potential effectiveness of combating negative attitudes toward foreign accents directly through educational training of some sort. Therefore, the video developed was roughly ten minutes in length, and displayed a slideshow accompanied by a narrated script (see Appendix A). The development of this proactive learning tool designed to reduce negative attitudes toward L2 instructors was established through consultation of academic

literature as well as cultural training practitioners. As denoted above, the creation of a learning tool aimed at reducing negative attitudes was centered around an evidence-based cultural competence training model emphasizing correcting misconceptions and stereotypes related to linguistic difference. Through theory and research, a script for an educational training video was developed with the intention of being applied for pilot use in training seminars provided by colleges' intercultural affairs offices.

Video Lectures

Next, the video lectures used were developed to simulate a college lecture in a basic communication course and were manipulated to also simulate the desired difference in accent versus no accent of an instructor. To control for variance that might be due to other instructor characteristics, an adult Generation 1.5 English speaker was recruited who had the ability to speak in both non-accented English and English with a foreign accent related to his native language (Punjabi, a dialect of India). The instructor recorded two video lectures with an accompanying PowerPoint slideshow that were identical in content, except that the instructor spoke without a foreign accent in one video and with a heavy Punjabi accent in the other video. The lecture itself was fully scripted and covered the Theory of Reasoned Action. Specifically, the lecture was designed to teach students about behavioral intention, attitude toward the behavior, and the subjective norm component. Twelve slides accompanied the lecture. The videos were recorded using a studio and allowed the camera to capture the speaker and the slideshow together, mimicking a typical classroom lecture. These two videos (with the accented video lasting 7 minutes and 51 seconds and the non-accented video lasting 8 minutes and 2 seconds) were nearly identical in every way with the exception of the accent

manipulation.

Procedures

All participants engaged in an online survey designed using the questionnaire-building software Qualtrics. Respondents first read an informed consent form, and those who consented to participate in the study proceeded to the next portion of the survey. Participants' experiences in the study occurred in three stages: intervention, lecture, and questionnaire.

Intervention

After agreeing to the informed consent form, participants were randomly assigned to view either an educational training video unrelated to the content of this study (control group), or the cultural training intervention video. The instructions for both videos when prompted asked participants to, "Please watch and listen to the following video." In order to ensure participants watched the full video, the survey was set up so that it was impossible for participants to proceed to the next section until the entire video had played; a timer was set on the page so participants could not simply fast forward to the end of the video to move on to the next section.

Lecture

Second, after being randomly assigned into the control and variant groups for the intervention being tested, participants were randomly assigned again to view one of two video lectures, presented either with a foreign accent (experiment) or without (control). To account for variance which might be due to other instructor characteristics, the same speaker was used for both videos meaning only the presence of an accent was manipulated. Both lectures covered the same lesson covering the Theory of Reasoned action and followed a fully detailed manuscript (see Appendix B). The videos were the

exact same length. Before watching the video lecture, students were given the following instructions, “Please watch and listen to the following video lecture. You will be asked questions related to the information presented in this video in the next part of this survey.”

Questionnaire

Finally, participants were presented with a questionnaire which included four measures and eight demographic items. Each of these measures will be outlined in greater detail in the next section of this paper. Upon completion of each of these components of the study, participants were directed to an exit screen which included instructions for printing and submitting verification that they had completed the study in order to earn course credit. No individually identifiable information was collected, and demographic and language background information were collected at the end of the survey to avoid sensitizing participants to the targeted attitudes and behaviors sought in this study. To ensure participants paid attention throughout the questionnaire, two questions were added (one toward the beginning and one toward the end of the questionnaire) which asked participants to select a certain response if they were reading the question. Those who failed to select the appropriate response were removed prior to data analysis.

Instrumentation

The selected instruments in this study were utilized from previously validated and published scales. As the purpose of this research was to identify a correlation between the independent variables of foreign accent and cultural training and the dependent variables of credibility and learning, a variety of instruments were used in an attempt to

control for potential extraneous influences. Measures were included in the questionnaire targeting performed learning (through a quiz based material presented in the lecture videos), perceived learning (both cognitive and affective), credibility, intercultural effectiveness, and exposure to foreign languages (for the full, detailed survey, see Appendix C).

Perceived Learning

Perceived learning was a dependent variable designed to measure student's perceptions of their own learning from the video lecture provided through self-report items. For the purpose of this study, perceived cognitive learning was set up as a comparison to performed cognitive learning. The Learning Loss Scale (Richmond, McCroskey, Kearney, & Plax, 1987) was used, which asked students to report the amount they feel they learned during the lecture (on a scale from 0-9) and the amount they feel they would have learned from an ideal instructor (also from 0-9). This measure was ideal for this study as it places the instructor at the center of the perception of learning. This scale typically offers reliability of $\alpha = .75$ (Hooker and Denker, 2014), and in this study, this scale had a reliability of $\alpha = .76$.

Performed Learning

The measure to establish the degree of learning through students' performance in this study is used as a comparative variable. As it is anticipated perceived learning will be influenced by foreign accent, performed learning is a measure to provide a more tangible depiction of learning that occurs as a result of this study's stimuli. As such, ten questions (five true or false, five multiple choice) were created to test knowledge gained from the video lectures provided. Questions asked students to recall specific information

recited in the lecture, such as the basic components of the Theory of Reasoned Action or its creators. These scores were then measured as the sum of correct items, with ten being the highest possible score and zero being the lowest ($M = 6.86$, $SD = 2.19$).

Affective Learning

In addition to creating a comparison between perceived and performed cognitive learning, affective learning was also measured to account for emotional responses to instructors which may be tied to intercultural perceptions. McCroskey's (1994) 16-item Affective Learning Scale was utilized, which measures student affect toward content, affect toward classes in this content area, affect toward instructor, and affect toward taking classes with this instructor. These four factors are then combined into two dimensions of student affective learning: affective learning and instructor evaluation.

The scales for affective learning and instructor evaluation consistently report reliability of $\alpha = .90$ or higher (McCroskey, 1994), and in this study the overall scale had a reliability of $\alpha = .92$. The subscales affective learning and instructor evaluation had reliabilities of $\alpha = .88$ and $\alpha = .90$, respectively.

Credibility

The next measure was also emphasized as a means to determine attitudes toward L2 instructors, and measured on self-reported, seven point bipolar scales employed from McCroskey and Teven's (1999) 18-item Credibility Measure. This scale, which asked students to report their perceptions about their instructor's credibility in three dimensions: a Competence Factor, a Caring/Goodwill Factor, and a Trustworthiness Factor. Items in Competence Factor included seven-point bipolar scales with labels such as "Untrained/Trained," and "Competent/Incompetent." Caring/Goodwill items included

labels such as “Cares about me/Doesn’t care about me,” and “Insensitive/Sensitive.” Finally, the Trustworthiness Factor included items with labels such as “Honest/Dishonest,” and “Moral/Immoral.” This scale usually maintains reliabilities between $\alpha = .80$ and $\alpha = .94$ (McCroskey, 1999), and in this study the full scale had a reliability of $\alpha = .94$. McCroskey and Teven (1999) argue each of these subscales should be computed separately and not as a single score, which is why this study analyzes each of these dimensions separately. The Competence Factor, Caring/Goodwill Factor, and Trustworthiness Factor yielded reliabilities of $\alpha = .91$, $\alpha = .79$, and $.87$, respectively.

Accent Rating

In order to both serve as a confirmatory measure to ensure the manipulation of foreign accent in the lecture videos was successful and to provide a potential dependent variable with a greater degree of variance than the simple two-level categorical variable of Accent/No Accent, Zhang and Zhang’s (2016) two-item Accent Rating Scale was used, which asked students to rate their agreement with the statements, “The speaker I viewed was a native English speaker,” and, “The speaker I viewed spoke with a foreign accent.” This scale usually offers reliability between $\alpha = .79$ and $\alpha = .88$ (Zhang and Zhang, 2016), and in this study, this scale had a reliability of $\alpha = .80$.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

To ensure that the desired manipulation effect between lecture videos was successfully achieved, an independent samples *t*-test was run between the videos (accented vs. non-accented) for accent rating. Results of this analysis indicated students who viewed the accented video lecture indicated perceiving higher levels of accentedness of their instructor ($M = 6.45$, $SD = 2.24$) than students who viewed the non-accented video lecture ($M = 2.21$, $SD = 1.07$), $t(349) = 11.76$, $p = .02$. This confirms that students perceived a clear difference in accent between the accented and non-accented condition, indicating that the manipulation was successful.

To reduce the family-wise inflation of alpha, a factorial MANOVA was conducted to test all of the hypotheses, with Accent and Intervention as the independent variables and perceived cognitive learning, performed cognitive learning, student affective learning, student instructor evaluation, perceived instructor caring, perceived instructor competence, and perceived instructor trustworthiness as the dependent variables. Box's Test for the Equality of Covariance Matrices was significant, $F = 1.26$, $p < .001$, so Pillai's Trace values were used (Mertler & Vannatta, 2005). Multivariate tests showed that there were significant main effects for Intervention [$F(4, 349) = 2.07$, $p < .05$, $\eta_p^2 = .05$, power = .84] but not for Accent [$F(4, 349) = .90$, $p > .05$]. Since there were no main effects for Accent, H_{1a} , H_{2a} , H_{3a} , H_{4a} , and H_{5a} were not supported.

Additionally, there were no multivariate interaction effects for Accent by Intervention [$F(4, 349) = .06, p < .05$], so H_{1c} , H_{2c} , H_{3c} , H_{4c} , and H_{5c} were not supported. Overall, this means that for at least some of the dependent variables, responses were influenced as a result of viewing the Intervention Video as opposed to the Control Video, but there were no differences in student learning or perceived instructor credibility related to whether or not the instructor spoke with an accent.

To further examine the impact of the intervention, univariate between-subjects effects for each of the dependent variables were examined. Univariate tests showed that there were significant main effects for intervention on perceived instructor caring [$F(4, 349) = 7.02, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .02, \text{power} = .75$], perceived instructor trustworthiness [$F(4, 349) = 5.06, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .02, \text{power} = .61$], perceived cognitive learning [$F(4, 349) = 6.41, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .02, \text{power} = .72$], and instructor evaluation [$F(4, 349) = 5.76, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .02, \text{power} = .66$]. Main effects for intervention on student affective learning, however, were not significant, $F(4, 349) = .34, p > .05$. Therefore, Hypotheses H_{1b} , and H_{4b} were supported, while Hypotheses H_{2b} and H_{3b} were not supported and Hypothesis H_{5b} was partially supported. Hypothesis H_{2a} predicted there would be a significant difference in performed cognitive learning by accent group, which was not supported, $F(1, 349) = .08, p > .05$. Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations for each dependent variable by each independent variable group.

Overall, despite previous research having guided present hypotheses to predict instructor foreign accent would have a significant impact on student learning and perceived instructor credibility, that was not the case in this study. Although the purpose

of the intervention was to improve student perceived learning and instructor credibility that might stem from negative attitudes toward L2 instructors, the intervention did achieve its desired effect despite no significant effects being found for accent on those dependent variables. This ultimately suggests an L2 instructor's foreign accent has no significant effect on student learning nor student perceptions of that instructor's credibility, but providing students with education related directly to their perceptions of their instructor will, in fact, improve those perceptions. These findings are discussed further in the following chapter.

Table 1.
Means and Standard Deviations for DVs by Group

	Perceived cognitive learning		Performed cognitive learning		Student affective learning		Student instructor evaluation		Perceived instructor competence		Perceived instructor caring		Perceived instructor trustworthiness	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
No Accent, No Intervention	-.33	2.21	7.75	1.81	36.70	9.53	42.60	8.13	34.64	4.93	28.74	5.15	32.96	5.00
No Accent, Intervention	.23	1.57	7.41	1.59	38.07	9.93	44.34	9.10	35.86	5.74	30.29	6.00	34.26	5.91
Accent, No Intervention	-.03	1.73	7.66	1.72	36.22	8.20	40.99	8.43	34.40	5.45	28.07	4.90	31.97	5.25
Accent, Intervention	.42	1.49	7.67	1.76	37.53	.45	43.84	8.50	34.88	5.48	29.72	5.23	33.34	5.15

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

The primary goal of this research was twofold: to determine what effect (if any) instructor accent has on student learning, and identify the potential value (if any) of providing students with cultural awareness training so as to improve learning and teaching across cultural boundaries. Based on the results of this study, previous research findings which suggest instructor accent does not negatively impact cognitive learning (Kahn & Sanchez, 2016) were supported. However, despite an analysis of research which finds L1 listeners of an L2 speaker experience difficulties which lead to negative emotional responses (Hayes-Harb & Hayes-Harb, 2014; Tsurutani, 2012), this study's hypothesis predicting an L2 instructor's foreign accent to negatively influence students' learning as well as their perceptions of that instructor's credibility was not supported. This finding suggests that while research has documented students' expressed disapproval of L2 instructors (Subtirelu, 2014), it is possible that disapproval has been overstated. While this research did add to the mounting evidence that foreign accent does not influence cognitive learning, its impact on affective and perceived learning was not significant either. Thus, a primary finding of this research is both support for previous research's findings in this area, but also a word of caution regarding the magnitude of such findings.

In terms of the second goal of this research, this study was able to confirm that cultural training can improve students' attitudes toward their instructors. Considering the

findings suggest a positive relationship between the cultural learning tool and student perceived learning, a significant result of this research is support for the value of providing students directly with cultural training. Although previous research on cultural training is limited to extensive Cultural Sensitivity Training (CST) programs for the workplace which take place over several hours of training, even a minimal (ten minute) training may help students perceive themselves to learn more. However, as the debate regarding proper measurements for learning continues, future research is needed to determine if perceived learning can influence other important components of learning (e.g., motivation). While this finding is unrelated to the role of instructor accent, it does also add support for the importance of cultural learning as a means of improving learning in general. As previous research has documented the value of cultural training for students' interaction with other students, continued research on the role of cultural and linguistic differences between student and teacher—as well as how to overcome those differences—is still needed. The significance of these findings is further reflected through implications in three areas, which are now discussed, followed by an overview of the limitations of the current study as well as suggestions for future research at the intersection of language, culture, and instructional communication.

Teaching Cultural Sensitivity

As higher education in the United States continues to evolve amidst globalization, administrators and instructors alike will need to answer the question of how best to channel the increasing cultural diversification of American classrooms into positive educational experiences for students. For decades, colleges and universities in the United States have been moving slowly away from dispensaries of knowledge toward providers

of an important life-learning experience. Bok (2006) identified that American undergraduate education is not simply about learning material, but about developing students' values as members of society—a thought commonly expressed in many mission college mission statements across the country. Cooks (2010) argued for the importance of students learning about the numerous power structures in society that operate along the lines of race, gender, sexual orientation, class, and countless other cultural boundaries.

Ultimately, college campuses are simultaneously increasing in cultural diversity while stifling cultural learning by refusing to incorporate it directly into institutional practices such as student orientation seminars. This research underscores this tension in the identity crisis of American colleges, demonstrating that as students and instructors continue to come from an ever-increasing array of cultural backgrounds, colleges and those who teach at them will have to decide what role culture will play in learning. Based on this research, teaching students about respecting the cultural background of their instructors can cause them to perceive themselves to have learned more. While this training was specific to linguistic differences, improving the cultural awareness of students more broadly may help them learn better both from their instructors and from one another.

Instructor Power in the Classroom

In addition to the importance of cultural awareness education, this research also highlights the relational nature of power in instructional settings. Instructional communication research often places the instructor as central to any important outcomes—either negative or positive—that occur within learning environments. Witt, Schrodt, and Turman (2010) point out that this is largely because instructors maintain a

great deal of power in most educational contexts, and improving communication behaviors for educators can have a lasting impact over the course of a career. Yet this research's findings would suggest placing students at the center of where positive change can occur to improve learning and make classrooms more inclusive.

Still, a considerable body of research has been devoted to the way instructors wield such control, and how the exertion of instructor power is perceived by students (for a review, see Goodboy & Bolkan, 2011). However, less research has focused on the power wielded by students in learning environments. Golish and Olson (2000) were among the first to acknowledge the ways students exert power in the classroom. In recent years, Goldman et al. (2016) point out, college students are becoming more and more vocal about what they want out of their time spent in college. As higher education continues to be driven by the demands of students, their relative power in the classroom is increasing. Brooks (2016) furthers, cultural differences that exist between students and instructors can create power imbalances in learning environments as perceptions of instructors' are filtered by each individual student's own cultural biases.

Considering that higher education functions to provide a service to students, Jordan, McGreal, and Wheelless (1990) established students do have expectations about how their education experiences play out, which some argue have led to a rise in student reports of dissatisfaction and students transferring institutions (Lichtenberger & Dietrich, 2017). As students become more entitled, instructional communication research will need to emphasize not only how to diagnose problems but also how to solve them. Considering this research's findings which potentially highlight the value of making

students more culturally sensitive to their instructors on their perceived level of learning, further study of the ways in which both students wield power and instructors are constrained by it is needed. Though an emphasis on navigating power dynamics in the classroom can help bridge the gap between students, it is also important to understand the role that language can play in shaping those dynamics, both as a medium for communication and as a communicator of culture in and of itself.

Language as Culture

Another underlying theme of this research was the way language can operate as an indicator of culture. However, the lack of any effects on outcome variables by accentedness—particularly in an experimental design which negated any variance which could stem from the perceived culture of the instructor (since it was the same speaker in both videos)—suggests further inquiry is needed to understand this phenomenon. A respectable body of research has explored the role of instructor cultural traits and various student outcomes (see Kim & Slapac, 2015), and a similar body of research has examined problems which result from language barriers in educational contexts (see Zhang & Zhang, 2014). This research sought to bridge these two areas of research by placing the instructor's language as a form of culture perceived by students. Though students did indicate an acknowledgment of the instructor's accent in this research, it did not influence their learning nor their perception of the instructor. More importantly, however, students' intercultural effectiveness was unrelated to nearly each other variable, potentially suggesting that in learning environments, language may play an important role, but that role may be tangential to—if not completely separate from—culture. Considering the video did show students the physical characteristics (e.g., race/ethnicity,

gender, etc.) of the instructor, it is also a possibility that the appearance of an international instructor had a more significant impact on student perceptions of credibility or their own learning from that instructor than the accent alone. In other words, the fact that the instructor may have appeared to be “international” may be impacting outcomes more than accent. Thus, it is not completely clear that language status was the primary motivator for results, or at least that it was more significant than other aspects related to the instructor. Future research is necessary to explore these phenomena of language versus culture both as they relate to one another, and as they combine to influence outcomes in the classroom.

Limitations

While the findings of this research are substantial and reflect important implications at the intersection of language, culture, and learning, they are not without their limitations. First, as is the case in any research, this study is somewhat limited by its participants. While sample size indicators suggest an appropriate population distribution, it is also worth noting this student sample was considerably diverse in terms of both ethnicity and language background. Moreover, depending on the makeup of the university more broadly, it is possible that the experiences of the student participants in this research—namely their perceptions of an L2 instructor—are not necessarily generalizable for all college students. Considering colleges in the United States vary greatly in their degrees of diversity of students and faculty, future research is needed to confirm these findings. Given that students often identify with instructors who they view as more similar to themselves, the perceptions of L2 instructors in terms of affective learning or instructor evaluation, for example, could be partially influenced by the culture

or linguistic background of the students themselves. Additionally, while the cultural learning tool created by this research was geared toward entering freshmen students, the survey was distributed in the second semester, when most students will have already taken their first classes. In these regards, this research's findings regarding affective learning are somewhat constrained by the demographic makeup of its participants.

Next, it is also important to note that due to the limited scope of this research, the content of the survey used to collect data is worth some degree of scrutiny. For example, this survey design asked students to watch two, roughly eight-minute videos, then complete a questionnaire with approximately 70 items. For this reason, although attention checks throughout the survey were used to ensure participant focus, it is well within the realm of possibility that fatigue plagued some of this study's participants. Moreover, while there are a great number of variables related to the student experience which could be correlated with instructor accent. While this research chose student learning and student perceptions of instructor credibility as dependent variables, any number of instructional communication variables could be tested. For this reason, the depth of this research's findings are limited because findings generalized about the student experience as it relates to linguistic differences more broadly are somewhat incomplete given the great multitude of variables which work together to craft a learning experience. Future research exploring such variables related to this experimental design are highly encouraged (for more detailed insights into future research, see the next section of this chapter).

Additionally, as is the case with any experimental design, it is important to heed

caution when considering the accuracy of findings as the simulations created by this research are also somewhat limited. The intervention established by this study, for example, was the result of scholarly research devoted to the phenomenon of non-native speech and modeled after a component of cultural sensitivity training, but this short video is merely a pilot for what ideally would be a workshop conducted with students before taking their first classes. For this reason, the simulation of a cultural learning experience through a brief video—despite yielding significant results—is still limited. Similarly, though the simulation of foreign accent was confirmed by student accent ratings, it is important to consider that the lecture videos are quite different from a real classroom experience with an instructor. While the student affective learning and instructor evaluation scales ask students to consider themselves in a class with the given instructor, it is difficult to assume the lecture videos fully simulated that experience for participants. Moreover, while the instructor in these videos was able to successfully convey what students perceived to be a foreign accent, because the accent was simulated by the speaker, it is possible that it does not accurately represent the experience of a true L2 instructor. Although the speaker was speaking with an accent related to his native language, it is possible having gained an American accent made even his formerly accented speech easier to understand for students. As such, although this manipulation was ideal to isolate the variable of accent, the simulation of that accent is also a source of some limitations. And while the impact of foreign accent may be consistent across different languages, it is also possible that different languages—and different accents—are perceived differently by students. Thus, though the study design and content of the

survey were both adequate for the purposes of this research, they are somewhat constrained by these factors.

Furthermore, the strength of this experiment's findings are somewhat contingent on the validity of its tools. To that end, it is important to note the proactive learning tool designed in this study was merely a preliminary attempt at such a program, and it only represents one method of attempting to provide cultural awareness about linguistic diversity. While the Fox et al. (2016) evidence-based training method proved to be one successful approach, it was repurposed in this study for a different cultural educational goal which may limit its usefulness. Moreover, others have pointed out presenting individuals with untrue information (e.g., myths, stereotypes, etc.) as a means to correct an attitude or behavior, it can actually reinforce the myth instead of dispelling it (Lewandowsky, Ecker, Seifert, Schwarz, & Cook, 2012). For this reason it is crucial that in further developing such programs, researchers and practitioners explore multiple approaches while maintaining an awareness of any potential negative alternative effects.

Lastly, given the social relevance of the issues studied by this research, it is entirely possible that social desirability played a role in influencing student responses. When participants feel they are being asked questions which reveal responses they feel might be viewed negatively in a social light, they have the tendency to respond how they think others might (Barry, 2015). When asked whether an instructor's language background made someone view the instructor more negatively, they might be aware that such an outcome is culturally biased and respond contrary to how they truly feel. Although this is common in cultural research, and although it is difficult to prove, it is

important to be aware of social desirability as a potential limitation to the findings of this study.

Future Research

While limitations for the present study abound, the findings of this research do contribute meaningfully to knowledge in the area of language and instructional communication. Nevertheless, there are a great number of different avenues by which future research can better understand these phenomena. For example, many of the limitations discussed above could seek to be remedied by follow up studies in this area. Specifically, new research examining the relationship between instructor accent and additional instructional communication variables may be particularly insightful. For example, though much research has confirmed the relationship between student learning and perceptions of instructor credibility, other variables such as instructor verbal and/or nonverbal immediacy, instructor clarity, instructor power use, and instructor misbehavior scales would all be potentially relevant variables to be studied in relationship to instructor language or foreign accent. In fact, Goodboy & Myers (2015) acknowledged “Foreign/Regional Accents” as one of the top instructor misbehaviors identified by students. Another area of future research could explore whether there is a difference between regional or foreign accents, or between different regional accents or different foreign accents in terms of the extent to which they influence or do not influence student learning or perceptions of an instructor.

Next, future research could also explore additional ways to manipulate the phenomenon of non-native speech as it pertains to other factors, namely gender. Though both of the lecture videos used in this study were presented by the same male speaker,

given that research has suggested gender can play a considerable role on crafting student perceptions of an instructor, further study of this phenomenon across genders is still needed. And while this research utilized a lecture video in which the speaker is captured on video in front of a projector screen with a slideshow, future studies could attempt to isolate solely the voice of the instructor by using voice-only lectures. As the prevalence of video lectures continues to grow alongside the proliferation of online learning (Radnitz & Todd, 2016), the relevance of such research is unlikely to diminish. Nevertheless, it is also important to consider more realistic survey designs, perhaps asking students to recall previous L2 instructors instead of providing them with one would yield more relevant results—although the potential influence of social desirability bias could increase. Either way, continuing to discover new ways of researching the role of linguistic backgrounds in educational settings is crucial.

Finally, future communication research on language is critical. The vast majority of current research on language and linguistic backgrounds as a social and cultural phenomenon comes from fields of sociology, linguistics, and psychology. Given that language is not merely the medium through which we communicate but a communicative object in and of itself, additional research on language from the perspective of communication is severely needed. Placing communication at the center of phenomena and concepts related to language, language barriers, or linguistic differences—not to mention the cultural associations of language—can yield important insights. For this reason, this research sought to help establish language and the phenomenon of non-native speech as an important object of study for communication scholars. Moving forward, it

is important to acknowledge language not only as an important construct in instructional communication settings, but in all communicative contexts in general.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

This research sought to contribute to knowledge in the area of foreign language and instructional communication by studying the influence of instructor foreign accent and proactive cultural training on student cognitive and affective learning as well as perceptions of instructor credibility. After examining the extent research in this area, outlining this study's methodology, reviewing its findings, and offering a discussion of what these findings mean in a broader context, it is clear that language can play a pivotal role in the learning process. What's more, the role of students' attitudes and perceptions of their instructors seems to be more salient than ever. As higher education in the United States continues to globalize, creating pathways for meaningful cultural learning for students regardless of the backgrounds of their instructors or peers is crucial. Ultimately, while instructors must do all they can to attempt to establish credibility and help their students learn, helping students understand and appreciate difference may be the key to empowering them to respect it.

APPENDIX A

Manuscript for video lecture¹

Theory of Reasoned Action



Let's say that George has decided that he needs to buy a car, but he's not quite sure whether to buy a used car or a new car. He knows that he could more easily afford payments on a used car, but he really wants to be able to impress his friends with a new car. Now let's say that you're a car salesperson and you want to sell a car to George. You'll make more money if you can sell him a new car, but you don't want to waste your time on new cars if he's only going to buy a used one. So how can you predict whether

¹ Developed by a previous study (Broeckelman-Post & Pyle, 2017)

George will buy a new car?

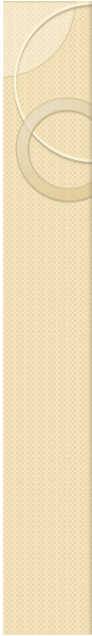


Theory of Reasoned Action

Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980

One way to figure out what George will do is to use the **Theory of Reasoned Action**. **The Theory of Reasoned Action** was developed by **Isaac Ajzen and Martin Fishbein** in **1980**. It assumes that humans are rational decision-makers and helps us **predict and understand voluntary behavior**.

To make the Theory of Reasoned Action a little easier to understand, we're work through the theory backward. First, we'll talk about **behavioral intention**. Second, we'll discuss **attitude toward the behavior**, and third, we'll talk about **the subjective norm component**.

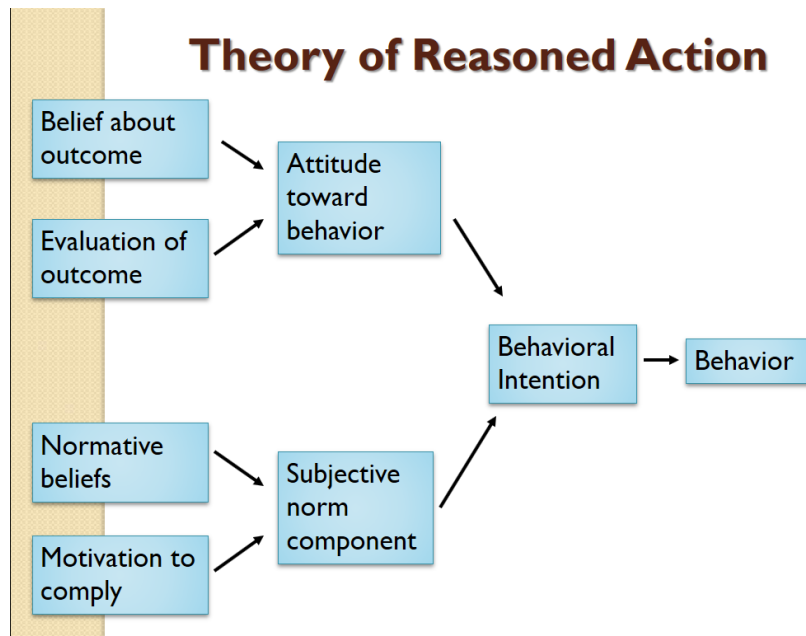


Theory of Reasoned Action

- **Behavioral Intention**: What the individual plans to do
- **Behavior**: What the individual actually does; actions taken

First, we need to understand **behavioral intention**. **Behavioral intention** is what someone **plans** to do. **Behavioral intention** is the best way to predict **behavior**, which is what the person actually does, or what **action** they take. In George's case, we would say that George's **behavioral intention** is to buy a new car if he **plans** to buy a new car but hasn't done so yet. When he actually goes to the car dealership and drives away in a new car, that would be the **behavior** of buying a new car. Sometimes outside factors prevent us from carrying out our plans, but in general, we can be fairly certain that people will do what they plan to do, or that their **behavior** will match their **behavioral intentions**.

But how do we figure out what someone intends to do



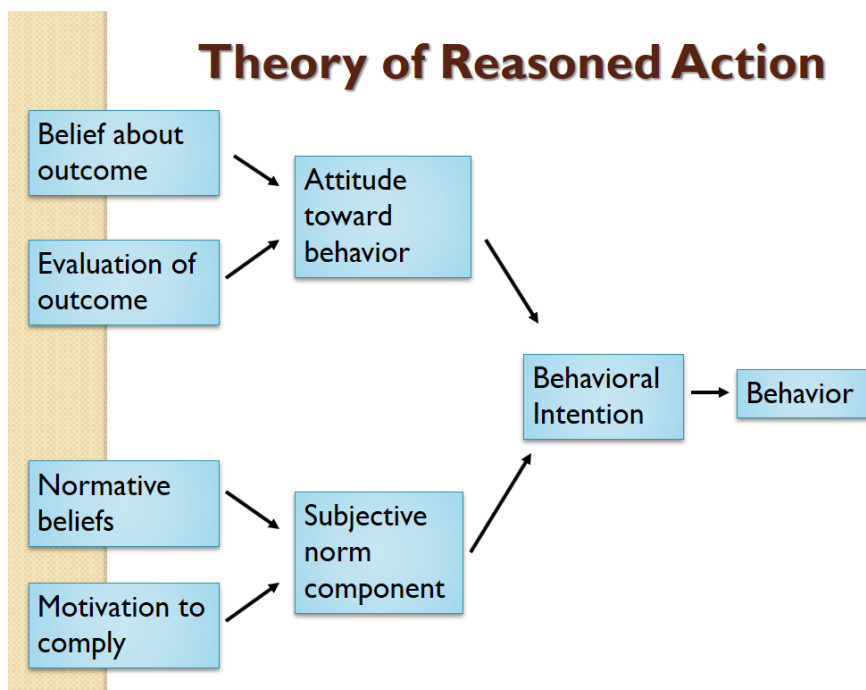
There are two components that lead to a behavioral intention first, an individual's **attitude toward the behavior**, and second, **the subjective norm component**.

Behavioral Intention

- **Attitude Toward Behavior:** the individual's own attitude toward the outcome
- **Subjective Norm Component:** Perceived social pressure from relevant others

The **attitude toward the behavior** is the individual's own attitude toward the outcome, or how they personally feel about the behavior. In George's case, this would

whether he wants to buy a new car, or how he feels about it. The second component leading to a behavioral intention is the **subjective norm component**. The subjective norm component is the perceived **social pressure** from relevant **others**. In other words, what the individual **thinks others** who are important to them want them to do. For George, this might be whether he thinks that his parents or girlfriend want him to buy a new car.



So, we just saw that the behavioral intention is made up of the attitude toward the behavior and the subjective norm component. Next, we're going to talk more specifically about the **attitude toward the behavior**.

We said earlier that an individual's **attitude toward the behavior** is how they personally feel about the outcome. The **attitude toward the behavior** is made of two parts: **1) their beliefs about the outcome**, and **2) their evaluation of those outcomes**.



Attitude Toward Behavior

- **Belief about Outcome:** what the individual thinks will happen if they perform the action
- **Evaluation of Outcome:** the individual's attitudes toward the outcome; how they feel about it

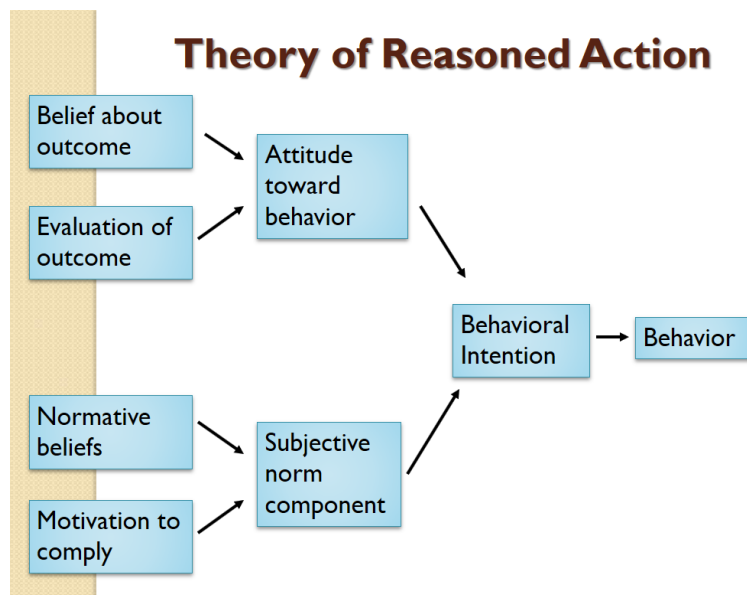
First, **beliefs about the outcome** are what the individual **thinks will happen** if they perform the action. They are the results that are expected. For example, George might believe that buying a new car will cause him to have reliable transportation. The second part, **evaluation of the outcome**, is the individual's **attitude** toward the expected outcome, or how they **feel** about it. For example, George probably feels positively, or likes the idea of having reliable transportation.

Of course, any decision or action is going to have several impacts or results, so let's think about a few of the other outcomes that George is likely to consider.

Attitude Toward Behavior

Belief about Outcome	Evaluation of Outcome
Look good	+
In debt	-
Few repairs	+
Less spending \$	-

Maybe George thinks that he'll look good driving around in a new car. He probably likes this idea, so he's going to have a positive evaluation of this outcome. But maybe he believes that another outcome of buying a new car will be going into debt, which he (point to – next to in debt) probably doesn't like. Then again, a new car probably won't need very many repairs, so he won't have to spend money on maintenance or worry about breakdowns. He probably likes this idea, or will have a positive evaluation of this outcome. But because of the car payments, he'll probably have less spending money, which he'll evaluate negatively. Listing the **beliefs about the outcomes** and the **evaluations of those outcomes** is kind of like listing the pros and cons of making a decision. **Together** we call these the **attitude toward the behavior**, but it's important to remember that this is just what the **individual** him or herself thinks and feels about what they're deciding to do.



Now that we've discussed the **attitude toward behavior**, we can move on to the **subjective norm component**.

The **subjective norm component** is the **influence that other people's opinions**, or at least what **we think their opinions are**, has on the decisions that we make.

Subjective Norm Component

- **Normative Beliefs:** perceived social pressure by relevant others to engage in the behavior in question
- **Motivation to Comply:** how willing the individual is to conform to the social pressure of relevant others

Like everything else in this theory, the **subjective norm component** has two

parts. The first is **normative beliefs**, which are the **perceived social pressures by relevant others** to engage in the behavior in question. It's what people who are important to us think about the behavior we're deciding to do. For example, maybe George thinks his girlfriend will like him even more if he buys a new car.

The second part of **the subjective norm component** is the **motivation to comply**, or how willing the individual is to conform to the social pressure of relevant others. In other words, how much do you really care about what that person thinks, and how much influence do they have on your decisions? George probably cares about what his girlfriend thinks, so her opinion is likely to influence his decision. We could say that he has a high **motivation to comply** with social pressures from her.

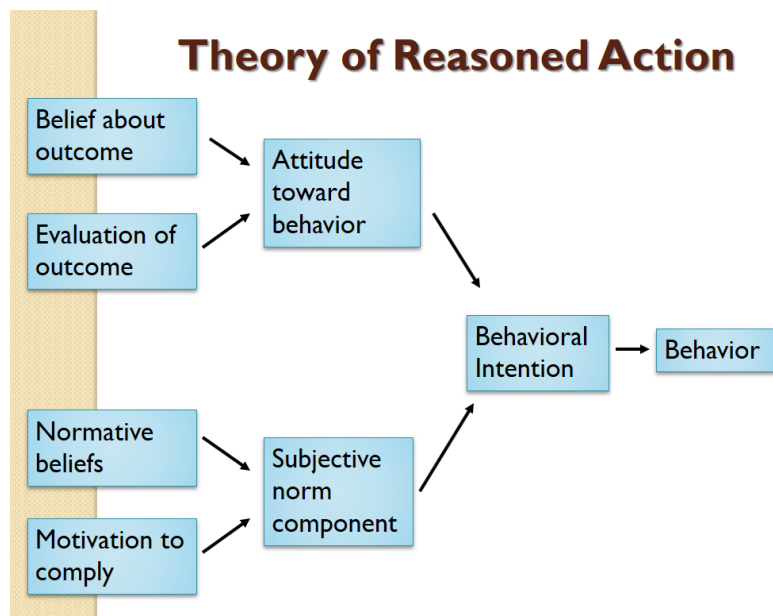
Of course, there are other people whose opinions are influencing George too.

Subjective Norm Component

Normative Belief	Motivation to Comply
Mom: +	Medium
Dad: -	Very High
Best Friend: +	High
Police: -	Low

Maybe George thinks his mom has a positive attitude toward his buying a new car because she's always worried about his car breaking down when he's on the road, so

that's another **normative belief**, but if he's like most teenagers, her opinion is only somewhat important to him, so we would say that he only has a medium **motivation to comply** with her opinion. But if his dad is helping make the down payment, George has a really high **motivation to comply** with his dad's views because he can't buy the car without his dad's help. So if his dad doesn't want him to get a brand new car because he thinks that it is irresponsible for George to go into more debt than necessary, George is more likely to buy a used car. But George thinks his best friend will think he's cooler if he gets a new car, and his best friend's opinion is important to him. Perhaps the police think it's bad for teenagers to buy new cars because they're more likely to drive too fast. But if George doesn't care much about what the police think, he has a low **motivation to comply** with their **normative beliefs**. As we can see, there are a lot of people whose opinions will influence or pressure us to make a decision, and some people's **normative beliefs** matter to us more than others, so we're more **motivated** to conform to their pressure. There's a precise mathematical way to predict someone's behavior using this theory if you're interested in learning more, but we're not going to go into that in today's lecture.

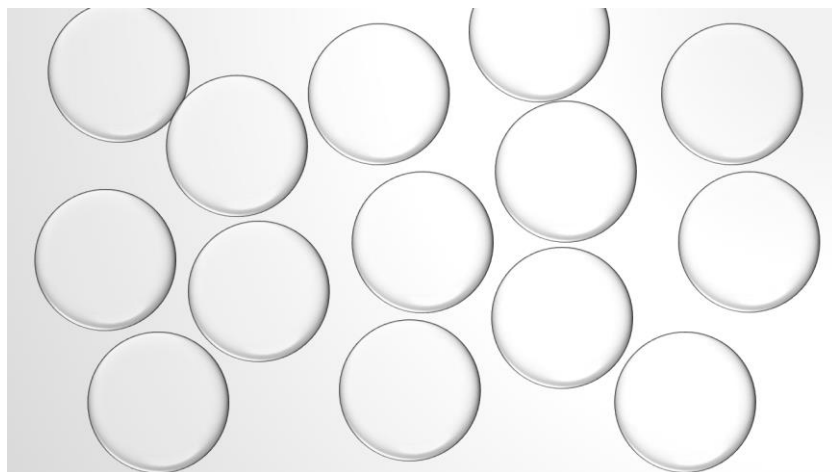


So in review, today we learned about **Ajzen and Fishbein's Theory of Reasoned Action**. First, we talked about **behavioral intention**, second, we talked about **attitude toward behavior**, and finally, we talked about the **subjective norm component**. So by using the Theory of Reasoned Action, you can decide whether or not it's worth your while to try to sell George a new car.

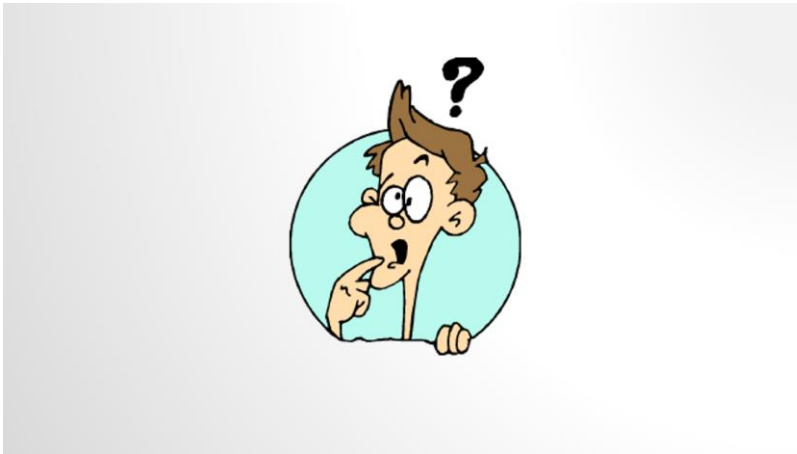
APPENDIX B

Manuscript for Intervention

Language Diversity in College



Don't you think it's fascinating that one of the ways in which spheres (1)² interact is via (2) continuous functions? (3) (4) Such functions are called homotopic (5) if there is a (6) continuous (7) disintegration between one and the other. (8) And if we regard (9) homotopic (10) functions as being equivalent (11), then they become an algebraic object called a group (12), or, more precisely, a homotopic group (13).

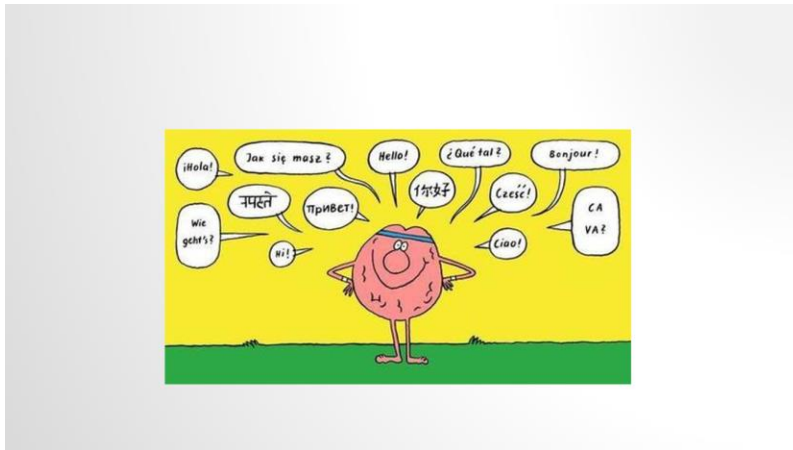


Most English speakers probably didn't understand a word of what I just said. I didn't.



The point here is that (1) language and fluency is a relative phenomenon.

² Numbers inside parentheses refer to PowerPoint animations on each slide



Many people today hold misconceptions about language, particularly when it comes to interacting with those whose native tongues differ from our own.

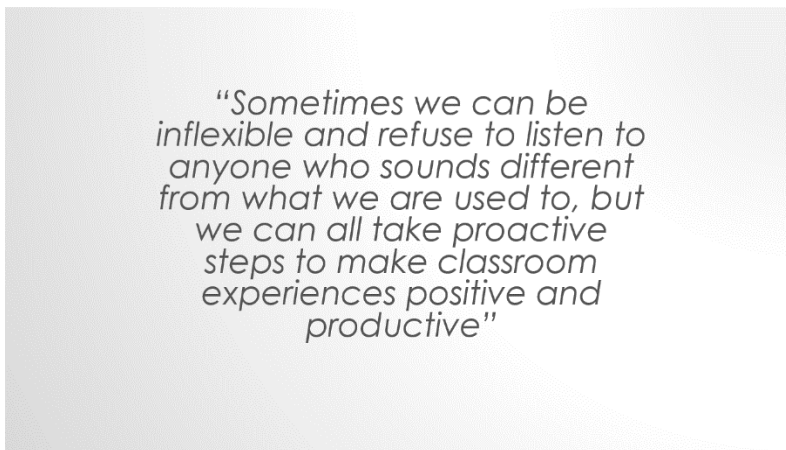


This problem can be especially prominent (1) in college environments, (2) where many students like yourself are (3) meeting vast amounts of new people from, (4) in many cases, all around the globe. Some of these people may even be your new instructor! (Slide 9) And although instructors with diverse language backgrounds are fluent English speakers, sometimes even the perception of a language barrier—say, an

instructor who speaks English with a foreign accent—can make us quick to judge



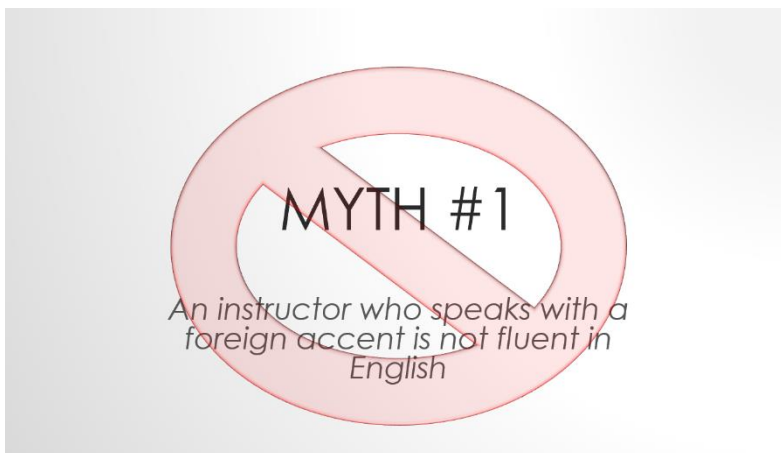
he purpose of this video, then, is to highlight some common myths about language difference and dispel them.



Because as one native English speaking professor puts it, “Some of us can be inflexible and refuse to listen to anyone who sounds different from what we are used to, but we can all take proactive steps to make classroom experiences positive and productive” (Heath, 2010).

THREE MAJOR MYTHS:

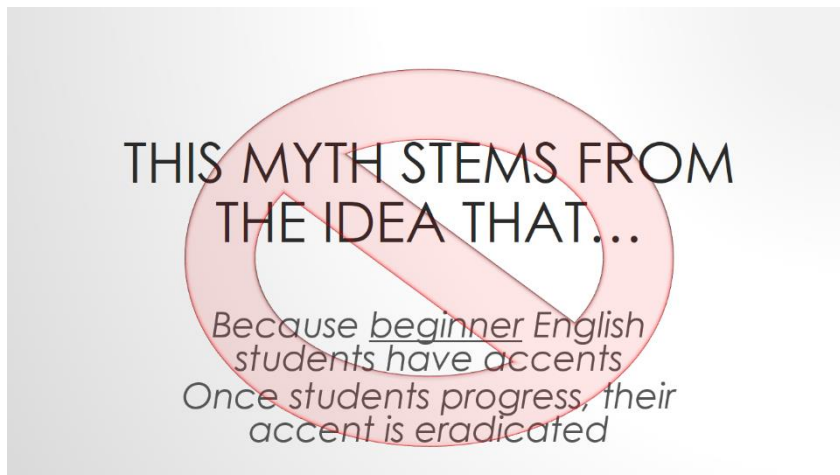
There are three major misconceptions about non-Native English speaking instructors which, when addressed, will help us better understand those whose backgrounds are different from what we're used to.



Myth Number One: (1) An instructor who speaks with a foreign accent is not fluent in English. (2) It's only natural that people often judge instructors



by their first impressions, and if an instructor happens to be a foreigner speaking with a bigger or smaller foreign accent, that instructor's English skills will be deemed to be very basic leading in some cases to condescension or complaints from students.



This myth stems from the assumption that, (1) just because *beginner* English students normally speak with harder foreign accents, people generally tend to assume that once those students progress through their studies and attain a certain degree of fluency, (2) their accent is going to be eradicated. (3)



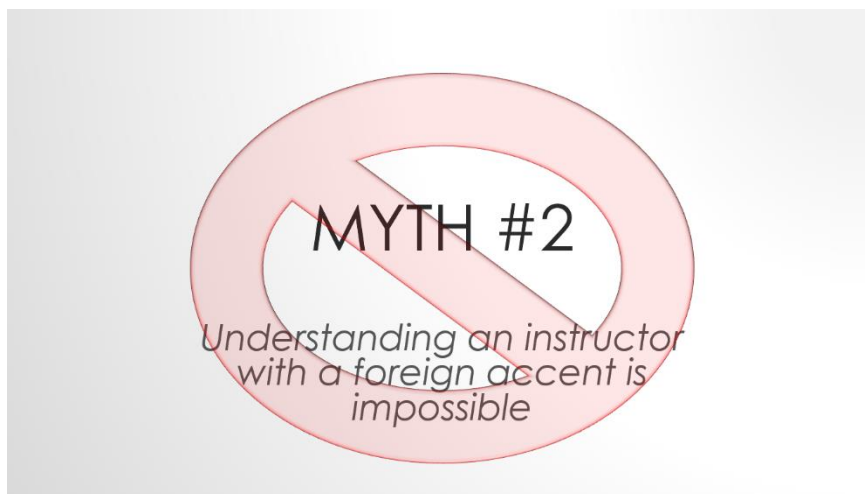
This notion is most likely based on a few observations of fluent foreign English speakers who are capable of speaking without any foreign accent at all, and then the following conclusion is drawn:



(1) *"A fluent English speaker speaks with almost native-like pronunciation."* (2)



In real life, more often than not, fluency isn't really so closely tied with perfect pronunciation. Dr. Tao Ming, linguistics professor at UCLA writes, "Many non-native English speakers may have a mastery of English vocabulary and grammar which far surpasses your average native English speaker" (Ming, 2013). Having an accent doesn't mean an instructor isn't fluent, may just mean their time in English-dominant countries might be limited. Regardless, as English is only one of thousands of languages in the world, many of the most credible and well-established scholars and educators have primary languages other than ours.



Myth Number Two: (1) Understanding an instructor with a foreign accent is impossible
(2). Many of us assume

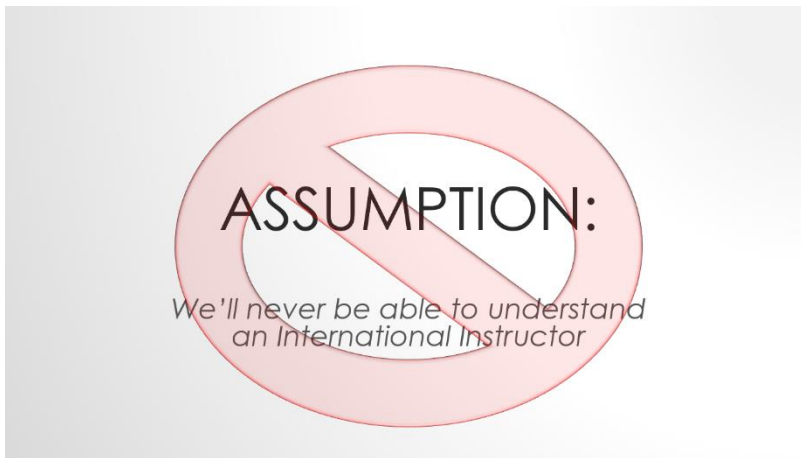


that only native English speakers’ accents—American, British, Irish, Australian and so on—are “proper” English accents. But considering



there are more English speakers in (1) China, (2) India, (3) Pakistan and (4) Nigeria individually as the (5) UK and Australia combined, these typical native English accents

may not be as much the “standard” as we think. (Slide 22)



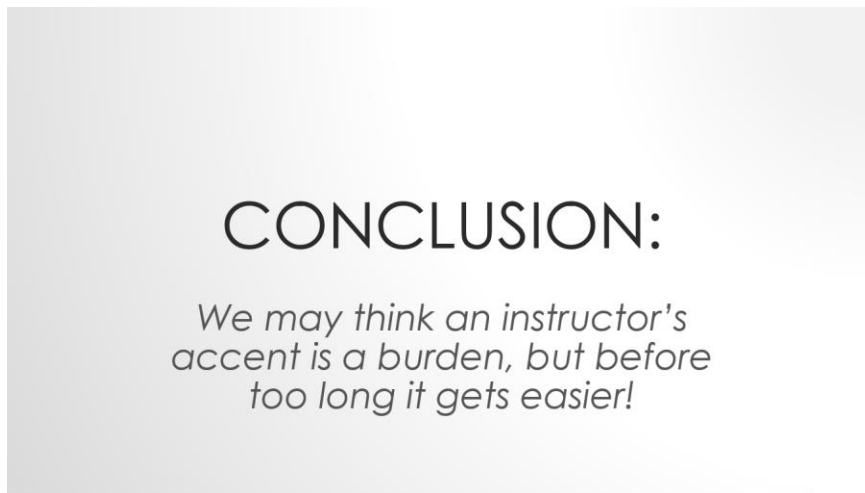
But when an instructor speaks English with an accent other than one of these, we tend to (1) assume that (2) we'll never be able to easily understand them. (3) However, as a great deal of linguistics research has shown, how well we understand a speaker with a foreign accent improves the more we are exposed to, or the more we listen to, that accent. Some researchers show improvement for listeners after as few as ten minutes. For example,



if an literature instructor's foreign accent changes the "r" sound to a "w," it could hinder your understanding. Imagine hearing "(1)Womeo, (2)Womeo whewe fowe awt thou, Womeo?" (4) Crickets.



But, the more you hear how they enunciate and pronounce, the more you understand and can identify the famous Shakespearean line.



CONCLUSION:

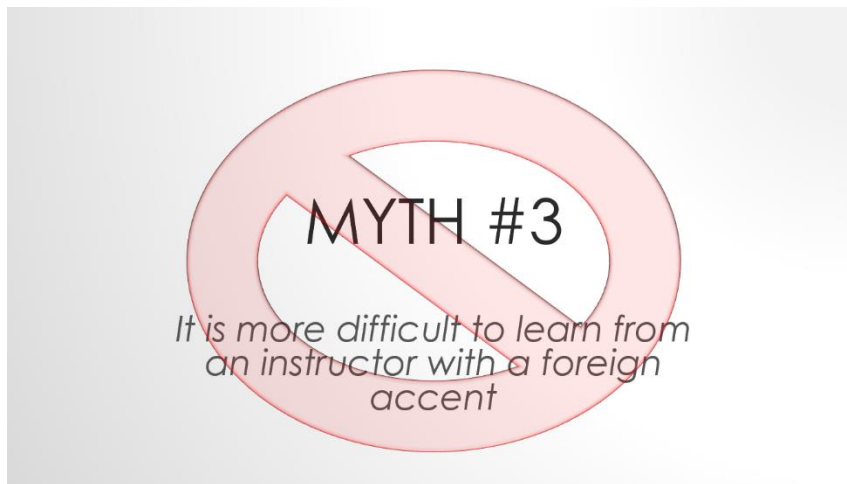
*We may think an instructor's
accent is a burden, but before
too long it gets easier!*

While (1) we may think an instructor's foreign accent is a burden at first, before not too long, it



can become much easier, so, put simply, if your instructor's foreign accent seems distracting, keep going to class!

Myth Number Three:

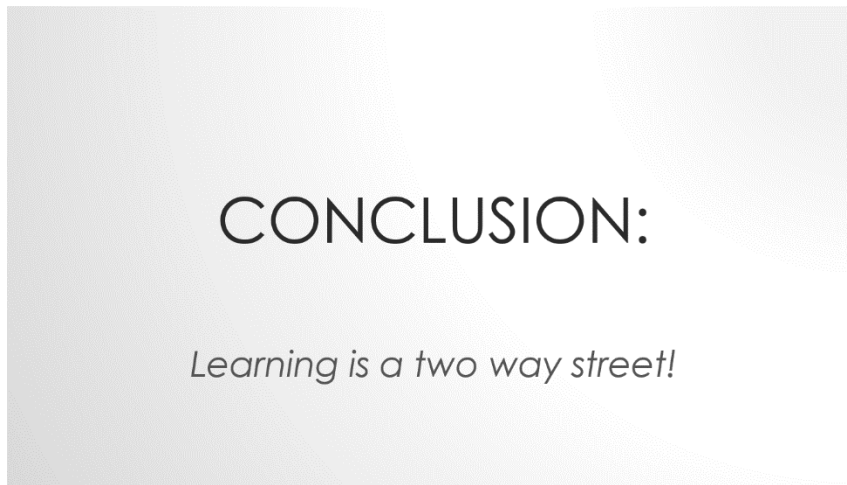


(1) It is harder to learn from an instructor with a foreign accent (2). Palmer Bennet



tells of her experience with a non-native English speaking instructor: “When I was in my second semester of college, my American literature professor was from India, and on that first day I couldn’t make out anything he said after “My name is Dr. Chander.” After class, I told him I was a bit confused because I didn’t quite understand some of the things he said during his lecture. He told me a story about his first day as a college instructor and how excited he was to teach when a student, upon entry, expressed frustration at being taught English by a foreigner. He told me he was used to my reaction and thanked

me for addressing my concern with him. I got an A in his class.” Bennet furthers, like any class, you get out what you put in. In combination with attending classes regularly, reading the textbook and e-mailing lecture notes or questions to your instructor will establish more pathways to understanding by leaning on both written *and* verbal communication, and will ultimately help you maximize the value of the class you’re in.

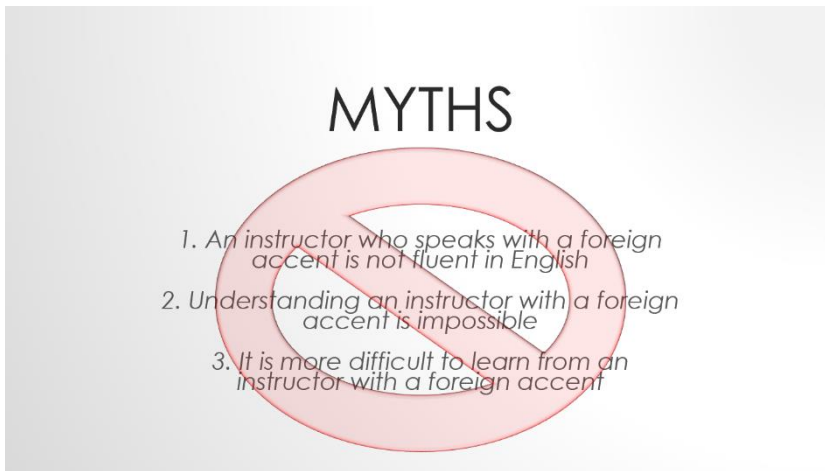


At the end of the day, (1) learning is a two way street, so before dismissing your instructor for their primary language, consider the knowledge they have to



offer and what they can teach you.

College can be one of the most influential times in life, where all of us can decide who it is we want to be, and how we treat those around us. That decision starts with the instructors right in front of us, and to better understand the ways in which our attitudes influence our actions, this video explored and dispelled three



myths associated with non-native English speakers: First, (1) that instructors with foreign accents are not fluent in English. Second, (2) it is impossible to ever understand an international instructor. And finally, (3) that it is impossible to learn from an instructor with a foreign accent.(4) Ultimately, it is most important to remember one simple thing:



the vast majority of international instructors studied in the US, so at one point or another, they were exactly where you are right now: listening to a professor speaking a language that was not his or her native tongue, frantically waiting for office hours for extra help, deciphering textbooks cover to cover. So whether you're taking a class in the continuous disintegration of homotopic functions, or learning a new language yourself, your instructor is there to help.

APPENDIX C

Survey Questionnaire

Block 1: Informed Consent Form

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

This research is being conducted to understand aspects of effective instructional communication. If you agree to participate, you will be asked a series of questions.

Participation will take approximately fifteen minutes.

RISKS

There are no foreseeable risks for participating in this research.

BENEFITS

Completing this survey is valid for course credit in COMM 100 or COMM 101. If you'd like to redeem your participation for credit, please follow the instructions at the end of the survey. Beyond that, there are no benefits to you as a participant other than to further research in this area.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The data in this study will be confidential. Names and other identifiers will not be placed on surveys or other research data. Only researchers listed below will have access to these data.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason. If you decide not to participate or if you withdraw from the study, there is no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. There are no costs to you or any other party. Individuals must be at 18 or older to participate.

CONTACT

This research is being conducted by George Kueppers at George Mason University. He may be reached at gkuepper@gmu.edu for questions or to report a research-related problem. The faculty advisor is Dr. Melissa Broeckelman-Post and her office number is (703) 993-1090. You may contact the George Mason University Office of Research Integrity & Assurance at 703-993-4121 if you have questions or comments regarding your rights as a participant in the research. This research has been reviewed according to George Mason University procedures governing your participation in this research.

CONSENT

I have read this form, all of my questions have been answered by the research staff, and I agree to participate in this study.

- Agree
- Disagree

Block 2: Intervention

Please watch and listen to the following video.

Block 3: Lecture

Please watch and listen to the following video. You may be asked questions related to the information presented in this video in the next section of the survey.

Block 4: Performance Test

Please answer the following questions based on the material presented in the previous lecture to the best of your ability.

1. The Theory of Reasoned Action assumes humans are not rational decision makers.

- True
- False

2. The influence that other people's opinions have on the decisions that we make is known as the subjective norm component.

- True
- False

3. Knowing a person's behavioral intention can be used to predict what actions that person might take.

- True
- False

4. *An individual's attitude toward the behavior is how they personally feel about the outcome of an action, and is made up of two parts: 1) beliefs about the outcome; and 2)*

- A: Beliefs about the behavior
- B: Prior knowledge about choices
- C: Their evaluations of those outcomes
- D: Social pressure from others

5. *Motivation to comply is a part of which element of reasoned action?*

- A: The subjective norm component
- B: Attitude toward behavior
- C: Behavioral intention
- D: Choice-making

6. *The Theory of Reasoned Action helps us do which of the following?*

- A: Decide what to buy
- B: Determine which sales tactics to trust
- C: Understand how to make rational decisions
- D: Predict and understand voluntary behaviors

Block 5: Perceived Learning

Overall, the instructor in the video was:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--

Bad:	•	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good
Valuable:	•	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Worthless
Positive:	•	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Negative

Were I to have the opportunity, my likelihood of taking a class with this instructor would be

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Unlikely	•	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Likely
Improbable	•	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Probably
Would	•	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Would not

I feel I have learned a lot from the lecture presented.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Block 6: Credibility

On the scales below, please indicate your feelings about the instructor you viewed:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Unintelligent	•	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Intelligent
Informed	•	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uninformed
Trained	•	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Untrained
Expert	•	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inexpert
Incompetent	•	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Competent
Stupid	•	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bright

Block 7: Intercultural Effectiveness

On the scales below, please rate your agreement with the following statements.

I find it easy to talk with people from different cultures.

- Strongly Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Neither Disagree nor Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Strongly Agree

I find it easy to get along with people from different cultures.

- Strongly Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree

- Neither Disagree nor Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Strongly Agree

I am able to express my ideas clearly when interacting with people from different cultures.

- Strongly Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Neither Disagree nor Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Strongly Agree

I am able to answer questions effectively when interacting with people from different cultures.

- Strongly Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Neither Disagree nor Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Strongly Agree

I always know how to initiate a conversation when interacting with people from different cultures.

- Strongly Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Neither Disagree nor Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Strongly Agree

I feel relaxed when interacting with people from different cultures.

- Strongly Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Neither Disagree nor Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Strongly Agree

I find I have a lot in common with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.

- Strongly Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Neither Disagree nor Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Strongly Agree

I find it easy to identify with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction.

- Strongly Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Neither Disagree nor Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Strongly Agree

BLOCK 8: Demographic & Background Information

Please list your age

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56 or older

Please select your gender

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to disclose

Please select your race

- East Asian/Pacific Islander

- Black/African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- South Asian/Indian
- Middle Eastern
- Native American/Indigenous
- Caucasian/White
- Other
- Prefer not to disclose

Please indicate your language status based on the following definitions:

- L1: Native English Speaker (English is the first language you learned and it is the language most commonly spoken in your household growing up)
- Generation 1.5: Multilingual English Speaker (English is not the first language you learned nor is it the primary language spoken in your household growing up, but you learned and began speaking English regularly between the ages of six and twelve)
- L2: Non-native English Speaker (English is not the first language you learned nor is it the primary language spoken in your household growing up, but you can read, write and speak in English)

Have you studied one or more other languages besides your native language?

- Yes
- No

- Unsure

Were you exposed to languages other than your native language as a child?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

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