



UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DA BAHIA
Instituto de Letras
Programa de Pós-Graduação em Língua e Cultura
Rua Barão de Jeremoabo, nº147, Campus Universitário de Ondina
Ondina, Salvador, Bahia CEP: 40.170-290

JULIANA SOUZA DA SILVA

BRAZILIAN ACCENTS OF ENGLISH:
An international attitude study

Salvador
2016

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Dissertação apresentada ao Programa de Pós-Graduação em Língua e Cultura, do Instituto de Letras da Universidade Federal da Bahia, como requisito parcial para o grau de Mestre.

Orientador: Prof. Dr. Domingos Sávio Pimentel Siqueira

Salvador
2016

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I want to thank Prof. Dr. Domingos Sávio Pimentel Siqueira for the years of patience and guidance in my ELF discoveries. He has always been committed to pushing us to the best we can be. This work was written mainly in the first person singular, so I could take the blame for my risky choices. However, my supervisor is definitely part of my own voice, as most of my thoughts have been discussed with him and group mates over our many research meetings.

This time, I also need to thank Dr. Antonio José da Silva e Profa. Dra. Fernanda Mota for giving me so many valuable suggestions after their examination of the first two and a half chapters of this dissertation. Their ideas were very enriching for the revision and expansion of this work.

Again, I want to thank my family, church, and close friends for all the support and understanding. All the weekends, the trips, and visits that were skipped for the sake of the reading and writing that I needed to do for this dissertation.

Thirdly, I want to thank my friends of different parts of the world who walked the extra mile with me by contacting more than once other people to answer my questionnaire: Melissa Shaw helped me with the questionnaires from Uganda and England, Caio Nogueira with ones from the US, Angie Benjamin with the ones from Botswana, Gosia Calubiec with the ones from Poland, and Priscila Santos with the ones from Thailand. I also want to thank the people that contributed as participants of this study by giving their time to answer my questionnaire.

Last, but definitely not least, I want to thank Jesus, my Lord and God, who has been with me every step of the way and knows the true motivation of my heart. He has helped me keep things in perspective and not lose sight of my faith and love for Him and for people around me. It is because He has given me health, strength, and motivation, that I have reached another important phase in my life.

Thank you all for caring!

Juliana Souza da Silva

RESUMO

Vivemos dias em que a língua inglesa está sendo usada por pessoas de todo o globo, 80% não nativos (Crystal 2006), para as mais diversas funções nos seus encontros interculturais (Seidlhofer 2011). Essa realidade tem demandado uma descentralização da posse simbólica dessa língua. No entanto, no mundo idealizado do ensino de inglês, a ênfase dos debates continua sendo as técnicas de ensino, enquanto o impacto da internacionalização do inglês passa relativamente despercebido, principalmente no que tange à sua influência sobre a língua (Jenkins 2007). Nós, pesquisadores de Inglês como Língua Franca (ILF), acreditamos que tomar o padrão nativo como único alvo revela uma abordagem restritiva e desatualizada no tocante às necessidades dos nossos alunos. É nesse contexto que pesquisas estão sendo desenvolvidas, voltadas para o reconhecimento da legitimidade de ingleses não hegemônicos. Como o sotaque é considerado o aspecto mais poderoso da língua para provocar reações a variantes diferentes (Jenkins 2007), esta pesquisa pretende investigar a atitude de 18 falantes de inglês estrangeiros em relação a 2 amostras de sotaques brasileiros de inglês locais. A relevância desse estudo está nas reflexões levantadas a partir dos dados que objetivam a autoria linguística do falante brasileiro de inglês começando pelo sotaque. Esse esforço de caráter conceitual é congruente com a Pedagogia Crítica revolucionária, descentralizada de brancura, autorreflexiva e sensível às necessidades dos outros (Scheyerl 2012).

Palavras-chave: Sotaque de inglês, Inglês como Língua Franca, legitimidade, linguística aplicada crítica.

ABSTRACT

We live days in which the English language is being used by peoples from many parts of the globe, 80% of them are non-native (Crystal 2006) and use the language to a diversity of intercultural encounters (Seidlhofer 2011). This reality has demanded a decentralization of the symbolic ownership of the English language. We, researchers on English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), believe that taking the native Standards as the only target reveals a restrictive and outdated approach when it comes to our students' needs. It is in this context that studies are being developed aiming to build up to the recognition of the legitimacy of non-hegemonic Englishes. As the accent is considered the first and most powerful aspect of language to provoke reactions to language variations (Jenkins 2007), this research is going to investigate the attitude of 18 foreign speakers of English towards 2 samples of a local Brazilian accent of English. The relevance of this study is in the reflections prompted by the data for the linguistic authorship of the Brazilian speakers of English starting from the accent. This conceptual effort is congruous with the issues addressed by a revolutionary critical pedagogy, decentralized of its whiteness, self-reflective and sensitive to the needs of others (Scheyerl 2012).

Key-words: Accent of English, English as a Lingua Franca, legitimacy, critical applied linguistics.

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EIL	English as an International Language
ELF	English as a lingua franca
ELT	English Language Teaching
ENL	English as a Native Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
GA	General American (Pronunciation standard)
RP	Received Pronunciation (British pronunciation standard)
NSs	Native Speakers
NNSs	Non-native Speakers
MESs	Monolingual English Speakers
BESs	Bilingual English Speakers
NBES	Non-bilingual English Speakers
WE	World Englishes
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
StE	Standard English

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CHAPTER 1 - FIRST STEPS

1.1 An introduction to my journey

There is always a story behind each goal we establish in life, be it personal or professional. Thus, this work is the result of a few years of reflections on English teaching through lectures, readings, debates on the combination of researches exploring issues of English as a global language and critical pedagogy. In order to understand the fundamentals of what is going to be presented, let us look back to when and how I started reflecting on pedagogical implications of the *status* of English and how previous investigation efforts led me to the object of this Master's dissertation.

Only two years away from completing my B.A. (Teaching degree) at Universidade Federal da Bahia (UFBA), I attended a lecture on English as an International Language given by Professor Sávio Siqueira that would take my conception of English to a challenging crisis. Back then, I had been teaching English for about eight years, but I had not given much thought to how far-reaching the internationalization of English was and how it was affecting language use and its development. I definitely had never thought about the implications of such fact to my praxis in the classroom. After all, considering different varieties within the native speaker options already seemed hard enough. After prof. Savio's talk, my understanding of who could be counted as users of English was broadened, as well as my acceptance that all of them contribute to changes in the language. From that day on, I could not ignore that fact in my classes any longer. Doing so would feel like deceiving my students. However, that was as far as I could go with my thoughts.

A year later, I joined the research group that studied the implications of the expansion of English. The group called *English as a Lingua Franca: criticism, attitude and identity*, was led exactly by Prof. Sávio Siqueira. Coincidentally, I had just been back from my first trip abroad. I had gone to London for two months on a study vacation, and though I could not notice, I had picked up some traits of the British accent that changed my American-influenced Brazilian accent a little. Many of my workmates started mocking me for that. It was when I realized how much accents could provoke strong reactions. I was so intrigued by such realization that I decided to study attitudes towards accents of English through the perspective of English as a Lingua Franca¹, a phenomenon that involves speakers of different L1s using English to communicate.

¹ This is a key concept in this work that will be discussed more in-depth later.

With that perspective in mind, and as my final undergraduate work, I conducted an attitude study on English varieties of six different nationalities to find out what our Brazilian students would think of them and how they expressed those attitudes. The investigation was divided into three parts. First, other fellow teachers (working in Salvador, Brazil) and I applied a questionnaire based on a similar work by Jenkins (2007), in which participants would answer about how ‘pleasant’, ‘correct’, ‘familiar’, and ‘acceptable’ each accent was to them, justifying their reactions with their own words afterwards. It is relevant to say that, at this point, the nationalities had not been revealed. This part was followed by an intelligibility test of recognition of words aimed to show how easily the participants could understand each nationality accent represented in the audio recordings. The third part was composed of the same attitude questionnaire as the first part, but with nationalities mentioned, to check for changes in attitude influenced by the awareness of where the speaker was from. The segment played was composed of fragments of nearly three minutes with six actors² of different nationalities talking about their latest movies. The audio was played three times, one for each part of the questionnaire.

Upon listening to the segments, participants were much more favorable to the Brazilian and African accents when answering the non-labeled section. The hegemonic variety accents were just below the Brazilian one in that same part. Attitudes changed considerably when nationalities were revealed. The Brazilian accent went from 1st to 4th place, and the British from 4th to 2nd, preceded by the American English one. The justifications were also very intriguing. Most of them contained words that would commonly be used to describe people (‘trustworthy’, ‘calm’, and ‘controlled’, ‘speaks like the Brazilians’, etc.), which attests for the hypothesis that accents represent a group of people and are categorized in a more sociocultural than in a linguistic/acoustic way.

According to that research, the strength of that idea still remains in the midst of the students finishing their English courses in Salvador. The results confirmed that the American variety of English is the most popular among the participants of the study. This particular accent was ranked first in both ranking questions and rated with the highest positive points for correctness, pleasantness, and acceptability. The only results that placed the American accent behind the Brazilian one was the familiarity rating, for obvious reasons, since the

²Actors: Julia Roberts (American) interviewed on *Eat, Pray and Love* (2010); Salma Hayek (Mexican-American), interviewed on *Once Upon a Time in Mexico*; Hugh Grant (British), interviewed for the film *Notting Hill* (1999); Rodrigo Santoro (Brazilian), interviewed for the movie “300”, (2007), the records on the identity of the Indian and African actors could not be found in 2015 as the edited video I created for the monograph has been deleted from Youtube.com.

participants are Brazilian speakers of English still studying English at a school where they are in frequent contact with other Brazilian classmates.

The relatively surprising results were the ones which involved the British accent. That accent was ranked as the worst in the preference of the participants in the first question, when the nationalities of the speakers had not been provided yet. It was an unexpected response, because the students, though more familiar with the American variety of English, claim to like the British better because of how it sounds. Since the results showed otherwise, we can understand that the reasons why the participants say they like this accent has actually more to do with the people and the status it represents than the accent itself.

In the results of the second question, we could see that the British accent, once “properly” identified, rose to the third position with the exact same number of points as the Mexican accent, which was already third in the first question rank. Therefore, not knowing the origin of the accent made a considerable difference in the British accent ranking, which means that it is very likely to have had extra-linguistic factors move it upwards in the rank.

After the monograph and before the beginning of my Master’s in Language and Culture at UFBA, I decided to carry out an international attitude study on Brazilian accents of English. This time, I investigated the opinion of speakers of English originally from ten different countries that were currently living in London. I also wrote a questionnaire that would try to elicit how those opinions could be connected to or originated from the level of intelligibility of the Brazilian accent of English represented in the audio segments selected specifically for the study.

Looking at the results, I could see that the reference accent was ‘familiar’ to 8 nationalities, ‘pleasant’ to 9, ‘clear’ to all 10, and ‘correct’ to 5 participants. Many aspects could be explored in the written justifications, but the most relevant of them were the contradiction in the attitude rates and the intriguing justifications. The contradiction was in the high rates of familiarity, pleasantness, and clarity contrasting with the relatively low rate of correctness. It definitely makes us reflect on what those interviewed participants considered as a reference of correctness.

The fact is that the evaluation of this item did not refer back to the language produced in the audio itself, but to something out of it, something more powerful than simple and practical intelligibility. Therefore, though it is very common to hear that a “good” accent is an intelligible one, it seems plausible to affirm that international communication still has a long way to go in order to reach the status of ultimate goal in English teaching and learning.

When it comes to the justifications provided by the participant students, the results can be summed up as follows: (a) intelligible does not necessarily mean familiar; (b) familiar does not mean easy to label; (c) pleasantness seems closely related to intelligibility; (d) clarity is taken as a synonym of intelligibility; (e) marked accents ³are expected to hinder intelligibility; and (d) rating accent correctness was seen as nonsensical, mostly.

Another interesting feature is that intelligibility turned out to be the main point in the great majority of the justifications. Therefore, being intelligible while having a marked accent was seen as very positive. However, the disparity in the ‘correctness’ item shows, once again, that in attitude studies, the tradition of imitating ‘native speakers⁴’ is still more powerful than the value of being intelligible. The defiance of this unfounded inherent correctness granted to the standard varieties of English poses as a challenge to researchers and teachers of English. In addition, I do believe that a systematic intelligibility test should be conducted to investigate the features of Brazilian accents of English that tend to cause communication problems. This study was shared with other ELF researchers at the 6th ELF International Conference in Rome, where I got interesting comments that contributed to some changes in the project of my present research.

In this MA thesis, my aim is to develop an argumentative attitude study that involves 18 foreign participants who speak English and live in their home countries at the moment. The process is going to be developed as follows: two (highly) proficient Brazilian speakers of English had their audio recorded and then sent through e-mail to participants along with an attitude questionnaire. The answers of the participants are to provide us with a wealth of discussion points that will guide us throughout the analysis, as we look at beliefs shown through the numbers in the multiple-choice type of questions and scrutinize the open-ended ones. The foreign participants were supposed to express their attitude towards the Brazilian accent of English using their own words to explain their choices in the yes/no answers, when they expressed if they thought the Brazilian accents were familiar, intelligible, made the speaker sound competent and if the accents were pleasant.

In the second half of the analysis, two national books on English pronunciation for Brazilians will provide us with a glance into the attitude and ideology of Brazilian publishers and some teachers when the topic is teaching Brazilians how to pronounce English words.

³ Marked accents are the ones that are noticed as accents. Usually, they are stigmatized and made fun of for representing a minority in a community, be it national or international.

⁴ The term “native speakers” will be problematized and an alternative classification for different speakers will be proposed.

In order to explore those aspects of the books, the introduction chapters are going to be analyzed which then is to constitute the beginning of the reflections on the relevance of the issues raised in this attitude study to ELT in Brazil and in other countries where English is a foreign language.

After considering the Brazilian context concerning English pronunciation teaching with the beliefs presented through the books analyzed, we are going to take a second look at the data and gather the participants' comments relatable to teaching issues through an English as a Lingua Franca perspective. Finally, principles for ELF aware teaching of pronunciation will be provided and some suggestions made about what needs to be taken into account to use or create teaching materials within this new paradigm.

The envisaged overall goal of this investigation and proposed debate lies in bringing to the community of English learners, teachers, linguists, and those interested in how English has been changing, some of what people from different parts of the world think of foreign accents like the Brazilian ones. Thus, reflecting upon critical pedagogy issues in English teaching shall elucidate the importance of including real-world English in teacher education curricula as well as in English language schools, as an action that also values the option of a speaker not to follow the pronunciation system of a hegemonic variety.

In order to conduct this debate from a clear perspective that combines ELF and critical pedagogy, in Chapter 2, I start by providing a brief historical contextualization of the status of English in the world today as well as the theoretical developments that have aimed to tackle related issues. In other words, this introduction will be followed by an overview of the history of the spread of English and the theoretical considerations that are relevant for this work.

In chapter 3, the methodological path is going to be drawn to explain the meaning and intention behind each question of the attitude questionnaire, the audio input, and the steps that composes the generation of data for this study. At this point some reflection is built on the necessity of qualitative interpretation for this kind of data.

The theory presented in the second chapter is revisited in the analysis organized into two chapters. In chapter 4, the results are going to be analyzed in three sections: (1) beliefs analysis drawn from the numbers generated by the yes/no answers; (2) attitude analysis depicted from the words used in the open-ended explanations for the yes/no answers; (3) ELF related discussions prompted by the issues evoked in the answers, such as nativeness, standardness, the value of intelligibility, etc.

In chapter 5, pedagogical considerations are made starting from the analysis of two books on the pronunciation of English specifically for Brazilians. Then, the teaching matters present in the data are going to be analyzed from an ELF-aware perspective. Besides that, some reflections will be elaborated on the construction of identity of Brazilian speakers of English and the political role of their teachers.

CHAPTER 2 - THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE: FROM AN ISLAND TO THE WORLD

2.1 Introduction

Needless to say, English is the most widely used international language of the 21st century. It has spread beyond any other in history (Jenkins 2007). Currently, English has become a language present in the lives of people belonging to varied social circles. It is seen as an inevitable consequence of elevated transit across ethnic and geographic borders through imported and exported goods, the internet, cheaper flight deals, and satellite television, just to mention a few channels. It is a commodity and a desirable possession to many who wish to feel as citizens of the world, get a better job or simply understand the lyrics to some of their favorite songs. However, just as much as English connects people, it also works as a tool of social exclusion and prejudice, when those who cannot afford to learn it struggle to meet the demands of today's globalization phenomenon. In other words, in a capitalist age, not owning English means to be the odd one out, socioeconomically, professionally, and, sometimes, academically.

In this sense, English has become an object of desire, though it would be correct to say that there is nothing special about this language in itself. It was not its lexical beauty, its rich and traditional literature, or its seemingly easy syntax that made it famous. Instead, human endeavors around the world throughout centuries spread it to an unparalleled domain. Therefore, to understand better how English has become such a powerful language, in this chapter, we are going to look at some aspects of its territorial expansion trajectory, which shall potentially shed some light on the historical and theoretical perspectives considered in this specific academic work.

2.2 Where and when everything began

From the title of this study, I take a stand to claim the existence of recognizable features that represent the English spoken by Brazilians. Though the main scope of my analysis is the accent, because of the territorial expansion of English, this language is unarguably being reshaped at all levels: phonetically, morphologically, lexically and syntactically. Considering the limitations of time and not to deviate the attention from my main goal, let us briefly trace back how the language of the Angle-Saxons came to reach nations that were never colonized by England, such as Brazil, Japan, Chile, among many others. To do so, I am going to cite some historical landmarks, which shall provide an

overview of how hybrid this language has been since the very beginning of its formation. As we go over those facts, we shall be able to connect history to the present and visualize the bigger picture of the changes English has been undergoing given its current international use.

Looking to the origins of English, one can see that this language came about just like many other languages, through war and political actions. It was initially formed by the combination of the languages spoken by the tribes which invaded and lived in the territory currently called England: the Angles, Saxons, and the Jutes. Back then, they used an English that later would be categorized as *Old English*⁵. It did not look or sound like the English we know today and can be attested by the well-known oldest literary work in the language, a poem called *Beowulf*, by an unknown author. Figure 1 below illustrates the writing of that time, which brings traceable characteristics, roots to some words still used at the present.

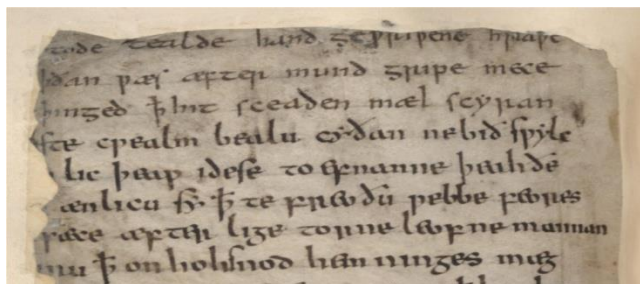


Figure 1: A Beowulf fragment.

In 1066, the Normans invaded Britain and established Norman French as the language of the royalty and ruling classes. For about 200 years, French was the language of the elite in England and those who aspired to ascend socially needed to speak it. Only after the Norman Conquest, in the 1300s, English was reclaimed as the language of the British and set as a symbol of their Englishness, as opposed to the Norman French linguistic and cultural legacy that the former rulers had left behind (Baugh & Cable 2002).

After having risen back to the place of the most used language in Britain, for the years direct influence of the conquerors' native language, English incorporated into its lexical repertoire innumerable Latin words that came through French and the power of the Church, as well as a mixture of words that were added through contact with other populations that had invaded the British territory.

In this evolutionary process, the language entered another phase past Old English. More specifically, the English spoken from the 1100s to the 1500s was named *Middle*

⁵*Old English*: the English spoken around 450-1100 AD. Many of today's English words are composed of the roots from that period.

English. Towards the end of that period, the so-called Great Vowel Shift, a huge sound change affecting the long vowels of English during the 15th to 18th centuries, took place. According to Baugh and Cable (2002: 238), “all the long vowels gradually came to be pronounced with greater elevation of the tongue and closing of the mouth, so that those that could be raised (a, e, e, o, o) were raised, and those that could not without becoming consonantal (i, u) became diphthongs.” Then, English started to sound closer to the variants spoken today. That period was followed by the Elizabethan Age English, also known as *Early Modern English*, exemplified in Shakespeare’s works.

This mixed language was spread across the pond and wherever else the British Empire, which had been established between the 16th and 18th centuries, managed to take over as its new territory (Pennycook 1998). English, then, became the second language of the Empire’s colonies, except for some of the countries that were populated by people originated from England, such as India and the USA. In North America, the US stood out as the colony which would spread the language worldwide as the world war II winner.

Late Modern English or *Contemporary English* is the one considered to be spoken today. It is composed of vocabulary from over a hundred other languages, such as Danish, Finnish, French, Portuguese, German, Spanish, Greek, etc. Therefore, as any natural language, English is also considered an extremely hybrid language, which ironically has innumerable advocates for its purity and (imaginary) integrity (Quirk 1990; May 2000; Mackenzie 2013; Mufwene 2001; Mukherjee & Rohrbach 2006).

2.3 English today

Still on the spread of English, in the 20th century, the United States, as a post-colonial country, became the greatest political, economic, and military superpower of the world. They invested heavily in selling the “American dream”, which basically consisted of marketing the United States as the most prosperous country of all. For these main reasons, millions of people in the world started learning English to consume the “American dream” by traveling, doing business with the Americans and struggling to immigrate to the United States. According to Blake (1998: 304-305), “traditional industries ha[d] given way to service industries such as tourism, and this has in its turn encouraged many to use a language that is more appropriate for a wider range of clients than that which they had used to the workmates they knew in their own industry.” The prominent status of the US, in many ways, propelled the expansion of English in the countries where it had been just another foreign language. Scientific works, for instance, after World War II started being published in English to be

more read internationally, even in Northern countries in Europe, where they would usually be published in German or French before then (p.305).

Simultaneously, Hollywood movies took the English language to a whole different level. At the time, English started being learned for military and political reasons as well as for entertainment. And whether we like it or not, the advent of the internet and the popularization of computer-like portable devices with their communication software, the effects and products of globalization have entered the general public's homes, bearing English as the default language for most international encounters, be them in person or virtually.

Though "English is in the world and the world is in English" (Pennycook 2001: 78), this phenomenon has not gone unnoticed nor been passively accepted and/or absorbed. With over 2 billion users in different levels of proficiency, English has achieved a global status (Crystal 1997; Berns 1995) and is being creatively defined by the people who use it (Nault 2006), the contexts it is used in and the purposes it is used for. The post-colonial Englishes have its own features with local accents, vocabulary and syntactical aspects that have emerged from day-to-day use in their own contexts, such as India, Nigeria, and South Africa. After all, it is only natural that the enlargement of contexts would also cause the expansion of grammatical and lexical repertoires (Seidlhofer 2011).

Not only indigenized Englishes are being influenced by local everyday use, but also the English spoken by those who have it as a foreign language⁶, as those speakers are getting increasingly in contact with different people in a variety of occasions and purposes. Technology has made borders fluid and interacting with people from other countries may cost just as much as an internet monthly bill. In addition, coming and going has become financially less costly and easier through the use of credit cards for international flight tickets, and also international diplomatic agreements have helped diminish the bureaucracy related to tourist visas⁷.

2.3.1 English as a Lingua Franca

In settings where English is used as a contact language to bridge communication between speakers of different L1, it has assumed the function of a lingua franca (Jenkins

⁶English is a foreign language where it is not an official language, which is usually the case in countries that were not colonized by Britain.

⁷Tourist visas are still extremely hard to get when it comes to the US, especially if one comes from a developing country or holds a muslim background. This may happen due to the excess of illegal immigration and the fear of terrorist attacks, which increased drastically after the attack known as 9/11.

2007; Seidlhofer 2011). The term English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), however, is a semantically loaded combination of words that has been fiercely questioned at Applied Linguistics conferences. Most of those debates have been based onto misunderstandings concerning its historical meaning and comparisons to previous attempts of creating or adopting an international means of communication such as Esperanto⁸. In this work ELF is a theoretical paradigm that sits comfortably with the proposals that combine realistic and contemporary English teaching with critical pedagogy⁹. So, I find it important to take some time to clarify what *I* mean by English *as* a Lingua Franca (ELF).

For starters, let us consider what ELF is not (Seidlhofer 2006). It is *not* a new variety of English; it is *not* a process exclusive to English; it is *not* a historically new fact. However, the term does *not* mean the same as it did in a distant past. ELF is not a new phenomenon, but it has been happening more substantially in the past decades given the unprecedented shortening of distances accomplished through the many factors mentioned before. This is not a lingua franca like the ones used in the Mediterranean to facilitate commerce over a millennium ago, which means to state that ELF is not a makeshift language. Instead, functioning as a lingua franca is a phenomenon that happens with any language that is spoken internationally, whenever that language is used to make communication possible between people who do not share the same mother tongue. Take Spanish, for example, the second most spoken international language in the world. In contexts where Spanish is used to bridge communication among people of different L1s, it is being used as a lingua franca. It also happens with French, Portuguese and German, but at a smaller scale. The fact they are widely spoken internationally, does not mean that those languages will always be used as *linguae francae*¹⁰. They are not functioning as *linguae francae* when used intranationally by monolingual or bilingual speakers that have English as their mother tongue.

The lingua franca function will naturally take the interlocutors to a position where accommodating to each other's English will certainly favor intelligibility. Hence, the language produced *ad hoc* is the outcome of a specific context, linguistic ability and repertoire of its interlocutors. In their book *Analysing English as a Lingua Franca: a Corpus-driven Investigation*, Cogo and Dewey (2012: 49/76) bring corpora that show a few patterns

⁸ Esperanto is a planned language which originated in a consciously-designed and planned language project. It was created essentially by Ludwick L. Zamenhof to facilitate international communication (Becker 2010).

⁹ Critical Pedagogy here is a way of thinking and doing pedagogy that is concerned with "educational theory and its sociopolitical context (...) to make central the most fundamental pedagogical questions regarding student empowerment" (Pennycook, 1990: 304).

¹⁰ *Linguae Francae* is the plural of Lingua Franca in Latin.

in language adjustments that are being made at present. For example, 3rd person singular zero, with occurrences such as “the **stage involve**” (by an Italian speaker), “one **woman have**” (a Korean speaker), “**somebody who grow up**” (a French/Spanish speaker); with prepositions, “will never **be looked in** the streets” (a Portuguese speaker), “If I **look this picture**” (an Italian speaker), “I like **listening** classic music” (Japanese speaker), “**depends the place**” (Portuguese speaker), “**it’s depend on** the situation” (an Italian speaker); with articles, “**first time** I went to London” and “**I’m university student**”; with collocation, especially with verbs with high level of semantic generality as *do*, *make* and *take*; with relative pronouns, *which* and *who* being used interchangeably.

Being a competent speaker in an international setting demands the ability to accommodate to a variety of nuances at each interaction. To do so, one must master English (not necessarily a hegemonic variety Standard), be aware of the importance of developing his/her pragmatic competence (Murray 2013) and be culturally sensitive (Kramsch 1993). Even though the different English varieties have their own features that characterize them as separate from each other such as different vocabulary, syntactical structures and pronunciation, those features do not represent ELF yet. They can be classified as what the field *World Englishes*¹¹ calls American English, Indian English, Chinese English, Brazilian English, etc. ELF is the language (not a language) produced during the negotiation of meaning by interlocutors of distinct linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In other words, ELF is not a variety, because it is not predictable and cannot generate a fixed grammar or orthography, due to the singularity of each encounter.

English can function as a Lingua Franca when used between Native Speakers (NS) and other Non-Native Speakers (NNS)¹², as well as between NNS and NNS. In sum, the defining factor for an ELF case is that the interlocutors do not have a common mother tongue, but under a more realistic global perspective it is also true if one of those speakers has English as their first language. Even though ELF is not a new English, the English spoken by those to whom it is a foreign language is automatically called Lingua Franca English or an “ELF variety¹³”, as it is solely utilized for international purposes (Jenkins 2007). Naming the English produced in Brazil as Brazilian ELF, however, demonstrates discrimination in favor of all the other Englishes that would not be called “automatic ELF.” It is also

¹¹ World Englishes “investigate the distinctive nature of particular outer circle Englishes for the legitimization of these as varieties in their own right” (Cogo & Dewey 2012: 8).

¹² The issue of nativeness and terminologies is going to be discussed in the (a) section.

¹³ Further debate on ELF being a *variety* or a *function* shall be carried out in the theorization proposed during the analysis of the questionnaire responses.

conceptually contradictory, as ELF is never a variety, but a linguistically far-reaching function through which language is negotiated and co-built on the go.

The field of study English as a Lingua Franca has been around since the 1990s and has gone through substantial changes in the process. Jenkins (2015) summarizes them didactically into three phases: ELF 1 followed WE tendency to codify aiming for a more democratic variety as a possibility for the future, ELF corpora collection projects were started and accommodation strategies were valued as essential; in ELF 2, the focus shifted from the features (lexical-grammar and phonology) into the investigation of the underlying processes of the use of English, there was/is general acceptance of the impossibility and contradiction in making ELF a variety, an increasing perception of the multilingual hybridity of English. Other languages were seen as part of the linguistic resources used by the speaker and were observed as accommodation strategies, e.g. in cases of code-switching; in ELF 3, officially proposed by Jenkins in this article entitled *Repositioning English and multilingualism in English as a Lingua Franca*, the multilingual in the Lingua Franca aspect of ELF is considered to be in need of further conceptualization and investigation. Now, ELF researchers are called to no longer see English as the language of most international encounters, but as a language that is part of a very complex repertoire of languages.

Though English is frequently drawn upon in *linguae francae* settings, it is not always the most important or the most used language in those occurrences. Languages are selected to serve many different purposes, such as include or exclude someone in the conversation, exert power, etc (Cogo; Dewey 2012). The relationship between English and other languages in the co-construction of meaning across cultures is the target of the coming investigations of the field, the concept of super-diversity¹⁴ (Vertovec 2007) is brought in as theoretical resource that take languages as not separated from each other, based on the idea that distinct languages are unnatural creations (Canagarajah 2013).

While new theoretical developments in the field are still gaining momentum, we can start elaborating on the expansion of English from the fact that 80% of the speakers of English are non-native speakers (Crystal 2006a: 425), the majority of the international interactions tend to be among NNSs. This data has prompted researchers all around the globe

¹⁴ Super-diversity (Vertovec 2007: 1025) “In the last decade the proliferation and mutually conditioning effects of additional variables shows that it is not enough to see diversity only in terms of ethnicity, as is regularly the case both in social science and the wider public sphere. Such additional variables include differential immigration statuses and their entitlements and restrictions of rights, divergent labour market experiences, discrete gender and age profiles, patterns of spatial distribution, and mixed local area responses by service providers and residents. (...) The interplay of these factors is what is meant here, in summary fashion, by the notion of ‘super-diversity’.”

to study the implications of such a remarkable fact. There is a broad array of issues being investigated such as: cultural identity (Jenkins 2007), intelligibility (Jenkins 2000), attitude (Garret 2010), pragmatics (Murray 2012), lexical and syntactical changes (Cogo & Dewey 2012), etc. There have been two main sides to those studies and debates on the expansion of English: the language purists (linguists and grammarians) and the Global Englishes advocates (mainly applied linguists).

The most well-known study fields that have been conducting research in English varieties are: World Englishes, World English and English as a Lingua Franca. They take on different perspectives, but are congruent when it comes to fighting against the hegemony of the so-called Standard Englishes, considered to be either British or American English. World Englishes comes from a tradition of seeking legitimacy for the post-colonial Englishes (Kachru 1992: 357), therefore, scholars look for differences that would grant each variety its own singularity and validity. The scholars in WE recognize the growing expansion of English in EFL contexts as well as the need for more research that would tackle their specific issues (Berns 2005). In her article *Expanding on the Expanding Circle*, Margie Berns (2005) proposes further research and data collection in countries where English is a foreign language, also known as the Expanding Circle countries. Nevertheless, their focus is on the legitimation of indigenized Englishes.

World English or Global English is the field that focuses heavily on the political and identity implications of the expansion of English. They propose complete freedom from the Angle-Saxon hegemonic standards (Rajagopalan 2004), while the other two study fields deal with native English more peacefully as just one of the Englishes that should not be taken as more correct or purer than the others.

English as a Lingua Franca scholars are interested in the similarities among the non-native uses of English, more specifically: the adjustments one makes in order to become more intelligible and appropriate to his/her interlocutor, the recurrent deviations from the standard Englishes that may become innovations, strategies in the negotiation of meaning, attitude and identity issues, and pedagogical implications, to name a few (Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey 2011).

The use of English in Europe is so frequent and substantial due to constant travels across borders that it is possible to observe a pattern in the deviations from the standards that we know. Projects like VOICE¹⁵ (The Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English),

¹⁵VOICE is online at <https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/>.

coordinated by Barbara Seidhofer, which records and transcribes spoken interactions in English with people of different mother tongues, allows researchers and English teachers to understand how the use of English has been changing in those contexts. It has taken such a proportion that the debate over a potential new variety may be coming about. In Europe, recurrent non-standard features in English might be generating what one could call “Euro-English” (Berns 1995; Jenkins 2000).

A similar initiative can be found in Asia, where the project ACE¹⁶ (Asian Corpus of English), coordinated by Andy Kirkpatrick, collects and makes available interactions among 'English-knowing' multilinguals from ASEAN + 3 (China, Korea, Japan) including English L1 Singaporeans, Filipinos etc.

While innovations in English around the globe are being transcribed, studied and defended as legitimate, there is another side to this battle that cannot be ignored, the ones Kachru (1991) nicknamed the ‘deficit linguists’. Taking the research field Second Language Acquisition (SLA) side and perspective, in which the target is the British and the American English Standards and anything else equals incorrectness, scholars like Quirk and the non-specialists that join them, relentlessly fight any idea of legitimacy of varieties that poses against the hegemony of those two varieties. They get to the extent of stating that those innovations are not English at all:

Nevertheless, there is something sinister about these pools of corrupt English lying about in the world. They are not just unpleasant for English people to encounter – and indeed for foreigners who care about speaking pure English. One also feels that they could grow and spread and eventually invade good English itself. They are like pools of language disease. (May 2000: 4)

It is very clear that May shows on *The Times* he believes he has the authority and the ability to tell good English from bad English, as well as judge how pleasant those differences sound to other native speakers. It is not clear, however, on what grounds he/she says so. For instance, which criteria characterize good or bad Englishes? Which research data is (s)he using to state that other Englishes would annoy native speakers? Above all, why should NNSs care so much about what NSs think of their Englishes if those count only for 20% of the English speakers on the planet? As Widdowson (1994: 389) stated:

How it develops in the world is no business of native speakers in England, the United States, or anywhere else. They have no say in the matter, no right to intervene or pass judgment. They are irrelevant. The very fact that English is an international language means that no nation can have custody over it. To grant such custody over the language is necessarily to arrest its development and so undermine its international status.

¹⁶ACE is also online at <http://corpus.ied.edu.hk/ace/index.html>.

I would not go as far as saying that the native speakers are irrelevant, but when it comes to an international language, as it was defended by Seidlhofer (2009:7), there is no such a category as the “native speaker”, hence their lack of superior authority in the matter. Internationally, the English speakers that have English as their L1 may own the language, but only as much as anyone else who speaks it. However, there are many forces that are involved in this legitimation battle. For instance, in the industry of English teaching materials, training and testing would have a lot to lose if they were no longer seen as the source of “pure” English, the gatekeepers¹⁷ of the language (Schmitz 2013: 146).

In order to criticize ELFers’ democratic approach to the use and teaching of English, there are scholars who question the need for a non-native speaker of English to preserve their national identity traits by keeping traces of their L1 in their English. For instance, Mackenzie (2013: 115) starts his criticism by pointing out that ELF scholars are not taking into account the current status of globalization, because they seem to ignore that more than half of the world’s population is bi- or multilingual, and that in postmodern (late or high modernity) times, a speaker should not be expected to want to define themselves by their L1 only. He argues that learning a language with native-like competence is a desirable achievement as it means the speaker has acquired a “plurilinguistic capital”, instead of simply expanding on tools of communication (p. 116).

The feasibility of avoiding the influence of L1 onto L2, however, becomes unlikely for the same reason he defends it should happen, globalization. He claims that, “Borders and cultures have become more porous, and a huge number of people speak English as an additional language. Clearly separated neat flat surfaces (...) are again giving way to ambiguity and overlap” (ibid). If one considers language as the representation of culture, according to Mackenzie himself, languages are bound to mingle in an indivisible manner. Ignoring that fact is sociolinguistically utopic.

Recognizing this inevitable mixture of languages confronts us with another matter, deciding how the nativeness concept fits in this scenario, or even if it does at all. When it comes to the development of one’s ability in English there are two main theories concerning EFL acquisition to be considered: native speaker competence vs. interlanguage as it is proposed by SLA studies (Seidlhofer 2011: 184), or the theory of World Englishes that

¹⁷ Gatekeepers control the Access to decision-making processes about legitimate English (Jenkins 2007: 239).

prefers to see geopolitical linguistic differences among Englishes as new varieties originated from Inner Circle Englishes combined with L1 influence from each region (Kachru 1985).

So far, many varieties of English remain in a conceptual limbo, as discussed by Seidlhofer (2011, p. 76), where she exemplifies it with the issue of the English spoken in Ghana. In sum, there is a debate over whether their English is Ghanan English or English in Ghana, which characterizes most of the debates about the emerging varieties. Ultimately, the dispute is about the influence of other national languages, whether they should be seen as mistakes (deficit in learning) or features of a new variety.

The attitude towards indigenized varieties proposed by WE advocates for a Ghanan English, taking the differences as new developing norms. According to Kachru (1985), inner circle countries, which have English as their L1, are the norm-providers; outer circle countries, which have English as a post-colonial official language, are the norm-developing ones; while those who belong to the expanding circle countries, and have English for international purposes only, are supposedly norm-dependent.

One thing to reflect more deeply about is how norm-dependent the expanding circle countries really are. I would say that it depends on how frequently those speakers have been using English and how much those settings have shaped their language use. Actually, one could defend that the promising concept of Euro-English, with its patterned deviations from the hegemonic StEs, should be considered norm-developing just like the English in post-colonial countries. In fact, the frontiers among countries and cultures are so blurry at this point in history and (virtual) age that the context itself calls for research on the number and linguistic density of communicative encounters that have been taking place in English around the world.

Some of the main debates concerning the current status of English include: nativeness, standardness, variation versus interlanguage, attitude and intelligibility, and identity. As I mentioned in the introduction, those topics will be revisited and discussed in the analysis applied to the data found in this study, but firstly, I would like to promote a debate on some of the most problematic concepts in the field of English as Lingua Franca. After that, a pedagogical view of those concepts will be presented in the light of Freire's critical pedagogy. To begin with, let us look at the controversial concept of what constitutes a native speaker.

a. Nativeness

Varieties of English are product of geography and history (Schneider 2001), but the notion of nativeness will vary depending on which scholar one reads and which context they are taking as reference. For instance, if the place of birth is a country which has English as its only national language, that person is usually considered a native speaker. In that case, the level of expertise of the speakers is usually dismissed as unimportant, even though not all native speakers are fully competent in their L1s (Schmitz 2013: 142).

In the case of outer circle countries, there is another issue to be considered: when and under which circumstance the speaker was exposed to English. Taking India as an example, Schmitz (2013) explains that some are not born into an environment where English is present, and therefore, they are not in contact with it from the very beginning of their lives. Of those, some only get in contact with English instruction as teenagers at school. They are generally between the full-replication of English and the exonormative English shaped and used in India (Schmitz 2013: 140). The question is who is the native speaker in India? Is it enough to be born in a country that has English as an official language?

When it comes to the unfounded belief that the native speaker knows all about his/her L1, the issue gets even more problematic. As a native speaker of Brazilian Portuguese, I do not need to go very far to think about how confident I feel when talking about possible sentences and words in my L1. I am more insecure about it than I am about English, which I studied more systematically and continuously. Needless to say, I do not trust myself as the best source of authentic Portuguese that a student of that language can have. Instead, I would say that he/she should expose him/herself to as many different speakers of Portuguese as possible, in order to build up a more comprehensive notion of what the language really is.

Still, many Brazilians would blindly trust a native speaker of English, as if they were consulting a holy oracle in Tibet. NSs also make mistakes (Schmitz 2013: 137) and tend to know about their L1 just as much as an average Brazilian would know about Brazilian Portuguese. There is not enough reflection on why English schools prefer NSs to bilingual teachers, who in many cases hold no qualifications that would attest of their teaching education (Mckay 2002). Nonetheless, this is not a *new* problem. In 1962, the poem “Song of the Native Speaker” was written by Frederic G. Cassidy as a protest against the non-critical view of the native speaker’s abilities:

Hail to the Native Speaker,
He never can go wrong!
For by some process mystic,
Subliminal, sublinguistic,
And utterly spectacular,

He knows his own vernacular
 To every last detail
 He simply cannot fail!

Again, the point is not in demonizing the native speaker, but in deconstructing his/her inherent value, for it is arbitrary and fictional (Jenkins 2007). One can notice how nativeness works as a political matter just by looking at history and wondering why American English gets to be called native while Indian English does not (Schmitz 2013: 139). The goal of ELF scholars and other congruent study fields is the death of the *privileged* status of the native speaker (ibid). In many cases, the acritical pursuit of the “native-like” proficiency happens simply by analogy of how other foreign languages are learned (Mackenzie 2013). Once one is aware of the current status of English, those assumptions need to be revised and an informed decision will be made, whether for targeting the ENL or for a more comprehensive view of English that would include contact with varieties of English from Outer and Expanding Circle countries.

In accordance with ELF ideology that decentralizes the ownership of the English language, the terminology *native* and *non-native* becomes inadequate (Jenkins 2000). Those notions reinforce with a naturalized justification the lack of authority attributed the ones that are not born in a country where English is one of their L1s. Therefore, as a political positioning, from this point on in this work, I am going to use Jenkins’ (2000) terminology for those categories: speakers who have English as their only L1 will be called monolingual English speakers (MES), while those who have English as their L2 will be called bilingual English speakers (BES). The BES category is not going to be suitable to speakers that cannot communicate fluently in English. They will be called non-bilingual English speakers (NBES). Though it might seem like there was a transfer of prejudice to the NBES, Jenkins (2000:10) explains:

This term [NBES] bears none of the negative implications of “non-native but instead provides a neutral, factual description. It tacitly acknowledges that many L2 speakers of English may have no desire to speak it fluently, let alone like a “native”, and that their English may have progressed to the level at which it serves their particular international communicative purpose.

These categorizing terms will be used whenever I am the one theorizing or whenever Jenkins’s works are cited, as she introduced the alternative terms above. When I mention other scholars’ ideas, I will keep the dichotomy native and non-native as an attempt to maintain the tone of their conceptions.

b. Is ELF another term for interlanguage or fossilized English?

There was never a time when language did not change, for mutability is simply inherent to language (Jenkins 2000: 26). The debate is, in fact, about *who* is authorized to change it. If one were talking about a national language, it would be clear that the locals (native) would be the agents of those changes, whereas if one is looking at an international community, everyone in that community would have the right to modify the language to suit their own needs. There is a lot of time and money invested in the maintenance of the English Standard ideology, but they cannot stop the use by its international speakers from shaping it. If by means of languaging as an action of creating and developing language through frequent and successful new words, structures, or pronunciation arise, those innovations are *unlikely* to get hidden under the carpet for the sake of inappropriateness in relation to native varieties (Seidlhofer 2011: 98). After all, why would anyone mind MESs' norms if, in most ELF interactions, they are absent or outnumbered?

The concept of interlanguage¹⁸ (Selinker 1972) comes from SLA studies and is a deficit approach to learners' development in the target language, as it focuses on what they cannot do in English other than on what they can (Jenkins 2006: 139). Interlanguage is the label given to the English of all speakers of English who have not achieved the so-called native-like competence (Seidlhofer 2011: 57) established by proficiency exams that have American and British Standards as the target. Brazil, for example, is considered a norm-dependent country, which means Brazilians could only be expected to emulate MESs in order to be intelligible in English (Jenkins 2009). As a consequence, an enormous amount of money and energy is spent on the side of the learners who believe they will only be 'fluent' speakers of English *if* they manage to parrot MESs close to perfection.

I wonder if anything would change in case learners of English knew that, firstly, the Standards presented to them are arbitrary abstractions that are only similar to the language patterns used by the population in the US and in the UK with higher education, therefore do not even represent all MESs. Secondly, Brazilian learners are much more likely to talk to other BESs and will not need to worry about how near to a MES they sound, especially as some studies attest, sounding like a 'near-native' when interacting with other 'non-natives' is generally taken negatively (Garret 2010).

¹⁸ **Interlanguage** is a concept introduced by Selinker (1972: 214) as a "separate linguistic system based on the observable output which results from a learner's attempted production of a TL [target language] norm."

Though fossilization¹⁹ (Selinker 1972) can happen due to difficulty in learning in some cases (Jenkins 2007), developing another successful manner to communicate other than a Standard-like one should not be seen as lack of ability to speak English properly. *Languaging* is creating new ways of saying and representing reality. When reality is not the same as where the English language originated from, the current environment will naturally mold the language into something more suitable to represent the setting and those speakers at that point in history. It is something that every speaker of any language does, whether they are aware of it or not. Stating that ELFers²⁰ cannot change English is yanking its ownership from them.

English is changing and it is changing fast. By acknowledging the possible origins of those changes as from any setting where this international language is spoken, we also destabilize the dichotomy right and wrong, which brings about another unavoidable matter: what are English teachers supposed to correct in their classes? Or even, what are teachers supposed to think relevant enough to teach? Those questions are rather unsettling and must not be taken lightly. In order to deal with the basis of those decisions, one needs to consider his/her concept of language and language teaching reference, as well as ponder the distinction between a model and a target.

c. Standardness, non-standardness and ELT

Most language teachers would agree that having a specific model to use in class is what makes teaching feasible, at least content wise. For this reason, more often than not, the decentralization of standard varieties has been the first point to be raised by worried practitioners in debates concerning pedagogical implications of ELF and current changes in the English language. It seems that leveling standard varieties with other possible realizations of the language is like pulling the rug from under teachers, schools, publishers, and all kinds of stakeholders²¹. After all, if not American standard or British standard, which English(es) is everyone supposed to teach?

Before trying to answer that dilemma, though, the questions that could be asked are actually how those two standard varieties (or dialects) became the default standards for

¹⁹ **Fossilization** is another linguistic phenomenon introduced by Selinker (1972: 215) as the “linguistic items, rules, and subsystems which speakers of a particular NL [native language] will tend to keep in their IL [interlanguage] relative to a particular TL, no matter what the age of the learner or amount of explanation and instructions he receives in the TL.”

²⁰ **ELFers** here are those speakers that use English to interact with speakers of other mother tongues.

²¹ **Stakeholders** are those who have the power to make important decisions in a certain community.

teaching and whether there is anything that makes those codified sets of linguistic choices better than any other option? Maybe those hegemonic varieties have been thriving unparalleled due to prestige, practicality, or plain simple tradition. However, it is time to reflect on the fact such restrictive views of language do not suffice for all the settings and functions English has come to mediate.

About the triumph of some dialects over others, Irvine and Gal (2000: 50) explain that around the 19th century, in Africa, linguists considered languages as natural entities (divine creations), within which any mixture or variation meant the contamination of something godly. It is rather relevant to point out that those linguists, people who decided which dialects were legitimate languages, were from Europe, and consequently, had European interests at heart. As a similar example of what happens with the reception of the English produced by BESs, in the linguists' reports, they presented considerably negative attitudes towards some sounds that characterized the African dialects influencing the languages being described. Their opinion of the unwanted dialectal features showed that it was the people they represented that did not please the linguists, not the language attributes:

Others thought clicks were more like the sounds of inanimate objects such as stone hitting. To these observers and the European readers of their reports, such iconic comparisons suggested (before our more enlightened days, at least) that the speakers of languages with clicks were some way subhuman or degraded, to a degree corresponding to the proportion of clicks in their consonant repertoires (Irvine & Gal 2000: 40).

Once a dialect was considered a language in its own right, it was mapped and sanitized of any influence of undesired borrowings of “impure” dialects. Using non-standard (mixed) varieties meant associating with “uncivilized” people. Such personification of linguistic matters attests for the power of indexicality²² in marked traces, pronunciation being one of its most evident and impactful ones. This way, the codified version of the language became something worthy of prestige and protection. In that process:

(...) each language, in short, was represented in an impoverished way to differentiate it from the other and not accord with an ideology about its essence. At the same time, regional varieties that seemed to overlap were ignored. An example would be the variety of Sereer spoken in Baol, which has been reported as a mix (Irvine & Gal 2000: 55).

This is an example of the power of linguistic ideology in action against minority peoples and their languages. According to Garret (2010: 33), “the system of beliefs that maintains, triggers and directs such discrimination is often referred to as ideology. Social

²² Indexicality, also referred to as iconization, involves a transformation of sign relationship between linguistic features (or varieties) and the social images with which they are linked” (Irvine & Gal 2000: 37).

stereotypes tend to perpetuate themselves and be self-fulfilling, acting, like ideology, as a store of ‘common-sense’ beliefs or filters through which information and social life generally is conducted and made sense of.” The naturalization of hierarchies of humans is iconized by language categorizations as ‘real languages’ or ‘dialects’. Such process of language ideology interference is very latent today in the hierarchy of English varieties or even in the resistance against the possibility of a post-native era in ELT.

At the risk of being repetitive, “language is a [powerful] tool to establish superiority” (Irvine & Gal 2000: 75). Therefore, the ones that have been exerted power upon over centuries and centuries should not expect such control and legitimacy of their language features to be *shared* out of the kindness of the gatekeepers’ hearts. Ownership is not given. It is self-recognized and claimed. Though the struggle for legitimacy of new Englishes is not aiming to negate the influence MESs, it is definitely out for decentralizing them. In addition, whoever benefits from MESs’ current ideological position of norm-provider is also expected to stand with them. Such purist decision is rooted in economy, prestige and power, but it is socio-linguistically unfounded.

Therefore, to start thinking about standardness we need to remember that it is not the language that has a standard, but its users that create it for socio-political reasons (Schmitz 2013: 9). The standard of the English language is an idealization and an ideology that serves the angle-saxon nations agenda of linguistic imperialism as well as all the industry involved in selling its teaching and testing (mainly publishers and language institutes). The idea of a monolithic British English still is England’s black gold and they are not give in without a fight (British Council Annual Report 1987-8). The math is simple: once other Englishes are considered as “good” as the British and American ones, publishers from those other countries are very likely to start writing their own textbooks and take over a considerable part the English teaching materials market. It already happens in some nations, but not in a large scale.

One of the most complex debates on ELF are rooted in the problem that is discerning a mistake from an innovation, a new norm²³. As an attempt to address those uncertainties, Bamgbose (1998, p.4) states that “an innovation is seen as an acceptable variant, while an error is simply a mistake or uneducated usage.” He, then, proposes a checklist that could be followed as a guide to distinguish the status of new occurrences in language: (a) the number of people using it; (b) where it is being used; (c) whether it appears in grammars, dictionaries,

²³ *Norm* here does not mean rules, but language structure, vocabulary, pronunciation that is seen as acceptable in a community.

etc; (d) whether it is ratified by teachers and examination entities; and how (e) acceptable it is viewed as. Simply put, there are numbers involved, but it all starts with acceptability and codification. As no language feature looks inherently more legitimate than others do, legitimation is socially constructed. Bamgbose himself summarized this idea by defending that, “it is people, not language codes, that understand one another” (p.11). Therefore, standardization is not so much about the intelligibility of a certain innovation as it is about how that innovation is negotiated through power relations of stakeholders. For instance, something new in language that was first used by lower class people would never be considered dictionary or grammar worthy until it started circulating in the mouth of more socially influential speakers.

When it comes to the NES teachers, an ethnically decentralized approach to English teaching would not discard them. Alternatively, they would compete more fairly with BES teachers and be judged solely by their ability to teach and actual knowledge *of* and *about* the English language. In the world today, though, the hegemonic standards are not only the *models* but also the *target*, which means the standard seems to not figure as *a* stable example for reference or a skeleton to build on (a model), but it is usually taken as the reality of language use (the target). This sort of view increases noncritical appreciation of the native speaker teacher and leaves learners/users unprepared for real life interactions.

From an ELF perspective, going beyond the standards of English seems like a reasonable decision to make, at least while the description of ELF is too little to establish a pattern of English innovations that could be used as more didactic complementary approach. With the objective of going further than just the conjecturing of critical perspectives in ELT, Nikos Sifakis (2014) actually proposes a *transformative* teacher education that would include stages of reading, elaboration of ELF aware materials, application of those activities in class, and reflection on the results towards more changes, more readings and new materials.

Another book-length initiative that is going towards an ELF-aware attitude in the classroom is in a book called *Teaching the Pronunciation of English as a Lingua Franca* that was written by Robin Walker and published in 2010. It has got specific directions on the sounds that work internationally and an account of typical deviations in pronunciation that do not cause communication breakdown in international settings. His work draws on the findings in Jenkins’s *The Phonology of English as an International Language* (2000), but presents a second step through a more didactic method, which includes audio segments and pedagogical dos and don’ts.

Both Jenkins's and Walker's books represent two of the first published pedagogical references for an ELF aware teaching of English. More recently, Patsko (2013) proposed the compilation of LFC into a grid for teaching purposes as part of her MA dissertation. Her work is very innovative and instrumental for multilingual classrooms and for ELF-aware pronunciation teaching, because she organized her LFC grid by the students L1s and signaled the English sounds they would probably find hard to learn. This way, referring to the grid, teachers may be able to plan pronunciation lessons that tackle their students' specific intelligibility needs. That can save teachers and students unnecessary investment in teaching/studying what would be picked up naturally or what is just unlikely to cause breakdown in international communication.

The considerations and tools for teaching English pronunciation above were definitely productive first steps towards rethinking intelligibility in international interactions. After all, not long ago, imitating native speakers to "perfection" was the only conceivably safe path to being understood in real life. Jenkins's most important goal with the Lingua Franca Core (LFC) was to bring flexibility to the teaching of English pronunciation based on empirical research that prioritized intelligibility, later on signified as an alternative that allows for the display of one's identity traits.

Mackenzie (2013) strongly disagrees with how democratic LFC really is. He reckons that a more realistic and postmodern approach to the issue of international intelligibility would consider the fact that there are some traits from L1s in English as an L2 that already work in international settings, but are ignored by Jenkins (2000) and, consequently, by Walker (2010) and Patsko (2013) as well. I, however, do not think this is a reason to completely discredit Jenkins's pioneer work. Though Mackenzie's arguments point to aspects that should be explored with further research, the references presented in *The Phonology of English as an International Language* (Jenkins 2000) were and are just as relevant as Kachru's concentric paradigm of the expansion of English, a very relevant starting point of reference. However, in order to redirect this debate, let us consider the central linguistic aspect of this study: pronunciation matters and some of its social implications.

d. Accents: intelligibility and attitude

According to Lippi-Green (1997: 42), the accent is a "loose bundle of prosodic and segmental features distributed over geographic and/or social space." Prosodic features include intonation, pitch, stress and tempo, and segmental features the phonological structure

of vowels and consonants. Simply put, an accent is a way of speaking, and every single speaker of a language has it (*ibid.*). Accent is the most powerful trigger of attitude towards language variation (Jenkins 2007), for it is the most evident linguistic mark of identity. While scholars like Kramsch contends that Expanding Circle Englishes have *no* impact on their speakers' identities (Jenkins 2000), being identifiable by one's own accent has consequences.

Depending on the 'affiliation' of the accent, it can be seen as an advantage or a disadvantage, which is usually measured by how similar the accent is to the prestige ones. We cannot forget that an accent, more than noticeable phonetic traits, is the representation of groups of people. Consequently, an accent will have as much prestige as the group it represents. As an international language and spoken by people from all over the globe, accent is also a matter of how one wants to be seen by others when using English to communicate. Does he/she want to be spotted as a foreigner who speaks English or would he/she rather be mistaken for a MES? Which affiliation is more desirable? This decision is ideological and very personal, and needs to be made by each speaker according to their beliefs and circumstances.

The attitude of those who believe that the only proof of learning a foreign language properly is sounding native-like continues being reinforced by teachers and schools that reward students who manage to lose their L1 accents (Jenkins 2007: 205). Another tool of maintenance of this attitudinal *status quo* is the respected language exams that are supposed to be international, such as Cambridge Certificate, TOEFL and IELTS. For instance, Cambridge Exam called Examination for the Certificates of Competency in English (ECCE) consider different phonetic realization acceptable as long as the test takers do not make it hard for native speakers to understand them (Description of ECCE online).

If only the stakeholders (international universities, students, parents, English schools and publishers) considered the fact that only 3% of the British speak with an RP accent and only 33% of Americans have a GA accent (Jenkins 2000: 14), the undiscerning pursuit of the Standard pronunciations GA and RP would probably start to be seen as pointless. Those hegemonic accents not only misrepresent the native speakers, but also constitute an instrument of discrimination to both MESs and BESs (BIESs included). Alike what happens among BESs, there are hierarchies that divide those who have English as their L1. MESs are categorized into groups of educated people as superior to uneducated people, northerners and mid-westerners as superior to southerners, etc.

Just as important as the membership issue is the preoccupation about international intelligibility. The concept of intelligibility in this research is always related to speech acts and aligned with Jenkins's (2000: 78) definition, for she believes it involves both the speaker and the listener and "(...) concerns the production and recognition of the formal properties of words and utterances and, in particular, the ability to produce and receive phonological form (...)." Many fear that differences in pronunciation among the varieties of English will make people unintelligible to each other (Jenkins 2007). They ignore the fact that the UK itself has so many different accents without losing intelligibility. It might take some time to tune in at first, but the frequent contact with each other and the accommodation strategies have regulated the language at all levels to the extent they have managed to understand one another throughout millenniums up to now. With the aid of the internet and all the other developments mentioned earlier, intelligibility shall remain safe amongst the nations in Kachru's outer and expanding circle just as it is in the inner circle.

Of course intelligibility problems happen in a number of international interactions, but they are most common *before* one can be considered fully bilingual. Jenkins (2000) explains that non-bilingual English speakers (NBES) tend to not make use of the context as much as a MESS or a BESS would, because NBESs are still insecure about what to expect of each setting of interaction, due to the difference of background experience. Therefore, non-bilinguals usually rely on the acoustic signal, through a bottom-up processing of the meaning. Thus, pronunciation is the most common reason for intelligibility problems (Jenkins 2000) both on the side of the speaker and the listener.

If the learner is in the early stages he/she is probably going to have a hard time finding the correspondence between spelling and sounds, especially because it varies considerably depending on the accent. A very common consequence for not being able to distinguish sounds well is to not be able to speak clearly enough to be understood by others, which makes a NBES someone more vulnerable to communication problems using his/her L2.

Studies have been done to learn more about the relation between intelligibility and attitude towards language variation. Though the origin of the influence is still left unclear, negative attitude towards an accent, for example, seems to generate lower intelligibility, similarly, though, lower intelligibility might be generating a more negative attitude. As pointed out by Jenkins (2000: 14), "intelligibility is not necessarily reciprocal and may be the result rather than the cause of negative social-psychological attitudes which have, themselves, reduced the receiver's motivation to make an effort to understand."

This is why studying attitudes towards language variation is a valid methodology to tackle ideologies that feed prejudice against minorities disguised as linguistic prejudice (Garret 2010). Those investigations are also especially relevant to ELF studies as they reveal how expectations translate into evaluation of speakers. Knowledge of those expectations themselves is an important step towards addressing language discrimination and educate the general public that includes the teachers and linguists (Jenkins 2007: 37-38).

Even though attitude plays an important role in intelligibility, there are other few reasons why an accent can be harder to understand than another, “partly from lack of exposure, and partly from the extent of their own deviations from shared common core of L1 phonological features, crucial to intelligibility” (Jenkins 2000: 14). Besides, previous knowledge about the “message-topic” might contribute with motivation and ability to better understand the speaker (Garret 2010: 101). In sum, one may predict that willingness to cooperate in meaning negotiation increases intelligibility (Jenkins 2000, 2007). However, willingness to understand a speaker whose accent is different from the regional or prestige one(s) will strongly depend on the kind of relationship the speakers have with each other.

Intelligibility does not simply happen or not, it is *negotiated* (Jenkins 2000: 79). As discussed above, some factors can interfere in how intelligible one can be perceived as being, even without truly and inherently being that easy to understand can vary according to the previous information that the listener has about the speaker. For instance, Niedzielski’s (1999) study shows that when the geographical origin of the speaker was provided the subjects (listeners) were found to change how well they could hear them. It proves that more often than not, attitude affects intelligibility.

As this is an attitude study, another considerably relevant point to be explored is the acceptability of non-native accents. Research conducted by Jenkins (2007: 154) attested that being intelligible is not enough for an accent to be acceptable, as this aspect of attitude passes through the judgement of social class and successfulness. In order to be counted as affluent, one is expected to be like MESs in their English, especially in terms of accent (Jenkins 2007). That belief continues to be very common because US and UK MESs are, even today, believed to own the English language.

Once BESs understand that *they* are the majority of English users and are more likely to interact with other BESs, they might be accepting of the fact that their English is just as legitimate as the inner circle ones. The more aware BESs are of their legitimacy in English, the freer they will feel to *adapt* English to each context of use, joining a community of English speakers where “they can feel at home” (Jenkins 2007: 199).

e. Identity: the authorship of self in ELF

Identity and language have a very close relationship. Some would say that identity features antecede the words that name them. Pennycook (2007), however, states that it is language that constitutes identity, not the other way around. That means language is the condition for identity traits to exist, because those characteristics must be socially acknowledged. As expressed by Hall (1997: 18), “meaning depends on the relationship between things in the world – people, objects and events, real or fictional – and the *conceptual system*, which can operate as *mental representations* of them.” In order to achieve the legitimacy of BESs’ varieties, their own words, syntactical structures and sound systems must be circulating socially as a representation of their existence.

For example, most plurilingual speakers agree that there are things that can only be expressed in a certain language. That is due to the fact concepts, words, and meaning representations are socially negotiated or constructed in a community (culture) in a way that differs from how it was done in another - reasoning that justifies code-switching even by the most competent speaker of an L2. If code-switching is needed to transmit the right tone to an utterance or to better explain one’s thoughts, new words and new combinations of words and sounds are also.

Let us take a moment to consider the representation of specific things through words by analyzing an English expression that does not have a similar enough version in Portuguese: *socially awkward*. With some effort, one can even think of the idea “*sem traquejo social*”, which roughly means ‘lacking social skills’, as the closest possibility of meaning approximation, but that does not really hit the *awkwardness* key, only the low-level-of-social-skills part and the *awkwardness* is left unrepresented. The fact it does not exist in Brazilian Portuguese makes us question if, from a Brazilian Portuguese speaking point of view, that possibility of adjectival phrase for someone’s social life does even exist, simply because it cannot be talked about or thought of without ‘language²⁴’ to represent it.

Once a NBES is introduced to the expression ‘socially awkward’, and others like it, that person has to elaborate that concept from whatever cues he/she has available to really incorporate it as part of his/her vocabulary, functioning as part of his/her conceptual map (Hall 1997: 18). This kind of assimilation happens all throughout the learning process of a foreign language or through countless English neologisms that slip into another language,

²⁴ Language is more than written codes or spoken sounds. It could be any kind of sign such as music or a painting.

like Brazilian Portuguese. For instance, we can consider for a moment the expression “drive thru” that can be seen on the sign of a fast-food restaurant driveway where customers can make their orders from inside their cars. This kind of service did not exist in Brazil, hence the need for the insertion of the lexicon into the linguacultural repertoire of Brazilians, who have easily accustomed to it.

While having language features from English inserted into Portuguese to fill in a semantic gap sounds like a natural movement of globalization, accepting English neologisms originated in Brazilian contexts might sound quite subversive to some purists. However, why not switch the direction of this creativity flow by legitimizing contributions to the English language? Words and/or expressions elaborated locally would probably describe and function more accurately the Brazilian cultural context, for example. The creation of new vocabulary formed by a non-standard combination of roots and affixes, or even code-meshing²⁵ with the local mother tongue is supposed to be part of the natural evolution of any language that has crossed borders. The political and economic power struggle seems to be the only structure keeping the legitimacy “certificate” in the hands of the hegemonic speakers of English.

Similarly, the non-standard phonetic realizations produced by speakers who were not born in English speaking countries are traits, not only traces, of this other context and its own linguistic demands, such as the use of another official language. It is only natural that the speaker’s national language will imprint some of its marks on his/her English, and whether the pronunciation differences were intended by the BESs is beyond the point. Those specific non-standard characteristics also form the speaker’s linguacultural repertoire and are not automatically negative or positive in international communication, as acceptability and intelligibility usually also depend on extra-linguistic factors.

Then, it is no surprise that, as Rubby and Saraceni (2006 as cited in Jenkins 2009: 205) put it, the pressure to speak native-like English has made casualties in the linguacultural identities. While the ownership of the English language is seen as belonging only to MESs, this pressing issue will continue to affect language teaching and international relations mediated by this language. It happens whenever one is told that the words and expressions he/she adds to English are not acceptable because they are not found in American or British Standard Englishes. Linguistic Imperialism (Phillipson 1992; Shins 2009) loud and clear,

²⁵ Code-meshing: “combining two or more dialects, language systems, and/or communication modes to effectively write and speak within the multiple domains of society” (Young et al. 2013).

whether enforced by MESs or submissive BESs, puts outer and expanding circle countries right back in their “places” when they dare to appropriate the supposed *international* language of the 21st century.

It was strongly contended by Kumaravadivelu (in press) that not much has changed after a quarter of a century of theorization against the hegemony of native speakers. He argues that the production of knowledge about the conditions of non-native Englishes, difficulties and lack of legitimacy is not enough, something needs to be *done* against the constant mutilation of identities that happens through the imposition of certain varieties of English over others. Evoking Gramsci’s (1971) subalternity concept and Mignolo’s decoloniality, Kumaravadivelu states that the subaltern community (NNSs) would be able to (p.1) “disrupt the hegemonic power structure” option if they move towards a “decolonial option which demands result-oriented actions, not just ‘intellectual elaboration’.”

For the sake of argument and to consider the frailty in the grounds of the authority constantly and freely granted to MES, let us compare the legitimating process of our mother tongue to one of a foreign language in order to observe how unfounded the demarcated ownership of a language is. To begin with, it is important to remember that language, in its broader sense, is a metaphor of life, a translation of meanings, of desires, of things that can be seen and touched, as well as of abstract constructs. A particular language, though, represents things that are necessarily marked by perspectives and linguistic needs of the group that uses it. Back to reflections on ELF and identity, we must consider the symbolic violence in demanding a bilingual speaker to limit his/her English to the American or British Standard varieties based on the excuse of correctness. By doing so, one is proposing that the price of speaking ‘good’ English is leaving his/her cultural background behind, as if it did not matter anymore, or even, as if it had to disappear.

The faculty of language is considered a biological ability inherent to human beings (Chomsky 1972), but the specifics of the language(s) that we acquire in the first years do not come imprinted onto our DNAs. They are passed on to us through the contact with other human speakers of that/those language(s). Thus, we always speak somebody else’s language, starting from the language we call mother tongue or national language. As Derrida (2001: 57, *my translation*) puts it, “we do not speak if not somebody else’s language – and it is in a

dissymmetric way, to them returning, always somebody else's, from somebody else, and taken back to them"²⁶

Despite knowing that we learn words and other parameters of this/these language(s) through speakers that antecede us in proficiency and time of use, we never question if that(those) language(s) belong(s) to us or not. We spend our linguistic maturation process being stimulated by our family and educational institutions to increase our knowledge, while, simultaneously, using the language(s) to do various tasks without any fear of not being ready or of any embarrassment. We definitely do not apologize for our "bad" Portuguese while we are learning and using it. Once we have finished acquiring the main structures and vocabulary, they will also carry our local and regional characteristics that distinguish us from people who grew up in other regions of the country. I am *not* comparing the acquisition process of a L1 to a L2 in the linguistic sense, but I am proposing that we think about the automatic legitimacy in the process of creation of new words and general appropriation of the language. What is it that makes the right for creativity so 'illegal' when the bridge for communication is a foreign²⁷ international language? It is all a matter of socially constructed legitimacy, which is reinforced by the gatekeepers of English that reach the general population through the educational system.

f. ELF and Teacher Education

In post-method times (Kumaravadivelu 2001) times, when *how* to teach takes a local assessment of students' needs, a fast-changing language and scenario becomes the main issue. Today, *what* is worth teaching is the new million-dollar question. As the concept of language, standardness, nativeness, appropriateness, and ownership are put to debate, the basis of English teaching is being shaken up. Awareness of the international status of English and how fast this language has been changing is just the first step towards a potential psychological shift in classroom praxis. After exposing over 300 teachers to the ELF concept, professor Jennifer Jenkins (2007) still found that not much had been advanced when it came to dealing with ELF in ELT. The idea of a democratic and flexible English sounds great at a *rational level*, but at a *deeper level*, the teachers that participated in her ELF attitude

²⁶ According to Derrida (2001: 57), "não falamos nunca senão uma língua – e ela é dissimetricamente, a ele regressando, sempre do outro, do outro, guardada pelo outro. Vinda do outro, permanecendo do outro, ao outro reconduzida."

²⁷ The term **foreign** still applies to languages where English is not an official national language. Even though it is important to reconsider how foreign English really is, taking globalization in consideration. It is also international as it is used mostly to bridge communication when the interlocutors do not share the same mother tongue.

research did not feel confident enough to work with anything other than Standard English (Jenkins 2007: 123/204).

Though, at first, one might think that ELF scholars want to replace Standard Englishes for ELF, that is a misconception, for ELF studies are not promoting a competition between different Englishes or Standard versus *ad hoc* negotiated English. It is about expanding the scope of how an international language such as English works, so learners can be better equipped to deal with real English, instead of the fixed abstractions usually found in textbooks, which represents only part of this hybrid language.

The irony is in the nativeness “police”, tools of maintenance of the *status quo*, which work for those who desire to keep a pseudo control of how English is used in places where many of those socially built restraints do not even apply. In reality, this dialogue is basically about when a deviation from Standards represents a mistake or a way to portray one’s identity. Classifying something as an innovation is not easy, but Bamgbose (1998: 3) suggests a few criteria that can help:

Five major internal factors are available for deciding on the status of an innovation. There are: demographic, geographical, authoritative, codification, and acceptability factors. They can be captured in the following set of questions: How many people use the innovation? How widely dispersed is it? Who uses it? Where is the usage sanctioned? What is the attitude of users and non-users to it?

Many innovations are recurrent in ELF settings, some examples are: ‘evidences’, ‘informations’, ‘bigness’, the question tag ‘isn’t it’ for all tenses, ‘have # years old’, etc (Seidlhofer 2011; McKay 2002). There are many other types of innovations other than the lexical ones, such as 3rd person singular, transitivity, preposition, articles, collocation, word order and relative pronouns, which were discussed in Dewey’s thesis (2006) called *English as a Lingua Franca: an empirical study of innovation in lexis and grammar*. These changes are not random at all. They emerge from regularities and possibilities within the English language itself (Seidlhofer 2011: 103-104). Innovations happen all the time in L1 in the same manner they do in English as a L2. The difference is in the legitimating process. While natives will create words and expressions freely, non-native are looked down to as not knowing how to use the “correct” version of the language, when it is not necessarily true.

There are clear examples in this process in Scottish English, for example. I have noticed that every Scottish person I have been in contact with within the past 4 years²⁸ use “you” when talking to two or more people. It makes perfect sense that the personal pronoun

²⁸ I have been to Scotland for a few weeks on and off for the past 4 years. I have been in contact with considerable number of Scottish people from Edinburgh, Glasgow, and from a couple of small villages.

‘you’ would be inflected with “s” like the regular plural of nouns. If Brazilians had created it, that would probably be seen as a mistake, but because it is a group of natives’ innovation, we would all see it as a legitimate change in the English spoken in parts of the UK. Again, if it is a matter of identity or a linguistic mistake (Jenkins 2007: 14), it depends on who is saying it and where it is said. Attitude towards language variation as well as level of appropriateness will differ according to the context (Seidlhofer 2011: 91).

Beyond preparing students for real life English, rethinking its teaching in the light of ELF, towards a more democratic conception of language, is tightly related to what critical pedagogues propose for language education. No true educator can ignore the power that is in being able to communicate with the world through English today. Globalization and other converging social phenomena as international media, travels and the internet have made the world a place we need to learn more about. Most importantly, we need to learn how to be inserted in that world as an agent, as put by Freire²⁹ (2015:53) “My presence in the world is not like someone who adjusts himself to it, it is like someone who inserts himself in it. It is the position of someone who fights not to be only an *object*, but also a *subject* of history” (my translation). This attitude towards language education is congruous with ELF pedagogical posture because it aims at empowering those who have been considered discredited concerning their authority over English, namely BESs, so they can take their place of legitimacy in a language that also represents who they are.

This is a sociopolitical matter that should be taken up especially by BESs engaged in teaching and research. After all, as contented by Pennycook (1990: 305):

It is also necessary to note the highly political nature of language itself and many issues around SLE. When the notion of a language is so politically based, standing in a difficult relationship to the questions of the status of dialects and standard forms, and intimately connected to the development and maintenance of the nation state, and when much SLE is tied to the contentious issues of bilingualism, minority education and internationalism, it is not surprising that, within an education system that has itself turned its back on political and cultural issues, there has been a reluctance to deal with the full array of social, political and cultural implications that arise within SLE. If we see education as a fundamentally political process, involved in the production and reproduction of social differences, and language learning as an equally contentious political issue, then the reluctance to deal with the fundamental but awkward social, cultural and political questions that surround SLE becomes on the one hand understandable but on the other reprehensible.

²⁹ Source text in Portuguese by Freire (2015:53): “Minha presença no mundo não é a de quem a ele se adapta, a de quem nele se insere. É a posição daquele que luta para não ser apenas *objeto*, mas sujeito também da história”.

The journey towards change is hard and needs to be led by the users of English whose Englishes are dictated by others. Dealing with the localities of our issues demands a whole new epistemology, a new path that would delink the subalterns from the Eurocentric thinking (Kumaravadivelu 2015). Just as the realities of the subalterns are dissimilar, they also require a new array of theories and methods to tackle their own issues. It is for that reason that this work aims at deconstructing the idea that Brazilians have bad English simply because they can be recognized as BESs when they speak.

The reflections proposed here are, however, only one of the first steps towards a longer journey intended to tentatively contribute to English teacher education through researches that investigate the engagement of Brazilian speakers of English in international communication. Combining the findings of this attitude study with the outcome of my future doctorate project on accommodation strategies and power relations, I intend to take a small step with other efforts of Brazilian researchers who have been working on understanding, deconstructing, and exploring the possibilities for the identity of Brazilian speakers of English. The next envisaged phase will be joining studies in the field to stir Brazilian English teachers with local epistemic and pedagogical alternatives to the industry of angle-centric materials and ideologies.

In the next chapter, I am going to delineate the methodological path taken in this study explaining what this research is aiming to accomplish, how we decided to do it and why such path was chosen. The participants and investigation tools will also be presented in detail, so we can develop an analysis that is also built upon background information on the people involved. The reason why the present theoretical chapter was written and presented before the methodology one is so the object of this work, as well as the debates it encompasses, are clearly seen as shaping the methodological choices ahead.

CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGICAL PATH

3.1 Introduction

As previously explained, this is an attitude study on the Brazilian accent of English, and as such, it is exploratory, qualitative and interpretative. Its exploratory aspect is in the unfeasibility of predicting the answers of the participants, making previously elaborated hypothesis an unsuitable option to approach the object. In order to establish a clear scope, a few specific nuances are to be observed, which will guide the development of the analysis. In other words, the exploratory aspect of this work is also a key to its methodological path: to develop an analysis that is prompted by the issues that come up through the data. In this section, I will present some characteristics of studies on attitude towards language variation, the objectives of this study, the investigation tools and the concepts underlying the choices concerning the questionnaire and the audio input, the subjects and the checklist.

Considering the fact this is an attitude study, the first thing we must clarify is the idea represented in the term *attitude* as what “one knows or believes something [is], has some emotional reaction to it and, therefore, may be assumed to act on this basis” (Edwards 1982: 20). Attitude towards language variation, then, is how people feel about a certain variation or variety. The importance of studying attitude towards language variation is that it will reveal not only how the accent is taken, but also how some groups view other groups.

Though it may sound a bit strange at first, we need to keep in mind that attitude assessments applied to language do not necessarily uncover the attitude of people towards linguistic features. The reality of research data shows that most of the data represents a description of people’s personality, which came to be called personality dimensions: speaker’s competence (intelligence), personal integrity (helpfulness, trustworthiness) and social attractiveness (friendliness, sense of humor) (Lambert 1967). According to Edward (1982), attitude studies reveal knowledge of the language variety itself, of the speaker and of the people who do the judgements. That means to say that the studies in this field are supposed to reveal a more positive or negative posture of certain groups in relation to each other and how aware they are of socially constructed hierarchy affecting their judgement of linguistic differences.

Within the scope of human communication, the accent³⁰ is the first and strongest trigger of attitude towards other speakers. On that account, it can be taken as a good starting

30 A distinctive mode of pronunciation of a language, especially one associated with a particular nation, locality, or social class (Oxford Dictionary Online).

point in exploring how social changes affects the value of non-prestige language varieties. As we are about to focus on attitude towards a potential new variety of English³¹, here represented by audio samples of its accent, learning about its social status internationally will allow us to theorize on its acceptance abroad while reflecting on the construction of identity of the Brazilian speaker of English.

I have noticed through my previous research efforts, that defining what an accent is can be very challenging for the general public, non-specialists, who usually had never thought about the matter seriously. For instance, it is very common to hear people exemplifying an accent with lexical differences (words and expressions) instead of a differentiated combination of sounds that is believed to be particular to a group of people. There is also the fact that only marked accents, those different from one's own, are noticed and called "accents", when it is known that whoever has the ability to talk already has their own phonetic affiliation with a certain group of people, also known as their *accent*. The lack of clarity in what the research subjects/speakers see as an accent might affect how they express their opinion about it, which means any attitude research on accents has its strengths and weaknesses.

3.2 Research Questions

The main guiding questions to be pursued in this study are:

- a. How are the Brazilian speakers of English represented through the eyes of speakers of English from other countries?
- b. What is the most common type of words or terms used to explain one's opinion about the Brazilian accents of English? Do those words describe linguistic features or personality dimensions? Are they positive or negative in their connotation?
- c. How can empowering Brazilian speakers of English with information on the attitude of other speakers of English towards them change the colonized attitude that has been reinforced for the past centuries?
- d. What pedagogical path(s) may be considered as a critically engaged response to the attitude towards the Brazilian accent revealed in this study?

31 Given the recurrent characteristics of the English produced in Brazil, a Brazilian English might be coming to be considered a reality soon. This approach to the influence of L1 onto English as a L2 finds its premises in the World Englishes paradigm, which seeks the legitimation of non-native varieties of English.

3.3 General Objective

The ambition of this work is to contribute to studies on the construction of identity of the Brazilian speaker of English by analyzing the attitude of 18 speakers of English from 6 countries towards the Brazilian accent of English. In addition, this study is aimed at raising relevant issues concerning how the Brazilian speaker of English is inserted in the globalized world today, then, reflect on some sociopolitical and pedagogical challenges and potential actions in this scenario.

3.3.1 Specific Objectives

In order to observe the aspects cited above more systematically, we will have as a guide the following specific objectives:

- a. Verify the percentage of subjects that consider the Brazilian accent of English familiar, intelligible, competent and pleasant.
- b. Analyze the open explanations given by the subjects to verify whether they contain words that represent personality dimensions or linguistic features.
- c. After that, if representations of linguistic features are found in the explanations, classify them as leaning towards a comparison with hegemonic standardized varieties or towards international intelligibility.
- d. If representations of personality dimensions are found in the explanations, categorize them as positive or negative.
- e. Identify how do those answers touch on the issues raised in ELF studies.
- f. Establish a dialogue between the issues raised in this study and some ELT concerns.

3.4 Investigation Tools

In order to collect data for the development of this attitude study, an accent audio sample was used to prompt the response to an attitude questionnaire that was sent through email to people of different countries. In addition, two national books on the teaching of English pronunciation are going to be the starting point of the pedagogical considerations. Now, we are going to look at the specifics of those materials and the conceptions underlying each choice.

3.4.1 The audio input

Thinking of only one Brazilian accent of English would be nonsensical. Collecting audio from all different accents, on the other hand, would also be unfeasible and pointless

for this specific study. For this reason, audio segments were collected in Salvador through a questionnaire that included the following questions:

- 1- What's your view on English language education in Brazil?
- 2- What can be improved in English teaching in Brazil?
- 3- What is the importance of studying English abroad for the education of a Brazilian speaker of English?

The criteria adopted for the selection of the speakers to be recorded was that he or she had to be Brazilian, currently living in Brazil, not an English teacher (to figure as non-specialized speakers), and needed to have an international certificate of English that would attest of their fluency. Though these criteria were observed in the selection of the speakers recorded in the audio, I do not intend to use them as the representation of *the* Brazilian accent of English, but samples of Brazilian accents of English that bring with them the complexity of the history of the volunteer speakers.

As convenience samples, two young ladies (in their twenties) recorded their voices (by themselves) and sent me their consents and language certificates from TOEFL that attested of their advanced proficiency. The audio for the questionnaire needed to be long enough to allow the formation of an opinion, but could not be too long as to compromise the answers if the listeners could not remember what they thought of it. Thus, only one of the answers from each lady was used for the sample, which was the answer to the second question, as a strategy to allow them some time to speak as naturally as possible, having already passed the (probable) initial tension of answering the first question. The constraints and consequential influence of capturing audio as “speech on demand” typical of research procedures cannot be ignored in the analysis. However, research ethics requirements leave no room for collection of data of unadvised participants. The samples had a similar theme development and length, which together lasted 00:01:53. A full transcription of that audio sample with phonetic transcription of the non-standard pronunciation is available at the appendix section.

3.4.2 The attitude questionnaire

The questionnaire was composed of a profile section and an assessment of attitude section. The profile of the subjects (see 3.3) included the items: full name, country of origin, country of residence, multiple options to where he/she learned English, and the option to identify a certificate of English that he/she could have, as well as the grade achieved. The attitude questionnaire itself was composed of four yes/no questions that were supposed to

have each choice explained. Let us now look at the specifics of the rationale behind those questions.

To begin with, the yes/no questions were not elaborated to uncover the participants' attitudes as a whole, but their beliefs. At this point, it is important to separate what is to be considered belief from attitude. According to Edwards (1982: 20), "attitude includes belief as one of its components. Thus, a subject's response to, 'is a knowledge of French important for your children, yes or no?' indicates belief. To gauge attitude one would require further enquiry into the respondent's *feelings* about his expressed belief." Hence, I also requested the subjects to explain their choices. The questions were preceded by the instructions that said the following, "Express your opinion about the Brazilian accent of English by selecting one of the options proposed. Then, explain your choices with your own words." Each of the questions was aimed to uncover a certain range of likely beliefs and attitudes. I am going to elaborate on them separately.

1st) Is the accent familiar?

The familiarity of the accent is evoked here to aid the participant with remembering where else he or she might have been in contact with speakers of English from Brazil. The awareness of other encounter with other Brazilians speaking English, be it in person or through cultural products such as films or music, might influence the attitude of the participant towards this accent. In addition, this question is also an attempt to expand the awareness of experience of the subjects, so they can answer the questionnaire considering a wider range of examples of Brazilian accents. If successful in that sense, this question will allow the subject to express his/her opinion and reveal his/her attitude of an accent that will be closer to the abstraction that could represent a plural Brazilian accent of English.

2nd) Is the accent easy to understand?

This question is geared to tackle the matter of intelligibility. As it was just mentioned above, attitude towards a speech community influences how intelligible their accent can be perceived as. However, it is also true to say that intelligibility itself, or how easy it is to understand an accent, also influences the attitude of an interlocutor towards a certain accent. It is definitely a two-way traffic and some aspects must be taken into consideration: the level of familiarity, level of similarity to the standard pronunciation known by the subject, phonetic closeness to his/her L1, or even the knowledge that the listener has of the L1 of the speaker that has English as his/her L2.

3rd) Do they sound like competent speakers of English?

According to the analyses in the field of attitude studies (Edwards 1982), competence is one of the personality dimension items usually used by the respondents of questionnaires when describing what they think of an accent. At the risk of being repetitive, finding words that describe human characteristics in language attitude questionnaires is rather expected. After all, languages and their variations cannot be considered better or worse based on linguistic features, for a language that successfully bridges communication is as good as any other. The components that may be weighed as better or worse, high or low is the sociopolitical power of the group the variety in question is linked to (p. 22).

The answers to the questions are likely to contain references to the mainstream standard dialects³², as they are directly connected with the idea of success not only in the ability to learn a language, but above all in the ability to grow in a competitive globalized world. In many cases, this is ultimately a matter of affiliation with the winning team. As Edwards (1982: 21) also states, “most studies of language attitudes, in fact, would be more accurately termed studies of attitudes towards *speakers*³³ of language varieties.”

4th) Is the accent pleasant?

Inquiring about the pleasantness of the accent is a way to ratify (or not) the attitude of the subject shown in the other three questions. On the other hand, it can also signal a contradiction, which is very common whenever a concept is closely related to identity³⁴. We need to keep in mind that, beyond everything, though this study is an effort to learn more about the attitudes towards languages, those answers are bound to (also) be a representation of how the subjects see *themselves* in relation to the group being evaluated through their accent. The matter is, thus, intrinsically connected to and influenced by constructs of national identity (Kalva & Ferreira 2011), ethnonational solidarity (Mackenzie 2013), and/or

27 A standard dialect is one spoken by educated members of society, used in writing and in the media, used in writing and in the media, and supported and encouraged at school (Edwards 1982: 21-22).

33 “Speakers” is not in italics in the original text.

29 As it was explored in the theoretical context section of this work, accents are a strong overt representation of group identity. Mackenzie (2013: 118) points out that “a great many sociologists and linguists have proposed overlapping accounts of identity in the contemporary globalized world. Virtually all of them describe it as malleable, motile, mutable, and so on – the same kind of adjectives that are regularly used to describe ELF.” The representation of identities shall be addressed in the analysis.

identification with global citizenship (Phipps & Gonzalez: 2004), as well as to communities of practice (Wenger 1998), etc. For instance, it would be predictable, though not certain, that a speaker from an outer circle country would seem more appreciative of non-native Englishes, due to solidarity in the fight for legitimation of their indigenous English. However, it is also possible that the standard ideology might be a stronger influence and the non-native accent of the Brazilian speakers in the audio would be measured against a native standard of English and see through a deficit approach. In other words, knowledge of the place where the subjects speak from contributes to interpretations that are more likely to be closer to the actual attitudes presented in their answers. Let us now turn to the profile of the subjects of different nationalities that answered the attitude questionnaire for this research.

3.5 The subjects

Taking Kachru's concentric paradigm for the expansion of English as reference, I selected six countries that would represent all of the three circles, two from each: from the Inner Circle, England and USA; from the Outer Circle, Botswana and Uganda; and from the Expanding Circle, Poland and Thailand. The subjects needed to be fluent speakers of English and reside in their country of origin. They were emailed the questionnaire, the term of consent and the audio. Differently from the Brazilian speakers in the audio, they were not required to have an English certificate, because that would have increased the difficulty of finding volunteers to an extent that could have jeopardized the realization of this study.

Table 1 – Participants' profiles

	ENGLAND 1	ENGLAND 2	ENGLAND 3
Country of origin	England, UK	United Kingdom	UK
Country of residence	England, UK	United Kingdom	England
How he/she learned English	English is her mother tongue	English is her mother tongue	English is her mother tongue
	POLAND 1	POLAND 2	POLAND 3
Country of origin	Poland	Poland	Poland
Country of residence	Poland	Poland	Germany
How he/she learned English	Elementary/High School (monolingual)	By himself	Elementary/High School (monolingual) By herself
	THAILAND 1	THAILAND 2	THAILAND 3
Country of origin	Thailand	Thailand	Thailand
Country of residence	Thailand	Thailand	Thailand
How he/she learned English	Elementary/High School (Monolingual) Private Lessons	Elementary/High School (Monolingual) By herself English Institutes	Elementary/High School (Monolingual) English Institutes
	BOTSWANA 1	BOTSWANA 2	BOTSWANA 3
Country of origin	Botswana	Botswana	Botswana
Country of residence	Botswana	Botswana	Botswana
How he/she learned English	Elementary/High School (bilingual)	Elementary/High School (bilingual)	Elementary/High School (bilingual)

	USA 1	USA 2	USA 3
Country of origin	United States	United States	United States
Country of residence	United States	United States	United States
How he/she learned English	Elementary/High School (bilingual)	By himself	By herself
	UGANDA 1	UGANDA 2	UGANDA 3
Country of origin	Uganda	Uganda	Uganda
Country of residence	Uganda	Uganda	Uganda
How he/she learned English	Elementary/High school (bilingual)	Elementary/High school (bilingual)	Elementary/High school (bilingual)

3.6 English Pronunciation Books for Brazilians

In order to represent with a published material some of the thinking present in teaching English pronunciation in Brazil, two books written and published by Brazilians and for Brazilians. One of them is *English Pronunciation for Brazilians: the sounds of American English*, by Sonia Godoy, Cris Gontow and Marcelo Marcelino, published in 2006. The second one is *Pronúncia de inglês: para falantes de português brasileiro*, written by Thais Cristófaró Silva and published in 2011. They are both books that teach standard pronunciation, Godoy *et al*'s one with GA and Cristofaro-Silva's with RP and other ENL for exemplifying exceptions.

3.7 The analysis route

The analysis of the data in the questionnaire will be drawn from the data generated by the table below, which includes profile information about the subjects and their answers about the Brazilian accent of English. The route of the analysis will be divided into two distinct parts. In the first part, considerations will be made based on the percentages of the yes/no answers, followed by the categorization of the explanations for them, distinguished as linguistic features or personality dimensions, which in itself already provides cues of the attitude of the participants towards the accents in the audio. In the second part, aiming to contextualize the pedagogical considerations, two national books on English Pronunciation for Brazilians will be used to exemplify the thinking that is circulating in teaching materials and in some classrooms in Brazil. Then, the same words that prompted the attitude analysis will be looked at from an ELF perspective in order to establish connections between them and the pressing issues concerning the legitimation of non-native Englishes in the world. Then, based on both parts of the analysis, reflections on ELT will relate this attitude study to the importance of critical pedagogy in times as these.

3.6.1 Tables

For the first of the objectives, finding out how ‘familiar’, ‘intelligible’, ‘competent’ and ‘pleasant’ the Brazilian accent of English is to the subjects, we need to consider number 3 (three) as the maximum rate and 0 (zero) as the minimum rate from each country. Each number represents 1 (yes) answer to the questions. In other words, if two of the three subjects from Botswana mark (yes) to the item familiarity, we are going to see number 2 vertically under “familiarity” and horizontally next to Botswana.

Table 2 – Beliefs table sample

	familiar	intelligible	competent	pleasant
ENGLAND	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)
USA	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)
BOTSWANA	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)
UGANDA	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)
THAILAND	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)
POLAND	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)	(0 to 3)
Total:	(0 to 18)	(0 to 18)	(0 to 18)	(0 to 18)

For a clear organization of the data concerning the nature of the explanations, a table will be used to present the categories: linguistic features and personality dimensions. The words interpreted as representing those categories will be vertically displayed under those categories and horizontally next to the country and subject that used those words, as in the table which follows:

Table 3 – Attitude table sample

Nationality & Subject Code	Linguistic features	Personality dimensions
USA 1	<i>Quotes of words, phrases or sentences that represent an explanation with linguistic features.</i>	<i>Quotes of words, phrases or sentences that represent an explanation with personality dimensions.</i>
USA 2	<i>Quotes of words, phrases or sentences that represent an explanation with linguistic features.</i>	<i>Quotes of words, phrases or sentences that represent an explanation with personality dimensions.</i>
USA 3	<i>Quotes of words, phrases or sentences that represent an explanation with linguistic features.</i>	<i>Quotes of words, phrases or sentences that represent an explanation with personality dimensions.</i>
(and the other 14 subjects)	<i>Quotes of words, phrases or sentences that represent an explanation with linguistic features.</i>	<i>Quotes of words, phrases or sentences that represent an explanation with personality dimensions.</i>

As the methodology of this work was elaborated about two years before the final draft of this work, its weaknesses were only noticed at the analysis stage. Having said that, I believe that I would have done it differently had I known the number of participants and

the long distance would make it unfeasible for me to clarify the meaning of some justifications. If I had the chance, I would definitely consider working with a smaller number of participants and make sure I can reach them easily for a possible follow-up interview.

I also recognize that the questions I elaborated for the attitude questionnaire might have guided my participants to produce a specific kind of answer. That was a necessary compromise I made in order to generate meaningful data, for some of my previous experiences with generic questions proved significantly less productive for the aims of my research.

In the following chapter, we are finally going to be able to look at the data collected through the questionnaire and the pronunciation books to develop analyses that combine those with the theoretical discussions presented in chapter 2 according to the methodological path presented in the present chapter.

CHAPTER 4—BRAZILIAN ACCENTS OF ENGLISH: AN ATTITUDE STUDY

4.1 Introduction

Similarly, to the analytic thinking developed in many fields that are part of Humanities, the analysis of the data collected through the investigation tools of this research constitute *an* interpretation that cannot be generalized. That fact does not devalue the work proposed here, given the objectives delineated for it and the nature of the object. Instead, it provides us with the opportunity to look at the data and the issues involved from where we are (geographically, culturally, historically and ideologically), without any pretense of being the ones who see it wholly. Therefore, there will always be plenty of room for different views on the same matter, but all shall be a contribution to each other.

Ideologically, this is not an aimless theoretical elaboration that intends to show how good we are at speaking English, for Brazilians, just as any other speakers of English, do not need to attest their ability to communicate in this language. The efforts employed here are directed to exploring the underlying mechanisms that drive the level of acceptance of non-hegemonic accents and how those features can be related to intelligibility. How much people can understand of an accent definitely affects their attitude and vice-versa. Nevertheless, our focus is still on attitudes, as conducting an intelligibility study would mean having other objectives and, consequently, another methodology.

An attitude study allows us to learn more about how center-oriented the minds of the participants from the 6 countries are by observing their response to the questions that were elaborated to trigger the revelation of their opinions about two Brazilian accents of English in the audio. The reason to conduct such research from a Brazilian perspective is to begin theorizing from a subaltern's point of view in order to build up our own epistemology of the expansion of English and its implications (Spivak 1988; Sousa Santos 2014).

To work on the construction of a decolonized (Escobar 2010 cited in Kumaradivelu 2016) image of ourselves, we need to understand what that image is truly like. Hence, the need for an attitude study that surfaces the representation in the responses towards the accents of two Brazilian speakers of English, who can also be taken as representatives of other non-prestigious English speaking groups. As reinforced by Faraco (2008:43)³⁵, “the

³⁵ The source text by Faraco (2008: 43) says, “O primado da alteridade bakhtiniano [postula que] tenho que passar pela consciência do outro para me construir.”

principle of Bakhtin's otherness [proposes that] I have to pass by another's consciousness to build who I am."

There is no such thing as a social identity that is formed solely of one's own view of himself or herself. If they are indeed *social*, identities are co-constructed through the subjective combination of views that come from oneself and find confirmation or not in other people's opinions. Therefore, only raising awareness of Brazilians of the status of English in the world today is not sufficient to insert the Brazilian speaker into that world. An attitude study allows us to see for ourselves (though through other eyes) how we already are part of it, so we can take action towards the empowerment of those who have the right to represent themselves and *be*, in an existential sense, in English.

Working as a militant applied linguist (Rajagopalan 2013) means taking responsibility for social inequalities through a critical pedagogy (Freire 1996) that takes action. Kumaravadivelu (in press) calls for a stand taking of the LA intellectuals of our times. He contends that those intellectuals can be categorized into *traditional* or *organic* as follows:

By and large, traditional intellectuals work within the confines of the institutions of the existing hegemonic order and are only superficially interested in uplifting the less fortunate of the subaltern communities. Organic intellectuals, on the other hand, are deeply connected to, and strive for, the fundamental transformation of subaltern communities.

Traditional intellectuals in Applied Linguistics have been producing knowledge that problematizes the hegemony of the inner circle countries in ELT, but it is the organic intellectuals that have the tools to change how things are not only *thought of* but also *done*. In other words, a pedagogy that is supposed to listen to people who have always been silenced by the imperialistic measures that pervade foreign language teaching (Scheyerl 2012; Siqueira 2012). Therefore, this work can be taken as an organic research effort that humbly ambitions to uncover attitudes towards the accents of two Brazilian speakers of English, so we, ELF researchers, can be more aware of where we are at in terms of language attitudes towards non-hegemonic accents and think of what should come next.

4.1 The Brazilian accent of English

Language is something very difficult to delimit, but it is usually taken for granted that a language must be described as a set of codes that is distinct from other sets of codes. However, if one considers for a moment the fact that all languages come from previously existent languages and are very likely to be influenced (changed) by its contemporary

languages, he/she will probably realize that distinguishing one language from another is not as simple as it seems.

If recognizing languages as discrete entities is a hard task, properly differentiating varieties of a language can be even trickier. Though the distinction between varieties is always an abstraction, one way to theoretically attempt to distinguish them is to observe the features that are recurrently used by a certain group of speakers with similar lingua-culture background. Then, by relating language to cultural contexts, the differences between language varieties, or even languages in general, transcend the idea of independent “God given” sets of codes that become automatic identity markers to communities that occupy certain geographic areas (Irvine & Gal 2000).

At the moment, I would not go as far as to affirm that, theoretically, there are no languages, such as French, English, German, or Portuguese. Instead, it would be more coherent to think that human beings may have bits and pieces of different languages in his/her linguistic repertoire, amongst which one or more are considered their first language(s) due to factors like the complexity and frequency of use for each individual. Those languages may be delimited, though artificially, through the mechanisms of cultural expression, which ultimately work also as maintenance and reinforcement of the *status quo*, such as literature, music and TV. Having considered the lines that separate languages (social acts) to be artificial, politically and historically crafted to separate groups of people, now, converging to the object of this study, let us turn our attention to accents.

Among the linguistic characteristics that contribute to the identification of a group of people there is one that seems to present the strongest power of indexicality, the accent. Firstly, when we think about accents, we need to take into account the fact that it is socially conceived. It also means that an accent is the concept of sound tightly connected with the idea of a population of speakers with the same geographical origins.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the general public tends to say that the evidence of an accent is in the selection of words, in the intonation, pronunciation or even in the word order or collocation used by the speaker. According the online dictionary Merriam Webster, an accent is (a) “a way of pronouncing words that occurs among the people in a particular region or country”, (b) “greater stress or force given to a syllable of a word in speech”, (c) “a mark (such as ' or ,) used to show the part of a word that should be given greater stress when it is spoken.”

For the sake of delimitation, this work is going to consider an accent “a way of pronouncing words that occurs among the people in a particular region or country”, which

is only socially marked by traces that differ from the Standard varieties. Secondly, thinking about the Brazilian accent of English, one cannot ignore the fact Brazil is a very large country and there will probably always be small differences among the English accent from different Brazilian cities, for the Portuguese (the L1) spoken in those cities carry different accents as well. However, due to the unfeasibility of collecting samples from each city in a country of almost 200 million inhabitants, for this study I am going to use the sample of two highly proficient speakers of English collected in Salvador, Bahia.

As a Brazilian speaker and teacher of English, I have observed recurrent phonetic characteristics that differ from the Standard varieties in the spoken English of other Brazilian speakers, as well as in my own. Hence, the reason why the two samples still represent the idea of what a Brazilian speaker of English might approximately sound like. To illustrate, some of the typical sounds produced by Brazilian lingua-culture background are present in the audio sample collected for this investigation, which can be found transcribed in the appendices. The non-Standard features found were: the pronunciation of ‘public’ as /'pɒblɪk/, instead of /'pʌblɪk/ ; ‘kids’ as /kɪds/, instead of /kɪdz/; ‘start’ as /ɪz'tɑ:rt/, instead of /stɑ:(r)t/; ‘Portuguese’ with another syllable stress as /'pɔ:tʃu:gi:z/, instead of /,pɔ:(r)tʃu'gi:z/; ‘used to’ as /'ju:z tu:/, instead of /'ju:st tu:/; ‘the’ /de/, instead of /ðə/; ‘that’ as /dæt/, instead of /ðæt/; ‘world’ as /wɜ:rd/, instead of /wɜ:(r)ld/; and ‘to’ /tʃu/, instead of /tu:/ or /tə, tʊ/. It is relevant to mention that in the case of the word ‘start’, the same speaker pronounced it with a GA Standard pronunciation the first time, but differently (as transcribed above) the second time. Let us now consider each one of the non-Standard features found in the audio sample.

One can assume that the non-standard pronunciation of the vowel ‘u’ in the word ‘public’ was due to the fact this is a cognate of ‘público’, pronounced as /'publiku/ in Portuguese. When it comes to signaling the voiced plural ‘s’ in ‘kids’, speakers might have been influenced by the only alternative in Portuguese for plural ‘s’, which is /s/. About the pronunciation ‘start’, there is the difficulty of starting words without a vowel. The phonetic transcriptions that represent the Standard varieties above were retrieved from the website, where the GA and RP pronunciations were provided whenever there was a divergence between them. The phonetic transcription of the words in Portuguese were retrieved from the website.

The ‘Portuguese’ mentioned in this work is the Brazilian Portuguese, which is considerably differently from the Portuguese spoken in Portugal. This dependency might be traced back to Portuguese, which does not take consonants without a vowel before or after

them, unless they are digraphs. Then, they will also require their own vowel sound. In the same word, there is also the transformation of the ‘s’ into a /z/. That figures as an example of how ‘s’ is pronounced in Portuguese when preceded by a vowel sound. The differentiated stress of the word ‘Portuguese’ cannot be traced back to its cognate in Portuguese, as they have the same syllable stress. This non-Standard pronunciation might represent an overgeneralization of the pronunciation of other long words in English, such as /'dɪkʃən(ə)ri/ (dictionary). The pronunciation of ‘used to’ with /zd/ instead of /st/ might come from an intralinguistic analogy, as the verb ‘to use’, when in the past form, is pronounced as /juzd/, or ‘s’ might have become /z/ for the same reason as in ‘start’ - coming after a vowel sound. The production of /d/ as a substitute of the ‘th’ sound in both ‘the’ and ‘that’, exemplifies one of the alternatives Brazilians commonly find to make up the difficulty in pronouncing the ‘th’ sounds according to Standard, as that sound does not exist in the Portuguese language. This alternative is very common in various parts of the world and tends to not cause any intelligibility problems (Jenkins 2000). Finally, the reduction of the pronunciation of the word ‘world’ probably comes from the difficulty in placing an ‘l’ sound between ‘r’ and ‘d’, as this cannot be found in Portuguese either.

The point of this section is to problematize what an accent is, and based on that concept, describe some aspects of the Brazilian accent of English. As admitted previously, apart from these pronunciation features that can be taken as traces of a Brazilian accent of English, there are others that may be found in future works. That fact, however, does not invalidate the research proposed here. After all, this is an attitude study that aims to discuss identity, intelligibility, and pedagogical matters by means of reflections on the power of social representation and conflicts in a BES accent (as a concept).

4.2 The beliefs table

Let us firstly observe the beliefs of the subjects concerning the Brazilian accent of English according to the yes/no answers to the questionnaire.

Table 4 – Beliefs table

	familiar	intelligible	competent	pleasant
ENGLAND	2	2	3	3
USA	3	3	3	3
BOTSWANA	3	2	2	3
UGANDA	3	2	1	1
THAILAND	0	1	3	3
POLAND	0	2	1	0
Total:	11 of 18	12 of 18	13 of 18	13 of 18

According to the numbers above, the Brazilian accent of English represented in the audio rated around 70% positive, to all of the criteria. There are specific aspects of those answers that can be explored more in depth. For instance, how well the accent was taken by the Americans and the English, convergences and divergences in the specifics; the negativity of the Polish subjects towards the accents in the audio; the link between intelligibility and competence for the Botswana; the Thai view of non-tonal accent; and the seeming attachment of the Ugandans to StE. Nonetheless, at this point, all we have is the audio, the subjects, the concepts and numbers, from which some inferences can be made.

The English spoken by Brazilians is not a codified variety, but it may be traced back to the English used by speakers who have Brazilian Portuguese as their L1. Those characteristics are present in the transfer of structural patterns, such as the position of adjectives in relation to the modified word, questions and negatives without auxiliaries, etc; there are also recognizable marks in the pronunciation of words and intonation. The point here is not if the subjects can tell the way Brazilians differentiate from standard varieties, but investigate where the Brazilian speaker fits in an English speaking world. I am going to analyze that by taking as a starting point the close-knit relation between social hierarchy and its representations through linguistic features.

Back to the interpretation of the numbers above, we must take into consideration that, as pointed out by Edwards (1982: 21), “evaluation of language varieties may reflect intrinsic linguistic inferiorities/superiorities, intrinsic aesthetic differences or social convention and preference.” Looking at the results of the Americans and the English who participated in this research, we can see that, generally, they were the most positive about the two Brazilian accents when compared to all the other participants. The only item that was rated as 1 point negative was found in the same person’s answers. This subject claims to not be familiar with the Brazilian accent and for that reason he/she cannot understand it easily at first. We can see here how familiarity can affect intelligibility even when somebody has positive beliefs towards that accent as perceived through the positive rate in the items competence and pleasantness. This data is particularly relevant to this study due to the dislocation of the responsibility for intelligibility.

Intelligibility is a two-way traffic (Jenkins 2007: 136), one can be seen as possessing fluent English and still needing others to adjust to his/her accent given the listener’s lack of acquaintance with that specific realization of sounds. Another possible reason for the inexperience of that subject with accents in the audio might be its closeness to an American standard pronunciation, as Brazilian schools of English tend to use more American materials

than British or of other varieties. The other subjects in this research might have noticed the influence of those American traces in the pronunciation. Depending on their view of the US, the recognition of those similarities might have weighed positively or negatively and affected intelligibility.

Another relevant aspect to be observed, which can be noticed in the numbers concerning competence and pleasantness, is how the so-called NSs were more welcoming to the Brazilian accent (a non-native one), while other BESs were much harsher towards it. The context where the subjects are speaking from is a factor that might have prompted positivity to those answers. The Americans who participated live in Florida and were studying Brazilian Portuguese at a university when they answered this questionnaire. Their attitude towards Brazilian Portuguese might have guided them to appreciate the accent in the audio. In similar fashion, the English people who answered the questionnaire live in cosmopolitan cities, two in London and one in Brighton. Their daily contact with English speakers of many different nationalities also might have made them more appreciative of fluent English, something not as easy to find in those cities as one may think, which probably led them to focus on the effectiveness and pleasantness of the sample evaluated.

Completely opposite to the MESSs' answers are the answers of the Polish subjects. They rated the two Brazilian accents of English rather negatively. We can learn more about the reasons why they reacted that way when we look at the explanations, but at this point, a few ponderations can be made. For instance, they were the only group of people that learned English in a monolingual elementary/high school or/and by themselves. Therefore, they are expected to have a Standard dialect as their main (or the only) model and goal. Considering they are from Eastern Europe, where jobs have been hard to find for decades and Poles have the same right to be employed in the UK as British nationals (Janowski 1992), that Standard dialect mentioned above is probably the British one.

It has been provided earlier that both Brazilians speakers of English in the audio possess an American-like accent. Consciously or not, they may have been associated with a variety that represent "lower quality" English to some Europeans. In addition, the subjects are likely to not have much practice in international interactions mediated through English, as Poland does not get many visitors from other countries. According to the article on the importance of English to Polish education, most Poles cannot afford to travel to English speaking countries to learn English (Butcher, Hughes, Kritsonis & Herrington 2007) or to enjoy a holiday where they would need English, which must lower the probability of contact with other BESs.

To the Botswana subjects, the Brazilian accents were familiar and pleasant. We can notice, however, that to one of them it was harder to understand the accents in the audio and that reflected on the subject's opinion of how intelligible the accents were. Considering the familiarity rate was not an issue here, we can turn to the fact they live in a post-colonial country, where English is learned in bilingual schools for social mobility. Given the relevance and presence of the British variety of English in Botswana, they are very likely to take that variety as both model and goal. Therefore, though familiar with the Brazilian accent of English, this Botswana subject may have a more prepared ear to British-like accents than to the ones presented as samples for this investigation.

The Ugandan subject's answers were surprisingly negative. Though all of the three subjects claim to be familiarized with the accent, only one found it represented competent speakers of English that sounded pleasant. Two out of three thought the accent was both familiar and intelligible, which makes us wonder what makes an intelligible accent not a representation of a competent speaker. Would Ugandan speakers be speaking from the same place as the Botswana? The migration rate of Ugandan people to the UK is very high. Whether that might have influenced their beliefs is something that we may perceive more clearly in the explanations for the answers.

4.3 The open-ended explanations table: uncovering attitudes

In congruence with the objectives proposed here, we are now going to analyze the characteristics of the explanations given to justify the yes/no answers. They are supposed to reflect the attitude of the subjects towards the accent as well as towards the English language, and to themselves as speakers of English. As informed in the methodology section, the answers are going to be classified as more linguistic or more personality oriented. If there are linguistic features being mentioned, we are to distinguish them as prioritizing international intelligibility or comparison with a hegemonic standardized variety. If there are representations of personality dimensions, are they words of negative or positive connotation?

Table 5 – Attitude table

Country & Subject Code	Linguistic Features	Personality Dimensions
USA 1	. <u>Heard</u> many different people around the world <u>speak</u> English. . I easily <u>understand</u> . . Nothing wrong with <u>the way they speak</u> .	Seems as if they've <u>studied</u> the language.
USA 2	Both <u>speakers</u> were <u>clear</u> of their <u>pronunciation</u> .	The accent is of <u>Brazilian origin</u> speaking English.

	...but <u>fluent</u> the entire reading Very <u>pleasant</u> and...	They were some words <u>they struggle with</u> ... not <u>harsh on forcing</u> the accent. Sounded <u>natural</u> .
USA 3	She <u>spoke clearly</u> . They <u>spoke full sentences</u> .	No, they <u>sounded normal</u> . Its <u>okay</u> .
England 1	. I've never had difficulty <u>understanding it</u> .	. Since living in London, I have <u>met many Portuguese speakers</u> and lived with a <u>friend</u> from Brazil. . <u>Compared to English speakers</u> who are infrequently fluent in Portuguese, <u>Brazilian's seem very competent</u> in English. . I <u>like</u> all accents.
England 2	. it's not an accent that I have <u>commonly heard</u> . . I could understand it but I had to concentrate. Some of the <u>vowel and consonant sounds</u> were different to what I am used to so I had to work hard at times to work out what was being said. I did, however, understand everything. . Their <u>English was very good, fluent</u> and used a wide range of <u>vocabulary</u> , no <u>stumbles or long pauses</u> . . It <u>sounds</u> very exotic and almost poetic. I find the <u>vowels</u> sometimes <u>sounded</u> a little harsh but overall it was <u>pleasant to listen to</u> .	
England 3	. Yes, they are using <u>advanced vocab</u> and <u>form fluent and articulate sentences</u> . . Yes, soft, <u>easy on the ear</u> , not difficult to <u>understand</u> .	
Botswana 1	. Have <u>heard both of them</u> before. . Both were clear. . <u>They're good</u> .	
Botswana 2	. I have <u>heard</u> this accent in a few parts of the country. . Some of the words I <u>could not hear</u> them. . The <u>pronunciation</u> of the words. . It's nice <u>to hear</u> that kind of an accent.	
Botswana 3	. I have <u>heard</u> it before. . Because I have <u>heard</u> what she was saying. . They sound fluent. . It sounds good.	
Uganda 1	. I have interacted with a lot of people who <u>sound like this</u> . . I didn't haven't to <u>listen more</u> than once or <u>strain to understand</u> what was being said <i>They <u>sound pretty fluent</u> ...</i> I did not find it <u>unpleasant</u>though it is obvious that <u>they are not native English speakers</u>
Uganda 2	Sometimes you have to <u>strain to understand it</u> .	. I have heard South American <u>friends who speak</u> like this. . Especially for the <u>second person</u> but you have to listen carefully. . It is clear that they still <u>need to perfect their English</u>
Uganda 3	. I have <u>heard it</u> in movies. . They make many <u>grammatical mistakes</u> .	. One has to pay close attention... <u>especially for the first person</u> . . It makes <u>communication a bit difficult</u> .

Thailand 1	. My Thai accent usually have <u>tone</u> . . <u>Sound of accent</u> is so far from my accent. . For me the accent is <u>hard to understand</u> .	. <u>They speak in good way</u> but (...) . They use some <u>polite words</u> like “I think that....”
Thailand 2	. First accent I <u>don't get it</u> (...) . Yes both of <u>sound</u> is competent speakers of English.	. (...) but second accent <u>it close accent with native speaker</u> in Thailand that I have been heard. . They spoke pleasant accent.
Thailand 3	. First people for me hard to <u>understand</u> . . Accent is <u>easy to understand</u> but not so much.	Yes both of them competent <u>maybe practices more</u> so, it will be <u>good</u> . Accent like native people same in Thailand.
Poland 1	I'd say so. They <u>spoke correctly</u> ...	I have no contact with Brazilians. ...but they <u>sound like</u> they were <u>inconfident</u> and the accent is terrible.
Poland 2	. Because on daily basis I don't have access to people who use English with Brazilian accent. . I think there are worst accents. . Because <u>accents are not pleasant</u> .	. <u>They don't sound</u> because I'm not deaf.
Poland 3	. No, because it's <u>sound</u> very Brazilian is not so common for me. . I must concentrate <u>to understand</u> it, especially when the first person is talking. On the one side, it's <u>nice to listen it</u> , because I <u>like the Portuguese language</u> , ...	<u>They sounds</u> uncertainly and inexperienced. ...but on the other side it <u>sound's not like a professional English</u> and is <u>not so easy to listen it</u> .

4.2.1 Linguistic Features

Concerning the linguistic features found in the explanations, we can see that they were much more common than the ones that can be considered of personality dimensions, there were 80 of the former and 43 of the latter, considering the columns of the phrases. The theme intelligibility was raised thirty-six times, six of those times associated with a negative attitude and thirty positive. The words used to classify those themes as such were: hear(d), listen, sound, clear/clarity, understand and fluent. As this discussion is specifically about valuing intelligibility over accuracy to a StE model, I think it is rather relevant to separate the data listed above into two sub-categories following Larry Smith's levels of intelligibility.

According to Smith (1992), there are three levels of intelligibility, the first is called “intelligibility” itself, which counts for the recognition of words; the second level is called “comprehensibility”, in which the sentences can be understood in their literal meaning; the third and hardest level is “interpretability”, which contains the pragmatic meaning of certain expressions. Following those categories, the words used to refer to the importance of intelligibility in the attitude of the subjects could be divided into the level of intelligibility represented by “hear(d), listen, sound”, while comprehensibility and interpretability would

be represented by “clear/clarity, understand and fluent.” When it comes to the first level (intelligibility), there were eighteen related words, fifteen of them revealed a positive view against three negative ones. At the second and third levels (comprehensibility and interpretability), sixteen words were found, of which thirteen were positive and three were negative. Those numbers demonstrate that a great deal of importance was given to intelligibility in the evaluation of these accents and that, intelligibility-wise, the Brazilian accent of English rated highly positive.

Still in the linguistic features, the judgement of correctness, or comparison to Standard varieties as established here, was present at a much smaller scale than the intelligibility ones. That aspect reveals the belief of the subjects concerning the existence of a superior form of the language or a variety believed to be *the* reference. As ‘correctness’ was mentioned quantitatively less than intelligibility related words, that can be counted as a demonstration of intelligibility as a higher priority to the 18 participants group. Though fewer, the words that were considered to represent that sub-category were “wrong, different, grammatical mistakes, correctly, with Brazilian accent, worst accents, sound very Brazilian.” Eight words were taken as part of this category, of which six had a negative connotation and two a positive one.

The positive attitude of the subject that explained the pleasantness choice with “nothing wrong with the way they speak” comes from a place of authority. One could guess only by looking at the explanation that the subject is probably an English teacher and/or a MES from the Inner Circle, which is true as the subject is from the US. However, another reference to correctness comes from a Polish subject when he/she explains his/her attitude towards the competence of the speaker based on the accent with “they spoke correctly.” According to Jenkins (2007: 94), BESs tend to be harsher to other BESs, and therefore, feel in the right to judge other speakers of English. Unfortunately, they usually assess how successfully the evaluated speaker(s) was able to erase his/her own accent, which to them figures as evidence of competence.

Even though both comments on “correctness” were positive, they were the only positive attitudes whenever the accent was compared to a Standard dialect³⁶ as a reference. The data attests, then, for a *deficit approach* to the language produced when the nativeness

³⁶ The term Standard dialect is going to be used in this study interchangeably with Standard variety as an ideological stand that points to the arbitrariness in the categorization that separates varieties (considered ‘real languages’ as described in the historical accounts by Irvine and Gal (2000) in *Language Ideology and Linguistic Differentiation*) and other languages that were demoted to ‘dialects’.

or standardness aspect is addressed, which confirms the predominance of a learner attitude. That attitude also reinforces the unlikeliness of reaching the goal when that is a native-like use of English, an (acritical) given target. The speakers in the audio, whose fluency was mentioned positively by most subjects and certified by official international exams, were seen as falling short when the matter was how close to a Standard they sounded.

Further elaboration on standardization and intelligibility will be devised in the next section in which those ELF related issues along with others will be drawn from the data and explored in more detail. Let us now consider some of the social relations brought up in the results as the explanations are classified as more positive or more negative in the personality dimensions analysis category.

4.2.2 Personality Dimensions

The phrases that were classified as referring to a personality dimension were the ones that the foreign participants used to explain their opinions about the Brazilian accents but fit the description of social relations better than they did the linguistic domain, which would include comments on either phonology, lexicon or syntax. Instead, as categorized by Lambert (1967), the phrases refer to human-like characteristics like speaker's competence (intelligence), personal integrity (helpfulness, trustworthiness) and social attractiveness (friendliness, sense of humor), which can be then positive or negative.

Firstly, we are going to examine the explanations using some of Lambert's categories, but adding to them a few other labels. Then, we will distinguish amongst them the ones that can be seen as positive or negative. The words or expressions that fell in the subcategory competence/intelligence were: "*studied*", "*very competent*", "*speak in a good way, but*", "*competent, (...) practices more*", "*struggle*", "*to perfect their English*", "*don't sound [competent]*", and "*not like a professional English.*"

Starting from the first two, as the only positive personality dimension connotations related to competence/intelligence, we can see that they all came from Americans and English people, once again attesting for a greater generosity amongst MESs than among BESs. The American subject who explained his/her choice for "competent" instead of "incompetent" with "*seems they've studied the language*", allows us to understand that the concept of studying passes by a Standard reference. Therefore, one can assume that, in the subject's opinion, the accent seemed close enough to what he/she considers educated Standard English. It is not possible to make out from these words only whether the intention of the speaker was to compliment the ability to mimic educated MESs or to express

admiration for a well learned language disregarding the reference used in that process. While a deficit approach highlights the differences, the emergence of an intelligibility priority focuses on the communicative accomplishments. What is definite is that he or she is pleased with the level of competence of the speaker. That is to say, if it is clear, it is competent. In fact, that accent sounded more than clear, it sounded educated.

In the second positive attitude towards the two Brazilian accents, the participant from England compares the ability of Brazilians in speaking English to the usual inability of English people to speak the Portuguese language. She/He said, “*compared to English speakers who are infrequently fluent in Portuguese, Brazilian’s* ³⁷*seem very competent in English.*” Then, we can see that, to that English person, being monolingual is something MESs should not see as positive, as they put themselves in a place of limitation. Therefore, to this participant, if a BES an intelligible level of communicative ability, he/she has in English makes him/her competent, or even “very competent.” Another clear example of someone’s opinion that puts MESs in disadvantage if compared to the Brazilian in the audio segments or any other BESs in a translingual world.

Moving to the negative words or expressions, we will start by analyzing the answer “*“speak in a good way, but the sound of accent is so far from my accent.”*” At first glance we think this participant from Thailand likes the way that person in the audio sounds. The “but” after the compliment expressed a discontentment. Though the comment is apparently about a linguistic aspect as the word used to refer to the accent was “sound”, that information is followed by a personal reference, “far from *my* accent.”

To better process this information, let us refer back to another fragment of explanation in which this Thai participant explains her/his not being familiar with the two Brazilian accents by saying, “My Thai accent usually have tone.” As we connect those dots, “my accent” and “usually have a tone”, a new perspective presents itself in the data, one of a speaker that is not looking up to MESs’, but is comparing the accents in the audio to her/his own, another BES’s accent. That piece of information is valuable as a starting point for discussion on the automaticity of looking up to MES for reference of correctness and group affiliation, which are going to be explored in the following subsection of this chapter.

For now, we will focus on the fact this explanation was written to elaborate on the choice of “yes” to the question “Do the speakers sound like competent speakers of English.” It was a choice that reveals a positive belief, but an explanation that attests for a slightly

³⁷ I am not going to make corrections in the participants’ texts.

negative hierarchy position for the two Brazilian accents presented and a higher position of preference for accents influenced by tonal languages. That brings a whole new twist to the debate of preference of speakers. This specific study is inexpressive in numbers, but a more extensive research on the preferences of accents and their reasons could work as a thermometer of change in the attitude of the general public towards different Englishes. Such data has the potential to signal a shift in paradigm in the understanding of non-specialists when it comes to which English should be taught or learned. From a practical point of view, the general population are the consumers of English as a commodity. Having that in mind, a research that encompasses a more representative number of participants in a region or in a country could contribute to the elaboration of linguistic policies, ELT materials and methods, teacher education, etc.

Back to the explanations, the second negative one was “words they *struggle* with but fluent the entire reading”, which came from an American participant when explaining why he/she had classified the accents as representing competent speakers of English. Here, the first element that stands out is the “struggle” the speaker is having with some words, according to the participant’s opinion. However, it is the second part that might clarify where he/she is coming from when they express that. He/She thinks the speaker is reading a text. When someone is reading it is understandable that any pause that is out of the ordinary for reading speed rate means the reader might be struggling with the pronunciation and/or comprehension of the text.

On the other hand, when someone is speaking to answer a question on the interviewee’s opinion, such as the ones proposed to the Brazilian speakers of English of the audio, a certain amount of hesitation could be considered natural, for the thinking of what to say is in play, decision making involving a number of mechanisms. Then, having pondered the likely change in expectations that depends on the awareness of the context of the production, it is hard to tell what this participant would think of the speaker’s performance and accent if he/she were aware of the real context, one of improvisation and personal positioning on serious matters such education and English teaching in Brazil.

The third negative comment that can be related to competence evaluation is “*It is clear that they still need to perfect their English*”, written by the Ugandan participant, who had selected “No” to answer the competence question. To set a context here, he/she mentioned in another explanation that he/she was familiar with similar kinds of accent by affirming to have “*heard South American friends who speak like this*” before. It is also the participant who claims to have had “*to strain to understand it*”, meaning the two audio

segments. Therefore, there is information enough to approach this comment with somewhat of a social and linguistic background.

Let us go top-down this time, tackling the content that classified this comment as being competence related, “to perfect their English.” It is undeniable that the first characteristic of such word choice is the belief of an existing perfection of English, which takes us back to the linguistic ideology discussion. On the Online Merriam-Webster, one of the meanings of the word *perfection* is “something that cannot be improved”, that can be interpreted as a pure form of something, without adulteration or mixture.

The history of the codification of languages and the establishment of the language purity concept, as Irvine and Gal (2000) presented, trace back the foundation for this kind of idealistic thinking. This concept proposes that a real language is so complete and self-sufficient that it can suit all kinds of communicative needs. As mentioned in the theoretical chapter, languages were considered God given (thus, sacred) and an evidence of civilization *if* they fit the previously approved format. Consequently, those languages are so unchangeable that people are supposed to be able to learn them to the full, to a level of perfection.

Coming from a place of familiarity with similar accents, this Ugandan participant sees himself in a place of authority towards the accents in the audio as to diagnose them as still needing to be improved. After all, only someone who sees him(her)self as more capable at doing something, would have the authority to point out the need of improvement. Though he/she seems to believe in a higher quality type of English, which makes this opinion ideologically biased, there seems to be a linguistic component influencing this positioning. Intelligibility difficulties are brought up in another explanation given by the same participant when he/she “strain[s] to understand it.” As discussed before, intelligibility tends to be influenced positively by familiarity. However, if the link between an accent and a social group connects a speech style to a non-prestigious collective, the familiarity with a certain accent can work backfire its effect on intelligibility, jeopardizing comprehension. It happens especially if that group represented by that accent is portrayed as uneducated and poor.

Therefore, the negative indexicality of accents combined with the strain to understand are likely to be caused by the same negative attitude towards a group of people, might have triggered the categorization of the accents as not representing a competent speaker. Instead, they represent the level of competence of someone who needs to work harder to sound like he/she comes from somewhere else. Again, this is one possibility of interpretation that is made possible due to the limited data I gathered through the

questionnaire. An ideal attitude study configuration would have allowed those participants to have been interviewed in person after having answered the questionnaire in order to clarify the intentions behind each word. Exceptionally, I was able to interview one of the Polish participants online to better understand some of his/her written explanations.

The next negative explanation denoting lack of competence of the Brazilian speakers in the audio was *“don’t sound [competent] because I’m not deaf”* from that Polish participant mentioned above. He explained in a follow-up interview via Facebook that *“you can be competent in English, but, if your accent is strong, it sounds, it sounds (smile emoticon), not so competent, because of the way it sounds, when you hear a real English Oxford professor, like for example, Richard Dawkins, (grin emoticon), he speaks bullshit (...) (tongue emoticon), but the way he sounds, it sounds so competent (grin emoticon)”* (Facebook chat, 2015). Here we can see that, to this Polish person, there is a difference between *being* a competent speaker of English and *sounding* like one.

The example given by the participant to illustrate what sounding like a competent speaker is like in his/her opinion reveals that he/she believes competence to be directly linked to an educated variety, as it is spoken by a professor, who is also English and teaches in a famous university in England, Oxford. Summarizing, competence to him/her is being able to sound like you know what you are talking about, even if that is not true, and be recognized as belonging to a powerful and influential group of people. It means he/she believes competence to be the same as social acceptance, not the ability to do something well.

Therefore, according to this participant, associating oneself with the idea of an English educated person has the potential to elevate that same speaker to the category of competent, even though being a MES or being a professor does not automatically add up to being a competent speaker of English. One more time, we are drawn back to the myth of the native speaker as possessing an inherited biological correctness in his/her use of the language. Besides, as problematized before, conceptually, there are no native speakers of the most spoken language for international communication in the world.

While a national language is “recycled” slowly, English as a Lingua Franca is far more frequently used, in varied settings, and by people with diverse or super-diverse backgrounds (Cogo 2012; Vertovec 2007). Those variables make this linguistic phenomenon uniquely fluid and complex at each encounter. In other words, the natural changes triggered by the usual amount of adaptations we make to adjust to the needs of the moment, in ELF

culminate in an unprecedented flexibility and need for creativity of its speakers, for each one of them bring their own lingua-culture into the communicative exchanges.

Before we move on to the next comment, let us dwell a little on the part of the justification in which he/she expressed the broadness of the accents in the audio segments. The participant said the accent was “strong”, meaning broad. The broadness of an accent is in how easily one can tell where the speaker is from just by listening to him/her. Saying, on the other hand, that the Brazilian speakers of the audio had strong accents and for that reason sounded incompetent in English, also denotes the fact this Polish speaker of English only consider someone has an accent when they do not speak like one of the hegemonic varieties of English. We know that also because he described the background characteristics of fictional speaker that would represent a typical competent speaker of English, who supposedly was identifiable through his accent, too. It is interesting and intriguing that the fictional English Oxford professor did not have a “strong” accent. We can conclude then, that what he/she really means by strong accent is undesirable, non-prestigious accent.

In this setting of language feature (accent) evaluation, each person participating will activate a different notion of the aspects being tested (acceptability, intelligibility, familiarity and competence). To some, being competent means speaking clearly, to others, it means to accomplish tasks using English, to others even, using grammar accurately. For instance, another Polish speaker evaluated negative the Brazilian accents in the competence question by explaining it did not sound “*like a professional English.*” According to the Online Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the adjective *professional* is “relating to a *job* that requires special education, training, or skill.” Thus, if we replace the word *job* for *English*, it would be the same as saying a professional English is an English “that requires special education, training, or skill.” That type of language would characterize an English for Specific Purposes, which indeed demands special preparation, and is not the specificity of this study.

As this question was elaborated to explore the concepts of competence that each person participating proposes. This Polish participant, for example, says that the accents were “nice to listen”, but do “not sound like a professional English, and is not easy to listen to it”, which refers to its acceptability and intelligibility as well. Once more, what sounds nice and still fails the recognition of “educated” aspects is relegated to the level of not good enough for work or intelligible enough to communicate. The recurrent issue here is: how is it possible for an accent to be pleasant while it is not intelligible or adequate? Were the accents really unintelligible or just different to the ideal dialect target?

Moving on to the personality dimension called *personal integrity* (helpfulness, trustworthiness), only one comment was found to fit this criterion, an opinion given by an American participant about the Brazilian speakers' natural way of speaking. He/She chose "yes" for the question "is the accent pleasant?" and explained with the following affirmation: "Very pleasant and not harsh on forcing the accent." To this American participant the Brazilian speakers have clear English and manage to possess such ability while staying true to their origins, without trying hard to imitate another accent. Here, we can see that it might be easier for someone who uses English frequently to prioritize comprehension over imitation, and value a foreign accent as a way to not change at a personal level or pretend to own an unmarked accent, an unmarked mask.

As for the personality dimension *social attractiveness* (friendliness, sense of humor), some comments were found to refer to friends who spoke with similar accents. All of those participants seemed to connect the audio segments to those previous experiences automatically. That data increases the weight of the answers of those specific participants, as they are possibly referring to a wider variety of Brazilian accents of English than just to the ones they were presented with to answer the questionnaire for this research. Those people were an English and a Ugandan speaker of English.

The English person said, "Since living in London I have met many Portuguese speakers and lived with a friend from Brazil." This participant used this explanation to say why he/she is familiar with the accents in the input. The other comments provided by the same speaker were very positive concerning the intelligibility and the competence of the Brazilian accents. Her/his answers, however, seemed to encompass much more than the audio samples. For the intelligibility part, he/she claimed to "ha[d] never had difficulty to understand it", which clearly adds to the mix the previous experiences with other Brazilian speakers of English besides the presented accents. And about the competence issue, he/she was the one who said "Brazilian's seem very competent in English." He/she wrapped up the explanations with an overall positive attitude towards different speech styles as he/she said, "I like all accents", which reinforces the idea that MESs are more appreciative of BESs' efforts to speak English than other BESs.

The Ugandan person mentioned his/her friends also in the comments for the familiarity question. This time, though, the familiarity does not count as something positive, for all the other written answers were about how hard it was to understand them and how much they need to perfect their English. What is intriguing about the familiarity expressed by this participant is that he/she claims to be used to these accents because he/she "ha[d]

heard South American friends who speak like this.” Now, it is understandable that Spanish and Portuguese are very close languages in their morphological origins. Their phonological realizations, on the other hand, are not as similar as many may think. For this reason, I do not think that having heard other South Americans speaking could provide much of an experience to those who are evaluating a Brazilian speaker of English, whose likely greatest linguistic and cultural influence is in Brazilian Portuguese, which also differs considerably from the European Portuguese.

Besides the three proposed personality dimensions analyzed above according to Lambert (1967), there is also the role of self-positioning towards other social groups that tells a lot about the tone of each questionnaire answer or interview in language attitude studies. That is why a display of power/authority should be taken as relevant data in attitude studies. Considering this study on accents, whenever the accents was labeled good or bad, this voice of authority can be heard in between the lines. After all, none of the questions asked the accents were good or bad, strong or weak. The participants brought up those qualifications when explaining their opinions concerning the accents familiarity, intelligibility, portrayal of competence and acceptance.

The self-positioning in a place of authority to express judgement of quality was found in the following comments: “Nothing wrong with the way they speak” (American 1), “It’s okay” (American 3), “Their English was very good” (England 2), “They’re good” (Botswana 1), “It is clear that they still need to perfect their English” (Uganda 2), “They speak in a good way” (Thailand 1), “Yes both of them competent maybe practices more so, it will be good” (Thailand 3), “Accent is terrible” (Poland 1). For starters, we can observe that were only 3 MESs and 5 BESs putting themselves in a place to pass judgement on the quality of the accents or the English spoken by the Brazilians in the audio samples. Exactly half of them were positive and half were negative. The point in observing how many participants put themselves in that place is checking which nationalities did it and evaluate if their historical relationship with English can be related to it. Then, we learned here that the participants from the inner circle were only 3 (England and USA), the ones from the outer circle were 2 (Botswana and Uganda), and the ones from the expanding circle were 3 (Thailand and Poland).

In the next section, a more theoretical correlation will be made as I elicit ELF related issues from the data generated through the questionnaires.

4.3 ELF related issues in the data

In the previous sections, the data collected through the questionnaire was analyzed through guiding categories and subcategories that distinguished the data as belonging to linguistic issues and personality dimensions. The interpretation of those words and expressions so far have already brought up some relevant discussion points that can be related to debates about English today. In this section, specifically, we are going to revisit the data to explore the ELF issues surfaced in the nuances of the comments for the yes/no questions of the attitude questionnaire. The most prominent topics identified in the data were: standard ideology, intelligibility, and ownership, nativeness and legitimacy. It is important to say that categorizing the findings into 3 different types is only an attempt to organize the text in a reader's friendly manner. The topics proposed will inevitably overlap in certain parts of the discussion as they intersect in their essence.

4.3.1 Standard Ideology in the data

It is very common to hear someone has 'good English' or 'bad English', which is usually decided in a fraction of seconds and based on the accent, more specifically, whether the accent is more or less marked. The power of an accent is so dazzling or catastrophic that it may create an image of proficiency or lack thereof even before the assessment is past the pronunciation reaching vocabulary range and collocation, syntactical relations, use of idiomatic expressions, or discourse coherence.

Expressing one's opinion on ideas, facts and things with generic adjectives such as 'good' or 'bad' and their intensified versions (great, amazing, awful, terrible, etc) provides very little information on the object of the evaluation. In fact, when something is said to be 'good', it only means that it is on the positive side of the scale, which works likewise for 'bad'. To put it in another way, the lack of precision of meaning caused by the selection of those vague adjectives also shows lack of thought given to the evaluation of the subject matter. A more careful language assessment would probably generate words that describe linguistic features and/or social interactions such as: easy or difficult to understand, natural speech speed, types of vowels, sounds friendly/nice/snobbish, etc. The good/bad simplistic kind of evaluation attitude is usually a symptom of reproduction of acritical ideas.

As an effort to tentatively understand what someone means by good or bad in language evaluations, we need to take into account what being successful in communication looks like in the mind of the general population. For purists, who have considerable reach with their preaching on language use 'facts', using language well usually means,

figuratively, coloring inside the lines of a pre-established codified Standard. This conception of language as a fixed and all-purpose clear-cut code is one that originates from an ideology of a monochrome Standard as the best way to ensure intelligibility and preserve the purity of the language (Quirk 1985). Still, there is no such thing as a monochrome Standard, for even educated MESs use different Standard varieties depending on their country of origin, fact that does not jeopardize communication amongst them (Seidlhofer 2011).

ELF scholars see successful communication in a more practical manner, taking real life interactions as the starting point for developing theories that describe the underlying processes, as Cogo and Dewey (2012:36) put it:

What we understand to be successful communication does not rely on notions of correctness, assessments of performance or similar factors. Rather, it is based on both a participant's and a researcher's perspective (with particular bias towards the former) on the conversations. In other words, we adopt an ethnographic understanding, and work on successful talk from the participant's point of view. In this sense, successful communication is any exchange that proves to be meaningful for the participants and that has reached the required purpose or purposes.

In this subsection, the role of the Standard ideology in the mind frame presented in the data of this study will be debated. Let us look at them listed in a table by nationality, then, tackle each one exploring possible reflections through an ELF perspective.

Table 6 – Standard ideology

“People who use English with Brazilian accent.”	Polish
“They spoke correctly, but they sound like they were inconfident and the accent is terrible”	Polish
“On the one side, it's nice to listen to it, because I like the Portuguese language, but on the other side it sound's not like a professional English and is not so easy to listen it.”	Polish
“Their English was very good, fluent and used a wide range of vocabulary”	English
“They are using advanced vocab and form fluent and articulate sentences”	English
“Seems they have studied the language”	American
“struggled with some words, but fluent the entire reading”	American
“Nothing wrong with the way they speak”	American
“[not competent because of] the pronunciation of words”	Botswana

“they speak in a good way but for me the accent is hard to understand”	Thai
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The first comment to be pondered here was written by one of the Polish participants, who was then explaining his/her familiarity with the accents in the audio. He/ She said to have heard “people who use *English* with Brazilian accent” before. The most significant attitude token I would like to point out is how the way people spoke in the samples was described. It was believed to be English, not Brazilian English, not good or bad English, not a new English, but simply English. Therefore, the participant proposes, intentionally or not, the idea that there is only *one* English for everyone to use and learn and that foreigners can only influence that “original” language to the level of pronunciation with their accents.

Another Polish participant reinforces this notion of an English that can be well learned and still sound like an inferior type of English for sounding different from the Standard reference. He/she explained, “they spoke correctly, but they sound like they were unconfident and the accent is terrible.” This attitude reveals a colonized mentality that always sees anything different of the hegemony as illegitimate, and non-hegemonic as ‘terrible’, which is an adjective empty in information other than high in the negative scale.

Completely different views of competence and success were found in the justifications of the English participants whose comments are on the list above. Both opinions focus on linguistic aspects to express the level of ability they believe the speakers in the audio possess. The first one said “their English was very good, fluent and used a wide range of vocabulary.” Then, provided words to expand on the expression ‘very good’ with ‘fluent’ and ‘wide range of vocabulary’, which denoted more thinking about the topic. That opinion also focused on linguistic features, though not restricted to the pronunciation at this point, not making any reference to correctness or a closeness to a ‘better’ English. The second English comment on the list is, “they are using advanced vocab”, which again does not speak of the accent, but attempts to explain with language related words their opinions about the English in the audio.

It is pertinent to highlight here the difficulty the participants had in sticking to the evaluation of the accent. Alternatively, they look through the accent to assess the word choices and even the form (grammar) of the language being produced. It must not be easy for non-specialists to tell language features apart, especially as speakers with different background will produce language that is singular at all levels (phonology, morphology, lexicon and syntax).

The three comments made by American participants that can be related to the issue of standardness are very similar in their tones. They definitely speak from a place of self-given authority as they connect the English produced to good education, struggle that is overcome and correctness in the way they speak. The first one wrote, “seems they have studied the language”, which presents the belief English is likely to be an artificially (institutionally) acquired language to Brazilians. Indeed, Brazil is a country where English is primarily learned as a foreign language. Nonetheless, just like in many other places in the world today, the role of English has been changing. Although the data has not been empirically analyzed yet, the increasing flux of virtual communication, transnational and multinational businesses in the country has also been changing the way and the frequency of English use. It is no longer a fact that English in Brazil is only used for traveling or for discussing import-export deals. Thus, in some cases, English can be learned by doing, instead of attending typical English classes.

The second comment by an American was “they struggled with some words, but fluent the entire reading.” Again, the selection of the word ‘struggle’ promptly reveals the idea of learners of English replacing the rightful position of user of English. The reason for the interpretation of this comment as patronizing is in the audio itself, since none of the speakers in the sample presented pauses related to difficulty in pronunciation or self-corrected any of the words pronounced. This comment can be taken as coming from a deficit approach, Standard oriented, which blurs the perception of the communicative accomplishments by comparing the language produced to a Standard variety.

The third explanation on the list by an American participant was “nothing wrong with the way they speak.” This was the justification given for ‘yes’ to the question on whether the speakers sounded like competent speakers of English. At this point in the questionnaire, the participants were supposed to think about the picture of competence they could get from speakers’ speech style (accent). However, what we see is an evaluation of the correctness level of the speakers’ English, which only describes their ability to follow a Standard variety with accuracy. Such attitude towards competence reveals what is expected from a learner of language in a traditional sense, memorizing rules and imitating MESs well.

Moving on to the next comment, which was written by a Botswana participant, let us consider the weight of expectations in attitudes towards language variation. He/she explained that the accents in the audio were “[not competent because of] the pronunciation of words.” Though this participant answered exactly what I had asked him/her, this explanation seems a little controversial. He/she claims to be familiar with this type of accent

and still finds it hard to understand. Botswana, like other postcolonial countries in Africa, study British English in their schools and learn to look up to Brits as the image of success. Therefore, it would be expected of the Botswana participants to not conceive as competent any accents that seem distant from the very Standard they see in school. As Brazilian accents of English tend to be heavily influenced by the American English cultural and instructional products, we have reasons to believe there might be an intelligibility psychological blockage given the frustrated expectation of not hearing British-like characteristics in the accents presented to him/her. That interpretation could have been confirmed with a follow up interview, which was not possible.

The last comment overtly related to the idea of Standard was “they speak in a good way”, by a Thai participant. Again, we are taken back to the idea of good and bad English. What is intriguing about this comment is that it is followed by the affirmation he/she cannot understand the accents in the audio very well. In sum, this participant considered these accents unfamiliar and hard to understand, but also pleasant and representing competent speakers of English. It is unclear, then, why the accent was described as difficult, other than for being totally different from his/her tonal first language, which must also characterize the local English he/she is used to hearing.

In this subsection we saw that the Polish and the Botswana participants had the worst attitude towards the accents concerning their proximity to an esteemed Standard variety. The English participants were particularly more ELF aware, prioritizing the content, sophistication of vocabulary and efficiency of communication. The Americans were appraising of the accents, but did it by comparing the English produced with the English that they expect to be learned in other countries, reinforcing the image of eternal learners that BESs are labeled with and even believe to be true about themselves. Finally, the Thai comment left us with puzzled as to why the accents were pleasant and represented competent speakers, but were unintelligible. Overall, we could observe that the attachment to a Standard, even if unconsciously, is present in the representatives of the 3 circles: inner, outer and expanding circle countries. Let us now look at the expressions that refer to intelligibility issues.

4.3.2 Intelligibility

The highest priority in international communication is not making sure everyone speaks the *same* language or with the same vocabulary, grammar or pronunciation. The most pressing issue in communication has always been intelligibility, and history has proved

people do not need to speak the very same dialect to understand each other. Since English is the most spoken language for international purposes, stakeholders in ELT have shown concern about causing communication breakdown by not correcting non-hegemonic realizations of the language. That fear is extended to all levels of the language and is rooted in the belief that only Standard English is safe as common ground for interactions involving people of diverse linguacultural backgrounds.

Now, the written answers of the participants are going to continue being analyzed, except this time they are about being able to understand the accents in the audio samples. The comments will also be listed by nationality, but discussed according to their category in Kachru's (1985) circles and through the ELF perspective.

Table 7 - Intelligibility

"I easily understand." POSITIVE	American 1
"Both speakers were clear of their pronunciation." POSITIVE	American 2
"I could understand it but I had to concentrate." NEUTRAL	English 2
"Yes, soft, easy on the ear, not difficult to understand." POSITIVE	English 3
"Both were clear." POSITIVE	Botswana 1
"Some words I could not hear them." NEGATIVE	Botswana 2
"[easy to understand] because I have heard what she was saying." POSITIVE	Botswana 3
"I didn't haven't to listen more than once or strain to understand what was being said." POSITIVE	Ugandan 1
"Sometimes you have to strain to understand it." NEUTRAL	Ugandan 2
"One has to pay close attention....especially for the first person." NEUTRAL	Ugandan 3
"It makes communication a bit difficult." NEGATIVE	Ugandan 3
"[hard to understand because the] sound of accent is so far from my accent." NEGATIVE	Thai 1
"First accent I don't get it." NEGATIVE	Thai 2

“First people for me hard to understand” NEGATIVE	Thai 3
“I must concentrate to understand it.” NEUTRAL	Polish 3

Generally, there were six positive comments on intelligibility, five negative ones, and four neutral. The explanations that represented good comprehension of the accents were written by two American, one English, two Botswana, and one Ugandan participant. The ones that signaled considerable difficulty to understand were one Botswana, one Ugandan and three Thai. The comments considered neutral were the ones that described having to strain or concentrate to understand, but still were able to understand.

The first element to stand out is the facility to understand the accents that was expressed by the American and the English participants, both from inner circle countries. As it was mentioned before, the Americans that participated in this research are Portuguese language students at university in the US, which in itself might have contributed them to respond positively to Brazilian Portuguese influenced English. It is also relevant to keep in mind that the English participants are London and Brighton residents. Therefore, they frequently face communication difficulties with a wide variety of linguistic backgrounds found in those cosmopolitan, touristic cities, and are appreciative of clear, easy-to-understand Englishes. So, we can summarize the likely reasons for the facility they had to understand the accents by weighing the fact they are acquainted with the primary foreign influence present in the Brazilian girls’ Englishes and they had a good attitude towards clearly pronounced English, not focusing on the differences at the cost of the similarities. Having to deal with real English mediated encounters on a daily basis must also have drawn them to prioritize intelligibility over Standard varieties accuracy.

The outer circle countries represented in this study had a rather balanced response to the intelligibility of the Brazilian accents. The Botswana had two positive and one negative comment. The Ugandan had one positive, two neutral and one negative comment. On the Botswanan side, the comprehension of the Brazilian was almost total, except for the words that were missed by one of the participants. On the Ugandan side, one did not have any difficulty to understand, but two others had to concentrate, while the last one found it really hard to follow the Brazilian speakers of English.

This scenario can be interpreted from the historical point of view, through which we can recall the fact Uganda and Botswana used to be British colonies until respectively 1962

and 1967. Therefore, those countries are new to their freedom and in the process of discovering who they can be in a self-governed era. Given the colonization aftermath, it is more than natural to expect that, language wise, they would see knowing British English as a commodity that is worth a lot of prestige in their home countries and in other parts of Africa. Having learned that speaking an English like the Queen's English is a sign of success in life it is expected that their ears would be better tuned for that pronunciation than for American-like with Brazilian Portuguese influence. Lack of acquaintance with those sound combinations might have caused them to shut down their cognitive system and blocked the information, as it happens to anyone who hears a very different way of speaking a certain language they already know well. Clarity, however, seemed to matter a great deal to them like it did to the Americans and English above, probably for the same reasons. After all, whoever deals with English daily or just frequently knows that the most important skill in interactions is accommodation, making adjustments to understand and to be understood by others.

In the group of expanding circle countries, the Thai and Polish participants whose comments were listed above had a lot of difficulty understanding the Brazilian accents in the audio. They wrote three negative explanations and a neutral one. The first is anchored on the difference between the known pronunciation styles to the Thai participant. Some Englishes are heavily influenced by the predominant languages of the region as speakers learned English in adaptive journeys that generate new pronunciation patterns, as Jenkins (1999: 27) explains:

These substitutions³⁸ would have started life as attempts to produce the 'correct' L1 English sound. However once L2-English classroom teachers began to be employed, the sounds would have been produced as classroom models and imitated by pupils. Over time, they gradually became regarded as local variants, rather than incorrect attempts to conform, and in many cases are now in the process of being codified.

Divergences among English pronunciation patterns have always existed and will probably always exist. History has attested that continued contact helps each interlocutor tune in their ears to those new patterns establishing another repertoire of expected sounds, which then become familiar and work as facilitators of communication across different lingua-culture backgrounds, characterizing typical ELF encounters. This is probably why

³⁸ She is referring to "speakers of Lankan (=Sri Lankan), Malaysian, Singapore and many African Englishes often use the sounds /tʰ/ and /dð/, so that the same words sound closer to 't-thin' and 'd-this'" (Jenkins 1999: 27).

Thai speakers of English have the potential to understand Brazilian accents of English much better if they ever get to be in touch with those speech styles long enough to tune in to them.

There is another significant component of an intelligibility equation that is the willingness to understand what is being uttered (Seidlhofer 2011), because “attitudes are cognitive and affective” (Garret 2010:23). The willingness to cooperate and accommodate to another speaker passes by the interests of each party and all the power relationships that will shape any human interaction. Having said that familiarity (with the L1 or the other same family languages) and continued contact contribute for intelligibility, willingness is a feature that does not influence this study in a positive way.

Presumably, none of the participants are expected to have personal interest in investing attention to cope with the new nuances present in the accents of the audio provided as input for the questionnaire. Therefore, accommodation strategies (Jenkins 2000; Garret 2010) to the speech styles in this study are likely to have been used unconsciously and made possible by previous connections with similar non-standard-like sounds. These subconscious strategies are unlikely to have been used by the Thai and Polish participants, as they are both geographically, linguistically, commercially and culturally distant from Brazil and its official L1, Brazilian Portuguese. Again, these are interpretations based on the information provided in the questionnaire and my sociolinguistic background knowledge (Garret 2010: 101) of the countries represented in this attitude study. The proposed reasons for the attitude and beliefs of the participants are also based on ELF as a theoretical paradigm that supports that communication misunderstandings are rare when accommodation takes place (Cogo & Dewey 2012).

4.3.3 Ownership, nativeness and legitimacy

Although many would agree that a language belongs to whoever speaks it, nativeness seems to still be the only universally accepted criterion for authenticity (Coulmas 1981:I cited in Seidlhofer 2011:32). While MESs are seen as creative when they venture into the production of new words to describe new feelings or things around them, BESs' creations are seen as lack of knowledge of the ‘real’ thing or even as mistakes. About who is authorized to create in English, Jenkins problematizes the fact that what is traditionally called a mistake could actually be seen as a demonstration of identity (Jenkins 2007: 14). Indeed, most of the times, the fine line that separates innovations from mistakes is who is responsible for them, which attests for the value of attitude studies and attitude actions that tackle the discussion on ownership.

About legitimacy, Seidlhofer (2011: 96) stretches Bamgbose's (1998) nativization features in the outer circle countries to anyone who appropriates of the language, by saying that "nativization can also be understood as the appropriation of the language by individual speakers, who make it their own for particular purposes and conditions of use so that they are 'at home' it." Therefore, there is nothing in the language use itself that can characterize a speaker as less 'native' than another speaker if they take ownership of their linguistic repertoire and mold it into whatever suits their communicative needs.

However, there are many gatekeepers that work on the maintenance of the belief that a certain English is more legitimate than others, which speaks of whose English is worth learning. About gatekeeping, Jenkins (2007: 239) says it is:

(...) informed by language ideology in that the gatekeepers of English (government institutions, examination boards, universities, publishers, the British Council, English Only and the like) in the main grant access to decision-making only to those whose orientation to English they approve of. And in something of a vicious circle, their language policy decisions (what is 'good' and 'bad' English, what is 'correct' and what is an 'error', and so on) seem (...) to impact on the attitudes and beliefs of non-gatekeepers around the world who, in turn, generally 'choose' to conform to these policy decisions.

It is and it will always be a matter of power struggle. For "in every society the differential power of particular social groups is reflected in language variation and in attitudes towards those variations" (Jenkins 2007: 68). Now, let us look at the explanations in the data that can be related to the topics proposed in this subsection.

Table 8 - Ownership, nativeness and legitimacy

"Sounded natural."	American 2
"They sound pretty fluent though it is obvious that they are not native English speakers."	Ugandan 1
"First accent I don't get it but second accent it close accent with native speaker in Thailand that I have been heard."	Thai 2

These comments bring up interesting topics for discussion. The first one, written by an American, is a positive comment that is supposed to validate the 'quality' of the English being spoken. "Sounded natural" was written to explain why this participant thinks the accents in the audio were pleasant. Yet, 'natural' is a very complex word that does not say much of the accent itself, but says a lot of what the participant considers as a reference, his/her own environment, his/her own variety. On the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, one of the definitions of 'natural' is "marked by easy simplicity and freedom from

artificiality, affectation, or constraint”, which I think defines well what the comment above aims to describe. The accents were taken as free from artificiality (not fake), affectation (not influenced by other forces/languages) or constraints (or forced). Another aspect that is implied in the choice of the word ‘natural’ is a shared reference for what is believed to be ‘real’ English. Otherwise, the concept ‘natural’ would have been explained as well.

Both the Ugandan and the Thai comments explicitly compare the accents to a native speaker reference. The Ugandan participant compares the accents to MESS’ English to say they failed to reach the goal of becoming native-like. Thus, that was the reason why they could not be considered competent speakers of English. The Thai explanation, on the other hand, said exactly the opposite. When comparing the Brazilian accents from the audio to MESS that had been to Thailand, he/she believes to have heard very similar sounds. The first question that comes to mind is: who is the MES they were both referring to? Were they American, British, Nigerian, Ugandan, New Zealanders, or others?

Nativeness is not a very clear concept as I discussed in my theoretical chapter at the beginning of this study. Generally, native speakers are the ones that were born in a certain country where the language in question is one of the L1s. The native inherent authority, though, goes beyond growing up using that language. Being a native speaker of English, more often than not, grants those people the unearned trust of instantaneous specialists in English. It means that not much thought is given to the fact proficiency in a language will vary according to many factors in somebody’s life.

The reflections developed in the analysis so far will also prompt the chapter on possible pedagogical challenges and implications, in which the teaching of English and, especially, the teaching of pronunciation, will be explored through an ELF perspective. In fact, the coming chapter is a continuation of the analysis with an approach to the data that touches on the concerns that English teachers have when faced with ELF in seminars or talks.

CHAPTER 5 - PEDAGOGICAL CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I am going to triangulate theoretical concepts and data analysis with some pedagogical considerations. In the beginning, a few insights into current attitudes on pronunciation teaching in Brazil will be explored in two books published in the country for a local audience. Even though this study is about the attitude of foreign speakers of English towards Brazilian accents of English, presenting publications on the teaching of English Pronunciation in Brazil may be useful for contextualizing the pedagogical considerations that are to be made here. After that, the data will be approached from an ELF-aware pedagogical point of view.

5.2 Current attitudes towards English pronunciation teaching in Brazil

Like many countries, English teaching in Brazil has gone through a few trends throughout its historical trajectory. It started with the Grammar Translation method, following the tendency of foreign language teaching popular at the time, when Latin and French were the languages broadly taught in most regular schools. This approach was justified by its main objective: reading literature from those foreign countries. Spoken practice was rare, also due to the limited number of proficient teachers of foreign languages. In the twentieth century, the teaching of English through grammar translation was followed by the Direct Method and then the Audiolingual Approach, having the latter repetition as one of its core procedure, and aiming for native-like pronunciation (Silveira 1999). After that, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) took over as the most popular approach in teaching English. Roughly, it was based on presenting and practicing language through situations that were common in English speaking countries, namely USA and the UK, and transmitting cultural facts/aspects of the native speakers' way of life.

In Brazil, the idea of the United States as a land of dreams, opportunities, and sophistication, where everything is better, from music to food was widely taken for granted. Learning English meant becoming more like a US citizen, which automatically made someone more cultured, sophisticated, and even smarter. Coursebooks played a huge role in selling this image of happiness captioned in English. As Siqueira (2012: 330) puts it,

(...) when we analyze the contents of the teaching materials with communicative titles, like in part of those other methods, one can clearly see that the cultural references always fell and still fall back to the idea of trying to mirror the daily life of the native speaker,

propagating and incorporating their beliefs, their behavior patterns, costumes and ways of life.³⁹

In post-method times, an eclectic approach has been rising as an alternative to (or an expansion of) CLT, as it proposes teaching according to students' needs and learning styles (visual, auditory and kinesthetic), or at least teaching in a way that takes into consideration most of those possibilities. At the moment, believe it or not, grammar translation is still the most used (though not the only) approach in most regular schools, both public and private, from elementary to high school years. Usually, this fact is justified by the overcrowded classes with students who are generally believed to have a considerable knowledge deficit from the previous school years. This pedagogical scenario is of great importance to the country as a whole, since the majority of the population goes to public schools, mostly, for not being able to afford private education. However, I will not elaborate on the ramifications of those challenges and their causes given the focus of this work, but these facts are to be mentioned as little has changed concerning English teaching in Brazil.

Private schools vary their teaching approaches and methods, usually staying between grammar translation and eclectic approaches loosely labeled as CLT. For instance, in many cases, grammar translation comes in play at private schools for two reasons: to facilitate training students at various levels of proficiency for university entrance exams, and/or to profit from paying not as much to underqualified teachers, simply because non-proficient teachers of English are expected to cost less. The most expensive private schools, however, have plans of becoming bilingual. For now, working towards those plans, those prominent schools have been hiring well-known English language institutes to teach in their own school facilities and then, due to this supposedly "plus" aspect, improving their marketing image for saving parents' money, which has been used to pay for additional English language courses local institutes. To tackle the university entrance exams issue, those bigger private schools usually provide intensive reading classes for high school seniors.

English language institutes vary in their methodology. Some work with the audiolingual approach, but most with a hybrid type⁴⁰ of CLT. The ones that work with the audiolingual approach, tend to be very concerned about sounding like an MES, as they have all classes scripted to be an imitation of MESs' audio materials, primarily US originated.

³⁹ Source text in Portuguese, "(...) quando analisamos os conteúdos dos materiais didáticos intitulados comunicativos, como na parte daqueles dos outros métodos, vê-se claramente que as referências culturais sempre recaem e recaem na ideia de se tentar espelhar o cotidiano do falante nativo, propagando-se e incorporando-se suas crenças, seus tipos de comportamento, costumes e modos de vida".

⁴⁰ Hybrid CLT is the use of an eclectic approach that has CLT as the foundation, but resorts to audiolingual drills and even grammar translation whenever necessary, but not predominantly.

CLT-based classes, on the other hand, tend to be about English speaking countries, shifting to the student's opinion and information only for personalizing new language content.

Moving on to ELT related materials produced in Brazil, two published books will provide some interesting insights on where national publishers (and possibly some teachers) stand, ideologically, when it comes to pronunciation teaching. That contextualization is going to be followed by comments on the data collected through the questionnaire of this research according to their pedagogical relevance. To start off, let us observe the attitudes revealed in excerpts from the introduction of those books written specifically for teaching the pronunciation of English to Brazilian speakers.

Although nothing can materialize the opinion of *all* the stakeholders involved in the teaching of English in Brazil, as these materials have been published, they can be taken as documents that exemplify some of the attitudes found in national teaching aids on pronunciation, and consequently, be considered opinion shapers of views on Brazilian accents of English. The first one to be published and also the most popular (so far) was put together by Sonia Godoy, Cris Gontow, and Marcello Marcelino, and titled *English Pronunciation for Brazilians: the sound of American English* (2006). The second one on the same topic, published in 2012, was *Pronúncia do inglês: para falantes do português brasileiro (English pronunciation: for speakers of Brazilian Portuguese)*, by Thaís Cristófaró Silva.

We are going to begin by thinking about how the book *English Pronunciation for Brazilians* treats the controversial endeavor that pronunciation represents in the teaching of an international language. On that issue, the authors defend that “[they] believe in the importance of *good* pronunciation, and that it is possible to improve it” (Godoy, Gontow and Marcellino 2006: 17). This statement is made as a stand-taking declaration after presenting two common views towards pronunciation teaching: one that aims to “eradicate the foreign accent” through repetition and contrast with the students’ L1; and the other view that is loose on the teaching of pronunciation to adults, because they have difficulty with certain sounds and see being able to communicate as the only objective, instead of pronouncing words “perfectly” (ibid).

The attitude presented in this book introduction is one of balanced opinions that lean to the side of standardness as the assumed desirable target for students. By saying, “it is possible to improve it” (p.17), within this frame, what they mean is that practice makes perfect, (though what ‘perfect’ means to them is another question that would need to be asked), despite one’s age or L1, and there is no reason why the wish to attain native-like

pronunciation should be forgotten. At first, one might think it would be too precipitated of me to interpret the excerpt as Standard related only by what is in it (from page 17), but my explanation is also based on the coming pages of the book. Later in the introductory chapter, the authors elaborate on their beliefs on improvement by listing the factors that are supposed to influence the process of learning a foreign language pronunciation, consecutively as: biology, the role of the native language, social-cultural aspects, personality, motivation, and one's profile (Godoy, Gontow, and Marcellino 2006: 18-22).

Generally, those factors can be summarized through short excerpts that are going to be commented one by one:

. Biology: “while it is not impossible, it certainly requires a lot of work” (p.18); Again, aiming for the closest native-like possible means a *lot* of work, but what is all that work for in reality? Research mentioned in Chapter 2 attests that, the majority of the population of English speakers, namely the 4/5 that is non-native, finds native speakers harder to understand than non-native ones. Logically speaking, if one wants to be better understood internationally, they are better off keeping their own accents.

. The role of the native language: “we could conclude that the native language *affects* not only the production of sounds but also the way a student hears them. (...) Production of sounds comes almost as a by-production of *good* listening” (p.18-19, emphasis added). At this point, the learner's L1 is taken as one of the major influences in the process of learning the pronunciation of a foreign language. The selection of the word ‘influence’ for the title of the subsection and the word ‘affects’ to talk about the power of one's L1 over the target language shows an evolution from the word ‘interfere’ that comes from the thinking attached to a deficit approach, typical of the Second Language Acquisition study field.

. Socio-Cultural Aspects: for the social-cultural implications of the pronunciation of English, the authors decided to bring up the accent and, by doing so, face the elephant in the room. After all, a book that is written in English takes for granted that the reader/learner/teacher is already proficient in the target language.

While you will suffer the influence whether want it or not, how much your pronunciation will change depends on how much you identify with the language or accent in question. An accent is a marker of your identity; it is part of who you are. How much of it are you willing to give up? All these questions lead us to the distinction between **accent** and **mispronunciation**. An accent is something that everybody, EVERYBODY has, whether they like it or not. It represents your roots and your history. You may have a native or a foreign accent. (...) Mispronunciation, on the other hand, is the distortion of the pronunciation of a word to an extent that it sounds either like another word or even incomprehensible to the listener (Godoy, Gontow, and Marcellino 2006: 19-20, emphasis in the original).

In talking about accents, the authors make it clear that everyone has an accent and that it is part of one's identity. Until then, we all agree with them. It is after defining mispronunciation that they entangle themselves in a contradiction. If some words can cause complete breakdown for being different from the expected version, how can learners decide by themselves which words are safe to say in their way and which are not? By finishing that subsection with this information, they actually say that keeping a foreign accent is a menace to communication. Therefore, the attitude of the authors is of awareness of the socio-cultural importance of someone's accent, but it is simultaneously an attitude that propagates the disbelief that it is possible to sound like a 'foreigner' speaking the target language and still be understood. As I said before, it can be even easier.

. Personality: "Learners that are outgoing, confident and willing to take risks may be more likely to expose themselves to the foreign language and native speakers. (...) **And exposure IS a determining factor for pronunciation improvement**" (p.20-21, emphasis of the authors). The first half of this statement makes sense also to the ones who are ELF aware, as confidence and exposure to the target foreign language is paramount for learning how to speak it. The native speakers' part, though, is quite restrictive and, consequently, less productive than it could be if learners exposed themselves to speakers of as many different nationalities as possible.

Thinking of native speakers as the ideal judges of competent speaking is a poor choice, statistically speaking. On the other hand, if someone is planning to move to another country, where he/she is going to need English to communicate with locals, that English speaker should practice his/her English with people from that specific country aiming to fine-tune his/her ear to their accent and accommodate/adjust to what is more easily understood by speakers with that background. Meeting someone who lives in a country that has a complex linguacultural life experience is also a possibility, which would qualify a conversation with that interlocutor as a super-diverse interaction.

. Motivation: "Motivation plays a vital role ensuring success in the acquisition of *good* pronunciation. It does make a difference if you believe pronunciation is a very important part of language" (p.21, emphasis added). The sole aspect that is debatable in this excerpt is the adjective 'good', which does not mean anything other than close to a pre-established target. Because of the second half of this book title, *The sounds of American English*, it is possible to assume that the pre-established target is GA (General American) pronunciation.

. Your profile: “(...) it is important for you to set your goals. (...) WHY I want to improve my pronunciation. (...) WHAT I want my pronunciation to be” (p.21). A scale is presented where the current and the desired stage are to be marked. The options are progressively: heavy *accent* – slight *accent* – lightly foreign-sounding (intelligible) – native-like (p.22, emphasis added). Another very relevant contradiction can be seen here. The category ‘accent’ is only given to the levels that come before the one considered intelligible, “lightly foreign-sounding stage”. It means that, in reality, only foreign accents are considered as accents in the book. Also, they seem to be seen as unintelligible. Only the “slightly foreign-sounding” can be understood due to its closeness to the American General pronunciation. According to this categorization, the speaker that ranks as “slightly foreign-sounding” does not *have* an accent, just like those speakers who have ‘reached’ the so-called *native-like* level. And in problematizing the term native-like, some questions could be raised, such as, “Who is the native speaker that we are supposed to imitate?”. Therefore, “How can one measure that ability accurately?”.

Through this brief analysis of what the authors state, I can possibly theorize that their discourse is rather politically correct⁴¹ in the beginning, but that same awareness of the importance of choosing to keep one’s accent is re-established later as unpractical and undesirable. Such attitude is very common to the notion of ELF as well. Stakeholders agree that MESS’ Englishes are not the only legitimate ones. However, as we can see from this analysis, this notion has not reached this instructional materials or class planning yet.

The second book selected to be a sample of the thinking present in teacher education in Brazil concerning the pronunciation of English was *Pronúncia do Inglês: para falantes do português brasileiro*, by Thais Cristófaros Silva. Her beliefs are quite clear from the first page of the book, where she says, “this book is a contribution for Brazilian speakers of English to better understand different accents of English and, also, be able to evaluate and understand his/her own English pronunciation” (Cristófaros-Silva 2011:15).⁴²

Acknowledging the existence of other English accents and making an effort to add them to her book shows progress in relation to the first book. The accents chosen to be used in the book were from the South of England, North of England, New Mexico (US), Los

⁴¹ By a “politically correct” statement I am referring to a statement represents what is expected of a person or a group of people that would make them sound or look respectful or genuinely tolerant of differences that tend to generate social tensions. In this case, respectful and appreciative of different accents other than the ones considered native.

⁴² “Este livro é uma contribuição para que o falante brasileiro de inglês possa compreender melhor os diferentes sotaques do inglês e possa, também, avaliar a sua pronúncia de inglês em particular”. (Cristófaros-Silva 2011:15).

Angeles (US), and from Brazil (voice of the author of the book). She also explains that the Canadian, Australian and Scottish varieties will be mentioned when specific aspects are discussed. The accents from England are the most used, followed by the American differences (whenever they are relevant) and other varieties to exemplify exceptions. Although the number of accents is more comprehensive, the criterion of selection still seems quite unrealistic when it comes to the expansion of English in the world. No post-colonial countries or expanding circle countries were selected. About how an accent is formed, Cristófar-Silva (2011:16) believes that:

The differences in pronunciation is a fact in every language. Sometimes, the variation of pronunciation can reflect speaker's personal information, like his/her geographical origin, level of education, age range, gender, etc. Actually, we can say that each speaker builds his/her own accent throughout his/her life. We can also say that, in specific conditions, a speaker can change their original accent.⁴³

This book brings a rather technical approach to pronunciation teaching without ignoring the fact pronunciation varies considerably even inside a relatively small country as England and in a big country like the US. Nonetheless, the accents of other English speaking countries are completely ignored. The pedagogical value of the English spoken by BESs in the expanding circle seems to be non-existent. The author sees L1 as a great ally in her quest for a better English pronunciation, but not as a positive influence to the students' accents. That attitude is revealed when she uses the word 'interfere' when talking about the relationship between the first language and the target language in the excerpt which follows: "I argue that the construction of the sound system of a foreign language is, primarily, based on the sound system of the mother tongue, which *interferes* directly into it⁴⁴" (Cristófar-Silva 2011:10, emphasis added).

Finally, the very existence of a book that teaches the pronunciation of English as something monolithic and does not take into consideration the possible *linguacultural* backgrounds of the listener, is actually proposing a paradoxical type of communication that only needs one side of the interaction to succeed. Accommodating to each interlocutor is what any speaker does (to a certain extent) when involved in any type of interaction. Sometimes we adjust our discourse, sometimes we adjust our pronunciation patterns, and so

⁴³"A diferença de pronúncia é um fato em qualquer língua. Algumas vezes, a variação de pronúncia pode refletir dados pessoais do falante, como procedência geográfica, grau de instrução, faixa etária, sexo, etc. Na verdade, podemos dizer que cada falante constrói o seu próprio sotaque ao longo de sua vida. Podemos dizer também que, em condições específicas um falante pode alterar o seu sotaque original" (Cristófar-Silva 2011:16).

⁴⁴Argumento que a construção do sistema sonoro da língua estrangeira é baseada, primordialmente, no sistema sonoro da língua materna e tem interferência direta deste. (Cristófar-Silva 2011:10)

forth. Those choices are not prompted only by linguistic factors. They involve the power relations between the speakers, which can be quite asymmetric at times. More important than imitating native speakers is learning how to negotiate meaning at all levels, and that includes adjusting one's pronunciation to facilitate communication at each encounter.

Having said that, in the next section, I am going to analyze the data collected in this study to process the value of the attitudes found that might be of use to teachers in Brazil who desire to teach pronunciation through ELF aware classes.

5.3 Teaching matters in the data

For centuries, in the history of education, people have relied on books to guide teachers and learners into what is considered scientific knowledge. Even today, books and teaching aids in general are still expected to represent reality displayed in the finest layouts and technologies. However, when teaching materials and stakeholders are found to be leaving out a good deal of actual knowledge of what is out there in the world, the paradigm in vogue needs to be thought over.

Having said that, in order to understand more about the underlying processes in the current use of English and the socio-cultural relations involved, further research is called for. It is with data and the elaboration of a more suitable epistemology that teaching materials and approaches can be reformulated into a more coherent outlook, becoming more efficient in preparing learners for real life situations. This work is just a small step towards the direction of what is happening out there, where English is used to mediate international communication.

An attitude study has a special place in current investigations for its value to the assessment of the acceptance or resistance of change, which also might reveal the power of an ideology in a certain community. Given the fact languages exist mainly for human communication and interaction, it is very important to know whether a new paradigm such as ELF (meaning the decentralization of MESs in the pursuit for mechanisms of international intelligibility) is becoming more visible in different scenarios.

Studying the response of 18 people from 6 different countries to the English accent of two Brazilian speakers allows us to consider the acceptance and perception of intelligibility of those representatives of Brazilian accents of English. Those results are going to be compared and contrasted with some of the main ideas found in the English pronunciation books for Brazilians, and the topics brought up in Chapter 4. It is going to be discussed whether, in class, ENL should be a model or a target; accuracy should or should

not matter more than intelligibility; and the principles that constitute the basis for ELF-aware pronunciation teaching.

5.3.1 ENL as *a* model or *the* norm?

The debate over model and norm comes from within the ‘nativeness’ issue. Nevertheless, let us look at it from the perspective of teachers of English who are BESs and teach the language to other BESs in Brazil, a country where English is not an official language, which means it is mostly used for cross-cultural international purposes. When it comes to teaching in this context, one word could define well what many bilingual English speaking teachers feel, insecurity. According to Kachru (1985), BESs in expanding circle countries are norm-dependent⁴⁵, but according to *native-speakerism* (Holliday 2006), consolidated amongst teachers, we are also always in a norm-deficit state.

In this sense, exploring the meaning of the term “norm” applied to accents of English, Jenkins (2000) problematized the difference between using a type of pronunciation as a model or as a norm. The model is the reference used to teach and as a common ground for the interlocutors. The norm is the rule, which makes it directly connected to the idea of correctness. In the introduction of her book, Jenkins (2000) takes those definitions brought by Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994) to explain the usefulness of having a “pronunciation core to safeguard intelligibility” (Jenkins 2000: 18) as a model, not as a norm. Now, the data in the questionnaire answers is going to be categorized as referring to a norm (mentioning correctness or the native speaker) or a model (mentioning intelligibility or clarity). Each categorized list of words and phrases is going to be followed by my interpretation, which is going to be based on the potential meaning of the word choices made by the participants of this study. Before moving on, I would like to reiterate that the objective of this analysis is to elucidate valid discussions on the teaching of English and more specifically its pronunciation today, not to prove anything through percentages or numbers.

Pedagogically speaking, the explanations of the participants presented in chapter 4 seem to reproduce what foreign language teachers and learners have believed for a long time. Some participants conceive speaking a foreign language well as sounding like a(n) (idealized) ‘native speaker’. And it is the ‘sounding’ part that seems to have the most impact onto the acceptance or rejection of one’s English, as accent is, according to Jenkins (2007), the first characteristic that we all use to judge/evaluate the people we meet. Although a

⁴⁵ Kachru (1985) presents three types of English speaking groups: the Norm-providers (Inner Circle Countries), the Norm-developers (Outer Circle Countries) and the Norm-dependent ones (Expanding Circle Countries).

considerable part of the world still sees English through ‘native-speakerism’ lenses even in international settings, maybe unaware of its casualties. That scenario makes it the teachers’ job to fight against such long-standing linguistic imperialism. Teachers have the chance to bring to class the reality of the internationalization of this language and educate our students about the colonizing tools present in our teaching aids (books, posters, audio and video prompts, etc).

Therefore, especially when it comes to pronunciation, “practic[ing] more”, as the Thai participant suggested, “study[ing] the language”, as the American one assumed, and “speak[ing] correctly”, as the Polish participant evaluated, need to be redirected to another target. ELF scholars do not propose a substitution of the current norms for a ‘new English’. This struggle is instead about widening the range of references (models), which are to be selected according to students’ specific needs (Sifakis 2014).

For example, if the student intends to use his/her English in video conference calls, the probable interlocutors’ linguacultural backgrounds should be the preferred reference. It means that, when it comes to the selection of vocabulary and pronunciation patterns (or standards), teachers should, whenever possible, consider what would better help their students adjust to the situation in which they are planning on using the language.

In a less than ideal setting for teaching, when classes are way more crowded than they should be, teachers could try identifying the most common communicative goals of the students and prioritize international intelligibility. If predicting the pronunciation that the students are going to be in contact with in life is unfeasible, exposition to a wide range of accents is likely to help them adjust to differences more easily in the future. Besides, establishing subskills (listening for gist, for specific information, in detail) as targets is far more productive than using listening exercises or pronunciation lessons for norm conformation. Back in 1998, Bamgbose already proposed that Post-colonial Englishes should be taught in former English colonies to serve the national communicative necessities:

It is in this regard that intra-variety intelligibility becomes more important than inter-variety intelligibility. Since the point has been made again and again that speakers of non-native Englishes have come to use it substantially for internal communication as well as such functions as education, technology and literature (Bamgbose 1998: 11).

Though the author is defending that the concern with intelligibility should have been greater for intranational interactions, with the advance of communication via internet and increasing facility of global mobility, be it physical or virtual, the use of English has become

more international than intranational. This reality calls for reassessment in teacher education everywhere, simply because the needs of the students worldwide have changed.

Let us now look in the chart which follow at the comments of the participants that can be related to the idea that clarity is very important in speech and that learning through ‘models’ instead of norms, might be more useful than parroting MESs. The first aspect one will probably notice in the table below is that, comparatively, it presents more than double the number of comments than the table of ‘norm’ related excerpts. The questions were on familiarity, intelligibility, competence (which could take participants to think of normative or intelligibility aspects). Then, we can interpret the number of comments related to intelligibility as an indication of the level of importance this matter has to the participants. Such information in itself should already prompt teachers and stakeholders to re-assess the value of communicative strategies for international interactions that do not necessarily pass by the seal of approval of MESs.

Table 9 - ‘Model’

“I easily understand (...).”	American
“Both speakers were clear of pronunciation.”	American
“Sounded normal.”	American
“She spoke clearly.”	American
“I’ve never had difficulty understating it.”	English
“I could understand it (...).”	English
“Their English was very good, fluent and used a wide range of vocabulary; no stumbles or long pauses.”	English
“Yes, soft, easy on the ear, not difficult to understand.”	English
“Both were clear.”	Botswana
“Some words I could not hear them.”	Botswana
“They sound fluent.”	Botswana
“I didn’t haven’t to listen more than once or strain to understand what was being said.”	Ugandan
“You have to strain to understand it”	Ugandan
“They speak in a good way but sound of accent is so far from my accent.”	Thai
“Accent is easy to understand but not so much”	Thai
“I must concentrate to understand it”	Polish

Among the excerpts listed above, there are three explanations written by the participants that are of substantial significance to this discussion on pronunciation teaching through an ELF perspective. The first one is, “their English was very good, fluent and used a wide range of vocabulary; no stumbles or long pauses”, written by an English person. In this excerpt, we can see a definition of ‘very good’ to this English, resident in Brighton,

someone who has lived for most of her life in a very diverse city. For this participant, ‘very good’ when describing an accent means ‘fluent’ and with a ‘wide range of vocabulary’, which made it possible for those Brazilian speakers of English to deliver with ‘no stumbles or long pauses’.

That was the explanation for choosing ‘yes’ as the answer for the question “Do they sound like competent speakers of English?”, which makes it a definition of a ‘very good’, meaning competent, speaker of English. For this study, such description is valuable for the internationality of this participant’s background and because there is no comparison with a Standard English variety in it. There were only references to linguistic characteristics. I met that participant a few years back for a couple of hours. I noticed her English was quite close to RP, and found out that her accent had granted her the nickname of ‘Queen’ by a common friend of ours. Speaking in a way another British person recognized as similar to the famous ‘Queen’s English’, would probably place her among those who did not take well the accents in the audio for being so Americanized and with Brazilian Portuguese traits. However, the same person, besides being an English speaker, was also finishing her classes in British Sign Language (BSL), a second language for her. She is not hard of hearing or deaf, but has a brother who communicates mainly through BSL.

For this reason, her understanding of what matters in communication might have also been influenced by her own journey in learning another language and figuring out how communication works in a broader sense. Therefore, she is likely to look for clarity in the information delivered through a speech act rather than look for differences or what many would call ‘mistakes’.

Observing such interpretation of what a good speaker of English is to another speaker with a varied linguistic background should provoke teachers to rethink the role of MESs as the norm, given success in international communication seems to be more linked to mastering clarity than to sounding closer to an MES’s English.

The next explanation listed above worth our special attention is “They speak in a good way but sound of accent is so far from my accent.” Though I have not met this participant in person, her/his questionnaire profile shows that he/she is from Thailand and lives there. It is intriguing that the manner English is spoken in the audio seems to be within the closeness expected from the target according to the participant. Nevertheless, that performance is so distant from what he/she is used to listening to, that it makes the accents fall short from what she/he expected them to be as a whole. We can conclude, then, that this

participant considers having a tonal accent (part of her L1 influence) a very important characteristic to make her/him feel comfortable listening to a certain accent.

Given the fact tonal languages are not part of life of a typical Brazilian who lives in Salvador, Bahia, being close to a Standard or sounding Western-native-like would probably *not* help either. As mentioned before, the linguacultural background of the listener will contribute or hinder intelligibility just as much as the characteristics of the speaker's English. Intelligibility is, indeed, a two-way traffic.

The third explanation I selected to comment on was "You have to strain to understand it" by one of the Ugandan participants. Here, we can see another example of an accommodation effort. He/she did not say the accents were unintelligible, just that they were difficult to decipher at first. It is common knowledge that we all have to give it time to adjust our ears to different manners of talking, even in our L1. As long as the pronunciation of the words do not distance too much from the core that is shared by the interlocutors, the listeners can create a sociolinguistic phonological profile of that new speech style and become able to decode what is being said. About that, Bamgbose (1998:11) states that "in a communicative act which involves a speaker and an addressee, both participants contribute to the speech act and its interpretation, and part of this contribution is making an allowance for accent and peculiarities of the other person's speech."

Acknowledging this semi-automatic reflex of our minds when facing a different accent, teachers can actually give students practice on intentionally noticing those differences and being able to understand those specific speech styles without straining anymore. For instance, the Scottish accent can be very hard to understand for a Brazilian speaker of English who had their English language education mostly based on American English models, with rare British Standard contacts. That difficulty can be overcome if this Brazilian person spends enough time in contact with Scottish speakers of English, so a phonological profile can be formed and the new patterns can be added to the expected sounds that refer to a shared reference in the world.

Therefore, successful ELF communication implies making adjustments so that speakers will be talking about the same things when they are using the same words, all that by means of intelligible pronunciation. It is basically about "connecting the word with the world. It is about recognizing language as ideology, not just a system. It is about extending the educational space to the social, cultural, and political dynamics of language use" (Kumaravadivelu 2006: 70). Taking ENL as the only model might confine students to a limited view of English. The foundation for communication strategies taught in class should

be building a common ground through negotiation of meaning, and that is a responsibility of both the speaker and the listener.

5.3.2 ELF aware Pronunciation Teaching

Throughout this study, I have been arguing that it would be more fruitful for the English learning process of our students to decentralize the monolingual English Speakers' varieties and expose them to more accents, and do so according to the students' intended use of the target language. ELF scholars do not prescribe how to teach English, but propose that teachers should feel empowered to teach ELF-oriented/sensitive classes (Seidlhofer 2011:16-17). The power of influence, responsibility, and local expertise are in the hands of BES teachers, even more so to those who are teachers and researchers, for they are reflexive practitioners that are more likely to see what needs should be rethought ideologically, methodologically, and linguistically. Textbooks and methodologies embedded in them need to be designed or remodeled by local ELF-aware teachers so that a more suitable pedagogical rationale for each context can be elaborated (Mckay 2002; Scheyerl 2012; Seidlhofer 2011; Kramsch 1993).

Standard varieties are not the enemy in this quest for equality. Actually, they are allies, because according to Freire (1997), having access to Standards of any language means having access to a powerful cultural good which, among other things, can pave the way for social mobility. Teaching a Standard variety to our students, future BESs, can be about allowing them to have the right and the means to tell their own stories in the target language, with the dialect that circulates not only in the academia and business, but also in some social groups. Standard varieties have their time and place in a community, but they are only one of the varieties/dialects a person should master. At the end of the day, any language has to be adaptable to each and every social circle that forms a speaker's identity, and at the individual level, adaptable to each listener/interlocutor he/she needs to interact with.

Finally, all of this sounds very democratic, based on Freire's *Pedagogy of Autonomy*, but how can we use this thinking towards teaching ELF-aware English pronunciation in class? Although there is not a magic formula to answer that question, there are some principles that can be considered in order to make the teaching of English pronunciation more ELF-aware: (1) use center-oriented pronunciation books critically; (2) elaborate ELF-aware materials; and (3) explore online options, as demonstrated in the paragraphs to follow.

Using center-oriented English pronunciation books critically: if teachers do not have any other resources other than a center-based book, they can try to use it critically by making

ELF principles clear during the course and proposing exercises that will increase students' confidence in using their own accents, in case that is what they choose to do. Some of ELF principles that are applicable to pronunciation classes are:

- . There are no native speakers of a lingua franca (Rajagopalan 2004);
- . Standard English can be seen as an ESP variety (Sifakis 2014);
- . Intelligibility is the main target (Cogo & Dewey 2012);
- . A competent speaker of ELF is one that accommodates well to other interlocutors and is sensitive to the communicative needs of the context (Jenkins 2007; Seidlhofer 2011).

The fact **there are no native speakers of a lingua franca** means that, there are also no owners of the language to whom BESs have to report to or apologize to for their non-standard use of the language. Therefore, learners of English have the authority to create in the language as they accommodate to each interlocutor. The teacher will be there to help the learners distinguish whether their way of pronouncing a word is likely to cause communication breakdown or not. This is not a simple task for the teacher, who needs to be aware of the sounds patterns expected by the probable communities with whom their students are probably going to use English. If the target community is undefined, the teacher should refer to an international core of pronunciation whose aim is to tackle communication breakdown between English speakers with repertoires of different L1s, such as Jenkins' (2000) *Lingua Franca Core* and Patsko's LFC Grid (2013) or the book *Teaching the Pronunciation of English as Lingua Franca*, by Walker (2010).

Standard English is an ESP⁴⁶ variety, because it is only expected to be found in certain social circles and in very specific types of encounters. When we compare the variety of dialects that an educated person masters in his/her L1, we can also see that in a typical English class, there is not much planned time for such a development to happen. Instead, any deviation from Standard is pointed at as a mistake, which categorizes that one dialect, in this case, the prestigious one, as the only target within the complex universe of the English class. That is why many of us, BESs, sound "too correct" when talking to other speakers of English in informal situations, which generates a sense of social inadequacy. That is an example of how mastering only Standard English can make socializing and being yourself harder, and sometimes, even embarrassing.

⁴⁶ ESP = English for a Specific Purpose.

As we could see in the theoretical chapter in the section related to the authorship of self, it is not possible to be whole in a language without having the freedom to create new ways of saying things, new words and expressions that describe who someone is according to their cultural origins and their life experiences. English is a very flexible language itself, as its history attests for the contribution of over 100 languages into its lexical repertoire, for example. Intelligible creativity is not random (Seidlhofer 2011) for it passes by the sieve of the language mechanisms that will allow or reject the proposed possibilities. Thus, distinguishing among the possibilities that would work in English demands experience in multiple encounters mediated by the language. That points to the need for teachers to monitor the creations of the students in order to guide them while they are gathering their own knowledge of how the English language works. This approach and its consequential methods is definitely applicable to pronunciation teaching.

In ELF interactions, **intelligibility is the main target**, not accuracy. The ELF concept is based on an interaction composed of English speakers with different L1s, MESSs and BESs, as well as BESs and BESs. Always taking into consideration the number of BESs as 80% of the English speakers in the world, the logical decision has been to question the monopoly of Standard varieties as the (only) references in ELT, especially when it comes to the teaching of pronunciation. Why focus on the pronunciation style of an infamous part of the MESSs, as only very few speak GA or RP⁴⁷? If accuracy is about not missing the target, it is the target that has to be expanded from following a Standard to negotiating meaning and accommodating to new realizations. That means shifting from learning ‘what to say and how to sound’ to ‘using accommodation strategies’ to clarify meaning.

A competent speaker of ELF is one that accommodates well to other interlocutors and communicative needs of the context (Jenkins 2007; Seidlhofer 2011). He/she understands that it is not his/her English alone that makes communication possible, but the combination of both Englishes to generate a ‘third’ English that operates in that context. It is possible to say that this is a very similar concept as to the “third place” proposed by Kramsch (1993) when exploring the concept of interculturality. After all, if language is culture, and language is the representation of how one views the world, ELF makes interculturality possible *also* at the linguistic level. Nothing exists socially until it is represented linguistically. No one exists completely in society, unless they can portray themselves with their unique characteristics, one of these being their own accent. It is then

⁴⁷ The percentage of speakers who speak General American (GA) pronunciation in the U.S. is only 33%. As for the Received Pronunciation (RP) in Britain, only 3% speak it (Kachru 1985; Crystal 1995).

that he/she leaves the ‘homogenous other’ (Irvine & Gal 2000: 39) category to feature as a human being in their own right.

If a teacher considers those ELF principles when dealing with a center-oriented book on English pronunciation, he/she will probably plan classes that will maximize the ability of her/his students to communicate well in English in predominantly ELF settings. Sometimes, though, the teacher gets to elaborate their own materials. In this case, before doing so, those practitioners are going to need to reflect on what they believe to be the object of their teaching. That will affect all the decisions they are to make concerning their source selection and focus, as Valdés, Kibler and Walqui (2014: 9) explain:

If it is assumed that language is a set of vocabulary and structures that can be taught in a well-established order, practiced, automatized, and put into use, then ELP⁴⁸ standards will describe a linear developmental progression that establishes the order and sequence of vocabulary and grammatical forms and structures that students will be expected to acquire over time. ESL instruction will then be expected to produce students who can exhibit growth in the correct or fluent use of such structures or vocabulary. (...) If language is viewed as a complex performance for communicating and interactively constructing meaning that involves the command of specific skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), ELP standards will instead describe the order in which particular subskills will be acquired and directly or indirectly inform the corresponding instruction that is expected to bring about such skill development.

ELF aware materials would be the ones that teach those ‘subskills’ which facilitate intelligibility at all levels, such as listening for the gist or details, identifying pronunciation patterns of a certain accents, etc. Teachers can guide their students to become linguistic ethnographers by observing the context and the background history of the interlocutors in the materials. In addition, an English pronunciation profile of a speaker can be drafted by noticing what is non-standard in the speech being analyzed and associating those features with a certain linguistic background, so learners can adjust more easily to future interlocutors in real situations.

Another way a teacher can expand the inputs in his/her English pronunciation classes is making use of the internet. On some websites⁴⁹, especially the ones made for teaching English, one can listen to people of many different nationalities speaking English in their own way, with their own vocabulary, syntax, pronunciation, delivery speed, and talking about a great variety of subjects. The audio passages can be selected by the English variety they want study, CEFR⁵⁰ level, purpose and common topics. There are other websites that

⁴⁸ ELP stands for English Language Professionals (Valdés, Kibler and Walqui 2014: 9).

⁴⁹ An example of this type of website is <www.englishlistening.com> and <www.real-english.com>.

⁵⁰ “The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is an international standard for describing language ability. It is used around the world to describe learners' language skills” (retrieved from www.cambridgeenglish.org/cefr).

provide realistic materials, like real-english.com, which has interviews with people of different nationalities (mostly Americans) talking about a substantial number of topics.

All in all, this analyses chapter focused on teaching related issues. Firstly, by observing some attitudinal characteristics in the introductions of two books on English pronunciation for Brazilians, as an attempt to delineate some of the beliefs and concerns of English teachers in Brazil. Secondly, we discussed those issues that had been raised and discussed in chapter 4 with a more sociolinguistic approach now from a pedagogical perspective of ‘nativeness’, ‘standardness’, ‘intelligibility’ and ‘creativity’. Finally, I listed a few principles to be taken into account when one desires to teach the pronunciation of English through an ELF aware perspective.

This is a very small scale study, and as such, it was not elaborated to bring closed answers, but to provide new readings and provoke new questions. Let us now move on to the final remarks, where a concise recapitulation will be provided with some final thoughts on attitudes towards BESs’ accents of English, as I attempt to answer the research questions proposed for this investigation.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUDING REMARKS

Thinking, reading, debating, writing, rethinking, adjusting, rereading, rewriting. That is how this study was done. Bringing in my concluding remarks is only a formal way to temporarily close only another step of a long journey that started in 2010, when I first learned that there was so much more happening to the English language than I could ever imagine. Such a discovery urged me to study more and re-evaluate all my beliefs concerning teaching and learning this language. It was after conducting a few researches as a volunteer that I found out that I wanted to go deeper into issues like attitude towards accents – the theme of this dissertation.

Although sometimes ignored, everybody has an accent (a speech style) and that is how we linguistically, positively and/or negatively, assess someone's origins and even education level. Therefore, there is much more to an accent than just the way words are pronounced or the way the intonation is materialized. The idea of accents is so entrenched in the evaluation of people's linguistic abilities and intelligence that an attitude study on accents seemed like a productive start for the investigations on how Brazilian speakers of English are present in the community of English speakers in the world today.

Having that in mind, this study was elaborated to uncover attitudes towards accents and the speakers in the opinions of 18 participants, 3 of each of the 6 countries selected to equally represent Kachru's concentric circles. Those beliefs were expressed as the justification for the yes/no answers to a questionnaire prompted by an audio segment of 1 minute and 53 seconds with 2 proficient Brazilian speakers of English. The data was analyzed with the specific objectives: (1) combine the beliefs present in the responses about familiarity, intelligibility, competence, and pleasantness with the explanations provided by those participants; (2) relate the data to ELF issues and discuss them; establish a dialogue between the data, the theoretical foundation of this work; (3) envisage pedagogical challenges and considerations.

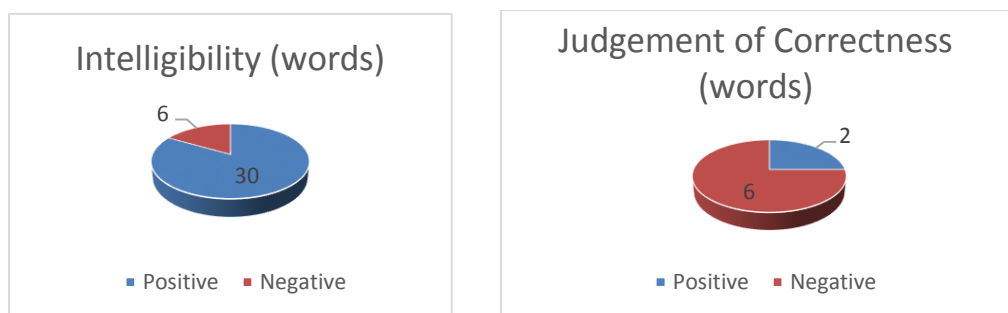
In order to revisit the results in a straightforward and comprehensive manner, I am going to attempt to answer the research questions I had established in the methodological chapter.

Question (1): How are the Brazilian speakers of English represented through the eyes of speakers of English from other countries?

According to the percentages in the data, the Brazilian speakers of English were described in a variety of ways by the participants of this study, organized here into 3 groups, according to Kachru's concentric circles (1985). The participants from the US and England (Inner Circle countries) considered the Brazilian speakers very competent in English, educated, mostly intelligible, and pleasant. The ones from Uganda and Botswana (Outer Circle countries) were less appreciative of the accents and, consequently, expressed that the speakers in the audio were similar to other South Americans, mostly intelligible, fluent, but, contradictorily, needed more practice to improve their English. The ones from Thailand and Poland (Expanding Circle countries) described the speakers differently from each other, but with predominant negativity. All of the Thai participants found the speakers competent and pleasant, but also unintelligible. The Polish thought the Brazilians in the audio were extremely difficult to understand, average to little competent, unprepared professionally, but spoke 'correctly' (participants' words).

Question (2) What is the most common type of words or terms used to explain one's opinion about the Brazilian accent of English? Do those words describe linguistic features or personality dimensions? Are they positive or negative in their connotation?

The most common type of words used to describe why the participants had chosen 'yes' or 'no' for the answers were the linguistic features ones, which outnumbered the personality dimensions with 80 to 43 occurrences, respectively. In the category that described linguistic features, 36 were about intelligibility, amongst which only 6 had a negative connotation. About 8 words or expressions were about the judgement of correctness, or comparison to Standard varieties, amongst which 6 had a negative context, and 2 a positive one. The words that could not be categorized as part of either subcategories were semantically neutral in that sense, like 'speak', 'vocabulary', 'stumble', and 'long pauses'.

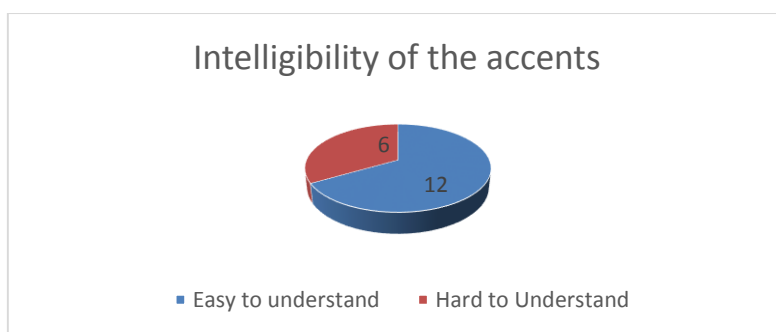


Graphic 1 - Linguistic Features

Question (3): How can empowering Brazilian speakers of English with information on the attitude of other speakers of English towards them change the colonized attitude that has been reinforced for the past centuries?

Although this research was done with just 18 speakers of English from different countries, I believe the reflections prompted by issues uncovered in the data might be able to stir and possibly change the colonized attitude that Brazilians have towards themselves. The discussions on intelligibility, standardness, nativeness, and authorship of self were found in the data and confronted with ELF-based theoretical constructs. Those topics were developed in a way that questioned the *status quo* of Brazilians' and other BESs' linguistic and cultural dependence and submission to the hegemonic English speaking countries. I advocated for linguistic creativity and target flexibility in teaching to facilitate the appropriation of English as a lingua franca.

As for **intelligibility**, we could see that 12 out of 18 participants considered the accents in the audio easy to understand. The ones that classified it as hard to understand by choosing 'No' for the intelligibility question, explained that they had to concentrate or strain to grasp what was being said. Therefore, even to those 6 participants with difficulty in understanding the audio segments, after some effort and time for adjustment, it was possible to comprehend the accents. That information can deconstruct the negative image of the Brazilian accent of English as unintelligible, an idea so commonly reinforced by many English teachers who have not been exposed to the internationality of English. As Jenkins (2000) contends, it is much more common for non-bilinguals (learners in the beginning stages) to have pronunciation difficulties that would cause a communication breakdown.



Graphic 2 – Answers of the question “Are the accents easy to understand?”

According to the results of this study, a proficient Brazilian speaker of English is more likely to be well understood by people who have had some previous contact with Brazilians or those who have a *linguacultural* background that facilitates their comprehension of a Brazilian Portuguese-influenced English. An example would be an

interlocutor with a multilingual repertoire, who would have had more practice in profiling the pronunciation differences or just had familiarity with other Romantic languages such as Spanish, French, and Italian.

When it comes to **standardness**, the results showed that those people who use English in more international environments were less concerned with form (the Inner Circle participants living in Florida, USA), London and Brighton, England) than those who learned how to speak English at school as ESL or EFL (the Outer and Expanding Circles participants living in Uganda, Botswana, Thailand, and Poland). Those percentages and comments attest that it is the stakeholders and the teaching materials publishing industry who have established reproducing an arbitrary Standard dialect as the ultimate goal. Again, this is not about rebelling against the Standard varieties, but placing it in the category of one of the useful ways of using English, which is not better (or worse) than the other possible realizations of the language. To put it another way, the speakers of English in Brazil still need to learn a Standard variety for specific purposes, however, *linguaging* (Cf. Chapter 2), according to the communicative needs of the moment in an intelligible manner to the listener is supposed to be taken as legitimate English. After all, if the use of language implies interaction, social rules apply, which means there is room for Standard and for whatever language variety the speaker wishes to use.

The **nativeness** debate and the **authorship of self** in English proved to be overlapping topics, for the myth of the native speaker's authority over a language seems to haunt most of the participants of this research. The ones who would be classified as native speakers, the American and the English participants, responded with a very intelligibility-oriented view, but with the 'attitude' of the ones who can tell if the accents sound 'natural', 'normal', or 'okay'. All the others participating in the assessment of the accents felt the need to compare the accents in the audio to the native speakers they had had contact with previously. The good news to the Brazilian speakers of English is in the fact that the native speakers mentioned by the participants only *conceptually* exist when the English referred to is the one spoken in their home countries. Though, if the English being evaluated is produced by people who have a more transnational communicative goal, the language will be featuring as a Lingua Franca. This is where the unspoken agreement between the interlocutors involved is likely to overrule their submission to standardness, as they bend the language into serving their contextualized needs.

Once the Brazilian speakers of English stop seeing themselves as the ones who have to apologize for having an English that is different from the others, we will embrace the fact

English belongs to whoever speaks it, as it should be with any. This language is indeed ours, it is out there for us to mold it into what we need it to be to suit our particular interactive needs. The scenarios where ELF is used have become more and more complex, and the subjects involved in this process are supposed to take the agency of those changes. Authorship, as a synonym or ownership, is something to be taken, not given.

Question (4): What pedagogical path(s) may be considered as a critically engaged response to the attitude towards the Brazilian accent revealed in this study?

Although the responses to the audio segment were quite varied, they definitely point to the need of more awareness concerning the implications of the internationalization of English. In consonance with Kumaradivelu (2015), I would say that raising awareness only is not enough. Researchers and teachers should work together to take actions towards the elaboration of an epistemology of the South (Sousa Santos 2014) in order to de-colonize (Mignolo 2010) the attitude we, Brazilian speakers of English, among innumerable aspects, also have towards our own English.

In the pedagogical implications chapter of the analyses, some of the actions suggested were: (1) using the center-oriented materials critically through comparisons with other Englishes, including the local one, deconstructing the system of values that places the MESSs' varieties as better than others; (2) elaborating ELF-aware materials by considering some sociolinguistic principles; (3) and using internet realia or realistic ESL/EFL resources, such as websites with audio activities and interviews with multilingual speakers of English.

Finally, despite the limitations of a long-distance collected data, the research questions proposed in this study were answered through the combination of argumentative theorization with ELF-related topics in the analysis of the participants' attitudes towards the Brazilian accents in the audio segments. Although, I may say that the pre-established objectives of this study were reached, the fight for the recognition of the legitimacy of BESs' accents and Englishes goes on, because the *actions* towards these and other goals have just started.

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APPENDICES

Audio Transcription

This audio transcription was done as a written account of the words used in the audio samples sent through email to the subjects. They contained two Brazilian young ladies speaking English and answering the question “How can the teaching of English be improved in Brazil?” The words that are in bold and were phonetically transcribed are the ones that deviated from the standard pronunciation(s), characterizing an identifiable markedness in the accent of the speakers.

First Speaker:

I think English teaching in Brazil should start sooner in schools no matter if they are **public** /'pʊblɪk/ or private, and **kids** /kɪdz/ should start learning English as they **start** /ɪz'tɑ:rt/ to learn **Portuguese** /'pɔ:rtʊ'gi:z/. In the primary side, it would be easier to get **used** /ɪʊzd/ to **the** /de/ second language. And also I have the feeling **that** /dæt/ sometimes English is not **taken** /'teɪken/ as seriously as it should. So the school should care about it too, should pay attention to it because English is really important, as I said before, because it is the most spoken language in the **world** /wɜ:ld/.

Second Speaker:

So, first of all, I think **the** /de/ English doesn't have the importance the other subjects have. So we spend a lot of time with biology, chemistry, and physics and during a week we only have two hours **to** /tʃo/ learn English and is not **the** /de/ complete English **that** /dæt/ we were supposed **to** /tʃo/ learn. It's just grammar and vocabulary that has hum...a aim **that** /dæt/ is to **to** /tʃo/ pass in the big test in the end of **the** /de/ High School. I think that the teachers should be more concerned about listening and speaking because that helps a lot to the person who wants to travel and wants to communicate in English. I think that's a good point. And the materials used in class are not complete enough, they don't explain grammar properly and we basically have to memorize all of the grammar and don't understand how it works.