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It is "broken" and "accented": Non-native English-speaking (NNES) Graduate Students' Perceptions toward NNES Instructors' English

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**PURDUE UNIVERSITY
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Entitled

IT IS "BROKEN" AND "ACCENTED": NON-NATIVE ENGLISH-SPEAKING GRADUATE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF NON-NATIVE ENGLISH-SPEAKING INSTRUCTORS' ENGLISH

For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Is approved by the final examining committee:

Tony Silva

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Shelley Staples

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Approved by Major Professor(s): Tony Silva

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7/1/2016

Date

IT IS “BROKEN” AND “ACCENTED”: NON-NATIVE ENGLISH-SPEAKING
GRADUATE STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF NON-NATIVE ENGLISH-SPEAKING
INSTRUCTORS’ ENGLISH

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty

of

Purdue University

by

Hyo Jung Keira Park

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree

of

Doctor of Philosophy

August 2016

Purdue University

West Lafayette, Indiana

For my parents and brother.

아빠와 내동생 그리고

세상의 어느 누구보다 용감한 우리 엄마에게 이 논문을 바칩니다.

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Lastly, to my future self who will be reading this dissertation with embarrassment, do not feel embarrassed! Your dissertation was the only beginning of your journey as an applied linguist! You have a destiny to fulfill in your life and don't you dare ever give up! After all, you have not given yourself a chance to see what you can do yet. It is all in your head. Do not lose the battles with yourself.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	viii
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Preface	1
1.2 Statement of Significance of the Problem	2
1.3 International Students and Scholars in the U.S.	4
1.3.1 International Students in the U.S.	4
1.3.2 International Scholars in the U.S.	9
1.4 Demographics of International Students and Faculty at Purdue University	12
1.5 Outline of the Chapters.....	21
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW	24
2.1 Language Attitudes.....	26
2.2 Language Attitudes of Native Speakers Toward Non-native Speakers and their Speech	31
2.2.1 In Native Speakers' Eyes: Perceptions Toward International Teaching Assistants (ITAs)	32
2.3 The Non-native English speakers' perspective: Attitudes of Non-native English Speakers Toward Standardized Varieties of English and Non-native Englishes.....	34
2.5 Exposure to Different Varieties of English in Asian Countries	32
2.5 Research Questions	40
CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY	41
3.1 Research Design	41
3.2 Participants	41
3.2.1 Survey Participants	42

	Page
3.2.2 Interview Participants	47
3.3 Data Collection and Analysis	48
3.3.1 Survey Data Collection and Analysis	48
3.3.2 Interview Data Collection and Analysis	50
CHAPTER 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND SURVEY FINDINGS	52
4.1 Survey Participants	52
4.2 Survey Questions.....	53
4.3 Survey Findings.....	54
4.3.1 Theme 1: The Amount of Encounters Between NNES Instructors and NNES Graduate Students	55
4.3.2 Theme 2: NNES Instructors' English and Communication Issues.....	59
4.3.3 Theme 3: NNES Instructors' Ability as Teachers	71
4.3.4 Theme 4: Solving Communication Breakdowns between NNES Instructors and NNES Graduate Students.....	76
4.4 Summary of Survey Findings.....	84
CHAPTER 5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERVIEW FINDINGS	86
5.1 Interview Participants	86
5.2 Interview Questions.....	87
5.3 Interview Findings.....	88
5.3.1 Theme 1: NNES Graduate Students Experiencing Problems with NNES Instructors from Particular First Language Backgrounds.....	89
5.3.2 Theme 2: A Fine Line between Being Victimized and Being Responsible as Graduate Students.....	99
5.3.3 Theme 3: Obstacles When Solving the Perceived Communication Problems	99
5.3.4 The Cases of Tianxuan-C and Shenka-I	105
5.4 Summary of Interview Findings.....	107
CHAPTER 6. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION	110
6.1 Overview	110

	Page
6.2 Summary of Findings Based on the Proposed Research Questions	110
6.2.1 Research Question 1	110
6.2.2 Research Question 2	112
6.2.3 Research Question 3	113
6.2.4 Research Question 4	113
6.3 Pedagogical Implications.....	114
6.4 Limitations and Future Research.....	116
6.5 Conclusion.....	118
REFERENCES	120
APPENDIX.....	127
VITA.....	131

ABSTRACT

Park, Hyo Jung K. Ph.D., Purdue University, August 2016. It is “broken” and “accented”: Non-native English-speaking (NNES) Graduate Students’ Perceptions toward NNES Instructors’ English. Major Professor: Tony Silva.

This study investigates the perceptions of non-native English-speaking graduate students towards non-native English speaking (NNES) instructors’ accented English. Students (N=161) who were enrolled in an oral English course at Purdue University participated in a survey. Follow-up interviews were conducted with voluntary participants (N=9) to examine the perceptions of NNES graduate students towards NNES instructors in depth. The findings in the survey showed that more than one third of the participants experienced difficulty with their NNES instructors due to their limited intelligibility and restricted command of English. Furthermore, one third of the participants expressed that they would transfer to another section of a course if the NNES instructor of the course speaks highly accented English. However, the majority of them believed NNES instructors can be as effective as NNS instructors. More overtly negative views were found during the interviews; many of the interviewees revealed strong desire to avoid NNES instructors with particular language backgrounds. Familiarity with the accents also played a significant role in ameliorating their negative perceptions toward NNES instructors. When there were communication breakdowns between the respondents and their NNES instructors, they tended to give up listening to the lectures and sought other

resources or solutions to address difficulties. Moreover, the majority of the interview participants expressed that they would avoid discussing the communication issues with their NNES instructors directly as it would be seen as rude and disrespectful.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preface

The motivation for this study was ignited by a conversation that I had with one of my Korean friends at Purdue. He was a Ph.D. student in an engineering program, where faculty members who did not speak English as their first language were highly visible. We had a conversation about how many non-native English-speaking (NNES) instructors were in his and my departments, and he complained about the quality of the lectures of NNES instructors in whose classes he was enrolled. I found it very interesting since English was not his first language, either. I took out a notepad and started taking notes of what he said. Here is a small part of the conversation that we had from the notes¹ I took that day:

“I don’t like my Russian math professor,” said my friend. I asked for the reasons why he didn’t like the professor. He said, “I can’t understand what he says in class. I don’t get what he’s trying to say in his emails, either. Well, I can still just study with the textbooks by myself, though. I wish I had a native speaker professor. And I don’t like my Chinese professors, either. I don’t understand their accent as well.”

¹ The note was taken in Korean and the excerpts are translated into English.

Here is another quote taken from the notes:

“I dropped one course because the professor’s bad English was so annoying to listen to. I would avoid the courses taught by professors from the same country next time as well.”

In addition, I heard a number of complaints from NNES graduate students towards other NNES graduate students and instructors. The conversation with my friend and the complaints made me wonder what was actually going on in such circumstances, where non-native English speakers from many different linguistic backgrounds encounter high-stakes occasions in a non-language learning-teaching environment such as in a science or engineering class as apposed to language instruction classes, but in which they are expected to communicate successfully in the language to their given tasks. A great number of studies have reported the negative perceptions of native speakers of English towards non-native speakers of English, and argued that native speakers of English have to become more sympathetic listeners and be open to different varieties of English. However, according to my friend’s comments, non-native speakers of English are also involved in the debate over the legitimacy of native/non-native varieties of English.

1.2 Statement of Significance of the Problem

In response to the increasing importance of English as a global language, a debate has emerged in the field of ESL and EFL regarding the legitimacy of non-native varieties of English versus native varieties of English. Many studies have examined native English speakers’ perceptions of non-native speakers of English, including the expectation that non-native instructors of English are expected to be as knowledgeable and as credible as native English-speaking instructors (e.g. Brown 1992; Fox 1991; Lindemann 2005;

Plakans 1997; Rubin 1990). However, the number of non-native English speakers has noticeably increased in both student and faculty populations in U.S. colleges and universities and it is not difficult to find a number of non-native English-speaking (NNES) students (undergraduates and graduates) in a classroom managed by an NNES faculty member. Even though non-native English speakers are highly visible in the United States, little research has been conducted to assess the ways in which they view other non-native English speakers and, specifically, how NNES students in U.S. colleges and universities perceive their NNES professors' accented Englishes. As language carries with it "baggage," such as social stereotypes or cultural elitism, one might argue that hierarchical and stereotypical views of certain types of accented Englishes are likely to be observed in these circumstances. Attitudes toward a speaker's particular cultural and linguistic group are also related to how the listener perceives the speaker and his or her accent (Lindemann 2003).

The number of U.S. faculty members who do not speak English as their first language reached 74,200 in 1998 (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). In 2012, it reached 116,917 (Institute of International Education, 2012). International faculty members are becoming "highly visible symbols of the changing face of the population in higher education" (Manrique & Manrique, 1999, p. 103). Nevertheless, the need to troubleshoot the problems resulting from miscommunication between NNES faculty members and their NNES students has not adequately kept pace. Past studies (e.g., Brown. 1992; Fox. 1991; Plakans. 1997; Rubin. 1990; Rubin. 1992; Wang. 2000) have focused mainly on American undergraduate students' perceptions of international teaching assistants; research exploring how NNES students perceive NNES instructors, however, is scant.

English no longer belongs only to those countries in which English is used as a first language; rather, it has become a global language, the ownership of which is claimed by each of its users. As the body of English-users around the world continues to grow, and the influx of non-native English-speakers into *inner circle* countries (Kachru. 1985) becomes greater, it is necessary to shed light on how NNES populations from different language backgrounds interact with, and perceive each other, in these countries. Among them are NNES faculty members from outer and expanding circle countries who are working in inner circle countries (Kachru. 1985) and seeking to promote different varieties of English in their new surroundings. Therefore, it is worthwhile to conduct research on how their Englishes are perceived not only by “native speakers” in the inner circle countries but also by non-native speakers from different language and cultural backgrounds.

1.3 International Students and Scholars in the U.S.

Due to various factors such as changes in immigration laws, the low enrollment rate of domestic college students to graduate schools, and the steadily increasing favor of American English as a second or foreign language over other languages in the countries where English is taught in schools, there has been a rapid shift in college demographics in the U.S. (Marvasti, 2005; Kim, Twombly, & Wolf-Wendel, 2012). The growth in the body of international students and scholars in the U.S. has become highly evident in the past two decades; the majority of them are from China, India, and South Korea.

1.3.1 International Students in the U.S.

As for international students in the U.S, the growth has been great particularly for Chinese and Indian students, while the total number of international students has

increased from 514,723 in 1999 to 974,926 in 2015 by 42 percent (Institute of International Education, 2016). In the past ten years, the numbers have increased rapidly ; Table 1 and 2 show the number of international students by places of origin in the U.S. in the 2004-05 and 2014-15 academic years.

Table 1

Top 20 places of origin of international students in the U.S. in the 2004-05 academic year (Institute of International Education, 2005)

Rank	Place of Origin	2004/05	% of Total
	World Total	565,039	
1	India	80,466	14.2
2	China	62,523	11.1
3	South Korea	53,358	9.4
4	Japan	42,215	7.5
5	Canada	28,140	5.0
6	Taiwan	25,914	4.6
7	Mexico	13,063	2.3
8	Turkey	12,474	2.2
9	Germany	8,640	1.5
10	Thailand	8,637	1.5
11	United Kingdom	8,236	1.5
12	Indonesia	7,760	1.4
13	Colombia	7,334	1.3
14	Brazil	7,244	1.3
15	Hong Kong	7,180	1.3
16	Kenya	6,728	1.2
17	France	6,555	1.2

Table 1 Continued.

18	Nigeria	6,335	1.1
19	Pakistan	6,296	1.1
20	Malaysia	6,142	1.1

Table 2

Top 20 places of origin of international students in the U.S. in the 2014-15 academic year (Institute of International Education, 2015)

Rank	Place of Origin	2014/15	% of Total
	World Total	974,926	100.0
1	China	304,040	31.2
2	India	132,888	13.6
3	South Korea	63,710	6.5
4	Saudi Arabia	59,945	6.1
5	Canada	27,240	2.8
6	Brazil	23,675	2.4
7	Taiwan	20,993	2.2
8	Japan	19,064	2.0
9	Vietnam	18,722	1.9
10	Mexico	17,052	1.7
11	Iran	11,338	1.2
12	United Kingdom	10,743	1.1
13	Turkey	10,724	1.1
14	Germany	10,193	1.0
15	Nigeria	9,494	1.0
16	Kuwait	9,034	0.9

Table 2 Continued.

17	France	8,743	0.9
18	Indonesia	8,188	0.8
19	Nepal	8,158	0.8
20	Hong Kong	8,012	0.8

From 2004-05 to 2014-15, there has been a slight shift in the top 20 places of origin (for instance, Japan ranked 4th in 2004-05 and fell to 8th in 2014-15); however, the number of international students from China, India and South Korea has steadily increased in the last 10 years. steadily come to the U.S. to pursue higher education.

Among international students, undergraduate students occupy 42.3 and 40.9 percent of the total in the academic year of 2004-05 and 2014-15, respectively, while graduate students occupy 46.8 and 37.2 percent of the total in the same academic years.

Table 3 and 4 show the number of international students by academic level in the academic year of 2004-05 and 2014-15.

Table 3

International students by academic level in 2004-5 (Institute of International Education, 2005)

Academic Level	International Students	% of Total
TOTAL UNDERGRADUATE	239,212	42.3
Associate's	65,667	11.6
Bachelor's	173,545	30.7
Freshman	29,780	5.3

Table 3 Continued.

Sophomore	26,351	4.7
Junior	33,947	6.0
Senior	45,431	8.0
Unspecified	38,036	6.7
TOTAL GRADUATE	264,410	46.8
Master's	121,523	21.5
Doctoral	102,084	18.1
Professional Training	7,675	1.4
Unspecified	33,128	5.9
TOTAL NON-DEGREE	61,417	10.9
Practical Training	32,999	5.8
Non-Degree, others	15,522	2.7
Intensive English Language	12,896	2.3
TOTAL	565,039	100.0

Table 4

International students by academic level in 2014-15 (Institute of International Education, 2015)

Academic Level	International Students	% of Total
TOTAL UNDERGRADUATE	398,824	40.9
Associate's	69,523	7.1
Bachelor's	329,301	33.8
Freshman	77,818	8.0
Sophomore	63,960	6.6
Junior	65,592	6.7

Table 4 Continued.

Senior	77,812	8.0
Bachelor's, Unspecified	44,119	4.5
TOTAL GRADUATE	362,228	37.2
Master's	208,355	21.4
Doctoral	118,104	12.1
Professional	10,218	1.0
Graduate, Unspecified	25,551	2.6
TOTAL NON-DEGREE	93,587	9.6
Practical training	120,287	12.3
Non-Degree, Intensive English	46,170	4.7
Non-Degree, Other	47,417	4.9
TOTAL	974,926	100.0

1.3.2 International Scholars in the U.S.

In the same vein, the number of foreign-born scholars in the academy in the U.S. reached 124,861 in the 2014-15 academic year, increasing by 28 percent from the 2004-05 academic year. In accordance with the top three places of origin for international students in the U.S., China, India, and South Korea took the first three places in the largest populations for international scholars. Table 5 and 6 show the top 20 largest international populations of scholars in the academic year of 2004-05 and 2014-15 in the U.S. with their places of origin.

Table 5

Top 20 places of origins of international scholars in the U.S. in the 2004-05 academic year (Institute of International Education, 2005)

Rank	Place of Origin	International Scholars	% of total
	World Total	89,634	-
1	China	17,035	19.6
2	Korea, Republic of	8,301	9.2
3	India	7,755	9.1
4	Japan	5,623	5.8
5	Germany	4,846	5.3
6	Canada	4,262	4.6
7	France	3,078	3.5
8	United Kingdom	3,185	3.4
9	Italy	2,565	3.1
10	Russia	2,420	2.5
11	Spain	2,043	2.3
12	Taiwan	1,543	1.8
13	Brazil	1,499	1.8
14	Israel	1,500	1.7
15	Turkey	1,427	1.4
16	Australia	1,183	1.3
17	Mexico	1,158	1.3
18	Netherlands	946	1.0
19	Poland	925	1.0
20	Argentina	825	0.9

Table 6

Top 20 places of origins of international scholars in the U.S. in the 2014-15 academic year (Institute of International Education, 2015)

Rank	Place of Origin	International Scholars	% of Total
	World Total	124,861	100.0
1	China	40,193	32.2
2	India	10,937	8.8
3	South Korea	7,415	5.9
4	Germany	5,318	4.3
5	Canada	4,611	3.7
6	Japan	4,511	3.6
7	Brazil	4,394	3.5
8	France	4,249	3.4
9	Italy	3,866	3.1
10	Spain	2,886	2.3
11	United Kingdom	2,635	2.1
12	Turkey	2,218	1.8
13	Taiwan	1,871	1.5
14	Mexico	1,646	1.3
15	Israel	1,522	1.2
16	Iran	1,475	1.2
17	Netherlands	1,162	0.9
18	Australia	1,019	0.8
19	Russia	1,010	0.8
20	Greece	920	0.7

The numbers in the above tables indicate that it is reasonable to expect a course run by a foreign-born faculty member in which many of the students are also foreign-born and who do not speak English as their first language. Purdue University, where this study was conducted, is a good representation of the internationalization of American universities.

1.4 Demographics of International Students and Faculty at Purdue University

Along with the increase in the overall number of international students and scholars in the U.S., Purdue University has so far been marked as one of the leading institutions, which has a large body of international students and scholars. It has been the host of students and scholars from more than 120 nationalities. Among the institutions of higher education in the U.S., Purdue University ranks 34th with 1125 international scholars and 5th with 9988 international students on campus (Institute and International Education, 2014). Table 7 shows the number of international scholars in the top 40 leading institutions in the U.S. in the academic year of 2013-14, and table 8 shows the number of international students in the top 20 leading institutes in the U.S. in the academic year of 2013-14².

Table 7

Number of international faculty in leading institutes in the U.S. in 2013-14 (Institute of International Education, 2014)

Rank	Institution	International Faculty
1	Harvard University	4,556
2	University of California - Berkeley	3,281

² The data of 2013-14 are presented here due to the inconsistency between the data of 2014-15 from Institute of International Education and that of 2014-15 from International Scholars and Students Office at Purdue University.

Table 7 Continued.

3	University of Michigan - Ann Arbor	3,274
4	Stanford University	3,230
5	Columbia University	3,064
6	University of California - Los Angeles	2,772
7	University of California - San Diego	2,722
8	Johns Hopkins University	2,634
9	University of California - Davis	2,496
10	Yale University	2,457
11	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	2,305
12	University of Wisconsin - Madison	2,033
13	University of Minnesota - Twin Cities	1,930
14	University of Illinois - Urbana-Champaign	1,899
15	Duke University and Medical Center	1,816
16	University of Pennsylvania	1,766
17	Ohio State University - Main Campus	1,740
18	University of California - San Francisco	1,706
19	University of Florida	1,676
20	University of Washington	1,578
21	University of Pittsburgh - Main Campus	1,571
22	University of Texas - Austin	1,507
23	University of Maryland - College Park	1,448
24	Northwestern University	1,392
25	University of Southern California	1,321
25	University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill	1,321
27	University of Arizona	1,255

Table 7 Continued.

28	University of California - Irvine	1,242
29	Cornell University	1,236
30	Emory University	1,210
31	Washington University in St. Louis	1,182
32	Michigan State University	1,172
33	University of Chicago	1,142
34	Purdue University - Main Campus	1,125
35	Penn State University - University Park	1,108
36	New York University	1,069
37	Rutgers University, The State University of New Jersey - New Brunswick & Camden	1,068
38	Boston University	1,057
39	Georgia Institute of Technology	1,026
40	University of Illinois - Chicago	1,006

Table 8

The number of international students in leading institutes in the U.S. in 2013-14 (Institute of International Education, 2014)

Rank	Institution	International Students
1	New York University	11,164
2	University of Southern California	10,932
3	University of Illinois - Urbana-Champaign	10,843
4	Columbia University	10,486

Table 8 Continued.

5	Purdue University - Main Campus	9,988
6	University of California - Los Angeles	9,579
7	Northeastern University	9,078
8	Arizona State University	8,683
9	Michigan State University	7,704
10	University of Washington	7,469
11	University of Michigan - Ann Arbor	7,273
12	Boston University	7,143
13	Penn State University - University Park	7,024
14	Ohio State University - Main Campus	6,800
15	Indiana University - Bloomington	6,661
16	University of Minnesota - Twin Cities	6,621
17	SUNY University at Buffalo	6,594
18	University of California - Berkeley	6,372
19	University of Texas - Dallas	6,296
20	University of Florida	6,135
21	University of Pennsylvania	6,024
22	University of Wisconsin - Madison	5,718
23	University of Texas - Austin	5,663
24	Texas A&M University	5,582

Table 8 Continued.

25	Carnegie Mellon University	5,501
	Top 25 Total (21.6% of all international students)	191,333

As international faculty members in the U.S. are concentrated in natural science, technology, and engineering fields (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006), Purdue's large body of international faculty and students is not surprising, due to the fact that the majority of colleges and schools at Purdue are concentrated in natural science, technology, and engineering fields. According to the 2013-14 report from International Scholar and Student Office (ISS) of Purdue University, a large number of international faculty members and international students are evident particularly in the fields of natural science, technology, and engineering. Table 9 and 10 show the number of international faculty members and students by areas in the academic year of 2013-14 at Purdue University.

Table 9

The number of international scholars at Purdue University by areas in 2013-14 (International Scholars and Students, 2014)

Areas	Count
Engineering	348
Agriculture	179
Physical Sciences	107
Biological and Biomedical Sciences	106
Health Sciences	60
Education	51
Others	50

Table 9 Continued.

Computer and Information Sciences	49
Business and Management	41
Mathematics	37
Letters	24
Communications	18
Social Sciences	16
Family and Consumer Sciences	12
Psychology	9
Foreign Language and Literature	6
Visual and Performing Arts	5
Philosophy and Religion	3
History	1
Total	1122

Table 10

The number of international students at Purdue University by areas and academic levels in 2013-14 (International Scholars and Students, 2014)

Area	Undergraduate	Graduate	Professional	Total
Engineering	1749	1617	-	3366
Science	922	584	-	1506
Management	842	389	-	1231
Liberal Arts	563	223	-	786
Health and Human Sciences	279	164	-	443
Agriculture	173	249	-	422

Table 10 Continued.

Technology	221	142	-	363
Non-Degree	174	7	-	181
Interdisciplinary Biochemistry	-	151	-	151
Pharmacy	40	61	23	124
Education	16	73	-	89
Veterinary Medicine	2	33	5	40
Total	4981	3693	28	8702

Following the current trend in the U.S., the largest international populations among the international faculty at Purdue, are from China (45%), India (7%), and South Korea (8%). The largest numbers of international students are as well from China (50%), India (16%), and South Korea (8%). Table 11 and Table 12 show the top 20 countries of origin of international faculty members and students, respectively.

Table 11

The number of international faculty members at Purdue University by country of origin (International Scholars and Students, 2014)

Rank	Country	Count
1	China	502
2	South Korea	93
3	India	88
4	Brazil	42
5	Italy	28
6	Taiwan	28
7	Germany	20

Table 11 Continued.

8	France	20
9	Mexico	19
10	Colombia	18
11	Turkey	18
12	Japan	17
13	Spain	16
14	Russia	13
15	Afghanistan	13
16	United Kingdom	13
17	Egypt	12
18	Canada	12
19	Pakistan	9
20	Ireland	6
	Others	135
	Total	1122

Table 12

The number of international students at Purdue University by country of origin (International Scholars and Students, 2014)

Rank	Country	Count
1	China	4323
2	India	1355
3	South Korea	733
4	Taiwan	232
5	Malaysia	176

Table 12 Continued.

6	Indonesia	95
7	Turkey	82
8	Colombia	74
9	Japan	72
10	Iran	69
11	Pakistan	68
12	Kazakhstan	67
13	Bangladesh	60
14	Canada	60
15	Mexico	59
16	Saudi Arabia	57
17	Brazil	56
18	Egypt	55
19	Germany	49
20	Hong Kong	49
	Others	884
	Total	8702

Based on the descriptive statistics above, it is undeniable that Purdue is truly a domain where a great number of encounters and interactions among international faculty members and students will occur. While many of the interactions among the international faculty members and students can be unsuccessful because of different cultural expectations a possible language barrier can as well exist among them due to the fact that they may have limited, if not restricted, command of English, which is the main communicative tool at Purdue as well as due to their unfamiliar accents to each other.

Therefore, this study will examine how non-native English speaking (NNES) graduate students perceive their NNES instructors' (including faculty members and other types of classroom instructors) "accented" and "broken" Englishes from a triangulated approach by utilizing surveys and interviews to have a broad, at the same time, thorough grasp of the NNES graduate students' perceptions toward the English of NNES instructors. Graduate students rather than undergraduate students are selected to be the participants in this study for three reasons. First, many of the graduate students would be more sympathetic to their instructors than undergraduate students since many of them will be seeking employment as faculty members in English-speaking positions after graduation. In other words, in the near future, they will be where their instructors are now, and their future selves are mirrored in their NNES instructors. Second, a relatively smaller amount of research has been done on the population of graduate students compared to that on undergraduate students despite the fact that graduate students occupy close to half of the student body in many of the schools in the U.S. Third, graduate students were selected to see what results could be drawn differently from those of Fox (1991), whose survey questions examining undergraduate students' perceptions toward international teaching assistants (ITAs), were partially adopted in my survey questions and interview questions.

1.5 Outline of the Chapters

Following the current chapter, the second chapter of this study provides a review of the literature regarding the attitudes and perceptions toward native and non-native English speakers and their speech. In the first part of the chapter, precedent studies on language attitudes and perceptions are discussed. This section includes an overview of

the previous research regarding different research approaches and factors affecting language attitudes and perceptions toward various accented Englishes. In the second part of the chapter, the perceptions and attitudes of native speakers of English toward non-native speakers of English are discussed. Various studies of language attitudes including the issues of ITAs (International teaching assistants) are provided in the section. In the third part of the chapter, it provides an examination of studies regarding various views on non-native Englishes and their speakers from different angles. In the last part of the chapter, the issues in relation to the extent of exposure to different varieties of English in Asian countries from which the majority of international students and scholars in institutions of higher education in the U.S come.

The third chapter consists of a description of the methodology of this study; detailed elaboration on the demographics of the survey and interview participants, the methods of data gathering, and data analysis is given.

The fourth chapter consists of an examination of the results from the survey questionnaires. In the first section of the chapter, a brief description of the survey participants and the questions modified from QUITA (Questionnaire of Undergraduates about ITA) (Fox, 1991) are provided. In the second section of the chapter, the findings and results from the survey data are discussed including some findings from the interview data to help understand the results of the survey data.

The fifth chapter consists of an examination of the results from the interviews. In the first section of the chapter, a brief description of the interview participants and the semi-constructed interview questions drawn from the survey questions of this study. In the second section of the chapter, the findings and results of the data from the interviews

are discussed with regard to the four themes emerged in the process of analyzing the interview data.

In the final chapter, I conclude with a summary of the findings of this study, pedagogical implication and limitations of this study, and the suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Attitudes and perceptions toward non-native English speakers and their speech have been dealt with in numerous studies for several decades in the field of EFL/ESL studies. In addition to the studies, a number of movements have developed in the field to argue and to support the legitimacy of the varieties of non-native English, particularly those that have been taught in English-learning classrooms.. However, English is not merely a subject taught in schools: Its importance has crossed the boundaries of the classroom to become the most important and powerful tool with which to be equipped in order to successfully communicate in various contexts.

One of these contexts, U.S. academia, serves as a good example of an area in which large populations from throughout the world gather to pursue higher education while using English as a primary tool of communication. However, participants in academia no longer hear American English only: With the large influx of international students and scholars, they must also be prepared to interact effectively with those who speak many different varieties of English. There are now multifaceted barriers between native English speakers and non-native English speakers and, at the same time, between non-native speakers and other non-native speakers. While studies on the issues between native English speakers and non-native English speakers flourished in the 1980s and the 1990s and a great number of follow-up studies were conducted later on, little attention

has been paid to the issues between non-native English speakers and other non-native English speakers. It would seem likely that non-native speakers would be more sympathetic with their fellow non-native speakers; unfortunately, this is not always the case. To understand the complex dynamics and to provide better support for possible miscommunication issues, studies regarding non-native English speakers' perceptions toward other non-native English speakers and toward their English are greatly needed.

The conceptual framework of this study has been influenced by discussions on language attitudes, the legitimacy of native versus that of non-native varieties of English, and the acceptance of English varieties in expanding circle countries. To better interpret and comprehend the background of the conceptual framework of this study and current issues related to it, a number of topics are discussed in the chapter.

In the following sections, the literature regarding the attitudes and perceptions toward native and non-native English speakers and their speech will be reviewed. First, previous research studies on language attitudes are discussed. This section includes an overview of the studies discussing different research approaches and factors that would affect how the participants of the studies perceive various accented Englishes and develop attitudes toward the speakers and their accented Englishes. Second, the perceptions and attitudes of native speakers of English toward non-native speakers are discussed. This section includes various studies on the issues of how native speakers perceive non-native speakers and their speech, and studies particularly on the issues of ITAs (international teaching assistants) in academia in the U.S. including Fox (1991)'s study which is the basis of this contextual research study. Third, issues related to how non-native speakers perceive and view native and non-native English speakers are

discussed. This section includes studies of how “standard” Englishes, such as American English or British English are conceptualized in the minds of non-native speakers, and studies on how this conception affects how non-native speakers perceive other non-native speakers and their speech. The fourth section discusses issues related to the extent of exposure to different varieties of English in Asian countries, from which the majority of international students in institutions of higher education in the U.S. come. Lastly, the fifth section discusses the research questions of this study based on the gap found in the literature review.

2.1 Language Attitudes

Research on language attitudes has long been a focus in the fields of sociolinguistics and sociopsychology. While Ihemere (2006) argues that “languages are not only objective, socially neutral instruments for conveying meaning, but are linked up with the identities of social or ethnic groups [and that this] has consequences for the social evaluation of, and the attitudes towards languages” (p. 194), many behaviorists and cognitive psychologists have looked at language attitudes in relation to various aspects of language. Language attitudes are in the form of consequences and cognitive outcomes produced by engaging in and with a certain language or a variety of the language, and they “are learned from previous experience, and that are not momentary but relatively ‘enduring’” (Agheyisi, 1970, p. 139). Early studies on language attitudes in the 1960s and 1970s, along with numerous studies on first language acquisition and development, focused on native varieties of a language. Lambert (1967), in an effort to understand language attitudes toward certain native accents and varieties of a language, developed a research technique called “the matched-guise” technique.

The “Matched-guise” research technique developed by Lambert (1967) has been utilized in several studies to understand the perceptions and attitudes toward different dialects of a language, language choice, and code switching in multilingual societies (e.g. Ball, 1983; Lai, 2007; Creber & Giles, 1983). The method was developed to look into the socio-psychological aspects of language use and attitudes toward it, particularly in the realm of bilingualism and language switching. This method has been utilized widely in the field of bilingualism in which many of the research participants are native-like, if not, native, speakers of two or more languages. The technique “makes use of language and dialect variations to elicit the stereotyped impressions or biased views which members of one social group hold of representative members of a contrasting group” (Lambert, 1967, p. 93). That is, a group of listeners, called “judges” in the study, listen to a passage read by a bilingual in two different languages or dialects, and their reactions to the languages or the dialects are measured in terms of personality characteristics on a scale of bipolar descriptors. For example, Creber and Giles (1983) used nineteen 7-point bipolar descriptors in a matched-guise test to rate each recording (called “stimulus voice” in their study) including status traits (e.g. Intelligent-Unintelligent; Educated-Uneducated), solidarity traits (e.g. Cold-Warm; Lower Class-Upper class). The following table shows a brief overview of the past studies using the matched-guise technique in relation to language attitudes.

Despite the frequency of utilization in research, the matched-guise technique can be seen as limited to look into language attitudes that involve non-native speakers and their speech. The contexts regarding language attitudes toward non-native speakers involve, to name a few, levels of proficiency in the language, cultural and social

stereotypes brought in to the accented language by the speaker's first language, linguistic features in the non-native speaker's speech that can create attitudes and perceptions toward the speaker, and most importantly, the successes and breakdowns of communication between the listener and the speaker.

In recent decades, research studies on language attitudes have been geared toward more interactive and contextual investigation using quantitative and qualitative approaches together. Mixed method research, which combines quantitative and qualitative data collection, is frequently used to understand language attitudes, particularly toward non-native speakers and their speech. The most frequently used mixture is to combine survey questionnaires and interviews to gain broad and detailed insights on a given research topic. The mixed method model of research is valuable in that it triangulates the validity of research results. For example, Fox (1991) utilized both survey questionnaires and interviews to investigate the perceptions and attitudes of American undergraduate students toward their international teaching assistants (ITAs). The mixed method design allowed Fox to broadly understand the trend in language attitudes of American undergraduate students toward ITAs through survey questionnaires and to look into how these language attitudes are expressed and permeated among undergraduate students and administrators at a college through in-depth interviews with the research participants.

As language attitudes can be driven by various factors, studies with regard to language attitudes were concerned with different variables. While many studies on language attitudes toward native varieties of a language were mainly concerned with how the varieties were viewed based on social features such as age and social class (Starks &

Paltridge, 1996), more dynamic factors can play a significant role in studies looking at language attitudes toward non-native speakers and their speech.

Intelligibility is one of the salient factors that affect language attitudes toward non-native speakers and their speech, which has been often neglected in studies of first language accents and varieties. Munro and Derwing (1995) explain intelligibility as it “may be broadly defined as the extent to which a speaker’s message is actually understood by a listener, but there is no universally accepted way of assessing it” (p. 76). Particularly, in an interaction between a speaker and listener, the extent of the speaker’s intelligibility can vary greatly depending on the listener. Among the studies on language attitudes, a number of studies connected language attitudes with intelligibility of native and non-native speakers’ speech. For example, Bresnahan, Ohashi, Nebashi, Liu, and Shearman (2002) looked at how perceived intelligibility can affect the judgments of listeners. Utilizing the matched-guise technique, 311 native and non-native speakers of English listened to three recordings of American English, intelligible foreign accent, and unintelligible foreign accent. The results show that the participants preferred the American accent over the foreign accents, and the intelligible foreign accent was considered more attractive than the unintelligible foreign accent.

On the flip side of the coin, as Major, Fitzmaurice, Bunta, and Balasubramanian (2002) notes that while “positive attitudes increase comprehension whereas negative attitudes decrease comprehension” (p. 187), listeners’ expectations can greatly affect the comprehension of speakers’ speech. In Rubin’s study (1992), participants listened to two identical speeches recorded by a native speaker of English with two different pictures attached to each recording—one was an Asian face and the other was a Caucasian face.

The results show that because the participants expected the Asian speaker to sound “non-native,” the participants scored the Asian speaker’s speech more foreign and accented. They also could recall more of what the Caucasian speaker delivered in the speech even though the two recordings were the same. In Fox’s study (1991), the findings also show that American undergraduate students complained about the “foreign” English of one of their instructors who was an American-born Asian American. Similarly, Brown (1992) and Taylor and Gardner (1970) found that country of origin can greatly affect responses when judging the language competence of a speaker.

Lindemann (2002) approached the issue in a more advanced way; Lindemann investigated the relationship between language attitudes and the perceived success of communication. Unlike other studies where participants were sitting in a lab and listening to given prompts, the native and non-native speakers of English in the study completed an interactional task together. The results show that language attitudes of native English-speaking participants affected the perceived success of interactions (including the extent of intelligibility of their non-native English-speaking interlocutors) between them and non-native English-speaking participants.

Level of proficiency in a second language can play a significant role in developing language attitudes. For instance, Dewaele and McClosley (2015) investigated how 2035 multilingual speakers perceived foreign accents on the basis of the participants’ personality, multilingualism (the number of languages that a participant can speak and the level of his/her proficiency in the languages), and sociobiographical variables (gender, experience of living abroad, experience of living in an ethnically diverse environment, and etc.). The results show that the participants who were more extroverted, emotionally

stable and tolerant of ambiguity were significantly less disturbed by the foreign accent of others. Also, the participants who were proficient in more languages tended to show more negative attitudes toward the foreign accent of others and their own.

2.2 Language Attitudes of Native Speakers Toward Non-native Speakers and their Speech

Issues entailed by the debates concerning the legitimacy of non-native speakers in classrooms have made their existence well known in the field of ESL/EFL studies. Numerous studies discussed the perceptions and attitudes toward non-native speakers; however, the majority of the studies discussing the attitudes toward NNES instructors have focused largely on classroom situations in which language is used as the main goal of learning (e.g. Braine, 2013; Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2002; Lindemann, 2005; Ling & Braine, 2007). English has made its presence well known not only as a language to learn in classrooms but also as a tool to communicate in various contexts. Attention therefore needs to be drawn to the classroom setting, where learning a language is not the main purpose of the classroom, but where “the teaching profession is of particular interest as a testing ground for questions of the role of attitudes to foreign accented speech in multilingual society, that is, in virtually all societies” (Boyd, 2003, p. 1). According to Boyd (2003), NNES instructors’ foreign-accented speech and their non-native English in a context where English is a medium of communication have been challenged by negative views and attitudes from society as well as from their students. In this section, the perceptions and attitudes toward NNES speakers from the perspective of native speakers will be discussed with regard to the perpetuating issue of ITAs (international teaching assistants) in the U.S.

2.2.1 In Native Speakers' Eyes: Perceptions Toward International Teaching Assistants (ITAs)

The "Oh No! Syndrome," is what Rao (1995) defines as "a first impression by homogeneous students to a perception that their teacher is very unlike other teachers and may have significant problems in speaking English" (p.3). This term has frequently been used to explain the disfavor of American undergraduate students toward international teaching assistants. To solve this perceived issue in colleges in the U.S, in a number of U.S. states, laws and policies, such as the "Instructors' Broken English Prompts Illinois Law," have been established in an effort to resolve problems related to NNES instructors in colleges (Thomas & Monoson, 1991; as cited in Rubin & Smith, 1990, p. 339). These laws require state colleges and universities to make sure that the English-speaking skills of those in teaching positions are adequate. However, the laws do not clearly define what "being proficient" means, and this has brought about a storm of discussions and arguments concerning the issue (Secter, 1987). Moreover, these laws view ITAs as the single source of the problem and ignore other factors that can affect the issue, such as negative linguistic and cultural stereotypes or cultural elitism (Rubin & Smith, 1990; Secter, 1987).

To investigate the possible factors affecting native English-speaking (NES) undergraduate students' perceptions and attitudes toward ITAs, Rubin and Smith (1990) conducted research on how undergraduate students at a large university perceive instructors based on their ethnicity, level of accentedness, and lecture topics. The results showed that the NES undergraduate participants rated the level of instructors' teaching abilities as lower when the degree of accentedness was higher. The researchers also

argued that many of the undergraduate participants did not have much overseas experience and might lack exposure to various kinds of accents in their home countries. Furthermore, they assumed that the participants who had more experience with ITAs, since they possibly had better listening comprehension with respect to foreign accents, viewed the ITAs more favorably. Consistent with the results of Rubin and Smith's study (1990), a finding by Li, Mazor, and Ju (2011) suggested that NES undergraduate students had pre-shaped ideas about ITAs and judged them before they actually had become acquainted with their ITAs.

Beyond the issues of cultural stereotypes and cultural elitism, pragmatics also plays an important role in communication between ITAs and undergraduate students. A study by Fox (1991) in which NES undergraduate participants were interviewed found that ITAs would be seen as "acceptable" not only when their English proficiency was at a "reasonable" level but also when the ways in which they communicated with students were comprehensible. The results of a study by Fitch and Morgan (2010) were also intriguing, particularly in relation to how NES undergraduate students define ITAs. The findings showed that some of the participants were perplexed by the ITAs' status; instead of acknowledging them as their instructors, they considered ITAs to be merely a group of people from foreign countries, distancing the ITAs from NES TAs they had. The interviewees, in general, believed that ITAs could be intelligent and smart, but voiced negative views in terms of the ITAs' English-speaking ability; they also reported witnessing fellow NES undergraduate students misbehaving in classes due to instructors' accented and "clumsy" English.

The studies on the perceptions and attitudes of NES undergraduate students toward ITAs in the U.S. are a good reference to understand the miscommunication issues between native speakers and non-native speakers of English to develop aids to possibly resolve the miscommunication issues such as extra language support for ITAs. However, the growing influx of international populations into U.S. institutions of higher education has turned the situation into a more complex one, where both interlocutors in a communication are non-native speakers.

2.3 The Non-native English speakers' perspective: Attitudes of Non-native English Speakers Toward Standardized Varieties of English and Non-native Englishes

The positive attitudes of non-native English speakers toward standardized English have been demonstrated in many previous studies (e.g. Jarvella et al., 2001; Mckenzie, 2004; Mckenzie, 2008; Xue & Lee, 2014). While there has been abundant research on issues concerning the attitudes of “native speakers” toward non-native Englishes and of non-native speakers toward native Englishes, little attention has been paid to the ways in which non-native speakers may perceive other non-native Englishes differently from their own. In a language-classroom setting, Boyd (2003) showed that not only “native speakers” of a language, but also non-native speakers, have negative views of non-native speakers. Those participants in the study who had a lower level of proficiency in Swedish and learned Swedish as their second language made more negative comments about non-native Swedish teachers than those who grew up in a monolingual Swedish context. Furthermore, the less proficient students voiced the attitude that the “native-speaker”-like level of language proficiency is the most important qualification for a teacher to be viewed as skilled. Liu and Tannacito's study (2013) showed similar results; the

participants in the study revealed a strong preference for native speakers, and negative perceptions toward their Taiwanese instructor, who received his degree in Russia, were shown due to his perceived “weird” accent. However, Boyd (2003) and Liu and Tannacito (2013) were solely concerned with second-language instruction, in which language is the main concern in the classroom. It is necessary to look beyond the English language learning classroom setting, where language is not the main subject of learning but rather the medium of other subjects.

A few studies were conducted on attitudes toward both native and non-native varieties of English. For instance, Xu, Wang, and Case (2012) looked at how Chinese learners of English viewed American, British, and Chinese English, as well as their attitudes toward those varieties of English. During the interviews, many participants were confused by the plural form of English—Englishes—and were unaware of the existence of varieties of English other than American English or British English. Some degree of explanation was required for them to realize what the term “Englishes” meant. In the survey, the participants showed more favorable attitudes toward standardized varieties of native English (American and British). The findings in Xu et al. (2012)’s study closely relate to a lack of exposure to different varieties of English in many Asian countries and to the cultural and social “baggage” a language carries. Since standardized native English (either American or British) is the main goal to be achieved for English learners in most Asian countries, the learners are not sufficiently exposed to (or informed of) other varieties of English. Neither are they aware that the English they speak—in accent and in use—likely includes features transferred from their own native language. Even though they acknowledge other varieties of English, such as Hong Kong English or Singapore

English, few schools teach the varieties as a model to emulate. Similarly, the Japanese participants in a study by Chiba, Matsuura, and Yamamoto (1995) rated American English most positively; the researchers concluded that this was the result of significant exposure to that particular variety in Japanese classroom settings.

Unlike these studies, Lee, Mo, Lee, and Sung (2013) focused more on the non-native to non-native dynamics and examined how Korean speakers view English spoken by Chinese, Japanese, and Korean native speakers. A survey was also implemented to investigate the participants' awareness of world Englishes and their attitudes toward native varieties of English. The findings showed that the participants acknowledged the difficulties in reaching "nativelikeness" and that having an accent is not the only obstacle to successful communication. However, regardless of the difficulties, more than half the participants admitted having a standardized form of native English as their learning goal. In addition, most of the participants revealed negative views of all three non-native varieties of English; the English used by a Chinese speaker was rated especially harshly. Furthermore, none of the participants voiced a desire to have any of the non-native speakers of English as their English instructor. The narrow attitudes of the Korean participants toward the Asian varieties of English can be projected to the general perceptions of those varieties in Asian countries; Asian learners of English consider their Asian varieties to be less legitimate than the native varieties of English.

Another study was done by Crismore, Ngeow, and Soo (1996) regarding attitudes of Malaysian learners of English towards native varieties of English and Malaysian English. The respondents expressed their awareness on the functionality of Malaysian English, but they reported that the Malaysian variety is not a valid English but an English to be

corrected. They also commented that standard native varieties of English would be the main goal for them to pursue in the process of learning English.

There are a few studies that showed conflicting results from the aforementioned studies. For example, Bernaisch (2012) probed the attitudes of Sri Lankan participants towards native varieties of English and the Sri Lankan variety of English. British English was rated as the most highly favorable, but interestingly, Sri Lankan English showed the second most positive results followed by American English. Unlike the results of Lee et al. (2013), many of the participants were viewing their own variety of English favorably and positively.

2.4 Exposure to Different Varieties of English in Asian Countries

It is commonly understood in the field of teaching English as a second or foreign language that “one of the chief goals of most second language learners is to be understood in their second language by a wide range of interlocutors in a variety of contexts.” (Munro and Derwing, 1999, p. 285). However, particularly in EFL contexts in many Asian countries, a single variety of English has superiority over any other varieties, such as American English in South Korea and Japan. English-learning materials that are available to the learners in those countries are primarily the sole target inner circle variety; the learners in these circumstances tend to fallaciously think that they will solely need to understand native speakers of the variety of English and be understood by them. While non-native-like accents are prone to be considered as “imperfect” and the learners are striving to achieve native-like proficiency of the inner circle variety, exposure to varieties of outer circle and expanding circle Englishes are highly restricted. Jeon (2009) well describes the current situation in South Korea with an example of EPIK (English

Program in Korea) on how only inner circle varieties are seen as authentic and superior over other varieties of English. Jeon argues that, with the lead of Korean government, the ideology of native speakers as ideal teachers has gradually permeated English education of Korea.

The amount of exposure to a certain accent can greatly affect the magnitude of how much a listener can understand accented English when it is encountered (Li et al., 2011; Lindenman, 2005; Rubin, 1990). Unfortunately, in many Asian countries, exposure to various types of English is highly limited. In Asian EFL contexts, “It is a rather arduous task to arouse students’ attention to world Englishes” (Chiba et al., 1995), as the students in expanding circle countries (Kachru, 1985) have a smaller chance to be exposed to varieties of English other than American or British English. For instance, English education in Korea aims for Korean students to be fluent in American English, and it is the only language that characterizes one as socially privileged (Ahn, 2014). As a TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) or a TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score is required to apply for a job or graduate school, studying English does not end as a school subject but continues as one of the significant aspects of being successful in Korean society. Learning American English and becoming highly fluent in it is the key to success in Korea.

The TOEFL, the most widely used test for those pursuing higher education, also promotes the fallacy of native speakerism by using only inner circle Englishes in the test. As of 2013, TOEFL has included a range of accents in English besides American English to test the test takers’ ability to understand different accents; however, it is only limited to “native” speakers of English from inner circle countries such as United Kingdom,

Australia and New Zealand. This creates a fallacy in which learners believe that they would only encounter “native” speakers of English when they eventually enter the institutes of higher education in the U.S. The reality is that the communication skills, particularly in listening comprehension, American universities requires is to be acquainted with many more various accents. Due to the fact that the number of international faculty members in American universities has increased dramatically in the past decades, the interlocutors in academic settings in the U.S. have to successfully demonstrate high comprehension skills for outer circle (i.e., Indian English or Singaporean English) and expanding circle Englishes (i.e., China English or Korean English).

In addition, the establishment of inner circle varieties of English as norms in expanding circle countries (Kachru, 1985) has created both an explicit and an implicit power hierarchy between “native speakers” and non-native speakers (Ling & Braine, 2007). Likewise, English education in Asian countries places great emphasis on getting “closer” to standardized English (in this case, American English); any other accented or non-standardized Englishes are considered to be interlanguages or broken English. Exposure to outer circle or expanding circle Englishes other than American English and their own variety is very rare. Xu et al. (2012), in their study, argue that the Chinese participants preferred the standardized native English accent over non-standardized and non-native varieties due to the education they received in schools and through textbooks; the native models in their English education shaped their favorable perceptions of native accents. Several studies (e.g., Evans & Imai, 2011) have revealed that Japanese learners of English also consider American English to be a goal and a benchmark in the journey of

English learning. The situation is not much different in Korea: Every year, a significant number of Korean students come to the United States to pursue higher education. Among them, many of the graduate students who are freshly arrived from Korea do not expect to encounter a large body of NNES instructors; moreover, they are not ready to understand and to process “non-standardized” Englishes. They are already encumbered with the expectation that they perform to the best of their ability while having limited control of the language and, at the same time, having to face unfamiliar varieties of English in high-stakes situations. The negative social mindsets toward non-standardized Englishes that the graduate students witnessed at home in Korea may well continue to be manifested in their minds; it is thus likely that they would find non-American, accented Englishes as varieties to avoid.

2.5 Research Questions

In light of the findings from previous research and the lack of attention to date on the perceptions non-native, English-speaking graduate students have of NNES instructors, I conducted a study to investigate four dimensions of this relationship:

- (1) What are NNES graduate students’ perceptions of NNES instructors’ Englishes?
- (2) How do NNES graduate students deal with the situations where there are communication breakdowns with their NNES instructors?
- (3) Do NNES graduate students have a preference for specific varieties of English? If so, what motivates these preferences?
- (4) What, if any, factors, other than accent and use of English, affect NNES graduate students’ views of NNES instructors?

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Triangulating research data through mixed methods and measures is most frequently used in social science studies to gain both quantitative and qualitative information to strengthen the precision of data analysis (Perlesz & Lindsay, 2003). In this study, a mixed method utilizing a survey and follow-up interviews were employed for methodological triangulation.

3.2 Participants

Non-native English-speaking (NNES) graduate students who were enrolled in ENGL 620 (Oral Communication in English for International Graduate Students) from Spring 2015 to Fall 2015 at Purdue university were recruited to participate in the study. The participant pool was selected due to the fact that the majority of the NNES graduate students enrolled in ENGL 620 were mainly from the programs where a great number of their instructors are non-native speakers of English and from diverse first language backgrounds. Therefore, it was assumed that the students in ENGL 620 are likely to have much interaction with their instructors who do not speak English as their first language. For specific information about the numbers of foreign-born faculty members, see Section 1.4.

At Purdue, a score of 27 in the speaking section of TOEFL is required for international graduate students to become teaching assistants. Those who do not have a score above 27 in the speaking section of TOEFL are required to take the Oral English Proficiency Test (OEPT) provided by Oral English Proficiency Program (OEPP). Purdue offers ENGL 620 for international graduate students who did not meet the bar score of 50 in the OEPT (the score range is 35, 40, 45, 50, and 55). ENGL 620 is a semester-long course; students have two 110-minute long classes, a 30-minute long conference with the instructor, and a 50-minute long tutoring session with the tutor every week for 15 weeks. The graduate students who receive a 35 are not eligible to take the course as their proficiency of English is not high enough for them to succeed in ENGL 620. The graduate students who receive a 40 need to take the course and be certified by the instructor before they start teaching, while those who receive a 45 must take the course but cannot work as teaching assistants at the same time. Therefore, the scores of the graduate students registered in ENGL 620 range from 40 to 45. The students are primarily distributed into sections of 40s and 45s, while some sections have a mixture of students who have received scores of 40 and 45. With the maximum capacity of 8 students for each section of ENGL 620, the number of sections open per Fall and Spring semesters is in general slightly more than 10, and only two sections are available for Summer semesters. During the time this study was conducted, there were 11 sections open in Spring 2015, 2 sections in Summer 2015, and 13 sections in Fall 2015.

3.2.1 Survey Participants

In the beginning of the semesters, a link to an online survey using Qualtrics to investigate students' perceptions toward NNES instructors' accented Englishes was first

distributed to the instructors of ENGL 620. The email sent to the instructors contained a brief introduction and the purpose of this study, and an invitation to participate in this study; the link that was attached to the email led the willing participants to the online survey (See Section 4.2 for the survey questions). The survey was completely voluntary; the instructors did not provide any extra credits or other benefits to those who would participate in the study. 161 participants responded to the survey, and the return rate was approximately 78%. Table 13 shows the demographics of the survey participants by their majors.

Table 13

Majors of the survey participants (N=161)

Major	Count	Percent
Civil Engineering	18	11.18%
Electrical Computer Engineering	16	9.94%
Mechanical Engineering	15	9.32%
Business and management	13	8.07%
Physics	11	6.83%
Aeronautics and Astronautics	10	6.21%
Computer Science	7	4.35%
Information Technology	7	4.35%
Statistics	7	4.35%
Education	5	3.11%
Agricultural Biological Engineering	4	2.48%
Art & Design	4	2.48%
Biology	4	2.48%
Agricultural Economics	3	1.86%

Table 13 Continued.

Agronomy	3	1.86%
Hotel Tourism Management	3	1.86%
Life Science	3	1.86%
Material Engineering	3	1.86%
Mathematics	3	1.86%
Biomedical Engineering	2	1.24%
Chemical Engineering	2	1.24%
Economics	2	1.24%
Industrial Engineering	2	1.24%
Nutrition Science	2	1.24%
Political Science	2	1.24%
Botany	1	0.62%
Chemistry	1	0.62%
Communication	1	0.62%
Earth, Science, Atmospheric	1	0.62%
History	1	0.62%
Horticulture	1	0.62%
Human Development and Family Studies	1	0.62%
Linguistics	1	0.62%
Literature	1	0.62%
Pharmacy	1	0.62%
Total	161	100%

The majority of the participants were in science and engineering majors. Besides the fact that the majority of the majors are concentrated in natural science, technology, and engineering fields at Purdue, another reason for this is that the ENGL620 course is offered to international graduate students who are not eligible to become teaching assistants due to their insufficient iBT TOEFL score in speaking (27). At Purdue, many

of the international students in science, technology, and engineering departments are admitted as research assistants initially with a sufficient overall iBT TOEFL score (80 is the bar score at Purdue for most of the departments in science, technology, and engineering), while the score in the speaking section is below 27. When they are later assigned to become teaching assistants based on their departments' regulations, they need to take the OEPT to demonstrate that they have adequate oral proficiency in English. As mentioned before, they have to be enrolled in ENGL620 unless they receive a score of 50 or above in the OEPT.

As for their first language backgrounds, more than 50 percent of the participants spoke Chinese (85 respondents) as their first language, followed by Korean (42 respondents) and Spanish (9 respondents). Table 14 shows the first languages of the respondents who participated in the survey.

Table 14

First languages of survey participants

Language	Count	Percentage
Mandarin Chinese	85	52.80%
Korean	42	26.09%
Spanish	9	5.59%
Malayalam	6	3.73%
Japanese	5	3.11%
Hindi	3	1.86%
Marathi	3	1.86%
Arabic	2	1.24%
Bahasa Indonesian	1	0.62%
Bengali	1	0.62%

Table 14 Continued.

Cantonese	1	0.62%
Pashto	1	0.62%
Turkish	1	0.62%
Vietnamese	1	0.62%
Total	161	100%

Among the 161 respondents, more than 70% were younger than 30 years old and more than 90% of them were Asian. Table 15 and 16 show the range of their ages, and their racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Table 15

Age range of the survey participants

Age range	Count	Percentage
21-23	31	19.25%
24-26	50	31.06%
27-29	34	21.12%
30-32	23	14.29%
33+	23	14.29%
Total	161	100%

Table 16

Racial and ethnical backgrounds of the survey participants

Racial/Ethnical Background	Count	Percentage
Asian	147	91.30%
Hispanic	8	4.97%

Table 16 Continued.

Caucasian	3	1.86%
Others	3	1.86%
African American	0	0.00%
Total	161	100%

3.2.2 Interview Participants

At the end of the online survey, a question was attached to ask about the willingness of survey respondents to take part in a follow-up interview to further investigate their experiences with and perceptions toward non-native English speaking instructors' accented Englishes. The question had a blank space where the willing respondents could leave their email address to participate in a 40-minute interview. Nine respondents left their emails and were contacted. After their participation in an interview was confirmed, a pseudonym was given to each interview participant. Their majors and language backgrounds are shown in Table 17.

Table 17

Names (Pseudonyms), majors, and first languages of interview participants

Interviewee	Major	First Language
Chunghe-C	Civil Engineering	Mandarin Chinese
Feng-C	Civil Engineering	Mandarin Chinese
Mengzhi-C	Life Science	Mandarin Chinese
Songji-C	Statistics	Mandarin Chinese
Tianxuan-C	Economics	Mandarin Chinese
Shenka-I	Material Engineering	Hindi

Table 17 Continued.

Baek-hyun-K	Agricultural Economics	Korean
Dong-jun-K	Civil Engineering	Korean
Myung-won-K	Mechanical Engineering	Korean

As the majority of the survey participants consist of the international graduate students from China and Korea, Mandarin Chinese and Korean were dominant in the first languages of the interviewees. Four interviewees were from mainland China, speaking Mandarin as their first language, three were from South Korea, speaking Korean as their first language, and one was from India speaking, Hindi as her first language.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

3.3.1 Survey Data Collection and Analysis

The survey items for the questionnaire were taken from QUITA (Questionnaires of Undergraduates about International Teaching Assistants), developed by Fox (1991), and modified to suit the target participants and research questions of the present study. Originally, Fox's survey consisted of three parts: (1) three questions about experience with international teaching assistants, (2) thirty-seven questions about undergraduate students' preference on international teaching assistants on a scale from 1 to 5, and (3) seventeen questions about undergraduate students' background information, including their current information, residence and school background, and their international or cross-cultural experience. The questions used in the survey of this study were mainly taken from the second part of Fox's survey and modified to understand the perceptions of NNES graduate students toward NNES instructors' accented English.

As the target audience of the survey in Fox (1991)—native English-speaking undergraduate students—was different from this study, a process of sorting and selecting questions was required. After careful scrutiny to select the suitable survey questions from Fox's list, two rounds of reviews were conducted to confirm the appropriateness of the questions. First the questions were reviewed by a well-known scholar whose major research interest is sociolinguistics. She was also a member of Fox's dissertation committee; several questions were removed and revised according to her comments and suggestions. The second round of review was conducted with the help of my acquaintances who were international graduate students at Purdue. The survey was first distributed to my acquaintances (N=5) and then forwarded to their acquaintances. A total number of 30 participants responded and questions were once again removed and revised according to the survey results. Through this review process, twenty-three questions were developed to investigate the background information of respondents, and their perceptions and preferences toward NNES instructors' accented English.

With the developed survey questions, an online survey was created using Qualtrics. I discussed my research with the instructors' of ENGL 620 in the first instructor meeting in the beginning of each semester when the study was conducted, and asked for their help to distribute the online survey to their current students. Upon their consent, I sent them the invitation email containing a brief introduction and the statement of the purpose of this study, and the link that led the willing participants to the online survey. The instructors introduced this study and the purpose of this research, and forwarded the invitation email to their students. The students who were willing to

participate in this study went ahead and filled in the survey during their free time outside of the classroom.

When the survey was closed, data collected by Qualtrics were exported to Microsoft Excel 2015 to be organized.

3.3.2 Interview Data Collection and Analysis

Based on the online survey questions, I developed the semi-structured interview questions to further investigate the individual experiences of NNES graduate students with NNES instructors and better understand their perceptions toward NNES instructors' accented Englishes. The interview questions asked for background information of the participants, their overall experience with NNES instructors, any issues and problems they had encountered due to NNES instructors' accented Englishes, and their comparative experiences with NNES instructors and native English-speaking (NES) instructors.

Nine willing participants who left their email address in the last question of the online survey were contacted as soon as the survey was closed. An invitation email to the second phase of the study—interview—was sent to them. The invitation emails contained a thank-you note for their willingness to participate in an interview session, a description of the interview session, and a question to ask about their available times. According to their available and preferred times, the interview schedule was created. The participants were individually invited to my office on campus at Purdue where I conducted a 40-minute interview with them. The interviews started with the semi-structured questions that were prepared previously, and further questions were asked to the participants

according to their responses to the prepared questions. Upon their consent, the interviews were audio-recorded.

All the interview recordings were transcribed by me and first coded according to the interview questions created based on the research questions. In the primary coded data, three distinct themes emerged. The four themes were: (1) the amount of encounters between NNES instructors and NNES graduate students; (2) NNES instructors' accented English and communication issues; (3) NNES instructors' ability as teachers; and (4) approaches solving issues between NNES instructors and NNES graduate students. According to the themes, the segments of the data were organized.

CHAPTER 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND SURVEY FINDINGS

The previous chapters presented the introduction to and the purpose of this study, the review of related literature, and the research methodology. In this chapter the analysis of the data gathered by utilizing a survey is discussed. The chapter primarily discusses survey findings; however, some of the data from interviews are included to help understanding the survey findings.

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, a brief description of survey participants will be provided. In the next section, the survey questions that were modified from QUITA (Fox, 1991)—Questionnaire of Undergraduates about ITA—to understand the perceptions of non-native English-speaking (NNES) graduate students toward NNES instructors are presented. Finally, the results and findings from the survey data are discussed under four extracted themes. In this section, some findings from the interview data are included to help understanding the results of the survey data.

4.1 Survey Participants

The survey participants were recruited from sections of ENGL620, an oral communication course for international graduate students aspiring to become teaching assistants. The survey was distributed throughout two semesters from Spring 2014 to Fall 2015. A total of 161 participants responded to the survey. Approximately 52 percent of the participants spoke Chinese as their first language, and Korean was spoken by 26

percent of the participants as their first language. The majority of the participants were majoring in science and engineering related fields of study. For detailed information about the survey participants, see Section 3.2.1. in Chapter 3.

4.2 Survey Questions

In this section, the questions used in the survey are presented under the four themes of the survey results. Questions 1 to 4 asked for the participants' demographic information, such as their first language, major, age, and racial background; Question 5 to 6 asked about the amount of encounters between non-native English-speaking (NNES) instructors and NNES graduate students; Questions 7 to 9 asked about the participants' perceptions toward NNES instructors' English and communication issues; Questions 10 to 12 asked questions under the theme of NNES instructors' ability as teachers; lastly, Questions 13 to 16 asked about how the participants approach solving issues between them and their NNES instructors. Table 18 shows the four themes and each survey question under the themes.

Table 18

Themes and survey questions

Themes and Questions
<u>Demographic questions</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is your age group? 2. Which department are you from? 3. What is your first language? 4. What is your predominant ethnic/racial background?
<u>Theme 1. The amount of encounter between NNES instructors and NNES graduate students</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. How many courses have you had with non-native English-speaking (NNES) professors/instructors? 6. How many of these courses have you had with NNES professors/instructors in your major field(s)?

Table 18 Continued.

<p><u>Theme 2. NNES instructors' English and communication issues</u></p> <p>7. Did you have any problems with NNES instructors?</p> <p>8. If I got an NNES instructor with a strong foreign accent, I would try to transfer to a different section of the course.</p> <p>9. If I could choose the section of a course myself, one of my main criteria would be to get into a section taught by an NES instructor.</p>
<p><u>Theme 3. NNES instructors' ability as teachers</u></p> <p>10. There are many NNES instructors who teach just as effectively as NES instructors.</p> <p>11. I can learn just as well from an NNES instructor as I can from an NES instructor.</p> <p>12. On the whole, NNES instructors show about the same level of concern for students as NES instructors do.</p>
<p><u>Theme 4. Approaches solving issues between NNES instructors and NNES graduate students</u></p> <p>13. When there are communication problems between students and NNES instructors, students can do very little to improve the situation.</p> <p>14. If I have trouble understanding an NNES instructor, I would talk with him or her about it during office hours.</p> <p>15. As a student, I would be willing to make adjustments in my speaking and listening styles in order to communicate better with an NNES instructor.</p> <p>16. It is not reasonable to expect students to make listening and/or speaking adjustments in order to communicate with NNES instructors.</p>

4.3 Survey Findings

In this section, each survey question is addressed and findings from the survey results are discussed under four extracted themes. As Question 1 to Question 4 were to ask for the demographic information of the respondents, the findings of the survey results are discussed from Question 5. I included some of the data gathered from the interviews with interview participants to help understand the results of the survey and the findings. An in-depth discussion on the findings of the interviews will be presented in Chapter 5. Written comments of the survey participants from the survey and interview excerpts

remain intact with grammatical errors unless the meaning in the comments and interview excerpts is highly unclear.

4.3.1 Theme 1: The Amount of Encounters Between NNES Instructors and NNES Graduate Students

The responses to the survey questions under Theme 1 explain how many encounters NNES instructors and NNES graduate students have at Purdue University. Question 5 asked the participants for the number of courses they had taken with NNES instructors at Purdue University. Figure 1 shows the number of courses that the participants had taken with NNES instructors.

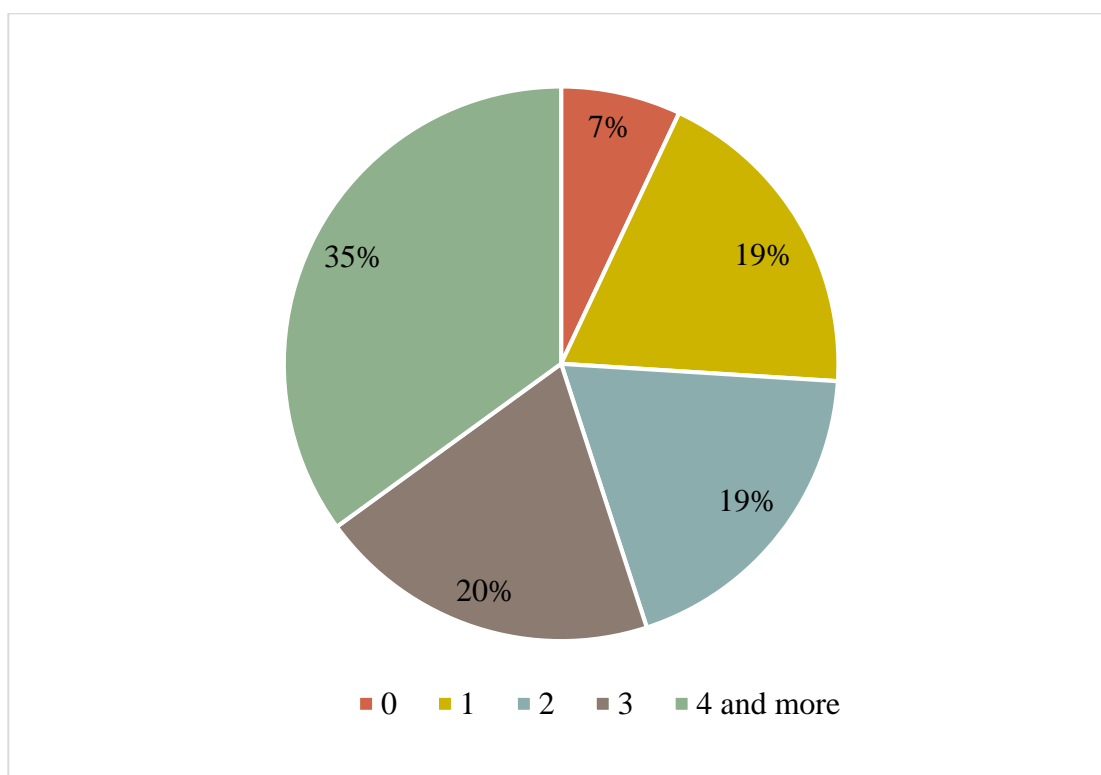


Figure 1. Q5 How many courses have you taken with NNES instructors?

As shown in Figure 1, 93% (N=150) of the respondents had taken at least one course with a NNES instructor. 35% (N=46) took more than 4 courses with NNES instructors, while

20% had taken 3 courses, 19% had taken 2 courses, and 19% had taken 1 course with NNES instructors, respectively.

Interview participants also commented that they had had multiple courses with NNES instructors. When they asked how many courses they had had with NNES instructors, many of them emphasized they had “a lot of” and “lots and lots” of courses with NNES instructors. Baek-hyun-K, a Ph.D. student in Agricultural Economics, had just finished the first year of his Ph.D. program and took more than 5 courses with NNES instructors from China, Eastern European countries, South America, and India, while he had one NES instructor in his first year. Feng-C, a Ph.D. student in Civil Engineering, took multiple courses with instructors from Italy, France, Spain, and India³. Feng did not take any courses with instructors from China as he intentionally avoided Chinese instructors—even though he is from China as well—because he found their accent very annoying to listen to. The other interview participants also took several courses with instructors from China, South Korea, India, and European countries.

The findings from the survey and interviews confirm that the interaction between NNES graduate students and NNES instructors is inevitable at Purdue University, where there can be possible communication barriers due to the limited intelligibility and comprehensibility of the accents of NNES instructors’ English caused by a number of factors. One possible factor can be unfamiliarity with the accents of NNES instructors’ English since the majority of the international graduate students are from China and South Korea at Purdue as are the participants in the survey. English is taught in schools

³ Feng-C was not sure which East European countries the instructors were from but he assumed they were from Poland and Rumania. He was also not sure which country in South America his Spanish-speaking instructor was from.

as a subject in China and South Korea, and a certain standard of English such as American English or British English is the goal of English education. As a result, there is not much exposure to diverse varieties of English at the same time, native-like English is the “optimal and ideal” model for English learners in these countries. While they are encountering NNES instructors from multiple different language backgrounds in their classrooms, the unfamiliarity with diverse varieties and accents can pose a big obstacle for NNES graduate students to comprehend and understand NNES instructors’ accents that are different from those of the standard English they learned back in their home countries. Furthermore, in the interviews, except for Shenka-I (Indian), the rest of the interview participants commented that they had not expected as many NNES instructors as they encountered before they came to Purdue University. This shows that many of Asian students who make up the majority of the body international students at Purdue University as well as in the U.S., might not be fully aware of the diversified population in the universities in the U.S., particularly for instructors they receive lectures from. The restricted awareness of Asian students of how multi-cultural and -linguistic environments they would encounter can lead them to a false assumption where they only need to train their ears to understand “standard” American English to be successful students in the U.S.

On the other hand, 7% (N=11) of the participants responded that they had never had a class with NNES instructors. As many departments require their international graduate students with non-passing scores on either the TOEFL speaking section or the OEPT to take ENGL 620 in their first year, a number of participants in the survey are likely to be in their first semester of graduate study. 7% of the participants who had not taken any courses with NNES instructors are possibly in their first year of graduate study

and likely to have an NNES instructor in the near future even though they had not had any so far. Among the 7% of the participants who had never had a class with NNES instructors, some of them might have intentionally avoided taking courses with NNES instructors.

Survey Question 6 asked the participants for the number of courses they had taken with NNES instructors in their majors or field of study. Figure # shows the number of courses that the participants had taken with NNES instructors in their major/field of study.

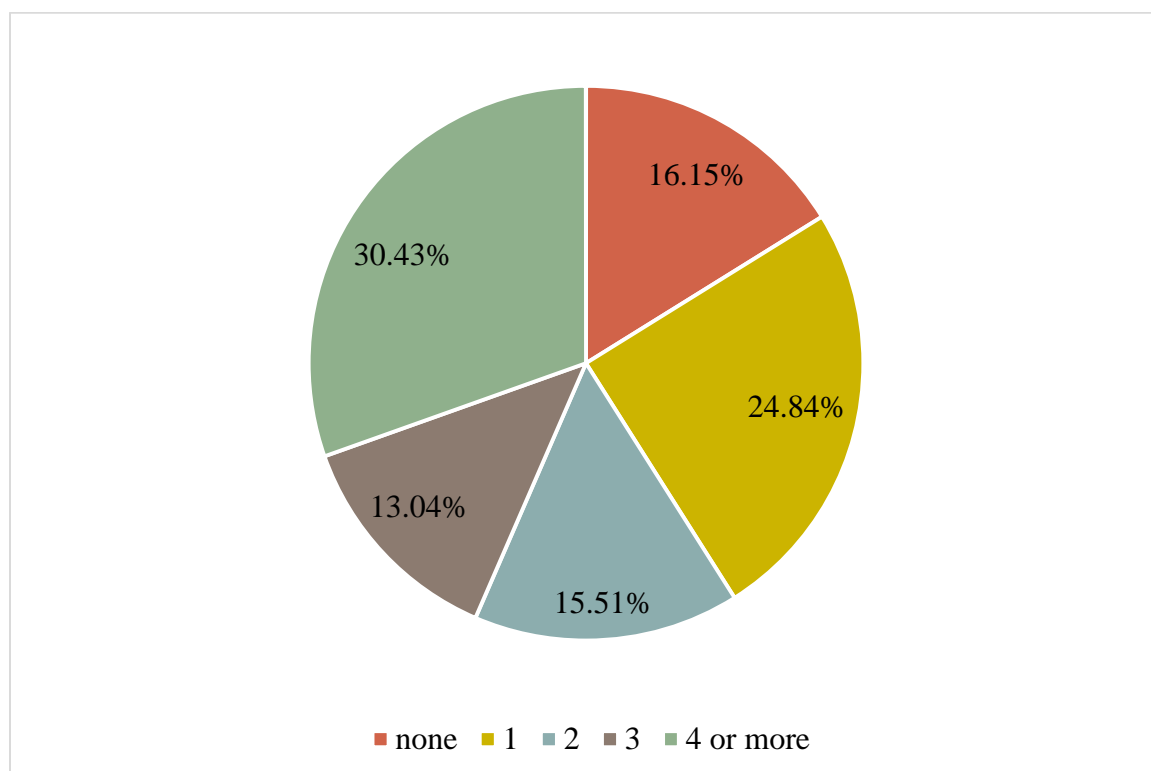


Figure 2. Q6 How many courses have you taken with NNES instructors in your major/field?

As shown in Figure 2, close to 84% of the participants had taken at least one course with NNES instructors in their field of study. Among them, approximately 30% (N=49) of the

participants had taken 4 or more courses with NNES instructors in their field of study, while approximately 16% (N=26) of the participants had not taken any courses with NNES instructors in their major. The reason why fewer participants (7%) had not taken any courses with NNES instructors overall and more participants (16.15%) in their majors can be explained by the fact that there are multiple core mathematics courses that graduate students from engineering and science majors have to take to fulfill graduation requirements. According to the two interview participants, Chenghe-C in Civil Engineering, and Myung-won-K in Mechanical Engineering, several mathematics courses that are offered outside of their majors have to be taken in the beginning of their graduate study and many of them are taught by NNES instructors.

4.3.2 Theme 2: NNES Instructors' English and Communication Issues

The responses to the survey questions under Theme 2 explain the communication issues that NNES instructors and NNES graduate students had due to NNES instructors' English. Under the second theme, survey Question 7 asked if the participants had any problems with their NNES instructors, and, if any, they commented on what kind of issues they had with their NNES instructors. Figure 3 shows the results of Q7.

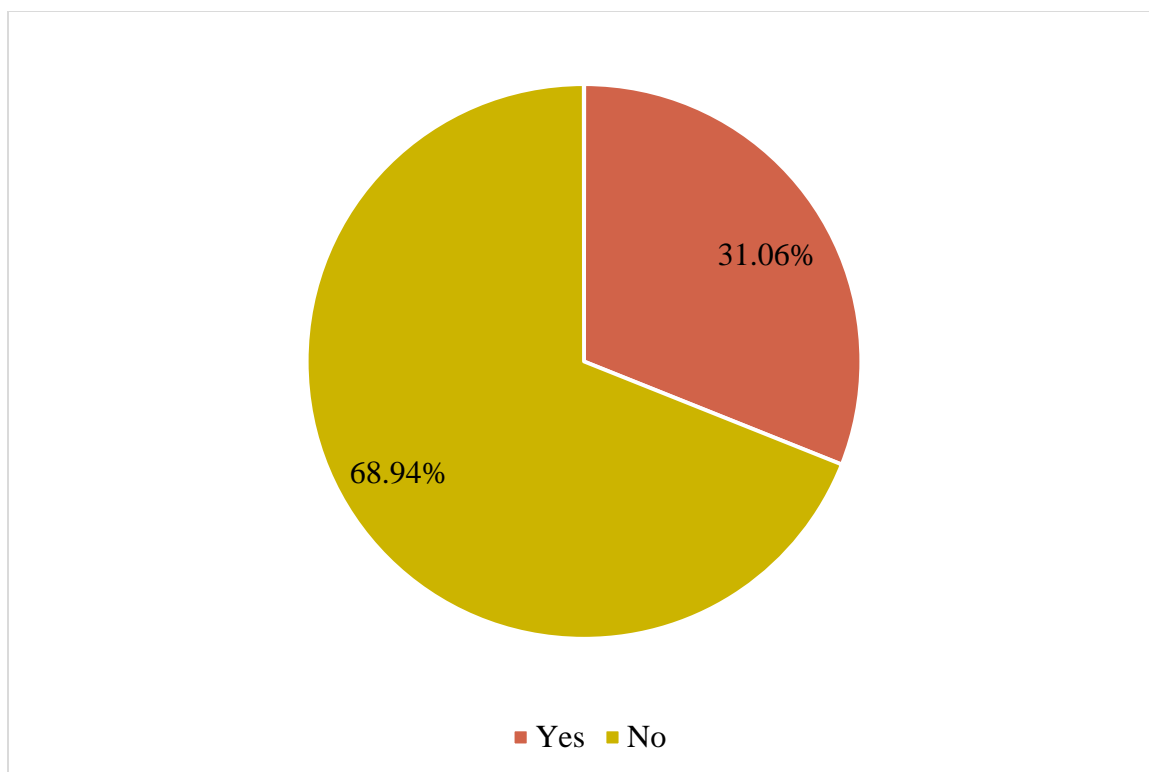


Figure 3. Q7 Did you have any problems with any of your NNES instructors?

31.06% (N=50) of the participants responded that they encountered problems with their NNES instructors, while approximately 69% of the participants said “no” to the question. Even though the majority of the participants had not encountered any problems with NNES instructors, 30% is not a number that can be ignored as it denotes that approximately one out of three participants encountered problems with their NNES instructors. Of the 30% who had experienced problems with their NNES instructors, many of the participants provided comments on what specific problems they encountered with their NNES instructors. Table 19 shows their comments.

Table 19

Comments made by survey participants for Q7

<p>Comments concerning NNES instructors' accent and pronunciation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Intonation and their own accents [were problematic] while talking” • “Understanding the accent[ed] English. That led to a decrease in the interest in class” • “Pronunciation led to misunderstanding, poor phrase usage” • “I didn’t understand the homework questions because of his English”; • “Communication with poor pronunciation” • “Communication with strange pronunciation” • “A teacher from Eastern Europe is hard to follow because [of] his strange pronunciation” • “They have strong accent” • “His accent is a little hard to totally understand” • “Pronunciation” • “Pronunciation and teaching style” • “Accent is distracting” • “Communication with strange pronunciation” • “I couldn’t catch what they said in the lecture because of their pronunciation” • “Sometimes I could not understand what he said due to quite different pronunciation. However, at the end, I could know the frequently used words in lecture.”
<p>Comments concerning NNES instructors' overall English</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Problems in lecture[s] spoken in poor English. Cultural problems” • “Ability to explain concepts was poor due to his English”; • “Listening and comprehension problems [of NNES instructors]” • “Sometimes [it is] hard to understand their English” • “Sometimes, I cannot understand what they are saying” • “It is really hard to understand their English” • “When I first came to [the] U.S. I have trouble understanding but it became easier after a while” • “Sometimes it is hard to understand [NNES instructors]” • “I had a course taught by a professor from India, I could not fully understand his lectures”

Table 19 Continued.

Comments comparing NNES instructors with NES (native English-speaking) instructors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Sometimes, native English speakers convey ideas better”
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The comments made by the participants were mainly about their NNES instructors’ English and their accent; particularly, the intelligibility and comprehensibility of NNES instructors’ accented English were the primary obstacles they encountered. As accent and pronunciation can greatly affect the intelligibility and the comprehensibility of the instructors’ speech, accent and pronunciation unfamiliar to the participants’ ears could cause them to develop negative perceptions toward the NNES instructors’ English.

One way to understand their unfamiliarity with NNES instructors’ accented English is to look at the durations of their stay in the U.S. As mentioned in 4.1.1, many of the students who are enrolled in ENGL 620 are in their first or second year of their program. Becoming familiar with a certain accent of English requires a good amount of time, particularly when the listener and the speaker may have limited control over the language. As a few participants commented (e.g. “Sometimes I could not understand what he said due to quite different pronunciation. However, at the end, I could know the frequently used words in lecture,” and “When I first came to [the] U.S. I have trouble understanding but it became easier after a while.”), listening to a certain accent over an extended period of time and becoming familiar with NNES instructors’ accents can be a way to overcome the language barrier between NNES graduate students and NNES instructors. A few comments also mentioned the particular linguistic backgrounds of their NNES instructors, such as “professor from India” and “a teacher from Eastern Europe”. It

is likely that their unfamiliarity to particular European accents or Indian accents hindered their understanding of NNES instructors from particular language backgrounds. For example, Smith and Bisazza (1982) found out that Japanese English learners found the American accent to be easiest to understand as they had been exposed to the accent during their entire English education, while they found the Indian accent the most difficult to comprehend due to lack of exposure to the accent. Tauroza and Luk (1997) also confirmed that the degree of familiarity with an accent plays a crucial role in causing listening comprehension issues on the listener's end. Since listening a lecture requires from NNES graduate students a certain level of listening comprehension, the familiarity with the accents of their NNES instructors can greatly increase the comprehension of NNES graduate students. However, exposure to a certain accent might not always lead to better comprehension of the accented English. Derwing, Rossiter, and Munro (2002) showed that explicit linguistic instruction on comprehension of a certain accented English on top of exposure to the accented English would lead to better understanding of the accented speech.

Negative views about NNES instructors' accented English were expressed by negative adjectives often used to describe NNES instructors' accent and English, such as "poor," "distracting", and "strange," as the participants considered the NNES instructors' accent and English are unsettling and outlandish. Purdue enrolls a high number of international graduate students from China and South Korea, who can find non-standard-like accents and pronunciation apart from inner circle varieties of English uncomfortable to listen to due to the fact that standard inner circle Englishes are very often the goal of English education in their home countries. Since most of the participants in this study

were from Asian countries, i.e., China and Korea, their former English education in which only native varieties of English—inner circle Englishes—are used could have ingrained in them the idea that a non-native accent or pronunciation is strange and not desirable (Xu et al., 2012). As pointed out in the comments, the negative views on accented English from NNES graduate students can give rise to issues in class, for example, students losing interest in the lectures conducted by NNES instructors. It can also cause a great amount of miscommunication in classrooms.

Survey Question 8 asked the participants if they would try to transfer to a different section due to their NNES instructors' strong accented English. Close to 31% (50) of the participants answered that they strongly agree or agree that it is likely that they would transfer to another section of the course. Close to 30 % of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed, while approximately 39% of the participants strongly disagreed or disagreed that they would transfer to another section due to the strong foreign accent of their NNES instructors.

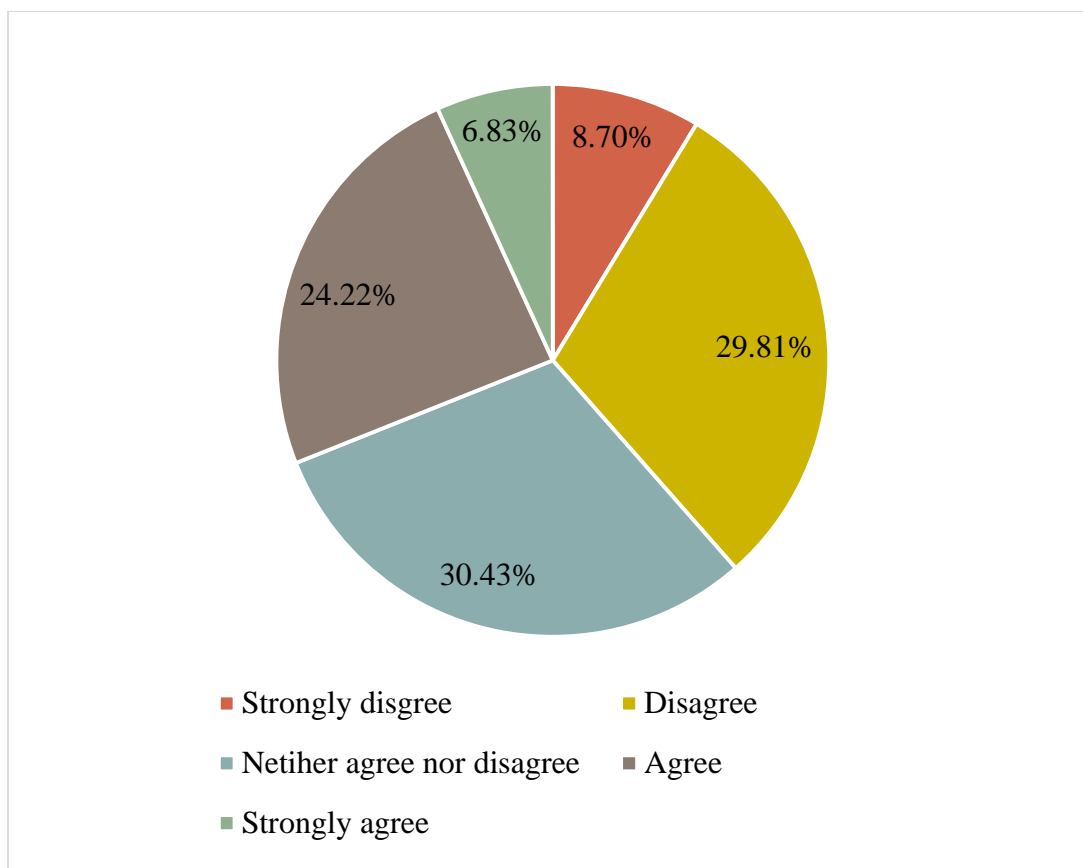


Figure 4. Q8 If I got a NNES instructor with a strong foreign accent, I would try to transfer to a different section.

To investigate whether the participants who had already encountered problems with NNES instructors—in other words, who answered Yes to Question 7—showed willingness to transfer to another section of a course due to the strong foreign accent of NNES instructors, I cross-examined the results of Question 7 and Question 8. Figure 5 shows the relation between the results of Question 7 and Question 8. “Yes” in the red color and “No” in the yellow color indicate the answers for Question 7, “Did you have any problems with any of your NNES instructors?” and the Likert-scale in the vertical line indicate the answers for Question 8, “If I got a NNES instructor with a strong foreign accent, I would try to transfer to a different section.” For example, among the participants

who strongly disagreed with Q8, 13 participants did not experience any problems with NNES instructors while 1 participant had problems with NNES instructors.

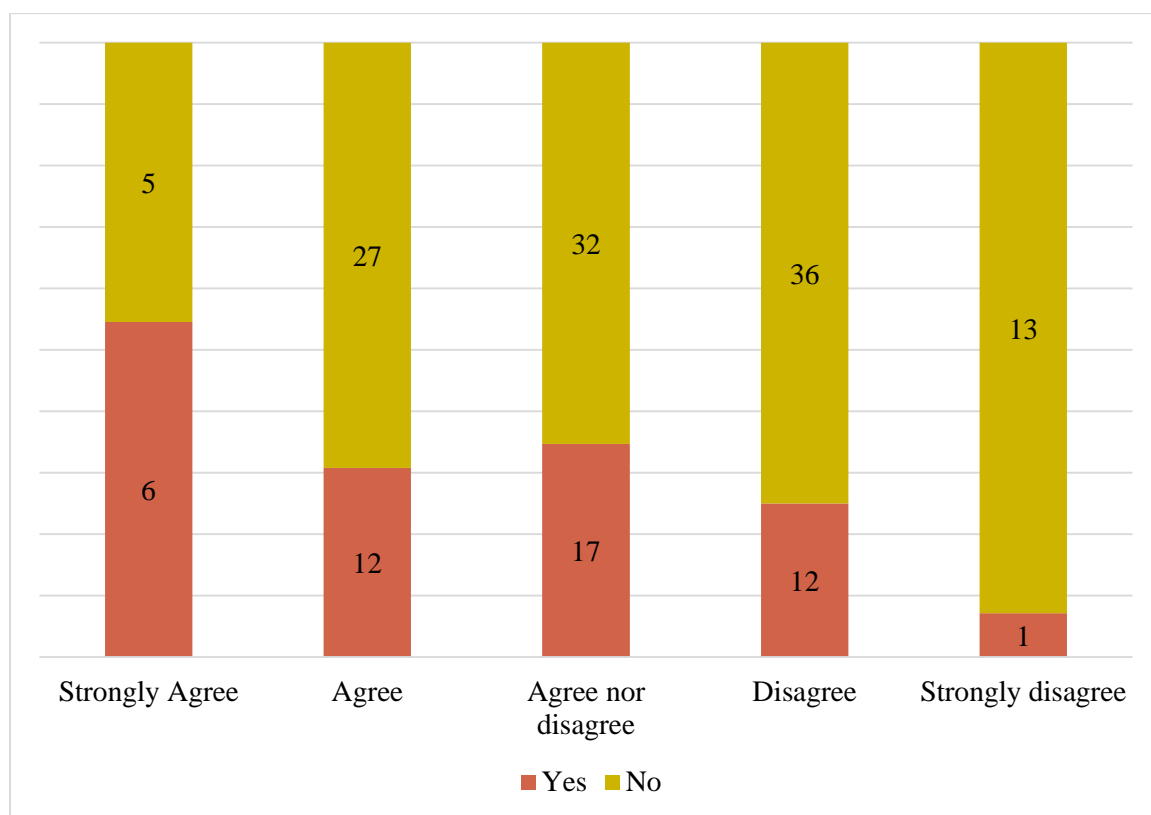


Figure 5. Cross-examined results for Question 7 “Did you have any problems with any of your NNES instructors and Question 8 “If I got a NNES instructor with a strong foreign accent, I would try to transfer to a different section”

Figure 5 shows that 18 participants (11%) experienced problems with any of their NNES instructors, at the same time, were willing to transfer to a different section due to the strong foreign accent of their NNES instructors. This indicates that their negative perceptions toward NNES instructors may have developed due to the issues they had with their NNES instructors in the previous semesters. However, 33 participants (20%) either strongly agreed or agreed that they would transfer to another section due to the strong accent of NNES instructors, even though they had not encountered any problems with

any of their NNES instructors. This can be due to their prejudices that they had developed toward “non-standard” accents of English before they came to the U.S., and the prejudices bled over to considering avoiding NNES instructors even before they encounter any problems with their NNES instructors. On the other hand, 13 participants (8%) answered that it is not likely that they would transfer to another section of a course due to the strong accent of NNES instructors, even though they had faced problems with their NNES instructors.

During the interview sessions, the interview participants brought up interesting reasons why they would not try to transfer to another section even though they had experienced problems with their NNES instructors. One of the reasons was the time constraints and scheduling conflicts they have as graduate students. They explained the constraints they have when transferring to another section or course, as Chunghe-C commented that “We have no other options. Because graduate courses, he [NNES instructor] teaches the course, and we have no other option” and Songji-C mentioned that “Courses in the Stats department are limited. There is just one course, and one professor can teach this course.” Dong-jun-K also commented that the sections taught by NNES instructors are easily “sold out.” Here, he considered the sections with NES instructors as popular shows or movies that are easily “sold out,” while those with NNES instructors are not as popular to be sold out. The other interview participants also said that their schedules are tight with mandatory core and elective courses they have to take to fulfill the departmental requirements for graduation. In consequence, they did not have much room to be picky about which section to take. The following exchange between me and Myung-won-K also shows their constraint in choosing sections they would like:

Excerpt 1

Researcher: Did it ever happen, has it ever happened to you? Transferring courses or sections because of the professor's English?

Myung-won-K: No.

Researcher: But you had troubles with non-native English-speaking professors.

Myung-won-K: Yes. Since I have to select my courses based on my time schedule and requirements from my department. I want to transfer to another section but it is taught by one professor, professor from China.

Researcher: So you can't choose which section to take, right?

Myung-won-K: Yeah, and if there are other sections, they are generally taught by non-native professors too. So I won't try to change from the beginning although I don't want to be in the course with non-native professors.

Other interviews included similar accounts; the courses offered for them were highly limited, and the students did not have any choice but to stay in the course.

Another reason, Baek-hyun-K mentioned during the interview, was that many of graduate students stick with Asian instructors due to their relaxed grading policies. The following excerpt explains why graduate students would not try to transfer:

Excerpt 2

Researcher: Did you have some flexibility to choose which section you take?

Baek-hyun-K: They usually have four to five sections but most of them are taught by non-native professors.

Researcher: If there are sections taught by native English-speaking professors, would like to transfer to one of the sections taught by native speakers?

Baek-hyun-K: It's my personal opinion but it's not only depending on the language sometimes. Because one of the classes I took from Statistics department, the number of students was around 40. And then 30 to 35 students are Asian. I think it's kind of easier to get a higher grade from Asian. I can't generalize that but usually.....That course, the old material plays really really important role in getting an answer for exam. I couldn't

understand the lecture and most of the Asian students didn't understand the lecture. But they could still get a higher grade because the old material, the previous ones. So they stick to those professors.

Researcher: So have you seen your friends or classmates giving up listening to the lecture and study by themselves?

Baek-hyun-K: A lot of them. If it is elective courses, they would try to switch to another course but it's required, they just give up and study.

Researcher: So you don't have much flexibility in that sense.

Baek-hyun-K: Yeah.

In one of the courses Baek-hyun-K took in the past, he as well as other students in class could not understand very much of what a NNES instructor was saying. Even though an NNES instructor's English is not highly comprehensible or intelligible, Baek-hyun-K commented that the NNES instructor's grading policies can serve as one of the reasons why he and other students would like to stay in the section.

Survey Question #9 asked the participants if one of the main criteria would be to get into a course taught by a native English-speaking (NES) instructor, if the participants could choose a course themselves. Of the participants, approximately 20% considered having a NES instructor as the main criteria when choosing the section of a course. A preference for NES instructors also came up during the interviews. For example, Baek-hyun-K preferred NES instructors "Because they can explain better," while Songji-C also preferred them—even to Chinese English-speaking instructors. Figure 6 shows the results of Survey question 9.

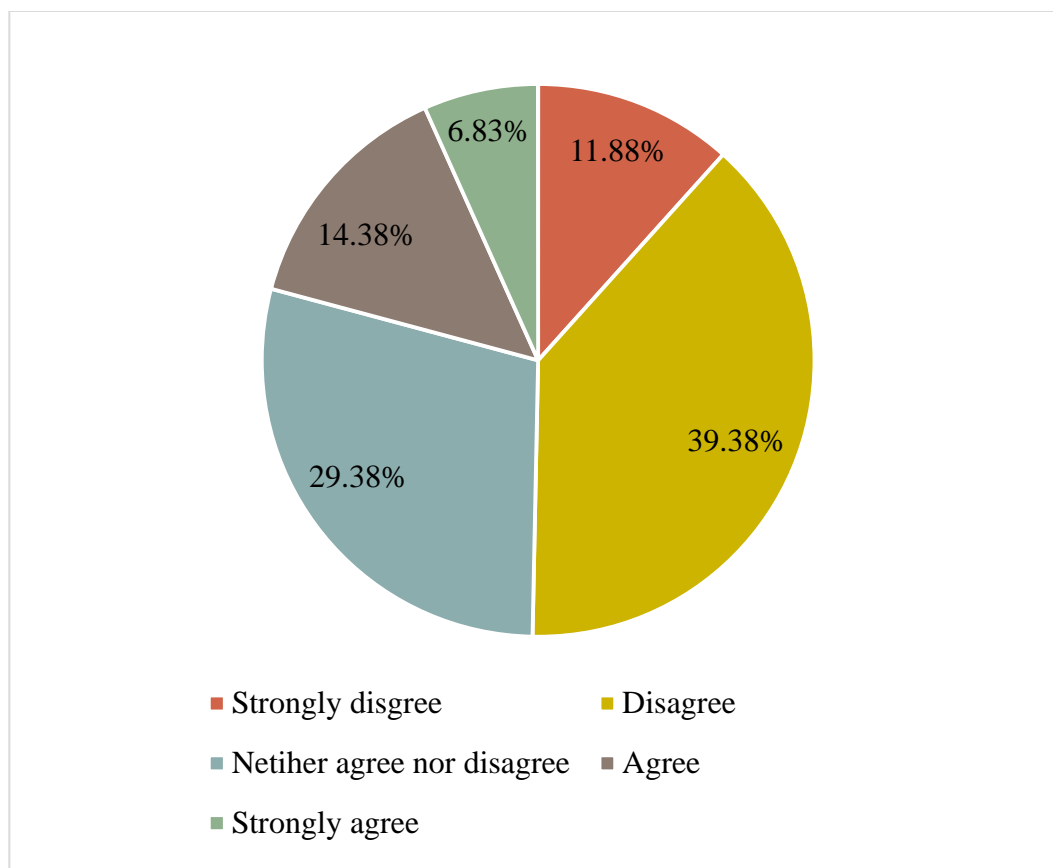


Figure 6. Q9 If I could choose a course myself, one of my main criteria would be to get into a course taught by an NES instructor.

However, more than 50% of the participants disagreed that having an NES instructor is the main concern when choosing a section of a course. It is likely that the participants take other factors into consideration in addition to NNES instructors' language ability when deciding on which section they should take. One of the factors could be how generous instructors are noted to be with respect to grading. Baek-hyun-K shared an interesting view regarding this matter:

Excerpt 3

Baek-hyun-K: A lot of Asian students stick to Asian professors. In a course, I couldn't understand his lecture and other students couldn't understand his lecture but still we got a higher grade. In Asian professors' courses, old materials are important because the exams are based on them.

Even if an NNES instructor's English is not highly comprehensible, his or her relaxed grading policies can serve as one of the main criteria for students in selecting his or her section. Another important factor which plays a significant role in selecting a course section can be the instructor's teaching ability and the level of concern that he or she shows to students, which is discussed in the next theme.

Furthermore, for many graduate students, research is one of the major parts of their graduate study. It is reasonable that graduate students would choose a course according to their research area and interest, not solely according to the fact that the course is taught by a NES instructor. In the interview with Chenghe-C, he explained that he would take his Indian professor's course— even though he had commented that he prefers NES professors—if he is familiar with the professor and if he “prefer[s] the Indian professor's research area.” Even though he had conflicted feelings about his NNES instructors and showed strong favoritism toward his NES instructors, whether he has common grounds in research areas with the instructors played more important role in choosing a section of a course.

4.3.3 Theme 3: NNES Instructors' Ability as Teachers

The responses of the survey questions under Theme 3 explain NNES graduate students' perceptions of NNES instructors' qualifications as teachers. Overall, the survey participants showed more positive perceptions toward NNES instructors in terms of NNES instructors' ability as teachers compared to their perceptions toward NNES instructors' English ability.

Under the theme 3, Q10 asked the survey participants if they believed that there are many NNES instructors who teach as effectively as NES (native English-speaking) instructors. Approximately 90% of the survey participants believed that NNES instructors could teach as effectively as NES instructors, while only 3% strongly disagreed or disagreed to the notion. Even though approximately 20% of the participants indicated that one of their main criteria is getting into a section taught by a NES instructor, most of the participants believed that overall NNES instructors can teach as effectively as NES instructors.

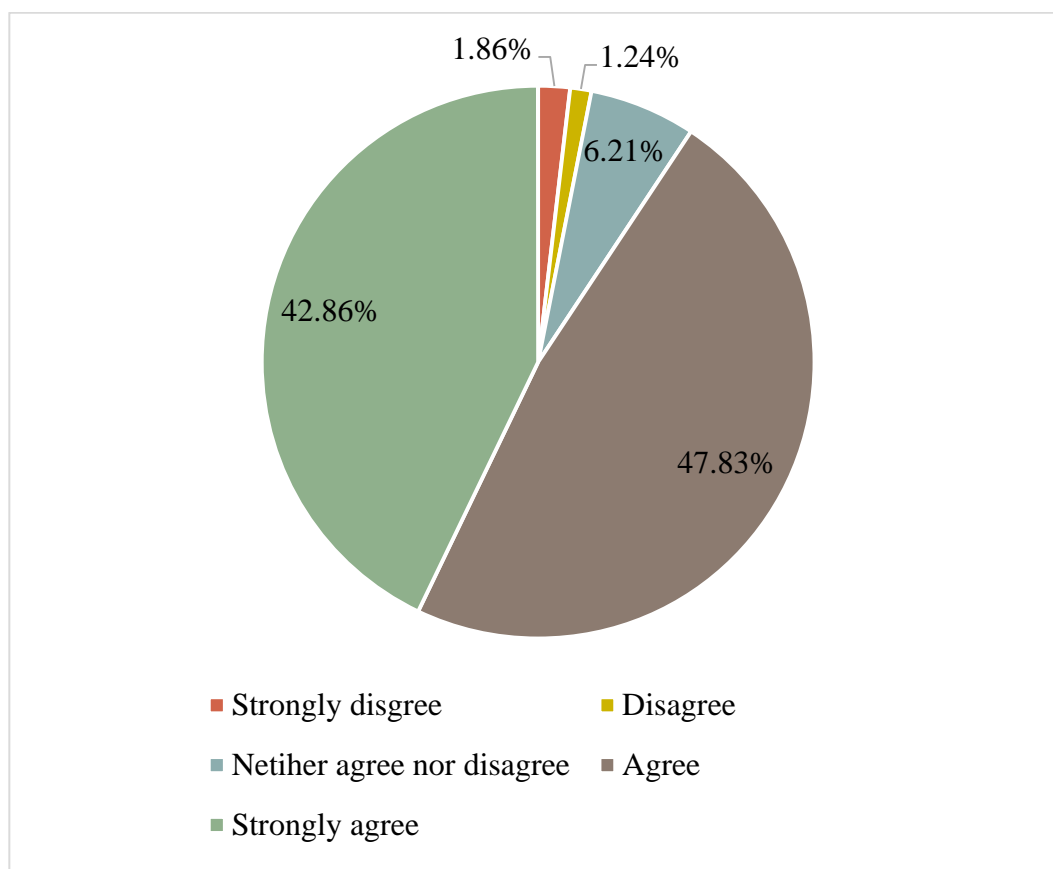


Figure 7. Q10 There are many NNES instructors who teach just as effectively as NES instructors.

Furthermore, Q11 asked the survey participants if they believe that they could learn as well as from NNES instructors as from NES instructors. Of the participants, approximately 65% believed that they could learn as well from NNES instructors as from NES instructors, while approximately 15% of the participants strongly disagreed or disagreed on the notion.

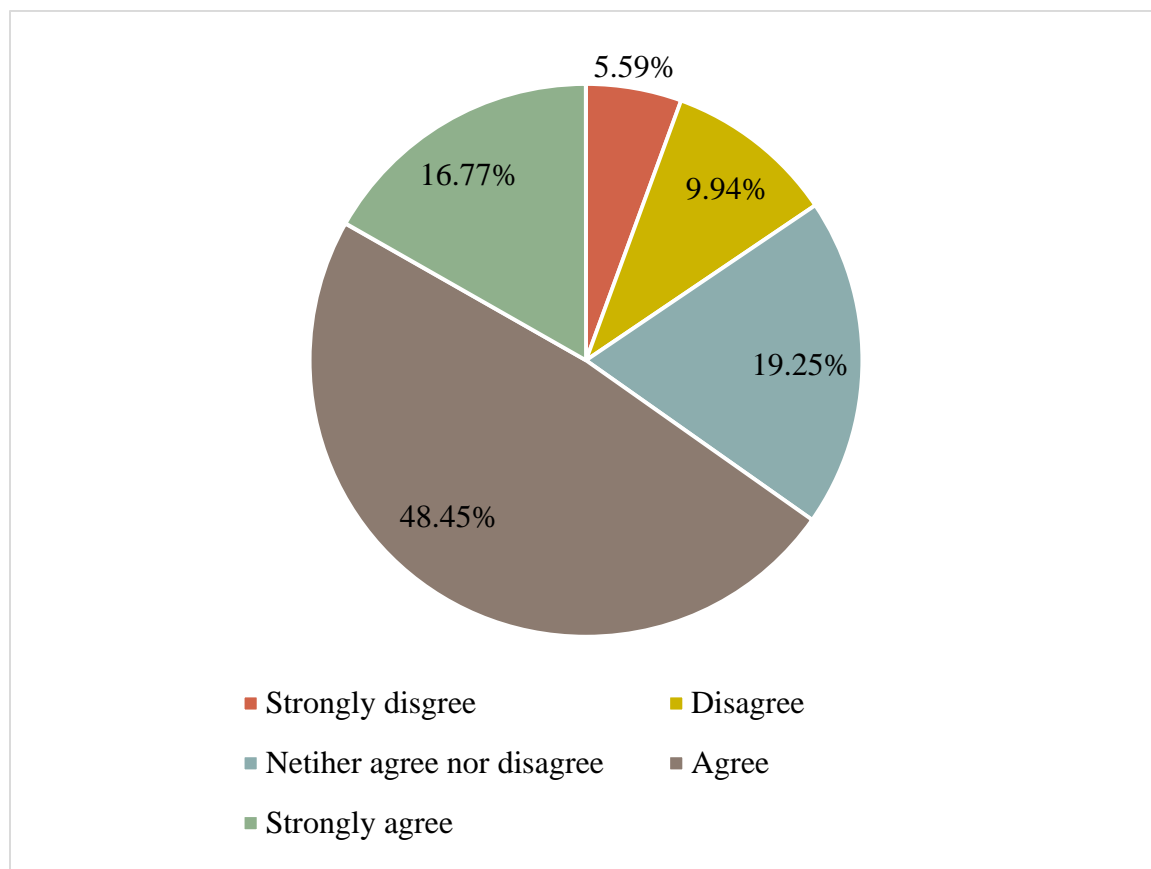


Figure 8. Q11 I believe that I could learn as well as from NNES instructors as from NES instructors.

These results contradict the findings of studies by Fitch and Morgan (2010) and Fox (1991), in which many of the undergraduate participants were feeling disadvantaged and “victimized” by having ITAs as their instructors. Here, it is plausible that the difference between undergraduate students and graduate students with regard to the amount of pre-

gained knowledge in their major can be one possible explanation for the contradictory results. In the interviews, Tianxuan-C commented that “It’s the qualifications and responsibilities of a graduate student. I should be able to study by myself even if I don’t understand the lecture.” Myung-won-K also stated that graduate students need more autonomy than undergraduate students and that “we can’t blame our non-native English-speaking instructors if we can’t learn from their lectures. It’s us. It’s either we don’t have enough knowledge or our English is bad. Not them.”

However, as much as autonomy in studying is required for graduate students and although positive results are shown in Q10 and 11 of the survey participants, many of the interviewees also shared the sense of helplessness they felt when they had NNES instructors whose English they found incomprehensible. This seemed to have affected their perceptions of the instructors’ teaching ability, which students believed limited learning from them as well. Several of the interview participants commented that they gave up listening to their NNES instructors due to their accented or poor English, and that caused them to develop negative views about NNES instructors as teachers. They also believed that proper teaching and learning were not happening in classrooms where their NNES instructors were in charge. Even though they would still attend the classes, they would study by themselves. Baek-hyun-K mentioned that one of his NNES instructors was simply reading through his lecture notes without properly explaining what he was reading. He commented that “I don’t think I can learn a lot from non-native professors.”

Q12 asked the survey participants if they believed, on the whole, that NNES instructors show about the same level of concern for students as NES instructors do. In

response to Q12, nearly 80% of the participants responded that NNES instructors show the same level of concern for students as native English-speaking instructors do.

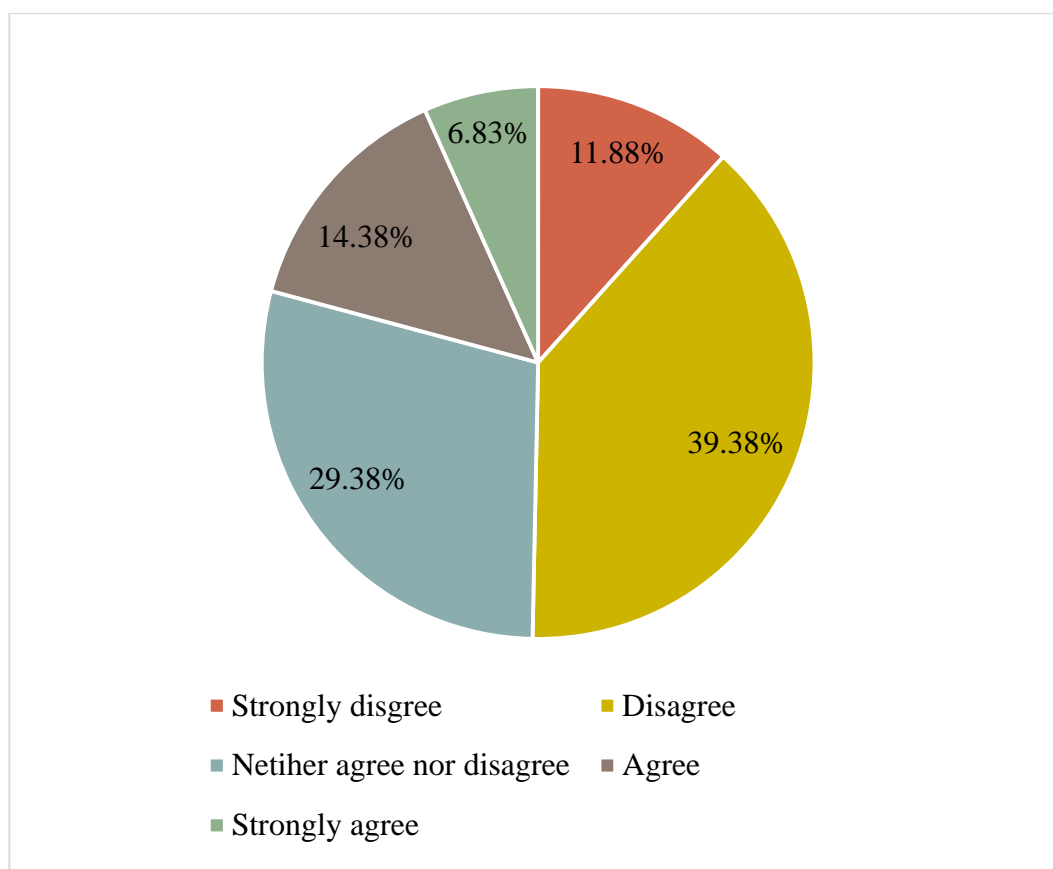


Figure 9. Q12 If I could choose a course myself, one of my main criteria would be to get into a course taught by an NES instructor.

In response to Q12, nearly 80% of the participants responded that NNES instructors show the same level of concern for students as native English-speaking instructors do. One of the interviewees even commented on the bad impression he had of an NES instructor:

Excerpt 4

Myung-won-K: One of my American professors—he just doesn't care about what students say. One of my friends told me that I should not expect him to slow down, as he speaks so fast, and he was just the same last semester. He wouldn't change.

Other interviewees also showed positive attitudes toward the level of concern from NNES instructors. Shenka-I mentioned that, because of their similar past experiences, it was easier to approach them to talk about academic difficulties as well as about problems that can be encountered by an international student:

Excerpt 5

Shenka-I: Non-native professors went through all the processes in the past that I'm going through right now. They know how to help international students. When I need funding or some other help, I would talk to them, not to non-native professors. American professors usually ask for American graduate students to be their assistants. Non-native professors know our situations, our financial difficulties and other stuff, too.

Songji-C made an interesting argument during the interview concerning this matter; instructors, both NES and NNES, will have concern for students, if the instructors care about their teaching.

Excerpt 6

Songji-C: Some of the professors care, some of the professors don't. Maybe, those professors who are very concerned about teaching, they will care about our opinions. But those professors who are devoted to researching, they are not so concerned about our feedback.

4.3.4 Theme 4: Solving Communication breakdowns between NNES Instructors and NNES Graduate Students

The responses to the survey questions under Theme 4 explain how NNES graduate students approach solving the communication issues created between them and their NNES instructors. The results show that some of the survey participants were passive in taking action to solve the communication issues and considered that there is little room for them to improve the issues. On the other hand, several participants showed

eagerness to take action to improve the issues and to take a more active role in such situations.

Question 13 asked the survey participants if students can do very little to improve the situation when there are communication problems between students and NNES instructors. In response to Q13, approximately 31% of the participants perceived that students have little room to improve their situations when there are communication problems with NNES instructors. In contrast, approximately 41% of the participants strongly disagreed or disagreed with students' limited availability with respect to addressing problems with NNES instructors in an effort to improve the situation. Figure 10 shows the results of Q13.

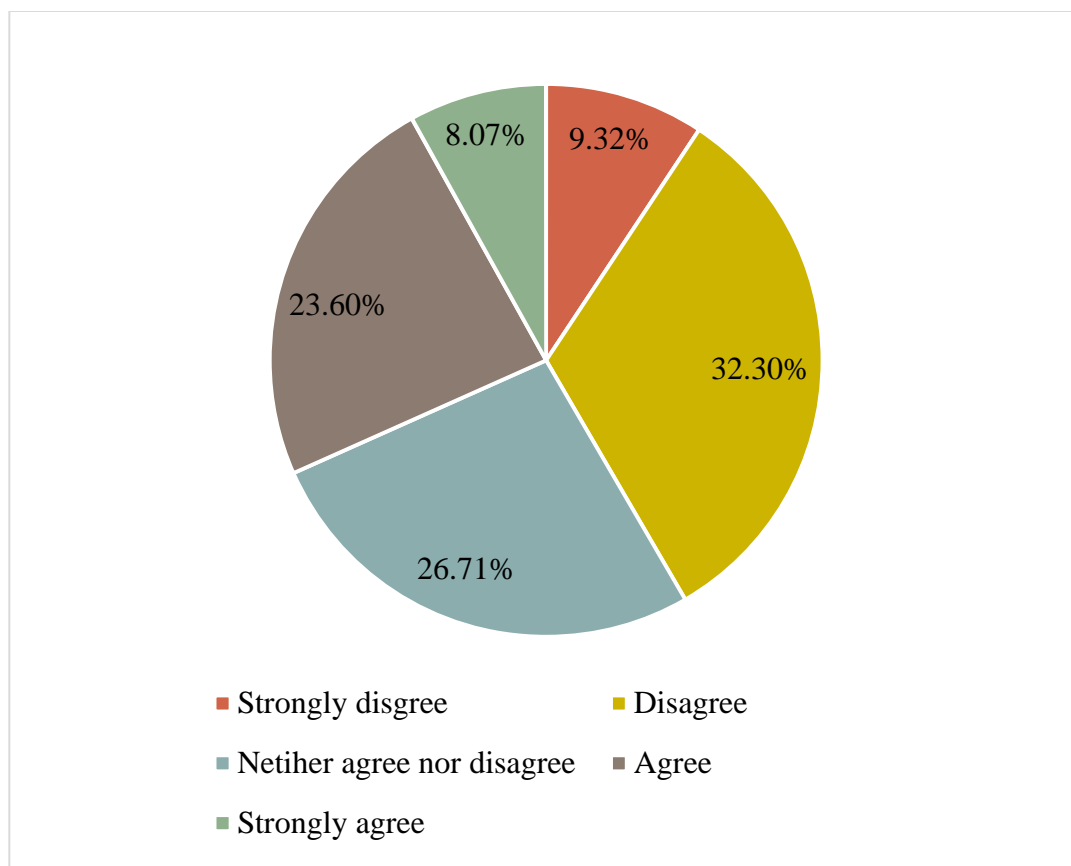


Figure 10. Q13 When there are communication problems between students and NNES instructors, students can do very little to improve the situation.

Furthermore, Question 14 asked if the participants would talk with their NNES instructors during office hours if they have trouble understanding their NNES instructors.

Figure 11 shows the results of Question 14.

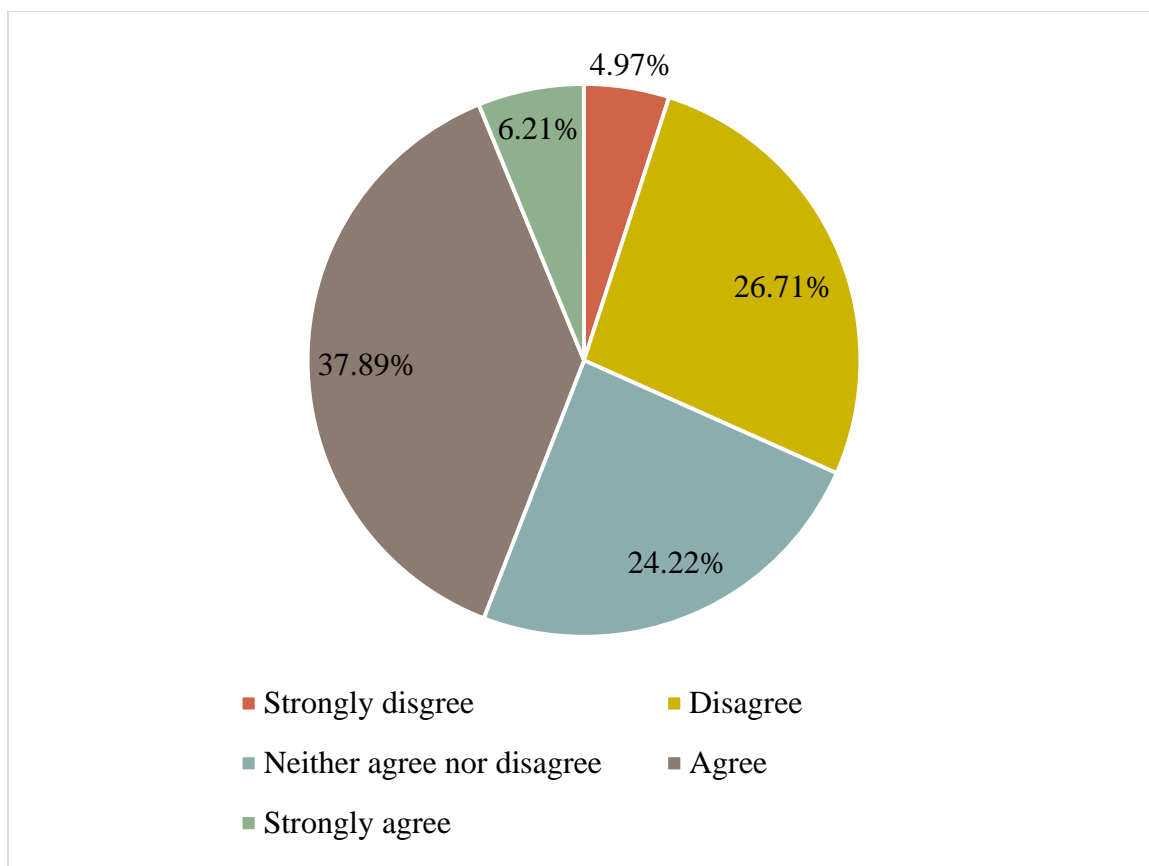


Figure 11. Q14 If I have trouble understanding an NNES instructor, I would talk with him or her about it during office hours.

Approximately 44% of the participants showed positivity with regard to visiting NNES instructors during office hours to talk to them one-on-one. It is likely that it is easier for the participants to understand their NNES instructors one-on-one, as they could ask the instructors to rephrase if they do not understand the instructors' English and they could also ask the instructors to slow down. It can also be interpreted that those participants who have been exposed to the U.S. educational system longer than others perceive the teacher-student role as more equal. This may empower the students to speak up and to be more willing to interact with their NNES instructors in an effort to improve communication between them and their NNES instructors. During one of the interviews

Chenghe-C also mentioned that he would go talk to his NNES instructor (his Indian instructor) if he could slow down a bit so that he could understand better in the instructor's class.

On the contrary, approximately 31% of the participants strongly disagreed or disagreed that they would pay a visit to their NNES instructors' offices during office hours to discuss a communication problem. While some of the participants find addressing the issue directly with their NNES instructors during the office hours acceptable, some of them might still find it difficult due to their preemptive notion of teachers' authority in class. Considering that many of the participants are from Asian countries—where teachers have more power and authority in classrooms, it can be daunting to comment on the communication problems with regard to the instructors' English. It could also be seen as impolite, as it can be perceived as a challenge to the instructors' status. During the interview with Shenka-I, she stated that it would be considered rude and inappropriate to approach NNES instructors to figure out the solution for the miscommunication between them in her culture. She would rather stay quiet and thus show respect for the instructors' status in the classroom instead of challenging the instructors by making suggestions or doubting their language proficiency and teaching ability. Other interviewees also shared similar apprehension about possibly offending or embarrassing their NNES instructors by pointing out their English as the source of the miscommunication between them.

Interesting accounts were given by the interview participants concerning this matter; attitudes toward this issue are also likely to differ according to the culture of departments. Chunghe-C mentioned that it seemed appropriate in his department for

students to bring up miscommunication issues with instructors and talk to the instructors face-to-face during the office hours. He commented that he had had a very hard time understanding his Indian instructor in the first several weeks of his first semester, so he and his classmates had gathered together and talked to him to ask him to slow down. He found the approach acceptable in the culture of his department.

However, Baek-hyun-K, a PhD student who completed his master's in the United States and said he was very well aware of the academic culture in the U.S., stated that this would not happen with instructors from his own country: he commented that "I would go to talk to them about it during office hours because I can understand them better face to face. But I can't do that with Korean professors. Because I'm Korean, they will take it really bad. It is too rude to them." Since many of NNES graduate students particularly from China and South Korea would encounter a number of NNES instructors from their own countries, it is possible that some of the participants who were not willing to pay a visit to their NNES instructors during their office hours are actually avoiding such a situation Baek-hyun-K mentioned during his interview.

In response to Q15 "As a student, I would be willing to make adjustments in my speaking and listening styles in order to communicate better with an NNES instructor," 73% of the participants showed a willingness to make adjustments in their speaking and listening styles for better communication. They seem to be aware of the fact that they are in a multicultural, multilingual environment in which they also need to play an active role to achieve successful communication with one another. Figure 12 shows the results of Q15.

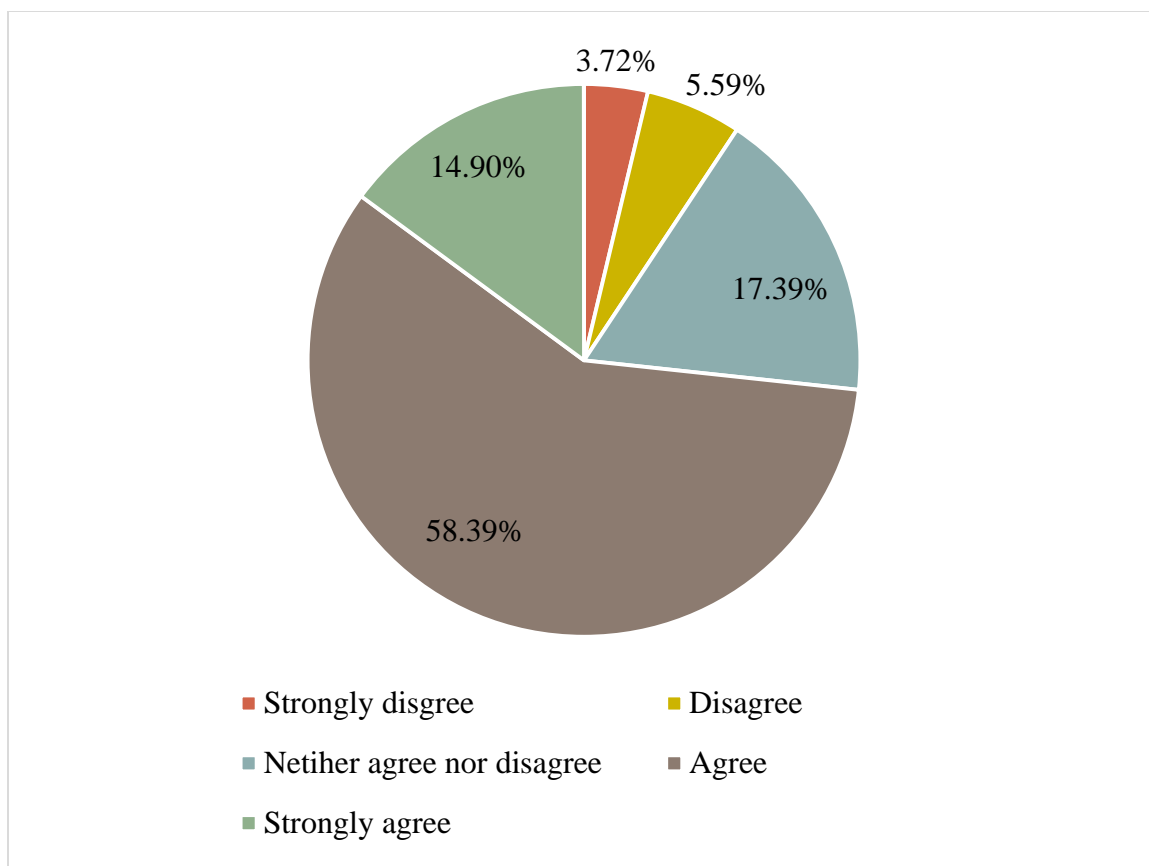


Figure 12. Q15 As a student, I would be willing to make adjustments in my speaking and listening styles in order to communicate better with an NNES instructor.

However, in response to Q 16, “It is not reasonable to expect students to make listening and/or speaking adjustments in order to communicate with NNES instructors,” far fewer participants, 44%, answered that expecting students to make adjustments for better communication with NNES instructors is reasonable (Q16). It is likely that they are willing to make adjustments, but it should not be assumed that it is expected for them to do so. Figure 13 shows the results of Q16.

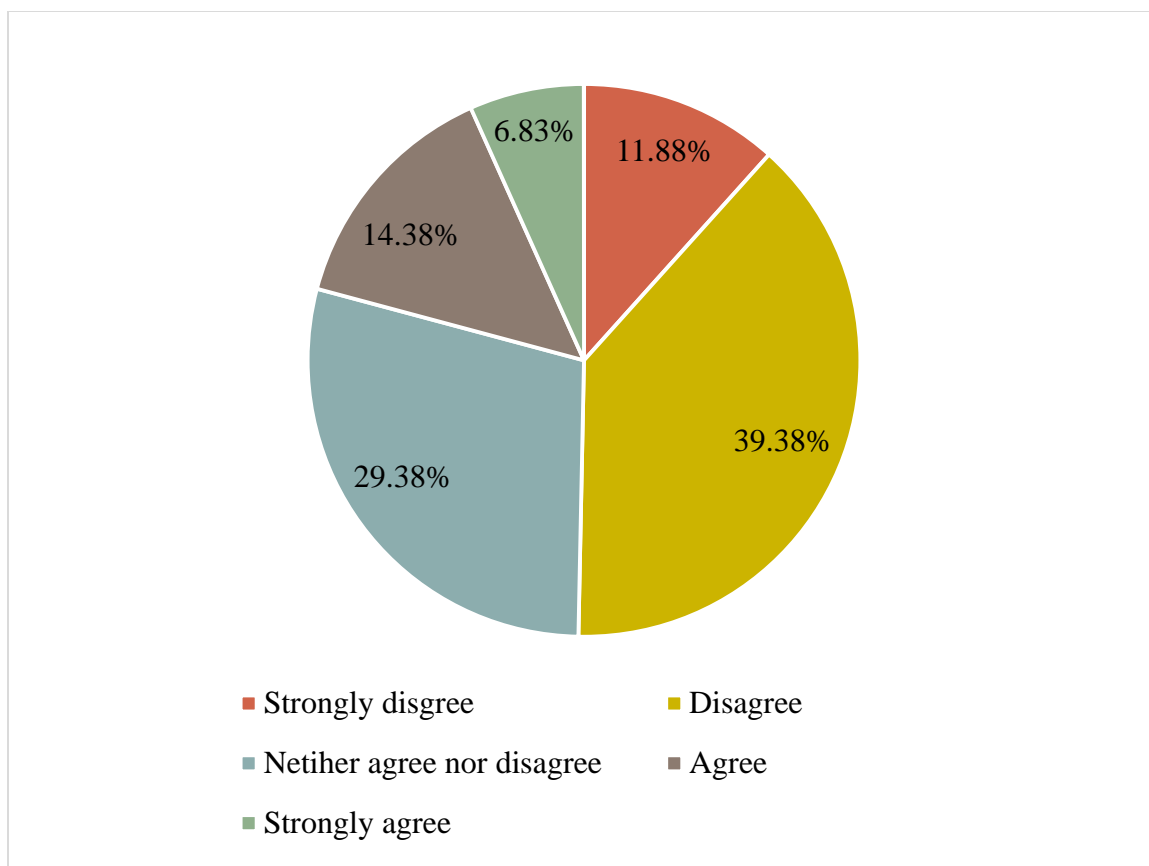


Figure 13. Q16 It is not reasonable to expect students to make listening and/or speaking adjustments in order to communicate with NNES instructors.

During an interview with Mengzi-C, he commented that it is an instructor's role to accommodate students in the classroom:

Excerpt 8

Mengzhi-C: If there are problems between a non-native professor and students, the non-native professor has to be better prepared for the class and try to resolve the problems between them.

Baek-hyun-K also expressed strong negativity regarding the expectation that students are to make adjustments for better communication with NNES instructors. As most of the participants were from Asian countries, where education is more teacher-oriented, they may expect instructors to take control of the classroom and accommodate students' needs.

4.4 Summary of Survey Findings

The first phase of this study, a survey, was undertaken to understand the perceptions of NNES graduate students toward NNES instructors. 161 participants of ENG620 (an oral communication course for international graduate students) responded to the survey. The findings of the survey showed that 93% of the respondents had taken at least one course with a NNES instructor. More than 50% of the respondents had taken more than 3 courses. It confirms that the interaction between NNES graduate students and NNES instructors is inevitable at Purdue University, where there can be possible communication breakdowns due to NNES instructors' accented English and their limited command of English.

Furthermore, one third of the respondents answered that they had experienced problems with any of their NNES instructors; the majority of the comments they provided expressed that NNES instructors' English was the major cause of the problems. One third of the respondents also either strongly agreed or agreed that they would try to transfer to a different section of a course if the NNES instructor of the section has a strong accent in English. Even though 20% of the participants responded that having a NNES instructor is the main concern when choosing a section of a course, 50% of the participants disagreed.

As for NNES instructors' ability as teachers, the participants showed positive perceptions toward NNES instructors. Approximately 90% of the participants believed that NNES instructors could teach as effectively as NES instructors.

Approximately 30% of the participants believed that they have little room to improve their situations when they are communication problems between them and their

NNES instructors, while approximately 40% of the participants disagreed and showed willingness to actively find solutions by visiting their NNES instructors during office hours. The majority of the participants, 73%, also showed willingness to adjust their speaking and listening styles in order to communicate better with their NNES instructors. However, far fewer participants, 44%, agreed that expecting students to make adjustments for better communication with NNES instructors is reasonable.

CHAPTER 5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERVIEW FINDINGS

The previous chapter presented the analysis of the survey data discussing the perceptions of NNES graduate students toward NNES instructors. In this chapter, analysis of the data gathered through interviews is discussed.

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, a brief description of interview participants is provided to help understand the findings in the interview data. In the next section, the semi-structured interview questions that were developed based on the survey questions are presented. Finally, the findings from the interview data are discussed with regard to the three themes that emerged in the process of analyzing the interview data.

5.1 Interview Participants

Among the 161 participants who responded to the survey, 9 participants volunteered to have an interview session with me. The interviews lasted approximately 40 to 45 minutes. Pseudonyms were given to the interview participants, and the demographic information of the interview participants is provided in Table 20.

Table 20

Names (pseudonyms), majors and first language of interview participants

Interviewee	Major	First Language
Chunghe-C	Civil Engineering	Mandarin Chinese
Feng-C	Civil Engineering	Mandarin Chinese
Mengzhi-C	Life Science	Mandarin Chinese
Songji-C	Statistics	Mandarin Chinese
Tianxuan-C	Economics	Mandarin Chinese
Shenka-I	Material Engineering	Hindi
Baekhyun-K	Agricultural Economics	Korean
Dongjun-K	Civil Engineering	Korean
Myungwon-K	Mechanical Engineering	Korean

As the majority of the students who were enrolled in ENGL 620 were from mainland China and South Korea, it was difficult to find voluntary interviewees from more diverse language backgrounds.

5.2 Interview Questions

Thirteen questions were semi-structured before the interviews based on the survey questions and findings. The questions asked the participants about demographic information, their experience with NNES instructors, their perceptions toward NNES instructors, the issues they had with their NNES instructors, and how they dealt with the issues.

Table 21

Semi-structured interview questions based on the survey questions and findings

Semi-structured interview questions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Which department are you from? 2. Which program are you in, master's or Ph.D.? 3. What is your first language? 4. How many courses have you had with non-native English-speaking (NNES) instructors? 5. How many of these courses have you had with NNES professors/instructors in your major field(s)? 6. How many NNES instructors do you have in your department? 7. Have you ever had a course or section (discussion, recitation, lab) of a course with a NNES instructor? If yes, how many? 8. What were the NNESs' first language backgrounds? 9. Did you have any problems with any of your NNES instructors? If yes, what kinds of problems did you encounter? 10. Did you have any problems understanding NNES instructors due to their English? If yes, what was the first means you used to work out problems with them? 11. If you had problems with NNES instructors' English, did you have any particular language background that you had hard time understanding? 12. Did you have anyone around you having problems with NNES instructors? What kind of problems did they have? 13. Are you willing to adjust yourself to understand NNES instructors if you have a problem understanding them? If yes/no, why?

5.3 Interview Findings

Four emergent themes were found in the interview data. In this section, the findings and results of the interview data are discussed according to the emergent themes.

The themes are: 1) NNES graduate students experiencing problems with NNES instructors from particular first language backgrounds, 2) a fine line between being victimized and being responsible as graduate students, 3) obstacles when solving

perceived communication problems, and 4) the Cases of Tianxuan-C and Shenka-I, who have positive attitudes toward NNES instructors.

Excerpts from the interviews included in this section are verbatim from the transcription. Explanation is provided if any grammatical errors in the excerpts harm understanding the meaning of any sentences.

5.3.1 Theme 1: NNES Graduate Students Experiencing Problems with NNES Instructors from Particular First Language Backgrounds

Seven out nine interviewees reported that they consistently had problems with their NNES instructors. The two interview participants who showed positive perceptions toward NNES instructors were Tianxuan-C from mainland China, a first-year Ph.D. student in Economics from mainland China and Shenka-I from India, a first year master's student in Material Engineering. Findings from the interviews with them will be discussed in the next section.

Except Tianxuan-C and Shenka-I, the majority of the participants consistently expressed negative views about NNES instructors due to the NNES instructors' English, particularly with the instructors' low proficiency and heavy accent in English. The negative views on NNES instructors' English expressed during the interviews seemed to be much more strongly expressed than those in the survey results. This may be due to their motives for volunteering to participate in this study, as one of the interviewees, Baekhyun-K, commented that he "had a lot to talk about non-native professors and issues with them." Many of the interviewees shared the same motive for participating in this study. The interviewees experienced multiple issues with their NNES instructors,

particularly due to their English; therefore, they were very willing to address the issues and hope to resolve them by participating in this study.

Among the participants, Baekhyun-K was one of the participants who had strong negative views about NNES instructors. Even though he had just finished the first year in his Ph.D. program at the time of the interview, he had more than five courses with NNES instructors in his major field of study. Throughout the interview session, he expressed dissatisfaction with his NNES instructors, particularly those from China—specifically due to their poor command of English. The following is one of the excerpts taken from the interview with him regarding his negative views on NNES instructors' English.

Excerpt 9

Researcher:approximately how many [courses with NNES instructors] so far?

Baekhyun-K: At least four.....most of them are from China and Taiwan.....one of them is from Poland or Rumania, Eastern Europe. I also had one South American.

Researcher: You didn't have any Indian professors?

Baekhyun-K: Oh, I have one.

Researcher: Did you have any problems with some professors from particular language backgrounds?

Baekhyun-K: From my experience, Chinese professors, they have hard time speaking English. So, they can't explain very well.

Researcher: So you had Chinese professors. How were you with them, listening to their lectures?

Baekhyun-K: I tried to listen to their lectures, for the first time.....I finally gave up. I still attended the class, for attendance and whatever, but I studied by myself with textbooks and research in labs.

Researcher: Particularly Chinese, but what other professors from other countries?

Baekhyun-K: As far as I know, the Polish, no, I took a math course with an Eastern European professor, his English is not good but his explanation is really good. I know which points he needs to explain for the students. The South American professor, because Spanish is closer to English, his English is not good but not too bad to teach. But Asian professors like Chinese professors. Indian professors, their accent is hard to understand.

Researcher: So you had harder time understanding Chinese English.

Baekhyun-K: Because their sentences are not, I think it's not correct. The Chinese professors' accent is slightly better than Indian professors but their sentence is pretty messed up.

Researcher: So with Chinese professors, mostly grammar issues. And then with Indian professors, mostly accent.

Even though Baekhyun-K felt that his NNES instructors with Eastern European and South American language backgrounds did not speak English well, he found that their English was good enough to clearly explain what they were teaching in class. He also found the English of Indian instructors hard to follow, particularly due to their accent, but he was not as negative toward the English of Indian instructors as he was toward the English of Chinese Instructors. As Baekhyun-K considered a Chinese accent “slightly better” than an Indian accent, a Chinese accent may have required less listener effort from Baekhyun-K. However, Baekhyun-K pointed out the syntactic problems in the English of Chinese instructors as the major issue, by calling it “pretty messed up,” which had caused him to develop negative views on his Chinese instructors and their English. He eventually gave up listening to the lectures of his Chinese instructors due to their limited proficiency in English, and strongly expressed his negative views on Chinese instructors as he clearly stated that Chinese instructors' English sentences are “not correct.” Throughout the interview, he consistently expressed his mistrust of Chinese

instructors due to their restricted control over English in class. Eventually he gave up trying to understand the instructors and studied by himself with textbooks.

Other Korean participants also shared their negative opinions toward their Chinese instructors. Myungwon-K, a third-year Ph.D. student in Mechanical Engineering, and Dongjun-K, a third-year Ph.D. student in Civil Engineering, also had extensive experience with NNES instructors. They had more than 5 courses with NNES instructors, and, had particularly strong negative views of their Chinese instructors similar to Baekhyun-K's. The following are the excerpts taken from the interviews with them regarding their negative views on Chinese instructors' English.

Excerpt 10

Myungwon-K: I was in this class in the beginning of the semester, and I really didn't like the professor [from China] because of his English. So I dropped the course. If a native, Indian, or a professor from China is teaching a section in the same course, respectively, I would definitely exclude the third option even before I actually try the first class.

Excerpt 11

Dongjun-K: Chinese professors speak broken English. It is really hard to understand. I had most trouble with Chinese professors because of their English.

Myungwon-K, not only gave up listening to his Chinese instructor, he had to drop the course as he did not understand what the instructor was lecturing in class due to the instructor's limited English proficiency. He even mentioned that he would avoid any courses that are taught by Chinese instructors even before he would attend the first class of the course. Dongjun-K also commented that Chinese instructors' English is "broken," and he showed a strong will to avoid Chinese instructors as much as he could. It seems that, for the Korean interview participants, the comprehensibility of English spoken by

Chinese instructors was most problematic and drove them to even drop the courses due to the incomprehensibility of the Chinese instructors' English. For the Korean interview participants, it was more than not being able to follow the Chinese instructors' English due to their accent or speed; they expressed strong antipathy toward the poor command of English spoken by Chinese instructors. Considering the fact that close to the half of the faculty members at Purdue are from China (N=502) and the third biggest body of international students (N=733) are from Korea, the issues that Korean interviewees commented on during the interviews could cause serious problems between Korean graduate students and Chinese instructors.

On the other hand, Chinese interviewees made several negative comments about the English of Indian instructors in particular. Except for Tianxuan-C, the rest of the Chinese interviewees had issues with the English of their Indian instructors. Chenghe-C, a second-year Ph.D. student in Mechanical Engineering, shared much of the hopelessness he had felt when he had been taking courses with Indian instructors. He thought that Purdue University, as a research-oriented institute, and his department did not care much about how well instructors' lectures would be delivered to their students. He found it "cruel" because it was a sink-or-swim matter to the students; if the students do not understand the lectures given by their Indian instructors, they either give up listening to the lectures and study by themselves or transfer to another section. However, transferring to another section was not always an option for them since the courses were often taught by a single instructor and they were mandatory for graduation. Below is the excerpt from the interview with him related to this issue:

Excerpt 12

Researcher: So in the past, did you have any trouble with them [NNES instructors] and try to transfer to another section?

Chunghe-C: We have no other options. Because graduate courses, he [his Indian professor] teaches the course, and we have no other option.

Researcher: What about if you have more room to change the schedule?

Chunghe-C: It depends. If I have an option, and the other professor I'm not familiar with, if I prefer this Indian professor's research area, I will try to discuss with the professor during office hours if he can slow down a little bit.

Researcher: So you will actually tell him.

Chunghe-C: Actually, in the middle of the semester, the first several weeks, we mentioned, we talked to him he spoke a little fast. Especially, our first and second semester, not familiar with accent.

Researcher: Let's assume that you have more freedom to choose any section of a course. Who do you want your instructor to be?

Chunghe-C: I prefer native one. Either American or European.

Researcher: What about between Indian and Chinese?

Chunghe-C: Chinese.

Researcher: So Indian comes last.

Chunghe-C: Yeah.

Researcher: Any particular accents your friends complained a bit [about NNES instructors]?

Chenghe: My friend complained about his professors' very strong accent in computer science.

Researcher: Where is he from? Which country?

Chenghe-C: From India. It's like Chinese students always have trouble to understand Indian. Because his research is really excellent. That's why he doesn't care about his students' opinion at all. If you don't understand,

you just quit. Very cruel. The department can't do anything because his research is great.

During the interview, Chenghe-C admitted that "Chinese students always have trouble to understand Indian," and his speed and accent were the obstacles that hinder Chinese students from understanding their Indian instructors. Chenghe-C continued talking about one of his Indian instructors:

Excerpt 13

Chenghe-C: I have this experience. In the first semester, one Indian professor, he taught, he gave a lecture. There are a lot of terminologies not familiar, he spoke with very strong accent. That semester, it was very hard for me. I even gave up listening to him during the lecture. I just went back home and did my own study with the book. It was waste of time actually.

Researcher: Did you actually try to go to the office hours to talk to him?

Chenghe-C: We expressed our feelings. All of the, that year, we had five to six students in the first semester. All of them from China. We had the same feeling. We just asked the professor "you can speak a little slower, we can't catch you."

Researcher: What did he say?

Chenghe-C: He accepted our suggestion but when times is limited, he just speaks fast and finished the lecture.

Researcher: Did you hear similar stories around you? Complaining about one of the professors?

Chenghe-C: If I have this feeling, I believe, not believe, I think all of us [Chinese students] have the same feeling.

Researcher: Particularly toward Indian accent?

Chenghe-C: Yeah. We need to put more effort understanding them.....Sometimes you give up listening to them and learn by yourself. It is waste of education resource.

As Chenghe-C preferred native English-speaking (NES) instructors over NNES instructors, Songji-C showed the same preference of NES instructors, particularly over NNES instructors from India. He also wanted to transfer, like Chenghe-C, to another section taught by a NNES instructor, but none of the sections of the course was taught by a NES instructor. He felt “victimized” as Chenghe-C felt. Following is an excerpt from the interview with Songji-C concerning his perceptions toward his Indian instructors’ English:

Excerpt 14

Researcher: So if you had more free time, would you be transferring to another section if his or her English is not good?

Songji-C: Yes.

Researcher: Particularly what language background do you have trouble with?

Songji-C: Indian English.....The first time, I was not really used to that.....But besides, the courses in Stats department are limited. So one course is just, there is just one professor who can teach this course.

Researcher: So you don't have many options and your schedule is not flexible.

Songji-C: Indian English, their accent is really strong. Even though I don't want to take course from Indian professors because of their accent, I don't have other options. There are no native professors teaching the course.

Here, it is noteworthy that the Chinese interview participants are still considering Indian English as “non-native” English, although it is possible that there are numerous Indian English-speaking instructors who speak English as a first language. Among expanding circle English speakers, outer circle Englishes seem to have not yet established a status equivalent to that of inner circle Englishes. Since the accents of their Indian instructors were not as familiar to them as those of inner circle Englishes, they might

simply have categorized Indian English as “non-native” English. This can be also related to the image that English has in Asian countries; that is, English is a language of white people. In the interview excerpt of Chenghe-C, it is seen that Chenghe-C categorizes “native English-speaking” instructors and “European” instructors together as his first priority among instructors when selecting a section of a course. Some of Asian students, who had been solely educated in their own Asian countries before coming to the US, would still perceive English as “white” language that only their imagined “white” speakers speak as their native language. Fox (1991, p. 222) also revealed that the NES undergraduate participants in her study considered their Asian-looking ITA (international teaching assistant) as a non-native speaker of English even though the ITA was born and raised in the U.S. speaking English as his first language. Another Chinese interviewee, Feng, seldom made negative comments about the English of his instructors from European countries such as Italy, Spain, and France, even though he mentioned that he preferred NES instructors over NNES instructors. Yet, he would avoid Indian instructors because he thinks their accent is not pleasant to listen to.

On top of the issues with Indian instructors, one of the Chinese interviewees brought up an interesting perspective toward the way the interviewees saw NNES instructors’ English. Feng-C, a second year Ph.D. student in Civil Engineering, was very adamant about avoiding instructors from his own country, China. He had extensive experience with NNES instructors from various countries such as Italy, Spain, France and India, but he did not take any courses with instructors from China. This was because he intentionally and actively avoided Chinese instructors due to their accented English. Below is the excerpt taken from the interview with him:

Excerpt 15

Researcher: Haven you taken any courses in Civil who don't speak English as their first language?

Feng-C: Yeah, they come from Italy, France, Spain, and some from India.

Researcher: No Chinese professors?

Feng-C: I never choose Chinese professors.

Researcher: Okay, so why do you avoid Chinese professors?

.....

Feng-C: To be honest, even though I'm Chinese, I don't like to listen to Chinese accent.

Researcher: So do you have any preferences among the professors in terms of their accents?

Feng-C: I prefer native speakers.

Researcher: But you said that most of the professors in your major are international.

Feng-C: So I have no choice at Civil [Engineering].

Researcher: But you are also taking courses from other departments.

Feng-C: Yes, last semester, I took advance mathematics for Engineering. The instructor was from Germany.

K: So you prefer native speakers over non-native speakers.

Feng-C: Yeah but in Civil there are very few native speaker professors. So I don't have any choice.

Researcher: You talked about avoiding Chinese professors. So did you drop the courses taught by Chinese professors or you avoided them even before you tried?

Feng-C: Well, I think I would avoid Chinese professors from the beginning because I don't like their accent. Another reason is that if the instructor is Chinese, there will be a lot of Chinese students in that class. You might

hear that Asian students are really good at Math. So it is really hard to get good score in that class. But if I have option, I will avoid Chinese and Indian.

Researcher: Oh, Indian professors too?

Feng-C: Yes, the same reason I said about Chinese professors. Accent.

Researcher: You have hard time understanding them.

Feng-C: When I first came here, it was really hard for me to understand them but after staying here for a while, better now. But still if I can, I will avoid them.

While he avoided the English spoken by his Indian instructors and preferred NES instructors over his Indian instructors, he was more adamant about avoiding Chinese instructors throughout the interview. Despite wanting to avoid both Chinese and Indian instructors, his negative perceptions toward the Englishes spoken by the two groups of instructors were based on different grounds. Feng avoided Chinese instructors because he did not like listening to them, while he avoided Indian instructors because it was hard for him to understand their English due to their accent. For him, Chinese English was unpleasant, whereas Indian English was simply hard to understand.

5.3.2 Theme 2: A Fine Line between Being Victimized and Being Responsible as Graduate Students

Even though most of the interview participants had experience dropping a course due to their NNES instructors' English or avoiding NNES instructors from certain L1 language backgrounds, they seemed to separate the feeling of being victimized from the responsibilities they hold as graduate students. When I asked the interviewees what they had to do when they did not understand their NNES instructors, many of them commented that they simply gave up listening to the lectures and studied with textbooks

by themselves. While they were feeling that their time was wasted and that the instructors did not care about the fact that their lectures were not properly delivered to the students, multiple times they commented during the interviews that they should know how to learn by themselves since they were graduate students. The following accounts from the interviews support this:

Excerpt 16

Researcher: Were you feeling okay when you thought your professor's English was not that good and you did not understand your professor? When you had to give up listening to the professor due to his accented English?

Chunghe-C: It's the qualifications and responsibilities of a graduate student. I should be able to study by myself even if I don't understand the lecture.

Researcher: So you can just study by yourself without listening to the lecture?

Chunghe-C: We are not undergraduate students. We should understand the lecture although we don't understand what the professor saying.

Excerpt 17

Researcher: Studying by yourself? You didn't understand the lecture because of his English?

Myungwon-K: We are graduate students and need autonomy and have to be more responsible than undergraduates. I want to avoid Chinese professors or other professors not speaking English very well but we can't blame them because we don't understand their lectures. It's also us. It's either we don't have enough knowledge or it can be our English is bad. Not just them.

The other interview participants also shared similar feelings with Chunghe-C and Myungwon-K; they univocally commented that graduate students should take more responsibility and be more autonomous in learning than undergraduate students even though they might not understand the lectures given by NNES instructors. Furthermore, even though Myungwon-K expressed strong willingness to avoid sections taught by

Chinese instructors due to their restricted command in English, he did not solely blame them for the matter. Myungwon-K commented that the restricted proficiency of Chinese instructors and his own level of proficiency in English are equally “blamable” when there is a cacophony in understanding the lectures taught by Chinese instructors.

However, as much as autonomy in studying is required for graduate students, many of the interviewees felt it was not fair for them to have instructors whose English was unintelligible and incomprehensible to them. When the interviewees gave up listening to the lectures run by their NNES instructors and had to study by themselves, they strongly wished that they could learn something from the lectures instead of being given full liberty to study by themselves. Mengzi commented that:

Excerpt 18

Researcher: So how did you feel when you had to study by your self instead of listening to the lectures?

Mengzi-C: I felt bad. I felt my time was wasted. I didn't miss class because the attendance points will be gone. I'm not here to study myself. I'm here because I heard Purdue has good professors. But I don't understand their lectures because I don't understand their English.

Researcher: How do you think you can solve it?

Mengzi-C: it will be better if the school can help them [international professors] to improve their English. Now I am taking English 620 [the oral communication course for international TAs that he was taking at the time the interview was conducted] and it will be good if we can have something, something, like English 620 for the professors. Then I can understand them better and my time will not be wasted.

Other interviewees also shared their helplessness in class with their NNES instructors. Chenghe-C mentioned that “it was waste of time” sitting in the lectures taught by NNES instructors whose English was not intelligible and comprehensible. Baekhyun-

K also made similar negative comments about the situation and showed much more negativity about improving the situation from the instructors' side by stating "I don't think they [my NNES instructors] would spend more time to improve their English." Even though they experienced and witnessed a great number of communication breakdowns in class, many of the interviewees were not hopeful that the situation would improve because, according to Feng-C, "research is more important than teaching" at Purdue, and "many professors don't care about teaching," according to Dongjun-K.

5.3.3 Theme 3: Obstacles when Solving the Perceived Communication Problems

Under Theme 3, several semi-constructed and follow-up questions were asked to understand the methods by which the interview participants would like to deal with and solve the communication problems between NNES graduate students and NNES instructors. As previously mentioned in 5.3.1, seven out of nine interviewees (the remaining two are Shenka-I and Tianxuan-C) expressed their negative perceptions toward their NNES instructors and commented that they had experienced communication problems with their NNES instructors. Even though Shenka-I and Tianxuan-C had highly positive views and experiences with their NNES instructors, I followed the same procedure by asking them how they would have solved communication problems if they had hypothetically had the problems with their NNES instructors.

Among the interviewees, Chenghe-C and Baekhyun-K were the only interviewees who were willing to talk to their NNES instructors when there were communication problems between them and their NNES instructors. During the interview, Chenghe-C seemed to be very outspoken to eagerly solve not only the problems with his NNES instructors but also any issues that he had to deal with as a graduate student. The

atmosphere in his department, Civil Engineering, also supported his active way of solving communication issues with NNES instructors. When he started his first year as a Ph.D. student at Purdue, he and his cohort members from China had communication issues particularly with Indian instructors in his department. They were taking a course with one of the Indian instructors and had hard time understanding him during lectures due to the speed and accent of the instructor. They exchanged ideas about how to solve the problem and gathered together to talk to the instructor during the office hours to ask him if he could slow down for them. Chenghe-C commented that “Actually, in that semester, the first several weeks, we did mention [that we did not understand the Indian professor]; we gathered and talked to him—he speaks a little fast. Especially for our first and second semester, once we just come here, not familiar with the accent. It seems okay in our department [Civil Engineering].” Even though he and his cohort members still had a hard time understanding the instructor after talking to the instructor as he commented during the interview, they were very positive about standing up and being willing to discuss the matter with the instructor, and felt that it was okay to do so. However, Chenghe-C also mentioned that because he had to respect his instructors he would eventually give up on trying to improve the situation:

Excerpt 19

Chenghe-C: Because my friends are mostly graduate students, if we don't understand, or if we express our feelings to the professor and he didn't improve so as we expect, we choose to give up. We don't show any negative opinions. During the first two semesters, we will complain. We will share the feelings in our circle. You know Chinese educational culture, students must obey all of the, need to respect the teachers. We will think if we complain too much, it is impolite to the teachers in our culture.

Similar to Chenghe-C's opinions, Baekhyun-K commented that he would go talk to them to solve the issues during office hours because he could "understand them better face to face." Even though he had not had gone to talk to his NNES instructors before at the time of the interview, he showed much willingness to discuss the issue with his NNES instructors to improve the situation.

However, both Chenghe-C and Baekhyun-K commented that it would leave very little room for them to improve the situation if the NNES instructors were from their own countries. Even though they seemed to be very outspoken and eager to solve the communication issues with NNES instructors from any other countries, they tended to shy away and be greatly hesitant to discuss the issues with the instructors from China. Chenghe-C commented that "I will talk to the other professors but not Chinese professors. They will take it very rude. They will think I am challenging them. Some of my other friends told me that they don't understand their Chinese professors but they can't tell them [the Chinese professors] because we are all from China. It is like challenging their authority." As they "are all from China," the authoritative characteristic of teachers in China which would prevent students from outspokenly challenging the performance of their teachers was playing a significant role when trying to find a solution to improve the communication issues. Interestingly, Baekhyun-K mentioned exactly the same situation:

Excerpt 20

Baekhyun-K: I would go to talk to them [his NNES instructors] about it during office hours because I can understand them better face to face. But I can't do that with Korean professors. Because I'm Korean, they will take it really bad. It is too rude to them.

Because he and his Korean instructors are from the same country and culture, it seemed impossible for Baekhyun-K to bring up the issues with his Korean instructors. As the authoritative role of teachers in classrooms in Korea is highly similar to that of China, Baekhyun-K did not want to challenge his Korean instructors' authority by commenting on their English.

Besides Chenghe-C and Baekhyun-K, most of the interviewees found that addressing the problem with NNES instructors was daunting, and even impolite, as it can be perceived as a challenge to the instructors' authority in the classroom. As Shenka-I stated that "It is very rude and not good in my culture for students to make suggestions or to doubt professors' ability in teaching or anything," in any cases, they were not willing to bring up the miscommunication issues directly to their NNES instructors.

5.3.4 The Cases of Tianxuan-C and Shenka-I

Among the nine interviewees, Tianxuan-C, a first year Ph.D. student in Economics and Shenka-I, a first year master's student in Materials Engineering, showed highly positive perceptions toward their NNES instructors throughout the interviews. Even though it was the first year in their programs, they both had much experience with NNES instructors from various first language backgrounds. However, it seemed that the reasons they did not encounter any issues with NNES were different from each other's.

As for Tianxuan-C, he perceived that the proficiency of the NNES instructors in his department that he encountered was very high. Since the NNES instructors in his department were at a high level in English, he did not encounter any problems created by the English of his NNES instructors. He commented that he "had zero problems" with his NNES instructors, as he believed that the instructors had already developed a high

proficiency in English when they had been in their Ph.D. programs. He also commented that it is also because of the nature of the department of Economics:

Excerpt 21

Researcher: Did you have any problems with your foreign-born professors?

Tianxuan-C: No. I had zero problems with them. They all speak English very well.

Researcher: So foreign-born professors in your department speak English relatively well?

Tianxuan-C: Yes, because when they were Ph.D. students, they needed to present. They needed to work as teaching assistants. Sometimes, they run their own lectures. So I don't think there is any issue.

Researcher: So, do you think professors in Economics speak better English than professors in Engineering majors?

Tianxuan-C: According to my observation, probably you are right. Professors in Economics and Business, they need to communicate with each other. That is the reason why they can handle English better than the professors in Engineering. We use the language more often as we have to discuss and communicate all the time. But in Engineering, they work based on projects. Yes, they do need to communicate within the groups but I think it is very limited, the range of the language to use.

In the beginning of the interview, he mentioned that he had several courses with the instructors from India, China, and South Korea. While the other Chinese and Korean interviewees ran into problems with their Indian and Chinese instructors due to their English, Tianxuan-C was highly positive about both Indian and Chinese instructors in his department. He believed that his Indian and Chinese instructors' English was perfectly intelligible and comprehensible, and did not have any issues when communicating with them in class.

On the other hand, it seemed that Shenka-I had not encountered any problems with her NNES instructor's due to the level of her English. During the interview with her, she showed a very high proficiency of English. Compared to the other interviewees, her level of English was the highest. She could elaborate situations and details with very sophisticated vocabulary and syntactic structures. She also showed much better listening comprehension skills than the other interviewees; there were very few times when I had to repeat questions or she did not understand my comments. She commented that "some of my international professors do not speak English perfectly, but I don't have any issues understanding them." It is also likely that she had been exposed to different varieties of English in India much more than the other interviewees from China and Korea; being exposed to different varieties and having trained ears could have helped her understand NNES instructors. She also believed that NNES instructors understood her situation as an international graduate student better than NES (native English-speaking) instructors did as NNES instructors had gone through the same process as international graduate students before they started working as faculty. During the interview, she shared her experience with one of her NNES instructors, who helped her find an assistantship. She commented that her NNES instructor fully understood the financial hardship she would have if she had not received any assistantship, and worked hard to help her find one. Eventually, she could teach a course as a teaching assistant thanks to the NNES instructor.

5.4 Summary of Interview Findings

The second phase of this study, interviews, was undertaken to expand the findings of the survey data and to understand the perceptions and views of NNES graduate students about NNES instructors more deeply.

Among the survey participants, 10 voluntary interview participants were recruited. Seven out of nine interview participants reported that they consistently had problems with their NNES instructors, while two of them showed positive perceptions toward NNES instructors. Among the participants, the Korean participants particularly showed negative views about the Chinese instructors due to the instructors' poor command of English, while Chinese participants expressed negative perceptions toward Indian instructors due to the instructors' accented English. The majority of the participants univocally expressed their helplessness when they had communication problems with their NNES instructors. Even though they decided to give up listening to the lectures given by their NNES instructors due to the instructors' poor command of English or the instructors' accented English, there was not much room for the participants to switch to another section.

Despite communication problems that the participants experienced with their NNES instructors, they seemed to separate the feeling of being victimized from the responsibilities they hold as graduate students. While they felt that they were wasting time by sitting in a classroom listening to unintelligible and incomprehensible lectures given by NNES instructors, they strongly felt that they should know how to learn by themselves since they were graduate students.

Among the interview participants, only two of the them were willing to talk to their NNES instructors when there were communication problems. The remaining interview participants tended to shy away from discussing the problems directly with their NNES instructors. They felt that challenging the performance of their instructors could be seen as rude and disrespectful to their instructors.

Two interview participants, unlike the remaining seven participants, consistently

showed positive views about NNES instructors during the interviews. Tianxuan-C perceived that the proficiency of the NNES instructors in his department was very high and commented that he did not have any problems with his NNES instructors. Shenka-I also shared her positive views about NNES instructors and commented that NNES instructors sympathize with NNES graduate students better than NES instructors.

CHAPTER 6. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Overview

In this study, a survey and interviews were conducted to understand NNES graduate students' perceptions of NNES instructors' English. This chapter will summarize the major findings and discuss pedagogical implications drawn from these findings. Limitations of this study and recommendations for future research will also be provided.

This chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section, the summary of findings will be discussed while answering the proposed research questions of this study. In the second section, pedagogical implications of the findings of the study will be discussed. In the third section, limitations and recommendations for future research will be provided, followed by the conclusion of this study in the last section of this chapter.

6.2 Summary of Findings based on the Proposed Research Questions

To understand NNES graduate students' perceptions of NNES instructors' English, four research questions were posited in the beginning of this study. In this section, the findings of this study are summarized according to the proposed research questions.

6.2.1 Research Question 1

What are NNES graduate students' perceptions of NNES instructors' English?

The results show that around one third of the participants experienced problems with NNES instructors in classrooms, largely due to their accented English. Even though NNES instructors' accented English was not the main reason behind the students' decisions to choose or to avoid the section of a course taught by NNES instructors, some of the responses demonstrated a preference toward NES instructors.

While the findings from the survey and interviews confirm that a great amount of interaction between NNES instructors and NNES graduate students is inevitable at Purdue, there seems to be a great number of communication breakdowns in classrooms. The findings showed that these communication breakdowns and barriers mainly are due to the limited intelligibility and comprehensibility of the accents of their NNES instructors' English and their limited and poor command of English. These issues caused many of the participants to develop negative perceptions of NNES graduate students toward their NNES instructors, which eventually led them to avoid non-native speakers as their instructors. Several negative comments were provided by the survey participants about NNES instructors' English such "communication with poor/strange pronunciation", "accent is distracting", and "ability to explain concepts was poor due to his English." During the interviews, a high level of negativity toward NNES instructors and their English was revealed as many of the interviewees had experienced a number of communication breakdowns in class with NNES instructors. Furthermore, considering the fact that most of the survey participants were from Asian countries where inner circle Englishes such as American English or British English are the only standard English for education, lack of exposure and the prejudice that already existed in their minds toward

non-native varieties of English may have contributed to their negative perceptions of NNES instructors' accented English.

6.2.2 Research Question 2

How do NNES graduate students deal with the situations where there are communication breakdowns with their NNES instructors?

Approximately 30% of the participants showed that they have little opportunity to improve their situation if they have problems with NNES instructors and would not actively seek solutions by visiting their NNES instructors during office hours to talk about the miscommunication issues they have in class. However, more than 70% of the participants expressed their willingness to make adjustments to NNES instructors' Englishes. This demonstrates that Asian students tend to avoid those situations in which they have to challenge NNES instructors to preserve their authority as a teacher; yet, they also understood that they are in a multicultural, multilingual environment in which listeners are required to make adjustments.

Similar tendencies were evident in the interviews; the participants showed hesitance and reluctance to directly talk to the NNES instructors they would have trouble with as it can be seen as being disrespectful to the instructors. Most of the interview participants tended to avoid conflicts with their NNES instructors by giving up on listening to the lectures and studying on their own. They witnessed similar cases with their classmates or friends—their classmates and friends gave up on listening to the lectures and sought help from other resources.

6.2.3 Research Question 3

Do NNES graduate students have a preference for specific varieties of English? If so, what motivates these preferences?

While approximately one third of the survey participants showed a tendency to move to another section of a course if the NNES instructor has a strong foreign accent, and to prefer to have a native speaker as their instructor, it was revealed during the interviews that a strong preference for specific varieties of English existed among the interview participants. Several Korean interview participants expressed dissatisfaction with their NNES instructors, particularly those from China. Their perceived poor and limited command of English was the main reason they had developed negative views about their Chinese instructors.

On the other hand, Chinese interviewees felt much hopelessness about the unintelligibility of Indian English to their ears. Even though many of their Indian instructors could be native speakers of English, Indian English was still considered as “non-native” as English is often seen as “white” language. Moreover, one of the Chinese interviewees showed a strong tendency to avoid Chinese instructors—instructors from the same language background of his—due to their English, while he would avoid Indian instructors for the same reason.

6.2.4 Research Question 4

What, if any, factors, other than accent and use of English, affect NNES Graduate students’ view of NNES instructors?

The findings showed that NNES instructors’ teaching methods and grading policies can affect NNES graduate students’ perceptions toward their NNES instructors.

Many of the survey participants viewed NNES instructors to be as effective in their teaching as NES instructors. These participants added that they can learn as much from NNES instructors as they can from NES instructors, presumably due to expected learner autonomy and pre-gained knowledge as graduate students. However, further investigation during the interviews showed that NNES instructors' relaxed grading policies can keep NNES graduate students in the course even though the NNES instructors' limited English could become an issue.

6.3 Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this study indicated that a great deal of interaction between NNES instructors and graduate students exists at Purdue University. There also seemed to be numerous communication breakdowns and obstacles, which would lead to other issues. Unlike the issues that involve ITAs and undergraduate students, the communication breakdowns and obstacles between NNES instructors and NNES graduate students have rarely been dealt with campus-wide to find a way to accommodate both NNES graduate students and NNES instructors. NNES instructors at Purdue are professors, which creates a perceived hierarchy between the instructors and graduate students, makes it hard for the NNES graduate students to raise issues about NNES instructors' English. By not addressing the communication issues, the problem is perpetuated with the persistent growth of the international population in academia the U.S. If the perceived limited command of English of NNES instructors is one of the causes of communication breakdowns between NNES graduate students and NNES instructors, it is urgent to find an appropriate way to support NNES instructors with their English. Furthermore, the issues of communication breakdowns between ITAs and undergraduate students and the

communication breakdowns due to NNES instructors' English are closely related to each other as ITAs are to future NNES instructors. Ample and proper support for ITAs to improve their English can lead to fewer communication breakdowns due to NNES instructors' English later on.

In the results of this study, the preference for native and native-like speakers was also expressed by the participants of the survey and interviews. More exposure to different accents and varieties of English in English-learning classrooms would raise awareness of the legitimacy of outer and expanding circle Englishes. Learners from outer circle countries, in general, have more opportunities to be exposed to different varieties of English and become more sympathetic listeners, whereas learners from expanding circle countries are largely educated in a monolingual environment in which the aim of their English education is to get close to "native-like" English. As Chiba et al. (1995) maintain, this native myth in expanding circle countries has driven their English learners to feel ashamed of their non-native-like English and to develop an inclination to perfectionism when facing outer and expanding circle Englishes. However, it is hard to draw a line between a variety of English and a "broken" English, particularly when a learner's English proficiency is not good enough to have a successful communication. If a speaker's command of English is not good enough to successfully deliver what the speaker tries to deliver, can we still call it a variety of English for this speaker? When a NNES instructor's lecture is not successfully performed due to his or her English, can simply raising awareness improve the situation? Therefore, I believe it is crucial to build a systematic support system for NNES instructors in which NNES instructors would not feel ashamed or intimidated.

Furthermore, it is crucial to have a window for NNES instructors to understand the situation fully. Although the following part of the interview was not included in this study, one of the interviewees commented that “I have a friend who has Italian advisor. None of his lab mates understands her [the advisor’s] English. I went to a conference with them one time and she asked questions to some presenters there and all of them had hard time understand[ing] her. But she doesn’t know nobody understands her well. She thinks her English is very good. And she tells my friend’s [her advisee] English is bad and [that] he has to improve his English. She says [the] same thing to his lab mates too, they have to improve their English. I think it’s her English to improve.” Many NNES instructors might not be aware that there are several communication breakdowns due to their English proficiency or accent and that students had to give up listening to their lectures or find other solutions to keep up with the course. Therefore, an institutional level of support for both NNES instructors and NNES graduate students is required.

6.4 Limitations and Future Research

One of the limitations of this study is the demographics of the participants. As the majority of the participants were from two major Asian countries, South Korea and China, it is hard to generalize the results to the populations from other language backgrounds. More participants from different language backgrounds, particularly those of outer circle countries, could produce results different from those of this study. Particularly, it was hard to recruit Indian participants, who are the second biggest population of international graduate students at Purdue, due to the fact that many of them passed the OEPT (oral English proficiency test) and were not enrolled in the course from which the participants were recruited. The same issue applies to the recruitment of interview participants; except

for Shenka-I who was from India, the interview participants were from South Korea and China. Interview participants from more diverse language and cultural backgrounds are needed to corroborate the results of this study.

Secondly, the participants of this study were recruited from a course in which the enrolled students had a score of 40 or 45 in the OEPT (oral English proficiency test), who do not fully represent the population at Purdue. The inclusion of more participants who have higher proficiency in English could also bring about different results. As the less proficient students said that a 'native-speaker'-like level of language proficiency is the most important qualification for a teacher to be viewed as skilled in Boyd (2003), the participants' level of proficiency in English might have affected the results of this study.

Several recommendations for future research can be made based on the results of this study. First, research on difficulties and frustrations of NNES instructors needs to be conducted. It is important to conduct a needs analysis on what difficulties NNES instructors have and what methods and solutions they would find most effective and helpful. Through the needs analysis, it would be possible to lay a foundation to support them.

Second, based on the findings of this study in which Chinese interview participants expressed their negative perceptions toward Indian English speakers, research on how outer circle Englishes are perceived by the speakers of expanding circle Englishes could bring different insights in to the field of world Englishes. As the Chinese interview participants in this study particularly had a hard time understanding Indian Englishes and did not recognize Indian English speakers as native speakers of Indian varieties of English, it would be interesting to see what status outer circle Englishes hold

in expanding circle countries and how outer circle Englishes are perceived differently from inner circle Englishes.

Lastly, research looking into NNES undergraduate students' perceptions of ITAs also needs to be conducted. Future studies on NNES undergraduate students' perceptions of their ITAs will provide us with more insights, thereby broadening our views to help us understand what difficulties exist among NNES students in different situations.

6.5 Conclusion

This study investigated the perceptions of NNES graduate students toward NNES instructors' English and what factors affect the building of their perceptions. Survey questionnaires and interviews were utilized to gather data. The findings showed that NNES instructors' accented English and limited command of English can bring about communication breakdowns and obstacles in classrooms. NNES graduate students who experienced communication issues with their NNES instructors showed a tendency to avoid conflicts by giving up on listening to the lectures and looking for other resources for help. They also tended not to directly address the issues with their NNES instructors. Furthermore, one third of the survey participants showed a preference for NES instructors over NNES instructors when choosing a section of a course, while the interview participants showed the similar preference toward NES instructors over NNES instructors. However, NNES graduate students perceived that NNES instructors, overall, can teach as well as NES instructors.

The findings of this study suggest that systematic and institutional support for both NNES instructors and NNES graduate students are needed to resolve the communication breakdowns between NNES instructors and NNES graduate students.

Despite a few limitations, the findings of this study lay a foundation for future research to better understand the perceptions and language attitudes between non-native speakers and non-native speakers.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX: SURVEY QUESTIONS

I. Demographic Questions

1. What is your age group?

(A) 21–23 yrs. (B) 24–26 yrs. (C) 27–29 yrs. (D) 30–32 yrs. (E) 33 yrs. or older

2. Which department are you from?

3. What is your first language?

4. Your predominant ethnic/racial background:

(A) Caucasian

(B) African American

(C) Asian

(D) Hispanic

(E) Other (including European American)

II. Experience with Non-native English speaking (NNES) Instructors

5. How many courses have you had with NNES instructors?

(A) One (B) Two (C) Three (D) Four (E) Five or more

6. How many of these courses with a NNES instructors in your major field (s)?

Choose one:

(A) None (B) One (C) Two (D) Three (E) Four or more

7. Did you have any problems with any of your NNES instructors? If yes, what were the reasons?

(A) Yes _____ (B) No

III. Scale of Preferences

Please select the appropriate number in the column on the right to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Some statements are similar, but read and respond to each one as accurately as you can. Do not reflect on them.

Use the following scale:

A	B	C	D	E
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

8. If I got a NNES instructor with a strong foreign accent, I would try to transfer to a different section of the course.

A	B	C	D	E
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

9. If I could choose the section of a course myself, one of my main criteria would be to get into a section taught by an native English-speaking (NES) instructor.

A	B	C	D	E
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

10. There are many NNES instructors who teach just as effectively as NES instructors.

A	B	C	D	E
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

11. I can learn just as well from a NNES instructor as I can from a NES instructors.

A	B	C	D	E
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

12. On the whole, NNES instructors show about the same level of concern for students as NES instructors do.

A	B	C	D	E
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

13. When there are communication problems between students and NNES instructors, students can do very little to improve the situation.

A	B	C	D	E
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

14. If I had trouble understanding an NNES instructor, I would talk with him or her about it during office hours.

A	B	C	D	E
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

15. As a student, I would be willing to make adjustments in my speaking and listening styles in order to communicate better with an NNES instructor.

A	B	C	D	E
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

16. It is not reasonable to expect students to make listening and/or speaking adjustments in order to communicate with NNES instructors.

A	B	C	D	E
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree

17. Are you willing to participate in the second phase of the study, which is a 40-45 - minute interview? If yes, please leave your email address.

(A) Yes _____ (B) No

24. If you have any other opinions on NNEPs NEPs, feel free to write in the section below.

VITA

VITA

Hyo Jung Keira Park
polyglotlinguistpark@gmail.com

EDUCATION

-
-
- Ph.D. in English, **Purdue University**, West Lafayette, IN 8/2016
- Second Language Studies/English as a Second Language Program
 - *Non-native graduate students' perceptions toward non-native professors' accented English*
 - Committee: Tony Silva (Chair), Margie Berns, April Ginther, Shelley Staples
- M.A. in Linguistics, **Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (HUFS)**, S. Korea 7/2011
- Thesis: *Implementation and perception of online peer feedback by Korean EFL students*
- TESOL Certificate, **HUFS**, S. Korea 1/2008
- Course work in Area Studies, **Seoul National University**, Seoul, S. Korea 3/2008
- Coursework completed of the master's program in Area Studies concentrating on Japanese area studies
- B.A. in Business Administration, **Chonnam National University**, S. Korea 7/2006
- Minor in English Linguistics and Literature
- Exchange Program, International Studies, **Gakugei University**, Japan 2004-2005

RESEARCH & TEACHING INTERESTS

Second language writing; second language speaking; English for academic/specific purposes; language testing; second/foreign language acquisition; sociolinguistics; bilingualism and multilingualism; qualitative research methods; mixed research methods.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN Spring, 2016

- *ENG620: Professional Development for International Graduate Students*
- Responsibilities: Prepare lesson plans; give lectures and hold individual conferences; help students with their professional preparation and job talk; individual feedback to students on professional presentations and mock interview.

Instructor, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 2014-Present

- *ENG620: Classroom Communication in ESL for Graduate Teaching Assistants*
- Responsibilities: Prepare lesson plans; give lectures and hold individual conferences; review students' OEPT test performance and establish goals for each student; monitor students' progress toward the goals; provide individualized feedback to students on speaking skills; grade assignments; assign final grades.

Instructor, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN Summer, 2014

- *BEB: Business English Boot camp for MBA students*
- Responsibilities: Prepared lesson plans; gave lectures on business case studies and facilitated discussion; established goals for each student; facilitated team projects for students; provided feedback to students on speaking and writing skills; facilitated for students to build an online platform to collaborate; graded assignments.
- *BECEB: Business English and Culture Boot camp for undergraduate and MSF students*
- Responsibilities: Prepared lesson plans; gave lectures on professional writing; facilitated students' presentation; provided feedback to students on writing skills; provided opportunities for students to build cultural awareness and understanding in the U.S.; grade assignments.

Instructor, International Center, West Lafayette, IN 2014

- Korean beginner and intermediate courses
- Responsibilities: Prepare lesson plans and teaching materials; and give lectures.

Instructor, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 2013

- ENG106I: Introductory Composition Course for International Freshmen
- Responsibilities: Developed syllabus, lectures, assignments, rubrics, and quizzes, provided individualized feedback to drafts, held individual conferences with each student or groups of students, graded assignments, and assigned final grades.

- Instructor**, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN 2011-2012
- ENG106: Introductory Composition Course for Freshmen
 - Responsibilities: Developed syllabus, lectures, assignments, rubrics, and quizzes, provided individualized feedback to drafts, held individual conferences with each student or groups of students, graded assignments, and assigned final grades.
- Senior Instructor**, MorningEdu Korea, S. Korea 2009-2011
- Teaching TOEFL and TOEIC in beginner, intermediate, advanced courses
 - Teaching Japanese-English/English-Japanese translation courses
- Online Instructor**, EduSpa, S. Korea 2011
- Video lecturing for English communication to the participants in an internship program in Australia
- Online Teaching Assistant**, HUFS, S. Korea 2010
- ENG202: Online Introductory Composition Course
- Instructor** 2005-2011
- ABC Tree, Seoul, S. Korea
 - English Study Center, Seoul, S. Korea
 - Cinema English, Seoul, S. Korea
 - EE-Tomo, Seoul, S. Korea
 - MorningEdu Japan, Tokyo, Japan

PUBLICATIONS

JOURNAL ARTICLES

- Park, H. K.** (accepted). The 'Outer Circle' English in an Expanding Circle country: Konglish, English loanwords, Anglo-Japanese loanwords and Korean English, *English Today*.
- Park, H., & Choe, H.** (2011). Implementation and perception of online peer feedback by Korean EFL students. *English Language and Literature 21, 24(3)*, 271-293.
- Park, H. K.** (under review). Non-native English speaking graduate students' perceptions of non-native English speaking instructors' accented English, *Journal of English as an International Language*.
- Park, H. K., & Thomas, S.** (under review). To be or not to be, that is the question: Needs analysis of a writing course for international graduate students, *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*.

NEWSLETTERS

Silva, T., **Park, H.**, Zhang, C., & Chen, Y. (to be published in 2016). Scholarship on L2 writing in 2014: The year in review. *SLW News*.

Silva, T., Thomas, S., **Park, H.**, & Zhang, C. (September 24, 2014). Scholarship on L2 writing in 2013: The year in review. *SLW News*.

MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

Park, H. K. (manuscript). "Now I see what I didn't see": *The effects of self-assessment in an oral proficiency class*. Target journal: *ELT Journal*. Expected submission: January, 2017.

Park, H. K. (manuscript). *A qualitative study on linguistic transfer between the first, second and third language driven by psycholinguistic relatedness of the languages*. Target journal: *International Journal of Multilingualism*. Expected submission: March, 2017.

Park, H. K., & Li, Y. (manuscript). The transfer of writing proficiency from L2 to L1. Target journal: *Language Learning*. Expected submission: December, 2017.

Park, H. K. (manuscript). *A case study on language attrition and native-speaker-ism of a multilingual speaker*. Target journal: *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*. Expected submission: May, 2017.

Park, H. K. (manuscript). *English, Japanese and French: a sociolinguistic examination and comparison of the post-colonial languages in South Korea, Taiwan, and Algeria*. Target journal: *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*. Expected submission: December, 2017.

PRESENTATIONS

Song, R., & **Park, H. K.** (2016). *Using computer-mediated communication technologies to bridge ESL writers' immediate community to their imagined community*. AAAL, Orlando, FL, USA.

Park, H. K. (2015). *Productivity and efficiency of an online writing group*. INTESOL, Indianapolis, IN, USA.

Park, H. K., & Zhang, H. (2015). *An examination of English textbooks in China in light of writing instruction*. INTESOL, Indianapolis, IN, USA.

Park, H. K., & Thomas, S. (2015). To be or not to be, that is the question: Needs analysis of a writing course for international graduate students. INTESOL, Indianapolis, IN, USA.

- Park, H. K., & Song, R.** (2015). *Writing in a team: Productivity and efficiency of an online writing group*. The annual conference of CATESOL, Anaheim, CA, USA.
- Silva, T., **Park, H.**, Chen, Y., & Zhang, C. (2015). *Scholarship on L2 Writing in 2013: The year in review*. Paper presented at the annual Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) conference, Toronto, Canada.
- Park, H.**, & Thomas, S. (2014). *My writing sounds unnatural!": Addressing international graduate students' concerns about academic writing*. Paper presented at Symposium of Second Language Writing, Tempe, AZ, USA
- Silva, T., Thomas, S., **Park, H.**, & Zhang, C. (2014). *Scholarship on L2 Writing in 2013: The year in review*. Paper presented at the annual Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) conference, Portland, OR, USA
- Park, H.** (2013). *Who is judging whom?: Native and Non-native English Speaking Graduate Student Perceptions toward Non-native Professors and Instructors*. Paper presented at the International Association of World Englishes conference, Tempe, AZ, USA
- Park, H.** (2011). *Implementation and Perception of Online Peer Feedback by Korean EFL Students*. Paper presented at Association of English Linguistics and Education of Korea conference, Seoul, S. Korea

TESTING & ASSESSMENT EXPERIENCE

- Test Rater**, OEPP (Oral English Proficiency Program), Purdue University 2014-Present
- Responsibilities: test scoring; scale management; participating in rater training
- Test Developer**, PLaCE (Purdue Language and Cultural Exchange) 2015-Present
- Responsibilities: item writing; test format development; validity and reliability control for test items

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- Webmaster**, ESL GO, Purdue University 2014- 2015
- President**, ESL GO, Purdue University 2013-2014
- Organizing committee member**, ESL GO, Purdue University 2012-2013
- President**, Graduate Organization of English Linguistics, HUFS 2010

MEMBERSHIPS

American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL)
 Asian English as a Foreign Language (Asian EFL)
 International association of world Englishes (IAWE)
 Indiana Teachers of English for Other Languages (INTESOL)
 Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teacher Training, Purdue University 2011-2014

- ENGL502 Teaching ESL Oral Communication (Spring 2014)
- ENGL 502 Teaching First-Year Composition for International Students (Spring 2013)
- ENGL505 Teaching First-Year Composition II (Spring 2012)
- ENGL505 Teaching First-Year Composition I (Fall 2011)

Rater Training, Purdue University 2013-Present

- Rater training for OEPT (Oral English Proficiency Test)

Conference, Purdue University 2013

- Conference for Pre-Tenure Women

ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

Teaching assistantship, OEPP, Purdue University 2014-Present

PRF Summer Funding, Purdue Research Foundation, Purdue University 2015

Mary Gitzen Memorial OEPP Excellence in Teaching Award, OEPP, Purdue University 2014- 2015

Instructor Travel Award, OEPP, Purdue University 2014- 2015

Q-Award for Excellence in Teaching in the Composition Program, Department of English, Purdue University 2013

Teaching assistantship, Department of English, Purdue University 2011-2013

National scholarship of Academic Purposes for Outstanding Students, The Government of South Korea 2010-2011

Academic Excellence Scholarship, HUFS 2009

Academic Excellence Scholarship, Chonnam University
2004-2005

SKILLS

Language: Korean (native); English (native-like); Japanese (highly fluent); Chinese (advanced intermediate); Modern Greek (intermediate); Spanish (elementary); French (elementary)

Survey Tool Software: Qualtrics

Course Management Software: Blackboard Learn

Web Design Tool Software: Dreamweaver

Other: MS Office software