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An Investigation of Pre-Service English Language Teacher Attitudes towards Varieties of English in Interaction

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AN INVESTIGATION OF PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER
ATTITUDES TOWARDS VARIETIES OF ENGLISH IN INTERACTION

by

JASON LITZENBERG

Under the direction of Dr. Stephanie Lindemann

ABSTRACT

English has become the default language of global communication, and users around the world are adapting the traditional standards of grammar and interaction. It is imperative that teachers of English keep pace with these changing conceptualizations of the language as well as the changing expectations of its users so that they can best prepare language learners for the sociolinguistic realities they will encounter. Teacher training programs have a critical role to play in that they must keep pace with both the changing global linguistic landscape and how these changes influence pre-service teachers. It is therefore imperative to understand the attitudes of pre-service teachers towards the varieties of English that their students will encounter.

This study considers the attitudes of pre-service TESOL teachers towards varieties of native and non-native English as used in naturalistic communicative situations. It considers personal factors that may play a role in how participants evaluate the interactive speech samples and whether TESOL training programs influence the development of attitudes towards language-in-use. To this end, a mixed methods design involving three primary components was used: an online survey of 70 respondents from 26 institutions, four focus group interviews, and a curriculum analysis of five teacher training programs.

This study is unique in that participants evaluate speech-in-action that is representative of the types of language found in many English as a lingua franca (ELF) settings. Among other things, primary results suggest that (a) standard language ideology influences many participant assessments of both native and non-native speech, (b) teacher training programs exert at least some influence on the attitudes of pre-service teachers towards varieties of spoken English in discourse, and (c) engagement with non-native speech in teacher preparation courses and language learning as a component of a curriculum can benefit pre-service teachers. Implications for applied linguistics, teacher training, and ELF are considered

INDEX WORDS: English as a lingua franca, ELF, Language variation, Grammar, Pronunciation, Attitude, Teacher training, TESOL

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by

JASON LITZENBERG

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Georgia State University

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DEDICATION

To Zorée Moon and Damian Jay ... thank you for being the awesomest kids and for putting up with me.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

An inevitable feature of all language is change. English has now become the default language of global communication, and at the heart of the spread of the language is variability and change. However, these changes are not being initiated by those who have traditionally held an assumed ‘authority’ over the language – the native speakers – but instead these changes are coming from communities of global users who utilize the code of English and adapt it to their own needs. These language users are exploiting the encoding possibilities of the language by creatively employing the common core of the language’s rules to suit their immediate communicative goals. In its function as a global language, what constitutes English use is recognized as being context-dependent, dynamic, hybrid, and fluid – a far cry from more traditional approaches toward language that are concerned with grammar, rules, and standards (Seidlhofer, 2011).

These new realities require a reconceptualization of ‘errors’ and perceptions of successful communication. Such reconceptualizations are particularly relevant for English language teachers who are charged with the task of helping others acquire the necessary skills to participate in global (and local) communities where English is the medium of communication. Yet numerous studies have identified a tendency among English language teachers and students to want to adhere to traditional standards (e.g., Jenkins, 2007a; Sifakis and Sougari, 2005; Timmis, 2002; Tsurutani, 2012), namely those of the native speakers. The attitudes and perspectives of teachers influence those of their students (Tan and Tan, 2008), the ultimate end-users of English, and therefore English language teachers are a logical place to begin learning more about the attitudes and beliefs towards English as they may be conveyed to learners and users (Jenkins, 2007a).

The present study focuses on a subset of language teachers, namely pre-service teachers enrolled in teacher training programs in the United States, where ESL dominates teacher training. Western TESOL exerts a strong influence on the profession as it is practiced and perceived globally (Holliday, 2005). Thus, pre-service teachers trained in the West have the ability to impact the future of English language pedagogy, and it is therefore imperative to understand the perspectives they will be bringing into their language classrooms and the profession as a whole.

The study uses a mixed methods approach of an online survey and focus group interviews to examine pre-service teacher attitudes towards English as used in naturalistic communicative settings, similar to those that pre-service teachers' future students may encounter. It considers notions of correctness, native/non-native issues, language teacher identity, perspectives of communicative success and communicative competence, and the influence of teacher training programs on the attitudes of pre-service teachers. The study also looks at the curricula of five teacher training programs in order to identify aspects of the curricula that may facilitate change in pre-service teacher attitudes towards some of these issues.

Chapter two introduces several concepts that are necessary for orienting the research within the broader field of applied linguistics. It presents an overview of common attitudes research methodologies and then considers more closely the research most relevant to the present study. The three subsequent chapters review the results of the study, beginning with the quantitative results from an online survey. This is followed by a presentation of the qualitative results from both the survey and a series of focus group interviews with pre-service teachers. The final results chapter looks at the curricula of five teacher training programs. The dissertation concludes with a discussion of the results and implications.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview of chapter

This chapter begins by presenting the general background of the project and its orientation within the field of applied linguistics. This is followed by a discussion of the central concepts of the project, namely English as a lingua franca (ELF), World Englishes and the Kachruvian Circles, and the native/ non-native speaker dichotomy. The next section presents a broad overview of language attitudes research methods that position the study within the area of applied linguistics. Subsequent sections then consider previous language attitudes research that is most relevant to the study of ELF and language teacher training, concluding with a summary and the need for the present research.

2.2 Background and orientation of the project

As described in the following subsection, an ELF approach to English language pedagogy requires that applied linguists and teachers re-evaluate how they envision and talk about language. Despite differences such as background, education, and teaching context among English language teachers, all teachers (and the field of applied linguistics as a whole) may benefit from at least some aspects of an ELF orientation. For example, even in ESL contexts in which one could claim that lingua franca perspectives are less relevant, ELF perspectives can reduce native speaker-centric views biased against trained, non-native professional educators. As Sewell (2012), a moderate critic of ELF, points out, perhaps the most important contribution of ELF to applied linguistics has been an increased awareness of the need to problematize concepts such as *community*, *language*, and *English*. Yet even if increased awareness is indeed the extent of ELF's influence upon the fields of applied linguistics and English language teaching, many researchers both within and outside of the ELF paradigm are likely to support a

continued re-assessment of the role that vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation play in successful communication (Cogo, 2012b).

One place to investigate the influence of ELF is in teacher training programs, which have the potential to raise future teachers' awareness of the diversity and hybridity of English (Birch, 2009; Jenkins, 2007a). For better or for worse, "pre-service English teacher education determines the quality of future in-service English teachers" (Tercanlioglu, 2008, p. 148). Pre-service teachers who are more accepting and tolerant of linguistic variation through exposure received in their training programs may be more likely to meet the needs and desires of their students.

As the field of TESOL becomes more professionalized, the importance of teacher training programs and the central role they play in the development of future teachers' perspectives towards global varieties of English is increasing. Teachers who are aware of their students' needs are more likely to address them. The first year of teaching is a critical time for novice teachers, and language teacher training programs have a significant role to play in preparing pre-service educators. Teacher training programs therefore need to understand how pre-service teachers perceive the teaching profession, themselves as teachers, their personal and professional identity, language standards, and the nature of language and communication in order to develop relevant pedagogies for individuals as they progress through a program. Teachers with positive attitudes towards non-native speech varieties may be more willing to accept variation from the traditional native speaker in their classes, while those with negative attitudes may establish less practical goals for their students. Thus, pre-service teachers offer a logical place for investigating attitudes and beliefs, especially in their ability to provide insight into the perspectives of future professionals before they enter the field.

The ELF model, the Kachruvian Circle and World Englishes, and the concepts of native/non-native exert a strong influence on the motivations and interpretations of this project. In order to appropriately understand how this project is situated within the field of applied linguistics, it is first necessary to clarify essential terminology and major concepts. The following sections cover ELF, World Englishes, and the concepts of native/non-native as used in this project.

2.2.1 English as a Lingua Franca (ELF)

Language is a means of communication, and one of the primary reasons for learning a language is to communicate with other individuals who utilize a similar linguistic code. Today, individuals who use English as a first language are outnumbered by those who use English as an additional language to their mother tongue (Graddol, 1997, 2006; Seidlhofer, 2011). These individuals do not necessarily need English to communicate with any of its native speakers, and some of them may never communicate with native speakers. Although accurate statistical information about non-natives who are users or who are learners is lacking, and the ratio between non-native/native speakers may be smaller than frequently purported (Maley, 2009). There is clearly great variability in the needs and goals of language learners as well as in the skill and proficiency with which the global community of users utilize English. Thus, English language users encounter “unpredictable variability” (p. 191) with which they inevitably must interact. ELF acknowledges this variability. It emphasizes the sociolinguistic reality that “the ability to communicate successfully in multilingual settings should be the primary goal of the learner, rather than the acquisition of native speaker proficiency and native speaker norms” (Kirkpatrick, 2012, p. 134).

Conceptualizations of ELF have been evolving since the introduction of the model over a decade ago (Cogo, 2012b). For instance, early discussions of ELF used terms such as *variety* and *nativization* to describe the goals of its research, as perhaps typified by the Lingua Franca Core (LFC), a project aimed at scaling down “the phonological task for the majority of learners ... and focusing pedagogic attention on those items which are essential in terms of intelligible pronunciation” (Jenkins, 2000, p. 123). While the LFC continues to be a relevant project within ELF approaches, other ELF research and theory has been centered on describing the sociolinguistic realities of communication among interlocutors who do not share a common native language. Rather than trying to find a new set of language norms, ELF is best envisioned as enabling applied linguists to move beyond normativity (Dewey, 2012) and allowing them to focus on other aspects of communication. Seidlhofer (2011) provides a broad, working definition of ELF as “*any use of English among speakers of different first languages for whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option*” (p. 7, italics original). Expanding on this concept, Cogo (2012b) stresses that ELF is not necessarily geographically bound. It is “virtual and transient in nature” (p. 97), and, in contrast to some earlier delineations of ELF, it may involve “speakers from both mother tongue and post-colonial contexts”.

ELF researchers prefer to view ELF as linguaculturally heterogeneous and highly variable, a phenomenon more appropriately defined as a *community of practice* (Cogo, 2012b; House, 2003; Jenkins, 2011; Kalocsai, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2009a) rather than a language or language variety. For this purpose, the concept of a community of practice has been adapted to describe ELF encounters. According to Seidlhofer (2009a), the three criteria used by Wenger (1998) to characterize a community of practice are relevant to ELF interactions -- namely, mutual engagement, a negotiated joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire. House (2003) states:

The activity-based concept of community of practice with its diffuse alliances and communities of imagination and alignment fits ELF interactions well because ELF participants have heterogeneous backgrounds and diverse social and linguistic expectations. Rather than being characterized by fixed social categories and stable identities, ELF users are agentively involved in the construction of event-specific, interactional styles and frameworks (p. 573)

Thus, as McKay (2003) points out, the study of ELF requires a greater focus on accommodation strategies and the “diverse ways in which bilingual speakers make use of English to fulfill their specific purposes” (p. 18). ELF has become more of a sociolinguistic project in that it attempts to describe the contemporary realities of language use.

In the rapidly developing, dynamic field of ELF research, many questions and issues of the early 2000s have either already been addressed or they have assumed a different shape in discussions of ELF (Cogo, 2012b). Although ELF is best conceptualized as a set of practices, there is a “lingering tendency” to see it as a distinct variety (Sewell, 2012) and continuing criticism from those who have failed to follow the evolution of the model (cf. Groom, 2012; Scheuer, 2010).

2.2.1.1 Criticisms of ELF

One of the more vocal critics of ELF, Scheuer (2010), claims that critics of ELF have been accused of misunderstanding and misrepresenting the ideology, and she devalues ELF pronouncements as “a manifesto of a motivational course” and as “a magic wand scenario, according to which ELF users’ self-esteem will dramatically rise overnight” (p. 342). Sewell (2012) is more charitable towards the enterprise, but believes that it only makes sense to talk about an “ELF community of speakers” if the “speakers themselves see ELF as a language for identification” (p. 43). Swan (2012) brings up a similar problem, pointing out that it is “not easy to generalize about speakers’ aims” (p. 381), particularly with regard to how speakers’ linguistic production may or may not deviate from their personal proficiency goals.

ELF rejects the native speaker as an unnecessary and irrelevant goal for language learning (Ferguson, 2012). However, Park and Wee (2011) state that even while ELF assumes an anti-hegemonic position in devaluing the traditional native/ non-native speaker dichotomy, it nevertheless seems to take on a class-based approach by promoting a form of “educated” (p. 368) English. In essence, this criticism is emphasizing the problem of describing a successful ELF user, which can vary greatly depending on context. In informal communicative situations, for instance, success becomes defined by the outcome of the interaction rather than by adherence to grammar or pronunciation standards, or, as Ferguson (2012) states, “the issue of error is far less salient: what matters more is whether what is said is clear and intelligible to the relevant interlocutors” (p. 126). Yet this seemingly egalitarian stance is exactly what concerns Park and Wee, for who is to decide what is intelligible? This problem becomes especially conspicuous in more formal situations of language use, such as business interactions or language assessment. How is intelligibility to be decided? Intelligible for whom?

While Derwing and Munro (2009) define intelligibility as “the degree of a listener’s actual comprehension of an utterance” (p. 479), they acknowledge that none of the various methods for evaluating intelligibility is adequate. Moreover, such a definition is difficult to apply to ELF encounters in which interaction and the interactional setting are principal factors. Rajagopalan (2010) addresses the ideological assumptions of *intelligibility*. He concludes with two main points, that (a) the idea of a common language guaranteeing mutual intelligibility must be reconsidered, and (b) intelligibility is perhaps best envisioned as a “lowest common denominator” (p. 469) in which speakers of different regional varieties are able to utilize their linguistic code to understand each other when needed.

Nevertheless, Park and Wee (2011) admit that current descriptions of ELF address a number of earlier critiques and allow the model “to make rewarding connections to studies that attempt to understand language as rooted within local practice ... with a much wider relevance to our understanding language in the modern world” (p. 372). However, they critique further, pointing out that to consider ELF as an activity type “may undermine the very distinctiveness of, and rationale for the ELF project in the first place” (p. 372). The concept of *community of practice*, for instance, has been adopted (and adapted) as a description for ELF and ELF interactions. In addition, the situation of how to deal with native speakers must be dealt with, and dislodging the native speaker as a standard-bearer is philosophically easier than perhaps practically possible. Scheuer (2010) argues that even for the most ideologically pure researchers, all ELF speech data “recorded so far are products of the old educational regime” (p. 345).

Nevertheless, despite criticisms, the ELF ideology and its goals are doing extremely valuable work by undermining counter-productive attitudes and moving the profession towards sociolinguistic realism (Swan, 2012).

2.2.2 Kachruvian Circles and World Englishes

The Kachruvian Circles approach has been influential to both ELF and World Englishes models (Bolton, 2006b; Seidlhofer, 2009b). The model offers a tripartite method for classifying English: the *inner circle*, which includes traditional native speaker locations such as the USA, UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, where English is the primary language of the population; the *outer circle*, referring to places where English serves as an important L2 in primarily multilingual communities (e.g., Malaysia, the Philippines, Nigeria, Pakistan); and the *expanding circle*, which includes locations that recognize the importance of English globally and

where it is widely studied as a foreign language (e.g., China, Egypt, Russia, Brazil, Mexico) (Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 1997; McKay, 2002).

The Kachruvian Circles model is useful for describing English and is especially practical for researchers who need parameters. However, critics point out the inability of the model to allow for intra-regional variation and claim that the Circles model stifles discussion regarding the legitimacy of new varieties of English (Görlach, 2002), which Crystal (2003) summarizes as “not all countries fit neatly into the model” (p. 60). Bruthiaux (2003) describes the primary problem with the Circles model as its inability to account for variation within varieties of English, tending to group together nation-states based on shared colonial history rather than discriminating between strongly multiethnic and monolingual communities.

Nevertheless, despite criticisms, the Kachruvian Circles have been influential to the World Englishes model, which overlaps (and contrasts) with ELF in various ways (Seidlhofer, 2009b, 2011). Rubdy and Saraceni (2006b) describe *World Englishes* as “New varieties of English” that have “endonormative potential” with standards that “are not imposed from the outside” (p. 7). The term has both narrower and wider applications (Bolton, 2006a). Wider applications refer to the study of varieties of English worldwide, such as African American Vernaculars in the United States or Celtic Englishes in Britain as well as realizations of English in Asia, Africa, Europe, and elsewhere; it encompasses basically any variety of the language identifiable as English across the globe. Narrower applications, on the other hand, refer to approaches more closely aligned with the Kachruvian Circles. The plural form Englishes -- rather than the phrase *varieties of English* -- emphasizes the autonomy and plurality of the language worldwide.

The ELF and World Englishes paradigms show accord in that both use the Kachruvian Circles Model as a descriptive starting point (Pickering, 2006). In addition, both approaches

recognize the hybrid nature of English, or its ability to allow elements of the local culture to be incorporated into its linguistic system (Canagarajah, 2006; Graddol, 1997; Rubdy and Saraceni, 2006a). Moreover, ELF is more closely associated with World Englishes than with Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) (Jenkins, 2006, 2009). While MFL classifies deviations from native speaker norms as deficits, World Englishes views such deviations as different emerging standards of systematicity. The MFL tendency to consider deviations as *interlanguage* ignores the sociolinguistic reality of English language learners and users who primarily use the language to communicate with other non-natives, situations in which native speaker norms are irrelevant. Thus, while World Englishes and contemporary ELF differ in their approach towards standardization of varieties, they share perspectives of the multifaceted and hybrid nature of a global language and view deviations from traditional standards as differences rather than deficits. In this way, World Englishes and ELF also share similar views of *nativeness*.

2.2.3 Native/ non-native

ELF and World Englishes dislike binaries, and in particular the inadequacy of the native speaker model (Jenkins, 2006). ELF researchers contend that a lingua franca belongs to its users and thus to a diverse, global culture. They argue that native speaker norms, particularly pronunciation norms, are not only unattainable, but unnecessary and frequently undesirable. As English has spread as a de facto lingua franca of global communication, the concepts of native speaker and non-native speaker have become ever more contentious. Rajagopalan (2004) argues that “[i]n its emerging role as a world language, English has no native speakers” (p. 112). From an ELF perspective, such a characterization is practical because speaking English as an L1 does not necessarily guarantee an ability to interact successfully with a wide variety of interlocutors, especially internationally. In fact, ELF is distinct from English as a native language and

therefore may need to be additionally acquired by native English speakers if they are to successfully participate in ELF interactions (Jenkins, 2012; VOICE, n.d.).

Numerous alternatives to *non-native speaker* have been introduced in recent decades, including *L2 user*, *L2 speaker*, *English-knowing bilingual*, or *successful bilinguals*, among others (V. Cook, 1999; Kirkpatrick, 2006; McKay, 2002). Jenkins (2000) introduces the concepts of Monolingual English Speaker, Bilingual English Speaker, and Non-Bilingual English Speaker, and McKay (2002) uses *bilingual user of English* “to describe individuals who use English as a second language alongside one or more other languages they speak” (p. 27). Yet despite these attempts at replacing *native/ non-native*, the concepts are somewhat engrained and alternatives have failed to take hold in the field.

In certain situations, the native speaker/ non-native speaker dichotomy may – if nothing else – be an issue of simple practicality “for lack of a better alternative” (Llurda, 2009, p. 120). The dichotomy, for instance, may be relevant in certain micro-sociolinguistic environments (Haberland, 2011) such as discussions of ELT (English Language Teaching) educators who have learned English as a second or third language (Braine, 2005). Lindemann (2003) describes how for U.S. undergraduate students the native/ non-native dichotomy is a perceptually distinctive method of categorizing speech. The present project is concerned with pre-service teacher attitudes towards the varieties of English their future students will most likely be using – that is, non-native English varieties – and in this way the perceptually distinctive native/ non-native speaker dichotomy offers a useful framework.

Thus, for the purposes of this project, a rather traditional view of native/ non-native speaker is taken. *Native speakers* are individuals whose first language of home, school, work, and so forth has been English for a majority of their lives. The term *non-native speaker* is used to refer

to individuals who have learned or are learning to become competent users of English as a second or foreign language. Subsequent references to these concepts use simply *native* and *non-native* and in each instance refer to English (unless otherwise indicated). In accordance to ELF perspectives (Hülmbauer, Böhringer, and Seidlhofer, 2008; Jenkins, 2012; Seidlhofer, 2004, 2009a, 2011; VOICE, n.d., among others), native speakers are not assumed to be more proficient or fluent (or other ideologically positive concepts) in the informal communicative situations represented in this study.

2.3 Language attitudes

Ryan, Giles, & Sebastian (1982) define language attitudes as “any affective, cognitive or behavioural index of evaluative reactions toward different language varieties or their speakers” (p. 7). Language attitudes are not stable entities, but they are dynamic and fluctuate depending upon social situations (Garret, 2010). Attitudes are more or less unconscious assessments that indicate what people think about a language, such as how it makes them feel, and what they think should be done (Dyers and Abongdia, 2010). Thus, the study of language attitudes is “an attempt to understand people’s processing of, and dispositions towards, various situated language and communicative behaviours and the subsequent treatment extended to the users of such forms” (Cargile, Giles, Ryan, and Bradac, 1994, p. 212).

2.4 Popular methodologies in language attitudes research

Since the 1960s, there has been an “explosion of research” (Giles and Billings, 2004, p. 188) on language attitudes. The different approaches to studying attitudes are usually divided into three main categories: direct measures, indirect measures, and societal treatment measures (Garret, 2010; Ryan et al., 1982). This section offers a brief overview of each.

Indirect methods of studying language attitudes involve listener evaluations of speakers of two, sometimes more, language varieties (Ryan et al., 1982). The most common indirect method is the matched guise technique (MGT) and its variations, such as the Verbal Guise Technique (VGT). The MGT involves the use of recordings made by a single balanced bilingual speaker in two languages. Respondents listen to the stimulus materials and are asked to rate the ‘different’ speakers in terms of various personality traits on some type of scale, usually a semantic differential or a Likert scale. The VGT, on the other hand, actually uses different speakers, who are supposedly able to present naturalistic samples of their language varieties better than a single bilingual speaker as with MGT. These two methods are arguably the most widely used in language attitude studies (Cargile and Giles, 1997).

Direct methods are a less subversive means of obtaining language attitudes and involve the use of direct questions or interviews. With direct methods, respondents may be asked about how they view a variety of language, their language preferences, the desirability of a variety, their reasons for learning a language, evaluation of social groups who use a variety, self-reporting on language use, desirability of bilingualism and bilingual education, or opinions concerning language policies (Ryan et al., 1982). This approach, then, simply involves the “overt elicitation of attitudes” (Garret, 2010, p. 39) by asking people how they feel about a language variety and expecting them to explicitly articulate their views.

Finally, *societal treatment* studies include observation, ethnographies, or analysis of sources obtained from the public domain, such as evidence from language policies or how languages are treated in newspapers or advertisements (Garret, 2010; Ryan et al., 1982). *Interactional approaches*, a subcategory of societal treatment studies, originating from the methodologies of sociolinguistic conversation analysis, add the element of context to language attitudes research

by looking directly at how attitudes arise through interpersonal interaction (Liebscher and Dailey-O'Cain, 2009). They provide specifics about attitudes not obtainable from statistics by analyzing “directly-expressed language attitudes as they appear within the discourse” (p. 197), and require “the researcher to take features of discourse into account that are either simplified or not observed when the analyst looks only at individual speaker turns” (p. 199).

To a certain extent, the distinctions between direct, indirect and societal treatment/ interactional approaches are artificial in that they are not always distinctly separate and easily placed into a single category, but frequently overlap. Moreover, many language attitude researchers may incorporate multiple methods into their design. The present study utilizes two approaches: a questionnaire that is based on a modified version of the VGT (indirect) and focus group interviews (direct and interactional).

The following discussion is divided into three main sections: (a) general language attitude studies related to this project, (b) studies specifically investigating the attitudes of language teachers and/or students towards English, and (c) studies specifically situated within the ELF paradigm. However, it should be noted that these categories are somewhat fluid and are only presented here for clarity of discussion rather than as distinct areas of research.

2.5 General language attitudes research towards varieties of English

This first section presents a number of more general studies on language attitudes that, while relevant to the present project and ELF attitudes, focus on broader issues related to native/ non-native interactions or World Englishes. For present purposes, the results of these studies and researchers' interpretations of the results are most pertinent and comprise the majority of the presentation. The section begins with studies on the theme of native/ non-native speakers, followed by those centered on outer/ expanding circle aspects of the World Englishes paradigm,

and concludes with a brief overview of a theme common throughout many attitudes studies – even if not directly addressed – standard language ideology.

2.5.1 Native/non-native interactions

The studies below investigate the attitudes of natives/ non-natives toward native and non-native varieties of English and generally demonstrate a preference for inner circle Englishes. A number of the studies here look at the attitudes of language learners towards language teachers. The attitudes of students are influenced by those of their teachers (Crismore, Ngeow, and Keng-Soon, 1996), so the perspectives of language learners may also reflect those of their teachers and the institution, and in this way are relevant to TESOL teacher training. These studies are also relevant to ELF research because they lend insight into the expectations of language users.

Several studies have specifically looked at student attitudes toward non-native teachers of English. For example, Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005) report how English language learner participants in an ESL context showed a preference for native speaking teachers for subjects such as pronunciation, culture, listening, speaking, and vocabulary, but were more accepting of non-natives for subjects such as grammar and communicative strategies. The preference for native teachers is somewhat incongruous when considered alongside results of Kelch and Santana-Williamson (2002) in which the non-native ESL participants in their study were frequently unable to discern native/ non-native English speakers. The authors suggest that the presence of any unfamiliar accent at all – whether native or non-native – seemed to cast doubt in participant judgments. Still, if a speaker was perceived as native, ratings for education, experience and linguistic skill were higher. In ELF contexts, on the other hand, Ma (2009) reports that English teachers who share students' first language may be advantaged over native English speakers when explaining complex language issues or understanding local cultural expectations.

Watson Todd and Pojanapunya (2009) report on a more detailed study investigating student attitudes towards native and non-native English teachers in which they utilized a questionnaire and an IAT (Implicit Association Test¹), an instrument designed to measure of the strength of automatic associations between two classification tasks. The researchers found little relation between students' explicit and implicit preferences for native/ non-native teachers. The authors explain that students "are apparently more willing to explicitly express a more prejudiced attitude than the one they implicitly hold" (p. 31). Watson Todd and Pojanapunya suggest that social attitudes—the explicit attitudes reflected in the culture—about preferring native teachers may be easier to change than implicit, or self-internal, attitudes.

Attitudes have also been shown to influence how interlocutors enter into an interaction. For example, in Lindemann (2002), native participants with negative attitudes towards Korean English speakers never rated interactions with those individuals as successful, while native participants with positive attitudes always rated such interactions as successful. In fact, the attitude with which one entered into a native/ non-native interaction was essential to both the actual and perceived outcome of the interaction. If perceptions of the other interlocutor were negative, an interaction was likely to be unsuccessful, and was always perceived as unsuccessful.

In sum, the studies in this section show how students have certain expectations of *who* (or *what*) an English language teacher should be, and these expectations are frequently based on an idealized inner circle standard. Attitudes prior to entering into an interaction can influence the outcome of that interaction; the idea expressed by participants in some of the studies that native teachers are preferred to non-native teachers could influence student learning and the outcome of

¹ Greenwald, Nosek, and Banaji (2003)

a course. These expectations, however, as Watson Todd and Pojanapunya (2009) point out, may have different internal realizations than those externally expressed.

2.5.2 English attitudes in the outer and expanding circles

A number of studies consider the status of English or the attitudes of locals toward English in the outer and expanding circles. Expressions of language ownership are not uncommon in the attitudes of many outer circle English speakers. In places as diverse as Malaysia and Brunei, English is no longer a foreign language associated exclusively with inner circle countries. While speakers in these regions recognize the importance of English for interacting with global society, they have appropriated the language to their own needs and begun to merge English into their own cultures for local purposes with local norms, and these vernaculars can serve as a marker of identity and in-group affinity (Moore and Bounchan, 2010; O'Hara-Davies, 2010; Tan and Tan, 2008). In the United Arab Emirates, Randall & Samimi (2010) found from police officer trainees little resistance to the wide-spread use of English in their country. Trainees related very ELF oriented reasons for learning English – that is, their motivations were more instrumental than integrative. The level of a trainee's education did not seem to be a factor.

Nevertheless, despite outer circle speakers' general appropriation of English for their own terms and purposes, as with any language there are distinct contexts of use where local English varieties, code-switching, or 'standard' inner circle Englishes are preferred. In official capacities where a 'standard' is expected, correctness judgments may often still be made on exonormative standards, where deviations from inner circle norms are considered mistakes made by people who speak 'poor' English (Bokhorst-Heng, Alsagoff, McKay, and Rubdy, 2007; Crismore et al., 1996). Socioeconomic status, age, and differences between public and private contexts of use have all been put forth as factors that can influence the level of acceptance of both inner and

outer circle varieties of English in local outer circle contexts (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2007; Bokhorst-Heng and Caleon, 2009; Cavallaro and Chin, 2009; El-Dash and Busnardo, 2001; Rubdy, McKay, Alsagoff, and Bokhorst-Heng, 2008).

These factors in the above studies relate to how outer circle English speakers perceive themselves – that is, their own speaker identity – in regard to other groups of language users, which has also been cited as playing a role in expanding circle contexts. *Identity*, according to Norton (2000), refers to “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (p. 5). In the expanding circle, students in Denmark have been shown to prefer British English varieties -- a region in close geographic proximity to Denmark and thereby presumably easier for Danes to identify with -- over American English varieties (Jarvella, Bang, Jakobsen, and Mees, 2001). In a similar study, Ladegaard and Sachdev (2006), however, found little support for an identity-based hypothesis of language learning. English can also serve a mediating or prestige function in one’s identity associations. O’Donnel and Toebosch (2008) report on how participants in Belgium preferred to use English rather than one of the major languages of their compatriots, Dutch or French. In Korea, knowing English can project the image of a “competent person with a great potential for success” (H. Park, 2012, p. 244).

Several studies have found non-natives to devalue their own speech. W. Xu, Wang, & Case (2010) report on how participants were aware of the plurality of English varieties and did not reject less standard ones, but they nevertheless demonstrated a continuing preference for native Englishes. Non-natives have been reported as having negative attitudes towards non-native speech (H. Murray, 2003), even their own varieties (Crismore et al., 1996; Hu and Lindemann, 2009; Tokumoto and Shibata, 2011; Tsurutani, 2012), and McKenzie (2008) describes how

participant recognition of inner circle varieties increased the evaluations they assigned on status traits. In a survey of Chinese listener perceptions of native/ non-native word-final stops in English, Hu & Lindemann (2009) found that participants idealized native English, even though it contained the same unreleased final stops that participants criticized in the non-native speech of their own variety.

2.5.3 ELF-relevant teacher and student attitude studies

The attitudes of students are inevitably influenced by those of their teachers (Crismore et al., 1996), and in this way – because both are intertwined – they are strongly related. It is therefore relevant to understand the attitudes that both groups have towards varieties of the language they teach and learn. Ladegaard and Sachdev (2010, citing Dörnyei, 2001), recommend that “future research needs to systematically assess the impact of teacher attitudes and motivations on second language learning” (p. 104).

With the exception of Dalton-Puffer et al. (1997), the bulk of research involving language teacher attitudes has taken place in the past decade. Much of this research has investigated attitudes towards emerging varieties of English, while other studies have specifically focused on ELF. While not all research made direct reference to ELF, it is relevant to the present project because of its focus on attitudes towards non-inner circle varieties of English. The first section below covers in-service teacher attitudes towards varieties of English, followed by a section covering pre-service teacher attitude studies, and then finally student-centered studies. However, because it is perhaps the most frequently cited study presented in support of native speaker standards, an appropriate place to begin is with Timmis (2002), a study that considers both teachers and students.

2.5.3.1 In-service teacher attitudes

Timmis' study highlights how student and teacher attitudes towards language varieties may not always correspond. Both students and teachers from almost 50 countries responded to a questionnaire (with language samples presented in the form of written excerpts) asking about language learning goals for pronunciation, grammar, and spoken grammar. Results for pronunciation suggested that a majority of students still adhere to native-speaker norms as a linguistic goal, although the international group of teachers surveyed was less focused on this traditional idea. However, students from India, Pakistan, and South Africa were distinctly more willing to retain pronunciation features of their L1 than students from other regions, prompting Timmis to suggest that acceptance of L1 influences may be context sensitive. As a whole, teachers were more accepting of non-native pronunciation, although in some cases teachers may have been expressing what they considered more realistic goals rather than more desirable goals, and some teachers even suggested that attaining native-like pronunciation could be "empowering" (p. 243).

For grammar, results among students were similar to those for pronunciation, with a majority viewing native speakers as a type of benchmark for achievement. Teachers were more conservative regarding grammar than they were for pronunciation. Regarding acceptance of spoken grammar, there was a distinct difference among students who had ESL versus EFL experience, with the latter group more accepting of deviations from textbook standards. Additionally, over two-thirds of the students who strongly disagreed with possibly using the informal grammar themselves also mis-identified the native sample. Teachers were more accepting of the spoken grammar samples, with recognition that learner level is important when introducing students to such examples and that native spoken samples are unnecessary for non-

native/ non-native interactions. Nevertheless, Timmis concluded that “[t]eachers seem to be moving away from native-speaker norms faster than students are” (p. 248).

Murray (2009) suggests that pedagogical practices have not kept pace with changes in how English functions in the world. Like Timmis, Murray uses a questionnaire methodology to investigate the attitudes of both native and non-native English teachers in Switzerland towards a minimized role of native-speaker norms in ELT. In particular, Murray is concerned with teachers’ view of Euro-English – that is, “the emerging variety of English spoken as a *lingua franca* by EU residents” (p. 150). Results suggest that native speaker teachers were more receptive towards non-standard grammar and Euro-English influences than non-native teachers. The author concludes that greater awareness of the new functions of English among Europeans is needed before they are willing to accept non-native targets.

Sifakis & Sougari (2005) also found that awareness of English in modern society is lacking among many Greek language teachers. In a questionnaire-based study, the researchers asked Greek teachers of English how the sociocultural status of standardized norms may influence their teaching, the goal of which was to explore the consistency between teaching practices and personal beliefs about pronunciation norms. Results, according to the authors, were paradoxical: while teachers seemed to believe that discourse was more important than rules or standards, they nonetheless held very norm-bound perspectives regarding pronunciation. Sifakis and Sougari posit a general lack of awareness of the implications of the international spread of English as one reason for this paradox. Thus, pre-service and in-service teachers require training that explicitly addresses contemporary ways in which English is used globally; such training builds awareness, which teachers ultimately incorporate into their own teaching. The authors conclude that “[i]n all probability, the situation described in this article is repeated in many other expanding-circle

countries” (p. 483) – an interesting notion that also raises the question as to how such attitudes may be reflected in inner and outer circle countries as well.

Jenkins (2005, 2007a) suggests that dominant language ideologies are responsible for the general lack of awareness of the viability of non-inner circle Englishes. Jenkins (2007a) uses an approach based in perceptual dialectology, “a branch of folk linguistics ... [that] aims to reveal people’s (the folk’s) beliefs about different language varieties by means of exploring how they overtly categorize and judge those varieties” (p. 148). Results illustrate the relationship between respondents’ perceptions of correctness, pleasantness, intelligibility and international acceptability of accents and the influence of dominant sociopolitical attitudes (i.e., linguistic insecurity, language myths, response to change). A large majority of non-native respondents, for example, were unable to conceive of non-native English as better than or equal to native varieties. Jenkins attributes such results to the dominant (but in her opinion outdated) language ideology that more traditionally English speaking regions such as the U.K. or North America represent the most desirable norms.

This theme is also evident in Jenkins’ earlier work. In Jenkins (2005) the author conducts personal interviews with non-native English language teachers. Her analysis reveals participants’ ambivalence and contradictions regarding their language and sociocultural identity: they desire to speak a native-speaker-accented English, but feel attachment to their mother tongue and the influence it may have on their English pronunciation. The detailed rationalizations that participants offer to support their views accentuate the benefits of qualitative language attitude studies, for quantitative methods would be challenged to uncover such dynamic, conflicted beliefs.

Recognizing that teachers' beliefs "have a considerable impact on the ways in which varieties are selected for teaching purposes" (p. 125), Young & Walsh (2010) conducted focus group interviews with three sets of experienced English language teachers of various international backgrounds. Prior to the interviews, participants were asked to read a series of contributions from *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, which included a piece by Jenkins (2007b) about ELF as well as a number of reactions for and against her position. The study's findings were not necessarily positive for proponents of ELF: despite having prepared for the interviews, "no participant was clear about the exact nature of EIL, ELF or any other 'NNES' variety" (p. 135). Most teacher participants assumed a "practical and pragmatic perspective" (p. 135) towards English and suggested that some standard form was necessary in order to teach. Yet most participants were uncertain which variety of English they themselves had learnt and demonstrated little concern for target models in their own teaching. Instead, they commented that clarity and utility were essential for practical purposes such as employment or higher education, and that learner needs were not something normally negotiated.

Learner goals and educational context are relevant to the pedagogical decisions of English language teachers. Decke-Cornill (2003) conducted focus group interviews with German teachers of English at two different types of high schools – a *Gymnasium* and a *Gesamtschule*, which differ primarily in how these types of schools prepare pupils for tertiary education. While the German *Gesamtschule* is a type of comprehensive school, the *Gymnasium* is comparable to British grammar schools or North American prep schools. According to Decke-Cornill, results of the interviews suggest that ELF, which allows for a "less normative, more process-oriented view of communication" (p. 68), is more aligned with the "socially ambitious ... multi-cultural and multi-lingual everyday reality" of the *Gesamtschule* than with "the more academically

ambitious and linguistically homogenous context of the grammar school” (p. 68). Although not directly addressed by the author, these findings suggest recognition of how English users can have drastically different linguistic needs depending on their own reasons for learning the language.

2.5.3.2 Pre-service teacher attitude studies

The studies above focus on the attitudes of *in-service* teachers’ attitudes towards varieties of English. The following set of studies – Dalton-Puffer, Kaltenboeck, & Smit (1997), Seidlhofer & Widdowson (2003), Grau (2005), and Dewey (2012)– focus specifically on *pre-service* teachers. With the exception of Dewey, these studies were all conducted in environments in which German was the dominant language.

Prior to more widespread introduction of ELF into the field of applied linguistics, Dalton-Puffer et al. (1997) conducted a VGT study in Austria considering listener attitudes towards Received Pronunciation (RP), Standard American (SA), and Austrian English. The study’s findings are nonetheless relevant to ELF. Results indicated participants who had spent more time in “English-speaking countries revealed more individualized, situation-specific attitudes” (p. 126) than those without such exposure and were more likely to accept deviations from a mainstream variety. The authors suggest the importance of personal contact with the target language group, emphasizing social identity and expressions of group membership. This proposition is particularly interesting when considered in relation to the idea of ELF community of practice, which constitutes a language group but not a language variety. How, for example, might increased contact with non-inner circle pronunciation norms improve non-native pre-service teachers’ views of their place among global English language users?

As seen in the previous section concerning in-service teachers, a lack of awareness of ELF is frequently a hindrance towards acceptance of the model. Similar results have been found for pre-service teachers. Seidlhofer & Widdowson (2003) analyzed pre-service teacher essay responses to a scholarly article² about ELF communication that challenges the idea of using native norms in English language teaching. A number of student responses are supportive of House's claims and in particular ELF, for example, expressing "relief" (p. 119) at realizing that native speaker goals need not be accepted as de facto standards. Another student-teacher claims that the activity raised personal awareness of the value of English for interactions with non-native speakers around the world. Yet many responses also seem critical of House's study and interpretation of results. Some respondents, for instance, found the conversation upon which House's study was based to be a "superficial situation" (p. 124) or "very artificial" (p. 125). Others questioned the acultural aspects of ELF, with different students claiming that "[s]peakers cannot just leave their culture behind and communicate on an ELF level" or that "culture is a feature of our own personality [...] it should be included in teaching as well" (p. 122). In any case, Seidlhofer & Widdowson conclude that the activity "had the educationally desirable effect of provoking critical reflection" (p. 126), which, one would hope, continues throughout the careers of the future pedagogues in the study.

With a similar goal of awareness-raising, Grau (2005) considered German pre-service teacher attitudes towards ELF. In this study, participants completed a questionnaire at the beginning of an ELT course and took part in follow-up discussions at the end of the semester. Grau believes that student-teacher participants' eagerness to offer opinions demonstrated their considerable interest in the subject. Although the "overall majority of students agree on the priority of

² House (2000) Developing pragmatic competence in English as a lingua franca. In: K. Knapp & C. Meierkord (eds), *Lingua Franca Communication*. Frankfurt a. M.: Lang.

intelligibility as a pronunciation aim in the classroom” (p. 270), some student comments appreciated the diversity of standards while others indicated a concern for “the problems that might be inherent in an absence of clear standards and norms” (p. 271). Grau interprets these results as supporting a strong need for reflective pedagogical approaches in order to encourage student-teacher reflection of their deep-rooted linguistic convictions. Present teacher training programs, according to Grau, need not be completely revised, but rather include critical reflection of ELF as an additional focus.

Dewey (2012) comes to a similar conclusion with regard to teacher training programs and pre-service teachers, stating that there is plenty of room for adapting towards a more ELF-oriented perspective. Dewey uses a questionnaire and interview design to uncover what pre-service teachers in England know about ELF and how they respond to it. The questionnaire had three parts in which (1) participants were asked about English as a global language, World Englishes, and English as a lingua franca, (2) participants rated different varieties by names on importance for present teaching context, level of familiarity, and prestige, and, (3) participants evaluated written utterances extracted from an ELF corpus. Participants demonstrated awareness of the terms for different varieties of codified English and of ELF, but for ELF there was little consensus on the applicability for individual teaching contexts, with participants expressing concern about how a non-codified English might cause problems for classroom practice. On the judgment task, some teachers were more norm-oriented while others were more accepting of divergences, even though they all consistently considered the utterances intelligible. The author suggests that participants were expressing their

identity as an experienced language teacher and member of a professionalized community with highly established codes of behaviour ... by orienting to language models and norms, which clearly have a central position in

institutionally-sanctioned versions of ELT expertise. In short, when asked to talk about ELF research, or for that matter, any research which has potential impact on current thinking, teachers will inevitably tend to invoke those aspects of their professional knowledge that are most familiar (p. 162).

Dewey concludes by expressing optimism about the incorporation of ELF and ELF ideologies into pedagogy. Comparing the present situation to Kumaravadivelu's (1994) description of a post-methods condition in ELT, the author suggests that ELF can bring about a *postnormative* condition "in which practitioners can be empowered to 'construct classroom-oriented theories of language and communication', and which enables practitioners to 'generate location-specific, classroom-oriented innovative language models'" (p. 166).

2.5.3.3 Student attitude studies

This section focuses primarily on student perceptions of ELF, although several of the studies include both teachers and students.

For both students and teachers, age may play a role in the level of acceptance of ELF. Using a combination of questionnaire and interview methodology, Ranta (2010) found that a large majority of both high school students and teachers agreed that students' main future uses for English are tertiary education, work, and travel – areas for which ELF goals are appropriate. Over half the teacher participants "stressed either the lingua franca role of English in the world and/or encouragement to communicate without worrying too much about errors" (p. 169) as being most relevant to their students. Moreover, although 79% of the teachers in the study were reported as being against using a single variety of English for pedagogical purposes, older teachers had a (non-statistically significant) tendency to adhere to a single variety. The younger generation of teachers – those with between 1 to 15 years in the profession – stressed the real-world circumstances of English in preparing their students. However, the authors point out that

the results suggest “teachers’ message about the importance of communication over accuracy in English does not appear to get through to their students” (p. 175).

Xu and Van de Poel (2011) also consider students’ perceptions of their English language needs. The authors used a questionnaire design to investigate the attitudes of university English majors’ attitudes towards ELF in Belgium. They found that participants “embraced some ideas of the ELF phenomenon” (271), namely acknowledgement of English as a functional necessity, awareness of and openness to the diversity of English as a universal language, the reduced superiority of standard English, and tolerance for and willingness to engage in ELF interactions. However, the authors highlight “the lack of openness and attention to the emotions associated with students’ learning English in the ‘shadow’ of native speakers” (p. 273), but also point out that participants in their study were English majors who might have different perceptions and goals than non-English major students. According to the authors, ELT professionals need to open dialogs about ELF with their students in order to emphasize what a language “can and cannot do” as well as bring a deepened awareness of communicative issues and strategies of language use.

The following two studies found acceptance of more endonormative standards for English among Chinese university students. He and Zhang (2010) report on a large-scale study of Chinese non-English major students’ perceptions towards China English, which the authors describe as a “performance variety” that has “standard Englishes as its core but is colored with characteristic features of Chinese phonology, lexis, syntax and discourse pragmatics, and which is particularly suited for expressing content ideas specific to Chinese culture” (p. 83). The mixed-methods study incorporated questionnaire, MGT, and interview methodology. Although the authors describe results similar to Timmis’ regarding participant attitudes about native

speaker norms, their results *differ* from Timmis' regarding participants' pronunciation expectations for their own English. The authors conclude that Chinese students "no longer set themselves a target as high as Standard Englishes for their pronunciation, as long as they could communicate freely with others in English" (p. 83) and they suggest that native-like pronunciation should not be over-emphasized as a pedagogical goal. The authors recommend the codification of China English in order to expand acceptance of the variety and to be able to present it as a viable alternative to inner circle Englishes.

He and Li (2009) also report on positive perspectives towards endonormative standards of English. They use a mixed methods approach to also explore Chinese student views towards China English³; the study included both English teachers and non-English major students. The results highlight the conflicting and dynamic nature of attitudes. For instance, even though almost half of the teacher-respondents use a native speaker-based model in their classes, they are more concerned that their students are able to communicate freely in English rather than adhere to native norms. Similarly, although over half of the student-respondents do not want to be identified as Chinese when speaking English, there was wide acceptance of a possible China English variety of English in the future. From these observations, He and Li conclude that an endonormative China English pedagogic model is desired by both teachers and students. Additionally, the researchers are able to develop a revised definition of what a China English variety would encompass, and because this revised definition is based on Chinese attitude research, it empowers Chinese learners by offering them a sense of ownership over the language.

³ Neither He and Zhang (2010) nor He and Li (2009) discuss the notion of variation within Standard Englishes or within a China English variety.

2.5.3.4 Summary of teacher and student attitude studies

The theme of awareness-raising is evident throughout a majority of the studies in the above sections. Age and motivations for studying English (e.g., university major or profession) appear to play a role in learners' choice of language goals. In most cases, teachers seem to be more accepting of non-native pedagogical goals than students, although there is still a concern among teachers for the need of a standard. However, students in China do seem willing to accept more endonormative standards. Although not always explicitly stated as such, much of this research as well as the reported findings are influenced by standard language ideology, which is addressed in the following section.

2.5.4 Standard language ideology and native speaker fallacy

In language attitudes research, standard language ideology plays a dominant, although not always visible, role. Lippi-Green (1997) defines *standard language ideology* as

a bias toward an abstracted, idealized, homogenous spoken language which is imposed and maintained by dominant bloc institutions and which names as its model the written language, but which is drawn primarily from the spoken language of the upper middle class (p. 64).

Standard languages are prestige varieties and spoken by a minority of people in a society (Jenkins, 2009), yet this minority variety is the one against which other varieties of a language are measured. Speakers of standard varieties often have political or economic advantages. Standard language varieties are also codified in reference books and dictionaries, which offers adherents an authoritative reference to support their positions. In education, standard language ideology can marginalize students who do not adhere to the rules of the standard. In intercultural encounters, idealized views of native speaker speech can come to represent a standard that is used to make judgments on non-native speech and performance (Hu and Lindemann, 2009; Jenkins, 2009; Lippi-Green, 1997). The idea of *standard* is often conflated with *nativeness*

(Seidlhofer, 2011). Thus, an extension of standard language ideology is the *native speaker fallacy*, a belief that “the teacher who is a native speaker is the best embodiment of the target and norm for learners” (Phillipson, 1992, p. 194). The effects of this (mis)conception have been identified in ELT hiring practices, student perceptions of teachers, teachers’ perceptions of themselves, and in textbook publishing (Braine, 1999; Canagarajah, 1999a; Jenkins, 2007a; Llorca, 2005; McKay, 2003).

Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008) present a brief history of the evolution of the standardization of English. Before print and radio, standards were based on spoken, regional dialects, but as standard ideology took hold, these dialects more and more frequently became evaluated on how they deviated from the ‘standard’. The idea of a standard has had “important ramifications for the status of new varieties of English” (p. 15), and the idea of a standard – or the need for some form of codification – has often been applied to discredit ELF. Arguing against the need for such codification, Seidlhofer (2011) points out that the successful use of the “encoding potential of English” is used “variably and *without* institutional sanction across communities and cultures” (pp. 48, italics original).

Standard language ideology has been influential for both researchers and participants in much of the research on language attitudes discussed above because of how it is used to describe ‘appropriate’ pedagogic models (e.g., H. Murray, 2003; Sifakis and Sougari, 2005; Timmis, 2002; Young and Walsh, 2010), a basis of comparison for other language varieties (e.g., He and Li, 2009; He and Zhang, 2010), discrimination against non-standard speakers (e.g., Kelch and Santana-Williamson, 2002; Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2005; Lindemann, 2002, 2003; Watson Todd and Pojanapunya, 2009), positioning of one’s identity as either an in-group or out-group user of a standard variety (e.g., Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2007; Crismore et al., 1996; Moore and

Bounchan, 2010; O'Hara-Davies, 2010; Rubdy et al., 2008; Tan and Tan, 2008), and for subjugation of one's own linguacultural group (e.g., Hu and Lindemann, 2009; Tokumoto and Shibata, 2011; Tsurutani, 2012; W. Xu et al., 2010). Lippi-Green (1997) states that American public school teachers "are for the most part firm believers in a standard language ideology which rejects or marginalizes those varieties of US English which are markedly non-middle class, non-Middle American, and colorless" (p. 131), and as the above studies demonstrate, similar forms of this ideology may be found in ELT and attitudes towards various international and non-native varieties of English.

2.6 The research gap

From the attitude studies described above, Dewey (2012), Timmis (2002), Moore and Bounchan (2010), Murray (2009), Sifakis & Sougari (2005), and Xu & Van de Poel (2011) collected questionnaire-based data, so respondents were answering questions about English, their knowledge of English, and their feelings about the *idea* of English with no actual relation to language in action. That is, respondents answered questionnaires about native/ non-native Englishes or ELF without actually hearing language samples. In Decke-Cornill (2003), Dewey (2012) and Jenkins (2007a) the researchers conducted either group or individual semi-structured interviews with participants. Yet again, interviewees were not presented with actual ELF samples during the interview process and instead offered responses based only on the idea of ELF as described by the researcher or from previous experience.

With the exception of the three studies by Dalton-Puffer, et al. (1997), He and Li (2009), and He and Zhang (2010), participants in these studies were evaluating language as described to them by the researcher (Jenkins, 2007a), presented through an academic article (Seidlhofer and Widdowson, 2003; Young and Walsh, 2010), or as a concept based on their previous experiences

with language (Grau, 2005; Moore and Bounchan, 2010; H. Murray, 2003; Timmis, 2002; J. Xu and Van de Poel, 2011). In this way, participant responses were primarily based on *imagined* speech. In the absence of examples of actual aural language samples, it is difficult to know what type of communication participants in many of these studies were imagining (i.e., successful or unsuccessful communication, speaker backgrounds, and so forth) or how they may have contextualized written samples (i.e., business or social environments). Although the language attitude studies of Dalton-Puffer, et al. (1997), He and Li (2009), and He and Zhang (2010) provided participants with verbal samples, these were isolated monologs that did not represent the sociolinguistic reality of how language is used in the interactional context of a community of practice, a cornerstone of contemporary ELF ideology.

The present study fills this gap in ELF research by presenting participants examples of multiple speakers using language in interaction. In other words, rather than imagined speech or isolated samples of individual speech, participants are evaluating samples of naturalistic ELF encounters. In addition, the study looks at how certain aspects of pre-service teachers' personal experiences may influence their present attitudes. More specifically, it addresses three areas that have not been directly investigated as potential factors in previous research on pre-service teacher attitudes: participants' achievement towards their degree, participants' teaching experience, and participants' personal L2 experience. Also, rather than focusing on a specific class or activity (cf. Grau, 2005; Seidlhofer and Widdowson, 2003), the study looks at how teacher training programs as a whole may affect pre-service teacher attitudes. This more comprehensive approach for looking at training programs enables the study to consider aspects of TESOL training that might affect these attitudes. Finally, with an overwhelming majority of ELF research taking place in Europe and Asia, this study is unique in that it considers pre-service

teacher attitudes from an ELF perspective *in the United States*, which until now has participated only peripherally in ELF-related research⁴. Nevertheless, ELF is globally relevant because English language teachers around the world share an international professional identity and are share a similar purpose: to teach English (Holliday, 2005). While the traditional ESL context of the study may have influenced the participant perspectives that are reported on here, it should be noted that previous ELF research on pre-service teacher attitudes has also taken place in ESL contexts other than the United States (see Dewey, 2012; Jenkins, 2005, 2007a).

The leading research questions are as follows:

1. What are the attitudes of pre-service teachers in North American TESOL training programs towards English as used in successful ELF and native speaker interactions?
2. How are the language attitudes of pre-service teachers influenced by their own background and personal language learning experience?
3. Do TESOL training programs influence the language attitudes of pre-service teachers? That is, is there a difference in pre-service teacher attitudes from the beginning to end of a TESOL training program?
4. What aspects of TESOL training curricula are likely to facilitate change in pre-service teacher attitudes?

The next two chapters primarily address the first three of these questions. The last chapter of the results addresses the fourth question, followed by discussion.

⁴ Pickering and Litzenberg (2011) is the only other ELF related research originating in North America that I am aware of.

CHAPTER 3: QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

There are three main components to this study: an online survey, focus group interviews, and a curriculum analysis. The present chapter is concerned with the quantitative data from the first part of the study, the online survey. These results are most appropriate for addressing the following research questions (or parts of these questions, as certain aspects of the questions may be more appropriately addressed through a different type of analysis, e.g., qualitative data).

1. What are the attitudes of pre-service teachers in North American TESOL training programs towards English as used in successful ELF and native speaker interactions?
2. How are the language attitudes of pre-service teachers influenced by their own background and personal language learning experience?
3. Do TESOL training programs influence the language attitudes of pre-service teachers? That is, is there a difference in pre-service teacher attitudes from the beginning to end of a TESOL training program?

The chapter assumes the following organizational format: methodology, statistical analyses conducted, and results. Some sections – such as the description of stimulus materials – are also relevant to materials in subsequent chapters.

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 Stimulus materials

In contrast to previous language attitude studies using either a verbal guise technique (VGT) or matched guise technique (MGT), the present study asks participants to evaluate speech in interaction using multiple speakers rather than individual speakers one at a time. VGT stimulus materials allow for “the use of naturalistic (but carefully controlled) dialogues and different speakers using their own accent, dialect or language” (Ladegaard and Sachdev, 2006, p. 107, parenthesis original), often speaking individually from a script or notes. This methodology

enables the creation of a “more authentic experiment” (p. 107) than MGT, which employs a single speaker producing two or more language guises.

The present study expands traditional VGT methodology by utilizing stimulus materials with multiple speakers in unscripted interaction. Unlike previous VGT studies, then, this approach offers participant listeners the opportunity to hear and respond to actual samples of *interactive* speech. Although these natural, unscripted conversations may introduce a number of uncontrollable variables (e.g., background noise, overlapping speech, speaker voice quality, turn-taking, and so forth), they have the advantage of presenting listeners with successful real-life examples of speech in interaction. This approach creates one of the greatest differences between previous studies (cf. Grau, 2005; Jenkins, 2007a; Sifakis and Sougari, 2005, and others) in which non-native speech in interaction was presented to participants through theoretical descriptions, and the present one in which participants hear concrete examples of unscripted, non-native interaction from semi-controlled situations.

The use of multiple speakers in dialog nevertheless brings numerous complications, such as an inability to know whether respondents are reacting to the group as a whole or to the speech qualities, voice qualities, or the language background of an individual speaker. An attempt has been made to acknowledge such challenges in the development of the listening response questions. For instance, it was believed that the semantic differentials in the study (*proficient/not proficient, confident/not confident, friendly/unfriendly, fluent/not fluent*) were at least somewhat applicable for describing interactive speech, and – although these dimensions could nonetheless easily vary among speakers – they are more linguistic evaluative measures than other commonly used descriptors such as *honest/dishonest, energetic/lazy* or *rich/poor*. Moreover, throughout the questionnaire, survey participants are repeatedly asked to consider the *group* of speakers or the

speakers *as a whole* – a subtle, albeit imperfect, attempt to remind participants of the nature of who they are evaluating. The same is true for the Likert scale questions that follow: these were selected because they are believed to be more applicable to a group of speakers. These questions are also often worded in such a way so as to remind the participant that multiple speakers should be considered when answering. Each of the Likert scale questions allows for comments that, when answered, should lend greater insight into respondents' motivations for their answer.

3.1.2 Stimulus recordings

The stimulus materials are approximately 45-60 second excerpts taken from naturalistic native and non-native speaker conversations recorded in semi-controlled settings. Speakers for all recordings were female in order to control for possible gender bias effects.

There were two non-native recording sessions, one of high-intermediate English proficiency and the other of advanced proficiency. All speakers had definitive non-North American influences to their speech (to differing levels) in syntax, subject-verb agreement, verb tense, lexicon, and phonology. These influences have all been attested as common to and non-disruptive for ELF interactions (Cogo, 2012b; Firth, 1996; Jenkins, 2007a, 2012; Pitzl, 2012; Salakhyan, 2012; Seidlhofer, 2011; Watterson, 2008). Non-native volunteers were recruited through in-class announcements in the upper levels (Levels 4 and 5 of a five level program) of a university Intensive English Program (IEP) and in freshman and sophomore academic writing classes specifically adapted for non-native speakers. Language background was controlled so that no two speakers of either non-native group shared the same first language. There were four speakers in the high-intermediate non-native group; only two participants were previously acquainted through their IEP classes. Excerpts from this recording session were used in Dialogs 1 and 4 of the survey. Table 3.1a shows a summary of dialog speaker information for this group.

There were three speakers in the advanced non-native group. Two participants were acquainted prior to the recording session through their writing class. Table 3.1b shows a summary of dialog speaker information for this group. Although not clear from the information on the self-completed language background questionnaire, the speaker from India could possibly be considered an outer circle native user of English. She identified herself, however, as a non-native speaker: this speaker was recruited from a sophomore university-level writing class designed for non-native speakers of English and she responded to a recruitment ad specifically requesting non-native speakers.

The native group had three volunteers; all were familiar with each other professionally and through Applied Linguistics courses. They were raised primarily in North America in the regions of Pennsylvania, Virginia, Missouri, Illinois, and Georgia and represent what Wells (1982, p. 470, as cited in Ladegaard & Sachdev, 2006) refers to as “an American accent without marked regional characteristics”. Neither the researcher nor colleagues identified any marked regional or ethnic variations for any of the native speakers. Table 3.1c shows a summary of dialog speaker information for this group.

Table 3.1a

Dialog speakers for High-intermediate group

	IEP level	Age	Age when started to learn English	Formal English study at school/uni	Time in U.S.	Languages spoken*	Country of origin	(Intended) major & degree
Speaker 1	Level 5	25	12 years old	4 years		<i>Arabic very well; Somali very well; English very well</i>	Saudi Arabia	Nursing
Speaker 2	Level 4	25	20 years old	3 (years?/ months?)	3 months	Russian <i>Fluent</i> ; English <i>4 level IEP</i>	Russia	
Speaker 3	Level 4	26	12 years old		1 (years? months?)	French 5; Lingala 5; Mounoukou-touba 5; Italian 1	Republic of Congo	IEP
Speaker 4				7 years	1 month	Chinese; English	China	

* italics represent participants' own verbatim descriptions

Table 3.1b

Dialog speakers for Advanced group

	Age	Age when started to learn English	Formal English study at school/uni	Time in U.S.	Languages spoken*	Country of origin	Major & degree
Speaker 1	21	8 years old	6 (years? months?)	1 month	Italian <i>mother tongue</i> ; German <i>fluent speaker</i> ; Chinese <i>basic level</i>	Italy	Economics, B.A.
Speaker 2	19	15 years old	4 (years? months?)	≈4 (years? months?)	Gujarati <i>very well (advance)</i> ; Hindi <i>very well (advance)</i> ; Sanskrit (<i>medium</i>); Bangali (<i>Beginner</i>)	India	Neuroscience, B.A.
Speaker 3	23	5 years old	14 years in Russia + 1 year in U.S.	3 years	Russian <i>very well</i> ; English <i>Not as good as I want</i>	Russia	Finance, B.A.

* italics represent participants' own verbatim descriptions

Table 3.1c

Dialog speakers for Native speaker group

	Age	Strongest language	Description of English	Lived outside U.S.?	Languages spoken*	Major & degree
Speaker 1	21	English	non-stigmatized	Jamaica, 8 years	English <i>native-like</i> ; Japanese <i>Grammar proficient</i> ; Korean <i>Instinctively</i>	Applied Linguistics & ESL, M.A.
Speaker 2	24	English	standard NAE	France, 1 year	French <i>intermediate</i>	Applied Linguistics, M.A.
Speaker 3	24	English		Indonesia, 9 months	Indonesian <i>beginner</i> ; Hindi <i>beginner</i> ; Spanish <i>beginner</i>	Applied Linguistics, M.A.

* italics represent participants' own verbatim descriptions

All recordings took place in the Applied Linguistics conference room in the mid-afternoon on three separate days – one recording session per day. Volunteers were provided a light snack of sandwiches, pasta salad and drinks as well as a list of discussion topics (See Appendix A). It was hoped that providing volunteers with discussion topics would increase correspondence of stimulus materials across all three groups as well as reduce volunteer anxiety and facilitate interaction. Relevant to the present study are McKenzie (2010), who successfully used unscripted monologs from a map-reading task as stimulus material, and Cargile & Giles (1997), who have suggested that non-critical content and familiar topics encourage listeners to “tune in” (p. 210) more intently to speakers’ language. The discussion topics provided were selected because they were considered at least somewhat relevant to the lives of the stimulus-material volunteers and more-or-less thematically neutral, which hopefully allowed pre-service teacher listeners to more easily “tune in” to the language rather the message itself.

Each recording session lasted approximately 45 minutes. At the start of each session, the researcher explained the procedure to volunteers, reviewed consent forms, addressed any questions or concerns, gathered consent, reviewed discussion topics, and left the room. The conference room door was closed during each recording session in order to minimize outside noise, although participants were free to leave if necessary. Volunteers were seated around a regular-sized rectangular table with the recording device (Samsun Zoom H4n digital handy recorder) clearly visible at the far end of the table in order to ensure maximum coverage using the 120° radius of the built-in stereo microphones. Recordings were made in 96kHz 24bit .wav format (conversation excerpts later posted to the online survey were converted to a smaller 128 kbps MP3format for quicker downloads). Each participant was provided a copy of the discussion topics for reference during the session.

Using semi-controlled conversation recordings as stimulus materials has several advantages, all of which would be difficult, if not impossible, to control in natural conversation. Firstly, the controlled environment ensures the highest audio quality of naturalistic conversation with minimal background noise or similar distractions that may otherwise divert listener attention from the more direct aims of the study. Nevertheless, a few focus group participants did comment on the “eating sounds”⁵ present in the recordings. Secondly, although criteria for stimulus-material volunteers were relatively unrestricted, attention was given to ensure that all groups had only female speakers and that speakers in each non-native group represented different within-group language backgrounds. The semi-controlled settings also provide a similar context of interaction and therefore greater comparability across stimulus recordings.

3.1.3 Survey design

The survey instrument was distributed through SurveyGizmo (Widgix_Inc., 2011), a web-based survey tool which offers a full version of their online survey software free to university students. An advantage of the online format is that it enabled pre-service teachers from programs across the United States to participate. In addition, this format allowed participants to complete the questionnaire on their own time so as not to interfere with courses, reduced the possibility of scheduling conflicts, and allowed for both novice and advanced pre-service teachers to complete the survey during the same data collection period. On the other hand, there was no assurance that participants complete the survey alone or with minimal distraction. Although the possibility of participants completing the survey multiple times was also a risk with

⁵ It should be noted that throughout the discussion of the data, double quotes are used to represent extracts from actual participant comments. Single quotes represent author’s own usage.

this format, it is highly unlikely that any did so, as institutions were only sparsely represented in the final data set.

The survey itself consisted of a series of four short conversation excerpts (Appendix B) beginning with the lower proficiency group, followed by the higher proficiency group, then the non-native speakers, and ending with a second dialog from the lower proficiency group. A specific, non-random ordering of excerpts was chosen for two reasons. Firstly, because this study already involves a rather large number of uncontrollable variables – particularly in regard to issues arising from the conversational interactions of the stimulus materials and other factors such as speaker voice quality – it was decided that a predetermined order for the stimuli would allow for greatest comparability across training programs. This method ensures that the dialogs were presented in the same order to a program represented by only three respondents or a program represented by 20 respondents, thereby reducing the influence of ordering factors as a variable among participant responses. Secondly, since previous research has indicated a tendency for listeners to prefer native speech over non-native speech, presenting the native-speaker dialog after both of the non-native dialogs decreases the likelihood of the native conversation biasing perceptions of subsequent dialogs. The second excerpt from the high-intermediate group (the lowest group) at the end of the survey followed the native excerpt, allowing for a comparison of perceptions before and after hearing the advanced non-native and native dialogs. Transcripts of the dialogs are in Appendix B.

In the general instructions for the questionnaire, each excerpt was described as coming from a lunchtime conversation; in the actual questionnaire, each conversation is preceded by a brief 1-2 sentence description framing the topic of discussion for the listener. For instance, the description for the first excerpt read: “In the following dialog several students are discussing

their hobbies. One student is explaining her interest in piano.”⁶ For all four conversation excerpts, the questions on the attitude questionnaire were the same. Each excerpt and set of questions was presented on a single, individual page of the survey. Participants moved forward in the survey after completing each set of questions; none of the questions were required and once a page of the questionnaire was completed, participants could not return to that page. Cargile (2002) reports that time constraints placed on stimulus materials may influence listeners’ evaluations of speakers; for this reason, participants were able to listen to each conversation as often as necessary when answering questions.

The general instructions for the survey informed participants that the research deals with issues of teacher training, but they were not specifically informed that language attitudes were being investigated. The survey’s visible title for participants was *Pre-Service TESOL Teacher Program & Materials Study*. On the first page of the survey, participants were asked to read the informed consent information; they could only proceed with the survey by agreeing to the informed consent and clicking the appropriate checkbox. The next page offered a brief set of instructions for completing the survey. The subsequent four pages were the actual attitude questionnaire, each of which presented an embedded audio player with the listening sample at the top followed by the same set of 16 questions for all dialogs.

According to Oppenheimer (1992), beginning a questionnaire or study with personal questions can be “very offputting to respondents” (p. 107). For this reason, the demographic and language history portion of the questionnaire was the final step of the survey. All responses were anonymous; potentially identifying information (such as institution) was not associated with responses in any manner during analysis. Survey data was collected for approximately six

⁶ Not all participants may have read these descriptions. There were a few comments from participants about not knowing what was being talked about when they first started listening.

months, with two major announcements for the survey being sent out in April and August of 2012. At the end of the survey data collection period, the link was closed in order to prevent further responses.

3.1.4 Survey questions

The first 6 questions were 5-point semantic differentials, which required study participants to choose from two semantically opposite lexical items (in this case, *confident/not confident*, *educated/not educated*, *friendly/unfriendly*, *proficient/not proficient*, *fluent/not fluent*, and *competent/not competent*). Participants completed the first set of six semantic differentials in response to the statement *The speakers in this conversation seem...* The linguistic dimensions of the semantic differential scales and the open-ended questions that followed were adapted from previous language attitude studies (Dalton-Puffer et al., 1997; Giles and Billings, 2004; Jenkins, 2007a). Attempts were made to eliminate biases referring to “standard” language or “correctness”, although one question did ask participants to evaluate whether one or all conversationalists are native speakers. The final two semantic differentials were based on different questions: *For this particular interaction, the vocabulary of the speakers seems (appropriate/not appropriate)* and *Based solely on the speakers’ language abilities (i.e., not topic or quality of recording), following the conversation was (easy/difficult)*. Following these eight semantic differential questions, the survey gave participants the opportunity to offer open-ended comments.

The majority of the remaining questions were 5-point Likert scale type, asking participants to *strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree*. At the end of each section there were two open-ended questions, one asking participants to comment on any part of the conversation they found difficult to follow or did not understand, and a second offering

participants the opportunity for general comments on the conversation or survey as a whole. The survey may be found in Appendix C.

3.1.5 Participants

Contacts at 79 public American universities or colleges with TESL/TEFL programs (undergraduate, graduate, or certification/endorsement) were initially approached via email and asked if they would be willing to help recruit participants for this project by distributing a recruitment email. Participating TESOL programs were all part of a university or college affiliated with an official state institution. These included any public institution offering degree-based majors or minors, certifications or endorsements in English as a second or foreign language education (i.e., TESOL, TEFL, TESL, ESL, and so forth). In order to maintain some uniformity regarding admission policies, cost of attendance, student population, and so forth, private and religious-backed institutions are not part of the data. Only programs offering B.A. or M.A. degrees were asked about participation, but individuals at each institution who were seeking other degrees such as ESL endorsements were not excluded from participating.

Institutions with B.A. programs in TESOL that participated in the study were primarily selected through the list of programs on the International TESOL Website (TESOL, n.d.). A few institutions were located through general web searches. The B.A. TESOL programs ranged in size from 5 to 25 students graduating from the program per academic year. Institutions with M.A. programs that participated were also selected through the institution listings on the TESOL website. However, because of the sheer number of programs identified, those offering only endorsements or K-12 ESL certification were not included. A random sampling of the M.A. TESOL programs suggests an average of approximately 20 new students per fall semester.

Of the 79 institutions found that fit the criteria above, nine were unwilling or unable to participate, or the contact information provided on their websites was out-of-date. Of the remaining 70 institutions, 24 acknowledged distributing the recruitment email after either the first or second request for help. No response was ever received from any of the remaining 46 institutions, although a few completed survey responses from these institutions suggest that at least some of them did distribute the recruitment email.

Any student enrolled in and seeking certification from a TESOL training program was allowed to participate in the study, including undergraduate students working towards a bachelor's degree, graduate students working towards a master's degree, and part-time or non-traditional students. Ph.D. students and practicing teachers not currently in a degree program were not included; although a few did complete the survey, they were later removed from the analysis.

A total of 109 participants at least began the survey and 83 participants completed the study, but only 70 responses were ultimately usable. Reasons for not including certain participants in the final analysis included: individuals who had already completed a degree and were teaching, conflicting information about degree type or standing, and locations outside of the United States. A number of participants began the survey, but then simply "clicked through" or closed their browser after the first few pages; these partial responses were also removed. Some of the effort involved to complete this voluntary study was perhaps discouraging to some participants: The survey was more complex than a simple set of questions, required that participants have headphones in order listen and respond, and took at least 15 minutes to complete. Table 3.2 presents an overview of relevant participant demographic information.

Table 3.2

Participant demographics

Total institutions represented	26*
Total participants	70
BA	18
MA	52 [†]
MA-Nov	20
MA-Mid	8
MA-Adv	21
Female	43
Male	24
Native speaker	64
Non-native speaker	6
Ages	21-58
Mean age	30.5
Median age	27.5

* two institutions unknown

[†] three MA participants could not be classified as Nov, Mid, or Adv

In the end, the most highly represented institution had 24 participants, roughly evenly split between BA and MA students. Participation from other institutions ranged from (most commonly) a single instance to up to seven participants, and numerous instances of three or two participants.

3.2 Data preparation

Prior to analysis, extraneous information was removed from the data set, including items automatically generated by the survey software such as IP address and test region (although the region information was useful in eliminating two participants from outside the United States who had completed the survey). Next, Likert responses were coded on a scale of 1 to 5. Other items – such as for possible courses in which to use the dialogs as language samples, participants’ teaching experience, and participants’ gender – were coded using dichotomous variables.

One of the items most relevant to this study was the number of courses taken towards TESOL certification. Participants were asked three questions: How many courses have you completed? How many are you taking? How many are remaining? The intent was to aid in classifying participants as either novice or advanced MA students. However, because of the extensive range of hours required by different training programs offering TESOL certification (between 15 to 30 credit hours), the most useful question was the “already completed” category.

For instance, a student with 3 remaining hours in a program that requires only 15 credit hours is not necessarily more advanced than a student with a larger number of remaining hours in a 30 credit-hour program. It seems reasonable to assume that programs requiring a higher number of credit hours represent a more intensive and detailed education. For this reason, MA participants were divided into groups based solely on hours completed. Thus, a participant with 12 hours of a 15 credit hour program would be categorized equally with participants having 12 completed hours of a 30 hour program. This procedure was used to classify self-identified MA-student participants into one of three categories: MA-Novice (MA-Nov; zero to three courses completed), MA-Middle (MA-Mid; four to five courses completed), and MA-Advanced (MA-Adv; seven or more courses completed). Participants who indicated that they were seeking TESOL certification or endorsement were also included in the MA groups because both types of degrees require completion of BA as a pre-requisite. In addition, two different parts of the survey asked participants to indicate the type of degree they were pursuing, and a substantial majority of endorsement/ certification participants indicated “MA” or “graduate degree” in one of these two places.

Using the classification method just described was also motivated by the discrepancies in the participants’ self-reported types of courses taken towards completing their degree. On the

demographic portion of the survey, participants were able to indicate which courses they had taken towards their certification. They were offered the following choices: *general linguistics, applied linguistics, descriptive linguistics, phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, pragmatics, linguistic analysis, TESOL methods, TESOL theory, TESOL materials, second language acquisition, historical linguistics, English grammar, pedagogical grammar, teaching practicum (ESL), teaching practicum (EFL), in-class teaching practicum, non-teaching practicum, language and culture, language in society (sociolinguistics), language and literacy, sociolinguistics, foreign language(s), and other (please specify)*. While this step was intended to lend insight into the number of courses that participants indicated to have completed towards their degree, such comparisons were not possible. Numerous participants, for instance, claimed to have completed 4-5 courses towards their degree but selected over 10 courses for the types. There were also several cases of the opposite occurring in which participants selected far fewer courses than they claimed to have completed. Although care was taken to develop a comprehensive list of courses based on a random sampling of TESOL programs, such discrepancies were nevertheless perhaps due to the lack of consistency in course titles among different programs: whereas one program may promote *syntax* and *morphology* as separate courses, another may combine them into a single unit. Or, having taken a single course in sociolinguistics, participants may have checked each sociolinguistics-type course (*sociolinguistics, language and culture, language in society*) listed in the survey. Thus, using self-indicated courses taken was unreliable for classifying MA participant status as novice or advanced.

Nevertheless, the information supplied in the self-reported courses taken was practical for investigating the influence of sociolinguistics courses. If one anticipates greater tolerance of

non-native accents among pre-service TESOL teachers as they progress through their program, courses dealing with how language actually functions in society – namely sociolinguistics courses – might be expected to exert a recognizable influence. So, in addition to categorizing participants according to degree, the three types of sociolinguistics courses were combined to create a sociolinguistics grouping of participants as either those who had completed at least one sociolinguistics course or those who had no sociolinguistics courses.

In addition to degree divisions and sociolinguistics courses, three other categories were also developed: *gender*, *prior teaching experience*, and *fluent bilingualism*. The categorization of the variable *gender* was rather straight-forward, as participants indicated either *male*, *female*, or *prefer not to answer* on the survey. Only 3 participants chose not to answer.

The variable *prior teaching experience* was based on participants' responses to one of the latter questions in the final section of the survey: "Are you teaching now or do you have any prior teaching experience?" This question also allowed for comments, and although there is arguably a difference between "2 years 6 months Ghana 1.5 years S. Korea", "Currently tutoring at Catholic Charities refugee ESL program", and "I've only casually tutored intermediate 2 speakers of English", any time teaching or any manner of teaching was categorized as *experience*. As often anecdotally acknowledged, many students enter a teaching program after having gained some form of experience and recognizing that they enjoy the field. This situation led to rather lop-sided grouping of those with experience (N=57) and those with no experience (N=17).

Fluent bilingualism, the final variable, was based on participant responses to "Please list all the languages you speak (including English) from strongest to weakest." Participants were able to list up to five languages and offer a self-evaluation of "How well?" next to each language.

Responses such as “fluent,” “advanced,” “native speaker [of a language other than English]”, “well,” “proficient,” and so forth were considered to demonstrate fluent bilingualism for the purpose of this categorization. Self-evaluative descriptions such as “poor,” “beginner” or “novice” were considered not fluent bilingualism.

3.3 Statistical analyses

The chapter begins with a presentation of descriptive statistics. These include responses to the survey item “I believe that the individual speakers in this conversation are native speakers of English” and participant selections of possible types of languages courses for using the stimulus dialogs as language samples.

The remaining survey data were analyzed primarily through three distinct procedures. The four stimulus dialogs were compared to one another using a one-way ANOVA in order to determine whether there were any significant differences between the means of the three interlocutor groups. It was important to see not simply whether a dialog was rated positively or negatively, but how that dialog was rated in comparison to other interlocutor groups. The ANOVA addressed the first research question (“What are the attitudes of pre-service teachers in North American TESOL training programs towards English as used in successful ELF and native speaker interactions?”) and offered an overall impression of participant attitudes on each trait.

The second procedure involved a factorial ANOVA, which was used to look for statistically significant relationships between the dialog traits and the seven factors: *BA vs MA*; *MA-Nov vs MA-Adv*; *BA vs MA-Nov vs MA-Adv*; *Sociolinguistics Yes vs No*; *Gender*; *Prior Teaching Experience*; and *Fluent Bilingualism*. The third item (*BA vs MA-Nov vs MA-Adv*) was used only to confirm results from the first two factors (*BA vs MA* and *MA-Nov vs MA-Adv*) and is not reported here.

3.4 Results

3.4.1 Descriptive Statistics

3.4.1.1 Participant estimates of interlocutor Native Speaker status

One of the latter questions for each dialog asked participants to evaluate the statement “I believe that the individual speakers in this conversation are native speakers of English”. The four possible responses were: *all*, *some*, *none*, and *uncertain*. These responses are particularly insightful because they offer participants two definitive choices (*all* and *none*), a less committed option (*some*), and an option that represents doubt (*uncertain*). Perhaps most pertinent for the present analysis are the two extremes (*all* and *none*) and *uncertain* because these options offer insight into participant attitudes regarding nativeness. Although the native/ non-native dichotomy is a centerpiece of the present research, it is not without its flaws, as discussed in the previous chapter. Participants who select *all* or *none* are demonstrating a certain level of confidence in their choice, while those who select *uncertain* or *some* may do so because they recognize that native speakers are by far not a homogenous group.

Figure 3.1 shows how participants responded to this question. Despite the presence of distinctively non-North American influences in interlocutors’ speech, the combined options of *uncertain* and *some* together were selected over 90% of the time for each of the three non-native groups. These two options were selected only a little over 30% of the time for the native group. However, the frequency with which the options of *some* and *uncertain* were selected for the non-native groups differed: while *some* was the most frequently selected option for the two high-intermediate groups, *uncertain* was the most frequently selected option for the advanced group.

Assuming participants made these decisions conscientiously (and the differences between *some* and *uncertain* for the non-native dialogs suggests decisions were conscientious), the

selection of *uncertain* for the advanced dialog may indicate some level of recognition of the diversity of English. While participant decisions need not necessarily have been made with conscious awareness of these ideas, their choices nonetheless may suggest recognition of the following: (a) non-inner circle varieties can be native, (b) inner circle varieties can differ greatly, (c) L2 users of English can acquire skills that resemble those of natives⁷, and (d) the concept *native* itself is contentious⁸. To a certain extent, the response *some* may be interpreted similarly to *uncertain*, yet without the same level of questioning or reluctance to commit suggested by the choice of *uncertain*. *Some*, then, may be interpreted as *yes, I believe there are native speakers present* while *uncertain* maybe interpreted as *I just don't know*. In either case, both responses may demonstrate how participants view (and question) nativeness. Figure 3.1 shows how participants responded to this question.

⁷ For qualitative support regarding items (a) and (c), refer to participants' discussion regarding being bilingual (Chapter 4, excerpt 49) and ensuing discussion.

⁸ The following comments offer qualitative support regarding item (d):

Participant 13, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 1: "Native" is a trickier description than "intermediate" is. [...]."
Participant 28, MA-Mid (NS), commenting on Dialog 1: "Is a native speaker considered an "equal" in this context? Or superior by default?"

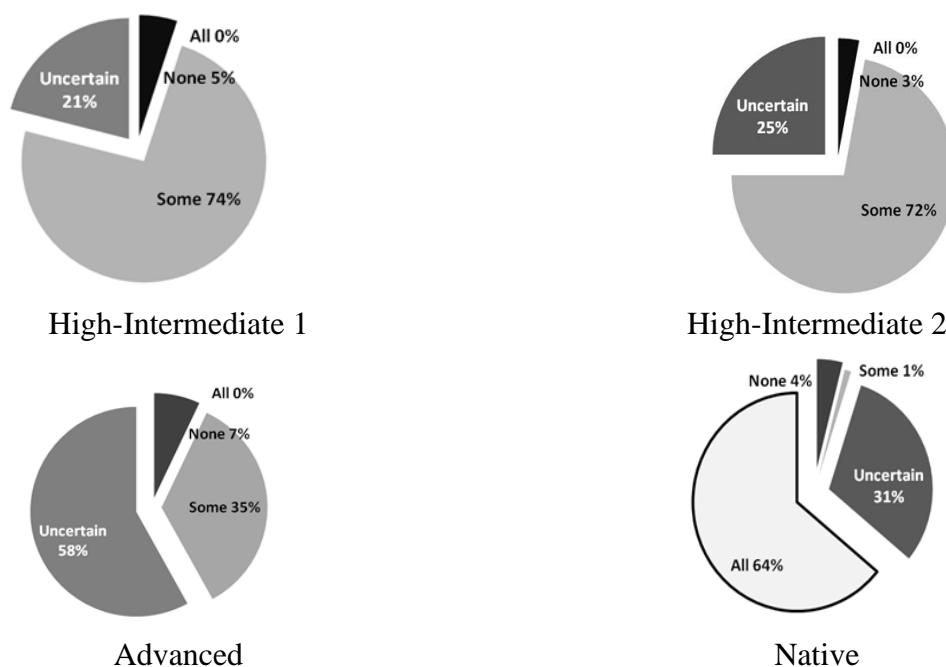


Figure 3.1: Estimates of interlocutor native status for all participants

Particularly interesting is how the two most different interlocutor groups (high intermediate and native) fostered less uncertainty than the advanced group. The selection of *uncertain* over *some* suggests doubt with their assessments, possibly fostered by the presence in the advanced dialog of an interlocutor who may be described as an outer circle Englishes speaker, and demonstrates recognition of the contentiousness of defining *native*.

Participant responses for the native group demonstrate more certainty than doubt, with a strong majority of the participants selecting the option *all*. This option was never selected for any of the non-native groups, and *none* was selected only 3% to 7% of the time across all dialogs. Thus, the only dialog in which participants express a strong level of confidence in their assessment is for the native dialog. For the non-native dialogs, participants express uncertainty

or believe that some interlocutors could be native, but very seldom do they express the same level of confidence as with the native group by selecting *none* or *all*.

3.4.1.2 Participant willingness to use dialogs as language samples for ELT

Survey participants were also asked to select from a list the types of courses in which they would be willing to use the dialogs as a sample for English language learners. The ten course options provided in the list were as follows: *beginning EFL, intermediate EFL, advanced EFL, a pronunciation course, a grammar course, a conversation course, university prep, business English, exam prep* (i.e., TOEFL / TOEIC / IELTS / etc), and *I would not use as a sample dialog*. No participants selected the final option, *other*. Curiously, every participant who indicated that they would not use the dialog as a sample also selected at least one (if not more!) of the other course options in which they would use the dialog as a sample; these responses have not been removed from the data. Figure 3.2 shows the participant responses for possible classroom use of the dialogs; the two high intermediate dialogs have been placed together. Table 3.3 presents an overview of the percentages for each dialog.

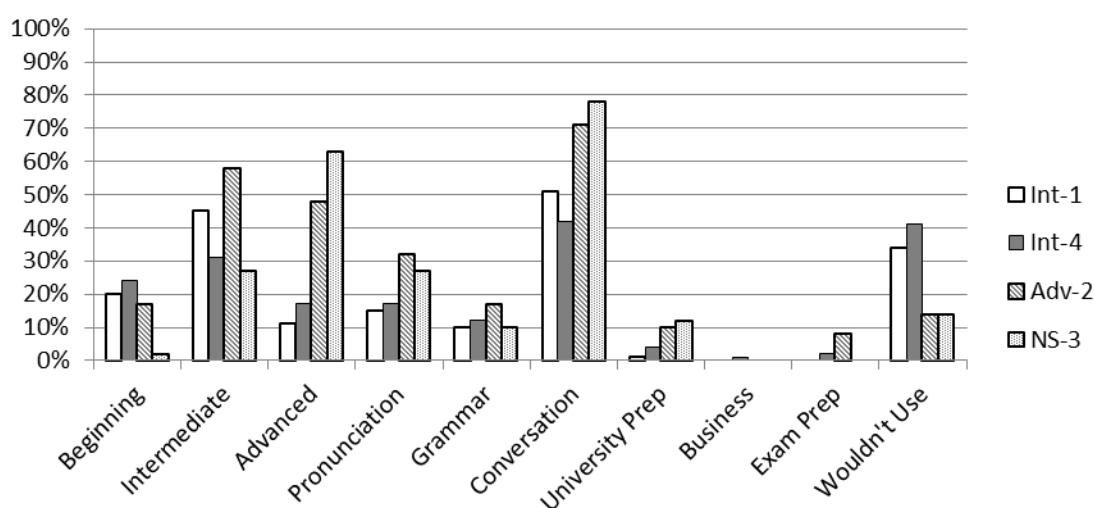


Figure 3.2: Participants willing to use dialogs for ELT purposes

Table 3.3

Participants willing to use dialogs for ELT purposes

Course Type	Int-1	Int-4	Adv-2	NS-3
Beginning	20%	24%	17%	2%
Intermediate	45%	31%	58%	27%
Advanced	11%	17%	48%	63%
Pronunciation	15%	17%	32%	27%
Grammar	10%	12%	17%	10%
Conversation	51%	42%	71%	78%
University Prep	1%	4%	10%	12%
Business	0%	1%	0%	0%
Exam Prep	0%	2%	8%	0%
Wouldn't Use	34%	41%	14%	14%

Because of the nature of the dialogs (informal lunchtime conversation), it is perhaps unsurprising that certain course types – namely, *grammar*, *university prep*, *business English*, and *exam prep* – were seldom selected. The course types most frequently selected were *conversation*, *intermediate*, *advanced*, *pronunciation*, and *wouldn't use*. For the three course types referring to levels (*beginning*, *intermediate*, and *advanced*), the percentage of participants willing to use the dialogs as a sample for English language learners roughly corresponds to the level criteria used when recruiting dialog speakers. For instance, the largest percentage of possible use for a beginning course is with the high-intermediate dialogs, the highest percentage for an intermediate course is with the advanced dialogs, and the highest percentage for an advanced course is the native dialogs.

The high-intermediate dialogs were the most frequently selected dialogs for only one course type (*beginning*). However, the high-intermediate dialogs were selected more than twice as frequently for the option *wouldn't use* than the advanced or native dialogs. In fact, only for the course type *intermediate* were the high-intermediate dialogs selected more frequently than

wouldn't use, and even then they were not the most popular selection for this course type. The advanced dialog was the most frequently selected one for an *intermediate* course and for a *pronunciation* course. This dialog was also selected for *grammar*, although overall responses for this course type were relatively infrequent and are not considered further. The native dialog was the most frequently selected for an *advanced* course. Both the advanced and native dialogs were selected over 70% of the time for a *conversation* course.

These observations offer insight into what pre-service teachers consider appropriate language goals for their students. Firstly, by indicating that they would use the dialogs most frequently in a *conversation* course, participants recognized the context of the interactions as informal and therefore best suited for teaching conversation. Secondly, the fact that the advanced and native groups were both selected for the conversation course by almost three-quarters of participants suggests that these groups are considered to be fairly equal regarding conversation proficiency, although the native group was selected more frequently. The selection rate was also similar for these two groups for *pronunciation* and *grammar* courses, but the advanced group was selected more frequently than the native group for each course type, which may indicate a dislike of certain aspects of the native dialog. This observation is supported by the qualitative data, which show an aversion to the overlapping speech and use of the discourse marker *like* in the native dialog, as discussed in the next chapter. Nevertheless, the native dialog was selected as appropriate for an *advanced* English language course most frequently, suggesting that (1) participants equate advanced language ability with nativeness, and (2) the native speaker should be a learner's goal. Finally, roughly 40% of participants selected *wouldn't use* for the high-intermediate dialogs, while the advanced and native dialogs were indicated as *wouldn't use* by only about 10% of participants. These observations suggest that participants viewed the

applicability of the advanced non-native dialog for classroom use more favorably than the high-intermediate non-native dialogs. In other words, participants are more likely to use native or “native-like”⁹ interlocutors as language samples.

3.4.2 One-way ANOVA

The survey asked participants to rate the speakers in each of the dialogs on a total of twelve traits. Although each trait was analyzed independently, they were intended to represent the qualities of solidarity, status, and language skill and were grouped as such in order to facilitate interpretation of results. Solidarity traits (*friendly*, *confident*, and *participate*) and the status traits (*educated* and *competent*) should not be associated with proficiency, so ideally these would not reveal any significant differences between dialogs. Traits of linguistic measure (*proficient*, *fluent*, *appropriate vocabulary*, *easy to understand*¹⁰, *appropriate language ability*, and *level*), however, were expected to have significant results corresponding to the levels of the dialog speakers. Table 3.4 shows the results of the one-way ANOVA of traits.

⁹ The term “native-like” was used to describe the advanced non-native group during a focus group session, discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

¹⁰ While the trait *easy to understand* may be compared to notions of comprehensibility (see Derwing and Munro, 2009), participants were, in fact, being asked about ease vs. difficulty. This trait is therefore referred to throughout the text as *easy* or *easy to understand*.

Table 3.4

Results of one-way ANOVA for traits

Dialog combinations	Friendly	Participate	Confident	Educated	Competent	Level	Proficient	Fluent	Vocabulary	Lang ability	Successful	Easy
Int1 x Int4 [†]	**											
Int1 x Adv2		*			**	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
Int4 x Adv2	*				***	***	***	**	***	**	*	***
Int1 x NS3	***	***	**		***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
Int4 x NS3		**	**		***	***	***	***	***	***	*	***
Adv2 x NS3	**		**			**	**			*		

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001

[†] Int1 = high intermediate speakers, Dialog 1; Int4 = high intermediate speakers, Dialog 4; Adv2 = advanced speakers, Dialog 2; NS3 = native speakers, Dialog 3

Because of the large number of comparisons, a p-level of less than 0.01 was taken as significant (marked with two or more asterisks in the table). As Table 3.4 shows, pre-service teachers rated speakers significantly differently in terms of solidarity traits (*friendly*, *confident*, and *participate*), primarily along lines of nativeness or proficiency. Participants evaluated the native speakers as more confident than the non-natives, suggesting that non-natives lacked confidence in English and that nativeness is associated with confidence. *Participate* refers to whether participants believed they would be able to participate as an equal in the interaction. Participant responses were significant for both of the high-intermediate and native combinations, suggesting that they would be more likely to participate as an equal in an interaction with the native speakers than with the high-intermediate group.

In terms of friendliness, Dialog 4 was evaluated more positively than Dialog 1 and than Dialog 2. Thus, among the three non-native dialogs, Dialog 4 was considered the most *friendly*. The native dialog was rated as significantly more *friendly* than Dialog 2 or Dialog 1 (but not Dialog 4). This was the only instance anywhere in the data in which there was a significant difference between Dialogs 1 and 4; any significance between these two dialogs is unusual because these two dialogs represent the same group of interlocutors. It is possible these differences on trait *friendly* were a result of dialog ordering, with Dialog 4 being rated more leniently than the other non-native dialogs after those dialogs had been heard. However, Dialog 4 also differed from all other dialogs in that it had the most non-inner circle standard grammatical and pronunciation features as well as displaying a clear example of interlocutors' negotiation of meaning.

Although solidarity traits (*confident, participate, friendly*) should not necessarily be associated with interlocutor language ability, there were significant differences between interlocutor groups on these traits. Specifically, participants deemed the native group as more confident than both non-native groups, and they also indicated that they would be more likely to participate in an interaction with the native group. It should be noted that the traits *confident* and *participate* could also be considered status traits. If so, results for the sole solidarity trait, *friendly*, align with previous research in that non-native or other subordinate groups may be rated highly on solidarity traits (Bokhorst-Heng and Caleon, 2009; Cavallaro and Chin, 2009; McKenzie, 2008; Tan and Tan, 2008). Such a classification of the traits would then also demonstrate significant results for the majority of status traits.

For the status traits, *education* was never significant, while *competent* was significant in four of the six dialog combinations. Participants rated speakers in all dialogs as being equally

educated, suggesting that interlocutor nativeness or proficiency did not play a role in how participants perceived their level of education. In other words, interlocutors' English language skills did not influence perceptions of their education. However, participants rated speakers in the advanced and native dialogs as more *competent* than those in the high-intermediate dialogs. *Competent*, then, was only significant between the high-intermediate and the other two groups; *competent* was not significant for Dialogs 2 and 3, the advanced and native groups. This observation suggests that proficiency of interlocutors played a role in competency evaluations, with the high-intermediate groups trending together and the advanced and native groups trending together. The tendency to rate the native speakers and advanced non-native speakers similarly to each other and both higher than the high intermediate speakers remains relatively constant throughout the remainder of the data and is especially evident on the linguistic traits.

The linguistic traits included *level, proficient, fluent, vocabulary, language ability, successful interaction, and easy to understand*. While significant differences between the dialogs are not surprising for some of the linguistic traits (e.g., *level, proficient, fluent* and *language ability*) because they roughly correspond to the selection criteria used for the dialog speakers, the significant differences between the high-intermediate dialogs and the other two dialogs for *successful interaction, vocabulary, and easy to understand* were somewhat unexpected given that these did not correspond to the selection criteria. One reason each of the dialogs was selected is because they represent a group of interlocutors who approach a topic and manage their way through it in a manner that may be interpreted as successful – that is, none of the speakers indicates dissatisfaction with the progression of the interaction or its outcome. At one point in Dialog 4 interlocutors must negotiate to clarify a speaker's comment about "routine work", but this negotiation is accomplished quickly with minimal disruption to the overall conversational

flow and the comment is quickly integrated into the interaction. Nevertheless, based on the survey question that defines *successful* as “to the best of my knowledge, the goals of the interaction were achieved”, participants perceived the high-intermediate dialogs as less successful.

The same is true for the traits *vocabulary* and *easy to understand*. Participants evaluated the advanced and native groups as having more appropriate vocabulary than the high-intermediate groups. Participants were asked to evaluate the appropriateness of the vocabulary for each particular interaction, and since the dialogs may be considered successful, the vocabulary should logically also be appropriate since it was sufficient for accomplishing the interactional goals. This was not the case.

The trait *easy to understand* represents participant responses to the statement “Based solely on the group of speakers' language abilities (i.e., not the topic or quality of recording), following the conversation was ...”, with the response options of *easy* and *difficult* each representing one end of a five point Likert scale. As pre-service teachers of English who (will) frequently interact with a variety of non-native Englishes, participants were expected to find all conversations equally easy to follow. However, the advanced and native conversations were consistently rated as easier to follow than the high-intermediate conversations.

Finally, it is perhaps unsurprising that the linguistic traits *level*, *proficient*, *fluent* and *language ability* were rated differently depending on interlocutor group. That is, the criteria used to select interlocutor groups played a strong role in how they were evaluated on these traits. In the same order used to recruit interlocutors – high-intermediate, advanced, and native – each was perceived as more proficient and as having greater language ability and a higher level than the previous group. In fact, even results for the advanced and native dialogs, which tended to trend

together for a number of other traits, were significantly different for most of these traits.

Specifically, participants rated natives higher than the advanced group on traits *level*, *proficient* and *language ability*, but not on *fluent*.

In some ways, *proficiency* and *level* may be considered synonymous, and *language ability* may be a reflection of both of these terms. Questions about interlocutor fluency and proficiency were intentionally presented separately in an attempt to uncover whether participants view these oft-conflated terms as discrete or as sharing some part of a continuum. While being rated similarly on a number of status and linguistic traits, the native group was rated significantly higher than the advanced group on *proficient* but not on *fluent*. Thus, it is possible for both the native and advanced groups to be equally *fluent*, but for the native group to be considered more *proficient*.

In sum, results for the dialog combinations 1 and 3 (the high-intermediate and native dialogs) were consistently significant – an expected outcome since these dialogs were the most different from one another based on the selection criteria used for the study. The results for the native and advanced dialogs were more scattered, with roughly every other trait showing significance. Yet since these two groups represent the higher proficiency speakers in the study (all are matriculated university students), some correspondence was anticipated. The native and the advanced dialogs were rated more positively than the high-intermediate dialogs on linguistic traits *vocabulary*, *easy to understand*, and *successful*. Natives, however, were rated more positively than both non-native groups on solidarity traits *confident* and *participate*, status trait *competent*, and linguistic traits *level*, *proficient*, and *language ability*.

3.4.3 Factorial ANOVA

Using the criteria described earlier, the data from all participants was divided into six sets of pairs: *BA vs MA*, *MA-Nov vs MA-Adv*, *Sociolinguistics Y/N*, *Prior teaching experience Y/N*, *Fluent bilingual Y/N*, and *Gender*. These pairs, or factors, were then measured against the traits using a factorial ANOVA. In only a few cases were the factors significant, as indicated by the asterisks * (Table 3.5) for traits *proficient*, *fluent*, *language ability*, and *level*. The expectation was that some of these factors would affect ratings of groups. For example, it was expected that participants with a background in sociolinguistics might rate all groups equally on status and solidarity traits, whereas those without such a background might rate native speakers more highly than non-native speakers on these traits. Such a result would signify an interaction between that factor and the dialogs, but this was not observed in the present data.

Table 3.5

Overview of significances for factors (F)

	Friendly	Participate	Confident	Educated	Competent	Level	Proficient	Fluent	Vocabulary	Language Ability	Successful	Easy
BA vs MA						*				***		
MA-Nov vs MA-Adv						*						
Sociolinguistics							*					
Prior Teaching Exp							**					
Fluent Bilingualism										**		
Gender								*			***	

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

The remainder of this section looks at each of the factors and traits in which significant differences were found.

BA vs MA on level: BA participants evaluated interlocutor level slightly higher than MA participants. Figure 3.3 shows the results for BA and MA participants on trait *level*. The ANOVA shows that participant degree type *BA vs MA* ($F(1,269 \text{ d.f.}) = 6.088, p < 0.05$) and Dialog ($F(3,269 \text{ d.f.}) = 48.608, p < 0.001$) had a significant effect on trait *level*, but no significant interaction ($F(3,269 \text{ d.f.}) = .557, p = .644$).

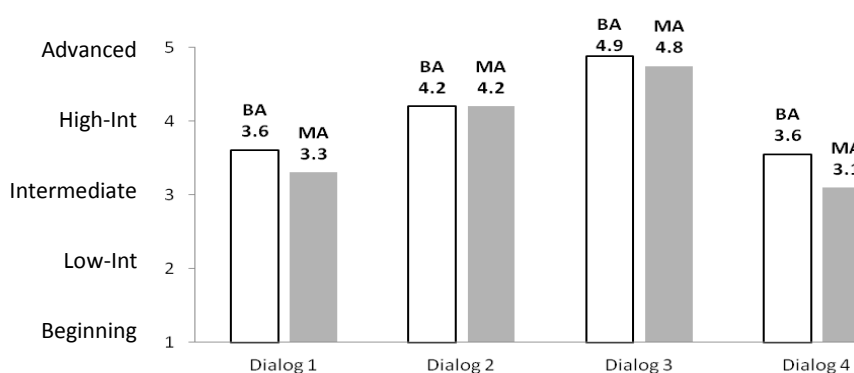


Figure 3.3: Averages for BA vs MA on trait level
(BA, N=18; MA, N=52)

Although the interaction between degree level and dialog was not significant, it is worth noting the apparent source of the overall difference between the MA and BA participants, as some dialogs appear to have been rated equally by the two groups on average. The means for BA and MA participants were the same with the advanced group (Dialog 2) and only minimally different for the native group (Dialog 3). However, there were stronger mean differences for the high-intermediate group. On Dialog 1, BA participants ($M=3.6, SD=.78$) were more lenient in evaluating interlocutor level than MA participants ($M=3.3, SD=.81$); on Dialog 4, BA participants ($M=3.6, SD=.86$) were also more lenient than MA participants ($M=3.1, SD=.96$). These results suggest that BA participants were less critical when evaluating speaker level of the

high-intermediate group. Results also suggest that BA participants were more likely to designate this group of interlocutors in line with the criteria used for selecting dialog speakers, designating speakers as high-intermediate. The MA participants, on the other hand, were more likely to designate this same group of interlocutors as intermediate.

BA vs MA on language ability: The trait *language ability* represents participant responses to the survey item “For the particular interaction in this recording, I believe the speakers in this conversation demonstrate appropriate language ability”. As with *level*, MA participants evaluated the dialogs more harshly than BA participants. Figure 3.4 shows the results for BA and MA participants on this trait. The ANOVA shows that degree type *BA vs MA* ($F(1,268 \text{ d.f.}) = 12.119, p < 0.05$) and Dialog ($F(3,268 \text{ d.f.}) = 10.953, p < 0.05$) had a significant effect on the trait *language ability*, but no significant interaction ($F(3,268 \text{ d.f.}) = 2.077, p = 0.104$). These results suggest that MA students were more critical of interlocutors’ various linguistic skills or abilities than were BA participants. While there was again no interaction, impressionistically we can see that MA students’ more critical ratings again appear on the high-intermediate dialogs (Dialogs 1 and 4), although in this case the native dialog (Dialog 3) shows more of a difference as well. On Dialog 1, BA participants ($M=4.3, SD=.59$) were more lenient in evaluating interlocutor level than MA participants ($M=3.5, SD=.88$); on Dialog 4, BA participants ($M=4.1, SD=.83$) were also slightly more lenient than MA participants ($M=3.8, SD=.87$).

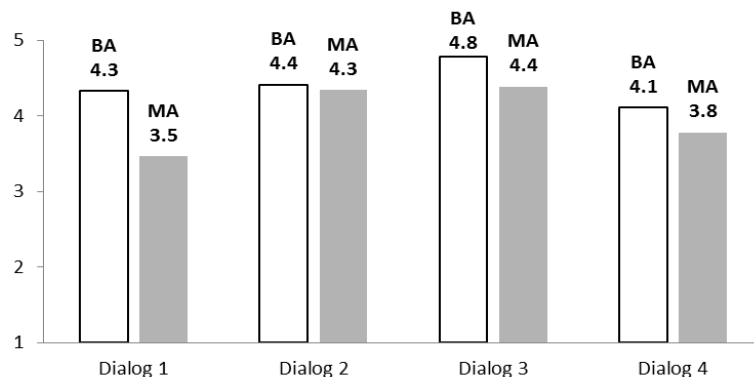


Figure 3.4: Averages for BA vs MA participant ratings on trait language ability (BA, N=18; MA, N=51)

Participant experience in an MA program, then, seems to lead to more critical evaluations, especially of less proficient speakers. It should also be mentioned that even though other factors such as older age, practical teaching experience, exposure to a second language, and so forth could have played a role in the different evaluations, these factors are nonetheless qualities of both MA and BA participants.

MA-Nov vs MA-Adv on level: Participant experience is also significant for the factor *MA-Nov vs MA-Adv* (Figure 3.5). MA-Adv participants evaluated the dialogues more critically than did MA-Nov participants. The ANOVA shows that participant degree level *MA-Nov vs MA-Adv* ($F(1,122 \text{ d.f.}) = 6.655, p < 0.05$) and Dialog ($F(3,122 \text{ d.f.}) = 36.319, p < 0.001$) had a significant effect on evaluations of trait *level*, but these factors had no significant interaction ($F(3,122 \text{ d.f.}) = .332, p = .628$).

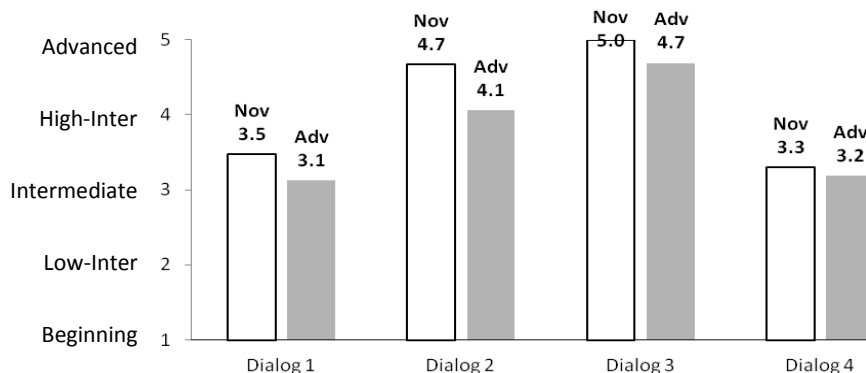


Figure 3.5: Averages for MA-Nov vs MA-Adv on trait level
(MA-Nov, N=17; MA-Adv, N=16)

Comparing these results to those obtained for BA and MA participants on the same trait, we can observe that in general, the participants who are more advanced in their degree programs tend to rate interlocutor level more critically. It is possible that participants are being influenced by the courses they take as part of their degree programs. These courses most likely emphasize aspects of language that more advanced participants then take into consideration when making level evaluations; more novice participants who have had less coursework are not as influenced by linguistic theories and ideologies when making evaluations.

Sociolinguistics on proficiency: Figure 3.6 shows results for participant experience with a sociolinguistics course on trait *proficiency*. Participants who have had at least one sociolinguistics course were more lenient when evaluating the dialogs than participants with no sociolinguistics experience. The ANOVA shows that *Sociolinguistics* ($F(1,271 \text{ d.f.}) = 3.542$, $p < 0.05$) and *Dialog* ($F(3,271 \text{ d.f.}) = 28.786$, $p < 0.001$) had a significant effect on trait *proficiency*, but there was no significant interaction ($F(3,271 \text{ d.f.}) = 1.437$, $p = .232$). It is worth noting that the higher ratings by participants who had taken a sociolinguistics course were at

least partially based on higher ratings of these proficient non-native speakers, a result we might expect for those who have gained some understanding of language variation

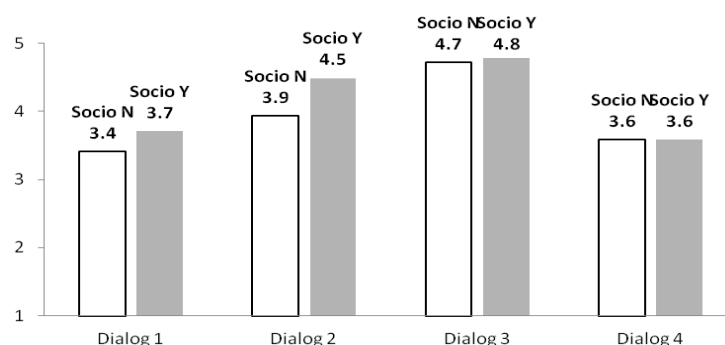


Figure 3.6: Averages for Sociolinguistics on trait proficient (Yes, N=41, No, N=29)

Prior teaching experience and proficiency: Prior teaching experience was also significant for *proficiency* (Figure 3.7). Participants with prior teaching experience rated interlocutors higher on *proficiency* than did participants with no prior teaching experience. The ANOVA shows that *Prior teaching experience* ($F(1,267 \text{ d.f.}) = 7.216, p < 0.05$) and *Dialog* ($F(3,267 \text{ d.f.}) = 22.503, p < 0.05$) had a significant effect on trait *proficiency*, but there was no significant interaction ($F(3,267 \text{ d.f.}) = 1.275, p = .283$).

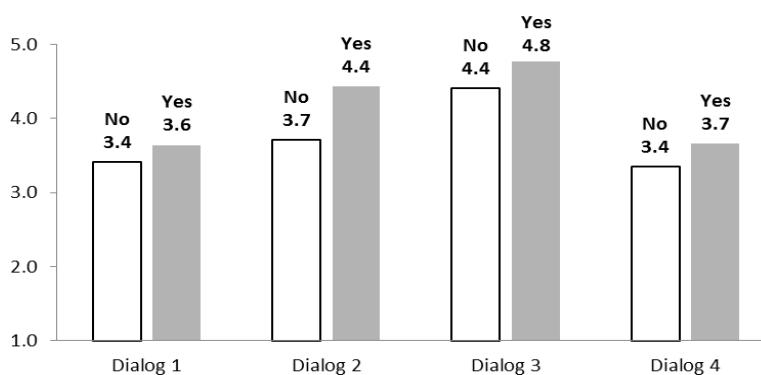


Figure 3.7: Averages for Prior teaching experience on trait proficiency (Yes, N=53, No, N=17)

Results for factors *Sociolinguistics* and *Prior Teaching Experience* were both significant for the trait *proficient*, suggesting that experience with the sociolinguistic realities of language use –

either as acquired through academic courses or through practical experience – influence proficiency judgments. In other words, participants who have taken sociolinguistics courses or who have teaching experience may be evaluating proficiency based on aspects of the actual communication rather than grammar and therefore evaluating dialogs more positively than participants without such experience.

Fluent bilingual on *language ability*: Participants who offered self-evaluations of their abilities in a language other than English as above “poor,” “beginner” or “novice” were classified as fluent bilinguals. Fluent bilinguals evaluated the interlocutors more harshly than non-fluent bilinguals did. The ANOVA shows that *Fluent bilingual* ($F(1,268 \text{ d.f.}) = 8.459$, $p < 0.05$) and *Dialog* ($F(3,268 \text{ d.f.}) = 16.846$, $p < 0.05$) had a significant effect on ratings of dialog speakers’ *language ability*, but there was no significant interaction ($F(3,268 \text{ d.f.}) = 1.927$, $p = .126$).

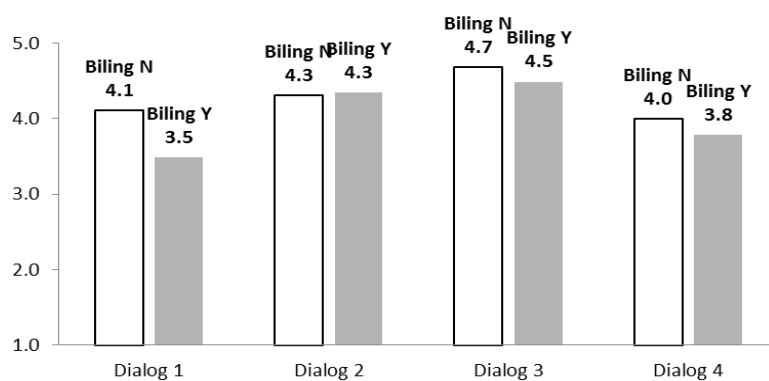


Figure 3.8: Averages for Fluent bilingualism participant ratings on trait language ability (Yes, N=41; No, N=29)

Participants with more cross-language contact seem to evaluate language ability slightly more critically. It should be noted that results may partially be from the method used to classify participants as bilingual, which was based on participants’ self-reported L2 ability rather than a

standardized test or other more consistent method of assessment. These self-evaluations may have been inconsistent, with participants having only basic L2 skills describing themselves as “intermediate” or “proficient”, and the reverse could be true among participants having exceptional L2 skills. Thus, the difference between fluent and non-fluent bilinguals should be interpreted with caution. It is also possible, however, that fluent bilinguals’ personal language experiences influences them to evaluate the abilities of others more critically.

Gender on *fluent*: The factor *Gender* was significant on traits *fluent* and *successful*, the only instances in which these traits were significant (Figure 3.9). The ANOVA shows that *Gender* ($F(1,260 \text{ d.f.}) = 5.122, p < 0.05$) and *Dialog* ($F(3,260 \text{ d.f.}) = 26.392, p < 0.001$) had significant effects on the trait *fluent*, but there was no significant interaction ($F(3,260 \text{ d.f.}) = .470, p = .703$). Female participants evaluated the dialogs more positively than male participants.

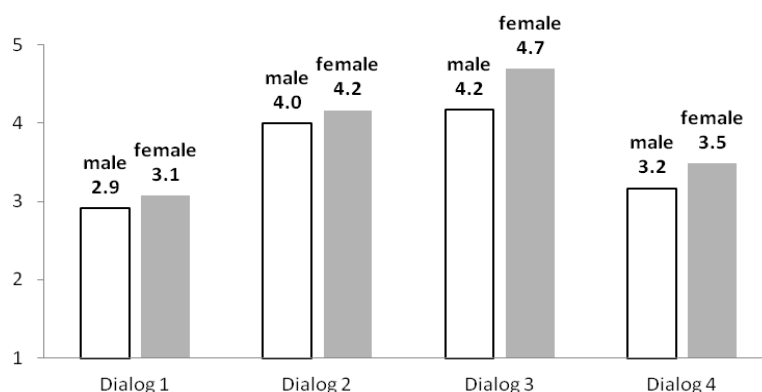


Figure 3.9: Averages for Gender participant ratings on trait *fluent* (female, N=43; male, N=24)

Gender on *successful*: The ANOVA shows that *Gender* ($F(1,255 \text{ d.f.}) = 11.898, p < 0.001$) and *Dialog* ($F(3,255 \text{ d.f.}) = 9.701, p < 0.000$) had significant effects on the trait *successful*, but there was no significant interaction ($F(3,255 \text{ d.f.}) = .765, p = .515$). Female participants evaluated interlocutors more positively on the trait *successful* than male participants (Figure 3.10).

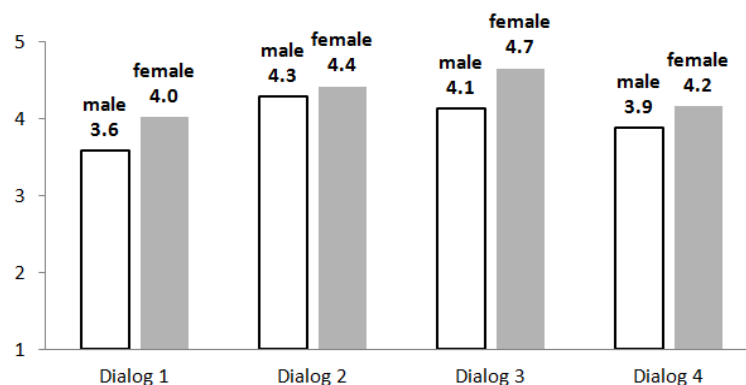


Figure 3.10: Averages for Gender participant ratings on trait successful (female, N=42 ; male, N=24)

The dialog speakers on the stimulus materials were all female. On *successful* and *fluent*, female participants evaluated the four dialogs more positively than male participants, indicating a possible gender effect – that is, a difference in how female and male participants perceived the interactions. These linguistic traits may have been influenced by aspects of solidarity for female participants regarding the success of the interactions and fluency of the interlocutors. This observation is supported by the qualitative data, as will be discussed in the following chapter.

3.5 Summary of quantitative results

Results from the quantitative portion of the survey found that participants demonstrated more confidence in their evaluations of the nativeness of interlocutors in the native dialog, but they tended to select *uncertain* with the advanced dialog that included an outer circle Englishes speaker and *some* for the high-intermediate dialogs. These results suggest awareness of the variability of English pronunciation as well as greater familiarity with certain varieties.

Participants were most likely to use the advanced and native dialogs as samples in English language classrooms. They also demonstrated awareness of context of interaction by most frequently indicating that they would use any of the dialogs in a *conversation* course. Participants indicated the native dialog as most appropriate for *advanced* and *conversation*

courses, and the advanced dialog as most appropriate for *intermediate* and *pronunciation* courses. The high-intermediate dialog was selected most frequently for the option *wouldn't use*.

Participants evaluated the dialogs along similar criteria to those used for selecting the dialog speakers. On linguistic traits, there were significant differences in how participants evaluated the high-intermediate, advanced, and native dialogs. There were also significant differences on the status and solidarity traits, but these were mainly along lines of proficiency. That is, participant evaluations tended to place advanced and native dialogs higher in status and solidarity traits than the high-intermediate dialogs.

The factorial analysis suggests that participant experience in their degree program (BA vs MA and MA-Nov vs MA-Adv) may to some extent influence their evaluations of interlocutors on traits *level* and *language ability*. Other factors that were also significant on isolated traits include Prior teaching experience and Sociolinguistics on *proficient*, Fluent bilingual on *language ability*, and Gender on *fluent* and *successful*. There was never an interactional effect between the factors and the dialogs.

CHAPTER 4: QUALITATIVE DATA FROM FOCUS GROUPS AND SURVEY COMMENTS

The data in this section concentrate on the first three research questions of the study, although certain parts of each question may be more appropriately addressed elsewhere, such as in the quantitative results. The aspects of each question most relevant to the present data set are:

1. What are the attitudes of pre-service teachers in North American TESOL training programs towards non-native English as used in successful ELF and native speaker situations?
2. How are the language attitudes of pre-service teachers influenced by their own background and personal language learning experience?
3. Do TESOL training programs influence the language attitudes of pre-service teachers?

The chapter first discusses the design of the focus groups, the procedures of how the focus groups were conducted, and the participants involved in each focus group. This is followed by a brief review of the qualitative responses from survey data and a description of how the data analysis was conducted. The second half of the chapter presents the findings.

4.1 Focus Group design

Focus group interviews were conducted after the online survey had been closed to further responses. The aim of the focus groups was to provide a more direct measure of pre-service teacher attitudes than obtained through the survey. Byrne (2004, as cited in Silverman, 2006) suggests that interviews can be particularly useful for assessing attitudes and values that may not be accommodated for on questionnaires. Thus, a primary purpose of the focus group interviews was to increase the richness of the online survey data by offering respondents an opportunity to expand on ideas or trends expressed on the questionnaire as well as allow the researcher to probe more deeply into attitudes or opinions expressed by focus group members. A “hallmark” characteristic of focus group interviews, according to Ho (2006), is the “explicit use of group interaction as data to explore insights that would otherwise remain hidden” (p. 2). Moreover, as

a form of face-to-face interviewing, which encourages spontaneous responses (Opdenakker, 2006), the interactive format of the focus groups allow interviewees less time for reflection when formulating their answers than on the questionnaire.

There are both advantages and disadvantages of conducting attitudes research through interviews. A particularly strong disadvantage of the focus group format is social desirability bias, a tendency for respondents to offer “the attitudes they think they ought to have, rather than the ones they actually do have” (Garret, 2010, p. 44). The possibility of this bias is particularly strong in group environments such as a focus group. Although from the researcher’s perspective focus group participants seemed to interact freely and openly, at the conclusion of Focus Group 2, Participant Leia leaned into the microphone and said “I believe in using the non-native speaker model in the classroom [...] For the record”. This action suggests both (a) participants were conscious that the interview was being recorded, and (b) during the interview process at least some participants were, at least to some degree, able to guess the purpose of the research.

Another possible disadvantage of the focus group format is interviewer’s paradox, which Garret (2010) describes as interactions between characteristics of the interviewer and the interviewee – such as ethnicity or gender– affecting the quality of the data. In Sin (2009), for example, interviewer-interviewee shared ethnicity was observed as creating a bond in some interview situations. Again, although from the researcher’s perspective focus group participants seemed uninhibited in their interaction, the first focus group consisted only of female participants and a male moderator discussing sample dialogs that involved only female interlocutors. Gender, in other words, could have played a role. In addition, with a PhD student interviewing MA focus group participants, it is possible social distance within the academic community prevented participants from offering certain views.

Yet despite some disadvantages with the focus group format, it also has numerous advantages. First, focus groups are useful for determining the positions of key stakeholders when developing policies, programs and practices (Vaughn, Schumm, and Sinagub, 1996). As aspiring stakeholders in TESOL, the views of pre-service teachers can lend insight into the future of the field; pre-service teacher attitudes expressed in interaction may suggest how their attitudes could play out in their future careers. Another advantage of focus groups is that they are dynamic; they allow participants to expand on ideas that may otherwise not arise through other methods of data collection. In a study of ELF communities of practice in Europe, Kalocsai (2009) found that semi-structured interviews of three or more participants allowed participants the opportunity to “both clarify and exemplify” (p. 30) their attitudes towards ELF. Focus groups can also have a “synergistic effect” that encourages participants to be more forthcoming than in individual interviews (Ho, 2006, p. 2). The focus group format also allows for an interactional analysis, which, although it may not always be necessary, has the ability to strengthen conclusions “by demonstrating on the basis of the turns that follow that this attitude is also understood in the intended way by the speaker’s fellow interactants” (Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain, 2009, p. 200). A final advantage of focus groups is logistical: focus groups are less expensive and less time-consuming than individual interviews (Oppenheimer, 1992).

4.2 Procedure

Focus group participants were recruited through email announcements. At the end of the online survey participants were asked to indicate whether they could later be contacted for focus group interviews, a method of recruitment originally intended to create at least some overlap among survey and focus group participants. However, due to the limited number of survey respondents and the diverse institutions represented among survey participants, email

recruitment was a more practical approach. Although not asked directly, two participants at two different institutions mentioned having completed the online survey.

A total of four focus groups took place at institutions in the southeast United States. Focus group participants were compensated for their time with a \$10 Amazon.com giftcard awarded at the end of the interview. Because response to recruitment announcements was somewhat sparse as well as erratic, no participant volunteers were turned away. Dörnyei (2007) suggests that fewer than six participants can limit the potential “collective wisdom” (p. 144) of a group, while too many participants can prevent everyone from participating. In reality, however, the number of participants in studies involving group interviews frequently varies, ranging in number of participants from three (Kalocsai, 2009) to an entire class (Grau, 2005). In the present study, the number of volunteers in each focus group ranged from three to seven participants. All interviews took place at university facilities.

Interview participants were presented with conversation excerpts from the questionnaire stimulus materials; interview questions reflect those from the online survey (see Appendix D for focus group questions and protocol). The semi-structured format is most appropriate for focus group interviews (Dörnyei, 2007); since they are semi-structured, there is some flexibility concerning the questions asked and the order in which they are presented. There is also an ability to ask follow-up or clarification questions. The greatest strength of the focus group format is the discussion (Dörnyei, 2007), so participants were allowed to elaborate on their views as well as respond to others in ways not possible on the questionnaire. The interviewer was cautious about providing adequate wait-time after questions and between participant comments.

Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Informed consent was emailed to focus group volunteers in the week prior to the actual interviews so that they had time to review the

materials. On the day of the interviews, hardcopies of the informed consent were distributed, signed by participants, and collected. The researcher also used this time to check for questions or concerns participants had about any aspect of the research; there were none. At the latter two interview sessions, interviewees were presented with a name card prior to the start of the recording and asked to write a self-selected pseudonym on the card. They then introduced themselves using the format, “Hi, my name is [pseudonym].” These pseudonyms were used on transcripts to refer to participants. Developing the pseudonyms was intended as a fun, rapport-building activity that put participants at ease for the interview. Prior to the interview, the same participant background information from the survey (e.g., age, gender, languages spoken, courses taken) was collected from volunteers.

Focus group data was transcribed as soon as possible after each interview session. Transcription conventions typically vary greatly depending on the focus of the research. For the present project, content is more important than paralanguage, so a more broad form of transcription was applied. Although detailed nuances of tone, speed of speech, and so forth need not necessarily be indicated, longer pauses and more salient changes in volume (i.e., that which may be used by speakers for emphasis) were acknowledged. The transcription conventions for this project were adapted from Schiffrin (1994, pp. 422-433); a complete list of conventions may be found in Appendix E.

4.3 Participants

Table 4.1 shows the demographic information for the focus group participants. Two focus groups were conducted at the first institution. Focus Group 1 consisted of MA-Nov participants (N=3) and Focus Group 2 consisted of MA-Adv participants (N=6). Unfortunately, one confirmed participant in the MA-Nov group missed the interview; as a result the three participants in the MA-Nov group were all female. They were in their 1st or 2nd semester of the MA program. Focus Group 2, the MA-Adv focus group, consisted of 6 participants in their 3rd or 4th semester of a 4 semester program.

For logistical reasons, off-site focus groups were of mixed degree-levels. The first of the off-site groups, Focus Group 3, consisted of 6 participants. All but one of the participants were students in a combined MA/PhD morphology seminar, the instructor of which donated the last hour of a 3-hour evening course to this project. Students who did not participate in the focus group used the extra time to meet with the course instructor regarding their final papers. While this combination of classtime/focus group was convenient, it created some confusion regarding eligible participants, giving the impression that any student in the course could participate. As a result, one participant (Peter) was a PhD student at the end of his first year. The other participants could be classified according to the standards of this study as MA-Nov (N=4) or MA-Adv (N=1).

Focus Group 4, the second off-site focus group, consisted of 7 participants and took place on a Saturday during a specially organized session of an applied linguistics conference. The interview took place in a regular lecture hall on the sponsoring university's campus; all participants were students of the TESOL program of the sponsoring university. This session included both MA-Nov (N=4) and MA-Adv (N=3) participants. Highlighting the difficulties of

using self-assessments for language ability, one participant (Ella) described her English language proficiency as “novice” even though the interviewer would have assumed her to be a native speaker because of her phonological regionalisms. It is likely that this participant misunderstood the question.

Table 4.1 shows an overview of the focus group participant demographic information, including pseudonym, degree, age, sex, languages, and teaching experience. The last column, *Socio?*, indicates whether the participant had taken or was currently enrolled in a sociolinguistics course (unfortunately, the distinction between past and current courses was not always clear in participant responses).

Table 4.1

Focus Group participant information

Focus Group 1						
Name*	Degree	Age	Sex	Languages**	Prior teaching experience	Socio?
Sheryl	MA-Nov	28	F	Korean <i>NS</i> , English <i>very fluent</i> , Portuguese <i>novice intermediate</i> , Japanese <i>basic</i> , Thai <i>basic</i>	8 years EFL experience	No
Allie	MA-Nov	24	F	Spanish <i>advanced ACTFL</i> ; Italian <i>low</i>	1 year EFL in Chile; 1 year preschool; 1 year K-12	No
Butler	MA-Nov	36	F	ASL <i>high intermediate</i> ; German <i>beginning</i> ; Arabic <i>beginning</i>		Yes

Focus Group 2

Name*	Degree	Age	Sex	Languages**	Prior teaching experience	Socio?
Jeff	MA-Adv	27	M	Japanese <i>Beginner</i>	3 years EFL; 2 years ESL	No
Rich	MA-Adv	28	M	Spanish <i>advanced</i>	1 year ESL; 5 years substitute teaching; 6 months Spanish substitute teaching; 3 years workshop leadership	No
Kim	MA-Adv	31	F	Spanish <i>advanced</i> ; Arabic <i>beginner</i>	community college ESL adjunct; pre-literacy refugee instructor; 3 years ESL; undergraduate composition & creative writing	No
Nancy	MA-Adv	26	F	Spanish <i>decent</i>	some ESL and EFL	Yes
Tasha	MA-Adv	24	F	Spanish <i>intermediate</i>	some ESL	No
Leia	MA-Adv	24	F	French <i>not well</i> ; Latin <i>only when reading!</i>	immigrant/refugee ESL; vocational English; IEP	No

Focus Group 3

Name*	Degree	Age	Sex	Languages**	Prior teaching experience	Socio?
Rahul	MA-Adv	32	M	Pashto <i>Excellent</i> ; Urdu <i>good</i> ; English <i>good</i>	8 years EFL at university in Asia	No
Peter	PhD	46	M	Spanish <i>Basic competence read, write, listen, speak</i> ; German <i>Basic</i>	ESL and EFL experience	Yes
Amy	MA-Nov	25	F		ESL tutoring	No
Casey	MA-Nov	24	F	Japanese <i>Intermediate</i> ; Italian <i>Beginner</i>		No
Caba	MA-Nov	27	F	Urdu <i>Well proficient</i> ; English <i>Proficient</i> ; Punjab <i>Proficient</i>	4 years university level EFL; MA literature	Yes
Susan	MA-Nov	67	F	Spanish <i>weakest</i>	2 years vocational education; 2 years EFL; 6 years university teaching; 25 years corporate training	No

Focus Group 4

Name*	Degree	Age	Sex	Languages**	Prior teaching experience	Socio?
Daria	MA-Adv	32	F	Spanish <i>High intermediate</i> ; French <i>survival/beginner</i>	Adult ESL; middle-school Spanish	Yes
Ruby	MA-Adv	35	F	Mandarin <i>Highly fluent</i> ; Cantonese <i>Highly fluent</i> ; English <i>Fluent</i>		Yes
Mary	MA-Adv	55	F	English <i>Proficient</i> ; Spanish <i>Not well, but decent</i> ; French <i>Some, enough to converse</i>	6 months ESL; 2 years community college core curriculum courses	No
Anna	MA-Nov	25	F	Italian <i>beginner-intermediate</i> ; French <i>beginner</i>		No
Ella	MA-Nov	24	F	English <i>Novice</i> [NOTE: this participant would by most standards be considered a NS] Spanish <i>Beginner</i>	one summer volunteer teaching in migrant farm worker program	No
Wang	MA-Nov	23	M	Korean <i>Intermediate</i> ; Chinese <i>Poorly</i> ; Spanish <i>Very poorly</i>	1 year EFL	Yes
Monroe	MA-Nov	23	F	French <i>Ok</i>	Practicum	No

* All names are pseudonyms

** Italics represent participants' own words.

4.4 Survey data

For each dialog, survey respondents were offered several opportunities to leave open-ended comments. There was no character limit; comments ranged in length from singular “no” to over 100 words. After the first 8 semantic differential questions, participants were told “Please use this space for any comments related to the above questions”. The next five survey questions concerned interlocutor level, interlocutor native speaker status, appropriateness of interlocutors’ language ability, possible course uses for the dialog, and whether the interaction was successful. After each of these questions participants had the opportunity to comment. The last two questions (below) at the end of each dialog were, like all others, optional:

Was there any part of the conversation that you didn't understand or found difficult to follow? Please describe this part to the best of your ability.

Please use this section for any additional comments regarding this conversation or the survey as a whole.

In total, participants had the opportunity to leave up to 32 comments for all four dialogs – that is, eight comments per dialog. Table 4.2 presents a summary of the dialog comments.

Table 4.2

<i>Summary of survey comments</i>	Comment count*
Dialog 1 (high-intermediate)	120
Dialog 2 (advanced)	39
Dialog 3 (native)	40
Dialog 4 (high-intermediate)	49
Total	248

* Not all participants left comments. Counts only include comments more detailed than “no” or “uncertain”. BA (N = 11); MA (N = 46)

The comments for each dialog from each participant were analyzed as a complete unit. Comments made in regard to specific questions on a dialog were distinguishable during the analysis by paragraph breaks. For example, Dialog 1 received two comments on the survey by

Participant 59, an advanced MA student and native speaker of English. After completing the semantic differentials, Participant 59 wrote “appropriate lexical choices, good use of intonation”; after answering the question about interlocutor nativeness, the participant wrote “One speaker had greater fluency and less NN markings in her speech”. This information is represented in the data as follows (the ‘0’ to the left of the excerpt represents the excerpt number):

0 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
 Participant 59: appropriate lexical choices, good use of intonation
 One speaker had greater fluency and less NN markings in her speech

Placing all comments from a single participant for each dialog together was practical for data analysis in that the combined comments helped disambiguate references. For instance, the second part of the comment in the above example (“less NN markings in her speech”) clarifies that the participant believes at least one interlocutor to be non-native, information that is useful when interpreting interlocutors’ comments on lexicon and intonation in the first part. A somewhat secondary advantage of combining comments in this manner is that it allows for a clearer, more concise presentation of the data.

4.5 Data Analysis and Presentation

Analysis of the focus group data as well as participant comments from the survey primarily followed two processes. The first process was one of iterative qualitative content analysis in which the categories of analysis “are not predetermined but are derived inductively” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 145). Coding generally follows two stages: initial coding and second-level coding.

Dörnyei (2007) describes the stage of initial coding as follows:

[F]irst, choose a text and read through it several times to obtain a general sense of the data. ... when you come to a passage that is relevant to your topic, simply highlight it and add an informative label in the margin. It follows from the spirit of qualitative research that at that at this stage you should highlight any interesting-looking passage even if it is not directly linked to your immediate

focus area. This is how new insights can emerge. ... clarity is the most important feature to aim for because it defeats the whole purpose of coding if the meaning of a code is not immediately transparent.

Initial coding is followed by second-level coding, which allows the researcher to “go beyond a mere descriptive labeling of the relevant data segments” (p. 252). During the process of second-level coding, the researcher usually develops a “hierarchy of codes” represented by a tree-like diagram.

The typical stages for analyzing qualitative data include: transcription, coding for themes, structured reflection, and drawing conclusions. Focus groups (and focus group data), however, are notoriously complex and subject to the influence of group dynamics (Barbour, 2007). For example, different group compositions can lead to differences in discussion content or emphasis. In addition, focus groups can encourage the appearance of consensus where there is none. Lexicogrammatical choices and prosody can serve as vital contextualization cues and indicators of speaker meaning beyond the surface content (Jenkins, 2007a). Nonetheless, as Jenkins (2007a) points out, prosodic cues such as intonation, stress, and pausing should be used to support interpretations of focus group data rather than initiate interpretation. Such was the case with the present data. At all levels of analysis, the stages are both recursive (they may be repeated multiple times) and emergent (ideas, categories and focus may change as the study progresses) (Willis, Jost, and Nilakanta, 2007).

The second process followed a more typology/ category development approach in which substantive results in one method are used to analyze the data in the following method (Dörnyei, 2007). Using this approach, the results from the quantitative data were used to inform qualitative results and were integrated into interpretations. The qualitative research software Atlas-TI (2009) was used for all stages of the coding process.

The following data represents observed trends of all participant opinions, categorized according to themes. This approach offers general impressions for themes without attempting to draw out some form of causation (e.g., participants made these comments because they were BA students). Moreover, it provides richer data in that it allows for the inclusion of the PhD participant and MA-Mid participants who were excluded from the statistical analysis.

4.6 Results

4.6.1 Participants' level assessments of interlocutors

Participant evaluations of speaker level are relevant to a study about language attitudes in that many of the descriptions of different proficiency levels offered by participants parallel aspects of *standard language ideology*, or “a bias toward an abstracted, idealized, homogenous spoken language” (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 64). Instantiations of standard language ideology in participant comments are both subtle as well as conspicuous, with more conspicuous comments often referring to “mistakes” or “errors”. Yet “mistakes” that have little communicative impact are more-or-less irrelevant, and furthermore, to claim that a mistake is being made requires knowing what that speaker was trying to do (Swan, 2012). Cogo and Dewey (2012, p. 78, cited in Swan, 2012) point out that “[d]eciding what constitutes an error is not only a complex issue, it is possibly not an ELF-compatible way of thinking about language” (p. 380). Thus, participant descriptions offer insight not only into their perceptions of intelligibility and communicative success, but also into the ELF-compatibility of how they think about language.

Participant assessments of dialog-interlocutor level generally correspond to the criteria used by the researcher when selecting the groups, yet agreement is not unanimous. Such discrepancies are understandable, as participants were evaluating groups of speakers rather than individuals, and differences between speakers naturally exist. For instance, even though the

dialog speakers were selected from similar pools of volunteers, their linguistic skills do not necessarily correspond. The challenge of evaluating multiple speakers is evidenced in the following excerpts¹¹ (bold indicates areas of interest within each comment):

- 1 FG 3, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:
Casey: But I, **I definitely heard two people**, like, contributing to the conversation, so taking all three [speakers], **I would say maybe, like, lower intermediate. But one person was definitely, like, above the others.** At least in this conversation. But .. if I was taking all three, maybe, like, intermediate because, they seemed to be understanding what was going on. Maybe just not talking a lot, but they all seemed to be comprehending the topic and addin-, excuse me, adding to it in some way.
- 2 FG 3, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Amy: **I placed them at an intermediate level. But the one that was answering the questions definitely seemed a little higher than the one that, uh, that was .. asking the questions.** But, I don't-, they're definitely above beginner level, but I'm not sure just how high ...
- 3 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 37: [...] There were also noticeable differences in speakers concerning fluency **so rating the group as a whole was not so easy.**
- 4 FG 3, PhD (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Peter: [...] But, uh, again, **it's hard to come to consensus on levels**

Despite slightly varying proficiencies, however, participants acknowledge that such differences are not critical – dialog-speakers are of similar proficiencies (excerpt 5) and they could be in the same language class (excerpt 6):

- 5 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 37: [...] Also, **these speakers are clearly higher in proficiency for NNSs** and seem to carry the conversation pretty well. [...]

¹¹ All references to *native* or *non-native* throughout the text refer exclusively to English unless otherwise indicated.

- 6 FG 2, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:
 Kim: **I think one was still that intermediate-high to advanced and another was advanced.**
 Jeff: [Yeah.
 Tasha: I think **maybe a little bit higher than the first one.** →
 Several: <agreement>
 Tasha: → Yeah, I would say very advanced.
 Kim: I'll go with Tasha. <unintelligible>
 Jeff: **I can see them all being in the same class.**
 Tasha: **Yeah. That's true.**
 Kim: **Yeah.**

Thus, while acknowledging that at least one interlocutor may be a bit more advanced than the others, participants nevertheless agree that interlocutors could conceivably be “in the same class”. That is, despite differences in perceived proficiency level, the dialog-speakers are of the same language-learner level.

Participants mention other challenges in evaluating the dialogs, such as excerpt length or even doubt in their own ability to make such judgments. Participants stated the following regarding excerpt length:

- 7 FG1 1, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 2:
 Sheryl: Yeah. Becau-, the, **the sentences were quite short still to be able to tell what their levels are really**
- 8 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
 Participant 40: I can't decide if they are advanced or high-intermediate. **It's hard to judge from such a short listening except** [sic].

In the following excerpt, Participant Rich (MA-Adv) has only a single semester of IEP teaching experience, while some of his colleagues in the group have more.

- 9 FG 2, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
 Jeff: High-intermediate.
 Rich: Yeah, or advanced. I put advanced when we listened to this the first time. And I still-, **but I don't have as much experience I guess maybe as you all do.**

Finally, a few participants critiqued the survey itself as presenting challenges to their evaluations. While many of these critiques were straight-forward complaints about sound quality (e.g., background noise) or length of the listening sample, some participants offered more reflective, critical reasons for their difficulties in evaluating interlocutors, as in the following example in which the participant questions the ideology behind the native/ non-native dichotomy as used in the study.

10 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 1

Participant 13: "**Native**" is a **trickier description than "advanced"** is. [...] I'm confident saying that all the clearly audible speakers in the recording show probable influence either from a language other than English or of English from a country other than the US.

For the most part, however, participants were willing to evaluate interlocutor level or interlocutor native-speakerhood. They frequently offered linguistically oriented reasons for their decisions, possibly demonstrating influence from their TESOL training. Many comments in which participants evaluate interlocutor level also offer insight into participant attitudes about the qualities they deem as inherent in these levels.

4.6.2 Participant explanations for classifying speaker levels

Particularly revealing is how participants justify their level evaluations of dialog speakers. These definitions include aspects of phonology, "mistakes", grammar, and so forth, and they offer insight into the criteria pre-service teachers deem relevant for describing proficiency levels. The following level evaluations are presented in order, starting with the high-intermediate group (Dialog 1 and Dialog 4), followed by the advanced group (Dialog 2), and concluding this section with the native-speaker group (Dialog 3).

4.6.2.1 High-intermediate Group

Salient features that participants identify for the high-intermediate dialog include pronunciation, lexical choices, fluency, pragmatics, grammar, and communicative skills. A number of comments seem to suggest negative dispositions, using terms such as “thick” to describe accent, “strained” to describe vocabulary, and “mistakes” to describe grammar. Another comment (“Proper grasp of pragmatics”) offers praise while at the same time exposing an ideology that compares the speakers’ pragmatics to some undefined “[p]roper” form.

Pronunciation: Pronunciation was a salient feature for several participants. Comments on phonology were generally negative as can be seen in excerpts 11-13 below or somewhat neutral as seen in excerpts 14-15. None of these comments are from more advanced participants (MA-Adv), possibly indicating that pre-service teachers’ tolerance of phonological variation increases as they progress through their programs.

- 11 FG 1, MA-Nov (NS & NNS), commenting on Dialog 4:
 Sheryl: **Very, very, very thick.** You really have to listen. To understand.
 Janet: [It was hard for me. It took me a second to acclimate. But once I did, I understood what they were saying, ...]
- 12 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
 Participant 8: I believe the speaker to be highly proficient, if not fluent, in the use of English given that that **it is clear that she is not a native speaker due to her strong foreign-sounding accent.**
- 13 Survey, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:
 Participant 30: the (older?) lady seems to be more fluent but the "you would forgot" (**unless it's a weird pronunciation of "forget"**) betrays her.
- 14 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
 Participant 10: On the verge of mid-intermediate, Varying levels of question formation proficiency
I could pick out accents from different regions.
- 15 FG 1, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Janet: Yeah. They're different levels, but she wasn't always making that mistake. Um, and **she**, like, uh, **substituted**, uh, ... what was it? "A"? <mimicking speaker> "/mæ mo ri/", "/mæ mo ri/" instead of "memory".

Lexicon: Evaluations of interlocutors' lexicon are primarily negative. Participant descriptions suggest that they believe that interlocutors may have had difficulty in finding the right words. Another participant makes excuses for interlocutors not knowing jargon, as if participants have lower expectations for this group of speakers than they would of another group that would be expected to be familiar with such jargon. Finally, while one participant did evaluate interlocutor performance more positively, describing them as displaying "ease" in their performance, this same participant seems to hedge this claim by pointing out the speakers' difficulty with "graceful speech".

- 16 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 13: The speakers **exhibit considerable ease** with the words they chose to express their ideas and are creative when their language level **makes graceful speech difficult**. I admire how they dealt with the trickiness of "forgetting" a skill that has been committed to habit.
- 17 Survey, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 30: the vocabulary used is **quite easy**
- 18 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 43: beginning vocab is **strained**, reminds me of people I know that are intermediate lvl
- 19 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 29: The confidence was there, but **there might have been more vocabulary that the Ss didn't use** (hence the prompting towards the end)
- 20 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 40: The speakers seemed **confident** since they could use filler words such as "like" **even though they didn't have the perfect word** to describe something, they came up with other words that could be used in their place (remember/recall also rules/steps). [...] also they ask what do you call this, the paper? "sheet music" is the word they are looking for, but this is **a rather specific term or jargon** related to the study of music, so I guess **they shouldn't be expected to know this at the intermediate level**.

The last of these examples (excerpt 20) presents an excerpt from the participant who commented on interlocutors not needing to know jargon at this level. While believing that interlocutors do not need jargon or may have trouble finding “the perfect word”, this participant nonetheless describes interlocutors as “confident”. Similarly, Participant 29 in excerpt 19 suggests that interlocutors displayed confidence despite lacking some vocabulary.

Fluency: There are only two participant comments on fluency for this group of speakers, but when participants do comment on fluency the observations carry negative tones. One participant, in a comment seen under the previous theme of vocabulary, describes the manner of interlocutors’ speech as lacking grace. In another’s comment, “too many blanks or hesitation” is juxtaposed with “hard to follow”. Considered together, this participant’s observations suggest that the interaction was difficult for the participant to follow because of the manner of interlocutors’ speech. In sum, participants are describing challenges associated with the level of fluency in this interaction.

21 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Participant 13: The speakers exhibit considerable ease with the words they chose to express their ideas and are creative when **their language level makes graceful speech difficult**.

22 Survey, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Participant 30: the conversation contains **too many blanks or hesitation**, might be **hard to follow**.

Grammar: The comments below come from a single MA participant, the only participant to specifically mention “grammar” as the source of her statement. Her descriptions of grammar are negative, with the use of the word “mistakes” suggesting influence of standard language ideology by comparison to another, more “correct” variety. Her statements, however, are double-sided in that they weave criticism of grammar with praise of communicative success. In

Dialog 1 (excerpt 23), the participant classifies the “mistakes” as “pretty intermediate”. Then, for Dialog 4 (excerpt 24) the participant first emphasizes “so many” and “the most grammar mistakes so far”, but immediately follows both observations with the coordinating conjunction “yet” and an acknowledgement of how the conversation proceeded despite the mistakes.

23 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Participant 40: [...] Their **grammar mistakes are pretty intermediate** [...]

24 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 4:

Participant 40: This dialogue has **the most grammar mistakes so far, yet** they were able to keep the conversation going.

[...] **so many grammar mistakes, yet** they were able to get their ideas across to some extent. [...]

Communicative skills: Other comments also seem to recognize that, despite any potential linguistic criticisms, the conversation functions – that is, interlocutors “speak well enough that they can have a full conversation”. Indeed, the conversation contains interaction and improvisation, as well as participants “bouncing-off-each-other”. There is evidence of negotiation of meaning, but this negotiation does not “bog down” the conversation and participants are able to offer “proper responses” to one another.

25 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Participant 10: **Understood the questions and was able to produce proper responses.** The conversation was **not bogged down in negotiation of meaning**, but continued to progress.

26 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Participant 29: **Interaction, improvisation, bouncing-off-each-other.**

27 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Participant 40: Each speaker made errors in grammar as well as their choice of vocabulary, yet they speak well enough that **they can have a full conversation with each other.** Their grammar errors were common ESL mistakes.

Pragmatics: In one comment, interlocutors’ pragmatic skill was evaluated more positively than observed for some of the other skills. Yet even while praising the pragmatics, the

participant's use of the term "proper" suggests influence of standard language ideology. As with the idea of "mistakes" seen earlier, "proper" suggests reference to a manner of speech or variety of language that represents what "proper" is.

28 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Participant 10: I could pick out accents from different regions. **Proper grasp of pragmatics**

Considering these comments, it is possible to develop a broad description of how participants define this group of speakers, who were recruited from levels 4 and 5 of a 5-level Intensive English Program and classified for the purposes of this study as *high-intermediate*. First, participants describe interlocutors as having accents that reflect "different regions" and are "foreign-sounding" and "very, very, very thick", possibly indicated by non-standard phonemes. While on the one hand they consistently describe interlocutors' accent in negative terms, this specificity in describing the accent, on the other hand, demonstrates at least some level of sophistication over more simplistic descriptions of "I hear an accent". In addition, interlocutors may have a large vocabulary, but they still have difficulty with word choice or "jargon". They possess the necessary communicative competence and pragmatic skills, but vocabulary may be "strained". Grammatical "mistakes" – however these may be classified – are "advanced" and do not seem to interfere with comprehension.

4.6.2.2 Advanced Group

The advanced group of speakers was recruited from freshman and sophomore college writing courses specifically designed for non-native speakers of English. Since interlocutors were already matriculated university students, they were considered to be more advanced than the high-intermediate group and classified as *advanced*. The difference in proficiency levels was not lost on participants, one of whom commented that this group was "a little bit higher than the first

one”. While many of the types of observations (e.g., grammar, communicative competence, and so forth) made for this group correspond to those for the high-intermediate group, the comments exhibit fewer negative connotations.

Pronunciation: Participant comments on pronunciation for the advanced group are more neutral. Mentions of phonology are not accompanied with evaluative descriptors such as “foreign-sounding” or “weird” as they were for the high-intermediate group, and instead are simply presented as being “different” (excerpt 29) or as “the accent” without evaluative commentary (excerpt 30).

29 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Participant 50: example of **different pronuciation** [sic]

30 FG 3, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Casey: ... I can see how you would think she would be native. I kind of thought she was for a second too, **then I started hearing the accent.**

Unlike the comments for the high-intermediate group, the influence of standard language ideology is less distinct. In fact, although Casey acknowledges the presence of an accent, her manner is less evaluative than seen for the high-intermediate dialogs. Her manner, however, seems to make reference to a standard that the “accent” deviates from. In another example (excerpt 31), one participant’s evaluation is even more positively oriented (“clarity of their pronunciation and prosodic features”).

31 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Participant 60: Even though these were not native speakers I still might use this in the classroom because of **the clarity of their pronunciation and prosodic features** [...]

Mumbling was also mentioned as a feature of the advanced group’s pronunciation (an observation also made for native speakers during the same focus group session).

32 FG 3, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Amy: ... I definitely think the first part of that conversation could be used in the classroom, but the second part ...got at, **there's more errors, and it was a little mumbled.** [...]

Fluency: Whereas participants criticized interlocutors in the high-intermediate group for their difficulties with “graceful speech” and as “hard to follow”, interlocutors in the advanced group are described with more positive terms such as “very proficient”, “fluent”, and “easy to understand”.

33 FG 3, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Caba: There's a nice idea to use it. Yeah. The .. I, I had a feeling that it was pretty **fluent and the language was simple, easy to understand.** So, I would use it in my classroom.

34 FG 3, MA-Nov & MA-Adv (NS & NNS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Casey: **[She had the control of English. She knew where to put the “Yeah”s and “A-ha”s in, which I think is pretty high level,** so, you know .. she was, she was, like, really good at casual speaking. So, you know, in class you learn, like, formal, so when you're really good at controlling a casual conversation like that, I can see how you would think she would be native. I kind of thought she was for a second too, then I started hearing the accent.

Rahul: So, can we say native-like?

Casey: Native-like. Yeah.

Caba: Very proficient.

Lexicon: In contrast to the high-intermediate group where there were six comments on interlocutors' lexicon, only one participant commented on the lexicon for this group of speakers. For the native group, there were no references to lexicon.

Here, the participant describes interlocutors as possessing conversational “skill”, yet also states that this skill feels “less natural” because of the “speakers' word choices”. From the comment, however, the basis for comparison of “less natural” is not clear – presumably, more proficient speakers or natives.

35 Survey, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Participant 31: I hear this type of conversation among my MA TESL international students with relatively less proficient English skill. **I assume what makes it feel less natural is speakers' word choices.**

Grammar: For this group of speakers, grammar continues to be described in somewhat negative terms, with several references to “mistakes” and “errors”, suggesting that participants perceive non-standard grammatical forms as salient determiners of interlocutor level. Even seemingly innocuous remarks such as “few mistakes” indicate the saliency of non-standard forms and that participants were isolating such deviations as a feature of the interaction. In fact, in one instance, even displays of competent communicative strategies are interpreted negatively rather than commended — for example, one participant interprets a speaker’s repetition of her interlocutor’s statements as an attempt to “correct her utterances” rather than as backchannelling or rapport-building (excerpt 37). One participant recognizes the communicative strategies of the interlocutors, yet obscures the praise in terms of errors, how to correct them, and comparisons to native speaker performance: “that’s what I want students to be able to do ... to contrast and learn how to error-correct ... like a native speaker would” (excerpt 40). This comment, however, is a bit unusual in that there is no evidence of interlocutors engaging in any self-correcting in the dialog, so exactly what the participant is referring to is unclear and may represent his expectations rather than what actually happened.

- 36 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:
Participant 26: There are too **few mistakes** to use it to analyze mistakes. It is too one-sided to use it for conversation.
- 37 Survey, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 2:
Participant 31: [...] Also, one **speaker obviously repeat [sic] what interlocutor said to correct her utterances.**
- 38 FG 3, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Amy: ... I definitely think the first part of that conversation could be used in the classroom, but **the second part .. got at, there's more errors**, and it was a little mumbled. ...

39 FG 4, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Mary: I'd say advanced. Maybe. **A couple of mistakes. "Home back", "back home", she flipped those. Um, she said, um, "something always comes out" instead of "up".** Y-, you know that's just a ... trying to figure out which word is-

40 FG 3, PhD (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Peter: ... But because there is obviously a native speaker and a non-native speaker. Pretty hi-, well, I'd say high-intermediate level, then, then I like that contrastive part for use in a classroom better than I might just, um, because .. **that's what I want students to be able to do, is to be able to contrast and learn how to error-correct.** Um, like a native speaker would, so..

Communicative skills: There are also numerous examples of participants acknowledging the communicative competence of interlocutors. These comments are more positive, particularly regarding interlocutors' ability at topic management.

41 FG 1, MA-Nov (NS & NNS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Sheryl: And even they actually made **a really smooth transition to, to the next topic** and <fades>

Janet: Wh-, what was it?

Sheryl: After the transportation they talked about something else

Moderator:Mm-hm

Janet: Oh, about them going home.

42 FG 3, MA-Adv (NNS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Rahul: And I would use it for .. diversity. The topic started with something else. They have completed, **they have achieved the goal, and they have switched to another one.** So, a kind of continuity, how to-, **how to continue the talk, and how to continue speaking .. rather. How to continue interaction. So, for example, starting with the first one, when they achieved their goal, they stopped conversation. Or, uh, the conversation ended. An-, and the second one, we found another topic .. after the completion of that topic, we might have another one.**

43 FG 3, MA-Nov & MA-Adv (NS & NNS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Susan: There was a good, **she used a good question to make a transition.** →

Rahul: Yeah.

Susan: →And I think **she did a nice job of it.** And that's what happens usually when you're in a, a casual conversation.

44 FG 4, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Daria: [It was impressive though because she went for it. You know, **she seems to understand, well, language the way, you know, people speak, um, in a conversation level.** So I thought it was impressive.

Native-like: Participant comments suggest that despite the proficiency of the advanced group, interlocutors are compared to English native speakers rather than other similarly advanced users or on the basis of interactional success.

45 FG 4, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Monroe: **One sounded as if they were kinda, like a native speaker, that as me and you.** And I was like okay is it .. I don't know which one it was but **I thought she was a native speaker.**

46 FG 2, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 2

Leia: **I thought I heard some native speakers,** but maybe not.

Jeff: Man[, I would say you didn't.

Rich: [Oh, I didn't.

Leia: No?

Kim: I think one was still that intermediate-high to advanced and another was advanced.

Jeff: Yeah.

47 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Participant 40: [...] I might use it to have the students listen to the way **the "i'm guessing - native speaker"** used filler words such as "YEAH," if she didn't know what else to say or just wanted to say something in response to the first person...

48 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Participant 10: There was one speaker that kept saying, "Yeah". It was difficult to tell from her short conversation, but **I don't think she was a native speaker either. She had many characteristics of a native speaker,** but I could still hear **hints of a foreign accent.**

In each of these examples, participants also express uncertainty in their assessments of interlocutors as native, using terms such as “kinda”, “think”/ “thought”, and “guessing”. Yet these assessments of non-nativeness are not shared by all participants: in excerpt 46, Participant Leia claims to have heard native speakers, only to be immediately rebuffed by a fellow participant: “Man, I would say you didn't”.

Similar disagreements, and then ultimately consensus, may be found in another, longer exchange from Focus Group 3 (excerpt 49, below). Participants initially disagree with a colleague's assessment that "there is obviously a native speaker and a non-native speaker", but a consensus is eventually reached, with participants describing the speaker's skill as "very proficient", "bilingual" and "native-like". In this particular example participants are more explicit that they are referring to the outer circle English speaker from India, part of which may be observed in Susan's questioning in the excerpt below. It is likely that the disagreement in Focus Group 2 (in excerpt 46 above) arose for similar reasons, although those participants do not offer any direct clues as to whom they were referencing.

49 FG 3, PhD, MA-Adv and MA-Nov (NS & NNS), commenting on Dialog 2:

- Rahul: → and even at first, because I always look for natives and non-natives, th-, th-, the .. lady who .. sp-, spoke almost all the time, **for me, she is a native speaker**. I don't know exactly, but for me she is because
- Caba: [Even if she is non-native she didn't have a strong accent
[...]]
- Peter: [...] But because **there is obviously a native speaker and a non-native speaker**. Pretty hi-, well, I'd say high-intermediate level, then, then I like that contrastive part for use in a classroom better than I might just, um, because .. that's what I want students to be able to do, is to be able to contrast and learn how to error-correct. Um, like a native speaker would, so..
- Susan: So, are we saying that the .. uh, person who said, was asked, Do you share with family. She just, and she said I'm on my own. You're saying that that, we're saying that that's a native person? A native speaker?
- Amy: No. She was, she was, er ...
- Peter: No <unintelligible>
- Caba: [Like at first had to-
- Susan: [Now, who, **who's the native speaker?**
- Rahul: The one who told, who asked the question about um...
<3 seconds>
I'm not sure I remember exactly, but ... the one who-
- Caba: [I don't think anyone was native there. →
- Susan: No. **She had less of an accent.**
- Caba: → I didn't have the feeling that any of them was a native.
- Peter: Really?
- Susan: Yeah, I don't think there was a native speaker in that group.

- Rahul: But sometimes people develop .. the ... the .. uh, their linguistic skill to the point where it's .. if not impossible, it's difficult for you to point out if he or she is
- Peter: [That's right. I understand. We're being, it's-, you know. ... it could be, **they could be bilingual.**
- @ @ @ @
- Caba: Yeah. **Bilingual.**
- Casey: [She had the control of English. She knew where to put the Yeahs and A-has in, which I think is pretty high level, so, you know .. she was, she was, like, really good at casual speaking. So, you know, in class you learn, like, formal, so when you're really good at controlling a casual conversation like that, I can see how you would think she would be native. I kind of thought she was for a second too, **then I started hearing the accent.**
- Rahul: So, **can we say native-like?**
- Casey: **Native-like. Yeah.**
- Caba: **Very proficient.**

Numerous definitions of World English would, in fact, classify the speaker being referred to here as a native speaker of English (see Bolton, 2006a), a concept that is perhaps indirectly acknowledged through these discussions of native speakerhood. Nevertheless, the key identifying feature for native speakerhood seems to be pronunciation, or the supposed absence of an accent. Comments such as “less of an accent” and “started hearing the accent” suggest influence of standard language ideology that ignores prosodic and segmental differences between regional varieties of native English. Without more specific descriptions of the *type* of “accent”, participants seem to be comparing an accent that displays evidence of “the breakthrough of native language phonology into the target language” (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 43) against some “geographically neutral” (p. 58) native accent. Another participant in an earlier excerpt (excerpt 48) also focused on accent, suggesting that “a foreign accent” – albeit one that is not “strong” – raised suspicions that the speaker was not native.

These participant evaluations of interlocutor nativeness are relevant to attitudes studies for several reasons. First, the survey participant's use of scare quotes in the comment “‘i'm guessing

- native speaker'" suggests some doubt in this evaluation, as does the qualifying statement "for me" in the comment "for me, she is a native speaker". While on the one hand these comments demonstrate acceptance of non-inner circle varieties of English as native, the uncertainty suggests hesitation or hedging, as if other listeners might not agree. Also, focus group participants' consensus in describing the speakers as "very proficient", "bilingual" and "native-like" suggests that participants view these three terms as equivalent and that they are evaluating the pronunciation of each utterance against some "notion of what a native-like version would be" (Munro and Derwing, 1995, p. 91). For these participants it seems as if *bilingual* is being measured against just such a notion of native speaker, a somewhat restrictive conceptualization of *bilingual* when compared to more general definitions that consider bilingualism to be a set of at least two linguistic resources available for communication, with proficiency measured according to context of usage (Wei, 2008). The participants' description of bilingual is further accentuated by the fact that two participants are non-natives and at least three of the others report having skills in a language other than English ranging from basic to intermediate – in other words, they are likely sufficiently bilingual for certain contexts. The main point being raised here is that *bilingual* for these participants seems to suggest a need to sound native-like rather than just an ability to use an L2.

It is relevant to mention that although the survey never states whether speakers of the stimulus materials are native or non-native, the survey design may have encouraged some participants to make assumptions one way or the other. For instance, in the following excerpt about Dialog 3 (the native dialog), participant Amy claims how she would have thought the interlocutors to be "native speakers" if she "didn't know that [...] they were learning English", a claim that was never suggested.

50 FG 3, MA-Nov Participant, commenting on Dialog 3:

Amy: Definitely. I-, they did. Like, it was, I couldn't even, if, **if I didn't know that they were not, like, if they were learning English I would** assume they were native speakers

The participant's assumption that all interlocutors are non-native speakers may be an effect of the ordering of the dialogs. That is, after hearing Dialog 1 in which at least one participant describes the speakers as having a "strong foreign-sounding accent", participants may be expecting similar from Dialog 2 and subsequent dialogs. On the other hand, the survey question "I believe that the individual speakers in this conversation are native speakers of English" may have promoted the assumption that there are native speakers to be identified in each conversation. Such an assumption could be the basis of some of the comments related to nativeness witnessed above.

To summarize participant comments of the advanced group, prominent features include communicative competence, grammar, and pronunciation. These comments allow for a description of the criteria participants use to define this group of matriculated university-level students who do not speak English as a first language. Participants describe interlocutors as fluent and as demonstrating communicative competence, particularly in regard to turn-taking strategies and topic management, although one survey participant interprets the speaker's repetition of her interlocutor's statements as an attempt "to correct her utterances" rather than as a desirable communicative or compensatory strategy or as a having rapport-building function.

Some participants suggest that a native speaker may be present in the recording, and they mention the "clarity of their [interlocutors'] pronunciation and prosodic features", even if it is at times "a little mumbled" – a feature also described in association with the native speaker dialog.

In fact, during a focus group discussion, participants seem to reach a consensus that the interlocutors are “native-like [...] advanced [...] very proficient”.

Lexical choices seem less relevant with this group, with only a single comment describing interlocutor word choices as “less natural”, although the participant does not offer insight regarding their basis of comparison. Also, although participants comment on pronunciation, for the most part, these comments are more positively oriented than those for the high-intermediate group. In terms of grammar, participants mention a “few mistakes”, yet these “mistakes” are viewed more positively than with the high-intermediate group. In fact, one participant even perceives interlocutors as self-correcting errors where no self-correction actually took place, suggesting that any perceived “errors” did not affect comprehension and were assessed (at least from this participant’s perspective) positively as involving some form of self-monitoring.

4.6.2.3 Native Speakers

Native, as one BA participant points out when commenting on Dialog 1, “is a trickier description than “advanced” is.” Yet the majority of participant comments indicate consensus that the interlocutors in Dialog 3 sound “like a group of native speakers”. Evaluations of this group were perhaps the most straight-forward, as there was little question of their level. With only a few exceptions, participants were generally confident of their claims regarding the native speaker group, and they defended their observations by mentioning features such as prosody, communicative competence, overlapping speech, and the use of discourse markers (specifically, “like”). The advanced non-natives in the previous section are described as “native-like”, a frequent yet somewhat nebulous term for describing proficiency levels. In this regard, pre-service teacher descriptions of the native speaker dialog lend insight into what, at least for this group of participants, may exist behind conceptualizations of nativeness.

Pronunciation: In contrast to the high-intermediate and advanced groups, there were no references to interlocutor accent for the native speaker group. Thus, while accent was a feature cited several times as a means for classifying the interlocutors as non-native in the previous dialogs, the lack of any reference to accent for the native speaker group is revealing in that the pronunciation of these speakers may be interpreted as representing an unspecified, ideological norm, and a basis against which the other speakers are compared.

Prosody: While “accent” is mentioned by participants in reference to the high-intermediate and advanced dialogs, prosody is a feature mentioned only in reference to the native speaker dialog and therefore perhaps more strongly associated with native speakerhood. One participant suggests that native speakers are more adept at linking (excerpt 51). Another participant compares this behavior to mumbling (excerpt 52). Other prosodic features mentioned include a fast speech rate and control of intonation (excerpts 53-54).

51 FG 1, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Allie: I mean I just think that **non-native speakers tend to put more space between the words**. You know, **the end of one word doesn't necessarily connect into the beginning of another word**. And, it makes it easier to understand when it doesn't do that. But this one, clearly, had a lot of overlapping.

52 FG 3, PhD, MA-Adv & MA-Nov (NS & NNS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Peter: → be-, because e-, every bit, you can't have those .. mumbled .. we o-, we're **native speakers** .. and I'm so, so sorry for you guys <indicating NNSs in group> →

Caba: M-hm.

Peter: → **we mumble all the time**. →

Susan: Yes.

???: @@@@

Peter: → we're <unintelligible mumbling>. Even in transitions where **we sort of fall off something and then start it up again**, and for you to listen to that as not-, as non-native speakers, like these guys, you'd be like what...

- 53 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:
Participant 29: Sounds like native English speakers sharing guilty pleasures. ... Good example of "filler" language **and intonational practices in English (rising sentence-final intonation)**
- 54 FG 3, MA-Nov & MA-Adv (NNS), commenting on Dialog 3:
Rahul: Yeah, I-, talking about my L1 I thought I have always been thinking that I'm a slow speaker in my native language. **My first language.** But once my friend recorded a clip, like one minute, and **when I listened to it I started comparing myself with a person who speaks very fast.** One of my friends who speaks very fast in .. his →
Caba: **Ten-thousand-, one thousand words a mi-, a second.**
Rahul: → yeah, so, i-, it's hard to, to know about how .. uh .. fast you are speaking in your L1. For example when I started here it was to be honest, it was hard to me to, uh, to follow Casey .. i-, i-, in first semester, but now I'm used to it

The comments above make references to certain qualities of speech that participants seem to associate with native speakers, including intonation, mumbling, and speech rate. Other comments, encompassing the two main areas of *Communicative skill* and *Discourse markers*, provide more detailed insight of native speech by participants and are covered below.

Communicative style: Communicative style was presented in the form of an unspoken dichotomy that suggests one group (native speakers) behave in a certain way that the other group of the dichotomy (non-native speakers) does not. For instance, as one survey participant wrote: "people cutting each other off, laughing, adding on to what last person said, sounds like all native speakers." Indeed, at times there may be "a lot of overlapping", which is something that native speakers "have a tendency to do."

- 55 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:
Participant 43: Sounds like a group of native speakers relating to one another about what they do in their free time, or ways they waste time, **people cutting each other off, laughing, adding on to what last person said, sounds like all native speakers**
- 56 FG 1, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:
Allie: [...] I mean I just think that **non-native speakers tend to put more space between the words.** You know, **the end of one word doesn't necessarily connect into the beginning of another word.** And, it makes it easier to

understand when it doesn't do that. **But this one [dialog], clearly, had a lot of overlapping.**

57 FG 3, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Susan: **So, I really thought that they were native speakers. And they, they spoke over each other.** .. Which .. we have a tendency to do.

Discourse markers: Several participants mentioned the discourse marker “like” as “typical of native English speakers”. In fact, a focus group participant directly justifies her evaluation of the interlocutors as native because of this marker (excerpt 58). This observation is confirmed by three other participants, who describe the use of “like” as “typical” of native speakers (excerpts 59 – 61).

58 FG 3, MA-Nov (NS & NNS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Susan: **I thought they were native speakers.-->**

Caba: Yeah.

Susan: **→Primarily because of the use of 'like'. And you count them.**

59 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 15: The use of **conversational fillers such as 'like' is typical of native English speakers.**

60 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 29: **Sounds like native English speakers** sharing guilty pleasures. **Good example of "filler" language** and intonational practices in English (rising sentence-final intonation)

61 Survey, BA Participant, commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 16: Although the **main speaker seems to be a native speaker**, the use of English is pretty casual and so **interspersed with "like"** as to make it seem she is not very educated. However, that's the reality on the street.

For the most part, participants identify the discourse marker *like* as an idiosyncratic feature of native speaker speech, and in one case the participant evaluates the use of this discourse marker positively, referring to it as a “[g]ood example of "filler" language”. However, a discernible majority of comments about the overlapping speech and the discourse marker *like* are severely critical, discussed in further detail in a subsequent section.

4.6.3 Summary of explanations for speaker levels

This section presented participant descriptions for their evaluations of the interlocutors in the dialogs. The types of comments participants offered for the two non-native groups differed in content from those they made in regards to the native interlocutors. For the high-intermediate and advanced groups, comments concerned aspects such as pronunciation, fluency, lexicon, grammar and communication skills, but for the native group comments were more focused on prosody, communicative style (rather than skill), and discourse markers. The advanced group, however, was described as “native-like”, while the high-intermediate group was not, suggesting influence of a standard language ideology that was evident throughout much of the data.

The following sections cover a range of themes, beginning with gender, which was also a significant factor in the quantitative data. Other themes covered include communicative competence, participant recognition of the importance of interlocutor relationships and context, and participant perspectives of successful communication. The themes then shift slightly, looking at participant willingness to use the dialogs for pedagogical purposes and the influence of participants’ own pedagogical training on their views. The last two sections focus on identity related issues.

4.6.4 Gender

Although stimulus material speakers represent different proficiency levels, they are all female between the ages of 19-28 years old. The most prominent comments regarding gender, however, are in reference to the native speaker dialog (Dialog 3); in this dialog, interlocutors’ ages range from 21-24 years old. Thus, it is not implausible to assume that both gender and age may play a role in the 24-year-old, female MA participant’s description of the interaction represented by this demographic as “what fluent English people can talk about”. Susan (a 67-

year-old, female MA participant) provides additional evidence that age as well as gender may be playing a role in such assessments. In the exchange below between Susan and Casey, Susan describes the dialog as “messy” and at first laughs, then calls out her 24-year-old colleague on her use of “like”.

62 FG 3, MA-Nov Participants, commenting on Dialog 3:

- Casey: I feel like it’s a good example of, like, like this was something that you →
 Susan: @@@@
 Casey: →you could, what?
 Susan: Do you know how many likes you used in the period of time
 ???: <several> @@@@
 Casey: See? I could see this as being a good example of a fluent English conversation. It’s between this demographic. Young, teenager, young little girls but it doesn’t really accomplish anything I would use in an English classroom. Personally. I-, I don’t think it would. It, like, I forgot what the topic was halfway through. I was, like, what are we talking about now? So, I .. I just would just be like .. here’s what fluent English people can talk about
 Susan: I-, I wouldn’t even use it for that. It’s, it’s messy.
 Casey: But it’s, it’s good, like I said, they sounded native-like.
 Susan: M-hm.

Susan and Casey seem to be describing “girl talk”, a term adopted from a survey participant’s comment and used here to describe “very authentic interaction between young women”, according to another survey participant. Dialog 3, the native speaker dialog, was the only dialog to elicit such comments from participants, suggesting that language produced by non-native female speakers – at least as represented by the dialog samples in this study – is not considered “girl talk.” Characterizations of “girl talk” correspond to those presented earlier for native speakers, which is perhaps unsurprising since both refer to the same group of speakers. However, the descriptions included here for “girl talk” specifically refer to the speakers’ sex as a relevant factor; in this regard, “girl talk” may be viewed as a sub-genre of native speaker interaction.

“Girl talk” includes a high-pitched and fast prosody and “idiomatic use” of the discourse marker “like”. In addition, “girl talk” features “some other elements” that are not described, but likely refer to the more pronounced aspects described earlier in relation to Dialog 3 such as overlapping speech and laughter (“people cutting each other off, laughing, adding on to what the last person said”) or colloquial expressions such as “sucked in”, which generated several minutes of discussion during Focus Group 4. A participant in Focus Group 3 (excerpt 66) even visualizes “arms flying all over the place” accompanied by unspecified “facial expressions” as part of the communicative event.

63 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 26: Some people may not want to use this dialogue because the speaker used "like" so much and spoke really quickly, but this is **a very authentic interaction between young women.**

64 Survey, MA-Mid (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 63: I believe this dialogue would present great difficulty to EFL students below advanced level due to **prosody, idiomatic use of "like", and some other elements** that would **likely classify this as "girl talk" register** of English usage. [...]

65 FG 3, PhD and MA-Nov (NS & NNS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Caba: Yeah. And for this kind of audio, learners would definitely need a video to understand what’s going on. ‘Cause the audio is not comprehensible.

Peter: M-hm. Yeah. You have to scaffold this with some other things.

Caba: Yeah. <quiet> So that they can..

Susan: I think it’s a great idea. Primarily because **I just envision these two young women with their arms flying all over the place →**

Caba: Yeah.

Susan: **→ you’ll see their facial expressions ..** that’s part the communication process also

66 FG 3, PhD (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Peter: [...] something I noticed when I was studying languages in the past, studying Spanish, my preference for wanting to hear .. th-, what’s, you know, **having male professor or a female professor because the way, um, I would hear it. I could just hear a certain register or timber of tone of voice better than another one. So in terms of how I thought I would use this in a classroom, ..uh, the content or, or goal notwithstanding I’m not sure just st-, people will want to hear that sound. It-, it’s very, so, high-pitched. A**

lot of laughing and giggling so I don't think I would use it in a classroom because, um, ... i-, I-, in my mind I can't find, like, a language goal that I would get out of it.

Evidence of the gender effect found in the quantitative data is also present in the survey comments and focus group data. For instance, a male focus group participant (excerpt 66) spends a considerable amount of time describing the prosodic qualities of the language in Dialog 3, then expresses uncertainty about using the dialog in a language classroom, stating: "I'm not sure just st-, people will want to hear that sound".

In addition to a gender effect, a generational effect may also have played a role; at 46 years old, this male participant was almost twice the age of the dialog speakers, who ranged in age from 21 to 24 years old. Additional evidence of a generational effect may be found in the exchange between Susan and Casey (excerpt 62), both female MA students. While 24-year-old Casey describes the dialog as "fluent", 67-year-old Susan counters by describing the dialog as "messy" and confronts Casey on her usage of "like."

4.6.5 Overlapping speech, discourse markers, and communicative competence

Not all participant comments focused on aspects of language such as grammar or vocabulary. Two communicative-based features that participants frequently commented on were the overlapping speech and the use of discourse markers in the dialogs.

The four main components of *communicative competence*, broadly defined as "the ability to use language appropriate to the social context in order to accomplish one's goals" (Carter and Nunan, 2001, p. 219), are sociocultural competence, strategic competence, discourse competence, and grammatical competence (Savignon, 2001). Overlapping speech and discourse markers belong to the *sociocultural* and *discourse competence* components of *communicative competence*. *Sociocultural competence* recognizes the social context in which an interaction

occurs, which includes an understanding of participant roles, the information being shared, and the purpose of the interaction. *Discourse competence* is concerned with “the interconnectedness of a series of utterances, written words, and/or phrases to form a ... meaningful whole” (Savignon, 2001, p. 17).

Overlapping speech and discourse markers are relevant to attitudes in at least two ways. Firstly, both represent features of authentic language-in-use, and participant descriptions of these features can lend insight into how pre-service teachers perceive authentic communication. Secondly, communication is (arguably) one of the primary goals of language education – in a language course that would use sample dialogs such as those in this study, oral communicative competence skills are likely more relevant than in a writing or grammar course. Thus, participant perceptions of these elements of communicative competence directly relate to how pre-service teachers define *authenticity* and the linguistic goals of their students, which then also relate to participant conceptualizations of English as a lingua franca for global communication.

Schiffrin (1994) describes *discourse* as occurring above the level of the sentence. It includes structural units such as morphemes, clauses and sentences, but it also includes what is said, what is not said, how it is said, and context. In this way, both overlapping speech and discourse markers are natural elements of human verbal interaction. Discourse markers such as *you know*, *well*, *like*, and others can be “an integral part of stylistic variation” (Fuller, 2003, p. 185) and their usefulness therefore varies according to the type of interaction. However, since a key element in the definition of discourse particles is that the grammaticality of an utterance remains intact when the particle is removed, such particles are not necessarily vital for lingua franca communication (unless interlocutors are aware of and in agreement about a particle’s meaning). Another aspect of natural, informal discourse is speech overlap, which can even have rapport-

building functions in certain contexts (Cogo, 2012b; Johnstone, 2008; Kalocsai, 2011). In fact, speech overlaps are so natural that they are not even taught to language learners. Interlocutors, however, do need to understand when overlapping may be appropriate.

The first of the following two sections deals with overlapping speech; the second section deals with the discourse marker *like*. The majority of comments regarding the overlaps concern the high-intermediate dialogs (Dialogs 1 and 4) while the majority of the comments regarding the discourse marker *like* concern the native speaker dialog (Dialog 3). Implications of these observations are discussed in each section.

4.6.5.1 Overlapping speech

Overlapping speech was, at times, put forward as a measure of nativeness by participants despite the fact that it was evident – although to a lesser degree – in the non-native dialogs as well. Regardless of interlocutor group, however, participants did not seem fond of the overlapping speech, especially when considering the dialogs for classroom use.

Not all overlaps in the dialogs are similar. Some overlaps may be compared to an ‘interruption’ because one speaker begins her turn before the original speaker has fully expressed the content of her idea. Other overlaps are milder in that a speaker begins her turn slightly before the previous speaker’s utterance closure, but both speakers complete their thoughts. There is also evidence of backchannelling such as “hm”, “m-hm”, “yeah”, or laughter; laughter is most prevalent in Dialog 3. Both overlaps and backchannelling could be considered as cooperative in having either a rapport building function or as being part of the process of negotiation (Johnstone, 2008; Kalocsai, 2011). The total number of overlaps in Dialog 1, Dialog 3, and Dialog 4 are relatively equal, although Dialog 1 contains more of what might be considered the interruption type, which may play a role in that the majority of participant

comments deal with Dialog 1. However, the number of participant comments concerning this dialog could be because this is also the first dialog that participants hear or because of the proficiency level of interlocutors. Participant criticisms against classroom use are primarily concerned with the effort involved when listening.

- 67 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 36: **Overlaps in speech make comprehension difficult at times.** It is real-world, but **difficult to understand.**
- 68 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 35: The first 10 seconds are **difficult to hear because it is quiet and the speakers are speaking over each other.**
- 69 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1
Participant 38: **A number of people were speaking over each other** at the beginning; this **made it hard for me to orient myself** when I first started listening.
- 70 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1
Participant 53: The beginning of the conversation when the topic is introduced is **difficult to understand due to the fact that multiple speakers are talking at the same time.**
- 71 FG 2, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Jeff: I don't think I would [use this in a class] because ... **who is speaking when isn't really so clear.**
Nancy: **They kind of speak over each other, so you have to really listen to it.**
- 72 FG 3, PhD & MA Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:
Peter: **Yeah, too much talking over one another**
Casey: Yeah.
- 73 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 4:
Participant 53: [...] The second speaker is very hard to understand and **when multiple speakers talk at once it is difficult to distinguish what each speaker is saying.** The topic as a whole, however, seems easy enough to follow.

While it is certainly valid for participants to be concerned about the intelligibility of language samples for classroom use, it is interesting that they express concern primarily with the high-intermediate dialogs. Only excerpt 72 (above) concerns the native speaker dialog while all other

comments concern the high-intermediate group. The native dialog does contain more laughter-type overlaps than the other dialogs, but comments on the laughter elsewhere in the data (excerpts 74 – 75, below) do not suggest disapproval of the laughter.

74 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 43: Sounds like a group of native speakers relating to one another about what they do in their free time, or ways they waste time, **people cutting each other off, laughing, adding on to what last person said, sounds like all native speakers**

75 FG 1, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Sheryl: About the-, strictly about the interaction, I think it was really good. They're like, "oh yeah, right". And then **they're laugh, they laugh. And laugh and agree and disagree and everything**

For the most part, the laughter seems to be perceived merely as an aspect of the communicative situation, and in one case (excerpt 74) ascribed to something native speakers do.

The point here is that the overlaps in the native speaker dialogs do not elicit negative comments from participants while the overlaps in the high-intermediate dialogs do¹². Yet the overlaps in the high-intermediate dialogs do not seem to interfere with comprehension: even when the overlaps represent more than backchannelling or supportive laughter, non-native interlocutors orient themselves to the input and they cooperate in integrating the new information from the overlap into continuing the interaction. Interlocutors are cooperating towards establishing meaning, and none show signs of being disturbed by the overlaps. This behavior may be interpreted as an example of *languaging*, a term borrowed from sociocultural theory to describe communication in which

ELF users ... exploit the potential of the language, they are fully involved in the interactions, whether for work or for play. They are focused on the interactional and transactional purposes of the talk and on the interlocutors as people rather than on the linguistic code itself. ... an entirely pragmatic undertaking in that the

¹² Although it is possible that participants did not comment as frequently on overlaps in the advanced and native dialogs because they had already done so for the first high-intermediate dialog, this explanation is somewhat unlikely since Participant 53 comments on both of the high-intermediate dialogs (excerpt 70 and excerpt 73).

focus is on establishing the indexical link between the code and the context, and a creative process in that the code is treated as malleable and adjustable to the requirements of the moment (Seidlhofer, 2011, p. 98).

Based on this idea of languaging, the interlocutors in the dialogs perform as successful (and typical) users of ELF (see also Firth, 1996), yet the pragmatic speech overlaps in the non-native dialogs are presented as challenging by the participants who commented on this feature – all of whom are native speakers.

It should be acknowledged at this point that the unnaturalness of the activity may also have contributed to these challenges. For example, several participants mentioned the difficulties associated with “eavesdropping”, such as Butler from Focus Group 1: “it took a second because it’s like, kind of like eavesdropping ... I’m trying to figure out ... what ... their roles are”. Moreover, despite the brief written descriptions provided at the top of the page on the survey that described the interactional context, it is obvious that not all participants were consistently attuned to the information; “I didn't know what the context of the conversation was”, wrote one survey participant. Thus, in addition to the overlapping speech, the unnaturalness of the activity may have played a role in participant difficulties, although the difference in the number of comments made for the high-intermediate group as opposed to native group nonetheless remains noteworthy.

4.6.5.2 Discourse markers

Like, when used as a discourse marker, is represented unequally in the dialogs. In Dialog 1 (high-intermediate group), there are two instances of *like* as discourse marker, while Dialog 4 from the same group of interlocutors has no instances of *like*. In Dialog 2 (advanced group), there are also two instances of *like*, only one of which is used as a discourse marker. In Dialog 3 (native speaker group), there are at least eight instances of *like* used as a discourse marker, with a

ninth instance of *like* where it is not used as a discourse marker. In other words, there is an obvious discrepancy in the number of times *like* occurs in the dialogs of this study, with the native speaker dialog having at least twice as many instances as all the non-native dialogs combined. Both survey and focus group participants generally describe the uses of *like* in unflattering terms.

The following excerpts are categorized according to positive and negative perspectives on *like*.

Positive perspectives: Throughout the entire data set there is only a single instance of an unambiguously positive position regarding the discourse marker *like*. In this example, the participant relates interlocutors' ability "to use filler words such as "like"" to linguistic confidence.

76 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 40: The speakers **seemed confident** since they could use filler words such as "like" even though they didn't have the perfect word to describe something, they came up with other words that could be used in their place (remember/recall also rules/steps). [...]

There is also minor recognition of how discourse markers such as *like* could be useful in a language classroom. This recognition, however, is not definitive, as is particularly evident in excerpt 77 (below) in which the participant merely describes the filler language as "good" but makes no indication as to whether the dialog would be appropriate for classroom use.

77 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:
Participant 29: **Good example of "filler" language** and intonational practices in English (rising sentence-final intonation)

The "'filler" language" that this participant (excerpt 77) mentions is assumedly referring to the discourse marker *like* since similar language is used elsewhere in the data (excerpt 78).

78 FG 2, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:
Rich: [But that **could be useful in a classroom** to show the <unintelligible>

Tasha: **She has a lot of fill-, a lot of “like”. A lot of fillers. That could be useful.**
 ???: <general agreement>

Rich and Tasha (excerpt 78) both use “could” (rather than more a more definite “would”), which suggests some reluctance, although others in the group do agree. Willingness to use examples with such filler language in the classroom is not definitive, but the possibility is not dismissed.

Negative perspectives: There seemed to be a stronger tendency among participants to disapprove of *like*. Participants offer various reasons for their aversion to *like*, such as difficulty in following a speaker’s meaning (excerpt 79) or labeling the frequency of the discourse marker itself as a “bad habit” (excerpt 80). One participant dismisses those who use *like* as “not very educated” (excerpt 81), while another suggests that *like* demonstrates a lack of linguistic aptitude or ability (excerpt 82).

79 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 49: The speakers spoke clearly and were able to communicate about the topic. **They even used slang with the word like.** I could understand the conversation, but it can be **hard to follow when someone constantly uses the word like.**

80 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 40: [...] They also seem to have the **bad habit of saying "like"** very often, which unfortunately many people do without noticing.
 [...] this might be a good conversation for advanced ESL students or students/teachers who just want to hear American English in an informal dinner setting at home with friends. It's a very realistic, natural dialogue (even if **like is said too many times**).

81 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 16: Although the main speaker seems to be a native speaker, the use of English is pretty casual and **so interspersed with "like" as to make it seem she is not very educated.** However, that's the reality on the street. **I get tired of waiting when there is too much "like".**

82 Survey, MA-Mid (NNS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 61: the conversation in this dialogue contains **the repetitive use of the word "like" which demonstrates the inability of the students to use better words than like.**

The comment in excerpt 79 demonstrates both praise and disapproval of the speakers. The participant describes the speakers as clear and “able to communicate”, and seems to commend the fact that they “even used the slang word *like*” (italics added). At the same time, however, the participant complains about the “constant” use of *like*. This excerpt serves a good example of how some participants were able to appreciate aspects of an interaction (e.g., clear speech and communicative ability), while also expressing displeasure with certain linguistic elements (e.g., *like*). In fact, in some ways it seems as if the feature that inspires participants to highly rate interlocutors’ language abilities is the same feature that they cite as challenging.

In addition, speakers are described as uneducated and as unable to think of “better” words because of their use of *like*. Dailey-O’Cain (2000) reports on similar findings, stating “the use of *like* seems to make people think the speaker is less educated” (p. 74). However, Dailey-O’Cain also points out that solidarity traits such as *cheerful* and *friendly* were rated more positively in association with *like*, which seems to emphasize the rapport-building benefits and contextual relevance of this discourse marker.

In excerpt 83 (below), a focus group participant is arguing in support of the dialog, concluding with a comment that the dialog is “a good example of fluent English”. Yet while presenting her position, Casey also uses *like* several times, for which her colleague, Susan, criticizes her. There are three of the instances of *like* are in excerpt 83, although one instance of *like* is used in the construction *feel + like* rather than as a discourse marker.

- 83 FG 3, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:
Casey: I feel **like** it’s a good example of, **like**, **like** this was something that you →
Susan: @ @ @ @
Casey: →you could, what?
Susan: **Do you know how many likes you used in the period of time**
???: <several> @ @ @ @

Casey: See? I could see this as being a good example of a **fluent English conversation**. It's between this demographic.[...]

When Susan comments on the number of *likes* Casey uses, it is uncertain whether she was attuning to the different grammatical functions of *like* or to the item itself. The three instances are nevertheless enough to make her laugh.

Although at various times some participants mention the authenticity of discourse markers such as *like* in the dialogs, there seems to be concern that the “idiomatic use of “like”” might be a problem for students (excerpts 84, 87, 88). These participants, who are represented by BA, MA-Nov and MA-Mid only, seem to “question in what kind of course” (excerpt 85) the native speaker dialog could be used, believing that these markers would be too difficult for learners.

84 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 36: use of many colloquialisms elevates the level of difficulty. The syntactic structures are not complex, but the use of **fillers and colloquial phrases could be difficult for EFL students**

85 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 11: I thought that one of the speakers **said “like” a lot, which makes me question in what kind of course I could use the dialogue.**

86 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 26: Some people **may not want to use this dialogue because the speaker used “like” so much** and spoke really quickly, but this is a very authentic interaction between young women.

87 FG 1, MA-Nov (NS & NNS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Butler: I barely got-, so **I can’t imagine being a non-native speaker, I would not be able to follow it**

[...]

Sheryl: One person used **a lot of, like, “it’s like” “like”** ... you know, the connecting
→

Butler: [the inserts

Sheryl: → words. So yeah, **that might be kind of difficult**

Butler: [And “um” and

88 Survey, MA-Mid (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 63: I believe this dialogue would present **great difficulty to EFL students below advanced level** due to prosody, **idiomatic use of "like"**, and some other elements that would likely classify this as "girl talk" register of English usage.

The participants in these excerpts view the usefulness of *like* in the classroom as questionable. Even in the excerpt seen earlier (excerpt 78) in which a focus group participant acknowledges that the dialog could be used in a classroom, she buffers her comment with hedges – “That **could** be useful” – suggesting some hesitancy to fully commit to such an idea. Overall, however, the majority of comments (“kind of difficult”, “great difficulty to EFL students”, “could be difficult for EFL students”, and “difficulty to EFL students below advanced level”) suggest that pre-service teachers are concerned with the challenges such language would introduce into the classroom.

In another example, the participant praises the speakers and their communicative skills, but criticizes them for the use of *like*, complaining that a speaker who uses *like* too frequently can be “hard to follow”:

89 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 49: The speakers spoke clearly and were able to communicate about the topic. **They even used slang with the word like**. I could understand the conversation, but it **can be hard to follow when someone constantly uses the word like**.

In the comments concerning *like* just presented, only one is in regard to the high-intermediate dialog, and this particular comment is positively oriented, stating that the “speakers **seemed confident** since they could use filler words such as "like"”. Otherwise all comments are in regard to the native speaker dialog and, aside from a few hesitant acknowledgments that these could be used in a classroom, a clear majority of the comments are negative. Thus, although Dialog 3 represents “very authentic interaction between young women”, the type of language

represented in this interaction is not something most participants believe they could use in a classroom, and perhaps also not something they believe their students may need.

These observations are somewhat contradictory. While participant comments on *like* in the native dialog suggest that they do not believe this discourse marker is necessarily something they could use in a classroom, the single comment about *like* as used in the non-native dialogs is supportive. This positive orientation toward *like* when used by non-natives may indicate participant expectations of native speaker ‘standards’ (the same standards that make speakers seem uneducated) when evaluating the dialogs. Fuller (2003) reports on the use of discourse markers in formal and informal contexts by native and non-native speakers. The native speakers in her study use *like* much more frequently than the non-natives, who also use fewer discourse markers across contexts overall. In the present data, there are also fewer examples of non-natives using discourse markers, and when they do, a participant described interlocutors as “confident” (excerpt 76), a description not applied to the native uses of “like” and one that suggests commendation for using the expression. Comments about *like* in the native dialogs are overwhelmingly negative.

4.6.6 Interlocutors and context

As English has spread to become the de facto global lingua franca of the contemporary era, it has outgrown the Kachruvian circles (James, 2009) and introduced a new set of sociolinguistic realities. Among these new realities is greater acceptance of non-inner circle Englishes as legitimate varieties (Coetzee-Van Rooy, 2009)—and in some cases as legitimate goals for learners—as well as recognition of the communities of practice in which English as a lingua franca is used. A number of participants seem to understand the new realities of English as used

in the world and the real-life situations students may encounter. A primary theme relating to the sociolinguistic realities of ELF is *Context of interaction*.

Context of interaction: Participants recognize the context of interaction as an important factor for successful lingua franca communication, expressed primarily through recognition of non-native speakers interacting with other non-native speakers, an observation made in three of the four focus groups. Throughout the comments, the theme of non-natives needing to communicate with other non-natives is evident, in one case being described as “real world”. However, while the participants in Focus Group 1 believed that such exposure would be useful for ESL (“especially in the U.S.”), a participant of Focus Group 2 seems to believe it would be more practical in a EFL setting.

90 FG 1, MA-Nov (NS & NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Sheryl: but it’s not so much about the accent. And it doesn’t bother me at all. I think, I think **if anything it would actually be beneficial for students to be exposed to non-native speakers’ accent**

Allie: [Especially in the U.S.]

Sheryl: Yeah. Especially in the U.S. [...]

91 FG 2, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Kim: You said an ESL classroom? Because if **I were teaching an EFL classroom** and I were preparing learners for a context in which they would mostly communicate with non-native speakers, **things like that are really great**, so they can hear different accents. **But, if I were preparing ESL learners** who want to learn English to communicate with native English speakers [...]

92 FG 4, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Mary: But it’s a real conversation, so it’s, it’s beneficial because if you go out in the **real world** and you have to listen to other people, they don’t talk like your teacher.

Daria: **You might have to deal with other people who have English as a second language and they have to understand each other @@@**

A theme shared between these categories is a tacit recognition of ELF by some participants.

That is, these participants seem to be aware of the global nature of English and the realities of

how it functions as a world language. These individuals understand that second-language users of English frequently “deal with other people who have English as a second language”, and that in order to properly teach students to function in these real-world situations, it may “actually be beneficial for students to be exposed to non-native speakers’ accent”. This tacit acknowledgement is also evident in participant distinctions between ESL and EFL in which participants use these traditional labels to distinguish between situations in which more exposure to non-native accents might be beneficial. Participant opinions, however, diverge as to whether such exposure to non-native speech would be more beneficial to learners in ESL (excerpt 90) or EFL (excerpt 91) contexts. Nevertheless, some participants recognize and accept the dynamic nature of an expanding global language that is not the property of any one lingua-cultural group.

4.6.7 *Successful communication*

Despite commenting on non-standard forms and more prescriptive-type grammar errors in the non-native dialogs, participants generally acknowledged that these interactions were successful, with *success* being roughly defined as in the following question from the survey: “I believe that this interaction is an example of successful communication. That is, to the best of my knowledge, the goals of the interaction were achieved”. Participant responses to this question reflect two approaches, *Let-it-pass* and *Concern for the native speaker*.

Let-it-pass: Firth (1996) describes the principle of *let-it-pass* as “a commonly-deployed resource in lingua franca interactions” when a hearer “lets the unknown or unclear action, word or utterance ‘pass’ on the (common-sense) assumption that it will either become clear or redundant as talk progresses” (p. 243). Firth and Wagner (1997) expand on the let-it-pass concept, stating that even though lingua franca interactions “evinced linguistic infelicities and abnormalities, the parties nevertheless *do interactional work* to imbue talk with orderly and

'normal' characteristics" (Firth and Wagner, 1997, p. 256, italics original). The following excerpts demonstrate different levels of participant recognition of let-it-pass.

- 93 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 4:
Participant 53: Overall, the speakers **can be understood and the flow of the conversation is not hard to follow even though some words or phrases are not clear.** I think this dialogue provides a good example of a successful group conversation where different opinions are expressed and **students use clarification strategies to understand one another.** [...]
- 94 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 4:
Participant 40: This dialogue has **the most grammar mistakes so far, yet they were able to keep the conversation going.** [...]
so many grammar mistakes, yet they were able to get their ideas across to some extent. They **didn't stop themselves from talking** or trying to convey their opinions even though they **didn't use the correct grammar** [...]
- 95 FG 3, MA-Adv (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Rahul: [...], they are, I don't know, they are **over-users, or expert-users, but still they have some, .. but they, they communicated. They have conveyed the message. If, if you talk in terms of mutual intelligibility, that's fine.**
- 96 FG 2, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:
Jeff: The point would be ... this is just an example off the top of the head, **the point would be that mistakes in speaking don't necessarily,** like-
Rich: **[Inhibit communication,** successful communi-
Kim: [Ohhh.
Jeff: Yeah

The recognition of let-it-pass, however, is more tacit than acknowledged, and some participant comments could be compared to a *yes ... but* strategy. That is, even while acknowledging that an interaction was successful, the acknowledgement is accompanied by a qualification ("never really", "yet", "but", and "even though"). Participants acknowledged that interlocutors were mutually intelligible, able to convey a message, and use clarification strategies when necessary; participants are demonstrating positive orientations, even if some aspect of this communicative success did not meet their expectations. One focus group participant, however,

seems to have expected the conversation to fall apart, something that, he points out, “never really completely” happens.

97 FG 3, PhD and MA-Nov (NS & NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Peter: there, they achieved a-, like, a-, about an intermediate fluency. Th-, **the conversation never really completely disintegrated.** →

Caba: [M-hm.

In another more extreme example of this *yes... but* orientation, a survey participant acknowledges the success of the interaction but baldly states that more native-like language samples would be preferred for teaching:

98 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Participant 60: Yes it is successful but whether it should serve as a teaching model seems like a different matter. [...] I would not use this as a sample for EFL because **I believe native-speakers should be used as examples.**

Yet participants did not consider all of the interactions successful. In fact, one of the most critical comments regarding interactional success concerns the native speaker dialog. In the following excerpts, native speaker focus group participants are rather forthright in their disapproval of the native interaction, with one participant calling the interaction “disfluent” (excerpt 99) and the other directly stating “I don’t think they accomplished their goal” (excerpt 100).

99 FG 2, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Kim: [It was **disfluent**. Not in terms of language proficiency, but, ... the-, ... if I think of the other recordings, especially the-, well, both recordings, the voices they continued with their thought. Da-da-da-da-da. And that one was **broken up by pauses and laughter and sort of topical jumps** ...

100 FG 3, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Susan: **I don’t think they accomplished their goal.** The first part of it, I ... **I didn’t get a clear understanding** of what they were even talking about. There **seemed to be this dead time** when the, the last speaker came up with the computer games. **I got the sense that she wanted to fill the dead time and she talked about it.** ...

Participant Kim in excerpt 99 suggests that pauses, laughter and topic shifts are a source of disfluency rather than rapport-building strategies. Similarly, by suggesting a need to fill “dead time”, the participant in excerpt 100 seems to disapprove of the means by which the topic shift is initiated, and for this reason claims that the interlocutors did not “accomplish their goal”. Yet what is the goal of an interaction in which speakers are discussing hobbies during an informal, lunch-time conversation? Arguably, the goal of such an interaction (and, in this case, an artificial one recorded for the purpose of research) is communication merely for communication’s sake, and in this regard, interlocutors have demonstrated communicative competence in their ability to utilize “dead time” for topic shifts and allowed perceived infelicities to pass.

Concern with native speakers: In a few cases, there seems to be concern for how native speakers might perceive the non-native speaker interactions despite the fact that there were no native speakers involved (or even the suggestion that any would be involved) in the interactions. Comments such as “but it would be difficult for many native English speakers” and “wouldn't make her unclear ... to most native speakers” suggest that participants are evaluating the dialogs with the ultimate communicative goal of interacting with native speakers in mind.

101 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Participant 13: Near the end of the dialog, someone may have said "I'm here young" to express that she had only been where she was at the time of the recording for a short period (three years). I don't know if that's a lexical error or a distinctly L1-interference one. She also says "I never been home back" to say that she hasn't returned home since she moved to where she is now. **This wouldn't make her unclear when speaking to most native speakers of American or British English, though.**

102 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 4:

Participant 46: They can **communicate with each other effectively, but it would be difficult for many native English speakers to understand them.**

These comments suggest unfamiliarity with the sociolinguistic realities of English as a global language, or more specifically, ELF, in which native speakers are irrelevant in many communicative situations.

4.6.8 Motivations for classroom use

In addition to issues presented earlier such as overlapping speech or the (over)use of *like* as a discourse marker, participants stated that background noise, “eating sounds”, or issues with recording quality would likely prevent them from using some or all of the recordings in a classroom. However, participants were not completely against the idea of using the dialogs for pedagogical purposes and offered reasons such as error-correction exercises and TESOL training, among others, as possibilities for education.

The first set of examples below (excerpts 103-105) present more general participant comments expressing dissatisfaction with the dialogs. Here, whether participants would use these dialogs in a classroom or not is uncertain, but the participants nevertheless show dissatisfaction with the dialogs, apparently basing their evaluations on some standard or ‘correct’ target that motivates their comments.

103 Survey, MA-Mid (NS), commenting on Dialog 4:

Participant 68: It could be used in linguistics or advanced conversation, but there are **various gaps/lackings in grammar and vocab.**

104 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 4:

Participant 60: **The only way I would use this dialog for teaching would be to show students what not to do.**

105 FG 3, PhD (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Peter: Um, uh, yeah, so, uh, I-, I’m leaning against **not using** it in a classroom. I would want something that’s **a little more deliberate, and maybe native speaker without, um, .. uh, mistakes.**

In the next set of excerpts, participants offered more specific reasons as to why they would use the dialogs in a classroom. While the more positive orientations towards using the dialogs as

language samples mentioned the success of the interactions or communicative strategies such as negotiation of meaning, negative orientations were more plentiful. These negative orientations typically revealed a reliance on the idea of a standard language against which the interactions were being measured and which made the sample unsuitable for teaching English. Most frequently, participants suggested using the dialogs as an activity for identifying “mistakes” in order to help learners avoid similar “errors” themselves.

- 106 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 4:
Participant 10: The few errors in this conversation could be a great chance to get students **to notice possible errors they are making, and bring attention to fixing mistakes.**
[...]
- 107 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:
Participant 13: I'm beginning to think that the errors in this and the other recording may be useful for advanced learners to **address types of language errors**
- 108 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 4:
Participant 13: One of the speakers says that she prefers routine work and she emphasizes "work" instead of "routine" and this makes her meaning unclear at first. **Errors like these could make for great editing exercises at the intermediate and advanced level but might contribute negatively at the beginner level**
- 109 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 40: I might use it in an advanced ESL class to have the students listen to so that they can **identify the grammatical errors**, but I most likely would not use this in my ESL classes, especially not anyone lower than advanced because **it has many grammar mistakes and wouldn't really help our students learn to speak correctly.**
- 110 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 4:
Participant 40: I wouldn't use this because **it's filled with grammar mistakes (unless advanced students are listening to correct the mistakes)**
- 111 FG 3, MA-Adv (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Rahul: For me, yes, because, uh, it contains some, uh, **mistakes, which can be, which can be helpful for students who are learning English.** Particularly as, .. mm, student, as EFL. Because those who have learned language, they usually m-, make mistakes.
[...]

And ...then they-, they will, they can take **those mistakes, which can be used as a stop sign in the future for them not to make such mistakes** while .. uh, um .. I mean, subject-verb agreement, particularly. [...].

Yet despite the “mistakes” participants refer to, the interactions in the dialogs were successful: interlocutors constructively negotiate through a topic with no indications of dissatisfaction. In fact, members of Focus Group 2 (excerpt 112, below) are quick to point out this success when a colleague suggests using the dialog as an activity for identifying mistakes. In the end, this same person agrees on the success of the interaction.

112 FG 2, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

- Jeff: For example, you could play that and just be, like, okay, write down any mistakes you hear, and then they wouldn't, maybe, it'd be hard on-, can listen for it, but, like, a learner might not pick up. But when you give them a transcript. Okay, read it. Oh, okay, I see all the mistakes now.
- Rich: Here are two other ways
- Tasha: [I don't want to focus on the mistakes though.
- Kim: [<unintelligible>
- Jeff: The point would be ... this is just an example off the top of the head, the point would be that mistakes in speaking don't necessarily, like-
- Rich: [Inhibit communication, successful communi-.
- Kim: [Ohhh.
- Jeff: Yeah

These participant comments on errors or mistakes as something “in need of correction and remediation” are not unusual “from the perspective of current mainstream ELT” (Seidlhofer, 2001, p. 149), but they do – for the most part – ignore the success of the communicative activity. Swan (2012) argues that “where the linguistic and situational context provide adequate clues to what is actually meant”, mistakes “may be neutralized” (p. 380). When the outcome of a communicative situation is successful, it is difficult to claim that mistakes have been made, even despite deviations from inner circle standards. Moreover, to claim that mistakes are being made requires knowing a speaker's intentions (Swan, 2012). Yet participants' orientation suggests that they are assuming a monolingual native speaker goal for the interlocutors, because it is only from

such a perspective that deviations from inner circle standards with no negative effect on the ultimate outcome of the interaction could be considered ‘mistakes’. Participants are assuming the native speaker as the goal.

Such a perspective ignores variation in native Englishes and alludes to the native speaker fallacy in which the native speaker is the “embodiment of the target and norm for learners” (Phillipson, 1992, p. 194) In a few extreme cases, participants directly express this ideology of native speakers as the embodiment of learner goals.

- 113 Survey, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 57: **I'd rather prefer to use native speakers' samples** for all purposes other than as an example of non-native speakers talking
- 114 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 60: Yes it is successful but whether it should serve as a teaching model seems like a different matter. [...]I would not use this as a sample for EFL because I **believe native-speakers should be used as examples.**
- 115 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:
Participant 60: [...] I believe this is a good **example of everyday, naturally-occurring social conversation that students would encounter with a native speaker.**

In another example that highlights standard language ideology and the native speaker fallacy, Participant Ruby, a non-native, at first does not want to use the non-native dialogs because she believes native speakers are better models. Other participants, however, do not fully agree with Ruby's comment, and offer reasons for their disagreement, such as linguistic diversity and the need to introduce such diversity in the classroom

- 116 FG 4, MA-Nov (NNS), MA-Adv (NS)
Ruby: Hm. Well I would saying being a ESL student myself, um, if you want to use kind of recording in the classroom, **we would like to use something like from a native speaker.** Because when we first learn English, we definitely pick up the accent from our teacher. Because it's non-native speaker, so we follow the mistake, the- .. I mean the pronunciation sometime, so we →
Daria: You might-

- Ruby: → would like to say that if we have to use this kind of material, we use the thing [from the native speaker. We don't use it.
- Daria: [Maybe you'd use a higher level in this conve-, in this conversation. And they have to analyze it.
- Ruby: Be[cause you want to teach student the correct way how you say it.
- Daria: [Correct way.
Yeah.
[That was my .. comment.
- Mary: [But it's a real conversation, so it's, it's beneficial because if you go out in the real world and you have to listen to other people, they don't talk like your teacher.
- Daria: You might have to deal with other people who have English as a second language and they have to understand each other @@@

This same interaction continues but eventually returns to Ruby several minutes later, who expresses a change of opinion. She is now willing to use the non-native dialogs, albeit still for the purpose of identifying mistakes.

- Ruby: [...] I think all the three dialog have, could be a sample in the classroom.
- Jason: A-, all three of them?
- Ruby: Yeah. **The thing I mentioned about form the native speaker is we want to teach students how does English sound like? But for this one, even though it's the non-native speaker, you can point out, maybe you can analyze the conversation. Um, do they have mistake in the grammar, so .. or you can show them what kind of a <2 syllables>.**

Although Ruby's eventual acceptance of the possibility of using the non-native dialogs as samples in a class falls back upon an ideology that places the native speaker as the model, this interaction demonstrates the fluidity of belief systems. Through more intentional and reflective awareness raising exercises, it is possible that Ruby may begin to question the assumptions inherent in her statements. As Sifakis (2007) points out, "teachers need to confront and change a whole range of long-held and deeply rooted viewpoints on many levels concerning: the importance of Standard English, the role of native speakers and the negotiation of non-native speakers' identities in cross-cultural communication" (p. 358). Ruby has demonstrated an ability

to adapt her views, yet her adaptation nevertheless still demonstrates a reliance on a native speaker based standard.

Another way that some participants suggest using the non-native dialogs does not involve language pedagogy, but rather linguistics or TESOL training. While more subtle, these examples nonetheless also suggest the influence of a standard language ideology in that the dialog speakers need to “improve”, that they have not yet reached some desired but unstated goal.

- 117 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 10: I would be hard pressed not to **analyze** the conversation as an instructor looking **for ways to help learners improve**.
- 118 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 50: **to study language of students learning English**, but not to use to teach English
- 119 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 68: an odd snippet of conversation -- **I probably wouldn't use it with EFL/ESL students, maybe with linguistics students**
- 120 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 4:
Participant 68: I probably wouldn't use it with EFL/ESL students. **I would use it with native-speaker English students, to study the conversation.**
- 121 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 4:
Participant 21: For this recording and others, I wouldn't necessarily use the recordings to teach EFL students, but perhaps to show them and **educators examples of different proficiencies**.

Not all participant comments, however, demonstrate influence of standard language ideology. Several comments show awareness of language variation and acceptance of non-inner circle Englishes. Here, participants recognize the success of the interactions, in particular, how interlocutors successfully engage in the negotiation of meaning to achieve their interactional goals. In excerpts 122 – 126 (below) participants also specifically mention how the aspect of success makes the dialogs appropriate for classroom use.

- 122 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 29: **Interaction, improvisation, bouncing-off-each-other.** [...] The speakers seem to like each other and be interested in talking to one another. **That's very useful as a sample for what good "conversation" can be!** [...] The confidence was there, but there might have been more vocabulary that the Ss didn't use (hence the prompting towards the end) [...]
- 123 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:
Participant 60: One thing I might use this conversation for would be **as an example of turn-taking in conversation.**
- 124 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:
Participant 29: Once again, "**interaction**", because these speakers are listening and **repeating utterances from their convo partners successfully, and building a longer, more involved dialogue.**
- 125 FG 3, MA-Adv (NNS), commenting on Dialog 2:
Rahul: And I would use it for .. diversity. The topic started with something else. **They have completed, they have achieved the goal, and they have switched to another one.** So, a kind of continuity, how to-, **how to continue the talk, and how to continue speaking** .. rather. **How to continue interaction.** So, for example, starting with the first one, when they achieved their goal, they stopped conversation. Or, uh, the conversation ended. An-, and the second one, we found another topic .. after the completion of that topic, we might have another one.
- 126 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 4:
Participant 53: I think this dialogue provides a good example of a **successful group conversation** where different opinions are expressed and students use **clarification strategies to understand one another.**

The participants in these examples are describing ELF, or the strategic skills that enable users “to cope with varied processes of interaction that ELF encounters are likely to necessitate” (Alptekin, 2010, p. 106).

4.6.9 Influence of teacher training programs

The influence of teacher training programs is evident in participant comments, even if somewhat tenuous in a few cases. In the first of these examples below, TESOL training seems to have positively influenced how the dialog interaction is interpreted by the participant, who

relates higher levels of language skill with communicative competence in how a speaker conveys meaning with “nuance and depth” rather than evaluating proficiency based on grammar or pronunciation.

127 Survey, BA (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Participant 13: **My studies have made it clear that language levels have everything to do with conveying meaning** and "high" levels are ones that allow great **nuance and depth of meaning**. The creativity I mentioned earlier shows a level of proficiency that's difficult to measure but that's certainly higher than -- the middle.

In excerpt 128 (below), Participant Rahul seems to be describing a learning style or communicative strategy, using the term *over-user*, which he defines as language users “who don’t care about grammar”. Although his memory of the term and his explanation of its meaning are ambiguous, the source of his knowledge is clear: it is a concept that he learned from having participated in at least one of his applied linguistics courses.

128 FG 3, MA-Adv (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Rahul: Yeah, because sometimes people don’t care about grammar. ... **If I can properly recollect, one of my teachers told me** that sometimes, sometimes people are good in their language. Particularly second language, because first language is, is always good. Perfect. So, they don’t care about grammar, so they can be termed as over-users.

In excerpt 129, Rich describes his expectations of what he will learn in a class he has not yet taken. Although this is not a statement of what he *has* learned through his training program, this comment does demonstrate how Rich has expectations of his training program.

129 FG 2, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Rich: **I haven’t taken sociolinguistics yet, but I know that there’s going to be a lot of discussion about what we perceive, versus what we can actually comprehend.** If people, like-, I think there’s research about it. You think you can’t understand ..., some participants have said they can’t understand this Asian speaker, but they can understand this X-in-such speaker. Do you know what I’m saying? And then, but they actually can when they remove some sort of filter, but I don’t think in here, based on the L1 or the-, and the accents that we’re hearing, that that’s the-, what’s affecting our perception of this conversation. I think it was the actual substance of what was being said

Rich's expectations bring up the interesting question as to whether he later gained the knowledge he hoped to from this course (and his MA program). Also, it is relevant to consider whether the participant's preconceptions of the course content influenced the benefits he may have experienced from the course.

There is more direct evidence of the influence of a teacher training program on participants' attitudes and linguistic knowledge in another interaction involving this same participant. In the following excerpt, focus group members are talking about a paper they had previously discussed in one of their classes that examines the benefits of using accented, intelligible, and comprehensible non-native samples in a language class (Murphy, 2012).

130 FG 2, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

- Rich: I guess, I guess just to make the distinction that wh-, when ya'll are saying you probably wouldn't and you're giving reasons, **I'm not opposed to using it**, I just don't know how I would use it yet. But I think that for giving, I like the notion that Murphy exposes to the **accented, intelligible, comprehensible speaker**. I think that that's awesome, and so, I-, I found that in that example, and if I could work it in. Whatever. If-, if it's turn-taking, →
- ???: [It's true.
- Rich: → or maybe if there's something else in there. I would, I would use it.
- Jeff: But that's, that's a different, like, that's a different context. Like, that is for **motivational purposes**, not, like learning.
- Rich: [I disagree. →
- Kim: [No, it's **for learning** as well.
- Rich: → I think it's **for learning**, And I think part of it is that it ties in motivation.
- Jeff: Well, I mean ... but ... you can't just go around randomly picking someone just because they're a non-native speaker. It has to ... the-, the-
- Leia: That's the point though. **They are supposed to be accented, intelligible-**
- Jeff: [I know
that. And that's why I said it's not-, it's for motivation and not for, like,
instruction
- Rich: What if part of our instruction though includes models that are AIC¹³ and, and, it doesn't mean that I'm suggesting that's the paradigm, period. But, we're teaching different skills, so whether I want them to emulate or listen or under-, do you see what I'm saying

¹³ Participant is referring to "Accented, intelligible, and comprehensible" (AIC) (as discussed by Murphy (2012))

- Jeff: But how would you go about isolating a **skill** out of that conversation?
 Rich: Well,[that's where, where, you were laughing
 ???: [<unintelligible> pronunciation
 Leia: Yeah, you have to pick it out yourself and then tell your students: listen for this.
 Jeff: So, what, from that one,
 Rich: [Kim's , the first one-
 Jeff: [What?
 Rich: What you brought up, the **negotiation of meaning**, like how the
 Jeff: [But did you just say that you couldn't do it? With, like, if he-, ... it's more if you couldn't see them?

This excerpt demonstrates the influence of participants' training on fostering greater acceptance of non-inner circle pronunciation standards. Participant Rich states how he is “not opposed to using” the dialog in a classroom and by doing so he associates the dialog speakers with the notion of “accented, intelligible, comprehensible” as discussed in his class. While some of the following discussion encompasses why an instructor may want to use such a dialog in a classroom (“motivational purposes”, “for learning”, “negotiation of meaning”), none of the participants contradicts the suggestion that the dialog speakers are accented, intelligible, and comprehensible. The paper they are referring to, however, emphasizes using AIC speakers for pronunciation and listening practice, a point which participants do not clearly address in their discussion.

In addition to their linguistics courses, teachers' own language learning experience can have a “significant influence” on their professional careers (Borg, 2003, p. 88). In excerpt 131 (below), the participant describes how her own language learning experiences at least partially influenced her decision to study TESOL. In excerpt 132, Butler describes how learning German from a non-native speaker of the language encouraged her to reconsider her own language learning goals and become more accepting of non-native pronunciation goals.

- 131 Survey, MA-??? (NS), commenting on studying TESOL:
Participant 32: I enjoy working with people from many cultures and I'd like the option to work abroad. **I was also influenced by my own language learning experiences.**
- 132 FG 1, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Butler: [...] **The only time I've ever experienced an individual from a different culture speaking another language was in my German class.** It was the first time, and it was an Indian gentleman, and he's still here, I believe. And, um, he's from India, and he teaches German. And his, his accent is pretty thick, so I can imagine it might be difficult. [...] It was d-, it was definitely different. Um, but then coming **from a different perspective of, "Ok, wait! I don't have to sound like a native" like, like a native speaker of German.** Having that concept, **from that perspective, I don't see anything wrong with it.** But, coming from the other perspective of "I want to sound as German-like as I possibly can", then I-, I would have issues.

In contrast, the participant in the next example (excerpt 133) describes her own challenges in learning a foreign language, but she uses this experience to comment on the "errors" of the advanced non-native group. Thus, rather than lead her to eschew the influence of standard language ideology, this participant's own language learning experience reinforced it.

- 133 FG 3, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 2:
Amy: Oh, I'm, I was just agreeing. Like, you'd hav-, ... I definitely think the first part of that conversation could be used in the classroom, but the second part .. got at, there's more errors, and it was a little mumbled. So, I'd have to find a good reason to have to use that in a class 'cause **I know whenever I was taking any foreign language classes that they, I don't know, it's difficult enough to try to understand what they're saying without grammatical errors, or mumbling we put in there.** So, I'd prefer to use a really clear dialog for my students to listen to

It is noteworthy that Participant Butler in excerpt 132 specifically mentions that her German teacher was a non-native speaker of the language. Although the participant in this last example does not mention the nativeness of her foreign language instructors, the fact that she does not mention it suggests that their nativeness was unmarked – that is, they were most likely native speakers of that language or shared the participant's nationality and were therefore non-distinct.

With these considerations in mind, the experiences of Butler with the non-native German instructor suggest the positive example non-native instructors can be for their students.

Finally, a native participant who is studying Arabic as a foreign language describes the empowerment of understanding the natural, native Arabic speech that she was exposed to in one of her language classes.

134 FG 2, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Kim: **I'm learning a language right now.** I'm a beginner. And the times-, she's always putting youtube clips up, and, like, kids speaking the language, but on home videos, but it's slower. And **anytime there's someone actually speaking, probably a native speaker of that language and I can understand it, it is really exciting. So, I can imagine if I did listen to that and I, at least caught a sentence or two, ca-, that person said, that would be really empowering versus,** like, those reeeally lame scripted conversations that come with conversation books on CD and stuff ... which still have their value.

Participant Kim feels “empowered” to be able to understand natural native Arabic speech, an observation which contradicts the idea that non-natives can be language models and suggests that she views communication with Arabic native speakers as her personal language learning goal. Since Arabic may be more culturally bound than English, Kim’s goal to be able to interact with representatives of this culture is understandable and to some extent appropriate (see Seidlhofer, 2011). However, as language teacher trainers, it is important to be aware of the influences that pre-service teachers encounter as part of their degree programs. Compared to the positive influence that a non-native speaker of German had upon Participant Butler in the previous excerpt, it is possible that Participant Kim’s own L2 goals could be transferred onto her students of English. More broadly, while it is essential for native speaking English language teachers to demonstrate experience with learning an L2, the goals of nativeness that they encounter while studying an L2 have the potential to influence their expectations of English language learners.

4.6.10 Non-native speaker identity

There were a total of ten non-native participants from both the focus groups and the survey. At times, some of these individuals used their non-native identity as a means for distinguishing themselves from other participants. This section looks at how the non-native participants utilized their non-native linguistic identity to position themselves in the discourse.

Linguistic identity, according to Jenkins (2007a), “is a complex phenomenon that cannot be divorced from other phenomena such as language attitudes and ideologies” (p. 198). Thus, how non-native speakers express identity in a second language is relevant to language attitudes because it can demonstrate how individuals position themselves in relation to their linguistic environment. Non-native participants demonstrate complex, shifting identities as English language users. For instance, non-natives may criticize, or subjugate, other non-natives for linguistic “mistakes” while, at the same time, demonstrating L2 ownership with such criticisms through their confidence in their ability to evaluate others.

In the following excerpts (135 and 136), non-native participants Rahul and Caba position themselves as a source of authority on the language, perhaps through their identity as teachers. At the same time, however, they disassociate themselves from other non-natives through use of the third person reference.

- 135 FG 3, PhD (NS), MA-Adv (NNS), and MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:
 Rahul: e-, e-, **even very clear talk**, ..mm, .. **is a kind of hurdle for nonnatives** when they start.
 Peter: Exactly.
 Caba: But in case, at the beginning, **they need very clear speech**, like, **very well defined grammatical structure and everything. Said in a very clear manner so that they can understand.** ... but, yeah .. The-, they’ll have to struggle more with understanding this kind of distractions
- 136 FG 3, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Caba: But th-, but **for non-native speakers, non-native speakers are more intelligible than the native speakers.** [...]

In other instances, non-natives draw more on their non-native identity than their teacher identity. In fact, through statements referring to their non-nativeness (“we [non-native/ Chinese (?)] don’t learn in book” and “non-native speakers have a hard time [...] that was, like, the hardest part for me, too”), they assume a learner stance and use that positioning to promote their opinion on language teaching. Here, the source of these participants’ authority is their non-nativeness. All participants are pre-service teachers and therefore part of the community of teachers, but these individuals also align themselves with learners – in other words, they perceive themselves as both as teachers and learners.

137 FG 4, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Ruby: [...] It sounds like really, really nativelike. Su-, sucked in it. So this one **we don’t learn in book**, so .. or, or you can before you listen to this video, you can provide a student .. this, it means the similar vocabulary, more vocabulary. Let **them** to practice, maybe **they** can take up in the conversation. Something like that. I-, I don’t know if, if you, if it will helpful or not. But this is what I think.

138 FG 1, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Sheryl: It’s always native speakers. And sometimes even the native speakers audios, uh, um recordings, sometimes are so fake [...]
And again, native-, like, **non-native speakers have a hard time when they’re actually** ... in the real world. And that was, **like, the hardest part for me, too.** Because **I** was so used to <elevated intonation, reported-speech voice> “Hi! How are you?”

These participants incorporate aspects of their non-nativeness into their identity and who they are as teachers, but they distinguish themselves as both English language *users* and *learners*. As teachers of English, these participants are language users who are able to aid others in the learning process. Yet additionally, their status as (former) language learners allows them special insight into the opinions and needs of other English language learners.

In the following set of examples, non-natives assume a position of authority (as teachers or advanced users) in which they seem to subjugate other non-natives by focusing on the qualities of the dialog-speakers' speech, describing interlocutors as lacking certainty, sounding less natural, and having a "thick accent".

- 139 FG 1, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:
 Sheryl: [...] And it's so clear and nice and ... manicured, but in real conversation it's not like that. **And we do have a lot of non-native speakers with thick accent.**
- 140 FG 1, MA-Nov (NNS & NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
 Sheryl: Yeah. **I don't really feel that, the, the certainty in their voices.**
 Jason: [The certainty. What do you mean by that?
 Allie: [Well, **the one is more certain than the other.**
- 141 Survey, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 2:
 Participant 31: I hear this type of conversation among my MA TESL international students with relatively less proficient English skill. **I assume what makes it feel less natural is speakers' word choices.**

Similarly, in excerpt 142 (below), the non-native participant concedes that the dialog could be used in a classroom, but exposes influence of the native speaker fallacy, when she acknowledges this "even though" interlocutors are non-native. Through her own previously self-acknowledged identity as a non-native, Participant Ruby positions herself as belonging to the same group she seems to disregard with the comment "even though" while simultaneously assuming a position of authority able of subjugating compatriots by pointing out "mistake in the grammar".

- 142 FG 4, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:
 Ruby: Yeah. The thing I mentioned about from the native speaker is we want to teach students how does English sound like? But for this one, **even though it's the non-native speaker**, you can point out, maybe you can analyze the conversation. Um, **do they have mistake in the grammar**, so .. or you can show them what kind of a <2 syllables> [...]

In excerpt 143 (below), Sheryl seems to be expressing empathy for the linguistic skill of other non-natives and the challenges language learners may encounter. In essence, she is using her non-nativeness and authority as a teacher to offer support for other non-natives. Yet while seemingly offering support for her compatriots by accepting non-standard pronunciation, at the same time, she seems to be suggesting that pronunciation is something that could *bother* other listeners.

143 FG 1, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Sheryl: For me, I **don't find it that problematic to use non-native speakers. Their accent didn't really bother me at all.** It's really natural.

Here, Sheryl promotes non-native accents as acceptable, demonstrating non-native ownership by rejecting inner circle standards (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2007) and demonstrating a desire to associate with the global community of (English) language users (Dörnyei, Csizér, and Németh, 2006). Yet her expression of acceptance seems based on an expectation of non-acceptance (by at least some speakers), perhaps influenced by the ideology “that linguistic nonnativeness makes one incomprehensible” (Shuck, 2004, p. 201).

Non-native participants also offer statements of their non-nativeness before evaluative comments about the language skills of other non-natives. As expert L2 English users themselves, these participants have the in-group authority to make such evaluations of other non-natives, a position which Caba may be assuming (excerpt 144, below). Ruby, on the other hand, gains her authority not from her status as an expert user but from her self-positioning as “a ESL student” (excerpt 145, below).

144 FG 3, MA-Nov-(NNS), commenting on Dialog 2:

Caba: **Being a non-native speaker of English,** I would mark it more than intermediate

145 FG 4, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Ruby: Hm. Well I would saying **being a ESL student myself**, um, if you want to use kind of recording in the classroom, we would like to use something like from a native speaker. [...]

In sum, non-native participants demonstrate fluid, hybrid identities. At times they unequivocally identify themselves as non-natives, a positioning that allows them to offer in-group knowledge of non-native preferences as well as allows them to be language ‘learners’. These same participants also position themselves as teachers, allowing them to associate with the wider community of teachers in the focus groups.

4.6.11 Othering

The concept of Othering has a long, deep-rooted history in the field of English language teaching (Canagarajah, 1999b; Holliday, 2005; Pennycook, 2001). Holliday defines Othering as “something which is constructed as opposite to the familiar, with often falsely attributed negative or exotic characteristics which are opposite to the positive characteristics of the Self” (p. 19). The native/ non-native distinction – a centerpiece of the present research – is perhaps the most common form of Othering in the TESOL profession. Despite attempts by critical applied linguists to problematize such dichotomous notions of identity and culture (Holliday, 2005; Norton, 2000), participant comments suggest that native/ non-native distinctions remain strong in the perceptions of some pre-service teachers. The positions that some participants take in relation to their identity are conflicted, demonstrating both positive and negative perceptions towards themselves or other L2 users.

4.6.11.1 Native vs. non-native Othering

Although the data imply several types of Othering, the most straightforward examples are those based within the native/non-native speaker dichotomy. This section covers two ways in which participants maneuver within this dichotomy: *The positive Self* and *Group positioning*.

4.6.11.1.1 The Positive Self

The positive Self represents an extreme form of Self/Other characterizations in which the Other is conceptualized as “opposite to the positive characteristics of the Self” (Holliday, 2005, p. 19) – in this case, the native-speaker Self and the non-native-speaker Other. The native English speaking participants in the excerpts below use language that positions themselves as advantaged over non-natives in some way.

146 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Participant 50: As a native English speaker, I feel that **I might be supplying more vocabulary words or simplifying what I say for them**

147 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Participant 60: If I were in the conversation **I would be afraid of using words that they might not know**, so it would hinder my communication.

A surface-level reading of the first set of comments suggests empathy for language learners or those less proficient. Beyond the surface level, however, this empathy seems to be based on the native speaker fallacy, positioning the native English speakers as the ideal language teachers/users in which participants position themselves as lexically advantaged merely because they are native speakers. While on the one hand participant descriptions of being “afraid of using words that they [the L2 English speakers] might not know” suggests empathy for others, on the other hand this fear is based on the participant’s concern of her own communication being “hindered” and indicates a belief that native speakers are more complex/ more advantaged communicators than the non-natives being referred to.

The participant’s own perceived disadvantage of being “hindered” is based on perceptions of an advantaged Self. In other words, this native speaker participant expresses fear of not being able to indulge in what Seidlhofer (2011) refers to as *unilateral idiomaticity*, or a “lack of concern for one’s interlocutor, a neglect of the need for accommodation, for sensitivity gauging

the other person's likely familiarity with expressions of a particular kind – in short precisely the kind of awareness and skill that accomplished ELF speakers are so good at employing” (p. 135).

In another example of the positive Self (excerpt 148, below), a participant exhibits a type of false modesty by switching roles and projecting his own assumptions about how he would be perceived (“as a teacher”) onto the dialog speakers, while at the same time positioning himself as an equal.

148 Survey, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 1:
Participant 20: I don't think the participants in this conversation would consider me as an equal **because I am a native speaker. They'll see me as a teacher. But I would consider myself an equal participant.**

The comment demonstrates influence of the native speaker fallacy, the impact of which has been significant in hiring practices, student perceptions of teachers, teachers' perceptions of themselves, and in textbook publishing (Braine, 1999; Canagarajah, 1999a; Derwing and Murray, 2005; Jenkins, 2007a; Llurda, 2005; McKay, 2003; Timmis, 2002). In an extension of this fallacy, the participant in the next example (excerpt 149) positions the Other (non-natives) as individuals who would *not* study conversation.

149 Survey, MA-Mid (NS), commenting on Dialog 4:
Participant 68: I probably wouldn't use it with EFL/ESL students. **I would use it with native-speaker English students, to study the conversation.**

By specifying who the students would be (“native-speaker English students”), the participant is suggesting that only native speakers are the ones who need to study conversation. In the comment, the participant is most likely referring to using Dialog 4 as part of a TESOL training course, something that other participants suggested at various points throughout the data. The implication of this observation is that English language teachers seem presumed to be native speakers.

In another example, however, non-nativeness is specifically offered as a reason for the participant's claim that the native English speaker dialog might be "a little difficult for some non-native speakers" – that is, the dialog would be difficult for some individuals because of their non-nativeness (rather than some other reason relating to the dialogs such as overlapping speech or background noise causing *all* listeners difficulty). As a native speaker, this participant belongs to the group portrayed positively in this dichotomy (natives) and is self-contrasted against the group that would have difficulties following the dialog (non-natives). Nevertheless, this participant does acknowledge that not all non-natives would have difficulties, only "some"¹⁴.

150 Survey, MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Participant 53: I think the way the speakers change direction mid-sentence and complete each others' train of thought **may be a little difficult for some non-native speakers to follow**. It is, however, a very authentic sounding conversation and would be excellent listening practice.

4.6.11.1.2 Us/Them

The examples of Othering evidenced in this section seem primarily intended to distinguish a characteristic of one's own identity within a group. The first two examples in this section (excerpts 151 and 152) demonstrate how participants use an Us/Them dichotomy to align themselves with natives/ non-natives as well as a teacher/ learner dichotomies. For instance, when a non-native participant says "we do have a lot of non-native speakers with thick accent", she may be associating with both non-natives as well as with teachers. Similarly, by identifying herself as "an ESL student", another non-native participant presents a hybrid identity of herself as a non-native as well as a language learner (despite the fact that she is in a teacher training program). The participant subsequently essentializes her own group (the group of non-native

¹⁴ It is perhaps important to note that although the participant may have been aware of questions about learners from earlier in the survey, this comment was not left in response to questions about classroom use but instead as a response to the survey question "Based solely on the group of speakers' language abilities (i.e., not the topic or quality of recording), following the conversation was [easy/difficult]".

speakers) and then speaks for all (Chinese) L2 English speakers as whole, describing what “we” prefer to hear in a classroom.

151 FG 1, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Sheryl: [...] ... manicured, but in real conversation it’s not like that. And **we do have a lot of non-native speakers with thick accent**

152 FG 4, MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Ruby: Hm. Well I would saying **being a ESL student myself**, um, if you want to use kind of recording in the classroom, **we** would like to use something like from a native speaker. [...]

However, participants themselves most likely do not perceive these identities as static representations of their Self. Numerous additional examples of both native/ non-native and teacher/ student Othering throughout the data demonstrate how these categorical boundaries are not distinct. For instance, in the next set of comments, Participant Ruby positions herself as a teacher rather than as a student. Also evident in these excerpts is how participants use a generic “you” to indicate teachers, a group that they likely associate with. This generic second-person pronoun functions as an agent who teaches students. In the following set of excerpts, participants distinguish themselves from students through their role as a teacher.

153 FG 4, MA-Adv (NS) and MA-Nov (NNS), commenting on Dialog 1:

Ruby: [...] if we have to use this kind of material, we **use the thing from the native speaker**. We don’t use it.

Daria: [Maybe you’d use a higher level in this conve-, in this conversation. And they have to analyze it.

Ruby: Because **you want to teach student the correct way** how you say it.

Daria: [Correct way.
Yeah. That was my .. comment.

154 FG 4, MA-Nov (NS) and MA-Adv (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Ella: And I was gonna say **you could use it as**, um, **a way to teach students** about the phrases like how you get sucked into something ‘cause you know a lot of English learners won’t be able to understand the context of, of the that, but to-

Mary: [They take it literally, what the word means.

Ella: Yeah. And **you** could use it as an introduction for other .. phrases, and that.
[...]

Also evident in excerpt 153 is how Participant Ruby, a non-native, associates the native group with the correct way. Her own group becomes the Other, or “the *wrong way*” (as opposed to “the correct way”, in her words). Thus, even though Ruby positions herself as a teacher who knows “the correct way” to teach students, she distinguishes herself from the native speaker group that is supposedly in possession of this correctness.

At times, native participants use the plural pronoun “we” to indicate their own positioning within the native/ non-native dichotomy. Participants in these examples position themselves within an Us/Them worldview that distinguishes between what “we” (native speakers) do and what “they” (non-native speakers) do. Such a distinction is noteworthy primarily because these participants are all highly proficient, pre-service teachers in the same training program, yet they distinguish themselves based on nativeness.

155 FG 3, MA-Nov (NS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Susan: So, I really thought that they were native speakers. And they, they **spoke over each other. .. Which .. we have a tendency to do.**

156 FG 3, PhD, MA-Adv & MA-Nov (NS & NNS), commenting on Dialog 3:

Peter: → be-, because e-, every bit, you can't have those .. mumbled .. we o-, **we're native speakers .. and I'm so, so sorry for you guys** <indicating NNSs in group> →

Caba: M-hm.

Peter: → **we mumble all the time.** →

Susan: Yes.

Participant Peter's approach excludes non-natives from his identification with his native speaker Self, an Us/Them distinction which could perhaps be rephrased as Us/You since non-native speakers are also present. In fact, he highlights the distinction, contrasting his in-group (natives) with the out-group, “you guys” (non-natives).

4.7 Summary of qualitative data

This chapter presented an analysis of the survey comments and the focus group interviews. The discussion expands and supplements the interpretation of results for the quantitative part of the survey, offering insight into the criteria participants used to classify interlocutors into levels and how participants describe successful communication. There was evidence of standard language ideology as well as knowledge of the sociolinguistic realities of a global language influencing participant descriptions.

Participants noticed rather different features of language for the native and non-native dialogs. While with the non-native dialogs participants focused on aspects such as pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and communication skills, with the native group they focused on prosody, communicative stylistics, and discourse markers. Native and non-native interlocutors were also evaluated differently in their use of speech overlaps, which were described in negative terms for the non-native groups but more positive terms for the native group. Many participants presented negative impressions of the discourse marker *like*, describing the native group as “not very educated” and difficult to follow as a listener. The only comment about *like* with the non-native groups, however, was more neutral or even positive. For evaluations of the native dialog, gender also seems to have played a role. The native dialog was even described as “girl talk”, which seemed to be conceptualized as a sub-category of native speech. The fact that interlocutors in the non-native dialogs were also female did not seem to be an overtly relevant factor for participants.

Standard language ideology seemed to cause conflict in that participants mentioned “mistakes” but accepted that the interactions were nonetheless successful. At times, participants seem to have relied on the principle of let-it-pass, even though the *yes, but...* strategies in their

descriptions suggest that participants may have been unfamiliar with the concept itself. In some cases, there was also an irrelevant concern for native speakers, demonstrating a reliance on an ideology that places interaction with native speakers as the goal of language learning.

Participant identity played a role in how native/ non-native and teacher/ learner concepts were discussed, with participants demonstrating fluid and hybrid identities by positioning themselves as members of various groups simultaneously. In a few instances, such positioning was used to subjugate groups of the Other, non-natives, positioning them as in some way linguistically disadvantaged. Non-native participants were observed as both associating with and refusing such negative connotations of non-nativeness depending on the positioning of their Self on the teacher/learner and native/ non-native dichotomies.

This section also looked at reasons why pre-service teachers would consider using (or not using) the dialogs as samples in an English language class. For those who dismissed the idea of using the dialogs, standard language ideology seemed to play a role in participants' decisions, in addition to non-linguistic concerns such as quality of the recordings or difficulties "eavesdropping". The strongest influence of standard language ideology was evident in the comments of participants who suggested using the non-native dialogs for TESOL training purposes or for error-correction activities with language learners. Participants willing to use the dialogs cited reasons such as the success of the interactions and their authenticity, or "real world" qualities. Finally, the influence of teacher training programs was also considered, presenting an example of how participants seemed more willing to accept non-native speech as a classroom example because of topics covered as part of their training program coursework. Participants' own language learning experience also seems to have played a role in how they approach language and set goals for their own students.

CHAPTER 5: CURRICULUM ANALYSIS

The last major component of this study is an analysis of M.A. and M.S. TESOL program curricula¹⁵ from five institutions that are highly represented in the survey and focus group data. The analysis included all institutions where focus group interviews were conducted as well as two other institutions strongly represented in the online survey. The primary research question that the evaluation of program documents was intended to answer is:

What aspects of TESOL training curricula are likely to facilitate change in pre-service teacher attitudes?

The approach to answering this question, however, was guided by the following sub-set of questions:

- What types of students do MA TESOL teacher training programs recruit? What are the entry requirements for pre-service teachers? What are the language requirements of the programs?
- What courses are TESOL students required to take for certification? Does the core curriculum indicate a tendency towards emphasizing grammar concerns, socio-linguistic concerns, praxis, or other? Is a practicum required?
- How are the programs and their content described? What are the learning outcomes of programs?
- How is successful completion of a program evaluated?

In addition, there were three questions on the demographic portion of the survey that are relevant to the curriculum data. Participant responses to these questions are analyzed in conjunction with the curriculum data in a brief section at the end of this chapter.

¹⁵ Henceforth references state only MA TESOL, unless a distinction is relevant.

5.1 Methodology

5.1.1 Curriculum data collection and organization

This section presents a broad overview of the teacher training curricula at five institutions. These institutions were selected because they are believed to be representative of the majority of programs in the complete data set. There are several reasons for this assumption.

First, a number of questions on the demographic portion of the survey ask participants for information that lends insight into their training program, such as the home department of the program, the name/ type of the degree they are seeking, the number of hours they have completed towards the degree as well as the number of hours remaining, and the types of courses they have taken. When designing this component of the demographic questionnaire, a random sampling of the 70 programs offering BA and MA TESOL programs was considered in order to identify more consistent features to list on the survey, such as the average number of course hours needed to complete a TESOL degree or the most common courses offered in a program. This process revealed substantial variability between programs (e.g., online and/or combined degree options, courses offered, home department) and differences in the amount of information available online, presenting challenges in navigating the different website structures of each program, some of which were more user-friendly than others. This variability is evident in the present set of data for the five programs considered.

Another reason these institutions were selected is because they provided participants for both the focus group and survey data. Three of the programs are represented in the focus group data; the other two programs were comparatively highly represented on the survey – one with five survey respondents and the other with three respondents. For the institutions where focus groups were conducted, there were seven survey respondents, one survey respondent, and 24 survey

respondents. Nevertheless, since an overwhelming majority of the institutions in the survey had only one or two respondents, the fact that the institutions represented here provided over 10% of the total survey respondents makes them representative of the entire data set.

Data was collected on four separate days over a four month period beginning in January, 2013. However, checks were made for more current information while conducting the analysis. These data refer to the most current program information based on publically available documents through each program's departmental or institutional web pages. Linked external sites were not considered. Depending on how information was presented by each institution, this information may have come from the previous semester, current semester, or the following semester. In other words, all information is from within a one-year period, fall 2012 to fall 2013.

The types of degrees offered by TESOL training programs vary greatly, including PhD, MA or MS TESOL, MA Linguistics, BA TESOL/ Linguistics (both major and minor), TESOL Certification without the completion of an MA, and TESOL Endorsement, generally completed in conjunction with another degree (e.g., M. Ed.) through the completion of an add-on type program. In order to maintain consistency across programs, only information that relates to MA TESOL programs was considered. This information included program descriptions, course descriptions, learning outcomes, graduate student handbooks, and so forth. These items were selected for two reasons: (a) they represent what prospective students see and how the program chooses to present itself publicly, and (b) they correspond to professional recommendations for teacher training program curricula (Wallace, 1991). Moreover, because this information considers student entrance requirements, expected learning outcomes, and graduation requirements, it was deemed most practical for addressing the question of which aspects of a TESOL training curriculum may encourage changes in pre-service teacher attitudes. Other

portions of this data, such as the selection of required and elective courses at each program, help identify what each program may deem as important for a future career in TESOL and thereby also offer insight into the ideologies these programs may promote.

All information was placed unchanged into documents according to categories (e.g., entrance requirements, course descriptions, and so forth). This information was then adjusted for consistency to allow for a comparative analysis among the programs as well as to maintain anonymity of the programs included. While this process made the data more comparable and more manageable, some detail may have been lost. The process first involved creating uniformity among course titles, changing the official titles of courses from each program to correspond with those listed on the demographic portion of the survey. For example, a course titled “Issues in Teaching ESL/EFL Grammar” was changed to “English Grammar”, or “Methods in Teaching English as a Second Language” was changed to “TESOL Methods”. Shorthand forms of more common concepts (e.g., Second Language Acquisition “SLA”, Intercultural Communication “ICC”, Foreign Language “FL”, or Second Language “L2”) were used when possible to allow for a clearer presentation of the data. A few additional courses not listed on the survey as a choice, such as Discourse Analysis or K-12 related courses, were adjusted and added to the data because no comparable options were available. When in doubt about adjusting for consistency, the original course title was cross-checked with the course description to ensure that the revised title represented an accurate description of the course content.

In addition to course titles, all descriptions were adjusted to reflect “hours” rather than “semester hours”, “credits”, or “one semester of”. Also, terms for similar concepts, or arguably similar purposes, such as references in the information for program applicants to “Statement of

Purpose”, “Statement of Interest” and “Personal Statement” were all combined into “Personal Statement”. As a whole, the process of adjusting for consistency involved a large amount of paraphrasing, using typical strategies such as substituting synonyms or changing word order. Excluding articles or prepositions, no series of more than two words was kept intact for the data presented here. These changes not only ensured more manageable cross-program comparisons, but also help maintain program anonymity.

5.1.2 Data analysis

No form of pedagogy is politically or socially neutral: “Educational systems are an important way that social and political systems create and perpetuate ... language, myths, rituals, and ideologies” (Birch, 2009, p. 35). Through their work, English language teachers may either adopt or reject the status quo, and throughout many regions of the world, native speakerism – the supposed authority of native speakers regarding English language – remains a dominant ideology. The present research is concerned with the attitudes of future teachers towards varieties of English that may deviate from their own or more traditionally accepted varieties; it is likely that the future teaching practices of pre-service teachers may reflect the language ideologies which they are exposed to during their training. In other words, English language teachers themselves have the potential to spread the ideologies of teacher training programs beyond the institution and out into the world.

The goal of the present analysis is to identify trends among programs. It is divided into five categories: *Overview of the programs*, *Admission criteria*, *Courses offered*, *Learning outcomes*, and *Graduation requirements*. Major features of each program have been placed into tables. Each of the following sections presents one table followed by a brief discussion, which focuses on observable trends among the programs.

5.2 Results

The results below are divided into six sections. The five categories used for the analysis guide the presentation of results, followed by a final section that describes the method of analysis and results from the demographic portion of the questionnaire.

5.2.1 Overview of programs

Table 5.1 presents an overview of the five programs under consideration. The *Degrees offered through program* column includes both undergraduate and graduate degrees (including PhD), in order to offer an accurate overview of the actual size and scope of the program offering TESOL degrees. However, the remainder of the analysis focuses only on MA programs.

Table 5.1

Overview of programs offering degrees in TESOL from survey and focus groups

	Home department	# of faculty	Degrees offered through program	Study abroad opportunities	Assistantship available
PU	Applied Linguistics & TESOL*	10	BA Applied Linguistics (major/minor) TESOL Certification MA Applied Linguistics/TESOL PhD Applied Linguistics	Yes, one country in Europe.	Teaching [†] , laboratory, research
MU	English	6	MA Linguistics PhD Linguistics TESOL Certification	Yes, two countries in Europe. Both include EFL experience.	Teaching [†]
ICU	English	3	MA Linguistics MA TESOL		Teaching [†] , research, editorial work, and writing tutor
NU	Anthropology, Linguistics, and TESL	6	BA TESOL (minor) TESOL Endorsement MA TESOL		Usually teaching
CU	English	4 ^{††}	MS TESOL	General study abroad options available through university	Tutoring or research

* In order to maintain anonymity, department titles are approximations

[†] available after completion of pre-requisite course hours

^{††} Number of department faculty with linguistics focus; department does not list program faculty separately. Total department faculty, N=38.

Three of the programs are housed in the Department of English at their respective institutions; one program is housed in the Department of Anthropology, Linguistics, and TESL, and another is its own independent Department of Applied Linguistics and TESOL. The number of faculty members ranges from 3 to 10, which includes visiting professors, assistant professors,

associate professors, and professors. The largest program is the independent department at PU with 10 faculty members, which also offers the most comprehensive selection of degrees. However, there are two important points to keep in mind when considering faculty size and degree: (a) with programs listed it is not always clear whether all faculty teach in the MA TESOL or whether some faculty only instruct undergraduate courses, and (b) the information for degrees only lists those which are offered through the program responsible for TESOL training rather than all degrees offered through the home department.

The table also shows whether study abroad opportunities are directly supported by the department; these opportunities only include those for which information is available through the program's web pages, and it is likely that study abroad opportunities not listed here are available. In any case, it is interesting that study abroad opportunities are not more apparent, especially those of the sort offered by MU in which pre-service teachers can gain EFL experience through two different summer programs in Europe. Another program mentions a study abroad opportunity through the department, and yet another has opportunities available through the university's international studies program. It would be useful for programs to clearly list any international opportunities, as this information is especially useful for pre-service teachers hoping to become TESOL certified *and* gain EFL (rather than ESL) experience.

All programs offer the opportunity of teaching, tutoring, and/or research assistantships. A few programs list a minimum number of course hours that must be completed before an assistantship may be granted, while others list no such requirement, suggesting that new entrants into the program are able to receive assistantships. These programs seem to recognize that professional knowledge gained from practical classroom experience is important to the development of teachers. The main distinction, then, is whether coursework is required prior to

receiving a teaching assistantship. The mere existence of language teacher training programs attests to the fact that special training is required to succeed in the profession, so it is surprising that some programs do not promote pre-requisites prior to students receiving teaching assistantships.

5.2.2 Admission criteria

Table 5.2 shows the admission requirements of the MA TESOL programs. The *Degrees offered* column shows the types of degree issued upon completion of TESOL training. The other columns list the admission criteria and language requirements. All programs require some type of institutional online or paper application as well as official transcripts to be submitted with each application, so this information has not been included in the table.

Table 5.2

Admission criteria of programs offering degrees in TESOL from survey and focus groups

	Degrees offered	Admission Criteria	Language requirement
PU	MA Applied Linguistics/ TESOL	GPA: 3.0 GRE: < 5 yrs old; verbal important Personal statement (max 3 pgs) Recommendation letters (3)	<u>NNS</u> : TOEFL or IELTS
MU	MA Linguistics/ TESOL	GPA 2.75 “Competitive” GRE ETS PPI* Personal statement (1 pg) Recommendation letters (2)	<u>NNS</u> : TOEFL (min 550)/ iBT (min 79)
ICU	MA TESOL	GRE or MAT Recommendation letters	<u>NS</u> : 9 credit hours or equivalent in one or more foreign language <u>NNS</u> : iBT (minimum 95, 20 each section)
NU	MA TESOL	Personal statement Recommendation letters (2)	<u>NS</u> : 9 hours foreign language (required for admission but may be waived; must be completed for graduation)
CU	MS TESOL	Personal statement Recommendation letters (2)	<u>NS</u> : 3 hours foreign language (required for admission but may be waived; must be completed for graduation)

* According to the ETS website (ETS, 2013), the Personal Potential Index provides “reliable applicant-specific information about six key attributes that graduate deans and faculty have identified as essential for graduate study: knowledge and creativity, resilience, communication skills, planning and organization, teamwork, and ethics and integrity” (para. 1).

The types of degrees offered through each program include MS TESOL, MA TESOL, and combined MA Linguistics/ TESOL. Admission criteria differ slightly among the programs,

perhaps most notably regarding exam requirements; one program requires the GRE as well as a test known as ETS PPI (but no personal statement).

The last column, *language entry requirements*, is perhaps most relevant to a study concerned with the attitudes of pre-service English language teachers, a career in which cross-cultural and cross-linguistic exchanges are central. Language entry and exit requirements as well as requirements for native and non-native applicants differ among institutions. (Language exit requirements are presented in Table 5.5, and this topic is revisited in that section). Three programs require that native speakers demonstrate experience with a second language, although two programs (NU and CU) waive the requirement for entry into the program on the condition that L2 experience is demonstrated prior to graduation. Two other programs (PU and MU) have entry requirements for non-natives, but not for natives. The willingness of a program to waive the language entry requirement reflects to a certain extent on the orientation of the program and the types of trainees the MA TESOL programs desire to recruit, such as those who have recently completed an undergraduate degree or pre-service teachers who have no previous language learning experience but are interested in the field for other reasons.

Three programs require non-native applicants to submit IELTS, TOEFL, or TOEFL iBT scores; only two of these programs list minimum iBT scores, with a difference of 16 points on a 120-point scale. The remaining two programs do not list language entry requirements for non-natives. For these programs, the application process – that is, success in the communicative task itself – appears to serve as sufficient assessment of language ability.

5.2.3 Courses offered

Table 5.3 shows the required and elective courses for each TESOL program. To compare across programs, references to number of courses (e.g., *three courses from the following list*),

credit hours, or semester hours have all been adjusted to reflect hours. *Hours* was selected over *courses* as the unit of comparison because it offered greater clarity when comparing total program requirements, especially among programs with and without thesis hours. Nevertheless, all courses listed are 3 credit hours each; in fact, none of the programs considered here offered courses of less than or more than 3 credit hours.

Table 5.3

Required courses and electives of programs offering degrees in TESOL from survey and focus groups

	Total hours	Required courses*	Electives	Other
		<u>21 hours:</u>	<u>15 hours from:</u>	<u>Graduate assistants:</u>
		General Linguistics	Pragmatics	Research
		English Grammar	Material Design	Apprenticeship
		Phonology	Research Design	Laboratory
		SLA	Sociolinguistics	Apprenticeship
		TESOL Methods	Conversation Analysis	Teaching
PU	36	ICC	Discourse Analysis	Apprenticeship
		Practicum [ESL or peer]	Psycholinguistics	Portfolio Development
			Corpus	
			L2 Writing	
			L2 Reading	
			Assessment	
		<u>12 hours:</u>	<u>3 hours from:</u>	Remaining course hours taken in linguistics
		English Grammar	TESOL Methods (K-12)	
		TESOL Theory	TESOL Methods	
MU	33	Assessment	Language and Culture	<u>Non-Thesis:</u> 6 hours
		Practicum [ESL]	L2 Writing	outside of area of concentration
			L2 Reading	

* All courses listed have been converted to 3-hour standard

Total hours	Required courses	Electives	Other
	<u>9 hours:</u> Descriptive Linguistics TESOL Theory TESOL Methods	<u>3 hours from:</u> Research Methods Writing Research Academic Authorship Rhetoric & Composition Research Technical & Professional Research	<u>Non-Thesis:</u> complete 3 additional hours of coursework
ICU 33		<u>9 hours from:</u> Linguistic Systems Applied Linguistics Phonology & Morphology Syntax & Semantics ESL Linguistics Historical Linguistics Language & Society Discourse Analysis Assessment	
		<u>6 hours:</u> electives	

	Total hours	Required courses	Electives	Other
		<u>30 hours:</u>		<u>Non-Thesis: 6 additional hours from:</u>
NU	36	Applied Linguistics English Grammar Linguistic Analysis SLA TESOL Theory TESOL Methods Another instruction-related course Sociolinguistics Pragmatics/ another culture-related course Assessment		Syntax Pragmatics [†] Research Methods TESOL Technology [†] Language & Literacy [†] Lexically-Based Instruction [†] Content-Based Instruction [†] Practicum [ESL] [†] Language Policy Special TESOL Topics [†]
		<u>21 hours:</u>	<u>3 hours from:</u>	<u>Thesis: 3 additional hours & Thesis Non-Thesis: 6 additional hours</u>
CU	33	Linguistic Analysis Syntax Phonology SLA TESOL Methods Sociolinguistics Research Methods	Special topics L2 Writing L2 Testing Practicum <u>3 hours from:</u> Contemporary Educational Issues School & Society Curriculum Theory American Education History Education Policy Sociology & Education	
[†] may substitute a required course upon approval				

There is general agreement among the programs as to the total number of hours required for graduation, but the number of specific required hours (that is, non-elective hours) varies widely. For example, the program at NU lists 30 required hours, although electives may substitute some required courses. The program at MU requires 33 hours for the MA, but only 15 hours are needed in order to complete TESOL certification, which may be completed separately. This program was also the only one to distinctly advertise (but not promote) TESOL certification separate from an MA, which explains the distinction the program makes between TESOL and Linguistics courses and seems to allow students greater flexibility in their degree than programs only offering an MA.

There seemed to be little correspondence among programs as to the types of required courses. The strongest trend seems to include some form of a general linguistics course (e.g., Descriptive Linguistics, General Linguistics, or English Grammar), and some type of praxis-oriented course (e.g., TESOL Methods). In terms of courses particularly likely to promote awareness of non-inner-circle varieties of English, only in the programs at NU and CU are pre-service teachers required to take a Sociolinguistics course; elsewhere this is an elective¹⁶.

Practical experience is vital to the development of pre-service teachers (Wallace, 1991), yet only two of the programs appear to require some form of Practicum: one is ESL-based, the other offers the choice of either an ESL- or peer-based practicum. Two of the remaining programs offer an ESL Practicum as an elective; one program does not have any Practicum listed as either an elective or required course. This same program (ICU), however, lists an ESL Practicum in its course descriptions, so the option is likely available in spite of its lack of visibility among

¹⁶ The same criteria are used here for identifying sociolinguistics courses as used for the factorial ANOVA in the quantitative analysis (Chapter 3). In addition to *Sociolinguistics*, other courses included under this rubric include *Language and Culture* and *Language and/in Society*.

courses offered. In other words, it is not only unclear whether ICU offers a practicum but also how often the program may do so. Assistantships are available through all of the programs, so even students in a program without practicum options potentially have opportunities for gaining practical experience.

5.2.4 Learning Outcomes

Table 5.4 shows the learning outcomes of the programs under discussion. These outcomes were compiled either through a webpage directly citing learning outcomes or from evaluation criteria for final projects/theses. Only three of the programs list learning outcomes. Another program provides very detailed information about exit requirements and final project expectations, while another offers similar but much more limited information. For these two programs, outcomes were extracted from the program exit/final project information.

Table 5.4

Learning outcomes of programs offering degrees in TESOL from survey and focus groups

PU*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate continuous practical experience while in program • demonstrate responsibility to the profession, be acquainted with professional development opportunities, demonstrate ability to participate in the profession as a scholar • demonstrate knowledge in a specialized area • demonstrate effective field-specific oral communication skills and be able to write about theory and practice • demonstrate an ability to use technology • ability to conform to the standards of the field
MU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop skills to prepare original research for publication • develop advanced competencies for language teaching and abilities to present of work to others • understand and contribute to contemporary issues and discussions in the selected area of concentration
ICU*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critically and reflexively examine field-specific literature • evaluate the findings of own research in the larger context of the field
NU†	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate competence in helping learners acquire multiple skills and competencies in English • understand major theories and research of language acquisition • understand the role of culture in identity development and language learning • demonstrate knowledge of assessment, classroom management skills, effective teaching strategies, and an ability to choose and adapt resources. • demonstrate responsibility to the profession, be acquainted with professional development opportunities, demonstrate ability to participate in the profession as a scholar
CU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze and interpret current linguistic theory (syntax, phonology, sociolinguistics, SLA) • demonstrate knowledge of current methods and practices (lesson planning, curricula development, lesson implementation, materials, assessment tools)

* indicates learning outcomes extracted from program exit requirements

† this program states that its learning outcomes have been directly adapted from standards of TESOL International

The information in Table 5.4 has been collected from what is readily and publically available. Unfortunately, only three of the five programs state actual learning outcomes.

Moreover, the detail provided in the learning outcomes varies greatly. For instance, the programs at MU and CU each describe three or fewer outcomes, while the program at NU is highly detailed and directly references the TESOL International standards for program recognition ("Standards for the recognition of initial TESOL programs in P-12 ESL teacher education," 2010) as the basis for its program design. Programs without clearly stated outcomes, however, do provide information regarding exit requirements. While the exit requirement information is nevertheless insightful, it differs from learning outcomes in that it is more goal-oriented (e.g., complete 33 course hours, report on findings of own research) rather than skills-oriented (e.g., demonstrate an ability to adapt classroom materials). There is enough overlap between stated learning outcomes and outcomes extracted from exit requirements to provide some insight into what is expected of graduates.

Students are expected to complete their training programs with knowledge of the current methods and practices of the field. This goal may best be met if students understand the sociolinguistic realities of English in modern global society, particularly in regard to native/non-native issues and how the spread of English requires a reconsideration of how linguists and teachers approach mistakes (Seidlhofer, 2011). Thus, alongside courses such as SLA, grammar, syntax, morphology, and similar, knowledge of current methods and practices in the field should also emphasize courses such as ICC, language in society, or sociolinguistics.

The required/ electives course list (Table 5.3) suggests such recognition in the programs considered here, although perhaps not fully realized by all, namely those that relegate sociolinguistics-based courses to electives. In fact, only the programs at NU and CU list sociolinguistics as a requirement; these are also the same two programs that mention sociolinguistics or culture in their learning outcomes. Although programs may have other ways

of addressing language varieties and language variation, this is not reflected in the learning outcomes. The outcomes listed here were compiled from publically available information, which is relevant because outcomes demonstrate what faculty regard as important, and information available portrays a program's public image. In other words, sociolinguistic concerns are not part of the public image of these programs.

Another commonality among these learning outcomes is an emphasis on the combination of theory and practice. That is, pre-service teachers are expected to be able to connect what they learn in the classroom to actual classroom practice. Without opportunities for praxis, however, making such connections becomes more challenging, so providing pre-service teachers opportunities through practica or assistantships is crucial to their development as well as to achieving desired learning outcomes. Since all programs offer teaching assistantships, but not all offer practica, students who are unable to receive a teaching assistantship (e.g., because of difficulties completing pre-requisite coursework or language requirements) may have fewer opportunities for gaining practical experience.

Finally, several programs emphasize the ability of graduates to relate the implications of their own research to the larger context of the field. Pre-service teacher experience that includes research has been associated with improvements in teachers' own practices (McDonough, 2006). Thus, even for pre-service teachers who may not wish to fully integrate themselves into the research aspects of the field, such experience can be beneficial and has a valuable place in teacher development.

5.2.5 Graduation Requirements

Table 5.5 shows the graduation requirements for the five programs.

Table 5.5

Graduation criteria of programs offering degrees in TESOL from survey and focus groups

	Graduation Criteria	Graduation language requirements
PU	Course work (36 hours) Portfolio, includes evidence of: - teaching experience (90 hours) - teaching video - professional development - MA paper 3.0 GPA	<u>NS</u> : 6 hours university foreign language or 1 year abroad <u>NNS</u> : none
MU	Course work (33 hours) 4-hour Comprehensive exam Thesis	L2 reading knowledge must be demonstrated by end of 18 hours
ICU	<u>Thesis</u> : Course work (33 hours) Thesis <u>Non-Thesis</u> : Course work (36 hours)	none (9 hours foreign language is required for admission)
NU	"B" Average <u>Thesis</u> : Course work (30 hours) Thesis (6 hours) <u>Non-Thesis</u> : Coursework (36 hours) Reflective paper	<u>NS</u> : 9 hours foreign language (required for admission but may be waived; must be completed for graduation)
CU	<u>Thesis</u> : Course work (33 hours) Thesis (3 hours) <u>Non-Thesis</u> : Course work (36 hours) Comprehensive exam	<u>NS</u> : 3 hours foreign language (required for admission but may be waived; must be completed for graduation) <u>NNS</u> : Control of English beyond communicative adequacy required, determined by faculty

The greatest distinction among these programs is the thesis requirement. Three of the five programs under consideration offer the choice of a thesis or non-thesis degree option, while one program requires a thesis as well as a 4-hour comprehensive exam. Another program has no thesis at all but instead requires 36 course hours and a portfolio, which includes evidence of classroom-based experience, a teaching video, and a final paper, among other items. The thesis option at most of these programs suggests a more research-oriented approach in the training of English language teachers. The program with the portfolio option, on the other hand, seems more praxis-oriented, ensuring that successful graduates exit the program with the materials and skills necessary to find employment in the field.

Another relevant difference among these programs is the *exit* language requirement. All programs expect graduates to demonstrate experience with a second language in order to exit a program, but not all require this experience before entering a program (as seen in Table 5.2). Two programs are willing to waive the entry language requirement but expect pre-service teachers to fulfill the requirement while pursuing their degree. Thus, the most noticeable difference is *when* the language requirement is fulfilled.

Another language-related difference is the linguistic proficiency in a second language that is expected of graduates. For instance, one program describes that natives can complete the language requirement by demonstrating reading knowledge in an L2. While reading is an important skill, such a requirement seems to emphasize the practicalities of a second language for research purposes rather than for interactive communicative purposes. In addition, programs in this study require only 3 to 9 hours of an L2, so graduates might only have very basic knowledge of a second language, and they may not have used it for communicative purposes at all. Teachers' own language learning experiences influence how they approach teaching (Borg,

2003), yet with only limited exposure to an L2, how much pre-service teachers may come to understand aspects such as language variation or the process of moving from language study to actual language use remains an open question.

For non-natives, a different program specifies that trainees' language skills must demonstrate sufficient control over English beyond communicative adequacy, as determined by faculty. This same program does not require non-natives to complete any language exams prior to admission, so essentially this program seems to be placing its linguistic control mechanism at the end of the program rather than the beginning. Such a method of language evaluation, however, suggests that the program does not regard completion of its curriculum to be sufficient evidence of necessary linguistic skill for a TESOL career. Moreover, it could be claimed that completion of an academic program in a foreign language would seem to be adequate evidence of one's proficiency.

5.3 Survey Responses

5.3.1 Participant data and organization

In addition to the curriculum data, the final section of this chapter considers participant responses to three open-ended questions from the demographic portion of the survey. These questions were: *Are you teaching now or do you have any prior teaching experience?*, *Please briefly describe why you selected a TESOL/TEFL degree program*, and *Please briefly describe your personal career goals as a language teacher*. The reason these data are included here is two-fold: (a) they offer additional insight into how well TESOL program curricula may be addressing the needs of TESOL students, and (b) they address the second of the primary research questions guiding this study, namely "How are the language attitudes of pre-service teachers influenced by their own background and personal language learning experience?". Participant

responses to these questions ranged from brief phrases (e.g., “Uncertain” or “Teach English in colleges”) to several sentences and, in a few cases, paragraphs. Because of the similarity in both topic and participant responses, answers to the latter two questions have been combined in the analysis.

The coding process was iterative. First, each response was assigned a brief one to three word summary phrase based on the propositions it contained. Many participant responses contained multiple propositions and were therefore assigned multiple codes (Table 5.6, below). Unlike for participant responses to the dialogs, the analysis of responses to the questions about work experience and future goals does not deconstruct participant statements. Rather, the present analysis is intended merely to offer insight into how well TESOL programs may be addressing the concerns and needs of pre-service teachers. It also seems reasonable to expect participants to have had multiple types of prior teaching experience as well as to be considering various options for the future. Moreover, codes are not being utilized in such a way that each participant requires an equal number of items, such would be the case if calculating percentages. It was therefore not considered problematic to have some participants included multiple times.

Second, codes were compiled and placed side-by-side in a table. Similar codes were then condensed into a single code in order to increase relevancy to the curriculum analysis. After condensing codes, all comments were re-evaluated and re-coded using the new, broader codes. Table 5.6 presents a sample of comments and codes from participant responses to each of the three questions.

Table 5.6

Sample comments and codes

Code	Participant response
<i>a) Are you teaching now or do you have any prior teaching experience?</i>	
ESL Practicum Tutoring Foreign language in US	I have interned in an academic ESL course , I have taught in a practicum course and I have tutored college students in beginning Spanish level courses.
<i>b) Please briefly describe your personal career goals as a language teacher</i>	
EFL ESL Foreign language in US	Possibly teaching English either overseas in Japan or to Japanese students in America , or teaching Japanese to American students .
<i>c) Please briefly describe why you selected a TESOL/TEFL degree program</i>	
Like languages Improve teaching skills	I am extremely interested in languages and after completing my B.A. in Spanish and Education and studying abroad in Spain, I became interested in leaning [sic] about my native language, English, and how to effectively teach it .

To consider one item from the table in more detail, example (a) demonstrates how four codes have been assigned to a single response. The participant mentions having “interned in an academic ESL course”, which was assigned the code *ESL*. Additionally, “[T]aught in a practicum course” was assigned the code *Practicum*, and “tutored ... Spanish” was assigned the codes *Tutoring* and *Foreign language in the US*.

5.4 Survey responses results

5.4.1 Reasons for studying TESOL/Personal career goals

Table 5.7 shows a summary of reasons offered by participants as to why they have decided to study TESOL. The information is presented in two columns, beginning with the greatest number of responses on the left to the least number of responses on the right.

Table 5.7

Participant reasons for studying TESOL and personal career goals

	Count		Count
EFL	38*	Teach foreign language in US	5
ESL	35	Graduate school (MA/PhD)	5
Enjoy learning languages/ culture	28	Adult education	5
Improve teaching skills	22	Administration	5
Higher education career	17	K-12 goals	5
Humanitarian goals	12	Personal language goals/ Language learning experience	5
Enjoy teaching	12	Gain experience	3
Travel	11	Speech pathology	3
Demand for English	8	Other [†]	3

* two responses mention returning to home country

[†] includes items only mentioned one time (“[p]rogram location”, “Uncertain”, “Required”)

The most commonly cited reasons for pursuing a degree in TESOL include some mention of EFL or ESL, an unsurprising result considering the degree. More telling, perhaps, are some of the other reasons that participants list. For instance, the next most frequently cited reason for pursuing a degree in TESOL is an enjoyment of learning languages, which demonstrates how many participants selected the field because of an interest in languages and a desire for cross-cultural experience. For many pre-service teachers, then, the language entry and exit requirements of TESOL programs may be more of a formality than a constraint, and training

programs could utilize this pre-existing interest in language and culture to the benefit of the field. More specifically, since pre-service teachers already have an *interest* in language and culture, programs could focus on building *awareness*. One way would be through a greater emphasis on sociolinguistics in TESOL training programs. The curriculum data showed that only two programs required sociolinguistics, yet sociolinguistics as part of a curriculum would help TESOL students understand the realities of English as a global language in comparison to the realities and status of other languages. Another possibility would be to include one semester of an L2 as a required course. It may have been a long time since some pre-service teachers sat in a language classroom – especially for those who completed all language pre-requisites prior to entering the program – and the experience of sitting in an L2 classroom would benefit almost any TESOL course, offering trainees an immediate possibility to compare experiences both positive and negative that they have as learners to themselves as teachers. Participants in the focus group and survey data were observed making such comparisons.

Humanitarian goals mentioned by participants include language rights, a desire to help immigrant or refugee families, and a desire to empower others through English, all of which suggest at least a mid-level of interest in courses addressing social issues and language policy. Participants who list humanitarian reasons as a motivation are likely already familiar with the sociopolitical and sociocultural aspects of English and they would probably find courses dealing with ELF and social issues engaging.

Travel and a demand for English were cited semi-frequently as reasons for studying TESOL. These reasons suggest influence of the native speaker fallacy as well as the possibility that participants are (mis)using the (mis)perception that native speakers represent the best teachers of

English¹⁷ (Phillipson, 1992). Similarly, this native speakerism also suggests influence of standard language ideology. Greater awareness of ELF, language variation, and language policy could help participants with such views better interpret modern linguistic realities and learner expectations.

Another reason frequently stated by participants was a desire to improve their teaching skills. While this response may also be unsurprising considering the nature of TESOL programs, it highlights the importance of a practical component that provides opportunities to connect theory with practice, which a majority of programs included in this analysis state as a goal. Also, a significant number of participants stated that TESOL is a stepping stone for a career in higher education, suggesting that many participants may be interested in a more research-oriented approach to language teaching and learning. For training programs, then, it is essential that they offer an adequate balance of both theory and practice. Some less frequently cited reasons for pursuing TESOL include K-12 education, administration, adult education, participants' own language learning experiences and goals, or a desire to teach a language other than English in the United States.

5.4.2 Prior teaching experience

Table 5.8 shows the teaching experience of survey respondents. The intent of placing this item on the survey was to find out how much experience participants had prior to beginning their program, but this was less than clear as several participants listed assistantships or practicum, both of which most likely refer to experience gained since beginning their programs. Nevertheless, the information presented here is useful for demonstrating the types of experience participants have had overall.

¹⁷ As indicated in table 3.2 of Chapter 3, only six of the 70 survey participants were non-native speakers.

Table 5.8

<i>Participant prior teaching experience</i>	
Type	Count
ESL	28
EFL	14
K-12	13
Tutoring	11
Assistantship	6
FL in US	4
Practicum	2
Higher education	1
Total # of participants with teaching experience	53

The distinction between EFL and ELF may be somewhat artificial (Swan, 2012). By its nature, ELF requires both global and local knowledge of English, so it is relevant to understand what types of experience pre-service teachers bring to their programs. Pre-service teacher participants desire international teaching experience. Table 5.8 shows that ESL experience is listed twice as frequently as EFL experience, yet both were listed as a goal almost equally (Table 5.7) as a reason for studying TESOL. While assistantships and practicum courses are certainly valuable components of a curriculum, there is interest in EFL experience that may not be fully realizable while in a program. However, the EFL opportunities available through the programs considered in this analysis were not always clearly described, which may discourage some interested candidates from applying, or, if nothing else, does not accurately portray some of the programs.

Only six participants list their assistantships and only two list practica as prior experience. Since the survey question actually asked about prior experience, these numbers are perhaps not

too surprising. Nevertheless, a large number of participants mentioned wanting to improve their teaching skills as a reason for studying TESOL, so the importance of practica and assistantships cannot be overstated.

5.5 Summary of curriculum analysis

This chapter considered the curricula of five TESOL training programs as well as participant responses to survey questions about their reasons for studying TESOL and their practical teaching experience. The program information, teacher motivations, and teacher experience show how teacher expectations and programs may align with the increasingly influential area of ELF.

There was noticeable variety among program home departments and the size of each program. Three programs mention study abroad opportunities, but only two offer such programs through the department, and only one clearly indicates teaching opportunity while abroad. All programs offer teaching assistantships, but the qualifications vary. Teaching opportunities are essential to training pre-service teachers, especially for those who mention a desire to improve teaching skills as a reason for entering their program. However, the opportunities for gaining EFL experience seem insufficient to match pre-service teacher wishes or the needs of an ELF-appropriate pedagogy

How each program approaches language entry and exit requirements also differs among programs, although this may be irrelevant since a large number of participants list an interest in language and culture as a reason for studying TESOL. In other words, an interest in language and culture is already evident among a majority of pre-service teachers, and programs should utilize this interest to the benefit of their curriculum in ways that foster cross-cultural communicative awareness. This could be particularly practical with native pre-service teachers

who might need to additionally acquire ELF communicative practices (Jenkins, 2012; VOICE, n.d.).

There was quite a lot of variability among programs concerning required courses and electives. Participants offered a number of different reasons for obtaining a TESOL degree, so programs should offer a sufficient number of elective courses in order to allow pre-service teachers to be able to personalize aspects of their training to suit their own goals. Also, there was a sufficiently strong number of participants who mentioned humanitarian goals as reasons for undertaking TESOL training to support greater inclusion of sociolinguistics and language policy courses into a curriculum.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

This chapter presents a discussion of results organized according to the four main research questions. This is followed by a discussion of implications for ELF, teacher training, and the field of applied linguistics.

6.1 Research Question 1

What are the attitudes of pre-service teachers in North American TESOL training programs towards English as used in successful ELF and native speaker interactions?

6.1.1 Differences between interlocutor language background and proficiency

The results of the study indicate that pre-service teacher participants evaluate interlocutor groups of varying language backgrounds and proficiency levels differently. While these differences were usually between native/ non-native interlocutor groups, there were also some differences between the non-native groups along proficiency distinctions, with the advanced group being rated more positively than the high-intermediate group. For a few traits in the quantitative data – namely *(I could) participate (as an equal in this conversation)*, *competent*, *fluent*, *appropriate vocabulary*, *successful*, and *easy to understand* – the advanced and native groups trended together and were rated more positively than the high-intermediate group.

Differences in ratings for solidarity traits (*friendly*, *participate* and *confident*) were most distinct between the high-intermediate and native dialogs. For example, participants evaluated the native dialogs as more friendly and more confident than the high-intermediate dialogs, and they indicated that they would be better able to participate as an equal with the speakers in the native dialog than with the speakers in the high-intermediate dialogs. It should be noted, however, that an overwhelming majority of survey participants were native speakers of English who are likely to have more in common with the native interlocutors than with those in the high-

advanced group. Familiarity, in other words, may have played a role (see Jarvella et al., 2001; Ladegaard and Sachdev, 2006). So while on the one hand these results indicate a preference for native speech among pre-service teacher participants, familiarity and/or in-group loyalty (see Bokhorst-Heng and Caleon, 2009; Garret, 2010; McKenzie, 2008; Tan and Tan, 2008) have also been identified as playing a role in language evaluations and may be influencing participant perceptions of these traits. Nevertheless, whether participant decisions were influenced by native speakerism or in-group loyalty, the results are not overwhelmingly positive regarding linguistic equality in cross-cultural communicative situations that require more extra-sociocultural solidarity, such as an ELF community of practice.

Education and *competent* were the only two status traits in the study¹⁸. Participant evaluations of interlocutor *education* were never significant, which suggests that participants viewed all interlocutor groups, regardless of native speaker status or proficiency, as equally educated. This result could in part be because participants were aware of the fact that all interlocutors were students. Prior to listening to each dialog participants were provided contextualizing information: “In the following dialog, several students are discussing [the topic of conversation] during lunch”. However, not all participants attended to this information. Yet previous research has found evaluations of education (or intelligence) to be significant, such as in evaluations of Singaporean dialects among university students in Singapore (Cavallaro and Chin, 2009), in evaluations of foreign-accented Japanese among university students in Japan (Tsurutani, 2012), and in evaluations of Japanese-accented speech among university students in the U.S. (Cargile and Giles, 1997), among others. Of course, it is possible that participants actually do view all interlocutors in the study as equally educated regardless of their

¹⁸ As discussed in Chapter 3, *participate* and *confident* were considered solidarity traits but may also be status traits.

linguacultural background. Such a result would be desirable, especially among pre-service English teachers.

Participant evaluations of *competent*, the other status trait in this study, contrasts with the results for *education*. Participants evaluated the high-intermediate group as less competent than the advanced and native interlocutor groups. On the one hand, it is perhaps not surprising that the higher proficiency non-native group and the native group were considered more competent than the lower proficiency non-native group. On the other hand, it is reassuring for educators wishing to incorporate more ELF perspectives into their curricula that the advanced non-native group was considered to be equally as competent as the native speaker group. For participants, competency appears to be more related to proficiency than to nativeness.

In addition to *competent*, the advanced and native groups also trended together on four of the linguistic traits: *successful*, *fluent*, *appropriate vocabulary*, and *easy to understand*. However, all three interlocutor groups were evaluated differently for the remaining linguistic traits (*level*, *proficient*, and *language ability*), in order from high-intermediate to advanced and then native groupings. Participants rated the native group higher than the advanced group on *proficient* but not on *fluent*, suggesting a difference in how participants perceive these concepts. Thus, the speakers might demonstrate different proficiencies, but their fluency would place them in the same class. The traits *proficient*, *level*, and *language ability* trended together, suggesting that these traits may have been viewed as similar to one another. Similarly, *fluent*, *successful*, *appropriate vocabulary*, and *easy to understand* trended together, which suggest that these traits may likewise be viewed by pre-service teachers as highly related to each other. In other words, if a speaker uses *appropriate vocabulary* and is *easy to understand*, participants may consider that speaker *fluent* but not necessarily *proficient*.

ELF may have its own proficiency clines (Jenkins, 2006), although defining an ELF cline is an empirical question that has yet to be addressed (Ferguson, 2009). These data suggest that fluency might be a determining factor between lower and higher levels of ELF proficiency. However, the advanced non-native group was at one point described as “native-like”, highlighting the role of native standards in participant evaluations. While an ELF proficiency cline would most likely incorporate aspects of cross-cultural communicative competence and rely on interactional skills that even native speakers of English may need to additionally acquire (Jenkins, 2012; VOICE, n.d.), these observations nevertheless raise an interesting question as to whether listeners would ever consider non-natives equally or more proficient than natives when both are present.

From an ELF perspective, it is valuable to recognize that the advanced group of non-native speakers was considered equal to the native speakers regarding fluency, success, appropriate use of vocabulary, and ease of understanding their interactions. Participants also evaluated these two interlocutor groups equally on the solidarity trait *participate*. So, the fact that the advanced and native groups trended together on these traits suggests that after non-natives achieve a certain level of proficiency, *fluency* becomes more relevant than proficiency for participant evaluations and participants are equally likely to participate in interactions with either of these interlocutor groups.

6.1.2 Participant descriptions of nativeness

Speaker language background and proficiency also played a role in participant opinions about the native speakerhood of interlocutors, with participants demonstrating the most certainty when evaluating the native and high-intermediate groups. A majority of participants accurately selected that *all* interlocutors in the native group were native, and a majority also selected *some*

for the high-intermediate group. The selection of *some* for this group is slightly surprising. However, Tsurutani (2012) reports that some Japanese native participants had difficulties identifying native and non-native Japanese speakers, and that misidentifications were more common with metropolitan participants than with rural participants. The author suggests that participants from metropolitan areas “who come across foreigners more often” may have “slightly more flexible views towards accented speakers” (p. 12). University major (international relations and dietetics) of the participants may also have played a role, with international relations students having greater interest in communication with individuals from different language backgrounds and also greater willingness to accept a broader range of varieties as “native”. Thus, in addition to the probability of participants simply not wanting to commit to a definitive response, participants in the present study (who are all pre-service teachers of English) may have been influenced by their degree program, one that by its very nature necessitates cross-cultural communication and perhaps “more flexible views” about nativeness.

For the advanced group of interlocutors, participants most frequently selected *uncertain*. First, the fact that participants selected *uncertain* rather than *some* demonstrates that the two responses were being selected with greater distinction than as simply an avoidance measure. Second, disagreement was observed among participants as to whether the interlocutor who had qualities of an outer circle Englishes speaker was native, “native-like”, or “bilingual”. It is therefore likely that this interlocutor caused uncertainty among participants. If so, this uncertainty demonstrates on the one hand awareness among participants that many non-inner circle varieties of English may be considered native. On the other hand, such recognition does not necessarily translate into acceptance since the advanced dialog was rated lower than the

native dialog on a number of traits. These findings correspond to those of He and Li (2009) and He and Zhang (2010) in which participants accepted the endonormative potential of a China English variety but nevertheless rated China English speech samples more negatively (with the exception of pronunciation, which was rated more positively) than traditional standard varieties.

Moreover, participant descriptions of the three interlocutor groups are noticeably distinct and suggest the influence of standard language ideology against which the non-native groups, but not the native group, are measured. For both of the non-native groups, participants mentioned features such as grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and communicative skill, but for the native group, the main features mentioned were prosody, communicative style (rather than skill), and discourse markers. Participants seem to have had different expectations for the native and non-native interlocutor groups. While the non-natives were evaluated against a standard language ideology that suggests a ‘correct’ grammar and/or pronunciation, the natives were evaluated more in terms of the stylistics of their speech. Previous attitudes research (H. Murray, 2003; Timmis, 2002) has suggested that native speakers are more receptive to deviations from standards than non-natives, but the lack of non-native participants – especially for the survey portion – unfortunately prevents the present study from making such comparisons.

Different expectations for native and non-native speakers also seem to have led some participants to identify non-native, or non-‘standard’, behaviors that were not there. For instance, one participant commented on how a speaker self-corrected even though no observable self-correction took place, and another participant described one of the speakers as repeating her interlocutor’s statements in order to “correct her utterances” even though there were no recognizable ‘errors’. Kang and Rubin (2009) propose the concept of Reverse Linguistic Stereotyping (RLS) in which “attributions of a speaker’s group membership cue distorted

perceptions of that speaker's language style or proficiency" (p. 442). Participants demonstrate how RLS may serve as a perceptual filter when, upon hearing non-native speech, they allow certain expectations to misguide their perceptions and interpretations.

Participants also seem to have extended different expectations about discourse success to the native and non-native groups. Traditional linguistic standards are irrelevant for an ELF community of practice. Acceptability of language is set by the users, who utilize their repertoire of sociolinguistic knowledge to facilitate communication and understanding (Cogo, 2012a). Thus, a major concern of modern ELF research is "exploring the strategies and processes that make ELF communication possible" (Cogo, 2012b, p. 99). From this perspective, the non-native dialogs used in this study are examples of successful ELF communication. In fact, all dialogs were selected because they were believed to represent successful communication even though they do not completely adhere to native speaker conventions. They exemplify informal, naturalistic conversation with many of the elements of natural communication such as overlapping speech, laughter, different volumes and speeds, negotiation, and backchannelling, among other things. In essence, these dialogs represented the types of communicative situations and stylistics common to successful ELF encounters (Firth, 1996).

Participants recognized the interactions as informal. Some participants even stated that it could be beneficial for students to receive non-native input in a language class. Yet while participants showed dislike for the overlaps in the non-native dialogs, the overlaps in the native dialogs seemed inconsequential. Additionally, participants found the discourse marker *like* problematic in the native dialogs, but the single mention of *like* in the non-native dialogs was somewhat positive, or at least described more ambivalently. As pre-service language teachers, participants were perhaps evaluating overlaps and discourse markers for pedagogical potential,

yet the difference in how these items were perceived in the native and non-native dialogs is striking.

Evidence from previous research (Sifakis and Sougari, 2005) suggests that teachers may recognize the importance of communication over adherence to a specific set of norms despite noticeable influence of a standard language ideology. While evidence from the qualitative data of the present study uncovered similar recognition, the quantitative data indicate that participants perceive interactional success of the dialogs differently. Participants do not necessarily agree with a key assessment of the study that the interactions were equally successful; they evaluated the high-intermediate dialogs as less successful than both the advanced and native dialogs. Yet the non-native dialogs demonstrate numerous common features of successful ELF talk such as creativity, accommodation, and repair (N. Murray, 2012; Pitzl, 2012; Seidlhofer, 2011). From an ELF perspective, the interactions *are* successful, but participants nevertheless rated the high-intermediate dialogs as least successful. It seems, then, that a standard language ideology prevented the participants from appreciating other factors of the dialogs that demonstrate successful ELF interaction.

According to Seidlhofer (2011), standard language ideology and native speakerism are so intricately connected that it takes effort not to perpetuate the idea that natives are the standard. These ideologies are evident in a native speaker participant's assumptions about non-native groups perceiving him as "a teacher" rather than as an equal. The participant seems to be equating his own native-speakerhood with the role of a teacher, which suggests unawareness of both ideologies.

Both ideologies were also evident in participant choices for possible courses in which they would use the dialogs as a language sample. For the majority of course types, participants

indicated a preference for the native dialog, despite the fact that it contained discourse markers and mumbled speech that invited complaints from numerous participants. There was some difference in how participants approached the non-native dialogs, however. While the most frequently selected option for the high-intermediate dialogs was *wouldn't use*, the advanced dialog was actually preferred over the native dialog for an *intermediate* course and for a *pronunciation* course, and results for the advanced non-native dialog and the native dialog were similar for a *conversation* course. When participants did mention the possibility of using the high-intermediate dialogs in a language class, it was often in the scope of 'error correction' exercises in English courses or for TESOL teacher training purposes. Nevertheless, the fact that participants are more willing to use the fluent (but, based on responses, not proficient) advanced dialog rather than the native dialog in a pronunciation course is especially relevant to the teaching of ELF. These results suggest acceptance of the non-native over the native samples for *pronunciation* courses and more-or-less equality for *conversation* courses – in contrast to Jenkins (2007a) in which participants had difficulty conceiving non-native Englishes as better or equal to native Englishes. However, these results are similar to those of He and Zhang (2010), who reported more positive ratings for China English over traditional standard varieties regarding pronunciation.

Indeed, as the previous example shows, participants also displayed positive attitudes towards the non-native dialogs. Some participants suggested that the interactional success made the dialogs viable for classroom use. Moreover, results indicate the importance of exposure to and critical reflection of non-native speech (see Grau, 2005; Seidlhofer and Widdowson, 2003). For example, during a lengthy focus group exchange Participant Ruby was seen changing her mind about not wanting to use the non-native dialogs in a language class, and although she did not

necessarily escape the influence of standard language ideology, she demonstrated the ability to adapt and perhaps eventually accept more of an ELF orientation in her conception of language teaching.

6.2 Research Question 2

How are the language attitudes of pre-service teachers influenced by their own background and personal language learning experience?

Personal qualities of participants that this study was able to isolate and consider include cross-linguistic experience, native/ non-native status, and gender.

6.2.1 Cross linguistic experience

There was evidence that participants' own language learning experiences have influenced their perspectives towards language or even inspired them to a TESOL career. While one participant's description of her L2 experiences encouraged her to eschew influences of native speakerist ideology, another seems to have had such views substantiated. Regardless, the point here is that participants' own L2 learning has had an impact on their conceptions of L2 teaching, and this aspect should be taken into account in teacher training program curricula.

Perceptions of interlocutor *language ability* seem to have been influenced by participants' ability in a second language, as bilingual participants generally evaluated the dialogs more critically than participants without such experience. Although the relationship between the factors and traits was not strong, the trend suggests that bilingualism may lead to more critical evaluations of certain linguistic features. Without knowing exactly what linguistic features participants are responding to, these results could be negatively interpreted because of the simple fact that the evaluations are more critical despite the success of the interactions. In that case, programs may wish to incorporate more discussion of what it means to be bilingual into their curricula. On the other hand, it could be that such evaluations are reflecting more specific

knowledge about language. Such knowledge about language, according to some teacher educators such as Yates and Muchinsky (2003), is essential to the TESOL profession and teacher training. These researchers claim that familiarity with second language acquisition processes and research are central to a teacher's ability to provide attention to all aspects of language – attention which the pre-service teachers in this study seem to be demonstrating. From this point of view, training programs that have more rigorous language requirements may be providing exactly the types of experience that pre-service teachers need.

6.2.2 Native/non-native status

Native/non-native identity was more relevant than anticipated. Non-native participants in this study demonstrated multiple, shifting identities. They associated themselves with teachers, with language learners, and with the larger context of language users. In many of these demonstrations of identity, there was evidence that participants may have been expressing ideas influenced by standard language ideology or native speakerism.

Young and Walsh (2010) report that non-native status did not appear to be a threat to the professional identities of teacher participants in their study. Similarly, the present study found that when positioning themselves in the identity of a language teacher, participants' non-native status did not seem to negatively affect perceptions of their professional identity. In fact, their non-native status afforded them special insight into the needs of language learners and they positioned themselves as a source of authority in non-native pedagogical issues that advantaged them over native English speakers (see Becket and Stiefvater, 2009). As English teachers (who logically should be capable of evaluating the sample interactions for classroom use), non-natives were observed reacting critically to the grammar and pronunciation of the non-native interlocutors. While on the one hand this behavior may demonstrate linguistic intuition and

expressions of ownership of the language (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2007), the correctness judgments were influenced by standard language ideology. Fellow focus group participants, by not disagreeing, were complicit in reifying these standard-influenced interpretations (Holliday, 2005; Miller, 2009).

In addition to their teacher role, non-native participants also assumed a learner role, often marked through their use of the pronoun “we” in which they associate themselves with learners or other non-natives (Holliday, 2005). Native speakers were observed doing the same when referring to behaviors of native speakers. Particularly interesting is that in the focus groups where such Us/Them divisions are observed, both natives and non-natives are present. So, while they all share the “common identity” (p. 6) of English language teachers, participants nevertheless differentiated themselves along lines of nativeness. The native/ non-native, Us/Them ideologies are pervasive. In fact, there was some evidence of native speakers guarding the “potentially valuable resources” (Inbar-Lourie, 2005, p. 278) that their native status privileges them.

The native/non-native dichotomy is clearly evident among the study’s pre-service teachers. Evident throughout participant positioning within the dichotomy is the influence of standard language ideology, and in some cases, native speakerism. Indeed, such ideologies can be difficult to escape, especially one such as the native/non-native dichotomy that has been central to the field for decades. The present study is an example.

6.2.3 Gender and age effects

The quantitative data identified gender effects for traits *fluent* and *successful*, findings supported in the qualitative data. There was also evidence that participant age may have played a role in evaluations of communicative success, particularly for the native dialog. Both gender

and age have been identified as influential in participant evaluations of speech varieties (Bokhorst-Heng et al., 2007; El-Dash and Busnardo, 2001; Garret, 2010) and acceptance of ELF (Ranta, 2010; Tercanlioglu, 2008), so these results are in line with previous research.

Yet perhaps one of the more unique gender-related observations revealed in the data is that participants only referred to the speakers' sex for the native dialog even though interlocutors in all dialogs were female. This observation brings up several interesting possibilities. First, it seems that interlocutor gender is less important when linguacultural background is not shared. That is, at least for the situations in the present study, non-nativeness overrides other interlocutor features. Second, it may also indicate influence of a broader standard language ideology than for other examples presented here, namely an ideology that suggests the female interlocutors are not achieving discourse success or using discourse strategies based on a masculine norm (Coates, 2004).

6.3 Research Question 3

Do TESOL training programs influence the language attitudes of pre-service teachers? That is, is there a difference in pre-service teacher attitudes from the beginning to end of a TESOL training program?

There were indications that participants' level in their TESOL training program may influence how they evaluate language. BA and MA participants differed in their evaluations of interlocutor *level* and *language ability*, and MA-Nov and MA-Adv participants differed in their evaluations of *level*. For each of these conditions, participants with the lower degree (BA or MA-Nov) evaluated interlocutors more leniently. On the one hand, these results suggest that training program experience leads to more critical (negative) evaluations. On the other hand, TESOL training programs may be influencing how participants evaluate linguistic competency, which aligns with the learning outcomes of at least a few of the programs considered here. The

present study was not designed to identify specific linguistic features that participants attune to, so their evaluations of interlocutor *level* and *language ability* could be based on any number of features such as communicative competence, grammar, pronunciation, and so forth. Moreover, it is also relevant to note that pre-service teachers' life experiences are not limited to their time in a training program and that these experiences inevitably influence their attitudes in immeasurable ways. The programs, however, do appear to exert some level of influence, even if the amount is small.

Participants with teaching experience and sociolinguistics experience, however, appear to be slightly more accepting of linguistic variation. Participants who have had at least one sociolinguistics course and participants with some teaching experience rated the dialogs higher on trait *proficiency* than participants who had no sociolinguistics experience or no teaching experience. Higher ratings of interlocutors on *proficiency* among those with sociolinguistics experience would be unsurprising, as sociolinguistics courses have been recognized as providing awareness of linguistic variation (Dewey, 2012; Dogancay-Aktuna, 2006). Similarly, it seems likely that those with teaching experience would be more aware of proficiency distinctions than those without teaching experience.

Teachers' beliefs change slowly and with effort (Borg, 2003; Wright, 2010). For a majority of the traits, there was no identifiable difference between the attitudes of participants at the beginning and those near the end of their degree programs. In fact, only the linguistic traits of *proficient*, *level* and *language ability* appear to have been influenced by something other than gender. Thus, instead of a difference in the attitudes of participants at the beginning or at the end of their degree programs, there was stability. TESOL training programs, in other words, may

have little influence upon how different levels of pre-service teachers perceive most of these qualities.

Yet there were differences for these traits (with the exception of *educated*) among all dialogs for participants as a whole. For the remaining attitudinal traits (*friendly*, *participate*, *confident*, and *competent*), one would hope to find a lack of difference between how they rate interlocutors, since, ideally, these qualities are not associated with language proficiency or nativeness. However, participants consistently rated the high-intermediate dialogs less favorably than the native dialogs, and usually also less favorably than the advanced dialog. Some of these ratings, such as those for the linguistic traits, are understandable; in fact, these differences contributed to the selection of the interlocutor groups. For the solidarity and status traits, however, these observations highlight areas where teacher training programs are not addressing negative attitudes to successful ELF encounters. To this end, programs may wish to adapt their curriculum to address more social – rather than purely linguistic – aspects of language use and evaluation. Or, as Dalton-Puffer et al. (1997) as well as the qualitative data of the present study suggest, simple exposure to different varieties may increase acceptance, supporting the inclusion of examples of successful non-native interactions in TESOL training courses.

The qualitative data was slightly more explicit in regards to how participants' views are related to their studies. How to assess language learner level and the identification of different communicative strategies are two areas that participants specifically mentioned. In one case, a participant even described his expectations of what he will learn in a course yet to be taken. In a longer focus group excerpt, participants are seen discussing the concept of accented, intelligible, and comprehensible (AIC) speech (Murphy, 2012), a topic that they covered in one of their classes. Although they seemed to overlook the primary purpose behind the idea of AIC – that is,

that accented, intelligible, and comprehensible non-native pronunciation may be a more appropriate model for pronunciation in an L2 classroom – participants have been influenced by it, and the concepts will hopefully remain with them throughout their careers.

6.4 Research Question 4

What aspects of TESOL training curricula are likely to facilitate change in pre-service teacher attitudes?

The study approached the answer to this research question by considering a subset of questions that allowed for both practicality and anonymity.

In their evaluation of MA TESOL programs, Govardhan, Nayar, & Sheorey (1999) describe a “muddle in the profusion of titles of degrees offered” (p. 120) as well as substantial variation in program departments and transparency of course titles and content. For the five programs considered in the present study, results were similar. There was a large amount of variation regarding entrance and exit requirements, study abroad opportunities, clarity about the availability of practica and other types of courses, and how students are evaluated. However, all of the programs demonstrated an attempt to have graduates connect either their own research or that of the field to practical experience. In other words, all programs believe that language pedagogy should be influenced by theory. While most programs had a thesis option, one program required graduates to compile a portfolio, a requirement that seems more praxis-oriented than the research-based thesis option.

The language exit and entrance requirements offer insight into program ideologies. For example, waiving the language entrance requirement but then having pre-service teachers complete 3 to 9 hours prior to graduation may give applicants the impression that language learning is an easy, short-term endeavor. Moreover, it is doubtful how communicatively

competent these individuals may become through such limited L2 exposure. Arguably, it is important for English language teachers demonstrate at least minimal conversational ability in a language other than their native language, as language learners may consider a teacher's ability to learn an L2 representative of their ability to teach an L2 (Harmer, 2007).

An entry requirement that assumedly cannot be waived is the language proficiency requirement for non-native students, and one institution even specifies that non-natives may need additional language consultation before graduating. Barduhn & Johnson (2009) recommend "higher language proficiency before nonnative speakers are allowed into teaching programs" as an area in need of improvement in TESOL training. While such a suggestion may make practical sense as far as maintaining institutional standards and assessing qualifications, it runs the risk of over-emphasizing (inner circle) standards that may be irrelevant in many international settings and de-emphasizing ELF skills that native speakers may need to additionally acquire. In essence, the question is more a matter of what counts as proficiency for a career in an international field such as TESOL rather than actual proficiency. In fact, the international aspects of the field are what attract many pre-service teachers. A number of survey participants mentioned an interest in language and culture as a reason for pursuing TESOL, an interest that could be utilized through a more egalitarian approach towards language proficiency, such as the inclusion of an L2 requirement for all TESOL candidates while *in the program*. While perhaps logistically challenging to organize and integrate such an approach, more closely monitored L2 learning could benefit a program by facilitating discussion of language learning strategies, teaching strategies, motivation, and language learning goals, among other things.

Of the five TESOL programs considered, only one clearly listed an opportunity for gaining EFL teaching experience, although three of the programs did list opportunities to go abroad,

which may also include teaching. Overseas field experience has been demonstrated as having a positive impact on pre-service TESOL teachers' professional and personal growth (Pence and Macgillivray, 2008; Yang, 2011). Such experience helps them better understand the need for reflection, the importance of classroom practices such as feedback, and build awareness and appreciation for other cultures. Participants cited a desire to teach in ESL and EFL contexts almost equally, but only about half as many participants claimed to have had EFL experience. Thus, even if all three of the programs that list overseas opportunities provide practical EFL experience, there seems to be not only a gap between participant goals and program offerings but also a missed opportunity for an enriching training experience. Since a majority of non-native English language users will most likely never (or very seldom) interact with native speakers of the language, practical experience outside of inner circle contexts seems invaluable.

6.5 Implications

6.5.1 Teacher training and pre-service teacher perspectives

Ideologies can be subtle and pervasive, and attitudes slow and difficult to change. Yet the present study shows evidence of influences upon pre-service teacher attitudes based on experiences in their training programs. Such evidence includes exposure to the idea of using AIC speech in the classroom, personal L2 learning experiences, direct references to knowledge from teachers, and shifting perspectives about using non-native dialogs as samples in a language classroom. While the participant's motivation for her shift in perspective in the latter of these examples was for purpose of error correction and therefore at odds with an ELF oriented pedagogy, it nevertheless demonstrates the value of engagement as advocated by a transformative approach to teacher education. Transformative approaches encourage conceptual development, reflection and analysis. They attempt to cultivate student teachers' ability to

confront and change their own established viewpoints by requiring teachers to formulate, articulate, and respond to complex ideas (Liddicoat, 2008; Sifakis, 2007). Transformative learning takes place whenever critical reflection causes previously established assumptions to become distorted, inauthentic, or invalid. The evidence that certain aspects of training programs may influence pre-service teacher attitudes indicates transformation is possible and is taking place.

6.5.2 Personal language learning experience

Pre-service teachers' experiences as language learners can have a "significant influence" (Borg, 2003, p. 88) upon their professional careers. The present study identified a relationship between participants' L2 experience and their views of language teaching and learning. In addition, numerous participants indicated a pre-existing interest in languages as a reason for selecting TESOL as a field of study. Teacher training programs, however, need to ensure that the L2 learning experiences of pre-service teachers align with their desired learning outcomes. For instance, programs could work with foreign language departments to (at a minimum) be familiar with the instructors and the materials, which would aid instructors in helping trainees compare teaching styles, materials, learning strategies, goals, and motivation. Also, in addition to language entry requirements, having all pre-service teachers take a foreign language class as part of the TESOL curriculum could facilitate discussion within their TESOL courses of issues related to language pedagogy, identity, culture, and assessment, among others. While such a suggestion is logistically challenging to implement, a foreign language requirement of at least one semester would make the experience of language learning more immediate and more relevant, especially for pre-service teachers who fulfilled the regular language requirements prior to entering a program, reminding them of the challenges of learning an L2. The assumption here

is that pre-service teachers in a program would learn about language teaching and learning by being students of a language themselves. Moreover, the discussions in TESOL courses would offer opportunities for engagement and transformation.

6.5.3 Introducing ELF into curricula

Evidence from the curricula of the programs looked at in this study support the observation that teacher education programs underemphasize the new sociocultural and sociopolitical realities of English and language teaching (Dogancay-Aktuna, 2006; Nero, 2005; Wilbur, 2007). Required courses of the programs typically included those that seem intended to increase pre-service teachers' knowledge about language as an abstract system (such as phonology, syntax, morphology, and grammar), or courses designed to increase teachers' pedagogical content knowledge (such as TESOL methods, SLA, and assessment). Yet current teacher training curricula need not necessarily be replaced in order to develop greater awareness among pre-service teachers of lingua franca issues (Dewey, 2012; Matsuda, 2005), as the content of some of these courses may already address important ELF related concerns (Dogancay-Aktuna, 2006). The type of course is less important than how it is taught. TESOL methods or approaches courses, which were required by all programs considered in this study, offer a common starting point for introducing more lingua franca oriented approaches to teaching, such as the ELF pedagogical framework described by Qiufang (2012). Incorporating these types of ELF aspects into methods courses would also be a step towards resolving the concerns expressed by Wilbur (2007) that pre-service teacher methodological training might not be adequately preparing future teachers for the "social and professional forces that depend on it" (p. 94). The ELF model represents an approach towards language that pre-service teachers need to be aware of in order to be sufficiently prepared for international and intercultural profession of TESOL.

6.5.4 Reconceptualization

An implication of ELF ideology is how it requires a reconceptualization of many core elements of applied linguistics, a few of which include what is ‘English’ and how to define grammatical competence, communicative competence, errors, nativeness, and bi/multilingualism. The present study identified influences of standard language ideology in participant descriptions of errors, nativeness, and bilingualism, all of which represent challenges to the realization of a complete reconceptualization. For instance, throughout the data participants were observed referring to “errors” in the dialogs, usually focusing on grammar or pronunciation. Also, in one focus group exchange, participants offered a somewhat limited definition of *bilingual* that seemingly was based on the idea of a *balanced bilingual* who represents the qualities of a native speaker (Alptekin, 2010), a description that ignores the “tremendous variety in language ability among bilingual speakers” (McKay, 2002, p. 27).

The native/non-native dichotomy was frequently evident in the perspectives expressed by both survey and focus group participants. Particularly interesting is that despite their “common identity” (Holliday, 2005, p. 6) as English language teachers, participants in the focus groups differentiated themselves along lines of nativeness. These identities were not disputed by other group members and they were thereby reified and validated. While the present study may offer itself some justification in that the native/ non-native dichotomy offered a useful framework for research purposes, accepting the terms as valid – even for research – also reifies them and highlights the challenges of reconceptualizing how the field describes language users.

Participant descriptions of “errors”, definitions of bilingual, and unquestioning acceptance of the native/ non-native dichotomy indicate ideological influences that are very much a part of these pre-service teachers’ perceptions. Indeed, L2 teachers are resistant to shifts in theory

(Borg, 2003), and they can have difficulties with new knowledge about language that is incompatible with previous conceptions (Bartels, 2005). Similar to observations in previous research (Grau, 2005; Sifakis and Sougari, 2005; Watson Todd and Pojanapunya, 2009), participant comments suggest a desire for some form of standard, and the native speaker seems to be a default position. These perspectives demonstrate the challenges for proponents of a reconceptualization of how the field of applied linguistics views and discusses language.

Watson Todd and Pojanapunya (2009) suggest that trying to change external attitudes may be easier than trying to change more internalized ones. Following this logic, it may be easier to try to change external definitions of standard rather than internalized conceptions of standard. For instance, *standard* could be used more leniently (Canagarajah, 1999b) to incorporate interactional strategies and accommodation skills. Yet a reconceptualization would need to ensure that such strategic competence is not based on native speaker interactions but on ELF interactions that take place with others who do not share sociocultural norms of behavior (N. Murray, 2012). The point here is that changing how the field explicitly talks about language may be easier to change than how we implicitly think about it.

6.5.5 *ELF influences*

Change occurs slowly and there are reasons to be hopeful that the groundwork for greater acceptance of ELF ideologies is already in place. First, it should be kept in mind that this research took place in the United States, a traditional ESL environment. So, it is possible that participants were offering opinions based on a perspective in which target language and cultural goals would be more acceptable. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, is that despite the ESL environment there was evidence of acceptance of ELF goals. For example, although more participants indicated a willingness to use the native dialog for *advanced* and *conversation*

courses, they also indicated a greater willingness to use the advanced dialog for *intermediate* and *pronunciation* courses. That is, the advanced non-native dialog was considered more acceptable than the native dialog for certain types of language courses. The qualitative data suggest influence of standard language ideology in participant choices for using the non-native dialogs, such as for error correction exercises, but there is no evidence that this is the exclusive reason. Participant selection of the advanced dialog could very well indicate acceptance of non-native speech as a model for language classes, as evidenced by acknowledgement of the success of the interaction. Even participants who use a *yes, but...* strategy when commenting on the communicative success were at least acknowledging interactional success.

Another potentially positive indication for ELF was the nativeness identification task on the survey. While a majority of participants were relatively certain when identifying native speakers, there was much uncertainty regarding the non-native dialogs. A possible interpretation suggests awareness among participants of the varieties of non-inner circle Englishes as well as the possibility of implicit questioning of the concept of nativeness.

Finally, although the native/ non-native dichotomy was a salient perceptual classification for participants, non-nativeness was not deemed as a disadvantage. Indeed, while the native speaker often seemed to be upheld as the linguistic goal, there was evidence that such standards were being questioned and re-evaluated. There were indications that aspects of transformative pedagogical approaches had positive influences upon pre-service teacher perspectives, which should be reassuring for proponents of ELF and supporters of more transformational approaches to teacher education.

6.5.6 *Guise technique*

Guise techniques of language attitude research have been criticized as too reliant on “a static, input-output mechanism” (Giles and Billings, 2004, p. 200) that is overly influenced by constructivist orientations and not necessarily suited to the study of human behavior. The present study’s adaption of the guise technique to include multiple speakers engaged in communicative acts does not eliminate the dominant input-output aspect of these types of participant evaluations (an almost inherent feature of the methodology), but it has moved this approach to the study of language attitudes a step closer to a more social orientation. As far as I am aware, this is the first guise study to use extracts of naturalistic conversation as stimuli. Interactive speech involves a number of uncontrollable factors (e.g., speech volume, topic, background noise, overlaps, and so forth – all of which have been discussed elsewhere in this dissertation), and for this reason has generally been avoided in guise studies. However, the present study shows that the experimental manipulations were effective, and as an initial attempt at using interactive speech in a guise design, the study opens up a new approach to language attitudes research that may better align with understandings language-in-use and ELF encounters.

6.6 Caveats

The greatest number of participant complaints about the study regarded the quality of the recordings. Also, as seen in the data, there were a number of comments about overlapping speech and colloquial language, especially with the native group. Because the stimulus materials consisted of naturalistic unscripted speech, this reaction was expected. While the semi-authenticity of the recordings may be a reason why some participants began the survey but quit after the first recording, the ability to analyze participant reactions to naturalistic conversation was central to the study itself and therefore necessary.

Another unfortunate aspect of the study is the participant count. The length of the survey, which was approximately 15 minutes, may have discouraged some potential participants. The original study design planned for 200 participants, although only approximately a third of this number was reached and may have influenced the lack of stronger statistical results.

Finally, because the study took place in a traditionally ESL environment, participants may have been approaching the dialogs and forming responses towards ESL rather than more ELF oriented situations.

6.7 Future Research

Since qualities of the dialogs resulting from their authenticity elicited a number of negative participant comments, future research could repeat the survey design with scripted, studio quality recordings. A number of factors of the naturalistic recordings could then be controlled for – such as the topic, speech rate and volume, speech overlaps, pronunciation, and grammar. This would also allow a more detailed analysis of exactly which aspects of the dialogs participants attune to. Participants in the present study indicated that a probable use of the non-native dialogs would be to engage students in error-identification and error-correction tasks. Focusing more specifically on potential classroom uses in future research could allow researchers to see what participants find relevant for students and allow these ideas to be more specifically addressed in TESOL training.

The survey component of the present study involved TESOL programs at over 25 public universities. While comprehensive, the breadth and diversity of the programs did not allow for a detailed analysis of the types of course content that may be most productive toward initiating change in pre-service teacher perspectives. In fact, programs not considered in the curriculum analysis could already be promoting more ELF oriented pedagogies, which may have affected

responses from participants at these institutions but could not be identified because of the study design. Future research could focus on a limited number of TESOL training programs as well as specific course types within each program, or follow the same set of participants over a year instead of a cross-section of participants at different stages in their programs as in the present study.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

This study reported on a mixed methods investigation of pre-service TESOL teacher attitudes towards different varieties of English in interactional settings. Previously, the majority of ELF-related attitudes research had only considered imagined speech or isolated samples of individual speech, and there had been a deficit of language attitude studies regarding speech-in-action, especially those involving quantitative methodologies. The present study fills these gaps. While some aspects of the results were disappointing for proponents of ELF or for educators wishing to foster awareness of language variation and acceptance of non-inner circle Englishes, other results were encouraging. Nevertheless, both positive and negative aspects advance the fields of applied linguistics, language attitudes research, teacher training, and ELF.

Regarding some of the more negative findings, the quantitative component of the study found only minimal differences in how teachers at the beginning and teachers at the end of their degree programs evaluated the dialogs, and these differences were primarily based on linguistic qualities. In addition, participants evaluated certain non-linguistic qualities of the interactions differently depending on the speakers' level of proficiency and nativeness. The fact that the dialog speakers were women seemed relevant for the native dialogs but not the non-native dialogs. The data suggest influence of standard language ideology, native speakerism, and Reverse Linguistic Stereotyping.

On the other hand, participants also acknowledged that the interactions were successful despite what they may have perceived as errors. There was uncertainty among participants in identifying native speakers, suggesting possible acceptance of non-inner circle influences on language production. Beliefs change slowly, yet the data also indicate that teacher training programs exert at least some influence on the attitudes of pre-service teachers, and there was

support for transformative approaches to language teacher education. The training programs themselves demonstrated a wide variety of course types and entry/exit requirements.

Overall, the results are important to language teacher training and the field of applied linguistics for several reasons. First, they offer insight into the perspectives of pre-service teachers towards the language that their students will most likely be using, information which can then be applied to teacher training programs to better prepare language teachers to address the needs and goals of their students. The study also helps the profession of English language teaching understand its relevance and position in an ever-evolving lingua franca landscape. For proponents of ELF, the study demonstrates that challenges remain before a complete reconceptualization of how the field views language can take place, but it also highlights areas where movement in the desired direction is taking place. Exposure to and examination of accented, intelligible, and comprehensible speech seems to develop greater acceptance of non-native alternatives among pre-service teachers; curriculum-integrated L2 exposure holds similar potential. Finally, the study adapts the popular guise technique of language attitudes research to include language-in-use, and in this way it broadens the possibilities of the methodology of attitudes studies.

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APPENDIX A

Stimulus materials: Possible discussion topics

Some topics you may want to discuss during your lunch:

1. Transportation to and from university

- How do you travel to school?
- Are you happy with your daily commute?
- What would you like to change about your commute?
- How does this compare to other places you've lived?

2. Class schedules

- Do you prefer morning or evening classes?
- Would you prefer to come to school 2 days, 3 days, or 5 days a week?
- Do you prefer short classes (i.e., 1 hour) that meet three days a week, or do you prefer longer classes (i.e., 3 hours) that meet once a week?

3. Freetime activities

- Do you have any hobbies?
- Do you prefer to play or watch sports?
- Do you have any hobbies that you used to do in the past but don't do anymore?
- Do you prefer to read or watch TV or a movie?
- Do you have a favorite book or movie? Why do you like it?

4. Work

- Do you have a job? What is it?
- How often do you work?
- Is it a challenge to work and study?
- What are some jobs you've had in the past? Did you like them?
- What do you want to do in 5 years? In 10?

6. Food

- What is your favorite food? What foods do you hate?
- Do you know how to cook?

APPENDIX B

Dialog 1 (high-intermediate group)

“Used to Play Piano”

Total time: 00:1:00

- (Fade in))
- Arabic: Alla=h.
- Chinese: [I was playing piano before
Uh, yeah
- :07 When I was five years old I started to playing piano
But now I quit
...(1)
- :14 Arabic: ((softly)) I wish I ...
Russian: [What kind of piano in the USA?
Chinese: Do I-, I do-, I don't have that
- :17 Arabic: [And the piano you like?
Is it something that you will forgot with the time
if you don't ..
- :25 do it everyday to .. play the piano?
Chinese: E=veryday I have to practice
- Arabic: [So you will for-, you .. will .. like .. if you
- :32 Russian: [can
you forget?
Arabic: Yeah
Chinese. Mmmm ...(2) No, I will not forget it
Arabic: [Hmmm.
- :38 Chinese: If I can practice ... some days ..
couple days,
- :44 I can remember the, the rules
Arabic: It's like rules or steps?
- :48 Chinese: Ste-, yeah, rules or steps
Arabic: [M-hm.
- :52 Chinese: I ca-, I can ... re-, recall <record> from the memory
Arabic: [M-hm.
- :56 M-hm. ... Wh-, what you call this type?
The paper?
(Fade out))

Dialog 2 (advanced group)

“Bad Drivers”

Total Time: 00:00:54

((Fade in))

@ @ @ @ @ @

:02 Italian: Yeah. Here, if you don't have a car
you have .. a lot of stress

Gujarati: Yeah.

:07 Italian: But also the car is expensive because .. the parking

:10 Gujarati: Yeah, it's very expensive
It's like .. almost \$800

Italian: [Yeah

Russian: [Yeah

:15 And the gas and insurance

Italian: [and parking

Russian: and parking. Yeah.

:20 And .. people driving like crazy in here.
@ @

No one ever uses their turn signals

Gujarati: [Yeah

:28 Russian: What's going on
and .. that's why .. I jus-, just don't drive

Gujarati: [@ @

:32 Russian: just avoiding that .. stress from there
@ @ @

Gujarati: [@ @ @

:38 ... (2) So you moved here with your family
or just alone:41 Russian: uh, I'm alone here ...
and .. I never-, yeah, I'm here for three years

:47 and I've never been home back

:51 and I'm trying to g-, planning to go every summer
and always something comes out

and

((Fade out))

Dialog 3 (native speaker group)

Stupid Video Games”

Total time: 00:00:43

((Fade in))

:04 NS1: I feel like that when you get sucked into a show or something
then it's .. or a book
I feel that way

NS3: [Yeah. Yeah. Or a book.

:09 NS1: Yeah. It's like with anything.
You get sucked into it, then ..
there's nothing to do

NS3: [Yeah.
[you're helpless .. like

:13 NS2: It's true.

NS3: [Yeah. You start thinking about it all the time

NS1: [@@

NS2: [@@

:17 NS3: and you do dream about it

NS2: [Yeah

NS3: I dream about it too
like, what happens next

NS1: [@@@

:23 NS2: [M-hm

NS1: Um, I did like,
this is really terrible,
:30 but the biggest time waster I have right now is like ..
really, really stupid computer games

:35 NS2: [@@@

NS1: like, like I feel like I reached a new low the other day @@@

:40 NS2: [@@@

((Fade out))

Dialog 4 (high-intermediate group)

“Routine Work”

Total time: 00:00:51

((Fade in))

- Arabic: I lo=ve to work ahead
 :03 to be a student again
 Chinese: I think studying is .. a very happiness things
 :09 Arabic: La @@@
 Russian: It's hard because .. when at home yo-,
 Arabic: [It's hard
 :12 Russian: you couldn't relax
 you sh-, you should study
 :18 Chinese: When I compare work and study
 I think study is more easy=
 :22 Arabic: Easy. Wow. ... (1) @@@
 :28 French: [Actually, I prefer the routine work than study
 Arabic: The what?
 French: The routine work
 Arabic: [M-hm
 French: [than study
 :38 Russian: Because you done with this work and forgot about it
 French: [Exactly
 Arabic: [Yes
 unless you are a teacher or something
 you have to prepare
 French: [<@@>
 :42 Chinese: [prepare for the class
 Arabic: Yes. So, ula-, unless you are a teacher
 :47 I love to work.
 Exactly. I will go home, rela=x ...
 ((Fade out))

APPENDIX C

Survey Instrument

Title: Pre-Service TESOL Teacher Program & Materials Study

Thank you for your interest in completing this survey. Presently, only non-PhD students working towards some form of TESOL certification (ESL, ESOL, EFL, endorsements, certification, etc) may participate.

First, let's see if you are eligible to participate in the survey. Are you at least 18 years of age?

Yes

No

What type of TESOL degree are you seeking?

B.A. - Major

B.A. – Minor

M.A.

Certification

Endorsement

PhD

[Display message: “Sorry, you do not qualify to take this survey. Thank you for your interest.”]

Other

Please Explain: _____

Informed Consent

This page is for the informed consent

Survey Instructions

Thank you for volunteering to participate in this survey!

The total time to complete all questions should be no more than 30 minutes.

On the following pages you will hear four conversation excerpts. Each excerpt is accompanied by a short, written description of the context in which the recording took place.

Please listen to each recording at least one time through and answer the questions that follow. You may listen to each recording as many times as you wish. The questions that follow are

the same for each excerpt.

At the end of the survey, you will be asked to provide some demographic information and some information about your teacher training program.

Thanks again for your time and willingness to participate!

Listening Questions¹⁹

In the following dialog, several students are discussing their classes during lunch.

Please listen to the dialog and answer the questions that follow. You may listen as many times as necessary.

As a whole, the speakers in this conversation seem

- | | | | | | | |
|------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| confident | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | not confident |
| educated | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | not educated |
| friendly | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | unfriendly |
| proficient | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | not proficient |
| fluent | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | not fluent |
| competent | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | not competent |

For this particular interaction, the vocabulary of the speakers as a whole seems

- | | | | | | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| appropriate | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | not appropriate |
|-------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|

Based solely on the group of speakers' language abilities (i.e., not the topic or quality of recording), following the conversation was

- | | | | | | | |
|------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|
| easy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | difficult |
|------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|

Please use this space for any comments related to the above questions:

In my opinion, the average level of these speakers as a whole group is

(Choose one)

- beginning
- low-intermediate
- intermediate
- high-intermediate
- advanced

Comments? _____

I believe that the individual speakers in this conversation are native speakers of English.

¹⁹ Only a single set of questions are presented here. These questions are the same for all four dialogs of the survey.

all
 some
 none
 uncertain

Comments? _____

For the particular interaction in this recording, I believe the speakers in this conversation demonstrate appropriate language ability.

strongly agree
 agree
 neutral
 disagree
 strongly disagree

Comments? _____

I believe this conversation is appropriate to use as a sample dialogue in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class for

(Choose all that apply)

- beginning EFL
- intermediate EFL
- advanced EFL
- a pronunciation course
- a grammar course
- a conversation course
- university prep
- business English
- exam prep (i.e., TOEFL / TOEIC / IELTS / etc)
- I would not use this as a sample dialog
- other? (please explain)
- comments? _____

I believe that this interaction is an example of successful communication. That is, to the best of my knowledge, the goals of the interaction were achieved.

strongly agree
 agree
 neutral
 disagree
 strongly disagree participate as an equal

Comments? _____

I believe I am able to comfortably participate as an equal in this interaction.

strongly agree
 agree
 neutral
 disagree

strongly disagree

Comments? _____

Was there any part of the conversation that you didn't understand or found difficult to follow? Please describe this part to the best of your ability.

Please use this section for any additional comments regarding this conversation or the survey as a whole

Participant Background Info

You're almost finished!

You have completed the listening portion of this survey. The present section asks for demographic information and information regarding your teacher training program.

Please note that the term *TESOL* in the following questions refers to *TESL*, *TEFL*, *ESOL*, *ESL*, *EFL*, and so forth.

What is your age? _____

What is your gender?

female

male

prefer not to answer

What is the name of your academic institution? (Please spell out).

What is your current academic classification?

freshman

sophomore

junior

senior

M.A.

other _____

Approximately how many courses towards receiving your *TESOL/TEFL* certification have you already completed? (Do **not** include current courses)

0-1 courses

2-3 courses

4-5 courses
 6-7 courses
 8-9 courses
 10-11 courses
 other _____

How many courses towards receiving your TESOL/TEFL certification are you currently taking?

0-1 courses
 2-3 courses
 4-5 courses
 other _____

*Approximately how many courses do you still need in order to receive your TESOL/TEFL certification?(Do **not** include current courses)*

0-1 courses
 2-3 courses
 4-5 courses
 6-7 courses
 8-9 courses
 10-11 courses
 other _____

What types of courses towards completing TESOL certification have you already completed? (Please select item classifications most similar to course titles at your institution. If your institution combines courses such as Phonetics/Phonology, please select both items)

- general linguistics
- applied linguistics
- descriptive linguistics
- phonetics
- phonology
- morphology
- syntax
- pragmatics
- linguistic analysis
- TESOL methods
- TESOL theory
- TESOL materials
- second language acquisition (SLA)
- historical linguistics
- English grammar
- pedagogical grammar
- practicum [teaching, ESL]
- practicum [teaching, EFL]

practicum [teaching, peers/in-class]

practicum [non-teaching]

language and culture

language in society

language and literacy

sociolinguistics

foreign language(s)

other courses not listed: _____

What is your major? _____

What department is your TESOL program housed in?

Linguistics

English

Foreign/Modern Languages

Education

Teaching & Learning

Other _____

Please list all the languages you speak (including English) from strongest to weakest.

	Language	How well?
a.	_____	_____
b.	_____	_____
c.	_____	_____
d.	_____	_____
e.	_____	_____
f.	_____	_____

Please list languages (other than English) regularly spoken at home

a.: _____

b.: _____

c.: _____

Are you currently studying any foreign languages?

yes

no

[If YES] Which language(s)? _____

Are you teaching now or do you have any prior teaching experience?

yes

no

other

[If YES or OTHER]: Please briefly describe your (teaching) experience

--

Please briefly describe why you selected a TESOL/TEFL degree program

Please briefly describe your personal career goals as a language teacher.

Please list the qualities you believe are most important to being a successful language teacher.

a.: _____

b.: _____

c.: _____

d.: _____

e.: _____

APPENDIX D

Focus Group: Procedures and Questions

Procedures for the focus group:

- 1) Listen to conversation excerpts. These are the same excerpts as from the online survey, although the order of presentation may differ slightly depending on survey results.
- 2) After listening to conversation excerpts, the interviewer will ask participants to respond to the following questions.
- 3) Because these are semi-structured interviews, additional questions may be added during the interview. In particular, participants may be asked to explain or expand on answers given, or group-wide confirmation of agreement or disagreement may be sought.

Focus Group Questions:

- 1) Considering the context and the topic, do you believe that this interaction was successful? That is, did the speakers achieve the goals they intended to achieve?
- 2) Did you have any difficulties understanding or following the conversation? If so, what were they and why?
- 3) Do you believe that the speakers in this dialogue are native speakers of English? Why or why not?
- 4) What skill level would you classify these speakers at? Why?
- 5) Would this be an appropriate language sample for an ESL classroom? For an EFL classroom? Why or why not?

Focus Group Protocol

Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. Informed consent will be emailed to focus group volunteers in the week prior to the actual interviews so that they have time to review the materials. On the day of the interviews, hardcopies of the informed consent will be handed out, signed by participants, and collected. The researcher will use this time to address any questions or concerns participants may have about the informed consent or interview process. Prior to the start of recording, interviewees will be presented with a name card and asked to write a self-selected pseudonym on the card. Participants are to use these pseudonyms during the actual interview to refer to one another, and these pseudonyms will be used on the transcripts as well. Developing the pseudonyms should be a fun, rapport-building activity that puts participants at ease for the interview. Prior to the interview, the same participant background information from the survey (e.g., age, gender, languages spoken, courses taken) will be collected from volunteers.

Interview participants will be presented with conversation excerpts from the questionnaire stimulus materials; interview questions reflect those from the online survey. The listening

stimuli will be presented to the focus group in the same order as they appear on the survey. In many ways, the interview is merely an interactive form of the survey. However, even though the online survey asks respondents to explain their answers in *Comments* sections, they are not obligated to do so and may avoid offering explanations because of the time required. The focus group format allows participants to be able to elaborate on their views as well as respond to others in ways not possible on the questionnaire.

The interviews will be semi-structured, so there is some flexibility concerning the questions asked and the order in which they are presented, and there is an ability to ask follow-up or clarification questions. To this end, *why* questions – those which correspond to the *comments* section of the survey -- are of particular interest. Thus, aside from playing the stimulus materials and asking the focus group questions provided, the moderator's role will primarily be asking participants to explain or clarify statements.

APPENDIX E

Transcription Conventions

Units

Word	<space>
Truncated word	-

Speakers

Speaker identity/turn start	:
Speech overlap	[

Transitional continuity

Final	.
Continuing	,
Appeal	?

Speech factors

Continuing/continued speech	→
Pause (longer than 1 second)	<X sec>
Pause (long)	...
Pause (short)	..
Laughter	@ @ @

Other

Transcription notes/comments	[note/comment]
Participant actions/behaviors	<action/behavior>
Edited continuous speech/ edited interaction [...]	