

Accent Modification and Identity

A Phenomenological Study Exploring the
Experiences of International Students and
Immigrants/Refugees



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Accent Modification/Reduction



Specialized
Therapy



Accented
Speech



Native
Speech

Why is it important?

1

Increasing immigration rates

2

Illegal immigration and deportation

3

Jobs for Speech-Language Pathologists

Number of Immigrants
Entering the U.S. per Year

Decade	Average per year
1890-99	369,100
1900-09	745,100
1910-19	634,400
1920-29	429,600
1930-39	69,900
1940-49	85,700
1950-59	249,900
1960-69	321,400
1970-79	424,800
1980-89	624,400
1990-99	977,500
2000-09	1,029,900
2010-17	1,063,134

(Department of Homeland Security, 2017)

Literature Review

Social

Immigration

American Perception &
Linguicism

(Padgett, 2018)

Circumstance

Cultural respect

(Uptin, Wright, & Harwood,
2013)

Professional

Work/School Diversity

Bilingual Employees vs
Accent Standardness

(Morales, Scott, Yorkston, 2012)

Suggestion vs Discrimination

Clear Communication

(Flaherty, 2014)

Personal

Community

Built by a shared
language

(Henslin, 2017, p. 95)

Assimilation

Accent and self image
(cultural integrity)

(Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994, p. 8)

Research Questions

1

How do thoughts and feelings towards accent modification differ with age and circumstance?

2

How does living with a nonnative accent affect an immigrant's social, personal, and professional identities within a country that primarily speaks SAE?

Methodology

International Students

Seeking education, attending
UNCO



(University of Northern Colorado, 2016)

Qualitative Data

Questions Regarding:

- 1) Experience in America
- 2) Relationships with Americans
- 3) Involvement in school
- 4) Familiarity with accent modification

Immigrant/Refugees

Seeking citizenship, from
IRCNOCO



(Immigrant and Refugee Center of Northern Colorado, 2019)

Qualitative Data

Questions Regarding:

- 1) Experience in America
- 2) Relationships with Americans
- 3) Experience procuring citizenship
- 4) Familiarity with accent modification

Timeline

Fall
2019

- Apply for NHS grant
- Finalize interview questions
- Develop relationships with IRCNOCO and CIE
- Begin IRB process



Spring
2020

- Receive IRB approval
- Recruit participants
- Begin interview process



Fall
2020

- Work with coder to begin analyzing data
- Participant check



Spring
2021

- Wrap up data analyzation
- Finish writing thesis
- Presentations

Real World Application



Clinical
Relevance



Businesses &
Professions



Immigrant
Population

Questions?

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