Public speaking in a cross-cultural classroom environment: a survey of student attitudes and perceived needs

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Public speaking in a cross-cultural classroom environment:
A survey of student attitudes and perceived needs

by

Kelly Ann Wonder

A thesis submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

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This is to certify that the Master's thesis of

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has met the thesis requirements of Iowa State University

Signatures have been redacted for privacy
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INTRODUCTION

Cross-cultural programming has been implemented in English composition courses to promote diversity within the college curriculum (Myers, 1994). This study will evaluate whether or not there is student interest in taking the public speaking course in the cross-cultural format and whether or not native and non-native speaking students would fit well together in this type of environment. This introductory chapter begins by providing background information on the research topic, then covers definitions of key terms, and ends with the rationale for this thesis which leads into the development of the research questions used to guide this study.

Background

The background segment of this introductory chapter discusses why the topic is of interest to the researcher and provides background into the current structure of the speech communications program at Iowa State University.

Personal Interest

Upon entering the Master’s program in Teaching English as a Second Language/Applied Linguistics at Iowa State University in September 1998, I was assigned a teaching assistantship in the speech communications
program. I began looking into the cross-cultural learning environment already in place in first-year composition as a way to combine my coursework in linguistics with the public speaking courses I was teaching. During the summer of 1999, I had the opportunity to teach one of two experimental cross-cultural courses in public speaking where half of my students were non-native speakers of English and half were native English speakers. In the section that I taught, I asked the students two specific questions about the cross-cultural set-up on their course evaluations to elicit feedback on the program: 1) why did you choose to take the cross-cultural course and 2) do you feel that it has been beneficial to you or your classmates. Student response to the latter was positive and has encouraged me to pursue my investigation into this type of setting for a public speaking course.

I am particularly interested in cross-cultural learning environments as they provide an opportunity for all students to acquire a broader knowledge base through exposure to a variety of cultures and learning styles. I believe that offering a cross-cultural course in public speaking will provide a valuable service to the non-native speakers of English taking the course. In order to determine the role cross-cultural classrooms would play in the fundamentals of public speaking at this institution, it is important to understand how the course currently operates.
Speech Communications at Iowa State University

At Iowa State University, the speech communications program can be described in two parts: the structure of the course and the coursework assigned throughout the semester.

Structure

Speech communications 212 uses the lecture/lab format to accommodate approximately 600 students every semester. The lecture is taught by a tenure-track assistant professor and presents basic course materials. Graduate students on teaching assistantships teach the lab sections where students apply lecture materials and deliver speeches. During the semester, non-native speakers are mainstreamed into the course. Approximately one or two non-native speakers are enrolled in each lab section each semester, but the exact number of non-native speakers in each classroom varies and can range from zero to five or more non-native speakers in each classroom.

Coursework

The coursework in the speech communication course focus on developing a formal public speaking competency, combining theory with practice. Speeches are assessed holistically by degree of structure and organization, content, supporting evidence, delivery, and relationship to the
audience. There are three major speaking assignments that the student must complete to pass the course. The first speech is an informative speech of five to seven minutes in which the speaker increases the audience’s understanding on a topic of the speaker’s choice. The second speech is a seven to nine minute persuasive speech of policy designed to convince the audience that someone should do something. The final speech is a four to five minute special occasion speech that uses creative language and stylistic devices to inspire or to entertain the audience. Students are expected to deliver each speech extemporaneously, engaging the audience with content and delivery.

In addition to the major speaking assignments, students are expected to complete classwork and participate in group meetings outside of the class throughout the semester. Classwork is assigned to help students practice the requirements expected of them and includes three smaller speaking assignments. An introductory speech and a demonstration speech are done early in the semester, and an impromptu speech is done toward the end of the semester to assess student ability to apply the skills learned throughout the semester without significant preparation and pressure. Outlines are required for the informative and persuasive speeches to demonstrate a clear structure and well developed content. The group work gives students an additional support structure for developing each speech assignment. There
are several opportunities to earn extra credit, which is applied toward the student's classwork grade at the end of the semester.

The final portion of the grade is composed of two tests, which combine multiple choice and short answer questions to assess the understanding of the text and lecture materials. A midterm is given before the informative speech to make sure students have an understanding of the fundamentals of public speaking before giving their first major speech. A final exam is given upon completion of the semester to assess what students have learned. Testing allows students who are apprehensive about giving speeches to strengthen their grade by excelling on the exams, while students who may not be good test takers can strengthen their grade by doing well on their speeches.

An understanding of the structure of the course and the coursework presented throughout the semester are necessary for determining if a cross-cultural format can be implemented into the public speaking curriculum. Now that the reasons for choosing the topic of cross-cultural programming in the public speaking program has been clarified, key terms need to be defined to develop a common understanding of the terms that will be used throughout the remainder of the study.
Definition of Terms

The first terms to be discussed are native and non-native speaker of English. Then a differentiation will be made between non-native speaker and ESL (English as a Second Language) student. Finally, a definition and background information on cross-cultural programming will be provided.

Native Speaker vs. Non-native Speaker

Throughout this paper, the terms native speaker (NS) and non-native speaker (NNS) of English will be used to classify differences in students. Cook (1999) describes the native language to be the first language learned by an individual in childhood. A native speaker is one who has “(a) a subconscious knowledge of rules, (b) an intuitive grasp of meanings, (c) the ability to communicate within social settings, (d) a range of language skills, and (e) creativity of language use” (Cook, 1999, p. 186). The level at which these characteristics are evident in each individual is variable. Cook (1999) goes on to describe a non-native speaker as “someone who uses a second language and is still in the process of learning it” (p. 188). These classifications of speakers will be used throughout the paper.

Differentiation between NNS and ESL Student

In many discussions of non-native-speakers, the term ESL (English as a Second Language) is used. For the purpose of this paper, an ESL student is someone enrolled in a specific ESL language learning program. I use the
term non-native speaker to denote a student who is not enrolled in an ESL program. The non-native speaker has demonstrated competency in the English language through an acceptable TOEFL score or other proficiency measurement allowing the student to enroll in regular academic programs offered at the university.

Cross-cultural Programming

Cross-cultural programming, also referred to as a cross-cultural learning environment or a cross-cultural classroom, is a course or sections of a course made up of fifty percent native English speakers and fifty percent non-native English speaking students. While this concept has not yet seen significant use, both Silva (1994) and Rubin and Turk (1997) feel this method is one of the most effective ways to accommodate non-native and native English speakers in the classroom.

According to Silva (1994), “the goal in such arrangements is to meet the instructional needs of both groups and, as a dividend, to foster crosscultural understanding, communication, and collaboration” (p. 40). Cross-cultural programming can impact both NS and NNS by accommodating for different skill needs and by providing exposure to different cultural values and communication strategies (Silva, 1994; see also Rubin & Turk, 1997). Using cross-cultural sections forces students to think more about their audience and to take their needs into consideration and has the potential to develop positive relationships and eliminate
stereotypes between native and non-native speakers (Koester & Lustig, 1991). In a cross-cultural classroom, students learn to apply theory when they are able to use it directly (Sellnow & Littlefield, 1996).

Understanding the differences between a native speaker (NS), non-native speaker (NNS), a NNS and ESL student, and the goals of cross-cultural programming are essential for this investigation and used throughout this study. The introduction of background information and definition of key terms leads to the development of the rationale for introducing cross-cultural programming into the public speaking program at Iowa State.

Rationale

Globalization is a trend that has taken place in many sectors of society, and higher education is not left unaffected by this trend. Globalizing higher education and the use of cross-cultural programming in first year composition at Iowa State has prompted the development of several research questions which apply cross-cultural programming to the public speaking curriculum.

Globalization of Higher Education

Non-native speakers of English are a growing population on college campuses due to an increased number of immigrants, refugees, minority groups, and international students in the United States. The 1996-1997
Digest of Education Statistics states that over 450,001 international students are enrolled at public and private universities and colleges in the United States. Iowa State University alone enrolls over 2,500 international students from 125 countries each semester in undergraduate, graduate, and visiting scholar programs (Iowa State University, 1999). To meet new demands presented by this population of students, universities are looking to increase the diversity in their programs resulting in globalization.

Cross-Cultural Format in First-Year Composition

One example of cross-cultural programming that draws on students as a resource for promoting globalization in the university is the first-year composition program at Iowa State that was introduced in the fall of 1994 and has been used to promote diversity in written composition. While little information has been published in this area, an interview with Cindy Myers (Appendix B), coordinator of the cross-cultural programs in first year composition at Iowa State, was conducted to look at the development of the cross-cultural program.

According to Myers (1994), “Because of its broad population base, the program is an ideal place for initiating curriculum changes that promote diversity.” Each semester, seven cross-cultural sections of first year composition are taught by professors and teaching assistants who have expressed interest in teaching the course. Each section is divided in half

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1 This figure does not include non-native speakers of English who are U.S. citizens.
and limits the number of students to 24 (twelve NS and twelve NNS) per section. The program was established with five goals in mind.

1. To increase tolerance and understanding among students.
2. To encourage critical thinking and inclusion of multiple perspectives in student writing.
3. To encourage cross-cultural collaboration.
4. To encourage retention of international students in the first year composition program.
5. To promote intercultural friendships" (Myers, 1994).

Besides these goals, the program hoped to use a diverse staff to promote language and cultural awareness and to provide a more effective experience to NNS.

The use of cross-cultural programming in first-year composition provides a foundation for introducing cross-cultural programming into the public speaking curriculum. While a foundation has been set, several questions have been developed to determine if the program can be implemented into a different setting.

Development of Research Questions

The first objective is to determine if students are interested in cross-cultural programming. Secondly, the needs of NS and NNS in the public speaking course should be examined. Through this study, I wish to determine if native and non-native speaking students at Iowa State University have an interest in taking public speaking in a cross-cultural and
whether or not students would fit well in a course offered in a cross-cultural environment.
Determining the interest and needs of students as related to cross-cultural programming requires background in two key areas: the role attitudes play learning and the needs of native and non-native speakers in the program. The first segment discusses the role of the environment on attitudes in the classroom, and the attitudes of students from the English 104/105 program. The second segment examines the needs of native and non-native speakers in the classroom.

**Attitudes**

The classroom environment plays a significant role in shaping student attitudes in any classroom. The attitudes of students in the cross-cultural first-year composition program show how students have molded the classroom environment.

**Role of the Environment**

The environment in which a student is placed plays an important role in shaping student attitudes and in determining what learning opportunities become available (Ellis, 1997). Students learn to make (linguistic and cultural) judgements based on what goes on around them (Ellis, 1997). Attitudes then form in response to peers, peer feedback, and language choices that are made. In a public speaking course peers model
extemporaneous delivery, linguistic forms, rules of the target language, and organizational strategies. The opportunity to improve oral fluency and sociolinguistic appropriateness also hinge on positive interpersonal interaction with peers (Cummins, 1983). Students use the examples presented to them and reflect the behavior in their own speeches. However, for modeling to be effective, students must value the feedback given to them.

Gardner's Socio-educational Model describes the connection between learner attitudes, the environment, and learning outcomes by associating "(1) the social and cultural milieu (2) individual learner differences, (3) the setting, and (4) learning outcomes" (cited in Ellis, 1997, p. 236). The setting which is influenced both social and cultural factors and the learner (learner's attitudes) produces different outcomes. Learning is enhanced when the classroom environment can create positive attitudes toward learning, motivate students, and build self-confidence (Ellis, 1997).

The general attitude of the classroom affects when and how learning takes place. The next segment looks at the specific attitudes of students that have been seen in the cross-cultural first-year composition program.

Attitudes toward English 104 and 105

Student attitudes toward the cross-cultural programming in first-year composition (English 104 and 105) have played a key role in making the cross-culture program a success. A positive attitude toward the classroom environment has allowed the program to continue and prosper.
To gain an understanding of the student perspective of the program, students participating in the cross-cultural sections during the spring semester of 1996 to the fall semester of 1998 were surveyed upon completion of the course to determine if they had a preference for “1. a section with general enrollment (containing mostly U.S. students but possibly with a few international students, 2. a cross-cultural section (a section with a mix of international and U.S. students) or 3. an all-international section (a section with international students only, not currently offered at ISU)” (Myers, 1996). Data were collected from 378 U.S. students, 388 international students, 29 foreign-born immigrants to the U.S., and 38 students who classified themselves as others. Seventy-three percent of the U.S. students chose the cross-cultural option, as did 95% of the international students (Myers, 1996).

Students were also asked to comment on any benefits or drawbacks to being in a cross-cultural course, and if their feelings about working with people from other cultures had changed since the experience. Both native and non-native speakers found the course to be an overwhelmingly positive experience (Appendix E).

With the success of the first-year composition program, the foundation is set for building a program in the public speaking program. But before a cross-cultural program in public speaking can be developed and implemented, an investigation needs to take place to determine if
students in the public speaking course have an interest in cross-cultural programming and perceive themselves to have needs that could be met in the cross-cultural environment.

To understand the needs of the students in the classroom, the factors impacting the individual should be taken into consideration. Not only does the understanding of students' attitudes toward cross-cultural programming affect the effectiveness of a course, but understanding and meeting the needs of NS and NNS enrolled in the course does as well.

Needs of Students in the Public Speaking Classroom

In order to develop appropriate content for a cross-cultural course, the instructor needs to be aware of the needs native and non-native speakers have in the classroom that are in addition to the basic public speaking needs addressed in the course.

Native Speakers

Ethnocentric views, limited cultural awareness, and poor listening skills can hinder the success of some native speakers in the public speaking classroom. Ethnocentrism is defined as “the view of things in which one’s own group is the center of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it” (Samovar & Porter, 1995 p. 56). Ethnocentrism is passed on to students by textbooks, instructors, and classmates through limited exposure or resistance to diversity. According to Kelly (1996), “most
approaches to public speaking are based on the works of Plato, Aristotle and other classical Greek scholars and have not been updated to include the views of women or minority scholars” (p. 176). Speeches are held to the standards of a “traditional Western, male dominated view” that perpetuates ethnocentrism because it “does nothing to help students see beyond the traditional mode” (Kelly, 1996, p. 175).

Limited exposure to culture does not allow for variety in communication styles and hinders students from being able to produce and consume messages created by people of different cultures (Kelly, 1996). According to Hugenberg (1996), “Americans have a difficult time valuing other cultural traditions because we fail to value other ways of thinking and other forms of logic” (p. 141). Being able to acknowledge different methods of organization, uses of evidence, modes of proof, and styles of presentation helps students develop their own style.

With limited cultural awareness comes a limited ability to adapt to different audiences. To adapt to an audience means to understand who is represented in the audience and determine if the audience has necessary and sufficient background to ensure understanding (Verderber, 2000). Cultural awareness is necessary to “(1) assess how your audience is likely to respond to what you will say in your speech and (2) adjusting what you say to make it as clear, appropriate, and convincing as possible” (Lucas, 1998, p. 119). Students must use cultural awareness to make appropriate word
choices, eliminate slang, and make examples more general rather than culturally specific.

While you are graded primarily on your oral presentation skills in a public speaking course, most of the class period is spent listening. Students listen to the lecture given by the instructor, and students listen to speeches given by other students. Lucas (1998) attributes not concentrating, listening too hard, jumping to conclusions, and focusing on delivery and personal appearance as causes of poor listening. Communication can become ineffective by a limited exposure to different communication styles and accented English. An example found in Powell (1996) illustrates this point.

"After hearing a speech from an African-American oratorical tradition, one white-American student approached me saying he couldn’t understand anything that was said. To me, the speech was understandable, but different" (p. 200).

Limited exposure to accents and different cultures interferes with communication. Increased exposure could help students improve classroom experiences (Ellis, 1997). Being a good listener is important for becoming a better speaker and a better speech critic and for learning more about a broad range of topics (Verderber, 2000).
While NS are challenged by limited cultural awareness, difficulty adapting to audiences, and poor listening skills, NNS also face linguistic and cultural barriers in the classroom.

Non-native Speakers

For students who do not speak English as their first language, other factors affect how they process information and interact in the classroom. These factors can be divided into two categories: linguistic and cultural.

Linguistic

With ESL textbooks being aimed primarily at speaking in “everyday” contexts and developing correct pronunciation, non-native speakers bring little experience in formal public speaking to the classroom (Rubin & Turk, 1997). Instructors of basic communication courses increasingly are challenged by problems specific to non-native speakers of English. According to Johnson and Golombek (1996), these challenges include language proficiency, communicative style, communication strategies, and pronunciation problems.

Some of the more obvious characteristics of non-native speakers are linguistic differences. A limited English proficiency often includes differences in pronunciation, a limited vocabulary, and listening skills. Second language speakers often have difficulty hearing and pronouncing
different vowel sounds (see figure 1). Different languages use different positioning of the tongue to produce sounds. The tenseness, rounding of vowels, length of the vowel sounds, nasalization, and tone play different roles in languages and affect how individuals hear and produce sounds (Finegan 1994, pp. 39-40). Table one illustrates some common vowel sounds that are difficult for non-native speakers to distinguish between.

| /i/ and /ɪ/ | he and hit |
| /æ/ and /ɛ/ | mad and met |
| /ɛ/ and /ə/ | lay and law |
| /u/ and /u/ | too and took |

Inflectional endings (-s, -es, -e, and -ed) also may prove to be difficult for second language speakers to hear and pronounce. For example, they may pronounce the –ed in the past tense of walk as wɔlkˌed rather than wɔlkt.

Inflectional morphemes in numbers (-teen and –ty) in thirteen and thirty are challenging as well. Other difficulties can be found in the pronunciation of consonant clusters, as in desks.

Stress, rhythm, and intonation patterns also cause pronunciation problems in English. Stress signals where the emphasis is placed in words.
In stressed words there is more volume and the vowels are longer, while in unstressed words the vowel sound is reduced (Johnson & Golombek, 1996). The rise and fall of the pitch level determines the intonation pattern. This is noticeable in statements, commands, yes and no questions, informative questions, and in lists. Failure to use the correct intonation pattern can result in misinterpretation of the message, i.e. a statement can sound like a question.

To offset linguistic inadequacies, students often will overcompensate by attempting to memorize speeches. When the goal is extemporaneous delivery, a memorized speech prevents the student from earning an A (Slagell, 1999).

While a degree of pronunciation and grammatical accuracy are important for understanding the student, native-like proficiency is often unreachable even after years of study. The native speaker as a model for non-native speakers has long been used in language teaching and in second language acquisition study (Cook, 1999). Instructors use native speakers as a model so non-native speakers can get an idea of how the language is actually used by native speakers. While native-like standards are used by second language acquisition researchers for measuring the non-native speaker ability in “grammaticality judgements, obligatory occurrences, and error analysis” (Cook, 1999, p. 189), few non-native speakers will ever be mistaken for native speakers of the language.
Cook (1999) goes on to explore the evidence showing the affects the first language has on the second language. These factors include phonological differences in the timing of voicing the beginning of plosive consonants, vocabulary differences where the same word has different meanings in each language, words borrowed from other languages, and syntactical judgements of grammaticality. In addition to language differences, non-native speakers can be “slightly less effective at language-related cognitive tasks, long-term memory of information gathered at lectures, and slower reaction times” (Cook, 1999, p.193). Because of the many differences between native and non-native speakers of a language, Cook (1999) does not feel that native speakers should be used to set standards for non-native speakers.

With the number of differences between the two groups of students, a number of questions arise from the instructor, including “if a NNS should not be held to the same expectations as a NS, what expectations should be held, and how can standards be set for each group of student without discriminating against either group?” The academic classroom may not always be the place to address the linguistic differences of NNS, but in the public speaking classroom those differences are on display in front of an audience of the student’s peers. If linguistic differences are affecting the student’s performance in the class or causing additional apprehension, then the instructor needs to look more closely at these issues.
In teaching and working with non-native speakers of English, linguistic limitations are relatively noticeable to the listener. However, one cannot omit the role culture plays in the individual. The influences culture has on the individual can be much more subtle.

Cultural

Culture can influence the student in many ways. Culture Shock, values, and reasons for being in the culture all affect how the students interact in the classroom. These cultural influences lead to many generalizations that can be considered when working with a diverse population.

Culture Shock

Culture shock can be found in varying degrees in all students in a university setting. While for native speakers, culture shock may result from the transition from home to a university setting, culture shock for international students often is much more involved. Yook (1997) breaks culture shock into two components. One involves the ability to relate and understand the host culture. The second is comprised of the gap between the expectations of the student has of the host culture and the actuality. In the public speaking environment, culture shock can result from differences in the value the native culture and host culture place on public speaking,
what constitutes appropriate delivery while speaking in public, and the expectation instructors have towards non-native speakers of English.

Values

An individual’s beliefs are often influenced by some object or event or by some value, concept or attribute. One must understand the values of the host culture, and how those values relate to the values of the home culture. Geert Hofstede, a Dutch researcher, has identified four value dimensions including individualism-collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and masculinity-femininity that have a significant impact on behavior of a culture. His research ranks each country in each of the four value dimensions to help visualize cultural belief systems.

According to Hofstede’s Value Dimensions, the United States is a low context culture in which little of the message is embedded in the context or those involved in the message (Samovar & Porter 1995). Hall (1976) defines low context cultures to be much more explicit and can be found to be offensive to cultures on the other end of the continuum. The United States is also one of the most individualistic societies in the world which tends to make us more competitive (Samovar & Porter, 1995). Individuals are encouraged to take initiative to do things for themselves and to be emotionally independent. Everyone has a right to a private life and their own opinion. Individuals of the United States also tend to be a more
masculine (p. 95) including materialism, goals of high achievement, independence, and more clearly defined sex roles which can lead to gender discrimination. The lifestyle of the United States tends to be weary of the amount of uncertainty in a situation (p. 91). A higher uncertainty avoidance leads to a “time is money” philosophy on life, an urge to work hard, and be aggressive toward our goals. Stress can be a problem if there is ambiguity in the constructs being worked within.

Other factors also influence cultural differences. To be considered a culture there must be some primary features including: a past history, a dominant, organized religion, a core set of values, regulated social systems, and artifacts unique to that society (Laungani, 1999). Locke (1998) examines several influential elements of culture including: sociopolitical factors, the culture’s history of oppression, the experience of language and arts, the influence of religious practices, child-rearing practices, family role and structure, values and attitudes, and degree of opposition to acculturation from which cultural differences can arise. All of these elements affect how the student interacts with the instructor and with classmates in small and large group situations in the classroom. The degree to which these elements differ between the new community and the old will determine how well one adjusts to the new environment and the degree to which culture shock is experienced.

Hofstede’s Value Dimensions discuss four key areas, which aid in
understanding cultures: individualism vs. collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity vs. femininity (Ting-Toomey, 1992). The Kluckhohn model also helps us to understand the values that each country represents in regards to human nature, man-nature relationship, time sense, activity, and social relations (Kohls, 1996). Understanding how each culture falls on these scales can help instructors understand what influences a student from a different cultural background. For example, the United States rates low on the power distance continuum, meaning that there is a more equal distribution of power among individuals. In contrast, Asian cultures fall on the opposite end of this continuum and experience a very high power distance relationship between individuals (Samovar & Porter, p. 93). If a teacher notices that an Asian student rarely participates in class and makes little eye contact, it is likely a result of that student’s cultural value system. Asian students use this behavior as a means of showing respect for their elders and individuals in a position of power. According to a study done by Yook and Seiler (1990), “Asian students seem to have a different image of the concept of public speaking, resulting in such behaviors as rigid posture, lack of facial expressions, restricted head movements and eye contact, and an overall business-like delivery and content.” Avoiding eye contact, not participating in class-discussion, and seeking distance between individuals is considered respectful. When we ask students to use extemporaneous delivery, we are asking them to violate
many of the principles that are highly valued in their country.

“Understanding culture-specific rules for how, why, and when the act of speaking is valued becomes important in identifying international students’ concerns and needs in the basic communication course” (Yook, 1997).

Reasons for Being in a Culture

The reasons for being in a culture also determine cultural differences and affect the acculturation process and stimulate cultural differences. Individuals leave their country for a variety of reasons and often are classified and viewed differently because of their status in the United States. In the same respect, immigrants, refugees, exiles, and international students have different needs that should be addressed. Eleftheriadou (1999) addresses the needs of each group and how they affect the acculturation process. “Immigrants, refugees, and exiles can sometimes view the new country as the cause of their problems rather than the country they fled from” (p. 120). International students have chosen to be in the United States for different reasons such as a better education and language learning experience and plan to return to their home country when their goals are accomplished. International students are not affected to the same degree by the same sociopolitical factors, cultural history of oppression, and limited language experience that affects immigrants, refugees, and
exiles. Because of the status that accompanies international students, the general public often finds these individuals to be more acceptable.

Generalizations

While generalizations can be made about a culture, it is important to remember that these generalizations will not apply to every individual from the same culture on the same level. Atkinson (1999) suggests a middle ground approach to culture and provides six principles to consider. These principles include "(1) all humans are individuals, (2) individuality is also culture; (3) social group membership and identity are multiple, contradictory, and dynamic, (4) social group membership is consequential, (5) methods of studying cultural knowledge and behavior are unlikely to fit a positivist paradigm, and (6) language (learning and teaching) and culture are mutually implicated, but culture is multiple and complex" (pp. 641-647). It is important to remember that in teaching one must "take into account the culture in the individual and the individual in the culture" (p. 648). This means that while some generalizations can be made about a group of people, one cannot assume that they will apply to a specific individual. Each individual's circumstances may be different. Generalizations can be used as a starting point, but should not be used as the final approach to a situation.
Research Questions

The Basic Course Communication Annual regularly surveys basic speech communication courses around the country to determine the status of the program and areas where additional research is needed. The 1999 edition suggests that more research be conducted in addressing the role of diversity in public speaking courses including but not limited to course content, classroom strategies, and student demographics (p. 34). After exploring the role student attitudes plays in developing a supportive classroom environment, the different needs had by native and non-native speakers of English, an investigation of the use of the cross-cultural format in the public speaking course at Iowa State University can be undertaken.

The purpose of this study was to gather evidence about whether or not students would be interested in taking a cross-cultural course in public speaking at Iowa State University, and whether or not NNS would be likely to fit well in such a class with NS. These questions were chosen to see if students in the public speaking course had a positive attitude toward the cross-cultural environment, as previously seen in comments by students in the cross-cultural first-year composition program, through their previous experiences in cross-cultural courses and their perceived benefits and drawbacks to taking a cross-cultural course. If students are not interested in taking speech communications 212 in the cross-cultural format and enrollment is not balanced, the cultural element is weakened.
It is also necessary to determine if the NNS in the public speaking course have the linguistic and cultural concerns seen in students by researchers. Many of the linguistic and cultural limitations mentioned previously are evident in ESL students. However, students enrolled in the public speaking course are no longer considered ESL students, as they have demonstrated sufficient English language proficiency, as determined by the University, to be admitted into the regular university program. In addition, speech 212 is not a transition course, such as English 104 and 105, which is taken during the first year of university study. Speech 212 is not traditionally a freshman course and can be taken at anytime during the students’ academic career. This poses the possibility that NNS may no longer be facing the cultural and linguistic limitations to the degree that ESL students or students in the first-year composition program are facing.

A survey of public speaking students enrolled during the spring semester of 2000 was used to answer questions developed from the research done in the area of linguistic and cultural limitations of non-native speakers and in the written communication program at Iowa State University. The following questions have been developed to focus the investigation.

1) What is the students’ attitude toward a cross-cultural public speaking course?
a) Are students interested in taking speech communications 212 in a cross-cultural format?

b) What benefits and drawbacks do students perceive toward taking courses in a cross-cultural format?

c) Of the students who have taken a course in the cross-cultural format, what do they feel are the strengths and weaknesses of the course?

2) Do non-native speakers have linguistic and cultural needs in addition to the needs of native speakers in the public speaking course.

a) What problems do non-native speakers expect to have in the public speaking course and how do they differ from the perceived needs of native speakers in the course?

b) Do non-native speakers have less formal training in public speaking than native speakers?

c) Do non-native speakers have fewer public speaking experiences outside of the public speaking course than native speakers?
MATERIALS AND METHODS

To address the research questions a questionnaire was developed and distributed to the students enrolled in speech communications 212 during the spring semester of 2000. Following the development and administration of the survey, student responses were analyzed to address the research questions. This chapter describes the questionnaire used to collect data, the students surveyed, the distribution of the questionnaire, and the analysis of student responses.

Questionnaire

A survey was developed to assess the perceptions of the speech communication students (Appendix A). The format was organized to process responses from a large number of participants and allow for some individual comments. The survey began with a series of questions to determine the demographic background (year in school, major, and native language) of the students enrolled in the course. Responses to the remaining questions were used to address the research questions. The questions explore the experience students have had with cross-cultural courses and public speaking to assess students' attitudes toward such programs and the needs students perceive to have within the public speaking program. Questions eleven through twelve on the survey were not used in this study.
Format

The main questions were numbered and printed in bold to help the student identify them. Related questions were grouped because individuals process information better when like information is co-located. A multiple-choice format was used to limit responses students could provide. Space was left for students to supplement their answers with additional comments. The survey was read by several students, the speech communications teaching assistants, and course director for clarity.

Demographics

The first three questions asked about the participants to determine NS/NNS enrollment in the course, year in school, and major area of study. Data are to be analyzed by comparing responses provided by native and non-native speakers. Question one determines if the student considers him/herself to be a native or non-native speaker. The native language, if not English and the length of time English was studied and the location of were used to determine how long and what type of exposure to the language NNS had. No questions were used to determine what NNS felt their proficiency was because students must demonstrate a minimum TOEFL score of 500 (530 for engineering students) to enroll in the University (Ruff, 2000).
The year in school was asked in question two to provide an indication of the amount of public speaking students have experienced. Upperclassmen are more likely to have given presentations and speeches in other classes, and to hold leadership experiences in extracurricular clubs and organizations than underclassmen. The student's major was asked to determine his/her academic background and to identify who is enrolled in the course. Some majors require more public speaking to be done within their field. For example, business majors will do a considerable amount of formal public speaking and presentations, while computer science majors do less. This experience factor will influence the student's exposure to public speaking. In addition, while speech communications 212 is a service course provided by the University, all majors do not require it. It is unlikely for students to take the course as an elective.

Attitudes

Questions eight through twelve relate to the first research question, "What are students' attitudes toward a cross-cultural public speaking course?" These questions were used to determine student interest in cross-cultural courses. This was done by examining previous exposure to cross-cultural courses, student interpretation of the benefits of this format, and interest in taking speech communications 212 in this format. If students have taken first year composition in this format, they may elect to take
public speaking in this format. Enrollment in other cross-cultural courses could signal an interest in taking public speaking in this format, especially if students feel that they would benefit.

Needs

Questions five through seven address the second research question, "Do NNS have needs in addition to the needs of NS in the public speaking course?" Questions five and six were designed to determine individual experience with public speaking. These questions are used to determine if NS have a more extensive public speaking background than NNS. Who has had more public speaking experience? Which group chooses to undertake outside public speaking roles? At the beginning of the year students complete a survey to provide lab instructors with an idea of what kind of experiences students have in public speaking. The multiple-choice selections were based on responses from this survey to make sure all possible selections were covered.

Question seven was used to identify student concerns in the course. At the time the survey was given, all of the students had given two speeches, the demonstration speech and the informative speech. Students should be familiar with the different areas required to give a successful speech at this point in the semester. This question was used to indicate if native and non-native speakers have different concerns in the course.
**Student Participants**

The demographic information collected on the survey allowed for the calculation of the number of survey participants. Twenty-four of the twenty-five sections of the public speaking course participated in the survey. A total of 559 students are enrolled in these sections. On the day that the surveys were distributed, 476 students attended class. Of the attendees, 466 participated in the survey. Four hundred thirty-three students indicated that they were NS of English while 33 indicated that English was not their native language. With the maximum enrollment for each section being 25 students, nine sections have no NNS in the class. The remaining sections had a range of one to four NNS, averaging two NNS per section.

**Academic Standing**

Of those enrolled in the class, 64 % of all students are classified as sophomores or juniors by the university, followed by 25 % seniors, 6 % freshman, and .5 % other. The total number of native and non-native speakers is broken down by academic standing in Table 2.
Table 2: Student enrollment by academic standing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Native speakers</th>
<th>Non-native Speakers</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>6.0(^1)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>433.0</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>466.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)Figures represent a percent of the number of students (\(n\)).

Major Areas of Study

Ninety-three percent of the NS participating in the survey indicated that speech communications 212 was a requirement for their major. Eighty-five percent of the NNS enrolled in the course were required to take the course. A breakdown of student majors is provided in Table 3. This semester, 28 % of students have declared a major in a business-related field. This is followed by computer science at 13 % and agriculture at 12 %. No students indicated majors in ethnic studies, history, or humanities. While several colleges on campus require this course, it is not a general education requirement for all students.
Table 3: Major areas of study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Native Speakers</th>
<th>Non-Native Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>12.0(^1)</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic/Cultural Studies</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Studies</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multidisciplinary</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Recreation</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Sciences</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-professional</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre and Arts</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>449.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)Figures represent a percent of the number of students \((n)\).
Procedures

The following segment explains the procedure for gaining approval for distributing the survey within the speech communications program and how the survey was distributed once approval was gained.

Approval Process

During the spring semester of 2000, eight teaching assistants enrolled in graduate studies at Iowa State each teach three recitation sections, one temporary instructor teaches a recitation section, and one lecturer offers the course. The survey idea was first proposed to the course lecturer who oversees all of the recitation sections. With initial approval, the recitation instructors were asked if they would be willing to distribute surveys in each of their recitation sections. After obtaining consent from those who would be participating from the department, university consent was obtained. At Iowa State University this process involves submitting an application and materials to the Human Subjects Committee.

Distribution

I surveyed the students enrolled in speech communications 212 during the spring semester of 2000. A single survey was developed and distributed through the recitation instructors to all students in attendance on 14 February 2000. Lab instructors were asked to allow ten minutes at
the end of class to distribute the surveys. Instructions were provided for the instructor and the students to ensure confidentiality and for completion of the forms. Two instructors ran out of time at the end of the class period and were not able to distribute the survey. One instructor chose to distribute the survey during the next class period, and the other instructor chose not to distribute the survey. Participation by the lab instructors and by the students was voluntary.

Analysis

The primary sources of data collected for the research of this thesis are the public speaking and cultural perception's questionnaire. The data were analyzed using the MS Word spreadsheet program to tabulate data and calculate percentages. First, all surveys were separated by demographic information. Then an analysis was made of multiple choice questions and free response questions. The final step in the analysis process compared the results between NS and NNS groups.

All of the surveys were separated by each student's response to survey question one - whether or not they consider themselves to be a native or non-native speaker of English. Native speakers were placed in one group and NNS in another group.

Multiple choice questions five through ten were analyzed in the same manner: the number of responses to each question were counted, and then
the responses were converted to percentages. Survey questions 8b and 9a, allowed students to supplement their multiple choice responses with additional comments. Comments were separated into two groups; one group for positive comments and one group for negative comments. Comments were then sub-categorized by the content of the comment.

The final step in the analysis process for both the multiple choice and free response questions was to compare the responses between native and non-native speaker groups. This was done to determine if there were any similarities and differences between groups. Based on the multiple choice and free response questions, evidence was gathered to determine if native and non-native speakers were interested in taking a cross-cultural course in public speaking at Iowa State University, and whether or not NS and NNS would be likely to fit well in a class together.
This study examined student attitudes toward cross-cultural programming and perceived needs in the public speaking course. This chapter will present the findings of the data by reporting the responses of NS and NNS to the survey questions. The first segment addresses the survey questions that correspond to the first research question regarding student attitudes toward cross-cultural programming. The second segment discusses the responses to the survey questions that correspond to the second research question regarding students’ perceived needs in the public speaking program.

**Students Attitudes toward Cross-Cultural Public Speaking**

Societal factors, including student attitudes or perceived attitudes toward a course, influence the student’s decision to enroll in the course and the desire the student has to participate in the course once they have enrolled (Kerka, 1998). The students’ attitudes towards taking a cross-cultural course in public speaking were measured in student interest, perceived benefits, and past experiences with cross-cultural courses.
Student Interest in a Cross-Cultural Public Speaking Course

The first indicator of student attitudes toward cross-cultural programming was student interest in taking the public speaking course in a cross-cultural format if that opportunity were presented to them. In Table 4, students have indicated their interest in a cross-cultural speech course.

Table 4: Student Interest in a Cross-Cultural Speech Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Native Speakers</th>
<th>Non-native Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>416.0</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I would.</td>
<td>48.0(^1)</td>
<td>91.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, I would not.</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\)Figures represent the percent of the number of students (n).

The public speaking course starts with a smaller population base than the first-year composition program, limiting the number of students likely to enroll in the course. Enrollment can often be a determining factor in deciding whether or not a course will be offered. There needs to be some student interest by both native and non-native speakers to justify inclusion of the cross-cultural course in the curriculum. This makes student interest an important factor in determining the success or failure of a course. If too few students register for a course, it is often dropped from the course offerings.

This response to this question does indicate that a fair number of students are interested in taking the public speaking course in the cross-cultural format should the opportunity arise. While the number of NS
interested is less than half, there would still be enough NS interest because at 100:7, the ratio of NS to NNS is much greater.

Perceived Benefits to a Cross-Cultural Course

The second indicator of student attitudes toward cross-cultural programming was the perceived benefits to a cross-cultural course. If a student is going to be interested in enrolling in a course, the student needs to feel that he/she will benefit from the course in some manner. This is especially important in marketing a new option to a course over an existing one.

Table 5 illustrates students' feelings toward cross-cultural courses as indicated in question nine on the survey. The majority of both NS and NNS, as indicated by the responses to "no one would benefit", feel that there are benefits to taking a cross-cultural course. Whether the benefits would impact the student directly or be more beneficial to their classmates, few individuals feel that no one would benefit from a cross-cultural course. While the percentages to the specific "benefits" categories are not very high, the lower percentages could reflect a limited awareness about cross-cultural programs. Because cross-cultural programming research is limited and not all of the students surveyed had participated in cross-cultural programming, students may not have a full understanding of what cross-cultural programming means.
Table 5: Feelings Toward Cross-Cultural Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Native Speakers</th>
<th>Non-native Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would benefit personally.</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>44.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>no</td>
<td>56.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My native English-speaking classmates would benefit.</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-native speakers would benefit.</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one would benefit.</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>89.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know if anyone would benefit.</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>98.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Figures represent the percent of the number of students (n).

In addition to the responses above, a variety of comments were submitted by students indicating the pros and cons of a cross-cultural format (Appendix D). Students supplementing their responses with comments indicated gaining cultural knowledge, exposure to language, interaction with a different population of students, and creating awareness towards stereotype as areas in which would be beneficial. Some students are clearly aware of how important it is to be able to learn to interact with individuals who do not speak English as a native language, be exposed to diversity, and to learn about cultural differences. Many students often noted that they live in a global society, and this format would be beneficial in business relationships, working with international student teaching assistants, and in getting to know NNS on campus.
While more students chose to comment with benefits than provide comments on negative responses, students are concerned with potential limitations to the course. On this side of the issue, students not interested in cross-cultural programs were concerned about communication between students, course content, and structure of the course that may inhibit learning. Some of these concerns, such as introduction of new material and different standards for each group of students, are quite warranted. Should a cross-cultural course be offered, it would take special attention by the instructor to ensure that these areas were not neglected. Other students commenting on the limitations of the course further illustrated the ignorance students with limited cultural exposure have towards cultural awareness. An example of this would be “You can’t understand them. Thick accent.”

Overall, students were interested in the cross-cultural programming, and the students who did not see benefits for themselves still felt that both NS and NNS would benefit from this type of format.

Past Experiences in Cross-Cultural Courses

The third indicator of student attitudes toward cross-cultural programming was the student’s past experience(s). As discussed earlier, a number of English first-year composition 104 and 105 sections are offered to students each semester in a cross-cultural format. Students past
experiences with cross-cultural programming will play a part in their decision making process when deciding whether or not to enroll in the course. Past experiences may also affect the recommendation a student makes on cross-cultural programming to a classmate. Table 6 represents the percentage of both native and non-native speakers who have participated in cross-cultural courses.

The survey indicated that only a small percentage of students have taken a course offered in a cross-cultural format. In addition, some students did indicate that they had enrolled in more than one course offered in the cross-cultural format. Limited experience with cross-cultural courses could affect the perceived benefits or interest in the course through limited exposure. It can be assumed that students enrolling in more than one cross-cultural course did feel benefits to this type of environment, otherwise they would not have enrolled in another cross-cultural course.

There was a misunderstanding of the question by students indicating another ISU course or a course at another institution. To be considered a cross-cultural course the course needs to be designated cross-cultural by the registrar’s office, rather than enroll a large number of NNS. The courses that were listed by students in response to these selections were often courses that involved study abroad experiences or courses that are known
Table 6: Experiences with Cross-Cultural Courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Native Speakers</th>
<th>Non-Native Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 104</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>88.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 105</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>81.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another ISU Course</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>96.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course at Another Institution</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>98.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have Not Taken</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures represent the percent of the number of students (n).

To be filled with a large number of NNS. While these courses may have been cultural experiences or created cultural awareness, they were not offered in a cross-cultural format.

The students who had taken cross-cultural courses, were then asked whether or not they felt they benefited from the experiences and why or why not. A positive experience in a cross-cultural course may encourage the student to take another course offered in that format. A negative experience may discourage a student from re-enrolling in a course offered in the same format. Students past experiences may also influence the decisions of their peers who may be enrolling in the course. The figures in Table 7 indicate that the majority of students who had taken cross-cultural courses thought they benefited from the experience.
Table 7: Reactions Toward Classes Taken in a Cross-Cultural Format

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Native Speakers</th>
<th>Non-native Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I benefited.</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, I did not</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>benefit.</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>93.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures represent the percent of the number of students (n).

Students were also asked to supplement their responses with additional comments (Appendix C). Students who indicated that they did benefit from this format noted positive interaction between native and non-native speakers and increased cultural awareness. Native speakers indicated an increased awareness towards other cultures, clarification of stereotypes, and the importance of speaking clearly. Non-native speakers commented on increased cultural awareness, but also added that they felt more comfortable in a class with other students in the same position as they were.

Negative past experiences, while they may not encourage students from re-enrolling in the cross-cultural course, provide perspective on the course that can be used to improve weaknesses or develop new aspects of the course. Students indicating they did not benefit from the cross-cultural format cited limitations in the course structure, interaction between students, and cultural awareness. All of the limitations mentioned need to
be considered when establishing a cross-cultural curriculum, because they might hinder the effectiveness of the cross-cultural environment. If limitations prevail, then the course would not be meeting its established goals.

Student interest, perceived benefits and drawbacks toward cross-cultural courses, and previous experience in cross-cultural programming are all indicators of student attitudes toward cross-cultural programming. While student attitudes influence the use of cross-cultural programming in public speaking, it must also be determined if cross-cultural programming can address students’ perceived needs in the public speaking course.

**Students’ Perceived Needs in the Public Speaking Course**

Students’ needs were surveyed by asking about what concerns, formal public speaking training, and the outside public speaking experiences are had by students when entering the course.

**Top Concerns of Students**

The first method used to determine what students need in the public speaking course was identifying what students perceive as their top concerns. The types of concerns do differ between NS of English and NNS. As shown in Table 8, native English speakers were more concerned about topic selection and organization of the speech, and NNS selected the oral
skills of vocabulary and pronunciation and vocal variation as their top concerns. Non-native speakers were concerned with how their English language proficiency will affect their performance in the course. In the public speaking course, a student’s limitation in oral proficiency skills is put on display for the entire class. NNS are especially concerned, because of accent, grammar, and vocabulary issues they face in learning a second language that are in addition to any natural fears caused by public speaking in general. This can make NNS less comfortable in speaking situations. When doing written communication tasks, there is an opportunity to proofread material to check for mistakes in grammar and vocabulary that are commonly made by second language learners. Public speaking does not afford this opportunity.

Table 8: Concerns in Public Speaking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Native Speakers</th>
<th>Non-native Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td>407</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>yes</strong></td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>no</strong></td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>87.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic Selection</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Aids</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>97.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Delivery</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>92.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eye Contact</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>87.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gestures</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>87.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stance</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>81.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>87.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Figures represent the percent of the number of students (n).
Formal Public Speaking Training

The second method used to ask what students need in the public speaking course was identifying what type of formal training students have had in public speaking.

As shown in Table 9, NS of English have had more formal public speaking training than NNS. The majority of NS have had a formal public speaking course in high school. Additional confidence speaking in front of an audience, as well as theoretical background, and speech preparation management can help the student succeed. Contrary to the amount of formal training by NS is the limited training of NNS. The majority of NNS have not had prior formal public speaking training before entering the course.

Table 9: Formal Public Speaking Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Native Speaker</th>
<th>Non-native Speaker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>432</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>66.0¹</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>97.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Additional Experience</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>71.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>98.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Figures represent the percent of the number of students (n).
Outside Public Speaking Experiences

The third indication of what students might need in the public speaking course was obtained by identifying the types of outside experiences students have had in public speaking. In addition to formal training in public speaking, native English speakers were more likely to be involved in public speaking situations outside of the classroom. Table 10 illustrates various public speaking experiences including: given a class presentation, spoken at a church, club, or organization meeting, been a keynote speaker at graduation or other special event, participated in speech debate, or mock trial team, or have had public speaking experiences in work related duties.

Most NS and NNS have given class presentations. However, the degree of formality in which a class presentation is given can vary. Even though a class presentation may be more informal, giving informal class presentations can help improve a students comfort level in more formal public speaking situations. While most students had given class presentations at some time, a larger percentage of NS reported that they had participated in other public speaking experiences. Native speakers’ averaged public speaking experience in at least three of the venues listed in table 9, NNS averaged two. This average does not represent how often the student has engaged in this type of activity, but merely that they had the experience at least once.
Table 10: Public Speaking Experiences Outside of the Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Native Speaker</th>
<th>Non-native Speaker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentations</td>
<td>89.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church, Club, or Organization Meetings</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keynote Speaker</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>83.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech, Date, Mock Trial Team</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>71.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theater and Drama Performances</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Additional Experience</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>97.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>96.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Figures represent the percent of the number of students (n).

Similarities in NS and NNS interest in a cross-cultural public speaking course can be seen in students’ interest in taking the public speaking course in the cross-cultural format, perceived benefits toward cross-cultural programming, and previous experiences in cross-cultural courses. Ninety-one percent of the NNS and forty-eight percent of NS would be interested in taking public speaking in the cross-cultural format. Both groups perceive there to be benefits to taking the public speaking course in a cross-cultural environments. The majority of students with previous experience in cross-cultural courses from both groups felt that they did benefit from the course.
Differences in students’ perceived needs are evident in students’ top course concerns, formal public speaking training, and additional public speaking experience. Non-native speakers rank vocabulary and pronunciation and vocal variation as their top concerns, while NS are more concerned with topic selection and organization. NS have had more formal public speaking training than NNS, and NS are more likely to do public speaking in extracurricular activities than NNS. Combined, both attitudes and perceived needs can be used to develop the student perspective towards using the cross-cultural format for the public speaking course.
CONCLUSIONS

This study found some important similarities in student interest in cross-cultural programming and some important differences in the perceived needs of NS and NNS in the public speaking program. This information is helpful for institutions and researchers interested in cross-cultural programming. This chapter discusses the major findings of this study, recommendations for the future use of cross-cultural programming, and implications for future research.

Major Findings

The first research question asked about student attitudes toward cross-cultural programming based on student interest in taking speech communications 212 in the cross-cultural format, perceived benefits and drawbacks toward cross-cultural programming, and past experiences in cross-cultural courses. Using the results of survey with the spring semester representing a typical make-up of the type of students enrolled in the course, there is interest by both native and non-native speakers in cross-cultural courses. While the percentage does not represent a majority of NS, the interest is significant enough by both groups to warrant one to two sections in a cross-cultural format each semester after taking all factors into consideration.
In addition to interest in cross-cultural programming, more students foresee potential benefits to themselves or their classmates to the program rather than drawbacks. While only a small percentage of students taking the survey had taken a cross-cultural, the majority of those students had a positive experience with cross-cultural programming. These comments are valuable in determining the strengths and weaknesses of current cross-cultural programs and impact the development of cross-cultural programming in the public speaking course.

The second research question was about the different perceived needs of NS and NNS in the public speaking classroom determined by the perceived needs in the course, formal public speaking experience, and additional public speaking experience. The data gathered in the survey does determine that native and non-native speakers have different concerns in public speaking, different types of formal training, and different experience with outside public speaking opportunities. Native speakers are most concerned with areas related to preparation of the speech. The survey indicates that the areas of greatest concern for NS is in topic selection and organization. Non-native speakers, on the other hand, have indicated oral skills as their greatest concern including: vocabulary, vocal variation, and pronunciation. NS and NNS also differ in the type of formal training had. While the majority of NS have had a high school public speaking course, the majority of NNS have not had any additional formal public speaking training.
in their home country or through ESL courses at Iowa State. NS and NNS also differ in the types of additional public speaking experiences they have had outside of the public speaking classroom. Both groups have had experience giving classroom presentations, but NNS are less likely to have given speeches in other instances.

The survey findings show that native and non-native speakers are interested in cross-cultural programming and NS and NNS perceive to have different needs in the public speaking course. The student perspective on cross-cultural programming plays a role in developing an effective program. With student interest in cross-cultural programming and the different needs of students in the public speaking course, cross-cultural programming has the potential to meet the different backgrounds of students.

**Implications for Future Use of Cross-cultural Programming**

Students have shown support for the program by indicating an interest in cross-cultural programming. Having students interested in cross-cultural programming provides a population base for establishing pilot programs in the cross-cultural format. Pilot programs are an essential step in determining the usefulness of cross-cultural programs, because they allow for further study and can be used to determine if cross-cultural programs are appropriate and effective in the public speaking course.
In addition to student interest in cross-cultural programming, student responses also indicate that NS and NNS perceive themselves to have different needs in the public speaking program. In order to meet the different needs of both groups of students, a curriculum needs to be developed than can accommodate NS and NNS in the same classroom. The effectiveness of the curriculum should then be studied through pilot programs established by student interest in the course. An appropriate curriculum is important for maintaining the cross-cultural focus and to make sure goals are being met.

Implications for Future Research

In the final segment of this study, the limitations of this study will be addressed along with the additional research needs in the area of cross-cultural programming.

Limitations of This Study

With the limitation of material available on cross-cultural programming, my initial research in this area has been very basic. This study was used to determine if students had interest in cross-cultural programming and if NS and NNS could fit well in a course together. While the survey used provided an anonymous way to gather responses from a large group of students, it did not provide an in-depth look at cross-cultural
programming. We do know that there is student interest and NS and NNS have different needs in public speaking, but we do not know if these needs can be met by cross-cultural programming.

If I had the opportunity to repeat this study, I would include interviews of NS and NNS through focus groups. An anonymous survey can be less inhibitive to students, but using focus groups can provide more extensive feedback to be used to investigate the needs of NNS in the public speaking course and reactions to the course. Focus groups with both NS and NNS who have taken courses structured in a cross-cultural manner would also help reveal its strengths and weaknesses. Meeting with smaller groups of students directly impacted by offering a course in this format would also supply more in-depth data.

I would also like to expand the project to include a study of a pilot cross-cultural public speaking course which has been offered during the first summer session. By looking more closely at a smaller population of students who had enrolled in a cross-cultural course, research could be gathered on why the students chose to enroll in such a section. Research could also be gathered to where students cultural perceptions and attitudes toward accented English stood before entering the course and measured at the end of the session to find out if attitudes had changed.

Finally, this study does not examine the effectiveness of mainstreaming students in the public speaking course. Students were
surveyed only during the first third of the semester about their interests cross-cultural programming and concerns in the course. There is no way of knowing through this study if students, both NS and NNS felt satisfied that their needs were met at the end of the semester.

The limitations surrounding this study lead the way for additional research to be done on cross-cultural programming.

Implications for Future Research

With the growing population of NNS on college campuses, the topic of determining the best way to accommodate the needs of NNS in the university classroom is just beginning to be explored. In all of my research I have found few quantitative or qualitative studies exploring specific programs and the results produced by the cross-cultural format. It is definitely important for this area to have more quantifiable data expressing the outcomes of each empirical study to validate usage. For this reason, additional research should be done to determine how effective cross-cultural programming is in 1) meeting the needs of NS and 2) in meeting the needs of NNS in comparison to other instructional formats. how improving cultural awareness, developing listening skills, applying audience adaptation, and in meeting the additional linguistic and cultural needs of NNS.

To examine the impact the cross-cultural environment on NS, research should be done to determine if the cross-cultural environment
improves cross-cultural awareness, listening skills, the ability to adapt to a different audience. Cultural awareness can be monitored through student interaction with NNS peers and exposure to speeches with a cultural content. Text and instructional materials should be evaluated to be sure a cross-cultural perspective is presented in the course. Pretests and posttests could be given to students to determine if there are differences in the students’ appreciation of culture and comprehension of accented English. Speeches could be monitored for ability to adapt to the audience by limiting cultural references and slang.

To examine the impact the cross-cultural environment has on NNS, research should be done to determine if the cross-cultural environment meets additional linguistic and cultural needs and decreases apprehension in public speaking situations. The literature available thoroughly explores the linguistic and cultural needs of students, but little has been done to explore how effective cross-cultural programming is in meeting these needs. Programs can study the effects cross-cultural programming has had on the performance of NNS in their class, on placement tests, and on future academic work. Assessment can be made of student apprehension towards public speaking, and then monitor participation in class activities and in outside public speaking ventures.

To accomplish this, I recommend initiating pilot cross-cultural courses within the public speaking program and then examining how
effective cross-cultural programs are meeting the needs of native and non-native speakers in comparison to mainstream programs. I also recommend tracking the progress of students enrolled in cross-cultural courses to determine if the established goals are being met.
# Public Speaking and Cultural Perceptions Survey

1. Is English your native language?
   - Yes
   - No
   a. If no, what is?

2. How long have you studied English and where?
   - Less than 1 year
   - 1-2 years
   - 2-3 years
   - 3-4 years
   - 5 or more years
   - United States
   - Another English speaking country
   - A non-English speaking country

3. What year are you in school?
   - Freshman
   - Sophomore
   - Junior
   - Senior
   - Other

4. Which of these fields best describes your major or your anticipated major?
   - Agriculture
   - Biologicallife sciences (biology, botany, zoology, etc.)
   - Business (accounting, business administration, marketing, management, etc.)
   - Communication (speech, journalism, etc.)
   - Computer and information sciences
   - Education
   - Engineering
   - Ethnic, cultural, and area studies
   - Foreign language and literature (German, Spanish, etc.)
   - Health related fields (athletic training, nursing, physical therapy, etc.)
   - History
   - Humanities (English, literature, philosophy, religion, etc.)
   - Liberal/general studies
   - Mathematics
   - Multi/Interdisciplinary studies (international relations, ecology, environmental studies etc.)
   - Parks, recreation, leisure studies, sports management
   - Physical sciences (physics, chemistry, astronomy, earth sciences, etc.)
   - Pre-professional (pre-dental, pre-medical, pre-law, etc.)
   - Public administration (city management, law enforcement, etc.)
   - Social sciences (anthropology, economics, political science, psychology, sociology, etc.)
   - Visual and performing arts (art, music, theater, etc.)
   - Undecided
   - Other: What?

5. Is SpCw 212 a required course for your major?
   - Yes
   - No

6. Have you taken a formal public speaking course prior to this one? Check all that apply.
   - High school speech course
   - Another college course
   - No formal training
   - Other: What?

7. What additional public speaking experience have you had? Check all that apply.
   - Class presentations
   - Church, club, or organization meetings
   - Keynote speaker (graduation and other special events)
   - Speech, debate, mock trial team
   - Theater or other drama performances
   - Work (including military and teaching experiences)
   - No additional experience
   - Other: What?

7. Do any particular areas of public speaking concern you? Check your top two areas of concern.
   - Audience analysis
   - Organization
   - Topic selection
   - Visual aids
   - Vocabulary/pronunciation
   - Delivery (please specify)
     - Eye contact
     - Gestures
     - Stance
     - Vocal variation, projection, or intonation
   - Other: What?

Please turn to the other side.
8. Have you ever taken a course at ISU or another institution in a cross-cultural format? (A cross-cultural format made up of 50% native English speakers and 50% non-native English speakers.)
   - English 104
   - English 105
   - Another course at ISU: What?
   - A course at a different institution: What?
   - Have not taken a cross-cultural course

   a. If you have taken a cross-cultural course, do you feel that you benefited from this format?
      - Yes
      - No

   b. Why or why not?

9. Do you feel that you or your classmates would benefit from this type of format? Check all that apply.
   - I would benefit personally.
   - My native English speaking classmates would benefit.
   - Non-native English speaking students would benefit.
   - No one would benefit from this format.

   a. Why or why not?

10. If you had the opportunity to take SpCm 212 in a cross-cultural format, would you?
    - Yes
    - No

11. Have you ever taken a course at this institution or another that was taught by a non-native speaker of English?
    - Yes
    - No

   a. If yes, how would you rate this experience in comparison to other courses taught by native English speakers?
      - Much worse
      - Somewhat worse
      - About the same
      - Somewhat better
      - Much better

   b. Are there any specific factors that would influence this decision?
      - Course content
      - Instructor availability
      - English language ability
      - Other: What?

12. If you are a non-native speaker of English, have you ever felt that your grade was affected by your English language ability? Please exclude English proficiency courses such as in the IEOP, English 101, etc.
    - Yes, but positively
    - Yes, but negatively
    - Both positive and negative influences
    - My English language ability has not been a factor.

   a. If you are a non-native speaker of English, are you concerned that your English language ability will affect your grade in this class?
      - Yes
      - No

Thank you for your participation!
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Background

1. When did the cross-cultural program begin?
2. How did it get started?
3. Why use the cross-cultural format?

Program

4. How many cross-cultural sections are offered each semester?
5. How are students made aware of the cross-cultural option?
6. How many students are enrolled in each section?
7. How do you ensure that there is 50/50 enrollment?
8. Who teaches the courses?
9. Are there specific requirements for teaching the course?
10. What are the goals for the cross-cultural program?
11. How do the goals of the cross-cultural program differ from the other 104/105 courses?
12. Does any special or additional curriculum planning take place?
13. How are materials/activities chosen for the course?
14. How does this instructional method meet the needs of all students enrolled?

Results

15. What kind of results has the program seen?
   a. Student performance/competency
   b. Student participation
   c. Appreciation of cultural differences
   d. Role of the environment
16. How have these results been measured?
17. What response have students given?
18. Has the university supported the program?
19. Do you know of any other institutions that use the cross-cultural formats?
20. Do you know of any other courses that use this format?
APPENDIX C

STUDENT COMMENTS

SURVEY QUESTION 8A
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Native Speakers</th>
<th>Non-native Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interaction</strong></td>
<td>“Made me realize to speak clearly.”</td>
<td>“Work with people have same situation is more comfortable.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“It gave me a chance to interact with people who did not speak English.”</td>
<td>“Because it helps you express yourself in a way everybody will understand.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Good way to get to know other people.”</td>
<td>“Because I know more people like me.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Because I have learned to interpret words stuck in thick accents.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural Awareness</strong></td>
<td>“It taught me of things, norms, and situations that I was otherwise unaware of.”</td>
<td>“Shared and learned from different cultures.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Was made aware of stereotypes.”</td>
<td>“Learn about diversity.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Helps understand different points of view and ways of thinking.”</td>
<td>“Easier, have more topics I can relate to.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Experience new people and learn new things by the experience of others.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Learned more about other languages and how they work.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“A way to understand other cultures.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Understanding variations in cultures is essential in understanding people.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Awareness Continued . . .</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Intro to other cultures and how to overcome cultural barriers.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Widened my perspectives.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Comments</td>
<td>Native Speakers</td>
<td>Non-native Speakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Structure</strong></td>
<td>&quot;Because I didn’t learn much about the other cultures.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;It’s no different than other courses.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Not the best of instructors.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Those who don’t speak English seemed like they just struggled along with no real effort in speech assistance.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Hard to keep up pace.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;It is more difficult to assess grade requirement standards. It seems like non English speakers have lower standards.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;No new information.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interaction</strong></td>
<td>&quot;We didn’t interact enough.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Didn’t interact that much; couldn’t understand when did.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Not much of a blend.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Difficult to understand what they are saying.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Because the non-English speakers were treated differently and I hated the class.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural Awareness</strong></td>
<td>&quot;I like to think I look past the differences to the message.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;I’m American.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D

STUDENT COMMENTS

SURVEY QUESTION 9
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses from students indicating benefits to cross-cultural programs</th>
<th>Native Speakers</th>
<th>Non-native Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Culture</strong></td>
<td>&quot;It would expand my knowledge of other cultures.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;You learn many things, it is diversity (which is what you find around the countries).&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Because some experiences can’t be taught by a teacher. They have to be learned by real life experiences.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;They would get a chance to learn more about other cultures.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Everybody could become more comfortable around other cultures.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Cross-cultural learning. Gain confidence, etc.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Integration of cultures always adds knowledge to the parties involved. I can learn about different cultures &amp; people with different cultures can learn about the country they are in.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Diversity is the backbone of society.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>&quot;They (NNS) would hear English in a more proper format and expand on their abilities.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Learn pronunciation and sentence level correctness.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Would help everyone understand each other better.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;I need to hear how others live and speak.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;It would be good for them to hear the&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction</td>
<td>&quot;In a world with a variety of languages and dialects it is becoming increasingly important to effectively communicate with many types of people. Cross-cultural courses give exposure in a safe learning environment.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Because the people like me that don’t speak English so well, will be more comfortable and less ridiculous.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;They would have an opportunity to learn English, but wouldn’t feel like a minority.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;I concern a lot if we have to discuss in the group.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I don’t plan to leave Iowa, and the area I live in there are not people from other cultures.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;So that they don’t get over concerned with their accent or delivery.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Because I have a hard time understanding non-native speakers. It would help me improve this.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;People not exposed to non-native speakers become more frustrated with non-speakers.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Good opportunity to recognize the language barrier problem between both groups. That may not have been noticed prior to the class or interaction that may not have taken place prior.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;It would help me feel not so different.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;It would be good to learn and interact with other cultures.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;It would be a good experience for becoming a teacher.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereotyping</td>
<td>&quot;Build understanding&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Don’t judge people as&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and break down stereotypes cross-culturally.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response from students indicating “No one would benefit from this format”</th>
<th>Native Speakers</th>
<th>Non-native Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>“You can’t understand them. Thick accent.”</td>
<td>No non-native speakers who indicated that they would not benefit from this format chose to comment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Fundamentally, speech communication cannot occur between two individuals which do not coherently understand the same language.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Sometimes I can’t understand some people &amp; then I don’t feel like I learn anything.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Communication suffers.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Difficulties in merely understanding classmates could interfere with the development of more advanced skills if the non-English native students did not have sufficient proficiency.”</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>“I feel that some people may become confused and loose interest.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“We’re here to learn. I like being able to understand my professor. I had to drop one class once”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Content</td>
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<tr>
<td>Everyone has heard it a million times.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cross-cultural classes would really have nothing to do with my major.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I don't see what I would get from it.</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is a special type of segregation. Dividing groups based on race is counter productive.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>It is hard to learn in that type of environment.</td>
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<td>Classes can move much faster when all are native English speaking.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Awareness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It wouldn't make a difference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most of the people I deal with at my job are Americans.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Americans need less emphasis on diversity and more emphasis on what we have in common.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I think the non native English speakers would be hurt and sad because the native speakers will make fun of them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>English is our native language and everyone should know it.</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX E

STUDENT COMMENTS

MYERS’ SURVEY
Student Comments (Myers, 1996)

Comments from students on the survey form reinforce the advantages of this program. Several typical comments are quoted below.

1. **Do you see any benefits or drawbacks to being in a cross-cultural section of freshman English?**

**Comments from U.S. Students:**

“I see nothing but a positive view when I think about this class. In fact, I'd strongly encourage every freshman class to be multicultural, if that was possible. It is good for American students and foreign students alike to broaden their minds and interact.”

“I find the cross-cultural section to be enjoyable and more informative than a traditional class. I have been exposed to many customs and lifestyles that I otherwise would be ignorant of.”

**Comments from International Students:**

“Very much needed in today's age of the “information highway” to understand people from all parts of the world first hand.”

“The benefit to being in a cross-cultural section is it give international student a chance to learn more about American culture. Since international students are more likely to stick together with the same culture, this class is a good way to avoid misunderstanding among cultures that usually exists.”

2. **Have your feelings about working with people from other cultures changed since the beginning of the semester?**

**Comments from U.S. Students:**

“Yes, when I first came to this class I was skeptical. I thought” Why do I need to know anything about other cultures?” Now I love being in this class and I love learning about other cultures.”

“They haven’t really changed since I had no previous experience. I can say though, that I enjoyed the class and would be happy to be in another cross-cultural class or that I wouldn’t hesitate to pick an international student for a lab/class partner.”
Comments from International Students:

“Yes. I respect their way of life with a more open mind as I understand why the behavior patterns are the way they are — and the reason why they are so. I can interact with them in a more confident manner now.”

“Yes. At first I thought that communicate with an American was a difficult thing. But now, I realized that it is very easy to interact with an American.”
REFERENCES


