

## **Comparing Lexical Neighbors between Native and Nonnative Speakers**

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The purpose of the study was to confirm the definition of lexical neighbors behaviorally and to compare the types of neighbors between native and nonnative speakers of English. One-hundred seven English speakers (ages: 17-40) and 88 nonnative speakers (ages: 18-44) participated in a discrete association task. Participants were asked to type the first word that came to mind when they heard the nonsense word. A response was counted as a neighbor if two or more people reported the word for the target nonsense word; they were coded whether it followed a one-phoneme rule of neighbors. The results showed that the number of neighbors between native and nonnative groups was significantly correlated and similar to each other. However, the percentage of the neighbors that followed the one-phoneme rule was significantly different between the two groups. Specifically, the native group followed the one-phoneme rule more often than the nonnative group. The results suggest that although the two groups were similar in the number of neighbors, nonnative speakers may have a broader definition of neighbors than native speakers of English.