

Navigating the Tech Interview as a Non-native English Speaker

It is has become increasingly difficult to live a day without using any form of technology. Tech has quickly integrated itself into our homes, workplaces and daily lives. There are constant startups popping up in every city, ready to take on the competition in this cut-throat industry. At the same time, big companies such as Google, Facebook and Apple continue to search for new opportunities to further situate themselves in our lives. With such an expansive and fast growing industry, it is only safe to assume that there is also an increasing demand for employees in tech, including non-native English speaking employees as well.

In 2014, The US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission released a report on diversity in tech. They collected data on race and gender in the high tech industry and presented data to show how the high tech industry is still white and male dominated. White and male workers continue to fill majority of the executive and managerial positions. The statistics themselves already pose a large issue for an industry that is creating and producing so much that affects our day to day lives. These high tech industries intend to create products that the daily consumer will use, however, how can we expect them to understand the diverse customer base they're targeting when their own workforce lacks the diversity that represents the real world consumer. However, this report by the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission surveyed what they defined as high-tech industries which consisted of a large variety of companies such as pharmaceutical, audio visual equipment, aerospace engineering and more. The survey results are describing a much larger workforce than this project is

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focused on, which is the Tech industry that we usually think of when we talk about companies such as Google, Amazon and Apple.

To focus more on the context that this project is intended to address, let's discuss some statistics of the Tech industry's workforce. To the surprise of many, foreign-born employees consists of over half of the tech workforce. These employees are sponsored for the H1-B visa by their tech employers and have become a topic of debate in the government. There are claims that the tech companies choose to hire foreign employees to save money as foreign citizens are often paid less than their American counterparts (Matloff, 2013). This situation would appear to show that non-native speakers have no trouble finding jobs in this industry, it is not necessarily true. While most of the employees are foreign workers, majority of those workers are from countries such as India, Canada and England, who are speakers of English or varieties of English such as Indian English (Balk, 2018). This means that non-native speakers of countries with lower levels of English fluency or from communities of color in the US can be excluded. In addition, non-native speakers are still often discriminated against for having an accent or not speaking native-like English (Hansen & Dovidio, 2016).

That is why, it is important to find ways to help the tech industry become a more diverse and equitable workplace. Some companies institute mandatory diversity workshops and implicit bias workshops to help encourage a more inclusive working environment. However, this does not fix the data that shows tech companies are neglecting a large community of skilled workers. This is the main reason why I have decided to create a series of workshops that will help prepare non-native English speaking engineers for tech interviews. Many communities

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of color in the US are non-native English speakers, some are those who immigrated here recently or in their childhood, and may speak non-native like English or with an accent. Helping these communities prepare for interview success will also help the tech industry become more equitable, diverse and representative of the people they are making products for.

Literature Review

In order to create a well-informed curriculum, it is important to look at the existing literature to create a foundation of knowledge. Unfortunately, there is very little research done on tech interviews and the language preparation needed for successful tech interviews as it is considered not only a very niche subject, but also a relatively new subject. It is also only recently that alternative education options for tech have become more established with coding schools and boot camps. However, it is still possible to use existing research on curriculum development and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) curricula to inform the curriculum design. Existing literature on curriculum development helps outline the good practices and processes to create a well-rounded curriculum that will best serve the intended audience (Serafini et al, 2015; Richards, 2017; Ingham, 2013; Keedwell, 2013). Although there is no ESP curriculum that matches this project exactly, the existing literature are also good references for designing an ESP course (Edwards, 2000; Fareen, 2017; Fareen, 2017b; Marra, 2013). Using ESP and curriculum development literature as the foundation for this project, I am able to understand the steps I need to take to create an informed curriculum and what it may look like. In addition to these two areas of research, I also reviewed literature that is intended to prepare applicants for tech interviews. There are a large number of tech interview prep books illustrate the

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interview process and what employers are looking for in an interview (Aziz & Lee, 2018; He, 2012; McDowell, 2019; Mongan et al, 2012). This literature review will discuss three areas of research and how they provided the foundation and exigence of my research: curriculum development, English for Specific Purposes and tech interviews.

Curriculum Development

The process of designing a course and its curriculum is one that takes time and requires a multitude of steps to result in a final product. One of the first steps in curriculum development and often viewed as the most important is the needs analysis (Richards, 2017; Belcher, 2006). The needs analysis is the main step where data and information is collected from multiple sources to inform how the curriculum is structures and what kind of content is taught in the course. During this step, it is important that different sources are used to triangulate a more well-informed needs analysis (Serafini et al, 2015; Richards, 2017). However, Serafini et al (2015) emphasizes a valid point that comprehensive needs analyses are usually unachievable due to other constraints, so sometimes it is necessary simplify and reduce the scope of the process. The needs analysis process began when ESP curriculum emerged because it is seen as something that is invaluable to the ESP curriculum design process. Often, the teacher who is teaching an ESP course is not familiar with the content of the course (Flowerdew, 2013). For example, the ESP teacher who is teaching doctors how to practice medicine in English is not necessarily a doctor as well. That is why specialists and people who are in the actual field of the ESP course are used as sources in the needs analysis process. Through interviews and observations, the teacher and course designer can be better informed

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on what students will actually need to learn to succeed. Many researchers have conducted needs analyses to better understand how students in different contexts need to be prepared for success in their ESP classroom (Kassim & Ali, 2010; Lehtonen & Karjalainen, 2008; Mecharoui et al, 2013; Spence & Liu, 2013; Stevens, 2005). The articles all had various approaches to collecting the data, either through interviews or surveys. However, most importantly, they all had more than one source for their information, allowing them to be more informed of all the possible stakeholders' opinions. A more informed needs analysis allows for the next steps of the curriculum design process to happen much more smoothly.

After a needs analysis is conducted, the process of designing the curriculum begins. Using the information collected from the needs analysis, choices can be made as to what kind of content needs to be included and how it should be presented. Following a needs analysis is the problematizing step of the process where the overall course is looked at from a larger lens to notice any issues that may come up in the future. This provides a chance for the curriculum designer to incorporate aspects into the course that may prevent these problems. Then, the goals and objects of the course are outlined, along with the scope and sequence of the course that details what the overall course would look like. Finally, the curriculum will end a section on what sort of assessment the students will have for the workshop and an overall course evaluation. All of these aspects of the curriculum will be informed based on the needs analysis to best address the needs of the students and will be reflected in the choices made about the course being design, from the type of course it is to the day-to-day course content.

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During the curriculum design process there are a decisions that need to be made to best address student needs. In recent years, technology has taken an increasingly larger role in the English language classroom to better address those needs (Richard, 2017). There are more courses designed to be blended learning courses that still have physical face-to-face interactions but the course is supplemented with digital learning resources as well (Keedwell, 2013; Ingham, 2013). Having part of the course online encourages student independence and shared responsibility between all classmates, the class is no longer only reliant on the teacher for correction and help (Keedwell, 2013). In addition, having part of the course online also provides flexibility for the instructor to use current and relevant resources for the students. It is important to evaluate the course that is being planned to notice what aspects of the course could be strengthened through a blended learning course (Ingham, 2013). Depending on the context of the course, a blended learning curriculum could be the most beneficial for students. These choices will be made after having conducted a needs analysis, problematizing, and planning the goals and objectives of the course. The curriculum design process is streamlined in a way to best create a curriculum that will fit the needs of students.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

In order to design a curriculum that fits the needs of the students, it is important to understand the genre in which this course will take place. For the context of this project, it is best fit in the genre of ESP. The field of ESP teaching came to fruition when instructors started seeing a need for more specialized English courses that match their students' goals and context. Since then, the field has continued to grow and expand to incorporate other theories (Belcher,

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2004; Belcher, 2006). As ESP research evolves over time, the actual ESP classrooms do as well.

This change can be seen in published articles of instructors sharing their ESP course designs and curricula (Edwards, 2000; Fareen, 2017; Fareen, 2017b; Marra, 2013). For instance, Instructors are beginning to incorporate communities of practice into their classrooms, allowing students to get real hands-on experience of using the English they learn in the setting its meant to be used in (Belcher, 2004; Belcher, 2006; Marra, 2013). Having a model like this allows, students to have explicit instruction of language strategies and rules and then a real context to apply what they learn. Then students are allowed to return to the classroom and reflect on whether or not those strategies were successful or useful for them. For some, pragmatics is blended into the ESP course, and it becomes less of a focus on English language rules and grammars, but helping equip students with the necessary strategies to navigate their context successfully (Belcher, 2004; Marra, 2013). Fortunately, ESP is a largely encompassing genre of course design that has large depository of strategies and ideas that can be incorporated when designing a course.

Along with learning ideas and strategies to incorporate into an ESP course, it is also important to understand difficulties that some ESP instructors face. Being well informed in advance will allow preventative measures to be incorporated into the curriculum during the design process. A common anxiety of ESP instructors is their lack of familiarity with the technical context they would be teaching for. As expressed previously, not all instructors who teach doctors English are necessarily doctors. This is where the needs analysis is so important. However, it is also important for ESP instructors to understand that they still carry a large wealth of knowledge about teaching English (Belcher, 2006; Edwards, 2006). ESP instructors can draw on their own experiences and knowledge about the subject, which students can do as

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well. In cases where the instructor's knowledge of the subject is lacking, experts can also be incorporated into the classroom, either through authentic materials, guest speakers, or even during the data collection process for the needs analysis (Belcher, 2004; Marra, 2013; Serafini et al., 2015). With technology becoming more accessible, ESP courses are also given the opportunity to be more inclusive and authentic with the materials chosen. Videos and guest speakers can be incorporated digitally, with spatial constraints becoming less of a problem. As society and the world continues to change, the ESP classroom will continue to evolve to adapt to the new context.

Tech Interview

The tech industry is particularly infamous for its complex and high stress interview process. The hiring process of most tech companies fall under a similar pattern that consists of a multi-stage process: application with a coding challenge, multiple phone interviews, and an on-site interview (He, 2012). The application part of the process usually involves a coding challenge where applicants are required to create something based off of the requirements and within the time limit given. Sometimes, this part of the process can be skipped if an applicant is contacted by a recruiter directly. The next step consists of the phone screening interview which can be comprised of more than one phone call. One of the phone screens can be with the recruiter or a human resources representative who calls to see if the applicant would be a good fit for the company (Mongan et al, 2012). The other phone screen is usually more technical with the call being with an actual engineer and applicants are expected to answer a few knowledge-based questions. If the applicant passes, they will be asked to go to the company for an on-site

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interview. The on-site interview can be considered the most stressful part of the hiring process as they often take a full day and consists of multiple rounds of interviews. There can be anywhere from three to six rounds of interviews that last from 30 to 60 minutes (Mongan et al, 2012). During these interviews, some of them can be behavioral interviews with the human resources department or technical interviews (He, 2012). The behavior aspect of the interviews allows the interviewer to get to know the applicant and evaluate if they are an apt fit for the company and the technical interviews are for applicants to demonstrate their technical and critical thinking skills by solving tasks out loud (He, 2012).

With such a complex hiring process, companies are able to sift through a large number of applicants for the few that fit the best into the company. This makes the interview an even more high-stakes and stressful process, which is why there are plenty of books and resources to help applicants prepare for a successful interview (Aziz & Lee, 2018; He, 2012; McDowell, 2019; Mongan et al., 2012). Many of the literature on interview prep share similar advice and one of them is the importance of getting clarification (Aziz & Lee, 2018; He, 2012; Mongan et al., 2012). There is no shame in making sure that the as an applicant, you are answering the question asked. Often times the interviewers may also withhold information with the assumption that a good applicant would ask for the information necessary to complete the task. Another aspect of the interview that is often overlooked but very important it also the time given near the end for the applicant to ask the interviewer any questions. Applicants are expected to prepare some questions in advance and prepare for this portion (Aziz & Lee, 2018; He, 2012; McDowell, 2019). Having prepared the questions in advance shows the interviewer that the applicant is invested in the company and understands the company's mission

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statement. The process that an applicant goes through from sending in a resume to actually receiving an offer is a long journey and a very taxing one. There are a multitude of steps with numerous people evaluating you in a very high-stakes environment.

It is hard to imagine undergoing this experience in a language that isn't your first language. In certain cultures and backgrounds, it might be uncommon for applicants to be expected to think out loud and explain their approach to a problem. In some areas, it is possible that the applicants just need to demonstrate an ability to solve the problem. It is also vital that applicants are comfortable and able to express their thought process aloud in English. An ESP based course will be very beneficial for non-native English speaking applicants who plan to undergo this process in English. The course would be created to specifically help applicants prepare and become more comfortable expressing themselves in English.

Tech Interview Workshop Curriculum

Situational Analysis

Educational Setting

The series of workshop is meant to take place as its own entity, separate of any school affiliations. The workshops will be open to all interested applicants who are non-native English speakers (NNS) who want to focus on preparing for the tech interview process. Instead of taking part within a coding school, the workshop may partner with a variety of coding schools in the bay area. In most coding schools, the population of NNS students only consist of a small subset of the general student population. The workshop series would stand as an external program that coding schools can send their NNS students to get extra preparation for tech

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interviews. Majority of coding schools are very intensive and require a large number of participation hours from students and this workshop would stand to supplement those hours, focusing on English and interview preparation.

The demographics of possible NNS can be very varied in background and level. Coding schools in the area have a variety of backgrounds, some coming from Asia, Eastern Europe, or South America. This results in a variety of cultural backgrounds and communication styles. The age range of these students can vary as well, as many people decide to change their careers into tech in much later stages of life. Most coding schools have interview processes and technical challenges involved in their application process, so it is likely that the NNS students have a command of basic English and can express themselves at an adequate level. The one similarity that all students will share is their goal of finding a job in the tech industry and that they will all have to undergo similar job searching experiences.

Faculty Characteristics

As this workshop is planned to start on a small scale, the faculty will only consist of one instructor. The instructor is trained with a TESOL background and has multiple years of teaching experience. However, the instructor does not have an in depth understanding of technical terms and skills related to the tech industry. To supplement this, the instructor has observed mock interviews, spoken with career coaches and interviewers to gather information.

Governance of Course Content

The instructor of this course has full governance of course content for this workshop. Depending on if this workshop will take place independently of any other coding schools or

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through collaboration with a specific school, the instructor will have the ability to adjust the curriculum as needed. The flexibility of the curriculum allows the instructor to make changes to best address the context and the students' needs.

Assessment and Evaluation Requirements

As there this workshop is intended to be independent of other schools, there are no established assessment requirements. However, if this workshop is conducted through a collaboration with a specific coding school, the assessment requirements will be adjusted to fit the requirements of the school. A diagnostic assessment will be conducted at the beginning of the course to best understand the needs' of the students and inform the instructor of what the workshop will need to focus on. In addition, at the end of the workshop, a survey will be conducted among students to better inform any revisions that need to be made to the course to make a more effective workshop series.

Needs Analysis

This needs analysis is informed through a triangulation of multiple sources collected from literature, media, and interviews. Multiple interview preparation books were referenced to gather information about the interview process and to understand what interviewers are looking for (Aziz & Lee, 2018; He, 2012; McDowell, 2019; Mongan et al., 2012). In addition to written literature on how to prepare for a tech interview, videos and tutorials on the internet were also referenced. There is a vast amount of online materials intended to help prepare applicants for a successful interview. Finally, interviews were conducted with three different groups: those working for coding schools/boot camps, those interviewing for tech companies,

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and those who are NNS working in tech already. The following needs analysis was informed based on all of this information.

Classroom Characteristics

This workshop would take place once a week for 1.5 hours for 6 weeks. The workshops are intended to supplement the existing coding school and boot camp programs that NNS students are already attending. The ideal size for this workshop would be 8 or 10 students at a time, and the students would consist of coders from the bay area. Some may already be done with their coding schools but are still job searching, or some may still be finishing up their programs at the coding school. The backgrounds of the students will be varied as the NNS programmer population in the bay area is very diverse with cultures from all over the world. In addition to the 1.5 hour in person class a week, online components of the class will be incorporated as well.

Objective Needs

These workshops are focused on preparing the students for a successful tech interview. There is no proficiency level test to admit students to these workshops, but the expected levels of the students are at least intermediate or higher. The needs will be addressed through an in-person class session once a week with supplemented online components.

As there are multiple aspects to a tech interview, the classes will focus on parts of the interview that NNS may have trouble with due to language or culture barriers. The main language component of the workshops will focus on vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation and listening comprehension. There are many technical terms that are used in the tech industry and

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these words may not come as easily to NNS when they're not using them every day. For tech interviews, the interviewers are not focused on checking if their grammar is correct or not, but comprehension of both parties is very important. Students will work on pronunciation of terms but also intonation and suprasegmentals to increase their comprehensibility. The workshop will also give ample opportunity for practice so students are able to improve their fluency as well. Finally, students will also work on listening comprehension as it is important for them to listen to the interviewer's question correctly to address the problem adequately.

Subjective Needs

A large part of the tech interview is focused on providing chances for applicants to demonstrate their technical knowledge and skill. However, having only high technical skills is not enough for a successful interview. A lot of what interviewers are looking for in applicants is whether or not they will fit into the company's culture and work well with others. In order to show that they will fit in, applicants will also need to demonstrate a high level of soft skills. Soft skills encompasses anything that is not technical, such as non-verbal language, ability to make small talk, and communication. Being a strong communicator and making small talk with an interviewer will help establish a connection and show the interviewer that you are friendly and amicable to work with. These are skills that will also need to be addressed during the workshop.

Job searching in the tech industry can be extremely taxing on mental health and confidence as it is common for applicants to send out hundreds of applications with little responses. This also means that students may have high expectations for these workshops in being the cure-all for their tough job search experience. However, students will need to

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understand that the workshop is a supplement to their existing coding school or job search experience. The students may come into the classroom with expectations that the learning environment is the same as how they learned to code. There are definite similarities in that the workshops will be highly interactive and collaborative, and will also need a lot of motivation and participation of the students in order for the workshop to succeed.

In addition to helping students with improving their language, this course is intended to help create a community among NNS programmers as well. After the course has ended, the connections they have built with one another will transcend the space of the workshop. They can continue to use the strategies and tools they learned during the workshops to help one another and practice for interviews outside of the classroom. The course may end, but the community of NNS programmers will continue to exist and with this community, the students will be able to share their successes and failures to help foster growth and confidence in themselves as NNS.

Problematizing

As I am going through the process of designing this curriculum and collecting information through interviews, there are a few problems that are slowly surfacing. Below, I will discuss three possible issues that I may encounter and possible ways to resolve the issues.

1. Diverse Needs and Backgrounds

The goal of this workshop is to help NNS successfully get jobs that they might not have had a chance to due to language barriers. As the main goal is to increase accessibility to tech jobs, this workshop is meant to be open to all NNS programming job-seekers to help them get

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supplemental help for the job search experience. However, along with this, the incoming NNS may be from completely different language backgrounds with varying English language skills. One applicant may need to focus on fluency and delivery while another needs to focus on non-verbal language. This can be difficult in helping all the applicants address the different needs they come to the workshop with. A possible way to tackle this issue is to do a form of self-evaluation in the first class that will help structure the rest of the workshops. The rest of the workshops can be centered on what the applicants want to improve on. Although some applicants may not need to improve that specific aspect, they essentially can become a resource to help their other workshop-mates as well.

2. Formal Assessment

As this course is not directly affiliated with any institution or governing body, there are no required tests or assessments. The workshops are meant to prepare students for interviews, so the real formal assessment for the course would be the actual interviews the applicants attend. However, a structure of informal assessments can be built into the length of the workshops with mock interviews every two weeks. Another possibility is to see if actual interviewers for different tech companies would be willing to donate their time and do more formal mock interviews with the applicants. Having real interviewers would simulate the high-stakes environment more accurately as the student is not familiar with the interviewer or the questions they will be asked.

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3. Course Intensity

The intended audience for this workshop are NNS coding students or NNS software engineers currently job searching. As most boot camps and software engineering schools are very intensive, they can spend more than 10 hour days at the school devoted strictly to learning programming. For those in the process of job searching, it is likely that they also devote a large majority of their time on refining their technical skills with study and practice, in addition to the time spent on sending out resumes and completing coding challenges for interviews. This is why it is important for this workshop to not be too taxing on the students, allowing them to balance their programming learning with this workshop. A possible solution for this is to partner with a few schools in the bay area and time workshops near the end of the cohort's time at the school. Most software engineering schools are structured in a similar way, where the majority of the weeks in the beginning are focused on learning coding and the final few weeks are focused on intensive interview preparation. Having the workshops start around the middle of their program and matching the school structure will help students have more time to come to the workshop. Also, the workshop will consist of one meeting a week for 1.5 hours, so students will not be expected to devote too much time in their week to the workshop. Hopefully with these implemented, schools will encourage their NNS to attend the workshops and spend a little bit of time each week devoted to preparing themselves for the interview.

Goals & Objectives

This workshop series is meant to focus on interview preparation, and the goals and objectives for this are limited to only a few. Along with giving students ample opportunity to

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practice and become comfortable in using English during an interview, another overarching goal is for students to develop analytic tools and strategies to continue the development on their own. This workshop series has three goals that have smaller measurable objectives within them.

- To foster strong soft skills needed for a successful interview
 - SWBAT make small talk with the interviewer to establish a connection as evidenced by mock interviews
 - SWBAT think aloud and express ideas comfortably and smoothly as evidenced by presentation practice and white boarding sessions
 - SWBAT utilize positive body language and non-verbal language in an interview setting as evidenced by mock interviews and reviewing recorded interviews
 - SWBAT speak clearly with comprehensible intonation and pronunciation of thought groups as evidenced by pronunciation exercises, presentations and mock interviews
 - SWBAT listen to questions accurately and address them appropriately with an answer through mock interviews and listening comprehension exercises
- To develop familiarity with technical terms and verbiage
 - SWBAT notice unfamiliar terms and learn them through participation in workshop group chat and vocabulary log
 - SWBAT use terms through in person and online group discussion and mock interviews

- SWBAT pronounce technical terms clearly and comprehensibly as evidenced by pronunciation practice between classmates and mock interviews
- To gain awareness of strategies for successful interviews
 - SWBAT develop self-evaluation tools through practice watching their own interviews
 - SWBAT gain noticing skills for useful interview strategies and skills through group discussion and analysis of recorded interviews

Course Content

Scope and Sequence

This workshop is intended to take place over 6 weeks with an in person meeting each week that will last for 1.5 hours. The language focuses for this workshop will be vocabulary retention, pronunciation for comprehensibility and listening comprehension. These three topics, along with soft skills and non-verbal language are interwoven into the six week duration of the workshop along with mock interviews every other week (Appendix A). Having the mock interviews throughout the duration of the workshops will give opportunity for the students to focus on the topics covered in class and implementing them in the mock interviews. After each mock interview, there will also be a reflection session the week after so students have time to watch the recording of their interview and analyze how successfully they were able to implement the strategies and topics covered in class. 6 weeks can be a short time, so there will not be extended time spent on each topic. A lot of the course will rely on student motivation and work outside of the class for this workshop to be the most effective.

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Meeting once a week for 1.5 hours is not much time at all, which is why this workshop will include an online component as well. The students of the workshop will all be required to join a Discord community that the instructor sets up. Discord is an online platform that was originally used for the video gaming community to communicate with one another. It is a platform where multiple channels can be created within the community and students can message one another privately or in one of the created channels. The Discord community will provide a place for students to consult one another on language obstacles they confront in their day to day life as software engineers or coding students, and the instructor will also be available for answering question as well. As part of the workshop, students will need to keep a vocabulary diary that will be discussed in class every week. Students will keep track of unknown or unfamiliar words that they encounter in their daily lives, these terms can be technical or otherwise and they can just be words they have trouble pronouncing. Their vocabulary diaries can be recorded on the Discord community as well. In addition, the online platform will also be an area for students to share resources and network with one another.

This course is intended for students who are learning to code and software engineers who are in the midst of job searching. The workshops are to supplement the time intensive schedules that both those groups already have and is not meant to take up too much time that the students are not able to focus on their other learning or job searching. Ideally, students will finish the workshop with a stronger confidence in their interviewing abilities and a set of reflective and analytical strategies that they can use to continue their growth and development.

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Textbook Evaluation

During the design process, it is also necessary to consider the materials that will be used in the course. Often times, curriculum designers will find a textbook that fits the context of their course and evaluate it to see if it is applicable to their class. A textbook evaluation is useful in understanding whether or not it addresses the needs of students properly, and if not what aspects of the textbook can still be used in the course (Richards, 2017). Unfortunately, there are currently no textbooks on interview preparation that are meant for the classrooms. For my needs analysis, I referenced four different interview preparation books. For this textbook evaluation, I will focus on one of them, *Cracking the Coding Interview*. Of the four books I referenced, this one was the most recent with it being published in 2019. The structure of these books are all very similar. They are divided into chapters on different concepts and types of problems that are common in a coding interview and there is usually one or two chapters focused on the non-technical aspects of an interview. These books are intended for self-study, similar to what one might purchase for a test preparation book. They are very text heavy with many example questions and answers. Unfortunately, the books are not intended for a classroom setting which is why the workshop will not have a set textbook for the whole duration. However, these interview preparation books are filled with practice problems and examples that can be used during the workshop for mock interviews or practice discussions with classmates. It is most likely that these books will be useful as a resource for workshop activities and discussions.

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The workshop will mainly use materials that have been developed by the instructor that will meet the students' needs. The activity materials will range from listening comprehension exercises to pronunciation practice. When developing the materials, outside sources such as the interview preparation books or online media will be used as authentic material.

Assessment

As this workshop is intended for interview preparation, the final assessment can be considered to be the high-stakes interviews the students would actually attend after the workshop is over. Although this workshop does not have a final test similar to other courses, a variety of assessments will be incorporated into the workshop. On the first day, students will be conducting a form of self-evaluated diagnostic test. This will help inform the instructor on what the students will need to improve and allow the instructor to adjust the curriculum as needed. Mock interviews will also be incorporated into the 6 week workshop every two weeks. These can be considered a form of performance-based assessment as the students are required to elicit the skills they have learned and practiced in class and use them in the form of mock interviews (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). Mock interviews between the students are the most practical and valid option for this type of workshop. The most valid and authentic type of assessment would be one that consists of what students are preparing for, interviews. Mock interviews allow for the student and the instructor to see student progress and areas might need to be revisited in the workshop while providing a realistic interview experience. It would also be impractical for teacher-conducted mock interviews as it would be less efficient. Having

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students interview one another allows for a more efficient process, but also provides opportunity for students to see others' performances and learn from each other.

The students will conduct mock interviews with one another and provide feedback to each other. In addition, the mock interviews will be recorded. The instructor will be able to watch all of the recorded mock interviews and provide constructive feedback as well. In total, there will be three mock interviews over the duration of the workshop. The students will receive feedback from peers and the instructor. In addition, students will also be required to do a self-evaluation at the end of each mock interview (Appendix B). These self-assessment reflections are an open-ended opportunity for students to go beyond checking off a box of what they did well (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). The students will be able to compare their performance from the beginning to the end of the workshop, reflecting each time and providing a broader scope of their development over the six weeks.

As the contents of this workshop are not easily quantifiable, there is an issue with the rater reliability of the mock interviews because they are subjective tests with open ended questions (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010). There is no official grading rubric that can accurately grade all of the possible answers and responses students may give in an interview process, so the feedback students receive will be based on how their peers and instructors perceived the responses. An unreliable test can cause a negative washback for the student, and detrimentally impact their development. However, that is why it is so important that students have a variety of feedback that are not quantified into a number grade. The feedback is always given in the form of written review on their performance focusing on what they did well and what they can

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continue to improve on. With this multi-faceted feedback process, students will have ample opportunity to receive beneficial washback from the test and time to reflect on their own growth and development.

Ideally, the instructor would be able to coordinate with a volunteer who is actually working in a Tech company and interviews as part of their job as well. If possible, the volunteer would donate their time and come in at the end of the workshop for a mock interview with the students. This would take place instead of the final mock interview. Having an actual volunteer come in and interview the students would provide a more realistic simulation of an interview and a more authentic assessment. Mock interviews with peers will provide opportunity for practice, but as students become familiar with each other they will not feel the nervousness of performing and interviewing in front of a stranger in a high-risk environment. Having a real interviewer come in will allow for the most authentic experience possible for this course as it is the closest to a real interview we would be able to achieve. It is also an important opportunity for the students to receive beneficial feedback from an experienced professional. With the variety of feedback incorporated into the workshop, students should end the workshop with a good idea of what they can continue to practice and the strategies needed to make those improvements.

Workshop Evaluation/Revision

Post course evaluation and revision are vital to the curriculum development process as it allows for improvement and a more refined course. This workshop series has only been designed and has not yet been piloted or evaluated. Once the course has been piloted, the

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instructor will be able to understand what areas of the workshop needs to be revised or redone. As the course is being piloted, the instructor will keep a journal after each workshop meeting to take note of what went well in that day's lesson and what can be improved. This journal will be a useful form of evaluation that can be referenced after the workshop has finished to see what can be changed. In addition to feedback received from the instructor's journal and experience, there will also be surveys completed by the students at the end of the course (Appendix C). The survey will provide insight from the students' perspective on how effective the workshop was for them, providing opportunity for them to express which parts were useful and which need to be improved. After the workshops have been piloted for the first time, these sources of information will inform the curriculum designer on how they can revise and improve on the curriculum for next time.

Conclusion

The idea for having a workshop for this started simply with a conversation between my partner, who is a software engineer, and I. As our topic of discussion moved on to how programming is continuing to become more and more attractive of a career option to people in the US and around the world, it was easy to see that there would an increasing amount of software engineers that don't speak English as their native language. This workshop is intended to help NNS software engineers surpass the cultural and language barriers that are involved with the Tech interview in majority of the companies in the US. Making jobs in the US Tech industry more accessible to these NNS software engineers will help the industry become more

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diverse and equitable. Although the greatest change should usually come from within the industry itself, I wanted to find a way to contribute as an outsider and an English teacher.

As Tech continues to play such a large part in our daily lives, I would hope that the Tech industry's workforce can represent the society it is serving. Although this workshop is just the first step, there are multiple other ways that the English language plays a role in the Tech industry. With an increasing number of workers that are not NNS, other aspects of the job might need to be addressed as well, including salary negotiation and workplace communication. These are possible ideas for other workshops that can continue to help not only NNS software engineers but the native English speaking ones as well.

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Appendix A
 Workshop Sequence

Week	Theme	Class (1.5 Hours)
1	Introduction Needs Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions / Workshop Summary • Conduct needs assessment • Set goals & objectives as a class based on expressed needs • Constructive Feedback explanation
2	Pronunciation Mock Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary Review (based on students' online vocabulary diaries) • Vocabulary Retention Strategies • Pronunciation focus: intonation & suprasegmentals • Mock Interviews in pairs
3	Post-Mock Interview Reflection Listening Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on last week's mock interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Constructive Feedback Exchange ○ Sharing areas that need more improvement • Vocabulary Review (based on students' online vocabulary diaries) • Listening Comprehension Practice
4	Soft Skills Mock Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary Review (based on students' online vocabulary diaries) • Discuss and curate list of positive soft skills • Review & Analyze past mock interview recordings' for discussed soft skills • Mock Interviews in pairs
5	Post-Mock Interview Reflection Pronunciation & Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary Review (based on students' online vocabulary diaries) • Reflect on last week's mock interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Constructive Feedback Exchange ○ Sharing areas that need more improvement • Pronunciation focus: Vocabulary/Minimal Pairs • Listening Comprehension Practice
6	Final Mock Interview Final Reflection & Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final mock interview • Class Reflection • Set post-workshop goals & objectives as a class • Set strategies & tools needed to achieve those goals • Complete workshop evaluation surveys

Appendix B

Mock Interview Self Reflection

Instructions: Take some time to reflect on your successes and areas for further improvement

Scoring Guide	
+: Amazing, I would hire myself! ✓+: Great job, a few things I could still work on. ✓: Average, there were many areas for improvement. ✓- : Not so good, the areas for improvement outnumber the successes - : I don't think I would hire myself...	
Question Asked	Solution You Gave
Overall Score + Explanation	
** Always include an explanation of why you gave that score to yourself! **	
Successes	Areas for Improvement

Appendix C

Workshop Evaluation Survey

What were your goals for attending this workshop? Were they covered in class?
On a scale of 1-5, how useful did you find this workshop? (1 = not helpful, 5 = very helpful) Why?
What were the most helpful aspects of the workshop? What specific activities were the most helpful for you?
How do you think this workshop can be improved?