

Schwa

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About **Schwa**

We are an academic journal produced by the students of Brigham Young University. Our mission is to increase the amount and the accessibility of linguistic scholarship—especially for those without graduate school experience—while simultaneously training editors and designers in the ways of modern publishing. Some of our articles are strictly theoretical and academic. Others are less technical and more personal in nature. Experiments, surveys, corpus analyses, and essays are all acceptable. We have published on all the following subdisciplines of linguistics and more:

- Phonetics, the perception and production of speech sounds
- Phonology, the system of speech sounds used in a given context
- Semantics, the meaning constructs of words and sentences
- Syntax, the structure of permissible and meaningful sentences
- Pragmatics, the real-world use of language and other speech-related actions
- Sociolinguistics, the variation of language based on sociological factors
- Psycholinguistics, the cognitive tasks necessary for language
- Fieldwork, notes, or reports from living in a community speaking a foreign language
- Forensics linguistics, the role of language in creating and carrying out the law

We are always accepting submissions. Papers on any language are welcome, including cross-linguistic studies, but papers must be written in English. To maintain a high standard of quality, our staff includes both editors and graphic designers. We extend an open invitation for new staff members. Go to schwa.byu.edu to submit a paper or join our staff.

Editor's Note

When I first joined *Schwa*, I didn't know just how much fulfillment I was going to find here. I've enjoyed reading the articles we publish, I've met some wonderful people who have become friends, and I've learned a lot over the last two years.

I'm truly grateful to be with a journal that publishes content I love. It's so delightful to me, every semester, to read the various articles on linguistics. I learn something new with each edition, and I'm thankful to the authors for sharing their work and letting us participate in the publishing process with them. I also thank Dr. Dirk Elzinga, our faculty advisor, for helping us find these fantastic articles and for ensuring that the articles we publish are reflective of true linguistic principles.

I love the people I get to work with. I love meeting new team editors, and I love welcoming returning ones back. They come ready to learn and have fun. I'm thankful especially for the senior editors; they make a hefty task much more manageable. I'm thankful for the senior editors whose first semester it is with *Schwa*, those who were willing to step up and fill that role when needed. As always, I'm thankful for my managing editors, Brooke James and Emma Franklin, and this semester, for our fabulous designer, Savannah Butler. This is not a one-person job, and so I'm thankful to them for sharing responsibilities with me.

Each semester presents new challenges. But although there are always a few sticky editing or design problems to confront with each issue, the most meaningful lessons come from the team editors. I watch them meet deadlines, ask questions, and engage in the process; their readiness to learn and tackle assignments inspire me.

So with gratitude in my heart for the memories and experiences I've had this year, the editors and I present the winter 2021 issue of *Schwa: Language and Linguistics*.

Mikaela Wilkins
Editor in Chief

The Effects of Mother's Language

Savannah Taylor

In this article, the author studies the effects of a mother's language on her children's language based on a small sample of two young children and their mothers. The author interviews her participants with the same set of ten basic questions and inserts the transcriptions into multiple language research databases for analysis. The author reviews this data in the article and concludes that even with her limited time and resources, there is clear evidence that the language used by a mother affects her children's language, as evident by the similarities in the vocabulary and the linguistic elements of the children's speech.

It has been said many times before that our children are our future. To protect that future, researchers have spent years studying how children develop and how they can help that development progress in a positive way. One of the most critical aspects of child development is language acquisition. A person's entire world can be changed by his or her ability to understand and describe what is around them, making this process a valuable subject for a researcher to study. One aspect of language development that has not been analyzed enough is the external influence the language usage of parents, siblings, and other household members has on developing children. As a child's family is his or her first source of knowledge and learning, it is imperative to understand how they affect the child's language. This article will specifically explore the effects of a mother's language usage on her child's language usage to help fill this gap in the research that has been done so far. The following studies are some of the most recent and related studies done on child language development. They illustrate the connection between external influences and a child's development, particularly their language in some cases.

In 2018, Frizelle et al. did a study on the syntactic development of people from their childhood to adulthood. They recorded children and adults telling stories and analyzed the language. Results of the study showed that at four years old a person's syntax is "fully acquired" and that coordinated clauses and multi-clause sentences increased and were used by all participants by the age of eight (p. 1175). This study used stories told by participants to analyze their language and see how it develops. This article analyzes the participants' language in a similar way, just with a different focus.

In 2019, Lucca et al. studied the impact of encouraging language spoken to young children while they worked to complete a difficult task. They discovered that children who had received parental support in the form of praise and encouragement during the task were more persistent in attempting to complete the task. When the parental support was removed, the children who had been given more support continued to be more persistent in their attempts to accomplish the task (p. 7). Here, researchers introduced the possibility of others, specifically parents, affecting the development of a child. I will focus specifically on the mother's effects in this article.

Another study from 2017 by Marjanovic-Umek et al. investigated the effects of parental education levels on children's vocabulary and grammar abilities (p. 457). They discovered that the level of parental education doesn't have any statistical relationship to a child's vocabulary and grammar skills, but that the amount of parent-child reading was directly linked to the amount of education a parent had (p. 473). They found that the earlier and more often parents started reading to their children, the greater the child's vocabulary and grammar capacities were (p. 473). This research reinforced the idea that parents, including mothers, who spend time with their children have a great effect on their children's language.

Another recent study done by Flensburg-Madsen and Mortensen (2019) researched how adults' language develops in their midlife and affects their intelligence. The researchers examined early language milestones in children and then followed up with them fifty years later. They discovered that these early milestones explained 6.7 percent of "variance in midlife IQ" (p. 269). In this study, the importance of early childhood language development was proved to affect the IQ of the participants for most of their lives. This article seeks to further this claim by asserting that mothers can change their children's entire life through their language development.

Lastly, in 1972, Snow did research on how a mother's speech changes when talking to children and how this change helps the children learn their language better. She found that mothers shorten their sentences, use fewer clauses, and often repeat what they say when speaking to their children. These changes in language usage by the children's mothers had a positive effect on the child's language acquisition (p. 564). Here, the research illustrates the positive effect mothers can have on their children through their language.

This previous research illustrates the powerful impact that families have on their children's language development, but most of it doesn't go into depth on one of the most influential relatives: the child's mother. There is still the question of how the mother and her language usage specifically influence the vocabulary, sentence structure, and general language used by young children. The research displayed here will fill that gap by examining the language used by four interviewees: two children and their mothers. The language used by each interviewee was analyzed to provide new data on how the language of mothers affects the language of their children.

Research Question and Methods

My research question is as follows: What is the effect of a mother's language on her child's language? To research this question, I decided it would be most beneficial to gather raw language data from a couple children and their mothers. I chose to interview an eight-year-old girl and her forty-four-year-old mother, as well as a ten-year-old boy and his fifty-four-year-old mother.

Each interview lasted different lengths, but only the first fifteen minutes were used from each participant. The questions I asked were meant to be thought provoking and conducive to storytelling to allow natural data to be gathered from the participants. I asked them about ten to fifteen questions each, depending on the route the interview took. The basic questions I asked everyone are as follows:

1. What is your name?
2. Where are you from?

3. How old are you?
4. How much formal schooling have you had?
5. What do you currently study in school?
6. What has been your favorite subject in school so far?
7. What would you say the happiest moment of your life has been so far?
8. What would you say has been the worst moment of your life so far? Why?
9. What would you say are the three most important aspects of life?
10. If you could be anywhere doing anything with anybody right now, what would it be?

After conducting these interviews, I transcribed the responses to text documents. I then uploaded these text documents into many online language analysis tools to compare the children's language to their mothers' language and the children and mothers to each other. I used the readability statistics given by Microsoft Word to collect data regarding the length of words, sentences, and readability. I then used Voyant text analysis software to more deeply analyze the content of the responses, specifically word usage and vocabulary. Finally, I analyzed all of the texts using Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) software to compare the characteristics of each of the texts I had collected to characteristics of other average personal writings.

Results

To discuss the results of my research I will present all the findings for each individual, starting with the first mother, Keri; then her daughter, Eliza; then the second mother, Marian; and finally her son, Ben. The specific aspects of the research I will focus on are the findings of word frequency, average words per sentence, I-words (words relating to the self, e.g., I, me, my), analytic score ("the degree to which people use . . . formal, logical, and hierarchical thinking patterns"), clout (relative confidence displayed), authenticity (relative humility and vulnerability displayed), and positive and negative word scores (LIWC). Figures and tables of each participant's raw data collected is organized in the appendix under each person's name.

The first thing I found when I gathered the text from Keri's interview was that she spoke 2,478 total words and had an average of 26.9 words per sentence. Her most frequent word was "like," said fifty-one times. Next, a graph of her most frequent words revealed that Keri said "like" and "said" often when she was telling a story or on a longer tangent of speech. A frequency word cloud illustrated that Keri answered most of the questions with stories and personal opinions. Keri's readability statistics pointed out that she had created ninety-five sentences throughout the interview. Lastly, Keri's LIWC data displayed that she had a greater number of I-words (11 vs. 8.7), clout (47.3 vs. 37.02), and authenticity (83.5 vs. 76.01) than average. It also exhibited that she had fewer negative emotions (1.1 vs. 2.12) and was significantly less analytic in her speech (8.6 vs. 44.88) than average but was about average with her positive emotions (2.3 vs. 2.57).

In Eliza's data from the readability statistics, it showed that she only recorded 493 words and seventy-four sentences. Her sentences had an average of 6.6 words, and Voyant stated that her most frequent word was "yeah," used twenty times. When asked questions, Eliza mostly responded with "yeah" and told few stories. Eliza's word cloud illustrated that most of her frequently used words were filler words used in her replies and stories. The data collected by LIWC indicated that Eliza used fewer I-words than average (7.5 vs. 8.7) but more cognitive processes than average (15 vs. 12.52). Overall, Eliza was less analytic in her speech (35.5 vs. 44.88) and had less clout (31.4 vs. 37.02) and less authenticity (61 vs. 76.01) than average but was much more emotional than average (71.4 vs. 38.6).

Marian's document as analyzed by Voyant had a total of 1,284 words with an average of 16.1 words per sentence. The most frequent words used were "like" with twenty-three uses and "really" with nineteen uses. Marian's most frequently used words illustrated that for most of her answers she shared stories about her family, other people, and her experiences. Her word cloud displayed this theme as well, with the more prominent words being "kids," "years," "think," "know," and "different." Marian's LIWC scores showed that she used fewer I-words (7.6 vs. 8.7) and negative emotions (0.4 vs. 2.12) than average but more positive words (3.9 vs. 2.57). Her text had less analytic speech than average (19.6 vs. 44.88) but much more clout (54.6 vs. 37.02) and authenticity (85.6 vs. 76.01).

Lastly, Ben's text document had 1,326 words total with an average of 20.1 words per sentence. The most frequent word used was "like" at thirty-seven uses, and his word usage graph shows that he used filler words very often in his speech. Ben's data from LIWC showed that he also used fewer I-words (6.3 vs. 8.7) than average. It also displayed that Ben used many more positive emotion words (2.9 vs. 2.57) and a lot fewer negative emotion words (0.5 vs. 2.12) than average. Ben's text was less analytic than average (14.7 vs. 44.88) but had above-average clout (49.6 vs. 37.02). He had about average authenticity (75.9 vs. 76.01).

Discussion

When analyzing my results, I discovered many interesting things about how a mother's language affects her children's language. First, I compared the speech of the two mothers to see what differences I could expect in their children. One of the most important differences I discovered was that Keri speaks much more quickly than Marian. For the fifteen-minute interview, Marian only spoke 1,284 words while Keri spoke 2,478 words. Keri also had an average of 26.9 words per sentence while Marian only had 16.1. Keri was definitely speaking at a much quicker rate and had a much longer sentence structure than Marian. If the way a mother speaks truly affects her children's language, then this observation should be true of their children as well.

The speed of Marian's speech could be attributed to her greater variety of vocabulary, as can be seen in a comparison of the word clouds created for each woman's texts. Keri's word cloud was dominated almost exclusively by the word "like." Marian's most used word was also "like," but her word cloud included several other words used almost as frequently including, "really," "people," "kids," "years," "know," "hand," and "think." Keri's rate of speech and frequent usage of the word "like" are possibly due to the story format of her interview question answers. Keri was much more natural in her speech as she told stories, unlike Marian, who gave very precise answers. These characteristics can be seen in Eliza's and Ben's speech respectively, illustrating the measurable effects their mothers' language has had on them.

Other scores from LIWC that were interesting were the positive and negative emotional word scores. Marian and Keri both scored lower than average in negative emotional word scores and above average for positive emotional word scores. In both cases Marian's emotional score was higher than Keri's. This result suggests that while both women shared emotional responses, Keri told more comical stories that held less-extreme emotions, whereas Marian was more focused on giving interview answers that tended to be more emotionally charged. In summary, these women illustrated similar positive and negative emotional scores, but they had differences between their speed and vocabulary. More importantly, these differences are visible when analyzing the language of their children, illustrating the mothers' direct effect on their children's language.

After analyzing and comparing the mothers to each other, I wanted to compare each one's language to her child's language and analyze the effect she had on her child's language. When comparing Marian to Ben, a few things are important to notice. First, Ben and his mother both spoke at about the same speed in the interview, and they had very similar language. While Marian only spoke 1,284 words with an average of sixteen words per sentence, Ben spoke 1,326 words with an average of twenty words per sentence. Ben is much younger than his mother, and usually one would assume he would speak much faster, but he only said one hundred more

words than she did in the fifteen minutes. When comparing their word clouds and most frequent word counts, both Marian and Ben had "like" as their most frequent word. This similarity in speed and sentence length illustrates how both mother and son spoke at around the same level of speech, even though they have more than a forty-year age difference.

Next, the LIWC scores of both Marian and Ben further illustrate how similarly they speak because they are mother and son. Here, I analyzed the positive and negative emotion scores for Ben and Marian side by side, and the most significant data was the negative emotional word score. Marian had a score of 0.4 and Ben had a score of 0.5. Not only are these scores incredibly similar to each other, but they are also unusually low when compared to the average. Looking at the positive emotions words both displayed, the scores were much higher than average: Marian with a 3.9 and Ben with a 2.9. This exhibits the similarity of their language as both being very positive. Marian's language has clearly affected Ben's, but Keri's influence on Eliza was completely different.

Next, I compared Eliza's language to her mother's. One thing that unexpectedly appeared during the interview stage of this study was Eliza's shyness. When initial interview determinations were made, she was excited and talkative, but once interviewing began it was difficult for her to be comfortable. Due to this, the results of this section became skewed, as much of the interview she spent answering questions with physical gestures or just "yes" or "no." She wasn't as prone to giving long stories for her answers but instead was very serious about the interview and answered all questions very concisely. Despite the shyness, I continued with the data comparisons in hope that there would still be some usable data. I first compared Keri's and Eliza's speed of language, their words per sentence, and their most frequent words. In her interview, Eliza said 494 words with an average of 9.9 words per sentence. This was much less than Keri's 2,478 words with 26.9 average words per sentence. When comparing Eliza's word cloud with Keri's, the word "like" stands out as a very frequently used word. It is the most frequently used word on Keri's word cloud, and on Eliza's it is the second most used word. The word "yeah" takes the number one spot for Eliza. She answered questions more with "yeah" instead of telling stories that would have incorporated more words. Out of the 2,478 words spoken by Keri, 2.1 percent of them were the word "like," and of Eliza's 494 words, 2.8 percent were the word "like." Despite being shy and not speaking much, Eliza still showed the effects of her mother's language on her by having a very similar ratio of "like" to total words.

The next portion of the analysis was on positive and negative emotional word scores. This piece of data was also not as supportive as I had hoped. The LIWC findings show that Keri's positive emotion score was below the average of 2.57, which is likely due to her telling stories that were less emotional, but Eliza's score was one point above the average at 3.6. Even in the little she said, Eliza's stories and words were found to be more

emotional than her mother's. One explanation for this difference could be that the word "yes," one of Eliza's more frequent answers, is considered a positive emotional word by LIWC. While Keri was willing to talk about many things and show some emotions, Eliza's lack of words but consistent use of affirmations gave her a greater positive emotional score. The comparison of Keri's and Eliza's LIWC data yielded almost exactly the same negative emotional tone scores of 1.1 for and 1.2, respectively. Overall, between Keri and Eliza, two things could be concluded. Either Eliza was much too shy to do the interview and to speak enough in fifteen minutes for all the necessary data to be gathered, or Keri has had little impact on Eliza's speech. Looking through all of the data, I believe there is enough evidence that Keri did indeed have an effect on Eliza's speech, even if it was very small according to the findings here.

Ben and Eliza, according to the research presented here, have had their language impacted to some extent by their mothers. Ben's language is reflective of his mother's, as is illustrated by his variety in vocabulary, speed of speech, I-word percentages, and positive and negative emotion scores. He was thoughtful and direct in his answers, much like his mother, and had similar sentence lengths and make-ups. Eliza was also clearly affected by her mother's speech, but less so than Ben. She was similar to Keri in the vocabulary makeup of her responses, but all the other data seemed to be skewed by the shyness exhibited during the interview. Eliza was simple and straightforward with her responses, but from the data collected it is still likely that her language has been affected by her mother, just in a less prominent way.

Conclusion

The research done in this article provides a solid basis upon which others can build to discover more about the effects of a mother's language on her children's language. I was limited in my time and resources to only interviewing and analyzing two children and their mothers, one of which didn't provide enough language data to be properly interpreted. If others were to do this same research on multiple mothers, with many of their children, or with adopted children versus unadopted children, I believe that my research indicates a significant variable may be found. This research is important because if we can understand where a child's language comes from and improve the source, we will be able to improve that child's future and many other children's futures. Language skills become the lens through which people see and interpret the world. As a society, we can help the next generation develop this lens so they will be better prepared to understand the world around them and how to improve it for everyone. Our children are our future, and studying their language development is part of what we can do to help create a better tomorrow.

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Appendix

Ben

Figure A1
Ben's LIWC Results

Traditional LiWC Dimension	Your Data	Average for Personal Writing
I-words (I, Me, My)	6.3	8.70
Social Words	7.7	8.69
Positive Emotions	2.9	2.57
Negative Emotions	0.5	2.12
Cognitive Processes	14.4	12.52
Summary Variables		
Analytic	14.7	44.88
Clout	49.4	37.02
Authenticity	75.9	76.01
Emotional Tone	71.1	38.46

Figure A2
Ben's Word Cloud



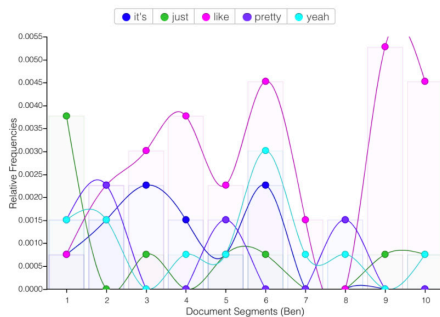
Figure A3

Ben's Readability Statistics

Counts	
Words	1,326
Characters	5,245
Paragraphs	1
Sentences	71
Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	71
Words per Sentence	18.6
Characters per Word	3.8
Readability	
Flesch Reading Ease	81.8
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	6.4
Passive Sentences	0%

Figure A4

Ben's Voyant Results



This corpus has 1 document with 1,326 total words and 406 unique word forms. Created now.

Vocabulary Density: 0.306

Average Words Per Sentence: 20.1

Most **frequent words** in the corpus: like (37); yeah (13); it's (12); just (10); pretty (9)

Marian

Figure A5
Marian's LIWC Results

Traditional LiWC Dimension	Your Data	Average for Personal Writing
I-words (I, Me, My)	7.6	8.70
Social Words	12.3	8.69
Positive Emotions	3.9	2.57
Negative Emotions	0.4	2.12
Cognitive Processes	14.3	12.52
Summary Variables		
Analytic	19.6	44.88
Clout	54.6	37.02
Authenticity	85.6	76.01
Emotional Tone	85.9	38.40

Figure A6
Marian's Word Cloud

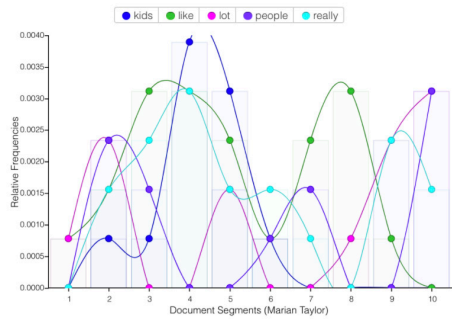


Figure A7
Marian's Readability Statistics

Counts	
Words	1,283
Characters	5,400
Paragraphs	1
Sentences	80
Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	80
Words per Sentence	16
Characters per Word	4
Readability	
Flesch Reading Ease	79.6
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	6
Passive Sentences	3.7%

Figure A8

Marian's Voyant Results



This corpus has 1 document with 1,284 total words and 373 unique word forms. Created now.

Vocabulary Density: 0.290

Average Words Per Sentence: 16.1

Most **frequent words** in the corpus: like (23); really (19); lot (14); kids (12); people (12)

Figure A10
Eliza's LIWC Results

TRADITIONAL LIWC DIMENSION	YOUR DATA	AVERAGE FOR PERSONAL WRITING
I-WORDS (I, ME, MY)	7.5	8.70
SOCIAL WORDS	7.5	8.69
POSITIVE EMOTIONS	3.6	2.57
NEGATIVE EMOTIONS	1.2	2.12
COGNITIVE PROCESSES	15.0	12.52
SUMMARY VARIABLES		
ANALYTIC	35.5	44.88
CLOUT	31.4	37.02
AUTHENTICITY	61.0	76.01
EMOTIONAL TONE	71.4	38.60

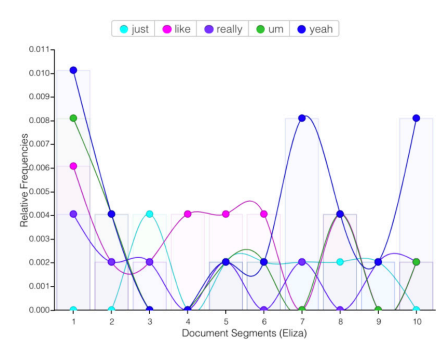
Figure A11
Eliza's Word Cloud



Figure A12
Eliza's Readability Statistics

Readability Statistics	
Counts	
Words	493
Characters	2,073
Paragraphs	1
Sentences	74
Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	74
Words per Sentence	6.6
Characters per Word	3.9
Readability	
Flesch Reading Ease	94.8
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	1.6
Passive Sentences	1.3%

Figure A13
Eliza's Voyant Results



This corpus has 1 document with 494 total words and 213 unique word forms. Created now.

Vocabulary Density: 0.431

Average Words Per Sentence: 9.9

Most **frequent words** in the corpus: yeah (20); like (14); um (11); really (8); just (7)

Keri

Figure A14
Keri's LIWC Results

Traditional LiWC Dimension	Your Data	Average for Personal Writing
I-words (I, Me, My)	11.0	8.70
Social Words	11.4	8.69
Positive Emotions	2.3	2.57
Negative Emotions	1.1	2.12
Cognitive Processes	10.8	12.52
Summary Variables		
Analytic	8.6	44.88
Clout	47.3	37.02
Authenticity	83.5	76.01
Emotional Tone	49.3	38.48

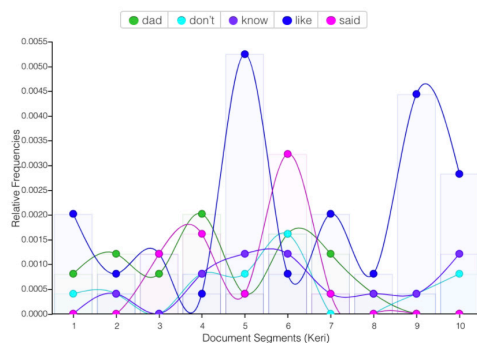
Figure A15
Keri's Word Cloud



Figure A16
Keri's Readability Statistics

Counts	
Words	2,475
Characters	9,853
Paragraphs	1
Sentences	95
Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	95
Words per Sentence	26
Characters per Word	3.8
Readability	
Flesch Reading Ease	75
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	9.2
Passive Sentences	3.1%

Figure A17
Keri's Voyant Results



This corpus has 1 document with 2,478 total words and 578 unique word forms. Created now.

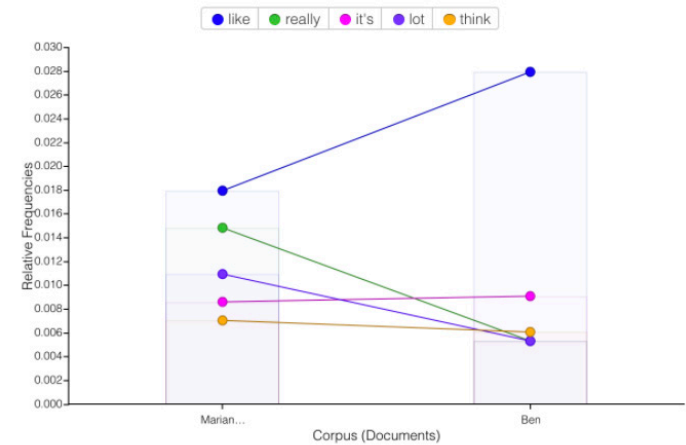
Vocabulary Density: 0.233

Average Words Per Sentence: 26.9

Most **frequent words** in the corpus: like (51); dad (21); said (17); know (15); don't (13)

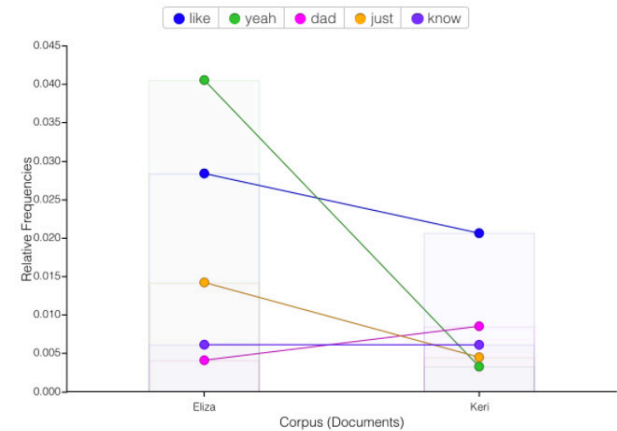
Marian vs. Ben

Figure A9
Comparison of Ben's vs. Marian's Voyant Results



Eliza vs. Keri

Figure A18
Comparison of Eliza's and Keri's Voyant Results



Group Data

Figure A19
Combined Voyant Results

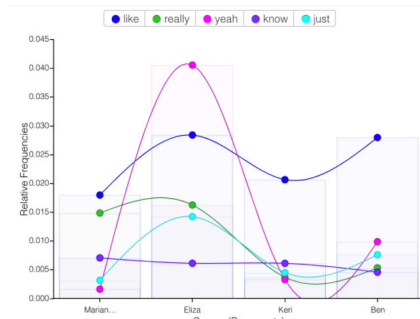


Figure A20
Combined Word Cloud



Figure A2
LIWC Data for Eliza, Ben, Keri, and Marian

	Title	Words	Types	Ratio	Words/Sentence
1	Marian	1,284	373	29%	16.1
2	Eliza	494	213	43%	9.9
3	Keri	2,478	578	23%	26.9
4	Ben	1,326	406	31%	20.1

Vocabulary Density:

- Highest: Eliza (0.431); Ben (0.306)
- Lowest: Keri (0.233); Marian (0.290)

Document Length:

- Longest: Keri (2478); Ben (1326)
- Shortest: Eliza (494); Marian (1284)

Average Words Per Sentence:

- Highest: Keri (26.9); Ben (20.1)
- Lowest: Eliza (9.9); Marian (16.1)

Distinctive Words (compared to the rest of the corpus):

1. Marian: hand (10), things (7), kids (12), palo (4), older (4).
2. Eliza: dreams (4), underwater (3), kinda (3), important (3), holding (3).
3. Keri: city (10), said (17), called (8), suburb (6), nice (6).
4. Ben: I've (5), read (4), mud (4), Greg (4), grade (8).

Most **frequent words** in the corpus: like (125); really (43); yeah (43); know (33); just (32)

BYU Slang

Its Influences and the A-Curve

Emma Franklin

In any community, members develop slang to identify themselves and to describe the group's unique aspects, and Brigham Young University is no exception. By asking students and alumni to anonymously submit slang terms, this study seeks to determine whether BYU slang fits into an A-curve pattern, meaning that merely a few slang words account for most of the submissions. The results indicate that it does. The article also contains a compiled dictionary of BYU slang terms and investigates what the terms identified in the study reveal about the values of BYU culture and their relation to local and national slang.

Like members of any community, students at Brigham Young University employ a complicated, diverse vocabulary of slang words such as “NCMO” (non-committal make out), “Cougareat,” and “freshman hill.” These words range in meaning, usage, and comprehensibility, even from person to person. However, as a BYU student myself, I have noticed that certain terms have emerged as more commonly understood or more popular, while others are more obscure. The purpose of this study was to learn more about what words and phrases are most frequently identified by BYU students and alumni as part of unique BYU slang. Additionally, since BYU is closely connected to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and is situated in the state of Utah, the study looked for overlap between the slang terms and aspects of Church and regional culture. The slang identified in this study could also reveal values and important aspects of life as a BYU student, which could promote an increased understanding of BYU culture. Most importantly, the study investigated if the slang terms identified correspond to an A-curve pattern as demonstrated in similar studies.

Background of College Slang

The word *slang* is usually employed to describe words that deviate from the traditionally accepted words of a society. According to Eble (1996), a professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, slang is “fashionable” and used mainly as a form of “social solidarity” (p. 10). Later, Eble (1996) expands her definition and explains that slang comprises “an changing set of colloquial words and phrases that speakers use to establish or reinforce social identity or cohesiveness within a group or with a trend or fashion in society at large” (p. 18). In other words, using certain slang words help identify someone as part of a group and even emphasizes whether or not they belong to a specific community. If a person uses current, trending slang, they are considered “cool,” whereas if they use slang that is out of style, they are considered “uncool.”

Among college students, slang is often used to fit in with others and communicate aspects of campus life that are unique or important. When relating slang terms to college students, Eble (1996) says that the function of slang as identifying someone as part of a group is its most important trait (p. 105). She explains that American college students rely on slang to be accepted by their peers and to establish a sense of belonging (p. 106). Similarly, Hummon (1994) defines college slang as “oral, informal, highly expressive language that is created and used primarily by students as part of undergraduate life” (p. 77). However, college slang can become more complicated because young adults tend to incorporate a variety of slang words that don’t always originate solely from their college campus. The students draw from general slang that represents a larger culture as well as slang vocabulary from the college subculture—broader terms shared by college

students nationally and more specific terms from regional or institutional subcultures (Hummon, 1994, p. 76). Thus, it is expected that college slang terms can be typically sorted into broad, national slang words, regional slang, and institution-specific slang.

Slang is constantly changing as new words are invented and introduced while others fade from use. Thus, when students are asked to identify slang words, there is always a range of terms and opinions, as demonstrated in two studies of college slang. In a study done by Eble (1996), when students were asked to bring ten examples of "good, current campus slang" to class on a notecard, most of the items were not original and were not unique terms to the college. Furthermore, not every student was familiar with terms other students had thought of, and there was disagreement about the meaning and usage of certain words (p. 13). However, the results of a study by Hummon (1994) collecting college slang identities, or labels used to describe groups or types of students, differed from Eble's. He found that the identifiers mentioned by students were about one-third general slang and about two-thirds college slang, which was defined in the study as words not found in *The American Dictionary of Slang* (p. 80). Despite the variety of findings, it can be agreed that what students consider "college slang" usually consists of both terms specific to the college or local community and more general or broad terms. Since I will be asking students and alumni to identify unique slang from BYU, I would expect more specific terms, even though there will likely still be more general slang.

When the slang of a culture or community is studied, the topics or meanings of the terms could give insight into what it's like to be part of that group. Eble (1996) states that "the slang of a group proliferates around topics of importance to that group," and slang could also provide a way to violate "linguistic taboos" of that culture and flout social norms (p. 49). Hummon (1994) addresses this point and explains that college slang could represent student subculture and thus the different, unique, or important values and experiences of undergraduates (p. 83). He goes on to say that undergraduate slang comes from so many different categories—general slang of national culture, national collegiate culture, regional or institutional sources, and small-group experience—because undergraduate life is so complex (p. 93). Moreover, because society has become so interconnected through media and technology, college students are likely generating, appropriating, and using more slang than ever before (Eble, 1996, p. 123). Therefore, college slang can reveal more about undergraduate life, including important values and shared experiences, and can originate from a variety of sources. Since students are producing and using a considerable amount of slang, they are likely applying it to their current situation and using it to set themselves apart as a distinct group. As such, it is anticipated that BYU students are doing this same thing—incorporating broader slang and inventing new words to cement their group identity.

This study was mainly inspired by another study by Connie Eble in 2017. Eble references William A. Kretzschmar, Jr's A-curve theory, which states that the distribution of variants of linguistic features is nonlinear and falls along an asymptotic hyperbolic curve. In her study, Eble asked a group of college students at the University of North Carolina to anonymously identify ten examples of "good, current campus slang." After receiving the submissions, the words were alphabetized and counted based on their frequency. The results confirmed Kretzschmar's claim that most submissions consisted of the same items and formed an A-curve (Eble, 2017, pp. 92–93). Thus, it can be expected that the slang of most varieties, including college slang, will follow this same pattern of an A-curve. In other words, a small number of slang terms identified will account for most of the submissions.

Methods

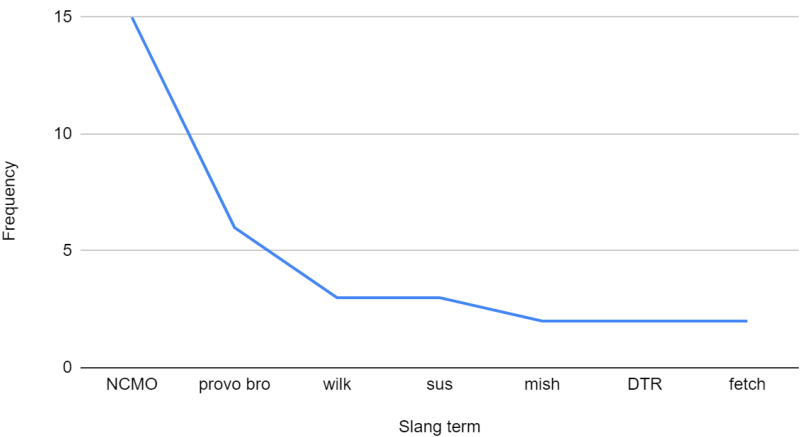
Inspired by Eble's 2017 study, I decided to collect a sample of slang terms identified by BYU students or alumni. I created a Google Form which asked the student or alumnus to identify a slang word or phrase unique to BYU, along with its part of speech, definition, context in which it's used, where it originated, how widely it's used, and any other comments. The survey responses were collected anonymously through social media, and the students and alumni were encouraged to fill the form out multiple times based on how many terms they could think of. The only demographic question was whether the respondent was a BYU student or alumnus. Once the survey closed, the Google Form organized the results into a table, and I manually counted the frequency of each term and noted which ones were identified the most often. I then created a graph to see if the results corresponded with an A-curve. Finally, I compiled a dictionary of all the slang words, combining repeated items into the same entry. In each entry, I listed the parts of speech given, the definition, some relevant details from other responses on the form such as the context or origin, and any example sentences that were included with the response. Although the entries were slightly modified to contain proper grammar, the text of the example sentences and definitions were taken directly from the responses to the form. These entries were then alphabetized and formatted to resemble a dictionary.

Results

The form received sixty-two total responses, fifty-three from current BYU students and nine from alumni. Since responses were submitted anonymously and participants were able to submit multiple slang terms, it is unclear how many people responded. The complete dictionary, which includes all terms identified, can be seen in the appendix. After the number of times each item was listed was counted, the frequency of all items that

appeared more than once were placed into a line graph to represent the trend from highest to lowest. The resulting graph can be seen in figure 1 below.

Figure 1
A-Curve for BYU Slang, November 2020



Discussion

As shown in figure 1, the term that received the most responses was “NCMO,” with fifteen students or alumni identifying it as a unique BYU slang term. The next most frequent response, “provo bro,” was only submitted six times. For the purposes of this study, this term was combined with the phrases “provo all-star,” “brovo,” and “basic provo bro,” because the students provided similar definitions. There were two words, “wilk” and “sus,” that received three submissions, and three words, “mish,” “DTR,” and “fetch,” that had two submissions each. The remaining thirty-six items in the dictionary were only submitted once.

Judging from this data, the findings show that the frequency in which BYU students and alumni identified slang terms follows a general A-curve trend because the terms identified were not equally distributed among responses; instead, one term received the majority of responses. While the most frequently identified word, “NCMO,” represents only 24.2 percent of submissions, it greatly outnumbers the next highest term, “provo bro,” which accounts for approximately 0.10 percent. It is unclear if the majority of respondents identified this word or not because participants were encouraged to submit more than once, and all submissions were anonymous. Despite this, the results indicate that “NCMO” is among the most popularly used slang terms at BYU.

The terms that were most often identified in this study as BYU slang also provide insight to the values of students at the university, especially the institution-specific words. BYU is known for its Honor Code and for consisting

mainly of students and faculty belonging to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Since a priority for young adults in the Church is getting married and starting families, it is not surprising that two of the most common words, NCMO and DTR, relate to the level of commitment in relationships. As the definitions provided by students and alumni suggest, "NCMO," or "non-committal make out," is used to describe someone flouting the social expectation of only making out when in a committed relationship while "DTR," or "determine the relationship," refers to the process by which a couple decides how committed they want their relationship to be. The high frequency of these words indicates that a main preoccupation of BYU students is dating and relationships, which is defied by some through NCMOs and encouraged by others through DTRs.

Furthermore, out of the seven most-identified terms, it appears that most of them are specific to BYU campus. As mentioned earlier, "DTR" and "NCMO" relate to the pressure at BYU to start dating to find a spouse. "Wilk" refers to the Wilkinson Student Center, which is a building on the campus. Naturally, these campus-specific words would come to mind when students and alumni are asked to identify BYU slang since they are not found anywhere else. Furthermore, as the Wilkinson Center is a central gathering place on BYU campus, "Wilk" is a more popularly used abbreviation from students in all majors and all years in school.

Meanwhile, two terms, "mish" and "fetch," seem to stem from a broader Church culture rather than BYU culture. "Mish" refers to missions served by members of the Church, which is when young men and women live away from home for two years or eighteen months, respectively, and teach other people about the Church. Many BYU students served missions, so it makes sense that they would use a shortened version of the word in conversation as they reference their missions quite often in casual conversation. Similarly, "fetch" is employed as a substitute curse word due to the Church's discouragement of swearing. Both of these words, while found on BYU campus, are most likely used by Church members located throughout the world, so they cannot be limited to strictly BYU campus slang. Since BYU and Church culture are so intertwined, it is hard to distinguish the line between certain slang terms such as these.

Likewise, the local and national culture influence BYU slang terminology. "Provo bro" suggests that it could be used by anyone in the Provo area, which is the city where BYU is located, whereas "sus," originating from the popular game Among Us, is a broader term used by almost anyone who plays the game. Since "provo bro" was identified quite frequently, it can be assumed that regional influences have slightly more influence on BYU slang than national culture. However, the range of influences present in just the seven terms with the highest frequency reveals the complex nature of BYU slang. It is clear that BYU college students use a variety of slang that comes from the campus environment, local and Church culture, and a more general national culture.

Conclusion

While this study is limited by scope and resources, it serves to reaffirm Eble's findings that the slang used by college students falls into an A-curve. The results demonstrate that, like other college students, students at BYU employ slang from many different aspects of their culture, whether it be parts specific to BYU, the Church, the city of Provo, or national trends. It also shows that there is much research that could be done about BYU slang and further explain how the slang used by BYU students relates to their values. Future research could analyze social acceptance of certain slang words such as "provo bro" and "NCMO" that seemed to elicit strong reactions in some responders. Other studies could analyze how BYU slang has changed over the years to see if alumni identify different slang than current students, or they could look more extensively at how the Church culture affects how BYU students speak. From this study, it is evident that the slang used on BYU campus is complex, comes from several sources, and reflects values that are held in the campus community.

References

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Appendix

bro and hoes *noun* 1. Provo bros and hoes; really basic and like to party, NCMO, and sell pest control, as in "Wow, she is such a hoe," or "He is a total bro."

cheese and rice *interjection* 1. Replacement word for "Jesus Christ" when someone is scared or has messed up.

Cougies *noun* 1. Another word for Cougars, as in "The BYU cougars are undefeated this year! Go Cougies!" Used mostly from people who watch sports.

deznat *noun* 1. "Deseret Nationalist"; from the #deznat movement on Twitter, a right-wing orthodox movement that tries to hold against liberal social change in the Church, as in "Where can I find the deznat blocklist?"

DTR *noun* 1. Abbreviation of "determine the relationship," meaning a discussion you have with someone to figure out what your relationship status is, as in "Johnny and I have gone out on three dates. I think it's time for a DTR"; 2. *verb* "Oh my gosh, you've been on THREE dates? You guys need to DTR!"

durf, derf *verb* 1. The act of premarital dry humping; usually occurs during the courting period for the LDS religion and used by party kids, as in "Hey baby girl, lemme durf."

ex-mo *noun* 1. Ex-Mormons, as in "Oh yeah, she's totally ex-mo, already put in to get her records removed."

fetch, fetchers, fetching *interjection* 1. A substitute swear word, as in "What the fetch? Where's my fetching watch?"; 2. Dang it, as in "Fetch! I just stubbed my toe!"

freshman hill *noun* 1. The hill that goes from Helaman Halls to campus, as in "I walked up freshman hill to get to campus, and it was the most exercise I've had all week."

g's *noun* 1. Used as a weird way to avoid saying the word religious "garments," as in "Ah man, I don't think I can wear this skirt with my g's on."

Happy Valley *noun* 1. The area of Utah that is highly concentrated with Mormons, who purportedly have no problems and a rosy outlook on life because they are all Church members; often used by people not from Utah making fun of Utahns who live in a bubble, as in "Nothing ever goes wrong in Happy Valley!"

jay dubs *noun* 1. Jehovah's Witnesses, used only by missionaries or returned missionaries, as in "I saw Jay dubs on my mission all the time."

Jose-B *noun* 1. A shorthand for the JSB, as in "My class is in the Jose-B."

mac *verb* 1. Make out, as in "I came home to find my roommate and his girlfriend maccin' on the couch."

midterm *noun* 1. Any test that is not a final, evolved as a means to explain the endless line of assessments in most BYU courses, as in "Sorry I can't make it this time—I've got to study for my midterm tomorrow."

mish *noun* 1. LDS Church mission, as in "I have so many amazing memories from the mish"; "Oh, dude, remember that time on the mish when we didn't get home until midnight because we were helping that guy change his tire?"

Mutual *noun* 1. A dating app for members of the LDS faith, as in "They met on Mutual."

NCMO *noun* 1. Non-committal make out, as in "I had a NCMO last night"; "She had a NCMO at Squaw Peak last night"; "This guy on Mutual wants to have a NCMO with me"; "You know he created a Mutual account for NCMOs"; "Jonny and I had a NCMO last night"; "That was a great NCMO last night"; "Brad only wanted a NCMO, so I decided to leave early"; "We didn't go on a date; it was just a NCMO"; "He totally had a NCMO last night with that girl"; 2. *verb* To make out with a random person for the pure carnal sensation, no feelings or commitment attached, as in "All the Provo Bros wanted was to NCMO"; "This guy named Brayden asked me over Mutual if I was 'down to NCMO.'"; "Johnny wants to NCMO Julia next week."

oh my heck *interjection* 1. A substitute for "what the heck."

pazookie *noun* 1. Pizza cookie, as in "We could get a pazookie for dessert."

pre-mi (pronounced like the term for a pre-term baby) *noun* 1. Abbreviation of "pre-mission"; used to describe someone who hasn't gone on a mission yet; girls looking to get married will stay away from them, as in "You don't want to date Kyler; he's a pre-mi."

progmo *noun* 1. Progressive Mormon; someone who is Mormon and also very forward-thinking, often supporting gay rights, racial justice, and gender equality, as in "She's a progmo; I saw her at a protest for BLM."

provo all-star, basic provo bro, provo bro, brovo *noun* 1. A tool who lives in Provo, as in "That guy's a provo; he's always at VASA hitting on the ladies." 2. A male aged 18–30 who lives in Provo or Orem, usually at the Village or Alpine Village, stereotyped to drive BMWs, work out at VASA, and do summer sales in Orange county, as in "He seemed like a nice guy until I noticed his Instagram was filled with shirtless gym selfies. What a Provo All-Star." 3. A basic bro in Provo, usually a tall, skinny white kid from Utah or Idaho who lives the gospel to the fullest and often thinks he is "cultured" from serving a foreign mission; lives the Provo culture, does summer sales and talks about it for the rest of the year, cannot handle spicy food, and likes to show off his piano skills in public, as in "He is a Basic Provo Bro." 4. Usually an RM who works at summer sales or pest control; implies non-committal relationships with girls and a hotheaded, party attitude, as in "He dumped you because he missed dating other people?"

He is such a Provo bro!" 5. A boy who is a player or noncommitted heartbreaker, as in "Are you sure you want to date him? He seems like a Provo bro."

rip *verb* 1. Comes from "RIP," but it is pronounced "rip" not "R-I-P"; means "dang it" or "that sucks."

RM *noun* 1. Returned missionary, as in "He's an RM."

SFLC (pronounced like "syphilis") *noun* 1. Abbreviation for Smith Family Living Center; used by alumni only since the building no longer exists, as in "I have three classes in the SFLC."

sus *adjective* 1. Describes something that is suspicious or fishy, especially when people play Among Us, as in "Red is sus. Look at what she's doing!"; "Did you see Henry? He's looking kinda sus"; "Emma didn't come to work today, that's sus."

SWKT (pronounced Swicket) *noun* 1. The previous abbreviation for the Kimball Tower, as in "I had a class in the bottom of the SWKT."

TBM *noun* 1. True blue Mormon; someone who is very dedicated to the Church; usually only used for the most extreme or intensely Mormon people, as in "He's a TBM. Never even smelled coffee."

true freshman *noun* 1. A person who is a freshman and has not gone on a mission, as in "I only date true freshmen."

tunnel singing *noun* 1. A cheesy Sunday night activity for freshmen living in the dorms; they go to a tunnel by the Marriott Center that has good acoustics to sing, as in "Hey, you wanna go tunnel singing tonight?"

way *adjective* 1. Synonym for "really," as in "That was way fun."

Wilk *noun* 1. Abbreviation for the Wilkinson Center, as in "Let's meet at the Wilk for FHE"; "I went to the Wilk to get some food to eat."

woosh, Kevin *interjection* 1. Used when the basketball team makes a free throw, as in "The forward made the free throw and the student section shouted, 'Woosh, Kevin!'"

Zoobie *noun* 1. A married person who has a lot of kids, as in "Are there a lot of Zoobies in your ward?"

Add a Title. That Will Help Readers Know What Your Paper Is About

Research on the Clarity and Politeness of Editorial Queries and Comments

Kyla Hill

In "Add a Title. That Will Help Readers Know What Your Paper Is About: Research on the Clarity and Politeness of Editorial Queries and Comments," the author shares the research and analysis behind various types of editorial comments that one can make when editing an author's work. Based on a similar study, the author conducted research via a survey with the same variables and found that direct comments were often rated better than comments that included downgraders and that passive voice comments often came across as more polite than those in active voice.

Being an editor is a unique position in that the person editing has the opportunity to enhance the words of another by working with the author to make those words look and sound as intended. An editor is “instructed to point out the difficult[ies] and ask the author to resolve [them]” (Einsohn, 2019, p. 10). From the time we are children, we are taught to politely say, “Yes, please” and “No, thank you” when responding to queries, making parents happier and more likely to respond positively to their child’s requests. Similarly, editors must query and comment on errors politely, making authors happier and more likely to use that same editor for future work. “For both practical and humanistic reasons, the editor must convince through tact and reasoning (rather than dictate through force and belittlement), and must take into account the writer’s personal stake in both the writing process and the written product,” say Jo Mackiewicz and Kathryn Riley (2003) in their article “The Technical Editor as Diplomat: Linguistic Strategies for Balancing Clarity and Politeness” (p. 84). Carol Saller (2016) too agrees that how something is said can be as important as what is said: “Care in editing is demonstrated by the quality of the changes you suggest, but the impression given by excellent line editing can be undone by ill-considered queries to the writer” (p. 23). A balance of politeness and clarity is required for effective editing work.

Mackiewicz and Riley (2003) give several examples as to how someone can say the same thing with various levels of politeness and clarity, along with reasons why a certain query or comment may provoke a certain response from the author. My research question is as follows: How can an editor best balance clarity and politeness? I will explain the method of surveying that I used to develop an answer to this question, followed by an analysis and discussion of the results and how my research question was answered.

Methods

Mackiewicz and Riley (2003) discuss eight strategies to form a query or comment for an author and suggest that there are benefits and drawbacks to each one. The eight strategies are using opinion, active derivable, bald-on-record, active preparatory, interrogative, passive derivable, passive preparatory, and hint (Mackiewicz & Riley, 2003). I created three examples of each of the eight strategies based off the examples given in the article by Mackiewicz and Riley. One example from each strategy used a downgrader, or “words and phrases that can mitigate an underlying directive” (Mackiewicz and Riley, 2003, p. 86). I then created a digital survey and distributed it to fifty-three participants who were asked for their age, gender, and native language along with their responses to the examples. They recorded their responses on two Likert scales of one to five—the first scale using one star

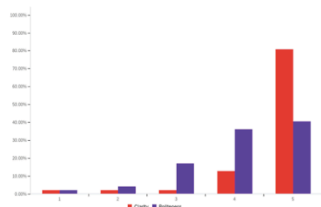
to signify “extremely unclear” and five stars to signify “extremely clear,” and the other scale using one star to signify “extremely impolite” and five stars to signify “extremely polite.” I asked the participants to pretend that they were an author of a book they were hoping to publish and then had them respond to the survey. The data was then collected and formed into charts, where I recognized which examples had the highest and lowest scores, on average, for both clarity and politeness. From these scores, I analyzed the results to see if they matched up with the ideas presented by Mackiewicz and Riley. For example, were the bald-on-record comments really the clearest and the passive examples really the most unclear, as they suggest in their article?

Results

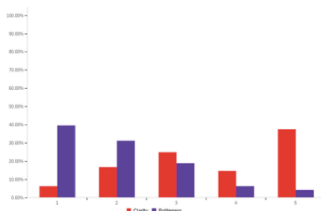
Most responses had some variance, but for the most part the participants seemed to rate both clarity and politeness more or less equally; no one example or strategy scored poorly in both clarity and politeness. Some of

Figure 1

“Increase the size of the typeface in these headings. That will make it easier for the reader to differentiate the headings from the body text”



“Include a table in this section, OK?”



Note. A downgrader made a significant difference in the way the politeness of a bald-on-record example was viewed.

the most interesting results were the ratings of the sentences used for the bald-on-record strategy, which is to state something directly with no room to confuse the directive with any other suggestion (see figure 1). If there was a winning sentence with the highest scores for both clarity and politeness from those used in this survey, surely it would be “Increase the size of the typeface in these headings. That will make it easier for the reader to differentiate the headings from the body text.” This example scored highly for both clarity and politeness because it is clear what the editor wants the author to do, and it is polite because of the justification from the editor. On the other hand, another bald-on-record example scored poorly for politeness even though it scored well for clarity: “Include a table in this section, OK?” This is interesting considering that this second example used a downgrader. Most other examples that included a downgrader generally were responded to as more polite, even compared to the other examples for the same strategy. The only other example

with a downgrader that seemed to do poorly in the area of politeness as well was “You know, graphic aids can help the reader understand data.”

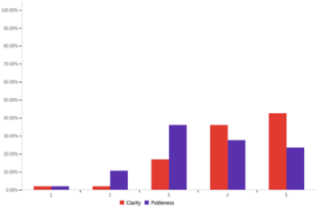
Clarity scored the highest in the examples given to represent the passive derivable, passive preparatory, and hint strategies—except for the examples with downgraders. Opinion, interrogative, and active preparatory strategies yielded sentences that scored well with politeness. Figure 2 shows a comparison of the same suggestion being told with the active derivable strategy and the passive derivable strategy, both of which were rated very clear and polite. Overall, this survey has shown through its results that clarity and politeness are more subjective than objective in nature, which follows Mackiewicz and Riley’s idea that there is a time and a reason to use each different strategy.

Discussion

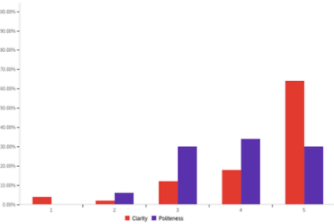
One conclusion that can be drawn from these results is that downgraders may be more effective in context than they are in single-sentence survey questions. Mackiewicz and Riley’s article advised using downgraders to mitigate a query or comment’s directness; however, my research yielded more results in favor of a more direct approach. My participants felt that downgraders made queries and comments less clear and far less polite.

As mentioned earlier, figure 2 shows the results of active and passive locution-derivable strategies. Both examples show that participants largely found this strategy to be clear and polite, with the passive derivable example showing the most sense of clarity. This obvious sense of clarity was also present in the passive derivable example of “The size of the type-face in those headings should be increased.” The passive preparatory examples, which were essentially the same wording save for the word *could* (in place of *should*), were, interestingly enough, not rated to be as clear as their derivable counterparts. This goes to show that the modals an editor chooses to use make a difference in the reception of a comment. Choosing to use an active or a passive voice makes a difference as well; the active derivable examples scored lower in clarity, even with the modal *should*. Perhaps it’s the pronoun *you* that made the participants (and thus, would

Figure 2
“You should revise this sentence for consistent subject-verb agreement.”



“This sentence should be revised to follow subject-verb agreement.”



Note. Derivative sentences, whether active or passive, scored fairly well in both regards.

make authors) feel as though the editor is imposing his or her intellect onto them; a passive voice can lessen that feeling by providing a teaching moment that doesn't feel so targeted towards the author.

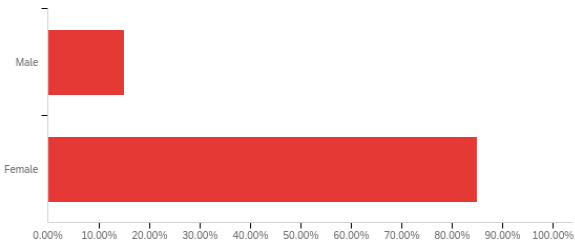
This research, both from Mackiewicz and Riley as well as myself, proves that an editor must recognize that there is more than one right way to make a comment on an author's work. Clarity is important, but so is an editor's reputation with an author, company, or other work; thus, politeness is also a good goal. As I learn from this research and use my best judgment, the linguistic reasoning behind why a comment may come across as more or less clear or polite will accompany my instincts and provide more effective and beneficial interactions with authors, as it will for any editor.

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Appendix

What is your gender?



#	What is your gender?	Percentage
1	Male	15.09%
2	Female	84.91%
	Total	53

What is your age?

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	What is your age?	2.00	39.00	13.28	12.87	165.75	53

18 – 24: 67.04%
25 – 40: 10.33%
41 – 54: 15.09%
55+: 7.54%

What is your native language?

English: 94%
German: 4%
Japanese: 2%

“I would increase the size of the typeface in these headings.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	4.21	1.03	1.05	52
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	4.15	0.93	0.86	52

“You should include a table in this section.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.94	1.02	1.04	51
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	3.53	1.00	0.99	51

“Revise this sentence so that the subject-verb agreement is consistent.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	4.08	1.06	1.13	51
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	3.57	1.14	1.30	51

“You could increase the size of the typeface in these headings. That's just a suggestion.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.78	1.11	1.23	51
2	Politeness	2.00	5.00	4.37	0.77	0.59	51

“How about possibly including a table in this section?”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.63	1.07	1.14	51
2	Politeness	3.00	5.00	4.49	0.64	0.41	51

“This sentence should be revised to follow subject-verb agreement.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	4.36	1.03	1.07	50
2	Politeness	2.00	5.00	3.88	0.91	0.83	50

“The size of the typeface in these headings could be increased.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.82	1.00	1.01	49
2	Politeness	2.00	5.00	4.20	0.76	0.57	49

“You know, graphic aids can help the reader understand data.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	2.94	1.31	1.72	47
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	2.81	1.21	1.47	47

“I think this sentence would make more sense if the subject and verb were in agreement.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.81	1.25	1.57	48
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	3.96	1.10	1.21	48

“You should probably increase the size of the typeface in these headings.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.79	1.08	1.16	48
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	3.48	1.10	1.21	48

“Include a table in this section, OK?”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.60	1.30	1.70	48
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	2.04	1.10	1.21	48

“You could revise the subject-verb agreement in this sentence.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.43	1.07	1.14	47
2	Politeness	2.00	5.00	3.79	0.85	0.72	47

“Could you increase the size of the typeface in these headings?”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.66	1.28	1.63	47
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	3.98	0.98	0.96	47

“A table should probably be included in this section.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.62	1.18	1.39	47
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	3.51	1.09	1.19	47

“This sentence could be revised so the subject and verb agree in number.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.32	1.47	2.17	47
2	Politeness	2.00	5.00	3.89	1.02	1.03	47

“Using typeface size to differentiate between headings and body text aids the reader’s comprehension.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.83	1.34	1.80	47
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	4.00	1.09	1.19	47

“I would maybe include a table in this section.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.02	1.16	1.34	47
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	3.89	0.90	0.82	47

“You should revise this sentence for consistent subject-verb agreement.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	4.15	0.92	0.85	47
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	3.60	1.02	1.05	47

“Increase the size of the typeface in these headings. That will make it easier for the reader to differentiate the headings from the body text.”

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	4.68	0.80	0.64	47
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	4.09	0.96	0.93	47

I think you could include a table in this section."

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.45	1.11	1.23	47
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	3.72	1.09	1.18	47

"Will you revise this sentence for subject-verb agreement?"

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.45	1.23	1.52	47
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	3.64	1.24	1.55	47

"The size of the typeface in those headings should be increased."

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	4.24	0.98	0.96	46
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	3.24	1.20	1.44	46

"Maybe a table could be included in this section."

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.04	1.14	1.30	46
2	Politeness	2.00	5.00	3.96	0.88	0.78	46

"Making sure your subject and verb agree in number is important for the clarity of a sentence."

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Clarity	1.00	5.00	3.78	1.28	1.65	46
2	Politeness	1.00	5.00	3.61	1.09	1.19	46

The Importance of Dialectical Studies

Grammatical Constructions of African American English

Livy Andrus

Nonstandard dialects are often associated with negative stereotypes, even though the grammatical systems they employ are as consistent and valid as those found in standard dialects. This article analyzes several unique grammatical constructions found in a sample of African American English speech to show that grammar in nonstandard English dialects is just as consistent and valid as in Standard American English and to emphasize the importance of dialectical studies. This is done in the context of the 2012 court trial of the murder of Trayvon Martin, whose outcome was heavily influenced by the spoken dialect of the key witness.

Most, if not all, languages today contain several different dialects. A dialect is a grammatically unique form of a language that is used specifically by those in a certain region or social group. Usually, one of these dialects is identified as the “standard” and so is the most recognized and accepted among both native and foreign language speakers. However, the dialects that are not considered “standard” are often associated with negative stereotypes, despite the fact that the grammatical systems they employ are as consistent and linguistically valid as those found in standard dialects. Such is the case with African American English (AAE). The purpose of this article is to analyze several unique grammatical constructions found in a sample of AAE speech to show that grammar in nonstandard English dialects is just as consistent and valid as Standard American English (SAE) and to emphasize the importance of dialectal studies. This will be done in the context of a court trial whose outcome was heavily influenced by the spoken dialect of the key witness.

Analysis of Grammatical Constructions

In 2012, seventeen-year-old Trayvon Martin was fatally shot in Sanford, Florida, by a man named George Zimmerman. During the trial, Trayvon's friend Rachel Jeantel, who was on the phone with him until moments before the shooting, testified for nearly six hours, which was significantly longer than any other witness. Though it contained what should have been some of the most important determining factors of the trial, Jeantel's testimony was almost entirely dismissed by the jury as lacking validity, intelligence, and credibility, simply because they had difficulty understanding it (Shoulson, 2020, para. 27).

An analysis of her patterns of speech found in the transcripts shows that Jeantel rapidly codeswitched, meaning alternated between AAE and SAE, during her testimony. For large sections of speech, she consistently used grammatical constructions from AAE and then switched to consistently using constructions from SAE. The switch occurred several times, usually after the interviewer had asked her to clarify her original response, which had been given in AAE. This indicates that she consciously switched from a dialect she knew her audience was less familiar with to one they were more familiar with. This pattern is repeated throughout the testimony, and the two dialects are rarely found in the same block of speech. Her consistent and distinct use of the two dialects proves not only that Jeantel is fluent in both dialects but also that she understands the grammatical constructions associated with both. By analyzing the transcripts of her testimony during the trial, it is possible to discern the rules that govern the grammatical constructions of AAE.

Null Copula

The null copula is the omission of a form of the verb *to be*; however, this omission is rarely random. While using AAE, Jeantel spoke largely in the present tense when describing the sequence of events that occurred prior to the shooting. The following excerpt from her testimony has been annotated to show instances in which the *is/are* copula has been omitted:

He say the man ___ followin' him again, behind him. And I say, 'Run! ___ You goin' to run?' He say he ___ not goin' run . . . 'cause he ___ out of breath. And then, he told me, he say this guy ___ gettin' close to him . . . He say, 'I'm not goin' run, 'cause he ___ tired, but I know he ___ tired. (Rickford, n.d.)

It is clear that Jeantel's language is highly vernacular and consistent, given that, in all seven instances where she could have used the *is/are* copula, she omitted it from her speech. This is reinforced by additional examples found throughout the testimony:

- "I say, 'What ___ you doin'?' and he say he ___ walkin'; and he said this man ___ still following him."
- "He say he ___ about to run from the back . . . And I can hear that the wind ___ blowin' from the back."
- "[The man] got problems . . . like he ___ crazy." (Rickford, n.d.)

During the portions of speech in which Jeantel switches to SAE, she uses the past tense to describe the events and never omits the *was/were* copula. Emphases have been added to the following examples to show the consistency in agreement between the tense, verb, and included copula:

- "When he *was* leaving the store, he just *told* me that he *bought* drinks . . ."
- "He *lost* him; he *was* breathin' hard."
- "And then he *told* me like the guy *was* getting close . . . and he *told* me the guy *was* getting real close to him."
- "He *was* like, 'What *are* you doing 'round here?'" (Rickford, n.d.)

The examples above, as well as those in which Jeantel employs the null copula, provide evidence for several consistent grammatical rules associated with the null copula in AAE. The first is that it generally only appears in the present tense and will never be omitted at the end of a clause. The second is that, usually, only *is* and *are* can be omitted; forms like *was*, *were*, and *am* are never omitted (Parsard, 2016, para. 4). When using the past tense, speakers of AAE will include the necessary copulas. Such consistencies support the legitimacy of this dialect as a language in and of itself.

Absence of Possessive, Present Tense, and Plural -s

Jeantel's testimony consistently demonstrates an absence of the verbal -s in possessives, third person present tense, and plural cases, which is a distinct grammatical characteristic of AAE that has been studied extensively. Tables 1, 2, and 3 demonstrate several examples that were repeated throughout the testimony and have been annotated to show when an -s would have been used in SAE. Several of these examples were previously annotated by John Rickford and Sharese King (2016) in their article "Language and Linguistics on Trial: Hearing Rachel Jeantel (and Other Vernacular Speakers) in the Courtroom and Beyond" and have been cited as such.

Table 1
Examples of Verbal -s Omission From the Possessive Form

Possessive	Notes
He told me he at the back of his daddy Ø fiancée Ø house . . . By his daddy Ø fiancée Ø house (annotated by Rickford & King, 2016).	
And he say he-he by-um- the area that his daddy Ø house is, his daddy Ø fiancée Ø house is . . . (annotated by Rickford & King, 2016).	
. . . he go' keep ru' til hi' dad Ø house.	
So then I told him, go to his dad Ø house. Run to his dad Ø house.	

Table 2
Examples of Verbal -s Omission from the Present Tense

Present Tense	Notes
All day, it seem Ø . . .	
Like, when he come Ø home, or . . . ?	
A couple minutes later he come Ø and tell Ø me this man is watchin' him.	
He say . . .	Out of 21 times that Jeantel used the present form of "to say," she omitted the -s 19 times

You could hear that Trayvon bump Ø...somebody bumped Trayvon, 'cause I could hear the grass.	
He just tell Ø me.	
He love Ø his family	Repeated 2 times
Love Ø to play on, love Ø to ride his bike	

Table 3
Example of Verbal -s Omission from the Plural Form

Plural	Notes
And then, second Ø later . . . (annotated by Rickford & King, 2016).	Repeated 2 times

Interestingly, the research on this unique grammatical phenomenon mainly focuses on the instances in which AAE speakers *do* use the verbal -s, and researchers are repeatedly surprised to find how often the verbal -s is missing from speech. In one instance, a study found that “contemporary urban [AAE] has no concord rule for verbal -s” (Oancea, n.d., p. 7). Since there appear to be no rules for *using* the verbal -s, perhaps there are rules for *omitting* it, similar to the null copula. The analysis of Jeantel’s testimony shows several consistent grammatical rules associated with the absence of the verbal -s. The first is that, in the case of the present tense, it most commonly occurs only with the third person singular (Oancea, n.d.). Jeantel applied standard SAE rules when using the first and second person:

- “So I *said*, ‘What’s going on?’”
- “I *said*. . . because he said this dude is like watching him . . .”
- “Yeah . . . you *could say* that.”
- “Yeah, like I *said*, a Momma boy.” (Rickford, n.d.)

Additionally, it appears that it is never appropriate to use the verbal -s in the case of the possessive; whenever Jeantel could have employed the possessive verbal -s, she did not. Less is known about the systematic usage of the verbal -s for plurals, however, and Jeantel was relatively inconsistent in this case. Despite this, the fact that all three instances of the absence of verbal -s can be cited in Jeantel’s testimony again shows that she spoke using unique and systematical grammatical constructions, which further validates the AAE dialect that she used.

Bare got

There is one aspect of Jeantel's speech that is less prevalent in the section of text that was analyzed for this article, but no less important in discerning the highly vernacular quality of Jeantel's use of AAE. This construction is known as the bare *got*. In SAE, the word *got* is usually accompanied by *have* and is used as a past tense verb or past participle. However, research shows that, in AAE, the bare *got* eliminates the *have* and is used primarily to indicate present tense possession (Tyler, 2016, para. 1). Jeantel's use of *got* is consistent with these findings, as evidenced by the following examples:

- "He *got* . . . the man *got* . . . he *got* problems. Like he crazy."
- "I *got* guilt." (Repeated two times) (Rickford, n.d.)

While the bare *got* has become more common in SAE, it is still most often used to indicate the past tense. For example, "I got a big paycheck last month" and "I got laid off last month" both refer to events that happened in the past. Research shows that there are very few instances in which the bare *got* is used in the present tense in SAE, which makes this a grammatical construction unique to AAE (Tyler et al., 2018, para. 1).

The Importance of Dialectal Studies

Despite the unique and systematic constructions that AAE provides the English language, it is commonly associated with negative stereotypes, which are harmful and degrading. Such is the case with many dialects; when a certain dialect does not measure up to the principles set by the standard dialect, native speakers of the standard dialect are quick to dismiss those who speak the less common one as unintelligent, illogical, and incoherent. Dismissing Rachel Jeantel as a credible source of information because of the dialects she speaks is a prime example of these harmful stereotypes coming into play.

Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure once commented on the linguist's responsibility to denounce these stereotypes, saying the following:

In the lives of individuals and societies, speech is more important than anything else Everyone is concerned with it in one way or another. But . . . there is no other field in which so many absurd notions, prejudices, mirages and fictions have sprung up The task of the linguist is . . . to dispel them as best he can. (Rickford & King, 2016)

It is important to study dialects in order to foster a greater understanding and appreciation for those who speak them. Because language is such an

essential part of the human experience, learning to respect the language of others, no matter how different they may be from one's own, could provide a necessary starting point in mankind's universal search for truth and respect.

Conclusion

A careful examination of Rachel Jeantel's testimony in the 2012 court case for Trayvon Martin's murder reveals that grammar in nonstandard English dialects is just as consistent and useful as in Standard American English. This was done by distinguishing patterns in her speech in which she rapidly codeswitched between African American English and Standard American English and consistently used grammatical constructions unique to each dialect. Additionally, three grammatical constructions distinctive of African American English were identified: the null copula; the absence of the verbal -s in possessive, present tense, and plural forms; and the bare *got*. An analysis of these constructions revealed specific rules that govern their usage within the dialect, which demonstrates that African American English is a legitimate dialect worthy of the same respect and understanding that Standard American English and other American English dialects receive. Ultimately, recognizing the idea that there are no superior dialects can both banish negative stereotypes surrounding native speakers of these dialects and foster environments of unity and compassion in a world that is consistently becoming more diverse.

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Editing Mistakes in Marketing

How Certain Errors Discourage Business

Brooklyn Hughes

Editors have a limited amount of time and resources to spend on each project, and human error adds to the impossibility of catching and correcting every mistake. This study explores how editing errors affect a customer's willingness to buy from a business by focusing on five common errors and how fourteen college students react to them. This knowledge can give businesses valuable guidance about where to focus their efforts to avoid errors that would turn away customers.

An advertisement that reads, "farm fresh Carrot's For sale" may lead people toward a myriad of emotions, ranging from mild annoyance to outright rage. Some readers may find the random capitalization frustrating, while others may fixate on the blatant misuse of the apostrophe. Although it is nearly impossible to root out every mistake caused by human error, lack of time or budget, and other constraints, certain errors could be more damaging than others. Therefore, as stated in *The Copyeditor's Handbook*, "Copyeditors must develop a sixth sense about how much effort, and what kind of effort, to put into each project" (Einsohn, 2000, p. 4). Errors in writing, specifically writing meant to advertise a product or service, could damage the reputation of a business and lead customers to feel a lack of professional trust.

Larry Beason (2001), associate professor of English at the University of South Alabama, discusses how people react to grammatical errors. In his article "Ethos and Error: How Business People React to Errors," Beason says that "errors are created in the mind as much as in the text" (p. 34), and there is often a "belief that errors [indicate] a shortcoming with the writer's education" (p. 35). To test this, Beason conducted his research on a small group of fourteen business people and their opinions on grammatical errors in business communication. Beason's research opens the door for future research opportunities that would allow for larger participant groups and different demographics.

Within the study I conducted, I (1) selected an additional fourteen people for my focus group, effectively adding to Beason's original study and broadening the information we have on which errors people find most bothersome, and (2) surveyed specifically college students to understand how they specifically react to certain errors. By recruiting a group of college students, I targeted an audience that I feel may be more aware of errors because students are submersed in an atmosphere of conscious and focused learning every day. Through understanding what errors are most annoying to college-aged consumers, editors can focus their efforts in a more effective way that will improve the relationship between customers and businesses for this target age range.

In this paper, I will present the methods, results, and discussion of my research, incorporating charts to visually represent my data. An appendix is located at the end with my survey sentences as well as the data for participants' bothersome ratings and responses to whether or not the error would stop them from buying from a business.

Methods

Participants

To conduct this research, I distributed a Google Forms survey electronically to fourteen college students at Brigham Young University. I selected students with a variety of majors to ensure that my research

expressed the university's diverse student body and allowed room for different backgrounds and degrees of education. For gender balance, seven of the participants were women and seven were men. By having a diverse and gender-balanced group of participants, I sought to ensure that my results reflected general trends in college students' tolerance for different types of errors.

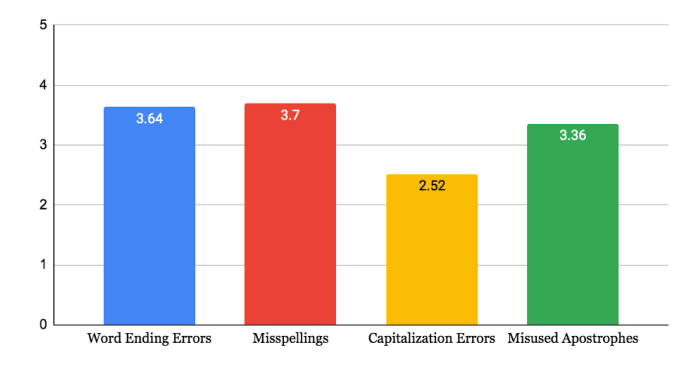
Procedure

I modeled a survey after Beason's (2001), but I used grammatical errors in advertisements instead of business communication. The survey consisted of four categories (misspellings, fragments, apostrophes, and capitalization) with four example sentences in each category. The sentences used for this survey were taken from actual advertisements that I altered to include different types of errors. The participants were asked to rank each sentence on a scale of 1–5 to indicate how much the error bothered them. Errors were marked in each sentence with an asterisk so that participants did not feel that they were being tested on their knowledge of grammar. Following each sentence was a question asking whether or not this error would stop participants from purchasing from the business. (See the appendix to reference survey questions and survey data.)

Data Analysis

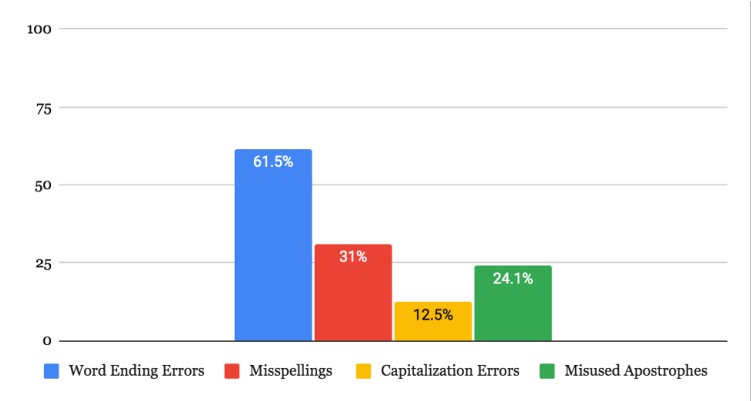
To analyze survey results, I exported the data into a spreadsheet document. I averaged the participant's survey response ratings for each sentence, keeping the sentences organized in their original four categories: word ending errors, misspellings, capitalization, and misused apostrophes. I then averaged the sentences together for each error category in order to understand how the participants generally felt about each type of error. The average ratings for each category are listed in figure 1.

Figure 1
How Bothersome Are Editing Errors?



After averaging the results for each type of error, I analyzed the second portion of the data: Would these errors stop participants from buying from a business? I added up the yes answers for each sentence from the fourteen participants. I then took the averages of these sums within each error category. This resulted in four final percentages. The results for these percentages are viewable in figure 2.

Figure 2
Do Advertising Errors Stop College Students from Buying from Businesses?



Results

Looking at the averages for how bothersome participants found each error category, I noticed that misspellings are the most bothersome error with a rating of 3.70 out of 5. Following misspellings, the remaining grammar errors are listed in order from most bothersome to least bothersome: word ending errors at 3.64, misused apostrophes at 3.36, and capitalization errors at 2.52. The data results for the second part of the survey suggests that word ending errors will stop participants from buying from a business 61.5 percent of the time. Misspellings will stop them 31.0 percent of the time, and misused apostrophes will stop them 24.1 percent of the time. Participants reported that they would not buy from a business with capitalization errors in their advertisements only 12.5 percent of the time.

Discussion

Implications

Understanding the implications of the data collected in this study can have a great impact on where businesses focus their editing efforts. The data presents an interesting relationship between how bothersome errors are and how these errors influence a person's choice to purchase from

a business. While misspelling errors are highest in the averaged ratings for how bothersome customers find them, word ending errors have the highest likelihood of stopping someone from buying from a business. Even though word ending errors, misspellings, and misused apostrophes are all within a half-point range of each other in their bothersome ratings, word ending errors affect participants' willingness to buy from a business to nearly double that of misspellings, and more than double that of misused apostrophes.

This evidence demonstrates a predicament for editors because even though misspellings are rated most bothersome, they do not affect business customer loss to the degree that word ending errors do. Since the priority of a business is to gain and retain customers, editors should consider placing word ending errors as their top priority and misspellings as their second. According to the data, editing for misused apostrophes should be third priority.

The data also reveals that capitalization errors are the least bothersome and least likely to stop someone from buying from a business. This indicates that advertising editors should spend their time focusing on the other types of errors first and prioritize capitalization errors toward the bottom of their list.

Future Research

While this study reveals important implications for editors and businesses about how people respond to different kinds of errors, there are many limitations that could be explored in future studies. A different age range for participants may offer interesting results about how editing errors affect older generations compared to younger generations. A study directed at exclusively women or men may yield valuable information for businesses that target one sex over the other with their marketing campaigns. This research is also limited by the small sample size of participants; a larger sample size may present different results.

Gaining an awareness of how grammar errors affect people can produce more efficient editing amidst the time, money, and human error constraints that all editors face. The results of this study will aid my own editing efforts as I work to craft writing that is as error-free as possible. While I will use the findings in this study to improve my editing, I look forward to continuing to research this topic in future studies with different demographics, alternate error types, or a larger sample size to improve my understanding of how errors influence readers.

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Appendix

Survey Sample Sentences

Word Ending Errors

- 1. Our potatoes are *growed closer than you may think
- 2. A *matchmake service for people who want to meet life insurance
- 3. Unlike the person next to you, our blades get *comfortable close
- 4. If you're only full of ideas, *you full of something else

Misspellings

- 1. Sex!! Now that we have your *attention, eat at Subway
- 2. I'm me, not *meet. See the individual. Go Vegan.
- 3. The *docter will see you now.
- 4. Your teen comes home and you smell *Marawana—Now what?

Capitalization

- 1. One sweet way to *Treat your *Day
- 2. The greatest thing since *Sliced *Bread with *Avocado
- 3. We believe in *Smarter *Soda choices, not just more *Soda choices
- 4. The perfect *Mattress for *Everyone

Misused Apostrophes

- 1. It's summer. *Your thirsty. We've got sales targets.
- 2. New Yorkers *arent angry, we're just hungry
- 3. Are you pouring on the *pound's? Don't drink yourself fat.
- 4. Volunteer—*its ego-friendly

Data Collection

Table A1

Data for bothersome ratings for each sentence

sentences	Word Ending Errors	Misspellings	Capitalization Errors	Misused Apostrophes
1	4.142857143	3.428571429	2.142857143	4
2	3.285714286	3.857142857	2.357142857	2.857142857
3	3.642857143	3.571428571	2.928571429	3.857142857
4	3.5	3.928571429	2.642857143	2.714285714
	3.642857143	3.696428571	2.517857143	3.357142857

Table A2

Data for whether these errors would stop participants from buying from a business

sentences	Word Ending Errors	Misspellings	Capitalization Errors	Misused Apostrophes
1	10/14	9/14	1/14	9/14
2	7/14	11/14	0/14	5/14
3	8/14	9/14	5/14	11/14
4	7/14	9/14	4/14	5/14
	8/13	9/29	3/24	7/29
	61.50%	31.00%	12.50%	24.10%

Social Media's Influence on Spoken Language

Camille Ladd

The way in which language drift occurs has been altered with the introduction of communication through electronic media. A review of available literature shows that social media platforms and other digital contexts are adding to the lexicon of those who use them. Messages can be sent immediately, and new codes have been developed for an online context. These codes have been observed in use outside of their original contexts. The users of these codes are typically young people that use the code as a mode for humorous speech. Further research is required to understand the nuance of these speech patterns.

In 2018 the daily average amount of time spent on social media worldwide was 142 minutes. In a year this would equal 51,830 minutes or thirty-six days (Tankovska, 2021). This statistic points to the massive amounts of time being spent on social media. More platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube are being used not only as ways to keep in touch with friends but also as stores, news sites, and for some, second language acquisition tools. Social media has great potential as not only a language acquisition tool but as a generator of new features of the English language. Teens and young adults are now using social media to create new slang and humor. The internet has its own code and the ability to understand this code is paramount to understanding how it affects the language outside of the online context of those that use it. This paper will address the use of marked online phrases in offline contexts and how often this occurs. It seems likely that many young people have incorporated online codes into natural spoken language; however, further research is needed to determine the extent of this vocabulary shift.

Literature Review

The effect that social media has on language is ever evolving and can be difficult to measure due to language drift largely happening at a subconscious level (Trudgill, 2014). The journal article "Diffusion, Drift, and the Irrelevance of Media Influence" argues that electronic media does not influence phonology in a significant way due to the evidence that those exposed to a largely American online context do not have any accent change or modification to accommodate this (Trudgill, 2014, p. 216). However, this does not mean that there are no serious linguistic effects from engaging in electronic media with new linguistic contexts. The immediacy of social media has fundamentally changed the way that linguistic drift occurs. The conventional way that diffusion of new linguistic features happens is through the middle and working class. The feature is sometimes then adopted by other classes, but this can take time. With the introduction of social media, this time lapse is eliminated, and linguistic changes are spread as quickly as they appear in a language (Tagliamonte, 2014). A research experiment was conducted by Tagliamonte (2014) to compare the linguistic usage of subjects across four different media with a written essay as the control. Tagliamonte concluded that linguistic variation is dependent on the type of media being used. Those using electronic media still conform to grammar structures, a fact that is often presumed to be the opposite (2014). This shows that different media elicit different vocabulary and tone from their users depending on context. Therefore, it can be concluded that the users' vernacular is impacted by what social media they choose to use and who their audience is. What that impact entails is complex and requires understanding of both the context and the participation that surrounds the language in question (Androutsopoulos, 2014).

Methodology

In order to overcome the difficulties associated with gathering information related to linguistic change, it is necessary to narrow the range of possible variations in common speech as a result of social media usage. For the purposes of this paper, the use of social media-based vocabulary in offline settings will be examined. Data was collected from members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two who attend Brigham Young University. This sample pool allows for control in the type of content generally consumed and the familiarity of the subjects with linguistic features originating in online spaces. In order to observe the diffusion of social media-based language into a spoken language context, certain words and phrases that commonly appear in online settings have been selected and put into a survey. The terms included are as follows: *hashtag*, *tl;dr*, *vibe check*, *ight imma head out*, *galaxy brain*, and *it's free real estate*. Participants were asked if they were familiar with these terms and if they had used them online. They were then asked if they had spoken them aloud and in what context this had taken place. They were also asked for additional examples of online speech that they had used in spoken conversation.

Results

Over sixty students responded to the survey and some gave additional examples of online speech being used in an offline setting. About 51.5 percent of all participants were familiar with all but one or two of these terms, and all participants had seen at least two of these online. When asked if they themselves had used these terms online, 81.8 percent of them had done so and 10.6 percent said they did this frequently. This online use was again reflected when asked about in person conversation with 66.7 percent of participants saying they had used one if not more of these terms before. In this small sample group of BYU undergraduates, it seems that the line between online speech and offline speech is blurred. The context these terms are used in both online and offline situations is nearly always joking or humorous in some way. Therefore, it is apparent why it is so easy to use them out of their online contexts. Some participants were able to give additional examples of social media-based language that they have heard in offline speech. Examples of this include saying *retweet*, *streak*, *oof*, *fax*, *lol*, *tbh*, *ngl*, *brb*, *go off I guess*, *pressing f to pay respects*, and quoting various vines or memes. One participant even said that "any meme has an offline presence," which shows how much social media has impacted the linguistic codes used by young people in various settings.

Discussion

When millions of people create language on social media everyday, it is impossible not to pick up on the way others put words together. This can create a sort of universal slang or code for those in the same groups on social media. Due to the global nature of these platforms, the spread of linguistic terms is immediate and wide. This causes the speed of linguistic drift to greatly increase and for online literacy to be greatly dependent on how often one uses social platforms. The above survey supports this by showing that young people do incorporate social media-based humor into offline discussions often.

This demonstrates the ability of social media to influence speech and that this online code is used by groups as a universal slang. There was no control on where students taking the survey were from and it can be assumed due to the university setting that many were not from the same area. If so, it could be concluded that social media-based slang is used to relate to those with different lived experiences by presenting a similar linguistic code. A study conducted by Shiri Lev-Ari (2018) supports this claim by examining predictive speech. The results of this were that "people with larger social networks are better at predicting upcoming meanings but not the form they would take. . . . People with different social experience process language differently, and [the results] shed light on how social dynamics interact with the structure of the linguistic level to influence learning of linguistic patterns" (p. 101). The study showed that social media can change the way that linguistic patterns are learned or acquired by those that use them. In unfamiliar environments, predictive speech may help bridge the gap between new friends by sharing the same slang or manner of speaking. It makes sense that if many people speak with the same grammar rules and vocabulary from sharing the same online spaces that one would be able to predict what will be said next due to previously observed patterns. This may help people feel more comfortable with each other and identify an individual as part of a larger group. It could be argued that social media is connecting its users not only through online media content but also through language.

Conclusion

Additional research is required to understand the reasons behind these survey results. We need to examine whether they are due to discussion of social media, creation of new vocabularies, or a combination of both. The relationship between where subjects were from and how often they used social media-based terms in natural speech is another area worth studying. Understanding how those who use online codes interact with people they are unfamiliar with would help to better explain the offline contexts where online terms appear. Overall, the effect that social media has on linguistic patterns of users is a complex area of study that will require many different perspectives to help explain.

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Americans vs. the So-Called British Accent

Catherine Niesporek

This article describes a study that tested how familiar Americans are with different British dialects. Twenty participants listened to ten pairings of recordings of British varieties of English, with some pairings from the same region and others from two distinct regions. The participants were more often able to identify when dialect pairings were from different regions than they were able to recognize when dialects were from the same region. These results indicate that Americans, while they revere British accents, are not familiar enough with the varieties of English spoken in the United Kingdom to be able to consistently identify them.

Most Americans love a good British accent. The popularity of various forms of media, such as television shows like *Downton Abbey*, movies like *Pride and Prejudice*, and Netflix sensations like the *Great British Baking Show*, can attest to this. Americans love to imitate the “British accent,” whether quoting Harry Potter, reading a Charles Dickens novel, or attempting Cockney with an “ello, guv-nuh!” and the like. To Americans, this “accent” sounds not only interestingly foreign to our ears but also wealthy and sophisticated. It is the accent of royalty, or, on occasion, a secret agent. Despite its popularity, the simple truth is that there are a large number of varieties of English within England itself: first, because of the many geographical regions of the country that were settled by different groups, and second, because of the historical differences between social classes. Jonnie Robinson (2019), contributor to the British Library, says, “The English . . . now [spoken] emerged from a number of different roots and has at no point in its history been uniform across the whole country” (para. 3). This lack of uniformity means that faking an accent might not be quite as simple as Americans might think. Due to the popularity of the so-called “British accent,” I wanted to assess how well Americans can really distinguish between the different varieties of English spoken in the United Kingdom. I hypothesized that because Americans perceive a universal British accent, the participants would have difficulty distinguishing different varieties of English used in the United Kingdom.

Background

There are numerous varieties of English within all English-speaking countries, and the United Kingdom is no exception. It is filled with a healthy variety of dialects within its numerous geographical and social regions. The International Dialects of English Archive (IDEA) separates England into ten different dialects. For the purposes of this study, samples from five distinct dialects were used: Devon, Surrey, Suffolk, South London, and East Sussex. Because of the high social status that the English variety received pronunciation (RP) has attained over the centuries, it has become the dialect of England’s royal, wealthy, and elite, and it is the standard variety spoken by those who work in media such as news, television, and movies. Because of its prevalence in the media, RP is perhaps the most recognizable variety of English in the United Kingdom, alongside Cockney. According to Barbara Strang (2015), author of *A History of English*, “A distinction is made between received pronunciation and the rest [of the United Kingdom varieties]” (p. 44). Because the RP and Cockney dialects are so recognizable, I did not include recordings of either in my experiment. However, I did include two recordings from South London. Regarding the variety of East Sussex, each regional variety has its own history of development, identity, and identifying factors, yet the variety of East Sussex is hard to distinguish. Jansen et al. (2020) say, “Dialects in the South East of England are very often perceived

as one homogenous mass, without much regional variation" (p. 31). Because this dialect is not very distinct, I included a pair of recordings of this variety in my research experiment to see if my participants would be able to distinguish it from others. According to author David Britain (2014), "There is no clear linguistic break between Norfolk and Suffolk dialects" (p.13), so I only included recordings from Suffolk in order to avoid unnecessary duplication or confusion.

Method

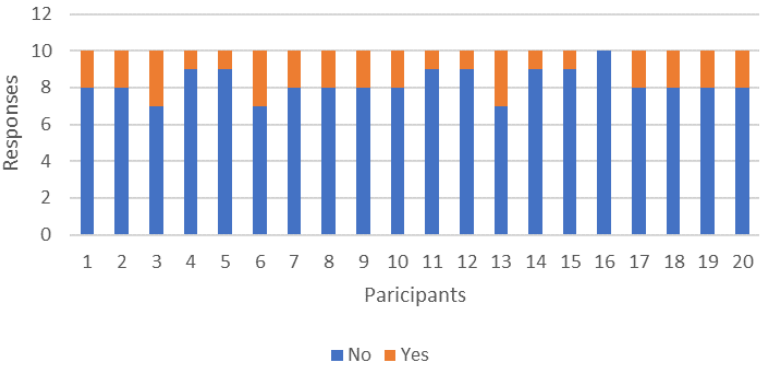
I collected authentic recordings from the IDEA of English dialect varieties from several different regions of the United Kingdom. I used two recordings from each of the five different regions: Devon, Surrey, Suffolk, South London, and East Sussex. I paired the recordings together, with five of the pairs using recordings from the same region and the other five pairs using recordings from separate regions in the United Kingdom. Each IDEA recording followed the same script of "Comma Gets a Cure," a script provided for the individuals who volunteered to read for IDEA. This ensured there was no difference in the words spoken in each recording, aside from the rare reader error (such as one reader saying "icky goose" instead of "itchy goose" and another reader saying "plump yellow dress" instead of "plain yellow dress"). I played the pairs of recordings to the participants, one recording at a time. After playing each pair of recordings, I asked the participants whether they thought the two dialects were from the same region or not. My participants included ten males and ten females of various ages, ranging from thirteen years old to fifty years old. The participants each listened to the recordings separately so that their responses would not be affected by the responses of the other participants. I was able to work with two participants in person because we shared a living space, but the others participated through telephone or FaceTime due to the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing limitations.

Results

Overall, every candidate was able to identify that three of the ten pairs were not from the same region or dialect, though they did not comment on which regions they thought the dialects came from. The recordings that were correctly identified as distinct dialects, however, were not consistent across participants. As seen in figure 1.1 below, when asked whether the recordings represented the same region, participants most often answered "No." It was common for participants to guess that seven or eight of the recordings were not from the same region, and one participant even said that none of the recordings sounded like they represented the same region. None of the

participants identified the correct same-dialect pairings proportion (being five of ten) because most of them overidentified pairings as being from distinct regions.

Figure 1.1
Participants' Answers: Are the recordings from the same region?

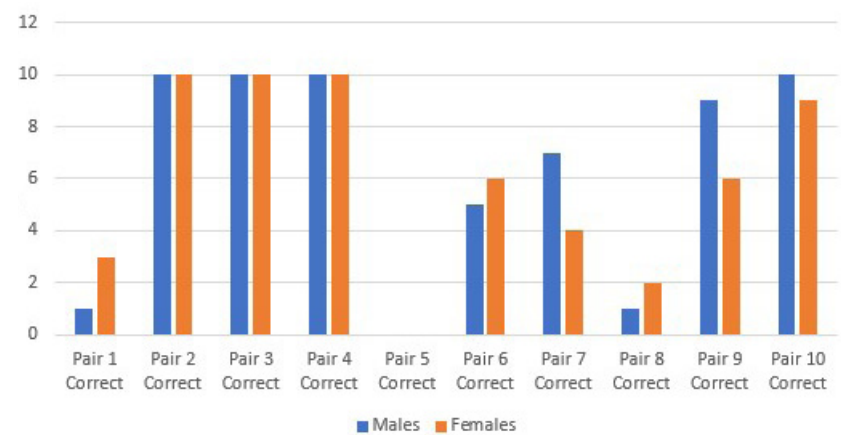


As seen in figure 1.2 below, more females chose the correct answer on three of the pairs than males, more males chose the correct answer on three of the pairs than females, and both females and males tied in choosing the correct answer on three of the pairs. More males chose incorrectly on three occasions than females, more females chose incorrectly on three different occasions than males, and both tied in choosing incorrectly on one occasion.

Looking at the first pair of recordings (which was comprised of two different recordings of the Devon dialect), we can see that four out of the twenty participants correctly identified the two recordings as being dialects from the same region. Of these four, one was male and three were female. For pairs two, three, and four, all participants accurately identified the dialects as being from different regions. For the fifth pair of recordings (which showcased two examples of the East Sussex region), no participants were able to identify that the dialects were from the same region. For pair six (which contained two different recordings from Surrey), eleven of the twenty participants correctly identified that the two recordings were from the same region. Of these eleven, five were male and six were female. For pair seven (which contained two recordings representing the variety in South London), eleven participants correctly identified that the two recordings represented the same region. Of these eleven, seven were male and four were female. For pair eight (Suffolk and Suffolk), only three of the twenty participants were able to identify that the recordings were from the same region. For pair nine (East Sussex and Devon), fifteen of the twenty participants were able to identify that the two recordings represented the same region. For the final

pair (South London and East Sussex), all but one participant were able to identify that the recordings were from two different regions. All these numbers are represented in figure 1.2 below.

Figure 1.2
Total Correct



Discussion

Looking at the first pair of recordings, we can see that four out of twenty of the participants correctly identified that the recordings were of the same region, while sixteen did not. A possible reason for this is that these four participants (three female and one male) are more experienced with the United Kingdom. These four participants are all over the age of thirty, and two of them have visited England on vacation. The sixteen participants who incorrectly placed the two recordings as being separate regions are likely to represent the general population of United States citizens, in that they cannot accurately identify one dialect as being the same when spoken by two different people, especially if this dialect is not one of the more easily recognizable dialects such as Cockney or RP.

Looking at pairs two, three, and four, we see that all participants were able to identify the pairs as being from different regions of England. Two of these pairs use recordings of a London dialect, which may be easier for Americans to pick out. If we accept this assumption, then we can hypothesize that Americans are more familiar with the London variety of British English, making it easier to identify and to distinguish it from other varieties found in the United Kingdom. Another possible analysis is that most Americans are not truly experienced at distinguishing British accents, resulting in participants claiming that many of the dialects do not sound the same. It also seems that Americans do well with distinguishing the dialects of Surrey, Suffolk, and South London when they are paired with other dialects.

Participants generally did not succeed at recognizing the dialects of Devon, East Sussex, and Suffolk when they are paired within their same region. East Sussex appears to be the hardest one for Americans to recognize, as no one correctly chose the fifth pair as being from the same region, even though it contained two recordings from Sussex. This follows what Jansen et al. was quoted saying earlier, that the Sussex dialect tends to blend in with other dialects of the United Kingdom, making it hard to identify or distinguish.

Females had a slightly easier time accurately recognizing the matching dialect when listening to two recordings from Surrey (six females to five males), while males had a much easier time recognizing the matching variety when listening to South London (seven males to four females). A possible reason for this could be differences in the British media that men and women consume, but it is hard to say.

The participants had an easier time identifying when two dialects did not match. Three of the recordings had all twenty participants correctly identify that the pairs' dialects did not match, and the tenth pair, another mismatch of dialects, had nineteen of the participants correctly detect that the dialects were not the same. Conversely, participants had an overall harder time identifying matching pairs. Of the five pairs that contained matching dialects, one pair was not chosen as matching by any participants. This pair contained two recordings from East Sussex. The pair with matching dialects that had the highest number of participants correctly recognizing the dialects as being similar was the South London dialect, with eleven participants pairing the matching recordings.

Conclusion

To conclude, Americans generally are not experts in distinguishing what is so often called a "British accent." I have concluded that Americans are only able to recognize the same variety or distinguish different varieties on an average level. In general, all participants were better able to tell when a pair contained two different dialects than they were in recognizing when a pair had two of the same dialect. A reason for this could be that participants felt more confident in answering "No" than "Yes." Another reason could be that all paired recordings sounded distinct because different people were speaking, and this was enough of a difference that recordings sounded like separate dialects to the participants. Both men and women were almost equally capable in distinguishing or not distinguishing if two recordings were of the same region. Females were only slightly more accurate in correctly pairing varieties together, though females and males equally identified one pair of mismatched recordings incorrectly. Additionally, males more easily recognized the South London dialect than females did. Ultimately, this research shows that while Americans are capable of occasionally distinguishing accents, we are not very good at it.

Why do these results matter? One reason is that it encourages those interested in British accents to educate themselves more in the different, diverse dialects available in the United Kingdom. By correctly using these various British English dialects, we can accurately represent its native speakers and their language rather than simply give a poor imitation of a British accent. If we want to improve our imitation accents, and if we want to give a more accurate representation of the various British dialects in existence, then we must better educate ourselves of the differing varieties of English present in the United Kingdom.

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How Positive Beliefs Affect Anxiety in the Foreign Language Classroom

Sofia Rubalcava

This research article shows that beliefs about language learning and the anxiety felt in the language classroom by university students are correlated. Although in the past it has been shown that anxiety is increased when there are negative beliefs about language learning, this article shows that when students have positive beliefs and assumptions about language learning, they are less likely to feel anxiety in the classroom. Data was collected through a survey given to twenty participants majoring in international studies, using a fusion of the BALLI and FLCAS developed by Horwitz in 1986.

When a person enters a language classroom for the first time, be it due to a university requirement, out of necessity of moving to a foreign country, or simply to indulge in a new hobby, one enters the classroom with preconceived notions about what language learning means. The student has ideas about how learning a language might cause a change in identity, affect cognitive abilities, increase opportunities for interactions with diverse people, or how the student might learn more about a culture. Conversely, depending on the person's motivation for entering the classroom, there might be doubts about communicating properly, having an appropriate accent, interacting with foreigners, or being discriminated against because of "imperfect" grammar and pronunciation. As an adult, questions about being able to retain and learn the language arise. Perhaps there are preconceived notions about the people that speak the language, or maybe there is reluctance to learn because it is irrelevant to a person's career and life goals. Regardless of the reasons for entering a language learning classroom, there is a clear understanding that most language learners—sincere or not—have prejudices (both positive and negative) that affect not only their actual ability to learn the language in question, but ultimately the levels of anxiety that they might feel in the classroom. This anxiety experienced by many students is present on the first day of class, but is frequently propagated by the teacher and the L2 curriculum. The emphasis of grammar and vocabulary acquisition, error correction by the teacher, judgment and comparison with peers, inability to feel like students can communicate their thoughts, desire to be understood by native speakers, and general self-consciousness are only some of the anxiety-provoking effects that a student might experience in the classroom.

Anxiety in a foreign language classroom is an important thing to consider. Often, students in language classrooms engage in several behaviors like negative self-talk or rumination, which ultimately affect their ability to perform well and process information; as such, "foreign language anxiety acts as an affective filter, which results in the students' being unreceptive to language input" (Atasheneh, 2012, pp. 178–179). Although not all L2 students are learning a language with honest intentions to communicate with other native speakers—as is often the case with university students that need to fulfill a language requirement—there is still a consensus among educators and researchers alike that language learning is closely associated with anxiety, and students themselves still believe anxiety to be a "major obstacle to overcome in learning to speak another language." Many studies of ESL students have found that the high levels of anxiety that are experienced interfere not only with an inability to produce language but also that anxiety interferes with learners' ability to interpret messages. These findings have led to an increase in pedagogical methods that attempt to reduce the affective filter (Horwitz et al., 1986). While these studies are specific to speaking (Young, 1991), there are other studies that show that language learners produce shorter compositions when under higher levels of anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986). The higher anxiety levels of language learners can be

debilitating to some, causing students to freeze when asked to speak, not understand instructions or the lesson when the teacher speaks the target language, make careless errors that students know how to correct, and even refuse to attend language class in an effort to reduce their anxiety. Ultimately, all these consequences of language learning anxiety lead to an inability to actually learn the language and communicate. This can be especially harmful for students, such as immigrants, that will need to use the language to communicate in their daily lives. Since language learning anxiety can have great repercussions on a student's success and ability to learn, it is important to understand the beliefs that students have that might affect the anxiety they feel in the classroom.

Over time, there has been a general desire in language-learning classrooms to shift the emphasis on error correction, native-like pronunciation, and vocabulary acquisition to a more communicative approach; rather than striving for accuracy, there is now a tendency to emphasize fluency and the ability to both understand others and to be understood, despite some errors. This, together with a general consensus in pedagogy to have a conducive learning environment with a low affective filter, would seem to imply that language learners should be having more relaxed experiences in the classroom. However, this is not the case. Of course, not all language instructors have a strong belief in a low affective filter, and because many people still believe that grammar and native-like pronunciation are a vital part of learning an L2, they continue to be in classroom, textbook, and even language learning app curricula. Additionally, as much as a curriculum can change and adapt to fit students' needs, there is only so much that can be done to change students' prejudices and pre-existing beliefs that have been, in some way or another, ingrained in their minds.

The format of this article will consist of a literature review and brief analysis of previous use of the BALLI and FLCAS, followed by claims on their validity and reliability (Horwitz, 1986), after which the methodology of my study will be presented. Then, I will present the data that was collected, which will be followed by a discussion of said results, and the conclusion will involve a final analysis and discussion of the project's implications.

Literature Review

Anxiety in the foreign language learning classroom is not a new topic, and Krashen (1983) has particularly popularized the concept of having a low affective filter to improve students' ability to learn in a low-stress environment. Elaine Horwitz, in particular, has done extensive research on foreign language classroom anxiety as well as the beliefs that language learners have. Her interest in these two topics has led to the development of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), both tools that have been used in many other studies.

Horwitz's use of the BALLI was largely to understand just how widespread common beliefs about language learning were and to document them in a formal study, thus making the BALLI study largely descriptive, with some discussion on the impact of those beliefs (Horwitz, 1988). She surveyed a total of 240 students between seventeen and thirty-eight years old who were enrolled in language classes to fulfill a university requirement. The BALLI evaluates five separate things: the difficulty of language learning, foreign language aptitude, the nature of language learning, learning and communication strategies, and motivations and expectations. Horwitz's overall findings proved her hypothesis that regardless of the language the students were learning, most students had similar beliefs, and there was a general consistency across responses, even though there were some minor variations. Two major conclusions came from this study: student beliefs about language learning affect learning strategies (e.g., the students who believe that learning an L2 is the same as translating will have different expectations than the actively involved and self-conscious students) and there is a strong belief that students must have grammatical correctness due to the "substantial number of students [that were] very concerned with the correctness of their utterances" (Horwitz, 1988). Although Horwitz found the results of the BALLI to fulfill her purpose, she also hypothesized about the need for further research on the connection between these beliefs and the language learning process, emphasizing the need for language instructors to break many of the myths the students believe and foster a more effective and productive learning environment for the students.

Horwitz was also the author of the FLCAS, which was created two years prior to her research with the BALLI. Like many, she understood that learning an L2 can be stressful and is more so in a classroom setting. Horwitz explains that in a study in 1983, when a support group for language learners was created, around one-third of the students "were concerned enough about their foreign language class to indicate that they would like to join such a group" (Horwitz et al., 1986). At these meetings, they discussed concerns and difficulties the students had, as well as alternate learning strategies and anxiety management exercises. It was this support group and the conversations discussed therein that contributed to the creation of the FLCAS, which was then given to seventy-five university students in introductory Spanish classes. The survey measures three general categories: communication apprehension, test-anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation in the classroom. In general, the results from the survey showed that students that were anxious feared not understanding the language, making mistakes, and being less competent than their peers. All of these responses led to students sometimes skipping class or overstudying, often leading to further feelings of being overwhelmed as they attempted to catch up. Most of the answers given by the participants in the survey that showed there was some anxiety in the foreign language classroom (FLC) were supported by at least a third of the participants, thus implying that

having anxious students in a FLC is a common occurrence—particularly in introductory language courses. Additional conclusions that Horwitz came to were that a lot of the anxiety felt in the classroom depends on helping students find healthy coping mechanisms in anxiety-provoking situations, and that instructors should be more conscious of the anxious students in the classroom, ensure that students feel relaxed, and make sure that the environment is conducive to learning. Some potential solutions would be creating support systems in the classroom and modifying error correction techniques. However, since foreign language is a highly assessed topic, it is unlikely to completely eradicate all anxiety in FLCs. There are only some things that can be done to ease said anxiety.

Horwitz's mediums for measuring language anxiety in a quantitative way have led to findings on the effects of anxiety on achievement. While previous studies were inconsistent in finding relationships between anxiety and learning an L2, Horwitz's FLCAS provided a quantitative way to measure this relationship. Since the result was moderately negative, it eventually led to a conclusion by Gardner that "anxiety is one of the best predictors of foreign language achievement" (Gardner, 1985, as cited in Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999, p. 219).

Sparks and Patton (2013) also employed the use of the FLCAS to understand the impact of language learning anxiety and achievement. In their own literature review, they name several studies that have been done with the FLCAS and demonstrate that a majority of the studies generally find that higher anxiety scores are associated with lower course achievement. This being said, Sparks and Ganschow (1991) criticize Horwitz et al.'s approach and the FLCAS, mainly for their failure to use comparison groups and for not keeping a control of language ability, not only in the foreign language, but also in the native language. Sparks and Ganschow go on to hypothesize that a lower ability in a student's native language contributes to higher anxiety scores on the FLCAS and consequently more anxiety in the foreign language.

Sparks and Patton (2013) completed a path analysis and hierarchical regression study that spanned ten years. They employed the FLCAS, but also measured the students' first language competency (through reading comprehension, pronunciation, reading pseudowords, writing, vocabulary, listening comprehension) when the participants were in the first grade. They re-evaluated them in tenth grade by assessing a series of cognitive skills, memory tests, verbal reasoning, and aptitude. The conclusions of this study showed that there are some potential flaws in assuming that the FLCAS only shows the results of anxiety in the foreign language classroom and that there are several other variables that could contribute to anxiety that are not necessarily related to L2 learning. Despite these valid criticisms, there is still a much larger consensus for the use of the FLCAS to evaluate anxiety in a foreign language classroom.

The use of the BALLI has not been as widespread as the FLCAS. However, when it has been used to understand student and teacher beliefs about foreign language learning, it has often yielded similar, consistent results like those in Horwitz's original survey. The BALLI has also been used in a variety of different countries and with various foreign languages: Horwitz's initial 1986 study followed German, Spanish, and French students. Kern (1995) evaluated French students (and also checked beliefs twice to see how they evolved over time, finding little change in their beliefs after a year), Aida (1994) studied Japanese-learning students, Altan (2006) evaluated students in Turkey, Peacock (1999) studied EFL students in Hong Kong, and Mantle-Bromely (1995) evaluated Spanish and French students at the seventh-grade level, as opposed to university-level (still showing similar results). Altan (2006) believed that the variety of learning strategies were attributed to learner perception and their beliefs about L2 education. The use of the BALLI in Turkey among five different universities brought very similar results to Horwitz's but points out that there is still little evidence to truly show the influence of these beliefs—especially if these beliefs apply to teachers as well—to the long-term learning of the students (Altan, 2006). Matthew Peacock (1999) employed the BALLI to EFL students at the City University of Hong Kong, and in his article immediately stated that the beliefs about language learning “almost certainly affect language learning” (p. 247). After his data collection, which aside from the BALLI also included a comprehensive proficiency test and a self-rating of proficiency, he proved his initial hypothesis, stating that the results of the BALLI were “not controversial” (Peacock, 1999, p. 253). Since Peacock's (1999) study also evaluated student proficiency, it showed a clear link between lower achievement based on negative beliefs about language learning. From a brief overview of these studies, it can be assumed that student beliefs are important to consider in the FLC, and their impact on student achievement—and the potential anxiety that comes from those beliefs—is worth noting and further investigating.

Methodology

In my research, I attempted to combine elements of the BALLI and the FLCAS to see if, by fusing these two questionnaires, a conclusion could be made to understand whether the beliefs of students about foreign language learning had any effect on their FLCAS score. For this study, twenty university students with an age range of twenty to twenty-five participated. Despite all being students at an American university, not all of them had spent the majority of their lives in the United States. Even though this increased the variability and changed the control of the study, I believe it is important to have the perspective of students that were not raised in the United States. While earlier studies keep a control not only on the foreign

language, but also the level of the course (all introductory), I did not control these. The only similarity among the participants was that they were majoring in international studies, a program that requires learning a language. Since demographics were not something that were being tested for this study, the age and gender of participants were not recorded.

I administered a BALLI/FLCAS fused questionnaire to participants through an electronic questionnaire, which was anonymous. Before beginning the BALLI/FLCAS questions, the participants were asked some general questions, all of which will be listed in the appendix with the answers that were given. The purpose of these questions was to acquire background information that could potentially affect participant results. Since the participants that were being surveyed all attended a Latter-day Saint university, it was likely that many of them had served foreign-speaking missions. If they had and were learning a language at the university that they had already learned in the immersive environment of a mission, it was important to consider how this could shape their beliefs. The initial questions also inquired about the type of grade that the participant received, and if they were satisfied with that grade. Since achievement could not be measured in such a short time, the next best thing was to evaluate how participants felt they had performed compared to the actual grade they had received. The level of language skill was also evaluated. Whereas most BALLI and FLCAS studies questioned beginner students, usually tested after three weeks in the course, I included more variability in my study to see how a wider range of participant levels could impact student beliefs as well as their anxiety levels. It would be assumed that if students had a higher FLCAS score, then it might be less likely for them to achieve a 200, 300, or even 400-level course of the language.

After the initial questionnaire on the participants' backgrounds, select questions from the BALLI followed. The questions were given as statements, with a scale from one to five given as a rating (Likert rating)—one being "strongly disagree" and five being "strongly agree." Ten questions from the original BALLI were omitted, as some of the BALLI questions were more relevant than others for the purposes of this study. The full questionnaire with the results will be given in the appendix. Following these questions, I introduced specific questions from the FLCAS that would be best for the purposes of this research project. Of the full FLCAS, I omitted only five questions that seemed to be a bit repetitive. Like the BALLI, the questions were given as statements, and the participants answered on a Likert scale—one being "strongly disagree" and five being "strongly agree."

One of the major differences between my research and the research done by others using the FLCAS and the BALLI was that I had very few controls in my study. While Horwitz, Aida, Kern, and others had several controls in their studies (all of their participants were beginner university students and took the FLCAS and BALLI in the first few weeks of the semes-

ter), my only control factors were that participants be university students (from the same university) that were majoring in international studies. The languages that were being studied and the level of competence (in terms of the course level) were not controlled, and the survey was carried out at the end of the semester, as opposed to the beginning of the semester. The fact that the participants were all international studies majors is of particular note, because it would appear that these sorts of students already have an appreciation for intercultural awareness, leading to a desire to want to communicate with people who speak other languages, thus potentially causing them to have a more positive belief system of foreign language learning. Their very career choice was indicative that they had a better disposition to learning a foreign language.

Results

Based on the initial questions on the participants' background, it was shown that there was a significant variety in the participants that took the survey in terms of where they had spent most of their lives, what languages they had taken, and how far they advanced in their language learning (see appendix for full responses).

An initial analysis of the BALLI will show that there is considerable variation in results (see table 1); however, it does appear that this group of participants have more positive beliefs about language learning than has been shown in previous studies. Participants underestimated how long it would take to learn a language fluently, had positive views of making mistakes, had desires to learn another language, had generally positive views of their own foreign language aptitude, and had the belief that, despite the fact that some people can learn languages with more ease than others, most people can still learn languages. They also had positive views on guessing words and believed that they would be able to speak the language well. Overall, the beliefs that these participants had about L2 learning was overwhelmingly positive. Some participants mentioned a few negative beliefs, such as feeling self-conscious when speaking the foreign language, believing that language learning is grammar-ruled and vocabulary-based, and believing that language learning was just translating between languages. That being said, the negative beliefs were eclipsed by the generally positive beliefs that were held by the participants about language learning.

The results of these questions proved to be somewhat different from what most other research on the FLCAS has shown (see table 2). Despite there still being some discomfort, self-consciousness, and perhaps general nervousness, the participants proved to be much more relaxed about language learning with a lower anxiety score. This being said, there is still some evidence to show that a sentiment of nervousness is still present, especially when it comes to the interactions with the instructor—being

called on without having anything prepared, fear of not understanding the teacher, and fear of talking with native speakers. Another point that seems to accentuate learner anxiety regards the social interaction with their peers. The results of the questionnaire showed that students feel self-conscious, or as though their peers are better learners than themselves. These feelings of self-consciousness are further exacerbated when talking to other people, particularly native speakers, sometimes leading the student to feel so nervous he or she forgets the knowledge they have. However, this seems to balance out with the general positive sentiment of other questions; the results show that there is very little nervousness around test-taking, no evidence of overstudying, little preoccupation about the consequences of failing, little embarrassment to volunteer answers, and little anxiety when well-prepared for class. In addition, very few participants answered that they did not want to attend class, and many gave a positive response to feeling confident when speaking in class. The fear of interaction with peers, native speakers, and the teacher is also countered with other responses that show that most participants are not afraid of being laughed at, do not fear correction from the teacher, and would generally feel comfortable speaking around native speakers.

These findings suggest that there is some anxiety around some aspects of language learning, but it does not seem to be nearly to the degree that studies like Horwitz's show. This could imply that either the general beliefs of language learners have changed, that students majoring in international studies already have a better belief system about language learning, or that something in the classroom has changed to affect the levels of anxiety experienced by language learners.

Discussion

These varying results of the survey show a slightly different angle of the BALLI and the FLCAS than what most other research has shown. Even though the correlation between BALLI and FLCAS scores was not typical (when compared to earlier studies), it still shows that there is a correlation between beliefs and anxiety in the FLC, only this study specifically showed the more positive aspect: positive beliefs about language learning lead to lowered anxiety in the language classroom.

Although the participants had a more positive view of language learning, there were still some "myths" that could be addressed. One of these is the fact that children are more capable of learning language than adults are, or that some people are born with an ability to learn a language (this of course is countered by their own belief that they have foreign language aptitude). Also, the general purposes of language learning still seem to revolve around more "negative" beliefs such as grammar, vocabulary,

and translation. Based on the results from the FLCAS, these beliefs did not correlate with the factors that led to anxiety in the foreign language classroom.

With regards to the answers given on the FLCAS, again, the results were mainly positive. Some students still responded to questions on the negative side, but it seems to be that the participants, while feeling some level of nervousness in the classroom (especially when put on the spot), do not experience as much anxiety in the classroom as other samples have shown. Participants believe that they can be fluent in the language. They don't fear making mistakes or being embarrassed in front of their peers, nor do they fear correction from the instructor. There was very little evidence of participants fearing going to the classroom because of the anxiety they will feel and no evidence of overstudying. While this overshadows the negative aspects of the FLCAS results, it is still important to recognize that areas where participants tended to score higher were questions that referred to being asked to speak spontaneously or with little preparation, as well as some fear of making mistakes, and being very aware of what other peers might think of them. It is important to recognize these results, as they can still be a contributing factor to anxiety in the classroom.

For future surveys attempting to combine the use of the FLCAS and the BALLI as I have done, it would be important to not attempt the use of so many variables. While increasing the variables proved useful, there were some shortcomings. For example, twenty percent of the participants spoke more than one language—oftentimes it was a combination of the majority of the other languages, such as Spanish, Mandarin, and French—which could affect the sentiments of the beliefs, as well as the anxiety they felt in the classroom, and probably made answering the other questions more complicated. It is also difficult, due to the way that I asked the background questions, to know if the participants are currently taking that language course, or if it was one they took in the past. Future studies should most likely study current language courses being taken and attempt to isolate to one language that is being learned. Another control variable to have in the future could be the level of language study. The participants in this study ranged from introductory courses to more advanced courses. This also could skew the results to favor those that feel comfortable with language learning, as forty-five percent of the participants were at a 300-level and only twenty-five percent were at an introductory level. While I think it is important to maintain a level of control with the language level for any repetition of this study, I also think that it is important to consider all levels of language learning and not isolate introductory courses. As this study showed, beliefs and anxiety can still affect more advanced students.

Conclusion and Implications

After analyzing the data from the survey conducted, it can be concluded that beliefs about language learning do affect the levels of anxiety in the classroom. While other studies have shown the negative side to this, I conclude that just as one's negative beliefs can lead to increased anxiety, so

can positive beliefs lead to decreased anxiety. It is worth noting that the participants in this study were likely biased towards language learning and intercultural communication, but it also goes to show that if further research is to be done on this, studies should be more comprehensive. Rather than focusing on university students that are taking a language course for a general requirement and come from diverse backgrounds, my study could prove to be valuable to see how anxiety affects language learners that are more intrinsically motivated. Although their beliefs might be more positive, there is still likelihood of the presence of anxiety in the classroom. As Horwitz noted, it is almost impossible to eradicate anxiety from a course that is heavily centered around evaluation and assessment.

It is also valid to recognize that while Horwitz (1986) has attempted to prove the validity and reliability of her tools (and the BALLI and the FLCAS have generally proved to be very effective), it cannot be concluded that a student's beliefs are the only thing that affect performance in the language learning classroom. It can also not be concluded that the fact that it is a foreign language classroom is the only thing that affects student anxiety levels and student achievement. While Patton and Sparks (2013) and Ganschow and Sparks (2007) believe that a participant's native language proficiency also affects their foreign language proficiency, I believe that there are numerous other factors—largely social and personal to the participants—that affect both their beliefs and their anxiety score in the classroom. As can be seen in this study, participants all had a common interest that changed what had largely been a negative result of foreign language anxiety. It would be of interest to see how maintaining certain personal aspects—relating to individuals' interests, hobbies, career choices, etc.—could affect the results of the study. This can also be supported by the fact that all the participants, except one, were members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Even if participants themselves did not serve a foreign-speaking mission, they are likely to have been in contact with someone who did and had a positive experience, thus perpetuating the positive belief about foreign language learning. Although there is a wide consensus between the relationship of anxiety and foreign language learning, there are many other factors to be considered. Tracking cognitive assessments, native language proficiency, and the scores of surveys similar to the FLCAS and the BALLI are all important if one is to truly understand the underlying nature between foreign language anxiety and beliefs about foreign language learning.

Lastly, one cannot disregard the time difference between Horwitz's initial studies, many of the ones that followed, and the present mindset around foreign language learning. When Horwitz first developed the FLCAS, she developed it from a support group that had formed for students learning a foreign language. In the 1980s, when it was developed, the way that language was taught was significantly different from how it is being taught now. Krashen's Five Hypotheses are essential in almost every language pedagogy class, as well as a comprehensive review of different methodologies that encourage a low affective filter. Additionally, there is a

growing movement to switch the focus of grammar and vocabulary in the curriculum to a more communication-based approach that encourages the use of authentic materials so that students not only speak the language but also understand the culture. These differences in the language pedagogy field not only change teachers' mindsets on how they teach and foster a healthy environment in the classroom, but also implicitly impact how even non-avid language learners perceive their ability to learn a language. With changing times and changing ideologies, it could be even more intriguing to understand how both foreign language anxiety and the prevalence of beliefs about language learning have evolved.

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Appendix

Background Information of Participants

Q: Are you currently taking a foreign class, or have you taken a foreign language class in a classroom setting? (Does not include independent study or use of language-learning apps).

A: All the participants answered "Yes" to this question.

Q: Which foreign language are you currently taking or did you take?

A: There was a wide variety of languages that were being studied:

Mandarin	Russian	Spanish	French	English	More than one language
4	2	5	2	3	4

Q: Did you receive a grade you are happy with/do you feel you did well in the language class that you took?

A: Eighty-five percent believed they did well in their language class, although five percent (1 participant) answered "no," five percent answered that it depended on the language, and five percent believed that while they received good grades, they don't feel it was well-earned, due to a instructor that was very lenient and gave "freebies" to help raise grades.

Q: At what level in language learning are you currently at or did you get to?

A: The results of this question are summarized in the following table:

100-level	200-level	300-level	400-level+
5	4	9	2

Q: Did you serve a mission in the language you are currently learning, or have you ever lived (over 1 year) in the country that speaks this language?

A: Fifteen participants did not serve a mission in or live in the country of the language they learned, although five did.

Q: Have you spent most of your life in the United States?

A: Fifty percent of the participants did spend most of their lives in the United States, and fifty percent did not. The countries where they had spent most of their lives varied, but was concentrated in Mexico and South America, with two participants that spent a majority of their lives in Romania and the United Kingdom, respectively.

FLCAS Results

*SD	D	N	A	SA
I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.				
1	3	6	8	2
I don't worry about making mistakes in a language class.				
4	8	2	2	4
I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in a language class.				
3	5	6	4	2
It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.				
2	5	5	5	3
It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.				
0	2	3	4	11
I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.				
0	6	4	6	4
I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.				
1	3	7	6	3
I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.				
7	2	4	4	3
In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.				
2	5	2	8	3
It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.				
6	4	4	3	3
I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.				
5	5	2	6	2
Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.				
3	5	6	4	2
I often feel like not going to my language class.				
11	4	4	1	0
I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.				
1	0	11	7	1
I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.				
7	5	5	3	0
I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.				
6	5	6	1	2
The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.				
12	5	3	0	0
I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.				
6	5	7	2	0
I always feel that other students speak the foreign language better than I do.				
3	2	6	5	4

I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.

5 1 7 6 1

Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.

3 4 3 6 4

I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.

8 1 4 3 4

I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.

7 3 6 3 1

I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.

5 5 5 2 3

I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.

5 4 5 5 1

I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.

9 5 4 1 1

I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.

2 3 7 7 1

I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.

2 2 7 5 4

*SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, N = neutral, A = agree, SA = strongly agree

BALLI Results

SD* D N A SA

It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language.

0 1 1 9 9

I believe that I will ultimately learn to speak this language very well.

0 1 4 8 7

If someone spent one hour a day learning a language, how long would it take him/her to be fluent? (Less than a year, 1-2 years, 3-5 years, 5-10 years, you can't learn a language in 1 hour a day)

3 8 6 2 1

Some people are born with a special ability which helps them learn a language.

1 2 5 7 5

It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.

0 0 1 7 12

I have foreign language aptitude.

0 0 9 7 4

Americans are good at learning foreign languages.

3 6 11 0 0

Everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.

0 1 0 4 15

It is necessary to know the foreign culture in order to speak this foreign language.

0 3 5 3 9

It is better to learn a foreign language in the foreign country.

0 0 2 7 11

Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words.

3 7 2 8 0

Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules.

2 7 2 9 0

Learning a foreign language is mostly a matter of translating from English.

8 11 0 1 0

It is important to repeat and practice a lot.

0 0 0 3 17

It is important to speak a foreign language with an excellent accent.

3 7 2 7 1

You shouldn't say anything in the foreign language until you can say it correctly.

16 4 0 0 0

If I heard someone speaking the language I am trying to learn, I would go up to them so that I could practice speaking the language.

0 4 7 7 2

It's okay to guess if you don't know a word in the foreign language.

0 1 5 5 9

I feel self-conscious speaking the foreign language in front of other people.

1 4 2 7 6

If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning, it will be hard to get rid of them later on.

8 4 4 4 3

If I get to speak this language very well, I will have many opportunities to speak it

1 0 5 8 6

If I learn to speak this language very well, it will help me get a good job.

0 0 3 5 12

Americans think that it is important to speak a foreign language.

5 8 5 2 0

I would like to learn this language so that I can get to know its speakers better.

1 1 2 3 13

*SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, N = neutral, A = agree, SA = strongly agree