

**Unveiling Pre-service Teachers' Attitudes Towards their own English Accents:  
Implications of the Standard Language Ideology in a Colombian University**

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Trabajo de Grado para Optar al Título de Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras con Énfasis en  
Inglés

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Bucaramanga, Colombia

2023

### **Acknowledgements**

We wish to express our deepest gratitude to our director Dr Dunia Catalina Mendez Vallejo for her commitment, patience and dedication to this research project. She was a considerable support to us throughout this long process. Her knowledge, feedback, advice and ideas nurtured and guided the present study. We cannot forget to thank Prof Silvia Andrea Tarazona Ariza, who got us into the realms of Sociolinguistics, for being such an inspiration to us. Her enjoyable educational classes were the kick-start of an interest in this discipline that we hope to pursue in the years to come. We also like to extend our gratitude to Dr Heidy Alegría Gutiérrez León for teaching us that the field of research is not limited to a single method. Her lessons made us realise that all research methods are valuable and worthy to be conducted, even if our immediate context favours just one. Finally, we want to thank our families for their support, encouragement and unconditional faith in us. Without them, this investigation would not have been possible.

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### **Abstract**

**Title:** Unveiling Pre-service Teachers' Attitudes Towards their Own English Accents: Implications of the Standard Language Ideology in a Colombian University\*

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**Key words:** Standard, Ideologies, Accents, Attitudes, Standard Language Ideology (SLI)

#### **Description:**

The present case study seeks to detect pre-service teachers' attitudes towards their own accents and the relation of these attitudes to the standard language ideology (SLI) at Universidad Industrial de Santander (UIS). This research follows a mixed approach that implemented four types of instruments. First, a Relational Content Analysis to the book used in the University Phonetics and Phonology courses. Second, a set of interviews to the Phonetics and Phonology instructors. Third, a Likert scale questionnaire to pre-service teachers. And finally a set of hypothetical-situation interviews to pre-service teachers. These four instruments helped achieve the objectives of this research. The findings indicate that in general, participants have positive attitudes towards their own accents. The justification for their positive attitudes involves three main aspects 1) the recognition of accent diversity, 2) the importance of intelligibility and 3) the respect for identities. Additionally, some inconsistencies were found during the results analysis. Said inconsistencies show that it may be possible for the pre-service teachers to unconsciously hold negative attitudes towards their accents, as a result of the influence of the Standard Language Ideology (SLI). Therefore, it is essential to question and debate about language ideologies and language attitudes amongst pre-service teachers; so as to promote environments of reflection, inclusion and comfort in the classroom.

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\* Undergraduate dissertation

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## Resumen

**Título:** Desvelando las Actitudes de los Profesores en Formación Hacia sus Propios Acentos en Inglés: Implicaciones de la Ideología de la Lengua Estándar en una Universidad Colombiana\*

**Autores:** Sharon Yisell Chacón Parada y Juan David Rojas Orozco\*\*

**Palabras clave:** Estándar, Ideologías, Acentos, Actitudes, Ideología de la lengua estándar (ILE)

**Descripción:**

El presente estudio de caso pretende detectar las actitudes de los profesores en formación hacia su propio acento y la relación de estas actitudes con la ideología lingüística estándar (ILE) en la Universidad Industrial de Santander (UIS). Esta investigación sigue un enfoque mixto que implementa cuatro tipos de instrumentos. Primero, un Análisis de Contenido Relacional al libro utilizado en los cursos de Fonética y Fonología de la Universidad. Segundo, un conjunto de entrevistas a los instructores de Fonética y Fonología. En tercer lugar, un cuestionario de escala Likert a los profesores en formación. Y, por último, un conjunto de entrevistas sobre situaciones hipotéticas a los profesores en formación. Estos cuatro instrumentos ayudaron a alcanzar los objetivos de esta investigación. Los resultados indican que, en general, los participantes tienen actitudes positivas hacia sus propios acentos. La justificación de sus actitudes positivas tiene que ver con tres aspectos principales: 1) el reconocimiento de la diversidad de acentos, 2) la importancia de la inteligibilidad y 3) el respeto a las identidades. Además, durante el análisis de los resultados se encontraron algunas incoherencias. Dichas inconsistencias muestran que es posible que los profesores en formación mantengan inconscientemente actitudes negativas hacia sus acentos, como resultado de la influencia de la Ideología de la Lengua Estándar (ILE). Por lo tanto, es fundamental cuestionar y debatir sobre las ideologías lingüísticas y las actitudes lingüísticas entre los profesores en formación, para promover entornos de reflexión, inclusión y comodidad en el aula.

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## Introduction

### Problem Context

The historical, economical, political and cultural power of English-speaking nations has placed their language as a privileged one, to the extent of being considered as the current worldwide lingua franca (Abdullah & Chaudhary, 2012, p. 128). This reputation has contributed to its expansion amongst non-Anglophone countries, where nowadays English is part of their foreign-language teaching policies as it is the case of Colombia and its National Bilingual Programme (García & García, 2012, pp. 54-55). The inclusion of a language within the education system demands highly prepared teachers that know not only about teaching methodologies, but also about the components of language (Phonetics, Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics and Pragmatics). The latter could become a pressure since teachers in their search for 'perfection' can feel that their linguistic knowledge is not enough, especially when it comes to pronunciation<sup>1</sup>. As Arboleda & Castro (2012, p. 46) state "doubt has been cast as to whether an English teacher whose language is characterised by flaws in pronunciation, intonation, and grammar patterns, among others, is still in a position to effectively meet his students' needs for successful communication".

In order to overcome this distrust, teachers and pre-service teachers tend to choose and cultivate standard mainstream accents such as Received Pronunciation (RP) or General American (GA) (Peterson, 2020, p. 6). However, taking this approach might contribute to the development of particular attitudes towards non-standard<sup>2</sup> varieties and the perpetuation of

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<sup>1</sup> This study uses the terms accent and pronunciation interchangeably seeing that accents are "*the way in which people pronounce words*" (Cambridge University Press, n.d.).

<sup>2</sup> Although we do understand that using the terms standard/ non-standard may imply the recognition of standardisation and standard varieties as a central point when dealing with accents (Milroy, 2001, p. 534). It is important to highlight that for the *practicality* of this study, the terms 'standard' and 'non-standard' will be used in order to facilitate the comparisons between two different varieties of the English language that people are familiar with. We do not pretend to mean that certain varieties are better than others or that languages are not continuously evolving.

standard varieties as the ultimate goal of language learning. Considering that for a great majority of English speakers, English is not their L1 (Garcia, 2013, p. 114), it is even more frequent to encounter phonetic and phonological diversity. There are “students increasingly arriving in the classroom speaking a dialect which is markedly different from Standard English. The question of just how much local phonology, grammar, vocabulary and pragmatics should be allowed in is difficult and contentious” (Crystal, 2003, p. 176).

Taking into account the previous fact, it is important to evaluate how teachers and pre-service teachers feel about different varieties that do not follow the expected canons because said attitudes can affect their own learning processes and, potentially, the processes of their students or future students. These viewpoints are particularly adopted during the first semesters of BAs in Foreign Languages Education when phonetics and phonology courses are taken (Lombana, 2015, pp. 39-40), as it happens at Universidad Industrial de Santander (UIS). Although perspectives can change over time, if they are not given special attention from the very beginning, future teachers can fall into the trap of “privileging one language [variety], ‘standard’ English, over others that students bring to the classroom. Privileging one form of English at the expense of others marginalises certain” (Lawton & De Kleine, 2020, p. 197).

This research project expects to shed light on the understanding of attitudes towards English accents amongst pre-service teachers in the first three semesters of their BA in Foreign Languages Education at UIS and the relationship of this understanding with the standard language ideology. The present work will come in handy to linguists and teachers interested in the effects that traditional pronunciation teaching has upon pre-service teachers’ feelings, opinions and behaviours towards their own and others’ ways of speaking English. Even if the discoveries cannot be generalised, they can support similar works, challenge ingrained concepts and be a precedent for future research. The impact that imposing standard varieties can have on the flourishing of confident orality in an L2 should never be underestimated.

Seeing the implications that the standard language ideology can have in the attitudes that pre-service teachers take towards their own accents, the current study seeks to answer the following question:

### **Research Question**

What are pre-service teachers' attitudes towards their own accents and how are they influenced by the standard language ideology?

### **Justification**

Within the Linguistics field, there is a common consensus, especially amongst descriptivist Linguists, that all languages and lects are equally sophisticated, valuable and regulated (Lawton & De Kleine, 2020, p. 197). Nevertheless, language instructors may be tempted to use only one specific variety in the name of 'pragmatism'. A tradition that rather than being helpful, can be counterproductive because of linguistic diversity amongst today's English learners (Jenkins & Mauranen, 2019, p. 7). Kirkpatrick remarks that "this adherence to the LI standard has been widely criticised in the field of applied linguistics for its *inappropriateness, irrelevance, and lack of attainability* in most non-Anglophone countries" (as cited in Chan, 2016, p. 286). Therefore, exploring the outcomes of the standard language ideology in pre-service teachers' outlooks on English accents in the Colombian context is meaningful to either validate or invalidate its serious repercussions.

The attitudes that English learners have towards their accents can undermine their confidence in their linguistic performance. The fact of not sounding 'native-like' might prevent students from participating orally in and outside the classroom. When compared to standard varieties, McKay (2002) asserts that even L2 English speakers, whose mastering of the language is advanced, are prompt to feel insecure and discriminated against (as cited in Chan, 2016, p. 286). As the way people speak is part of who they are, favouring accuracy over

intelligibility can make learners perceive their identities at risk. That is the case of Singapore, where official institutions discouraged the use of an English that does not follow standard parameters, even if the Germanic language is the L1 of many citizens (Galloway and Rose, 2015, p. 109). In Colombian society, it is also noticeable the preference for so-called 'neutral' varieties amongst English learners and English teachers disregarding their linguistic backgrounds (Guerrero & Quintero, 2009, pp. 136-137).

Even though there is still a long way ahead to make people realise the necessity of embracing phonological differences in ELT (English Language Teaching) pedagogies, teachers and pre-service teachers play a main role to raise awareness of the adverse effects that demanding a single pronunciation model can have. In Weaver's words (2019, p. 42) "working towards acceptance and inclusion of linguistic diversity in education must arguably begin with *examining the beliefs and ideologies of instructors*". As promoters of language learning, English teachers have a great responsibility to guarantee their students' well-being, including their linguistic preferences. Instead of dismissing and forbidding previous learners' language knowledge, teachers can take advantage of it to reach a balance between comfort, identity and intelligibility. Kuos (2006) suggests "English language instructors should . . . rectify their conception of attachment to the linguistic norms of native speakers of English" (as cited in Moradkhani & Asakereh, 2018, p. 11). This rectification may allow non-native speakers to use the language without fearing sounding too 'foreigner-like' and to feel comfortable in their own accents.

## **Objectives**

### **General Objective**

To detect pre-service teachers' attitudes towards their own accents and the relation of these attitudes to the standard language ideology.

### **Specific Objectives**

To examine whether the book used at UIS in the course of English phonetics and phonology peddles the standard language ideology or not.

To recognise teachers' attitudes towards English accents and the role of teaching and learning pronunciation.

To identify the direct and indirect attitudes that pre-service teachers hold towards the English accent they currently have and towards the English accents they are learning.

## **Chapter One: Theoretical Framework**

In the following lines a sufficient insight into the most relevant concepts regarding attitudes towards accents, language ideologies and the standard language ideology is addressed.

### **1.1. Attitudes towards accents (Language attitudes)**

The use of language involves decisions. Every time a speaker utters a word or a sentence over other forms, they are making linguistic choices. These elections are the result of attitudes towards lects (accents, dialects, etc.) and the people who use them (Dewi & Setiadi, 2018, p.370). Human beings either *approve* or *disapprove* certain uses of the language and this is expressed in their *evaluative reactions*. Even though speakers do not always acknowledge their preferences, many of them believe in the existence of two types of language: “appropriate” (what they use, or desire to use) and “inappropriate”(what others use) (Van Herk, 2012, p. 148). In the case of foreign language learning, the language that usually receives the latter label is the one that learners use. Dewaele & McCloskey (2015, p. 222) explain that these attitudes “are partly linked to people’s prejudices . . . [but they] also fall partly outside people’s conscious control and are affected by their personality profile, their linguistic background and general sociobiographical variables”.

From the first years of life, speakers develop awareness of their belonging to a particular variety and start to deduce others' social group memberships based on their language use (Kinzler et al., 2010). These associations come along with evaluative reactions towards varieties that have nothing to do with the properties of the varieties themselves, but rather with established stereotypes about them (Giles & Niedzielski, 1998). These stereotypes, ultimately, form mental categorisations, which can be activated by merely listening to another person's accent. When these categories are created and become noticeable, stereotypes are widely popularised, then those stereotypes have the power to alter people's perceptions of other communities of speakers (Dragojevic et al., 2018).

Language attitudes are classified into two major types: evaluative reactions towards speakers of the variety and evaluative reactions towards the language variety itself (Dragojevic et al., 2021, p. 61). The evaluative reactions towards speakers are generally analysed based on two evaluative dimensions: status (prestige, intelligence, education, etc.) and solidarity (attractiveness, friendliness, kindness, etc.) (Dragojevic et al., 2017, p. 386). Whilst, evaluative reactions towards the variety, itself, take account of three evaluative dimensions: structure (logical, illogical, ambiguous, unambiguous, etc.), value (choppy, fluent, abrupt, flowing, etc.) and sound (harsh, soft, elegant, illegelant etc.) (Schoel et al., 2013).

Bearing in mind these speech evaluation instruments, there are three principal approaches to study language attitudes: 1) the societal treatment, 2) direct and 3) indirect (Chan, 2016, p. 288). According to McKenzie (2010) these categories can be understood as follows: 1) the societal treatment is an unobtrusive approach in which attitudes are derived from observations and documents (p. 41), 2) the direct approach is noticeable since participants justify 'straightforwardly' their beliefs, opinions and feelings towards language use (p. 42) and 3) the indirect approach is subtle because the people under scrutiny are dubious about the

purpose of the research; that is why measuring languages attitudes through this approach is considered to go beyond humans' conscious awareness (p. 45).

Researchers have also divided the study of language attitudes into five independent but complementary lines of research that focus on: 1) documentation, 2) explanation, 3) development, 4) consequences or 5) change. Studies centred on *documentation* scrutinise people's current attitudes towards language varieties and speakers of those varieties; having a descriptive nature. Investigations directed to *explanation* look for the reasoning behind samples' attitudes. Researchers concentrated on *development* intend to look into the ways attitudes have evolved through time and towards what languages or varieties. Analyses on *consequences* bring attention to the way language attitudes influence behaviours and contexts. And explorations into *change* aim to create and evaluate the success of possible interventions made to ameliorate the effects of the identified consequences (Dragojevic et al., 2021, pp. 63 - 69).

## 1.2. Language ideologies

Human attitudes towards language features are heavily influenced by their personal - sometimes collective- *linguistic beliefs*, especially when it comes to teaching and learning languages (Lew & Siffrinn, 2019, p. 376). These beliefs are known as Language Ideologies, which can be defined as social outlooks about the nature, structure and use of language (Silverstein, 1979, p. 193). People's thoughts and assumptions about language and communication can also heavily impact their behaviours and attitudes in society. For example, authors such as Vogl (2018, p. 190) express that Language Ideologies have the ability to either include or preclude linguistic variation and diversity depending on a specific social group's interests.

The latter aligns with Judith Irvine's critical stance on Language Ideologies as carriers of sets of political and moral affairs (Irvine, 1989, p. 255). Political in the sense that powerful



social institutions can influence peoples' language ideologies; therefore their social dynamics. And moral, meaning that language ideologies consider relationships between societies and language use that are considered more 'correct' by most people. That is to say "they represent not only how language is, but how it ought to be" (Woolard, 2020, p. 2).

The importance of revealing these ideologies relies on the fact that even if they glide under people's noses, society is still unaware of their existence, which ultimately ends in their reproduction and permanence (Cushing, 2021b, p. 322). These notions thrive in rich environments and social spheres and even make their way into decision-making situations that shape educational curricula and practices (Razfar, 2012, p. 132). Seeing that linguistic identities and varieties can be regulated by academic institutions, through discourses, policy-making regulations and documents, schools and universities are influential to its establishment. This is something referred to as 'Linguistic Engineering' (Shohamy, 2006, p. 64).

### **1.3. Standard Language Ideology (SLI)**

The Standard Language Ideology (SLI) is a concept that has been present in and out of foreign language classrooms for many years. Societies tend to favour certain varieties over others and these preferences are also passed down to linguistic pedagogies. Lippi-Green (1994, p. 166) defines this phenomenon as "a bias toward an *abstracted, idealised, homogeneous* spoken language which is imposed from above, and which takes as its model the written language. The most salient feature is the goal of suppression of variation of all kinds". This attempt to abolish linguistic diversity is supported by the idea that if people strive tirelessly to sound differently, they can achieve it. The trouble with this so-called anti-non-standard ideology is that it imposes:

a massively steeper burden on speakers of some varieties than on others. When people say that speakers of a non-standard variety "could change if they wanted to," they are in effect saying, "even though it would require a massive effort, erasure of their identity,

and rejection of their home language and community norms, and *even then* it would still not be completely successful. (Van Herk, 2012, p. 155).

The outcomes of these futile endeavours can be explained in the light that it is impossible that a living language gets fully standardised in its spoken form (Ayres-Bennet & Bellamy, 2021, p.4). Although there are varieties that claim to be standard, it is possible to point out dissimilarities within said varieties as a result of their constant usage and evolution amongst different social and cultural groups. Considering the previous discussion, Milroy & Milroy (2012, p. 19) state that it would be fitting to regard “standardisation as an ideology, and a standard language as *an idea in the mind* rather than a reality – a set of abstract norms to which actual usage may conform to a greater or lesser extent”.

This conformity responds to social demands of particular settings that privilege and adopt the standard language ideology. Bourdieu believes that part of this conformity is the result of speakers learning from a young age “that the ability to succeed in a given field is largely dependent on the congruency between one’s way of speaking and the field they occupy” (Bourdieu, 1991). An adaptation that, eventually, establishes and preserves a linguistic and social superiority of certain speakers of the language. This explains why speakers of standard and mainstream varieties tend to have a practical advantage; in comparison to speakers from not-so mainstream varieties, who end up in lower-ranked spaces within social structures, meaning that the Standard Language Ideology prompts ‘hegemonic domination’ of standard varieties (Kroskrity 2004, p. 509; Silverstein 1996, p. 284).

## **Chapter two: Methodological Design**

### **2.1 Type of Research**

Regarding the nature of our participants and the context in which they are in, an instrumental case study method is adopted. The uniqueness of our small sample is something

to be highlighted seeing that we are focused on pre-service teachers in the early stages of their BA. This allows us to get the perspectives of people who are in the transition from secondary school to university life. Bearing in mind the complexity of social truths, studying folks becomes fundamental to have a deeper understanding of people's experiences (Adelman et al., 1980 as cited in Cohen et al., 2018, p. 379). By focusing on fewer participants, the representation of their realities is more likely to be specific and detailed. Thus, the insights of this case can be useful for future adjustments to phonetics and phonology courses available at universities such as UIS.

This research involves qualitative and quantitative data which is analysed in the light of a constructivist approach. This approach comes in handy since our intention is to gain some insights into the experiences of a specific group (experiences that vary from person to person) (Adom et al., 2016, p. 6). Along with this approach, our mixed study is guided by a phenomenological paradigm in order to identify the people's consciousness towards our phenomenon. The significance of this paradigm relies on the fact that we attempt to grasp how our participants perceive the world and themselves whilst they are exploring their surroundings and realities (Shudak, 2018, p. 1248).

## **2.2 Population and Sampling**

This research considers not only human actors but also non-human actors. As for the latter, our sample includes two chapters from the book *'English Phonetics and Phonology: a practical course'* by Peter Roach (4th edition) as corpus. This book in particular is the one used as the central material in the three-level course of Phonetics and Phonology, which is compulsory in the BA in Foreign Languages Education's curriculum that the university offers. The specific chapters that are taken on board are chapters one and twenty. The reason for

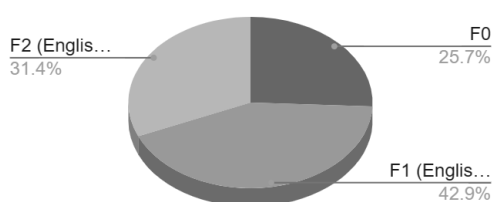
choosing them relies on the fact that they are the only chapters that deal specifically with accent variation.

For the selection of our human participants, accessibility is key. That is why our current University was selected. The people under scrutiny are 35 pre-service teachers taking the courses of English Phonetics and Phonology at Universidad Industrial de Santander (UIS) during the academic period 2022-1. Pre-service teachers can be identified as university students that are enrolled in a teacher preparation programme and being trained to become educators themselves (Mooi & Mohsin, 2014, p. 878). From the thirty-five participants, nine (25.7%) belonged to the course *Foundations of English Articulatory Phonetics*, fifteen (42.9%) to the course *English Phonetics and Phonology I*, and finally, eleven (31.4%) to the course of *English Phonetics and Phonology II* (see figure 1).

**Figure 1.**

*Participants enrolled in each English Phonetics and Phonology course at UIS. Sample description.*

**Participants from each course**



As our aspiration is to acknowledge the influence of the standard language ideology on students' linguistic attitudes, our participants also include their four teachers who are in charge of the Phonetics and Phonology classes since they have the potential to shape students' outlooks.

For the election of the population mentioned above, non-probability samples were applied, meaning that participants were non-randomly chosen; rather they were selected based

on our aims (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 214). From a wider population (all pre-service teachers in the BA), only a section of them is required (pre-service teachers taking Phonetics and Phonology courses). This research uses different types of non-probability samples 1) convenience because of nearness and access to our sample, 2) purposive as our study will be enriched by the teachers' academic background as well as the written course material by Peter Roach and 3) volunteer because participants from the section of the population had the freedom to either participate or not in the investigation.

In order to have access to our population the following procedures were taken into account: 1) teachers in charge of the phonetics and phonology classes were informed about the project and they signed a formal consent that allows us to invite their students to be part of the research (Appendix A), 2) teachers and pre-service teachers participating in the recorded interviews signed a consent form before conducting them (Appendix B), and 3) pre-service teachers agreed with a participation consent before answering the questions in the survey (Appendix C).

Moreover, to encourage the participants' cooperation, this research preserves the anonymity of its sample by excluding their names in the raw data transcription and using gender-neutral pronouns in the analysis process. Throughout the investigation, the population's privacy and identities were protected from external people and the data was handled merely by the researchers.

### **2.3 Data Collection Instruments**

For the collection data process, four different instruments were applied. The first one is a relational content of analysis regarding two chapters from Peter Roach's book. This analysis was useful for examining the existence of the standard language ideology in the course materials.

Second, a semi-structured interview for the teachers was carried out. This face-to-face interview consisted of eight questions that allowed us to recognise their beliefs and perceptions regarding accents and pronunciation teaching and learning (Appendix D). For the creation of the questions, we took ideas from the work of Moradkhani & Asakereh (2018, p. 17) and Arboleda & Castro (2012, p. 61).

Third, a semi-structured five-question interview for the pre-service teachers participants took place so as to *indirectly* identify their thoughts and assumptions about English accents through hypothetical situations (Appendix E).

Lastly, a survey was implemented to *directly* pinpoint the pre-service teachers' attitudes towards their own and standard accents by providing eighteen statements about feelings and beliefs regarding English accents (Appendix F). This survey took into consideration some questions from Moradkhani & Asakereh (2018, p. 16) and Fang (2017, pp. 153-155). This collecting data instrument included a Likert scale to measure the level of agreement; its possible answers were: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, or Strongly Agree. Furthermore, this questionnaire had a socio-demographic section with six questions in order to get to know our participants' features and backgrounds.

Both sets of interviews were carried out in situ by the researchers and were recorded with the consent of the participants (Appendix B). It is worth mentioning that during the interviews, the use of Spanish was allowed to ensure that our participants felt at ease.

## **2.4 Resources and analysis techniques**

For the data analysis, both sets of interviews were uploaded to the IBM Watson 'Speech to Text' (an audio-to-text software) that helped us transcribe them. After the transcription of the data, through a systematic study of the interviews, categories were set based on the emergent topics on the answers of the questions. Categories that will be covered in depth in sections 3.2.1 and 3.4.1. Some of the questions were carefully designed bearing in mind previously thought

categories and expecting to get emergent subcategories. The systematic study of the answers was registered in memos (Birks et al., 2008, p. 69). This technique includes: transcribing the raw data, selecting relevant information, colour-coding said information based on the recurrence and occurrence of certain topics, creating categories and subcategories that are related to each other, detecting relationships, analysing and discussing.

In order to interpret the answers of the survey, a spreadsheet software was used to organise the information and facilitate the quantification of the data. This tool provided us with percentages that showed us tendencies and intensities within the population (McKenzie, 2010, p. 25).

When it comes to the examination of the chapters from the book, a relational content analysis technique was employed to go beyond what the text says and find out the connection between Peter Roach's ideas and the Standard Language Ideology (Abdollahzadeh & Baniasad-Azad, 2010, p. 5). This technique consists of dividing the corpus into units of meaning which can be either: words, sentences, paragraphs, etc. This research takes into consideration excerpts that mention the concept of either accent or pronunciation. After that, the units of meaning are classified into their corresponding categories that are created based on the concepts to be analysed. For this study the categories are 'standard accents', 'non-standard accents' and 'accent diversity'. Then, coding rules are established for organising the excerpts into their respective categories. The coding rules for this investigation are covered thoroughly in chapter three: results, section *3.1.1*. Finally, relationships between concepts are identified and analysed to understand the intentions of the selected corpus. In the case of this research, the link between excerpts will reveal whether the book encourages the Standard Language Ideology or not (Cohen et al., 2018, pp. 668-685).

## 2.5 Schedule of Activities

In the following table, the planned schedule of activities of this study can be found. It covers a sequence of the required actions that were carried out in a span of fourteen weeks (matching the academic calendar for 2022-1).

**Table 1.**  
*Schedule of Activities*

Week	Date	Activity
Week 1	18th April-22th April	Ask for permission and make invitations
Week 2	25th April-29th April	Book chapters analysis.
Week 3	2nd May- 6th May	Interview to teachers.
Week 4	9th May-13th May	Interview to students taking the course foundations of Articulatory Phonetics
Week 5	16th May-20th May	Interview to students taking the course English Phonetics and Phonology 1.
Week 6	23rd May-27th May	Interview to students taking the course English Phonetics and Phonology 2.
Week 7	30th May-3rd June	Survey application to all the participants from the three English Phonetics and Phonology courses.
Week 8	6th June- 10th June	First progress report to the Research Project director.
Week 9	13th June-17th June	Data analysis- teacher's interviews.
Week 10	20th June- 24th June	Data analysis- Interview to students taking the course foundations of English Phonetics and Phonology.
Week 11	18th July- 22nd July	Data analysis- Interview to students taking the course English Phonetics and Phonology 1.
Week 12	25th July-29th July	Data analysis- Interview to students taking the course English Phonetics and Phonology 2.
Week 13	1st August- 5th August	Data analysis- Survey application



		to all the participants from the three English Phonetics and Phonology courses. And proofreading.
Week 14	8th August- 11th August	Final report to the Bachelors' dissertation committee.

## Chapter Three: Results

### 3.1 Content Analysis of the Book Used in English Phonetics and Phonology Courses at UIS

#### 3.1.1 Findings on Content Analysis of the Book Used in English Phonetics and Phonology Courses at UIS

This section tackles the results of the first specific objective *to examine whether the book used at UIS in the course of English phonetics and phonology peddles the standard language ideology or not*. These outcomes are a result of the relational content analysis carried out to the book 'English Phonetics and Phonology: A practical course by Peter Roach' (4th edition). This widespread pedagogical material was first published in 1983, meaning that it has been circulating in the field of English teaching pronunciation for almost forty years all around the globe (according to Roach, n.d.). The last edition of the book, the fourth edition, was released in 2009 and it is the one considered in this research.

According to English Phonetics and Phonology teachers at UIS, this particular course book has been used in the BA in Foreign Language Education for little over thirty years, which includes the times when most of them were students. During one of the questions of the interviews (Q3), teachers explain the reasons for having Peter Roach's book as their main source in the course of English Phonetics and Phonology. In their opinion, the fact that it is a good worldwide reference in the realm of English Phonetics and Phonology makes it appealing for curriculum creators. Furthermore, the structure of the book allows pre-service teachers to

get a well-rounded understanding of the nature of sounds and speech phenomena in the English language; including vowels, consonants, stress, connected speech and intonation. However, they all seem to agree with the point that pre-service teachers need more sources of information than the book. To do so, English Phonetics and Phonology instructors look for other materials that are more practical for students, have a wider variety of exercises, go deep into technicalities and use auxiliary materials from the web.

For this relational content analysis, some excerpts were selected from chapters one and twenty of Peter Roach's greatest publication. The criteria for the selection of these excerpts are based on the presence of the term *accent* or *pronunciation*. Explicit information as well as implicit information are considered within the analysis. The coding rules to classify each excerpt into a category are the following:

**Table 2.**

Coding rules for the book analysis

<b>Category</b> (Group of ideas that share the same features)	<b>Description</b> (Description of the category)	<b>Accepted Codes</b> (Terms admitted within the same category)
Standard accents	This category includes all the excerpts that go over standard varieties of English accents.	Standard, Received pronunciation (RP), BBC pronunciation, Public School Pronunciation (PSP), General British (GB), General American (GA), Network English.
Accent Diversity	This category covers all the excerpts that point out the diversity of English accents.	Different accents, variety of a language, EIL (English as an International Language), variety, different from
Non-standard Accents	This category encompasses all the excerpts that regard non-standard varieties of English accents.	Midlands and north-western accents, Scottish and Irish accents, non-english accents,

accents different from GA,  
influenced pronunciation.<sup>3</sup>

In chapter one, the author gives an overview of the kind of English pronunciations that can be found in the world, his reasoning behind the selection of the specific accent that is covered throughout the book and the public to which the course is aimed at. The public he envisioned included linguistic researchers, English language teachers and future English teachers within university settings who, in his words, '*need an advanced knowledge of the principles regulating English sounds*' (Roach, 2009, p. 1). Regarding the content of chapter twenty, the author comes back to the topic of accent diversity, but this time he provides general features of some accents that deviate from the accent covered in the book.

Considering the category *standard accents*, the author states that his book delves into the features of the accent that is 'normally chosen' and 'most often recommended' for learners studying British English, being RP (Received Pronunciation) (Roach, 2009, pp. 1, 3). Nevertheless, the writer disagrees with the latter name, RP, and the implications of it. In his view, using the adjective 'received' in its name insinuates that any other accent -official or not, standard or not- is not as respectable and endorsed as RP, especially in the field of education (Roach, 2009, p. 3). He also disagrees with the use of terms such as PSP (Public School Pronunciation) or GB (General British) that do not represent the totality of the population they are supposed to represent. Meaning that neither every speaker of this standard accent attended a Public School nor every speaker from Great Britain speaks this way. For the author, a more accurate term is BBC English; the reasoning behind his preference relies on the sense of steadiness present amongst broadcasters' speech from different parts of the UK, particularly

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<sup>3</sup> It is worth mentioning that even if the difference between the categories *accent diversity* and *non-standard accents* might seem similar at first glance, this study makes a distinction between the two of them. Thus, *accent diversity* involves all the excerpts that recognise the diversity of English accents without mentioning a specific accent; whilst *non-standard accents* takes in the excerpts that discuss some non-standard varieties of English accents.

those belonging to BBC. This is exactly the accent the writer describes in his work and the term he uses throughout the coursebook to refer to the Standard Variety of British English.

Choosing BBC as the main standard variety discussed in his book was a careful, informed choice. The author decided to stick with this term not only because it represents the United Kingdom at large, but also because this accent: has been described the most in great detail (as compared to others), it is the accent commonly selected by language teaching authorities when it comes to introducing British English to foreign learners and is the one variety that is preferred for textbooks and dictionaries when dealing with pronunciation matters (Roach, 2009, p. 4). Even if the BBC accent enjoys such a popularity and it is the cornerstone of Peter Roach's book, the author remarks that he is certainly "not suggesting that you [English learners] should try to change your pronunciation", but that it is important to focus on the standard in order to understand the differences between it and learners' accents (Roach, 2009, p. 4). For him, this attention to the standard is not the same as saying English learners must perfect the BBC accent; rather they must prioritise communication. Therefore, when referring to pronunciation courses, he clarifies that "...the model chosen is BBC (RP), but the goal is normally to develop the learner's pronunciation sufficiently to permit effective communication *with native speakers*" (Roach, 2009, p. 6).

As for category *accent diversity*, the author recognises the existence of various accents within the English language, even if his book focuses on just one of them. He acknowledges that aspects such as birthplaces, social classes, ages and educational backgrounds influence the way people pronounce words. He clarifies that when talking about accent differences these "are pronunciation differences" (Roach, 2009, p. 3). Although the writer is aware of the widespread use of the English language and all the accents that are emerging along with this process, he does not intend in his work to describe the pronunciation features that are most commonly found in global settings. On the contrary, he concentrates on just one variety of the wide palette

of possibilities. Roach, however, stresses the importance of exposing English language learners to as many varieties as possible in order to nurture their linguistic awareness. An objective that he recognises his book does not achieve.

In the matter of category *non-standard accents*, the author mentions and describes some accents from English-speaking countries that are not RP. For instance, Scottish accent, Irish accent, Welsh accent, Midlands English accent, North-western English accent and Deep South American accent. Another accent that is mentioned is what he calls an accent influenced by speakers whose L1 is Spanish, but live in the USA. Considering that not every single speaker from a particular area pronounces words in the same way as their fellow citizens, the author emphasises that using these general terms could be misleading and simplistic (Mugglestone, 2003, p. 7; Cruttenden, 2014, p. 82). Hence, all speakers are prone to have variations in their pronunciation due to their own contextual and personal characteristics. One clear example of the previous statement is that the author, himself, recounts how his pronunciation differs from BBC as a result of the places he has lived in (Midlands and north-western England). In his own accent, there are some pairs of words that are pronounced with different vowels; whilst in the BBC accent, these same pairs of words are pronounced identically (meaning they are homophones). Even if Roach sticks, most of the time, to the BBC pronunciation, these vowel differences refuse to disappear completely from his own pronunciation (Roach, 2009, p. 162).

The existence of a great variety of English accents brings about opinions on which variety would be more suitable for choosing it as a model for teaching foreigners. Roach expresses that accents such as the Scottish or the Irish do have higher appeal since they are more straightforward in the relation grapheme-phoneme, especially for foreigners who struggle in acquiring the current standard varieties (i.e BBC). In the authors' view, this opinion is neither supported nor undertaken by most English Language teachers who deem these possibilities as

non-practical seeing that they do not correspond to a standardised 'legitimised' model (Roach, 2009, p. 5; Davila, 2016, p.130).

### ***3.1.2 Analysis and Discussion on Content Analysis of the Book Used in English Phonetics and Phonology Courses at UIS***

The relational content analysis demonstrates that Peter Roach's English Phonetics and Phonology predominantly does not peddle the standard language ideology. In the excerpts analysed, the author is explicit about not forcing anyone to adopt a standard accent. Although the book does explain the features of a standard variety, the BBC pronunciation, the writer emphasises the value and practicality of other varieties; and that his intention is nothing else but informing about the most privileged variety that is normally adopted when teaching British English to foreign learners. This preference for a so-called standard variety is something that the author questions; he expresses that "each individual's speech is different from any other's; it follows from this that no one speaker can be taken to represent a particular accent or dialect, and it also follows that the idea of *a standard pronunciation is a convenient fiction, not a scientific fact*" (Roach, 2009, p. 163) as well as an imagined benchmark that does not legitimise it (Rose & Galloway, 2017, p. 7).

A convenient fiction, created and standardised a long time ago by old, traditional teachers who have perpetuated the use of the same 'unalterable' variety in education for many years (Cushing, 2021a, p. 1; Davila, 2016, p. 129). A perpetuation that is reflected in teaching materials, syllabuses and evaluation methods applied to young language learners even nowadays. This is what Roach calls the Pronunciation Teaching Paradox. English language learners, who are usually young, are being taught to speak in a traditional careful speech commonly found amongst senior citizens. Therefore, if they happen to interact with youngsters, it is quite possible that they may acquire and adopt a more modern spontaneous speech that does not respond to any other standard model commonly used in the ELT field. Thus, the most

probable outcome when turning back to their pronunciation classes is receiving failing marks, which is something the author laments (Roach, 2009, pp. 167-168; Gates & Ilbury, 2019, p. 115).

Even if Peter Roach is meticulous with his choice of words in order to respect learners' freedom to choose an accent, there are certain ideas that suggest a possible bias in favour of the standard language ideology. In chapter one, he stresses that he is not suggesting that learners should try to change their pronunciation, but he advises that learners should focus on BBC pronunciation, at least during the first stages (Roach, 2009, p. 4). In a nutshell, do not change your pronunciation, but concentrate on the standard. And even though the author claims that this concentration on the standard is exclusively for purposes of comparison, this suggestion can influence learners to modify their pronunciation since a figure of authority in the field of English Phonetics and Phonology, such as Peter Roach, is making it (Tajeddin et al., 2018, p. 303).

Another reason that questions the existence of the Standard Language Ideology in Peter's work is the fact that he, himself, declares that his book is written to help non-native speakers be intelligible enough when speaking English; while also stating that in most pronunciation courses, including his, 'the goal is normally to develop the learner's pronunciation sufficiently to permit effective communication *with native speakers*' (p. 6). Reducing the goal of English learning pronunciation to only communicating with native speakers disregards the vast majority of English speakers' worldwide who are not native (Jenkins & Mauranen, 2019, p. 4). Speakers whose aims are not necessarily to interact exclusively with native English speakers, but rather with any interlocutor, no matter their homeland (Moyer, 2007, p. 115).

Regardless of the reasons to suspect that the author is in favour of the standard language ideology, as a whole, his book reflects the opposite. Peter Roach expounds on his explanation

as to why BBC pronunciation takes the main stage of the book, without stating that this standard is the only acceptable variety. Moreover, he never expresses apathy for any other variety and makes sure to realise his readers of this diversity. The authors' choice of words never express an 'inherent' superiority of the standard varieties nor a 'noticeable' inferiority of non-standard varieties making clear once again, that all varieties are valuable. An idea that brings out that Peter Roach's *English Phonetics and Phonology: a practical course* does not promote the standard language ideology.

### **3.2 Teachers' Attitudes Towards English Accents and The Role of Teaching and Learning Pronunciation**

#### ***3.2.1 Findings on Teachers' Attitudes Towards English Accents and The Role of Teaching and Learning Pronunciation.***

This section discusses the results of the second specific objective *to recognise teachers' attitudes towards English accents and the role of teaching and learning pronunciation*. These findings are a reflection of the answers that English Phonetics and Phonology teachers provided during the semi-structured interviews. In order to guarantee their anonymity, instructors will be referred to as T1 (Teacher 1), T2 (Teacher 2), T3 (Teacher 3) and T4 (Teacher 4) in the results description. These interviews serve different purposes within the research, therefore, this section takes into consideration seven questions out of the eight questions formulated<sup>4</sup>. In Q1, teachers expressed their experience in the realm of English Phonetics and Phonology. In Q2, they were asked to give their opinion about the most important characteristics an English teacher should have regarding pronunciation. In Q4, the respondents shared their perceptions of pre-service teachers' accent preferences. In Q5, interviewees stated their position on the

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<sup>4</sup> The question excluded from this section was Q3 because it was related to the book used in English Phonetics and Phonology classes. Therefore, Q3 has already been discussed in the above section.



accents they encourage in the classroom. In Q6 and Q7, teachers indicated their opinions about broad accents and pre-service teachers who have one and in Q8, they recounted their experiences exploring their own accents when they were pre-service teachers (Appendix D). During the analysis of the interviews, the categories and subcategories created considering the following patterns:

**Table 3.**

Coding Rules for Teachers' Attitudes

<b>Category</b> (Group of ideas that share the same features)	<b>Description</b> (Description of the category)	<b>Subcategories</b> (Topics that are included within a category)
Characteristics for teaching pronunciation.	Features an English teacher should have regarding pronunciation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Good pronunciation.</li> <li>2) Knowledge of the phonetic and phonological system.</li> <li>3) Model for the students.</li> <li>4) Differences between the L1 and the TL.</li> <li>5) Teaching and assessment strategies .</li> <li>6) Students previous knowledge on pronunciation</li> <li>7) Intelligibility.</li> </ol>
Teachers' perceptions of pre-service teachers' accent preferences.	Pre-service teachers' perceived accent preferences.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Good pronunciation.</li> <li>2) Knowledge of the phonetic and phonological system.</li> <li>3) L1 influence into the TL.</li> <li>4) Personal decision on accents.</li> <li>5) Accent and identity</li> <li>6) Imitation of native speakers.</li> <li>7) Instructors' attitudes towards accents.</li> </ol>
Teachers' position on the accents they encourage in the classroom.	Teachers' thoughts about the accents that are promoted during lessons.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Intelligibility.</li> <li>2) Knowledge of the English phonetic and phonological system.</li> <li>3) Personal decision on accents.</li> </ol>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4) Imitation of native speakers.</li> <li>5) Differences between the L1 &amp; TL.</li> </ul>
Teachers' opinions about broad accents and people who speak them.	Teachers' thoughts about marked accents and their speakers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Intelligibility.</li> <li>2) Knowledge of the phonetic and phonological system.</li> <li>3) Imitation of native speakers.</li> <li>4) Differences between the L1 &amp; TL.</li> <li>5) Good pronunciation.</li> <li>6) L1 influence into the TL.</li> <li>7) Instructors' attitudes towards accents.</li> <li>8) Context and use of the language.</li> <li>9) Accent and identity.</li> </ul>
Teachers' experiences concerning their accents.	Teachers' anecdotes about their time as English pronunciation learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Curricular inclination.</li> <li>2) Good pronunciation.</li> <li>3) Personal decision on accents.</li> <li>4) Model for the students.</li> <li>5) Instructors' attitudes towards accents.</li> </ul>

Regarding Q2, the category analysed was *Characteristics for teaching pronunciation*. From which seven subcategories were identified. These subcategories are: 1) good pronunciation, 2) knowledge of the phonetic and phonological system, 3) model for the students, 4) differences between the L1 and the TL, 5) teaching and assessments strategies, 6) students previous knowledge on pronunciation and 7) intelligibility.

When considering this question (Q2), it was expected from the instructor-participants to take into account their own experiences and academic background they expressed in Q1, knowing that their experiences range from 5 to up to 32+ years working in the field of English phonetics and phonology. Surprisingly, only half of the English phonetics and phonology courses' instructors highlight the importance a teacher's pronunciation has when addressing pronunciation in the language learning classroom. They explain that in order to be a good

pronunciation teacher, teachers should be able to properly '*realise vowel sounds and consonant sounds indicative of the English language*' not only because is what is expected of them, but also because they -whether consciously or unconsciously- serve as a model and guide for their students (Cushing, 2021b, p. 321). Another characteristic -which they all mentioned- is that all pronunciation teachers should have knowledge of the phonetic and phonological system of the language they are teaching. Some of the instructors explained that knowledge on the phonetic and phonological system of the Target Language (TL) is as important as knowledge on their students L1 in contrast with the TL. In this sense, there was a general consensus among participants that the differences and similarities of these languages regarding speech phenomena is something teachers should be aware of, especially because of the possible interference between them and the difficulties this interference may have in the students' learning process (Wardhany, 2021, p. 17).

When delving into the question, two of the instructor-participants mentioned that a critical characteristic for teachers involves the constant use of different teaching and assessing methods and strategies. Treating pronunciation separate from the other skills and deeming it as important, allotting moments of the class for explicit pronunciation exercises and making sure of assessing the students is something that they do in their classes and they expect other teachers to do. They also touched on the fact that students' previous knowledge regarding pronunciation is important since it gives them a starting point to their expectations of the students' performance and input to enrich the class. T3 was a special case in the sense that they were the only one who mentioned the importance of intelligibility. They put special emphasis on the fact that since the key factor for a successful pronunciation class is comprehension and intelligibility, students must be able to understand what their instructor says in order to get the class dynamic flowing. Comprehension and successful communication will make students want to contribute, participate and learn in the classroom.

When it comes to Q4, the category considered was *Teachers' perceptions of pre-service teachers' accent preferences*. Within this category, seven subcategories were taken on board. These are: 1) good pronunciation, 2) knowledge of the phonetic and phonological system, 3) L1 influence into the TL, 4) personal decision on accents, 5) accent and identity, 6) imitation of native speakers and 7) instructors' attitudes towards accents.

When questioned about their students' preferences, instructor-participants express that their students' accent is a personal decision. They explicitly mention they can not oblige their students to speak a specific variety as it would be unfair, hence students have total and complete freedom. T1 expresses that although students are free to choose a variety of English, they are not natives and their L1 will inevitably affect the TL, so the students will always have a '*certain accent in their speech*'. Most of the instructors have noticed that their students arrive to university with the idea of following the American variety of English and imitating American native speakers' speech. The rationale behind that thought is that perhaps their students have more contact with the American culture and accent thanks to the exposure to media they can find and how widespread and popular it is. T3 does make a distinction between students with higher levels of English and students with low levels. They explain that those with higher levels tend to prefer and want to imitate the standard varieties (either British or American), while the students on the other side of the spectrum do not have a desire to stick to any standard native-like accent, they just aim for being understood and not failing the course. T3 also pointed out that in their perception students aiming to have a British accent, especially an RP (Received pronunciation) accent, are the ones who like following strict rules. Whereas, students who strive for having an American accent, they tend to enjoy mainstream American media (Peterson, 2020, p. 6). T2 highlights the fact that even if people say that their goal is not sounding native-like, in reality it is. Because as T2 utters, '*I do think that everybody unconsciously tries to imitate native speakers as best as they can.*'

T2 was also very clear on the fact that even if pre-service teachers are free to follow whatever variety they prefer. T2 -as an instructor- does not give it much thought nor much importance to other peoples' personal choices, the only thing that really matters is that pre-service teachers have a good pronunciation as well as enough knowledge of the English phonetic and phonological system. When asked to formulate more into the idea of everyone unconsciously imitating native speakers, T2 brought out the link between accent and identity. They completely disagree with theoreticians who claim that imitating native speakers can put at risk one's linguistic identity (Davies, 2008). For instance, T2 alludes that when they decided to pursue a British accent they did not think -and still not do- that they were losing a part of their identity whatsoever and they were just a Colombian person speaking English with a British accent.

Concerning Q5, the category examined was *Teachers' position on the accents they encourage in the classroom*. Within this category, five subcategories were established. These are: 1) intelligibility, 2) knowledge of the English phonetic and phonological system, 3) personal decision on accents, 4) imitation of native speakers and 5) differences between the L1 & TL.

Regarding the accents they encourage in their classroom, most instructor-participants agreed on the fact that when conveying ideas, intelligible pronunciation has the utmost importance since for them, communication is the ultimate goal of language learning (Crystal 2003; Sung, 2013). And while T1 and T3 agree on this thought, they also assert that it is important for their students to be aware of the '*phonological principles of the English language and the phonetics*' and to learn about the different varieties of English that exist in the world. This is something that T4 attempts to do in their classes. They mention other varieties of English apart from the dichotomy between a British accent or an American Accent. An attempt that coincides with Roach's (2009) perception of exposing English language learners to as

many varieties as possible in order to nurture their linguistic awareness that was mentioned in the previous section, 3.1.1. T4 also indicates the concern that pre-service teachers have for the future implications that sticking to a particular accent can have (Lawton & De Kleine, 2020, p. 204). T4 reinforces the idea that intelligibility is more crucial than accuracy. In their words pre-service teachers must focus on having '*a natural/accurate pronunciation in the sense that it's clear enough for the hearers in order to have a successful communication.*'

Some of them restate that following a variety is a personal choice people have and that while they are supposed to teach them about the standard varieties, more specifically RP accent, they do not insist on their students to speak one in order to succeed in their class. However, T2 has a completely different opinion. They do try to encourage their students to imitate native speakers of any variety -there's no special preference, but it has to be a native since for T2 they are the ideal model of pronunciation (Park, 2020, p. 13; Mariño, 2011, p. 134). Similarly, T2 insists on the idea that people endeavour to sound native like even if they do not explicitly accept it (Park, 2020 p. 6). On the other hand, T4 touches on the topic of imitation of NS (Native Speakers) by saying that they tell their students there's no need for them to sound like one. This aligns with T1's perspective of non-native speakers adopting other varieties because as they put it '*there's no such a thing as <I speak the British accent or the American accent> but I speak the English that I speak, It's a personal choice*'.

T3 points out something none of the other instructors did. They stated that while they do respect their students' personal decisions, in class they make emphasis on the need to produce English sounds as English sounds and not as Spanish sounds, respecting the integrity of the English phonemic system and making clear differences between the L1 and the TL (Liu, 2011, p. 115). For T3, it is not a problem that pre-service teachers do not sound as native as long as they do not sound exactly the same as they do when speaking their L1.

Regarding Q6 and Q7, the category studied was *Teachers' opinions about broad accents and people who speak them*. This category took into consideration nine subcategories. These are: 1) intelligibility, 2) knowledge of the phonetic and phonological system, 3) imitation of native speakers, 4) differences between the L1 & TL, 5) good pronunciation, 6) L1 influence into the TL, 7) instructors' attitudes towards accents, 8) context and use of the language and 9) accent and identity.

When describing what a strong or marked accent is for them in Q6, instructors explained that a person with a strong or marked accent tends to produce English sounds the same way they produce sounds in their L1, making obvious the lack of knowledge about differences between the L1 and the TL as well as the influence the L1 has on their production of the TL. On the one hand, T3 was explicit about this when they said that people with marked accents do not make any effort to try and produce foreign sounds as foreign sounds nor to imitate them. On the other hand, T2 voiced that people with strong accents try to enunciate every sound excessively, putting emphasis on every single sound, which makes their discourse sound way less natural and forced. Yet, when they get into the flow of conversation in an informal context, their speech is more likely to sound "accurate". T4 describes people with marked accents as people who do not try to follow standard patterns of good pronunciation, demonstrating lack of knowledge of the phonetic and phonological system (without proper intonation). That, they say, could lead to misunderstandings and miscommunication, so their focus is mainly on one's ability to use phonetic and phonological knowledge to convey clear messages and ideas -aside from accent-. Nevertheless, T4 expresses that *'the standard is the standard'*.

When asked about their personal feelings when encountering these marked accents in their classrooms, T1, T2 and T4 explain they do not feel a particular way (neither good nor bad) when their students have a specific accent as long as they can successfully communicate.

Contrarily, T3 has mixed feelings. T3 has different expectations from students depending on the phonetics and phonology course they are in. T3 says that it is not a big issue if students have a marked accent at the beginning of the Bachelor's degree. Nonetheless, T3 awaits for improvements during the courses, so that student's English accents do sound differently to their L1 accents as they progress.

Although T1 and T4 prioritise meaning, information and communication over pronunciation, when they do encounter marked accents in the classroom they react as follows. T1, for example, accepts that they do correct students when their pronunciation is not intelligible enough as a consequence of misplacing stress, confusing minimal pairs or making up words. Similarly, T4 mentions that they reiterate that students copy the most approximate pronunciation, T4 does this by overemphasising sounds and making students realise when they can be misunderstood. The latter is achieved by asking prompting questions such as '*Excuse me?*', '*Sorry?*', '*Could you repeat?*', '*I beg you pardon?*', etc.

T4 goes deeper when reflecting upon their thought evolution on accents. T4 reveals that at the beginning of their career they did require students to speak with certain English accents because doing so, may help them avoid uncomfortable situations, judgements and misunderstandings in the future. Despite having had this thought, nowadays, T4 expresses that with experience in the field of phonetics, they learnt that '*it is not necessary to sound like a native speaker from anywhere in the world*'. T4 expands this idea by affirming that learning languages should not become a matter of pretending to be someone else, rather, '*we need to keep in mind that we must keep our own identity. And as latinos, we have our own accents*'.

Teachers also mentioned the influence of settings in speech (Lawton & De Kleine, 2020, p. 205). T2, T3 and T4 do talk about their understanding of their students' use of English in different contexts. That they are aware students learn certain abilities that might not be applied to their everyday speech and will only be used in academic settings. Regarding this, T4



does expect their students to make total use of verbal and non-verbal language during academic presentations in their courses and does not pay attention to accent. However, when it comes to production assessment within the English phonetics and phonology course, T4 pays more attention to the articulation of sounds. T4 declares that in general students recognise their pronunciation weaknesses and some keep trying to correct themselves to follow standard patterns, whilst others simply do not pay much attention to it.

Respecting Q8, the category evaluated was *Teachers' experiences concerning their accents*. This category took into consideration five subcategories. These are: 1) curricular inclination, 2) good pronunciation, 3) personal decision on accents, 4) model for the students and 5) instructors' attitudes towards accents.

T1 expresses their opinion on the influence that the standard British English accent has on the undergraduate degree. Regarding their experience, it was noticeable that the contact with this variety was ubiquitous (Phillipson, 1992). Therefore, T1 wanted to adopt that accent in the first place. The exposure was perceived in the sense that they only had British-based materials, which somehow made them think that the British variety was the '*proper accent*' (Davila, 2017). T2 recounts their transition from an American-like accent to a British-like accent, which was the result of using British materials during their first years of teaching, a process that in their words was 'unconscious'.

In relation to teachers' personal decisions on accents, the participants recount different reasons that range from uncomfortable situations to self-motivation. For instance, T1 mentioned their interest in adopting a British accent in the early stages of their undergraduate education, something that switched over time. T1 indicates that their classmates all opted for a more 'rhotic' accent, more specifically a General American accent. This reality, along with some discouraging comments from their classmates about their accent, made T1 feel the necessity to fit in. Thus, T1 gave up on the idea of sounding British-like and embraced a rhotic

accent. In the case of T3, they recall their hardships as an English phonetics and phonology student back in the day. T3 struggled desperately with the production and quality of certain vowel sounds, something they viewed as a stump in the development of their accent. T3 tackled it by reviewing course material that was not covered by the course's syllabus and by allotting self-work independent from the course's work until they felt they had improved their accent and pronunciation. Likewise, T4 mentions their efforts towards self-improvement. An action that came not only from a place of struggle but from a place of self-motivation as well. T4 states their interest in the field and how committed they were with the course because T4 revelled in it.

When evoking their English phonetics and phonology courses, T2 insists on the idea of teachers as a model of pronunciation (Cushing, 2021b, p. 321); hence T2 strived to imitate their instructors. Upon being questioned about their accent, this teacher indicates that their aim at that moment was just to learn pronunciation. The accent just came along. T2 believes that back then, their accent was *'kind of neutral and maybe a Colombian accent'*. Something that did not seem to be an issue, which was consistent for almost all the participants except for T1. Even if T3 and T4 had positive experiences in their courses, they could identify that their former teachers did not welcome certain pronunciations and sometimes their classmates were ridiculed by their instructors.

The findings described above can be represented in the following table where the five categories and the fourteen subcategories are stated. This table shows the occurrence of some subcategories in just one category and the recurrence of certain subcategories in more than one category.

**Table 4.***Categories based on Recurrence and Occurrence of Teachers' Attitudes*

<b>Subcategories</b>	<b>Characteristics for teaching pronunciation</b>	<b>Teachers' perceptions of preservice teachers' accent preferences</b>	<b>Teachers' positions on the accents they encourage in the classroom</b>	<b>Teachers' opinions about broad accents and people who speak them</b>	<b>Teachers experiences' concerning their accents</b>
Good pronunciation	X	X		X	X
Knowledge of the phonetic and phonological system	X	X	X	X	
Model for the students	X				X
Differences between the L1 and the TL	X		X	X	
Teaching and assessments strategies	X				
Students previous knowledge on pronunciation	X				
Intelligibility.	X		X	X	
L1 influence into the TL		X		X	
Personal decision on accents		X	X		X

Accent and identity	X		X	
Imitation of native speakers	X	X	X	
Instructors' attitudes towards accents	X		X	X
Context and use of the language			X	
Curricular inclination				X

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### ***3.2.2 Analysis and Discussion on Teachers' Attitudes Towards English Accents and the Role of Teaching and Learning Pronunciation.***

The interviews disclose that teachers' attitudes towards English accents are generally positive, which is evidenced in the vocalisation of their thoughts on standard and non-standard varieties. In their discourse, it is noticeable that within their linguistic choices they did not use words or any type of language that could have negative connotations nor judgements towards a variety. Throughout their answers, teachers show a nonchalant attitude towards the decisions that pre-service teachers take on their English accents; they recognise that it is a personal choice. Even so, teachers reiterate the importance of having an intelligible accent to communicate with others (Rahimi & Ruzrokh 2016, p. 142). This communication can be either with a standard variety or a non-standard variety. It is not unexpected that teachers have positive attitudes towards standard varieties, which they consider as a model or reference to not necessarily follow or imitate, but at least to be aware of it. What is reassuring is that they also have positive attitudes towards non-standard varieties; they seem to understand the diversity of accents they will find in the classroom and in the world (Van Der Wildt et al., 2017, p. 872). Moreover, they acknowledge that students will use the TL differently inside and outside their university courses.

It is interesting, however, that when instructors are given the question, their first instinct is to give answers that reflect their direct attitudes -which are positive, as stated above- but it is worth mentioning that as they elaborate on their answers, they give hints of their indirect attitudes. Hints that suggest a contradiction to their direct attitudes. For instance, they use adjectives such as *proper*, *good*, *correct*, and *accurate* when referring to the desirable pronunciation pre-services teachers should have, but it is not clear what specific accent they are referring to when mentioning these adjectives. At times, they seem to be suggesting standard varieties as '*proper*' but when directly asked what they mean with that, they go back

to mentioning that the important thing for them is the concept of intelligibility. These suggestions can be exemplified in the following excerpts from the interviews:

Excerpt A: *'T1: you can communicate even if you have a strong accent but this doesn't mean that they (pre-service teachers) should speak willingly, they should still follow the phonological principles of the English language and the phonetics'.*

Considering that what distinguishes one accent from another is the phonetic and phonological differences (Roach, 2009, p. 161), the latter statement lacks clarity in the sense that it does not explicitly state which accent's principles pre-service teachers ought to pursue. They could be referring to GA (General American), RP (Received pronunciation) or even any other English in the world.

Excerpt B: *'T2: When pronouncing it's very important to make clear distinctions between the vowels. [ . . . ]. Also the consonants, especially the consonants that don't exist in Spanish. Another aspect is the problem with the assimilations [ . . . ]. And connected speech is also another thing that teachers should master very well so that's more or less the idea'.*

The previous description of what a good pronunciation entails basically covers all the topics discussed in the material used in the English Phonetic and Phonology courses at UIS. Nonetheless, again, it avoids mentioning the specific accent they are indicating since distinctions of vowels, consonants, assimilations and connected speech vary from accent to accent.

Excerpt C: *'T3: It must sound differently anyway to the sounds of their mother tongue. [ . . . ] I point out the parts of the speech in which they should improve not to sound with a very strong accent.'*

This idea accentuates the belief that having features of your L1 into your TL does not come in handy when speaking the latter. It also alludes to the thought that having a strong accent is not a desirable thing and speakers should make an effort to not sound as such. This is achieved by

identifying the features they need to work on to make clear distinctions between their L1 and their TL. Still, it is not yet evident if they are talking about a standard accent or not, and if so, which one.

Excerpt D: (When describing a broad accent) *T4: 'Because they don't produce the phonemes in approximate way to the one that should be from at least **standard** accent'.* (When addressing broad accents in the classroom) *T4: 'I try to do is to insist in that case the most approximate pronunciation'.*

These statements call once again for a close pronunciation to the sounds of the English language. The teacher even slipped out the nature of the accent they are looking for, being a standard accent. In spite of this, it is not certain what standard accent they are approaching because they are various standard accents.

Although the opinions from the excerpts were not consistent throughout the interviews -and their occurrence was somehow scarce-, these opinions can potentially convey the idea that sounding as native speaker is the ultimate goal of learning pronunciation (Moradkhani & Asakereh, 2018, p. 4); seeing that teachers never mentioned non-standard accents as possible models of pronunciation. However, these are just glimpses of what their indirect attitudes towards accents might be. As a whole, what the data shows is that teachers have positive direct attitudes towards accents; they never expressed the superiority of certain varieties over others nor their favouritism towards specific ways to pronounce words. In order to succeed in their courses, there is no need to sound exactly as the accent they are exposed to during classes.

When it comes to the role of teaching and learning pronunciation, teachers believe that it is a crucial aspect pre-service teachers must know about since they will be models for their future students (Cushing, 2021b, p. 321). According to the interviewees, if pre-service teachers work on the articulation of sounds and speech phenomena, they will be better equipped to help learners with pronunciation struggles. T1 even expresses that in order to be seen as an authority

in the language learning classroom, this training cannot be overlooked. Moreover, as it is expected that English teachers devote specific moments of their classes to tackle pronunciation, instructors mentioned that beyond theoretical knowledge of English pronunciation, pre-service teachers should also have different pedagogical strategies to assist their students.

### **3.3 Pre-Service Teachers' Direct Attitudes Towards the English Accent they have and are Learning**

#### ***3.3.1 Findings on Pre-service Teachers' Direct Attitudes Towards the English Accent they have and are Learning***

This section addresses the results of one part of the third specific objective *to identify the **direct** and indirect **attitudes** that pre-service teachers hold towards the English accent they currently have and towards the English accents they are learning*. These findings come from the survey pre-service teachers answered through Google forms, which later on was exported into an Excel spreadsheet. The data collected was divided into three categories 1) Standard Language Ideology, 2) Attitudes Towards Your Own Accent and 3) Attitudes Towards Your Own Accent Considering Standard English Accents. Additionally, an extra category was included for the pre-service teachers' sociodemographic information. The last two categories (number 2 and number 3) come in handy for achieving the third specific objective mentioned above; whilst the first category (number 1) is helpful for accomplishing our general objective *to detect pre-service teachers' attitudes towards their own accents and the relation of these attitudes to the standard language ideology*.

This research uses a four-point Likert scale to measure the level of agreement with the eighteen statements it displays, being six for each category. The four-point scale was chosen in order to avoid neutral answers that would not have served the aims of this paper.



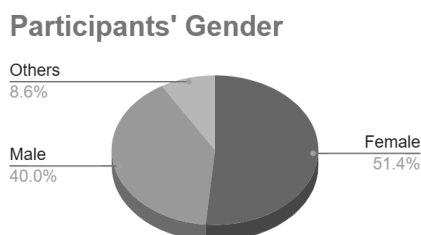
● Strongly Disagree	● Disagree	● Agree	● Strongly Agree
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The levels of agreement are analysed in the following way: for the first category, that has six statements related to the standard language ideology, if participants answered Agree or Strongly Agree, this means they are in favour of the standard language ideology. On the contrary, if their answers were Disagree or Strongly disagree, their beliefs clash with the standard language ideology. For the second category, with six statements about their own accents, if pre-service teachers answered Agree or Strongly Agree, they hold positive attitudes towards their own accents. Conversely, if they chose Disagree or Strongly Disagree, they have negative attitudes towards their own accents. Finally, for the third category, that presents six statements on their own accents compared to the standard varieties, if respondents Agreed or Strongly agreed, they perceive standard accents as a criterion for evaluating their own accents. Rather, if they Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed, they disregard standard accents as a benchmark for judging their own pronunciation.

### Pre-service Teachers' Sociodemographic Information

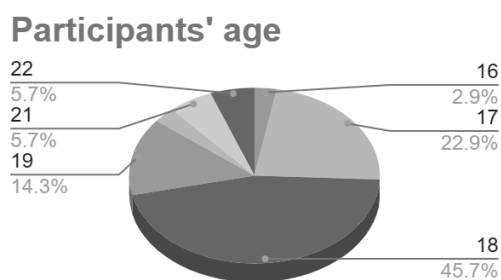
Concerning the pre-service teachers' sociodemographic information, within this 35-pre-service-teacher sample, eighteen (51.4 %) identify as female, fourteen (40%) identify as male and three (8.6%) identify with other genders such as: non-binary, genderqueer and agender (see figure 2).

**Figure 2.**  
*Participants' gender.*



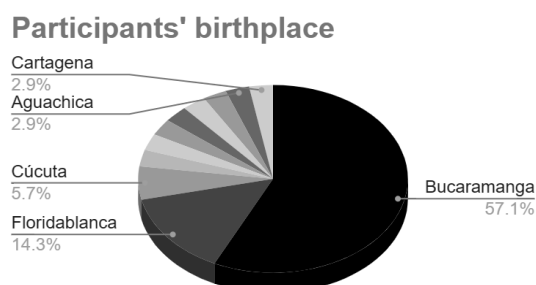
About their ages, they range from sixteen to twenty-two as follows: one pre-service teacher (2.9%) is sixteen, eight pre-service teachers (22.9%) are seventeen, sixteen pre-service teachers (45.7%) are eighteen, five pre-service teachers (14.3%) are nineteen, one pre-service teacher (2.9%) is twenty, two pre-service teachers (5.7%) are twenty-one and two pre-service teachers (5.7%) are twenty-two (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3.**  
*Participants' age.*



The vast majority of participants, twenty (57.1%), were born in Bucaramanga; other pre-service teachers' birthplaces were: Floridablanca with five (14.3%), Cúcuta with two (5.7%), Piedecuesta with one (2.9%), Girón with one (2.9%), Yarumal with one (2.9%), Valledupar with one (2.9%), Socorro with one (2.9%), Cimitarra with one (2.9%), Aguachica with one (2.9%) and Cartagena with one (2.9%) (see Figure 4).

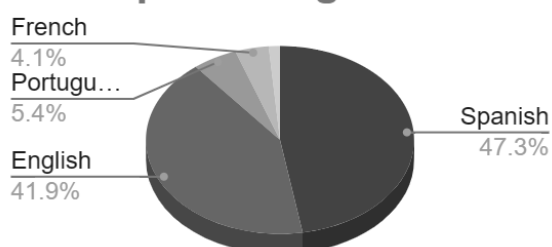
**Figure 4.**  
*Participants' birthplace.*



In terms of their linguistic repertoire, the totality of the thirty-five pre-service teachers speak Spanish (100%). Out of them, thirty-one (88.6%) speak English, four (11.4%) speak Portuguese, four (8.6%) speak French and one (2.9%) speaks German (see figure 5).<sup>5</sup>

**Figure 5.**  
*Participants' linguistic background.*

### Participants' linguistic ba...



As for the pre-service teachers' rearing places, they are diverse. The majority of the participants, twenty-three (65.7%), have lived in the same place they were born for a fairly long amount of time. These places are located within the metropolitan area of Bucaramanga, being: Bucaramanga, Girón, Floridablanca, Piedecuesta and Lebrija (which is in the outskirts of the city). As for the rest of the participants, twelve (34.3%), they have moved around the country, and even one of them has been abroad for a year in Zapala-Argentina. The ones who have stayed in Colombia have resided in places such as: Aguachica, Cartagena, Marinilla, Carepa, Cúcuta, Yarumal, Caucasia, Montelibano, Valledupar, Confines, Cimitarra, Barrancabermeja and Rionegro-Santander.

### Standard Language Ideology

When it comes to the participants' attitudes towards the standard language ideology, it is safe to say their level of agreement is not positive. Out of the six statements, five showed a great disfavour towards the standard language ideology since twenty-three participants (65.7%

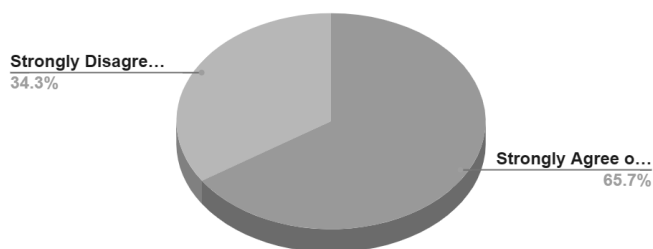
<sup>5</sup>This research does not delve into the participants' level of proficiency for each language they speak. However, considering the semester in which participants are, their level of English ranges from Pre-intermediate (B1) to Upper-Intermediate (B2). And as for the other languages, it is expected they have at least a beginners level.

) or more disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statements. This can be illustrated with statements four and five in which almost the totality of the participants, thirty-four (97.1%), disagreed or strongly disagreed (see figure 6). The statements read as follows:

4. *English language learners should eradicate all traces of their foreign accents and stick to a standard accent such as General American or Received Pronunciation.*
5. *The only acceptable accents are standard accents spoken by native people in one of the English-speaking countries.*

**Figure 6.**  
*Standard Language Ideology. Statements 4 and 5.*

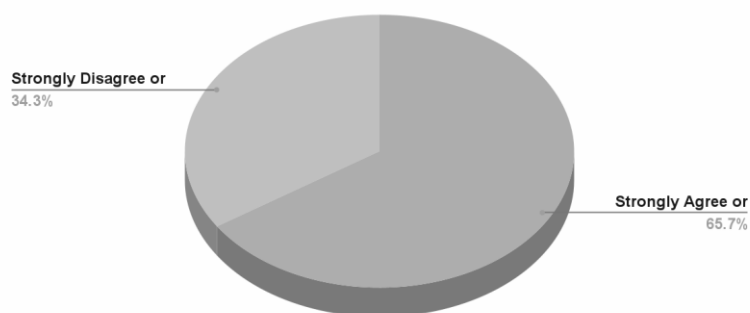
**Att. towards the Standard Lang. Ideology:  
Statement 6.**



The only exception to this disfavouring trend towards the standard language ideology was statement six, in which twenty-three pre-service teachers (65.7%) agreed or strongly agreed with it (see figure 7).

6. *English language Teachers and English language learners should try to use an English standard accent spoken in one of the English-speaking countries.*

**Figure 7.**  
*Standard Language Ideology. Statement 6.*

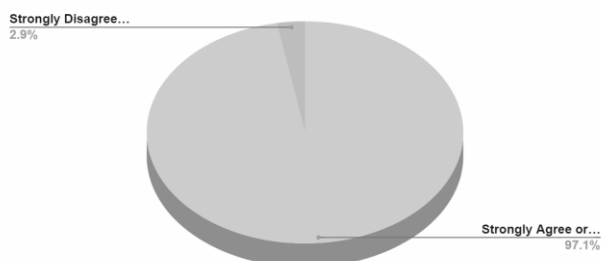
**At. towards the Standard Lang. Ideology: Statement 6.****Attitudes towards their own accent**

In respect of the pre-service teachers' attitudes towards their own accent, in general, they demonstrate positive attitudes. Their levels of agreement with four of the six statements mark their tendency to appreciate their own English accents. This is exemplified in statements one, three, five and six, in which at least twenty-six pre-service teachers (74.3%) or more agreed or strongly agreed with the affirmations. The latter is best represented in statement five where nearly the whole sample, thirty-four (97.1%), agreed or strongly agreed (see figure 8). The statement goes as:

*5. I think my English accent sounds friendly.*

**Figure 8.**

*Attitudes towards their own accent. Statement 5.*

**At. towards their own accent: Statement 5**

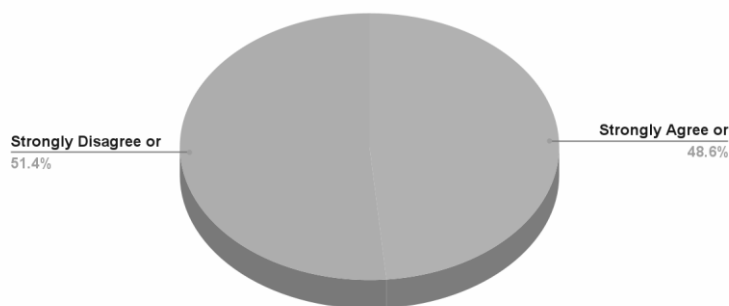
However, there is a slight level of disagreement over two statements, two and four, in which more than half of pre-service teachers indicate negative attitudes towards their accents. In

statement two, **2. I believe my English accent sounds intelligent**, although the difference between pre-service teachers that agree and the ones that disagree is minimal, there is an inclination towards the Strongly Disagree and Disagree choices with eighteen respondents (51.4%) in total (see figure 9). As for statement four, **4. I feel that my current English accent is ready to teach classes**, it is the one that pre-service teachers Strongly Disagreed or Disagreed the most from the category, having twenty participants (57.1%) with a negative view (see figure 10).

### Figure 9.

*Attitudes towards their own accent. Statement 2: I believe my English accent sounds intelligent*

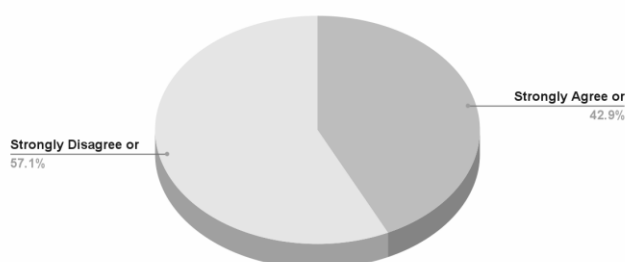
At. towards their own accent: Statement 2.



### Figure 10.

*Attitudes towards their own accent. Statement 4: I feel that my current English accent is ready to teach classes.*

At. towards their own accent: Statement 4.



## Attitudes Towards Their Own Accent Considering Standard English Accents

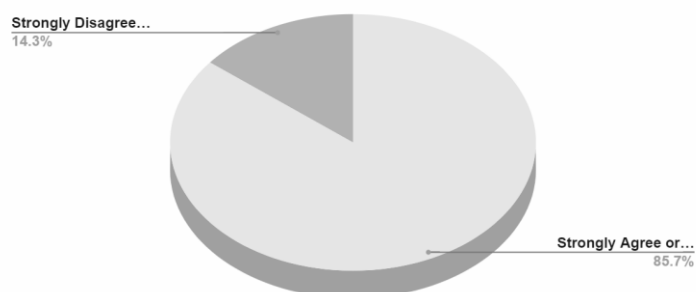
Pertaining to the pre-service teachers' attitudes towards their own accent considering standard English accents, they reflect positive attitudes when compared to standard varieties. From the six statements, the answers Agree or Strongly Agree are the most prominent in four statements; having twenty-three participants (65.7%) or more adhering to this agreement. A good example of the latter is statement two, where thirty pre-service teachers (85.7%) support the assertion (see figure 11).

*2. I feel happy if someone mistakenly considers that I speak as a native speaker with a Standard English accent (i.e. General American, Received pronunciation, etc.)*

### Figure 11.

*Attitudes towards their own accent considering standard English accents. Statement 2:*

At. towards their own & standard: Statement 2

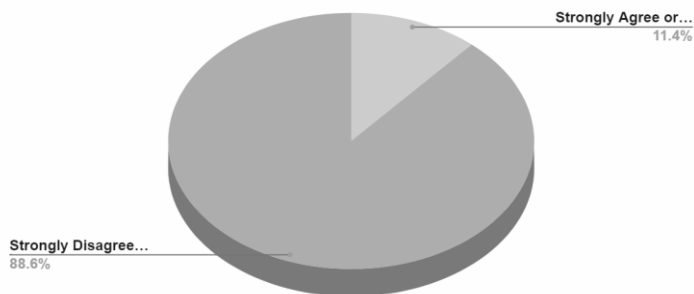


Despite the previous figures, participants do not always regard standard accents as a reference point to compare their own accents. This is corroborated in statements three and five, in which most pre-service teachers Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed with the sentences. For instance, in statement three, *3. I cannot tolerate when my English accent sounds different from the standard accents spoken by native people in English-speaking countries*, thirty-one (88.6%) pre-service teachers disfavoured the affirmations (see figure 12). Similarly, in statement five, *5. I believe that I am understood in English because my accent sounds similar to a Standard English Accent spoken in one of the English-speaking countries*, twenty-four respondents (68.6%) opposed it (see figure 13).

**Figure 12.**

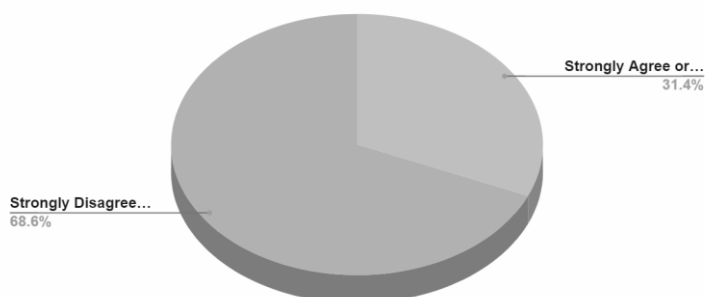
*Attitudes towards their own accent considering standard English accents.. Statement 3: I cannot tolerate when my English accent sounds different from the standard accents spoken by native people in English-speaking countries.*

At. towards their own & standard: Statement 3

**Figure 13.**

*Attitudes towards their own accent considering standard English accents. Statement 5. I believe that I am understood in English because my accent sounds similar to a Standard English Accent spoken in one of the English-speaking countries.*

At. towards their own & standard: Statement 5



### 3.3.2 Analysis and Discussion on Pre-service Teachers' Direct Attitudes Towards the English Accent They Have and are Learning

The survey reveals that pre-service teachers' direct attitudes towards their accents and standard accents tend to be positive, overall. According to their answers, they favoured statements that compliment their accents and disfavoured statements that diminish them. In the



light of this, it can be stated that the majority of them feel comfortable with the way they speak regardless of standard varieties, that they recognise but not exactly follow completely. Thus, although they have positive attitudes towards standard accents, this does not mean they have entirely adopted the standard language ideology. Rather, they seem to embrace linguistic diversity (Vergara & Pascual, 2019, p. 179).

Nevertheless, it is intriguing that in category one, related to standard language ideology, there is a statement, statement six, in which participants seem to suggest they have some traits of the standard language ideology. This contrasts with the answers to the other five statements where their levels of disagreement are superior. It is relevant to mention that those five statements regard exclusively what a language learner should have in mind -the standard accents- when training their pronunciation. Opposite to statement six that also includes language teachers (refer to figure 6) . The statement goes like this:

*6. English language **Teachers** and English language learners should try to use an English standard accent spoken in one of the English-speaking countries.*

Correspondingly, this irregularity can be observed in statement four and six from category three, attitudes towards their own accents considering standard English accents. Here, once again, pre-service teachers reflect the importance they give to standard accents (Dragojevic et al., 2021, p. 68). Statements read as follows:

*4. I feel satisfied with my English accent, but **would still like to attempt** to sound like a native speaker with a Standard English accent.*

*6. I like to be **corrected** when my pronunciation in English does not sound standard.*

The level of agreement with these statements confirm that pre-service teachers have some mindsets that align with the standard language ideology since respondents express their aspiration to sound as standard varieties and to invest time to achieve this aim (Van Herk, 2012, p. 155). It is also interesting to see that participants believe language teachers -figures of authority in the classroom- should attempt to adopt the standard varieties of English; in contrast

to language learners, who do not have that duty (according to the answers to previous statements in category one: *Standard Language Ideology*).

Findings on category two, *Attitudes towards their own accents*, demonstrate that even if pre-service teachers feel comfortable, satisfied and confident enough in their L2 accent to hold conversations and participate in classes, they recognise the 'unreadiness' of their English accents to teach classes (refer to figures 9). This could go hand in hand with findings discussed in the above paragraph, in which they mentioned the importance that having a standard accent has for language teachers (Cushing, 2021b, p. 323). And as they have not achieved that standard accent, they do not perceive themselves as prepared language teachers yet. Within this same category, pre-service teachers positively evaluated their accents better in terms of solidarity (Dragojevic et al., 2017, p. 386) as it can be seen in statement five, 5. *I think my English accent sounds friendly* (refer to figure 7); whilst in terms of status (Ibid, 2017, p. 386), they slightly favoured a negative evaluation, as in statement two, 2. *I believe my English accent sounds intelligent* (refer to figure 8). These notions line up with the stereotype that non-standard varieties sound welcoming and warm rather than eloquent and smart (Dragojevic & Giles, 2016, p. 398; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994, pp. 64, 66; Walsh, 2021, p.786). This lack of confidence in the intelligence of their speech goes along with pre-service teachers' perceptions of their 'incompetence' to instruct learners that was pointed out before.

Despite this low incidence of contradiction in their levels of agreement with the statements, pre-service teachers hold predominantly positive attitudes towards their own accents and the accents they are learning, standard varieties. Considering the answers they give to most of the statements (thirteen out of eighteen) it is apparent that regardless of the fact of not sounding as the models studied in class, they appreciate their pronunciation and the varieties they are exposed to in class. Even if pre-service teachers aspire to acquire a standard variety, this aspiration does not hinder them from embracing and valuing the ones they

currently have. Therefore, their appreciation of linguistic diversity does not seem to be biased towards a particular accent.

### **3.4 Pre-Service Teachers' Indirect Attitudes Towards the English Accent they Have and are Learning**

#### ***3.4.1 Findings on Pre-service Teachers' Indirect Attitudes Towards the English Accent they Have and are Learning***

This section directs its attention to the results of the other part of the third specific objective *to identify the direct and indirect attitudes that pre-service teachers hold towards the English accent they currently have and towards the English accents they are learning*. These findings arise from the face-to-face pre-service teachers interviews, during which they imagined five hypothetical situations and their possible reactions. In order to guarantee pre-service teachers' anonymity, they will be referred to as PT-# in the results description. For example: PT-1, PT-14, PT-23 and so on. The interview has a total of five questions. In Q1, pre-service teachers react to people who judge others' English knowledge based on their accents. In Q2, they acknowledge whether or not they would change their accents according to teaching contexts. In Q3, the interviewees reflect on their possible reactions if they had a students' parent who favours the standard language ideology while working in an English-speaking country. In Q4, the respondents express their course of action if a teacher/professor assessed them taking exclusively as a reference the standard varieties. And in Q5, pre-service teachers expose their potential teaching practices relating to non-standard accents (Appendix E). The analysis of the interviews bore in mind the following criteria:

#### **Table 5.**

*Coding Rules for Pre-service Teachers' Indirect Attitudes*

<b>Category</b> (Group of ideas that share the same features)	<b>Description</b> (Description of the category)	<b>Subcategory</b> (Topics that are included within a category)
Reactions towards the ideas of people that support the SLI.	Participants' reactions when encountering SLI supporters and their comments.	Acceptance Rejection
Reactions towards accent modifications with respect to teaching contexts.	Interviewees' reactions to the possibility of changing their accents depending on teaching contexts.	Negative reactions Positive reactions
Reactions to English-native parents who promote the SLI.	Pre-service teachers' reactions when dealing with English-native parents who disapprove of their accents.	Acceptance Rejection
Reactions to a failing mark because of not following the standard varieties.	Pre-service teachers' reactions to their assessment being based only on the standard language varieties.	Negative reactions Mixed reactions
Reactions towards having a student with a non-standard accent.	Pre-service teachers' potential reaction when encountering accent varieties in the classroom.	Acceptance Rejection

Concerning Q1, the category explored was **Reactions towards the ideas of people that support the SLI**. The vast majority of participants, 32 out of 35 of them, express a strong rejection towards SLI supporters and their ideas/comments. For them, having a specific accent is not as relevant as communicating successfully; it is just a personal preference. As PT-10 puts it *'You can know English very well but still have a different accent that the normal or the expected one. I think that's just a preference'*. Pre-service teachers prioritise intelligibility and knowledge of the language over standard pronunciations to determine one's ability to speak English (Grondelaers et al., 2019). One of the participants, PT-7, highlights the fact that *'it's not like you don't know English just because you don't know how to talk like a native person'*. Participants are aware of the expanding nature of English (Cogo, 2012, p. 235), which makes it impossible to regulate completely due to different cultures and environments. One participant, PT-28, even declares that that thing called *'standard accent' does not exist* (Milroy

& Milroy, 2012, p. 19). Since learning English entails much more than having an accent, reducing speakers' abilities to their accent would imply that more than half of its speakers - who have learnt it- do not know the language, an idea that PT-35 hit upon. Participants believe that those implications come from an egocentric perspective on languages; they express that people's communicative abilities should not be regulated nor determined by standard privileged varieties from English-speaking countries (Kaur & Raman, 2014, p. 254).

On the other hand, a small group of participants seem to accept followers of SLI and their ideals. They do believe that having a standard accent is somehow important when learning English. For them, having the approval of those whose accent is valuable is essential for measuring their progress in the language. One participant, PT4, comments that if a native speaker criticised their English because of their accent, they would feel embarrassed. This negative feeling coincides with another participants' opinion, PT-14, who mentions that in a similar situation, they would feel bad and ask themselves what they are doing wrong. The latter evidences participants' concern of native English speakers' judgements (McKenzie, 2010, p. 53). One participant, PT-16, extends the idea of avoiding these judgemental situations by saying that English learners should expose themselves to the -standard- varieties they are trying to pursue in order to acquire them (Jenkins, 2000).

In relation to Q2, the category explored was **Reactions towards accent modifications with respect to teaching contexts**. Most participants, 20 out of 35, indicate positive reactions towards changing their accents to meet contexts' needs. Thus, they are open to modify their pronunciation if circumstances require them to do so (Dewaele & McCloskey, 2015, p. 222; Dragojevic et al., 2021, p. 67). The main reasons pre-service teachers pinpoint for implementing these changes are: accents in the workplace and surroundings, other people's perceptions, professional demands and learners' sake. They accept that people tend to pick the accent they are exposed to the most (Jenkins, 2000); therefore if they had the opportunity to

work in an English-speaking country or if all their future co-workers spoke with a certain variety, they would eventually end up imitating and adopting their model of pronunciation. For them, this transition is *natural* and *unconscious* as PT-17 and PT-24 expressed it. One participant, PT-6, relates this to the fact of either offending or not their interlocutors. This person affirms that if the way they are currently expressing offended others, they would please them and reshape their accent. Some participants remark that if job requirements asked them to alter their pronunciation, they would finally give in, even against their personal will. As one participant, PT-26, puts it '*I consider that we have to be proud of the way we talk, but I know that sometimes it is more convenient to try to talk in another way in order to get more acceptance. I would like to not change it but if the situation requires me to do it or if I feel forced to do it, I would do it, but I would prefer not to*'. One final reasoning behind their disposition to adjust their accent regards learners' potential struggles in the classroom (Weale, 2017; Chalk & Rahman-Jones, 2018). Participants express that they would be disposed to change the way they speak if their students had a hard time understanding them. This idea is brought about because, for them, their key priority is that learners are able to comprehend the information they are being taught. Some examples of this perspectives are:

*PT-10: 'if I'm using some accent that my students don't really understand and they prefer another one or if I think is gonna be easier for them to understand me if I use a different accent I will try to change it..I will do it if I consider that changing my accent will help them understand me better.'*

*PT-25: '...if the children only know how to work with an accent maybe with the children I would change it, in another case I will be using my American accent.'*

*PT-30: 'If my students don't understand my accent, I would be almost obligated to change my accent in order for them to understand me. But I don't think it affects the education I could give them.'*

Contrarily to this acceptance of accent modification, there are a group of 15 participants that are reluctant to modify their pronunciation. Meaning that they will keep the accents they have, no matter the context they will be in. The reasons for this include matters of comfort, identity, personal preference and the irrelevance of accents for teaching. Regarding comfort,

interviewees mentioned the level of difficulty perfecting a standard accent has. Some of the expressions they used when addressing their comfort include:

*PT-13: 'I would use the accent I feel most comfortable with.'*

*PT-16: 'I think maybe I am lost if I use other accent and I try to use the similar accent always.'*

*PT- 21: 'I think, I think is difficult to change the accent, so I will have only one general accent for every situation.'*

Within the reasons of identity, participants stated that speaking a non-standard variety helps them represent themselves culturally through language (Baratta, 2016; Trofimovich & Turuseva, 2015). Some of the remarks made read as follows:

*PT-1: 'I think it's better to show who you are.'*

*PT-17: '...my accent is my essence and I wouldn't change my accent for anything in the world.'*

*PT-35: 'that's a huge part of what, of the way that I am.'*

Personal preference was also taken into account. Some of the pre-service teachers agreed on the fact that having an accent depends solely on ones' choice and predilection towards a specific variety. Within their answers, it can be highlighted the following ones:

*PT-2: 'even if I am in Great Britain or Canada or in another place I'm going to use American English.'*

*PT-8: 'I like the accent I have or the accent that I have built by myself. Like I like it and I recognize I try to do like an American accent and I understand this accent as a neutral accent, so I like this, I wouldn't change it.'*

One of the most salient reasons states that having a standard accent does not affect nor influence their teaching skills, it has nothing to do with their teaching preparation (Arboleda & Castro, 2012, p. 59). Their answers comprise:

*PT-9: 'I don't really think I'm gonna change it. I just want my students to understand what I'm trying to communicate and teach them. I don't think I'm gonna change my accent.'*

*PT-12: 'if what I'm teaching is understandable and useful for them, my accent has nothing to do with that.'*

*PT-15: 'the most important thing is my grammar and the things I say, not my accent.'*

*PT-33: 'I think the accent is not the most important accent of teaching English so no. I think in the future I would not change my accent.'*

With reference to Q3, the category deemed was **Reactions to English-native parents who promote the SLI**. The main body of participants, 33 out of 35, reject derogatory parents'

comments about their accents if working in the USA. In the case of dealing with English-native parents who could disapprove of their way of pronunciation, they would not change it. Their motives behind rejecting parents' points of view are: identity, xenophobia, recognition of varieties and the fact that their teaching skills are not affected by their accents. Pre-service teachers embrace their backgrounds, which they believe is sometimes evidenced in the way they sound (Baratta, 2016; Trofimovich & Turuseva, 2015). Some examples of these thoughts are:

*PT-1: 'It is normal to have an accent, so I would try to say I am Colombian and I do have an accent if you are great with this, well that's okay if not well... but I would clarify that because I know some people don't like accents.'*

*PT-26: 'Your accent represents your richness and culture.'*

Other participants would perceive a sense of xenophobia if someone questioned their teaching abilities based on their accents (Ramjattan, 2020, p. 2). They voiced this idea as follows:

*PT-15: 'They're wrong because that could be xenophobic, if they understand what I say and still complain, they are just complaining because they feel superior.'*

*PT-29: 'I would go to talk to the director and talk about the situation because it has to do with xenophobia.'*

*PglT-34: 'I wouldn't gree, that's xenophobic, I'd argue that... me coming from a place that's not that one doesn't mean that I can't teach.'*

Interviewees recognise the value of varieties and that noticing them and exposing learners to them nurtures the learning process (Tsang, 2020, p. 10). Pre-service teachers share their thoughts like this:

*PT-6: 'I will try to be kind and respectful and try to make the parent understand that exposing the child to different accents could be beneficial to their learning process.'*

*PT-19: 'there's not a right accent or correct one to be an English speaker.'*

*PT-24: 'They are wrong, so wrong. There's a lot of accents and there's no right one.'*

Last but not least, the most popular idea among participants highlighted that having or lacking an accent has no relevance for teaching (Arboleda & Castro, 2012, p. 59). Accents do



not affect the quality of education a teacher can provide to their students and that their goal is to be understood. Some of the words participants used to describe this idea entail:

*PT-5: 'I would explain that it doesn't matter what accent you have, the most important thing is that the children can understand me.'*

*PT-7: 'I'm gonna feel like they are people that don't know the real life, because even if I don't have the standard accent, I'm teaching something that has rules...they are disrespectful but it wouldn't affect me in the end.'*

*PT-8: 'I'm qualified and the less important factor for teaching their children is where I'm from.'*

*PT-13: 'Their child is still learning even if I have an accent because I'm teaching them, so what's there to be mad about?'*

*PT-28: 'I can do my job and be a teacher and my accent doesn't represent an obstacle in their learning.'*

Contrastingly, two pre-service teachers accept English-native parents' comments promoting the SLI. In the possibility of being questioned about their teaching abilities on account of their accent, they would modify it. The rationale behind this position encompasses: the usefulness of the standard for teaching and the high regard for the variety spoken in the country you are living in. For one participant, it is wrong to speak in the classroom something that is not standard (Tsang, 2020) and for the other an English-speaking context demands a certain level of expertise in the language. This can be seen in the succeeding statements:

*PT-23: 'I would say that the accent is very important to teach, if you are in another country you have to be on the level of the country you are teaching in. So I would try to improve and start studying more.'*

*PT-33: 'I think they can be right if I'm doing it [speaking a non standard variety] in the classroom...The accent is important because it would be more clear and they can understand what I'm saying.'*

Respecting Q4, the category examined was **Reactions to a failing mark because of not following the standard varieties**. More than half of pre-service teachers, 18 out of 35, have absolute negative reactions towards receiving a failing mark due to their non-standard accents; whilst 17 out of 35 have mixed feelings about it (with an inclination for the negative reaction). Nevertheless, all of them, counting negative and mixed, express disfavour towards being assessed in the light of only standard varieties (Cushing, 2021b, p. 326). Consequently,

they would not accept the mark and would take action against it. The justification for reacting this way are: unfairness, diversity of accents and intelligibility over accents. Pre-service teachers feel that getting a failing mark as a result of their accent is an unreasonable judgement (Derwing & Munro, 1997, pp. 11-12). They express opinions like:

*PT-7: 'I would say that that is not fair at all... Because that should not be something that. I mean getting a different accent should not like have a problem if you get a great grade or a bad grade.'*

*PT-12: 'I would tell them that it's not fair. Tell them that I bet they had an accent when they started learning English, so it doesn't make any sense.'*

*PT-26: 'it is not fair, and the professor should know that accents do not interrupt the learning process.'*

Participants also defend their negative reaction to the poor mark by recognising the diversity of English accents present in the world nowadays, the value they hold and how they should be respected for what they are (Derwing & Munro, 1997, pp. 11-12). They utter the subsequent remarks:

*PT-5: 'the teacher was all the time telling us that we have to speak British. So I think he has to be more open. They have to understand that maybe the students have different accents.'*

*PT-15: 'I think that is useless, there are so many accents, why is my accent bad and the rest are right? I don't agree with that.'*

*PT-18: 'The accent is something that some people have and this shouldn't be punished for that reason, It should be respected and accepted the way the person normally talks and express.'*

*PT-21: 'Everyone learns the accent they want and they can't do that because it isn't okay. They are teachers, they know there are many accents and I think they cannot impose an only accent.'*

*PT-24: 'They would be leaving behind the variety of accents in the world. Me having an accent doesn't mean I can't speak a language.'*

In the pre-service teachers' view, another ground for opposing the low mark is that intelligibility takes precedence over accents. As long as they are being understood, they do not see the point of applying themselves to acquire a standard English accent, agreeing with Rahimi & Ruzrokh's (2016, p. 143) ideas. Their flow of thoughts goes like this:

*PT-10: 'I think if I have an understandable accent, if you can understand me clearly what I'm trying to say, what I'm trying to explain, I don't think they can fail me for not having the accent they want me to have.'*

*PT-11: 'as long as he can understand me I don't see a problem with it. Many people have many accents and they shouldn't react that way.'*

*PT-16: 'I think the important thing is they know how I use the grammar and the tenses. So they should give that more importance than my accent.'*

*PT-23: 'If you are good at speaking and are fluent, then the accent says nothing as long as you can communicate.'*

All the aspects mentioned above reflect the reasoning behind conflicting with the bad mark. A reasoning that is shared by pre-service teachers with negative reactions as well as pre-service teachers with mixed-reactions. However, the last ones also declare that they would not complain about the mark if it were informed, from the very beginning, of the requirement of following a standard variety to pass an exam or the course. Even if they were not pleased to stick to these parameters, they would do it in order to succeed in the subject. They give utterance to their perspectives as follows:

*PT-1: 'I wouldn't fight but it could be sad and maybe it's condition to pass the test.'*

*PT-12: 'But if I had to because or else I'm going to fail the subject, then I'm gonna change it. Or I'm gonna try it but it's something hard to do.'*

*PT-13: 'if the teacher already told us how we were supposed to pronounce this, it's not a big issue because he did tell us'...what's the need to be specific, it doesn't matter if it sounds fancier. It's still English.'*

*PT-20: ' But if they told me the test was with a standard English and I didn't have it, it would be my fault...I don't have to follow it if I don't want to but If that class requires it, I would learn it. But I feel like I'd have to even if I don't want to.'*

*PT-33: 'I think it's valid because my teacher gave me the feedback so if I know the exam is in a particular accent I would study that accent but only for studying for the exam ... I don't see a problem but I would feel bad changing the accent.'*

Regarding Q5, the category delved into was **Reactions towards having a student with a non-standard accent**. The greatest number of participants, 23 out of 35, show acceptance of their students' non-standard accents. They express that there is no need for their students to modify their accent during the classes. Their logic is based on the following factors: intelligibility, students' choice and identity. Pre-service teachers incline towards intelligibility over accents, one more time embracing Grondelaers et al. (2019) beliefs that state that it is not necessary to have a 'flawless' -in terms of standard varieties- accent as long as you convey a message. Participants reiterate that their focus would not be students sounding like native

English speakers, but rather students being understood by their interlocutors. Some participants put into words this notion as follows:

*PT-6: 'If the accent affects the meaning of the words, yes, but if it is understandable, no, I would not do it.'*

*PT-19: 'They can have their Colombian accent as long as other people can understand what they're saying. I mean, an acceptable accent is like the other people can understand what they're saying.'*

*PT-31: 'But in my opinion, I don't correct them because if they can communicate the ideas it doesn't matter for me.'*

Another reason for accepting non-standard varieties in the classroom is that they consider students are entitled to talk the way they do, even if it is not standard, and pre-service teachers respect that decision. Additionally, they would be willing to help their students if they had a desire to cultivate a standard variety. The key element is that students feel at ease, appreciating students' choice. This can be evidenced in the next statements:

*PT-1: 'If they're trying to learn how to speak very very good English with an accent, with American accent or a British accent I will help them, but if they are not there is no problem, it's their decision.'*

*PT-13: 'That depends, if they want to sound more native I would correct them, if they want to sound more "natural" or something, but I wouldn't make it an obligation.'*

*PT-27: 'people just cannot change their accent, you cannot obligate someone to say things the way you want....as long as I see that the student is trying to learn and really getting into the language, I don't have a problem. People can have accents, it is okay.'*

The last motive pre-services teachers bring up for welcoming a variety of accents in the classroom is that by imposing a model as the only possible way, students may feel their personal identities at risk (Davies, 2008). For them, the way you talk is a significant indicator of someone's background and roots. Some of their convictions are:

*PT-3: 'No because, the accent is important because it says where are you from. And. So it is important that you take your country everywhere...you have family here, and that's important to you, to use it also when you speak.'*

*PT-17: 'No, I wouldn't .I love accents all over the world and I think accents are the most beautiful and essence of a human being and I think that makes them unique so I wouldn't do anything about it.'*

*PT-28: 'No, I don't think so, I think that's unique and is inside us, I love that, I think it is our essence so it's great.'*

*PT-35: 'I don't think accents should be that problematic or something a person has to fix, we don't have to look at them that way... they are part of us so I wouldn't really mind.'*

The latter rationale for supporting non-standard varieties, identity, is also shared by the pre-service teachers who have a mixed judgement towards these accents. Moreover, they mentioned another important factor, which is students' educational stage. For them, the acceptance or rejection of deviations from the standard depends on the educational environment too. Pre-service teachers declare:

*PT-4: 'I would correct it if he or she's a little kid. I think it is because to the kid gets used to a standardised English, However if they are older I think I would say just like. "Oh well your accent is not a problem". This is just a way to talk.'*

*PT-22: 'If they are highschool or elementary students there wouldn't be a problem but if they are undergraduate students or postgraduate students I would tell them that that is not right, that they need to adapt to the language, to the accent because they are in a more advanced level.'*

*PT-24: 'If it's a student that wants to speak English it is not necessary to correct but if they want to dominate the language, I would emphasise that they have to work on the accent. If not, they don't need to go into technicalities.'*

On the other side, these pre-service teachers, who have a mixed judgement towards accent variety, express their rejection alluding to the consequences that having a non-standard accent could lead to (Lawton & De Kleine, 2020, p. 204). In their outlook, students who do not cultivate a standard accent are more likely to face social repercussions. This idea can be exemplified in the following lines:

*PT-4: ... 'children need to get used to a standardised accent to avoid that type of discrimination for part of the one people living USA or the UK.'*

*PT-5: 'It is important to teach the accent because the society. Because if you go to another place with your Colombian accent, they are going to see you like a strange person. and maybe some people aren't going to judge you...this can make you feel worry or sad, nervous when you want to have a conversation with someone.'*

*PT-14: 'I'd help them talk a bit more standard because if they want to go to for example the US they may have a bad time if they don't have a standard accent that they want that everyone has.'*

Pre-service teachers who reject non-standard varieties also included within their arguments the possible consequences of not following standard varieties. Nevertheless, they

expand these arguments and refer to other elements such as: a) respect for the English phonemes, b) students' sense of self-fulfilment, c) attractiveness of the English sounds and d) usefulness of the standards. These conceptions are stated like this:

- a) *PT-20: 'If you're speaking English you have to try to lower your Colombian accent because this is another language and when you speak you have to sound different than when you are speaking Spanish.'*  
*PT-21: 'In our accent the words tend to be very different from the pronunciation of English, so I'd remember them that we need to try to speak the best English.'*
- b) *PT-7: 'If you're learning something it's cool or it's fine to do that you learned something in all the ways, not only like, what so I think that you should get all the knowledge not only on the writing, not only in the reading, but also on speaking.'*
- c) *PT-2: 'I preferred to listen a natural accent or an American accent than a Colombian accent, sounds better.'*  
*PT-9: 'It is a Colombian accent but I'd try to make them produce it in a more American English way because it sounds better, it sounds more like you care...I just think it sounds prettier.'*
- d) *PT-32: 'I think they can use both [varieties] but it would be useful to learn an accent if you want to go out to the UK or US it would be easier for them to understand what you're saying.'*

### ***3.4.2 Analysis and Discussion on Pre-service Teachers' Indirect Attitudes Towards the English Accent They Have and are Learning***

The interviews uncover that pre-service teachers' indirect attitudes towards their accents and standard accents are predominantly positive. When faced with hypothetical situations in which third parties heavily criticised and diminished their accents, their immediate reactions (for the most part) were to defend their pronunciation as well as diverse varieties. Even if pre-service teachers acknowledge the position of standard varieties in the world, they do not conform to them in order to speak English. They manifest through their speech that their accents are not a hindrance in their communication with others. For them, this is the ultimate goal of learning pronunciation, being understood enough to establish conversations (Grondelaers et al., 2019; Rahimi & Ruzrokh, 2016). Moreover, the majority of pre-service

teachers regard these variations in pronunciation as something treasured and unique for every human being and their cultures (Baratta, 2016; Trofimovich & Turuseva, 2015).

In spite of embracing diversity of accents and defending their pronunciations, pre-service teachers consider the possibility of modifying the way they sound in order to succeed in settings that demand it, for example in a university course. They would do it exclusively for the sake of the situation and not on a daily basis. This was evidenced in category four, **Reactions to a failing mark because of not following the standard varieties**, where they indicate their conformity to altering their accents, even against their genuine willingness to do it. However, there is a small group of participants that seem to be disposed to change their pronunciation in the presence of figures of authority such as: native speakers or school directors (Davies, 2008; Heller & Jones, 2001). Here are some examples of these thoughts:

*PT-2: 'I'd changed for the school.'*

*PT-4: 'I think that if the person that says me that is a native speaker so, I think that I'd feel embarrassed.'*

*PT-17: 'I would have to respect their opinion somehow because they do know.'*

Whilst the rest of participants do not think they need to change their accent when facing figures of authority, there are some that think they must prove themselves and their knowledge to be seen as capable instructors entitled to their own pronunciations. This idea is a clear example of the influence the SLI has on non-standard-accent speakers who are marginalised by those with accents in a position of power, standard varieties (Walsh, 2021 p.775). These speakers feel like they need to demonstrate their abilities and the value of their local accents when compared to native speakers and standard-privileged varieties. Pre-service teachers release statements as the next ones:

*PT-11: 'And show the certificate that I have studied just to make clear that I know the language and my accent is not an obstacle for making people understand me.'*

*PT-20: 'Probably I'd tell them that I studied for doing this. That if I am a teacher it is because I'm ready and prepared for that.'*

*PT-30: 'It would be unfair to me because I would be prepared to teach a class.'*

As stated in the previous paragraph, standard accents are holders of privilege that have a direct effect on non-native-varieties speakers, an effect that is also viewed in the need for them to alter their accents and sound more native-like (Wach, 2011, p. 255). Pre-service teachers put across ideas such as:

*PT-11: 'If you want to not have a lot of problems in the future, especially in talks or conferences, maybe try to sound more like a native.'*

*PT-22: 'The professor has to be the best one. So I think it should be mandatory that a professional speaks well, at the end of the career. When a teacher is bad and has a Colombian accent it is not enjoyable to learn and we are going to learn badly because we have to speak with an accent that sounds like a native.'*

*PT-25: 'I have to say that probably is important to sound like a native.'*

Although the ideas previously mentioned can suggest, to some extent, the existence of negative attitudes towards their own accents amongst pre-service teachers. As a whole, they do have, for the most part, positive attitudes towards their pronunciation and standard varieties. It is safe to affirm this, seeing that in four out of the five categories, the most common answers indicate acceptance of non-standard accents, including theirs. These favourable attitudes confirm that pre-service teachers hold their pronunciations in high regard. They express the value of accent diversity, what accents represent culturally and how important it could be for learners to be exposed to them (Vergara & Pascual, 2019, pp. 175-176). This approval of accent variation does not exclude standard ones, it just considers them as one possible way of pronunciation amongst many others. Rather than perceiving standard varieties as the holy grail of learning English pronunciation, they are observed as models that coexist in the midst of others. This recognition contributes to placing non-standard varieties in a position of equality that takes away some of that privilege standard varieties have had for centuries and resignifies the value of all kinds of pronunciations.

#### **Chapter Four: Conclusions**

After a careful analysis of pre-service teachers' attitudes towards their own accents and



the influence of the standard language ideology on said attitudes, the main conclusion that can be drawn is that nearly all pre-service teachers have positive direct and indirect attitudes toward their own accents and that the standard language ideology is not related to these attitudes. The factors that explain these positive attitudes are 1) acknowledgement of accent diversity, 2) significance of intelligibility over pronunciation and 3) recognition of the relationship between identity and accents.

Pre-service teachers discuss that, firstly, the expansion of English around the world has incremented the number of existing varieties and therefore talking about a 'legitimate' single variety in the 21st century is an unviable prototype. This goes in line with Çavuşoğlu (2021), who questions the legitimacy of standard varieties and the perpetuation of these models in education. Secondly, pre-service teachers consider that the global nature of English makes it more indispensable to be intelligible by more speakers than perfecting the pronunciation of English sounds. This is also covered by Grondelaers et al. (2019) who prioritises being understood over having a 'flawless' standard accent. Finally, pre-service teachers argue that identities are mostly disclosed through the way people sound. This is consistent with Rose & Galloway (2017) who prove that local varieties play a main role in the development of identities.

Regarding the influence of SLI on said attitudes, the content analysis of the book and the teachers' interviews lead to the conclusion that neither the materials nor the instructors promote the SLI. The results of these instruments show that the academic environment, in which pre-service teachers move, is not influenced by SLI or its principles. On the contrary, it is respectful of linguistic variety and personal decisions. Although the book focuses on a prestigious standard variety, the author clarifies that English learners have freedom to choose their pronunciation, respecting their identities and prioritising intelligibility. Furthermore, English Phonetics and Phonology instructors admit varieties in their classes. As they have non-

standard accents, pre-service teachers can feel motivated to approach pronunciation with the purpose of being understood rather than eradicating all traces of their L1 accents.

In this study, most pre-service teachers display non-compliance and rejection towards the Standard Language Ideology, conclusions that have been drawn in other studies (Kircher & Fox, 2021; Çavuşoğlu, 2021; Zhao & Liu, 2021). Aside from rejecting the SLI, participants present strong negative reactions towards its principles. A popular idea among the vast majority of participants stated that there was no desire for changing their accent in order to sound like a native since it does not represent progress for them; contrasting with Fang's study (2017) in which most students were not content with their own accents and believed that sounding like a native speaker meant that they were making progress. Most pre-service teachers gave more importance to matters of comfortability and the expression of their culture and identity through the language as compared to Kim's study (2021). Following that thought, in the eyes of the majority, native speakers are not perceived as a linguistic authority. Pre-service teachers acknowledge that English is a language spoken by millions of people worldwide; consequently, the native-like model of speaking is losing attractiveness (Fhlannchadha & Hickey, 2018).

Seeing that pre-service teachers are very likely to be future English teachers in Colombia, the present outcomes are promising for the field of ELT in the country. As mentioned in the justification, the figure of authority that the teacher represents has the potential of shaping learner's thoughts; therefore, if any change wants to be achieved, it has to begin with instructors' outlooks on language (Weaver, 2019). The latter is something that is already evidenced amongst the vast majority of pre-service teachers of this study, who express reluctance to perpetuate the idea that privileged-standard varieties deserve the highest hierarchical position amongst language varieties. As pre-service teachers hold positive attitudes towards their own accents, which are non-standard, they are not expecting their future students to strictly follow varieties that do not represent their identities.

The conclusions of this paper are consistent for the most part; however, there are certain inconsistencies. This is not a surprise considering the complexity of studying people's attitudes towards accents, which also happened in Carrie's (2017) and Huang & Hashim's (2022) works. As for this study, pre-service teachers uttered sentences that showed vestiges of internalised ideas of the importance of standard accents during their interviews; mentioning that: a) they would feel embarrassed if a native corrected them, b) they would change their accents if their jobs required them to do so or if c) they wanted to avoid misunderstandings and discrimination abroad (refer to section 3.4.). Additionally, pre-service teachers' surveys showed that a) they would like to be corrected when they do not sound standard and that b) in their view, language teachers should have a standard pronunciation (refer to section 3.3). The contrary points of view exhibit that some pre-service teachers hold negative attitudes towards their own accents, which are informed by ideas of the SLI (Lippi-Green, 1994).

Although a further explanation of the causes of these outlooks goes beyond the limits of this research, our study suggests that pre-service teachers' context is somehow influenced by the SLI; seeing that inconsistencies are also found amongst English Phonetics and Phonology teachers (refer to section 3.2) and in the book used during the course (refer to section 3.1). For example, instructors use adjectives such as 'good', 'proper', 'accurate' and 'correct' when describing the kind of pronunciation they are looking for. However, these same adjectives are usually associated with standard varieties (Peterson, 2020; Venter, 2002), which can make pre-service teachers perceive these kinds of accents as 'the best' option to pursue. Instructors also mention that the ideal pronunciation should be approximate to that of English sounds; to guarantee intelligibility. This is debatable since intelligibility's perception is subjective to personal conceptions of legitimate pronunciation, which can be biased (Moyer, 2007; Golombek & Jordan, 2005).

Phonetics and Phonology teachers' also showed that their acceptance of non-standard accents is limited and that standard accents are their point of reference since there could be doubt of teachers' positive attitudes towards deviation from the standard (Lawton & Kleine, 2020). Their acknowledgment of non-standard varieties does not halt the comparison of non-standard accents to standard ones when assessing language features (Lawton & Kleine, 2020). This explains why some pre-service teachers are open to adapting their accents during their Phonetics and Phonology assessment periods in order to score higher in their exams (refer to section 3.4).

And as for the inconsistencies on the book used during Phonetics and Phonology, the author called for the focus on standard varieties, which for him, is not the same as changing your pronunciation. And for non-native speakers to improve their accent to communicate with *native* speakers. Both statements align with SLI's ideas considering that focusing on an accent without changing it is an utopian perception because exposure to accents shape them (Jenkins, 2000) and privileging communication with native speakers disregards the expanding nature of the English language (Cogo, 2012). Moreover, the focus in one variety of English maintains the privileged position of standard varieties within the educational setting and strengthens ideologies amongst English learners (Davila, 2016; Kaur & Raman, 2014).

In spite of these ideas of sticking to standard accents, it would be essential that Phonetics and Phonology courses' instructors highlighted the importance of being exposed to different English accents, even if they are not discussed in depth during classes. Furthermore, it would be sensible for accent variety to be discussed and take up more space during Phonetics and Phonology courses than it currently has. This extra exposure to accent varieties from different communities can enrich their communication and nurture their understanding of the linguistic value other accents hold (Roach, 2009; Vergara & Pascual, 2019), eradicating the idea that there are varieties of more importance than others. On top of this, bringing language

ideologies and language attitudes into Phonetics and Phonology courses could open up discussions on the validity of said themes, as well as, topics of linguistic ownership, legitimacy and use, so as to, ultimately, create a reflective environment that nurtures critical thinking.

The results of this research could be expanded by the analysis of the rubrics of assessment used during Phonetics and Phonology courses for evaluating pre-service teachers. By doing so, the explanations as to why pre-service teachers sometimes note the inclination of favouring standard varieties might be extended. Another instrument that might enrich the findings of this research are observations of Phonetics and Phonology courses to identify and analyse instructors and students' discourses used during classes in relation to accents. This analysis could either validate or contradict the results of this study. As attitudes are not something deeply rooted in people's minds, it would be practical to carry out a similar study in a few years from now to compare pre-service attitudes at the beginning of the B.A to their attitudes at the end of their undergraduate degree. The study of the development and evolution of attitudes toward accents, over time, is "likely to be valuable for sociolinguists interested in language spread, maintenance, decay, language planning and foreign language policy" (McKenzie, 2010) .

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## Appendixes

### Appendix A- Consent to invite pre-service teachers to participate



**Language School**  
**B.A in Foreign Language Education**  
**Bachelor's Dissertation**  
**Director: Dunia Catalina Méndez Vallejo**

#### Subject: Consent for research invitation

I hereby allow eighth-semester students: Juan David Rojas Orozco and Sharon Yisell Chacón Parada from the Bachelor's Degree in Foreign Languages Education at Universidad Industrial de Santander (UIS) to invite students under my charge to be part of their Bachelor's Dissertation "Unveiling Pre-Service Teachers' Attitudes Towards Their Own English Accents: Implications Of The Standard Language Ideology In A Colombian University".

The undergraduate students will invite students during some classes in order to get the minimum number of participants they need for their research, as well as to collect the contact information of those who wish to participate voluntarily in the study. The rest of the procedures (interviews and surveys) will be carried out outside of class schedules so as to respect the English Phonetics and Phonology's syllabi.

Professor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Responsible Researcher's Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

Responsible Researcher's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Place and date: \_\_\_\_\_

This document is signed in duplicate, one copy being kept by each party.



## Appendix B- Interviews' consent



**Language School**  
**B.A in Foreign Language Education**  
**Bachelor's Dissertation**  
**Director: Dunia Catalina Méndez Vallejo**

### INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

## UNVEILING PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THEIR OWN ENGLISH ACCENTS: IMPLICATIONS OF THE STANDARD LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY IN A COLOMBIAN UNIVERSITY.

### INFORMATION

You have been invited to participate in the research: Unveiling Pre-Service Teachers' Attitudes Towards Their Own English Accents: Implications Of The Standard Language Ideology In A Colombian University. It aims to explore pre-service teachers' attitudes towards English accents. You have been selected because you voluntarily decided to take part in this case study.

The researchers responsible for this study are eighth-semester students Juan David Rojas Orozco and Sharon Yisell Chacón Parada from the Bachelor's Degree in Foreign Languages Education at Universidad Industrial de Santander (UIS) under the direction of Dr Dunia Catalina Mendez Vallejo, Associate Director of the Spanish Language Programme in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at Princeton University.

In deciding to participate in this research, it is important that you consider the following information. Feel free to ask any questions that are unclear to you:

**Participation:** Your participation will consist of taking part in a face-to-face interview, which will be recorded to facilitate the analysis of the interview. In any case, you will be able to interrupt the recording at any time, and resume it whenever you want.

**Benefits:** You will not receive any direct financial benefit for participating in this study. However, your participation will allow us to generate information about language attitudes and ideologies towards English accents.

**Voluntariness:** You declare that you are aware of this research and have consented to your participation. Furthermore, you are free to answer any questions you wish, as well as to stop your participation at any time. This will not be to your detriment.

**Confidentiality:** All your opinions will be kept confidential, and will be held in confidence. In presentations and publications of this research, your name will not be associated with any

particular opinion. The information you provide will be stored securely for the duration of the research and the researchers will be the only party that will have access to your data for academic purposes

**Contact details:** If you require further information, or to communicate for any reason related to this research, you can contact the Responsible Researchers of this study:

Responsible researcher name: Sharon Yisell Chacón

Telephone: 3138132271

Address: Faculty of Human Sciences, Universidad Industrial de Santander.

Email: sharonchacon31212@gmail.com

Name of the researcher in charge: Juan David Rojas

Telephone: 3188560390

Address: Faculty of Human Sciences, Universidad Industrial de Santander.

Email: jdavid98orozco@gmail.com



**Language School**

**B.A in Foreign Language Education**

**Bachelor's Dissertation**

**Director: Dunia Catalina Méndez Vallejo**

## INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to voluntarily participate in the study Unveiling Pre-Service Teachers' Attitudes Towards Their Own English Accents: Implications Of The Standard Language Ideology In A Colombian University.

I declare that I have read (or have been read to) and (have) understood the conditions of my participation in this study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and they have been answered. I have no doubts about it.

Participant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Responsible Researcher's Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

Responsible Researcher's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Place and date: \_\_\_\_\_

This document is signed in duplicate, one copy being kept by each party.

## Appendix C- Survey participation consent



**Language School**  
**B.A in Foreign Language Education**  
**Bachelor's Dissertation**  
**Director: Dunia Catalina Méndez Vallejo**

### PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' INFORMED CONSENT: SURVEY

Good morning/afternoon/evening. Our names are Juan David Rojas Orozco and Sharon Yisell Chacón Parada and we are students of the ninth semester of the Bachelor's Degree in Foreign Languages Education at Universidad Industrial de Santander (UIS). We are conducting research on language attitudes and ideologies towards English accents as part of our undergraduate dissertation (Trabajo de Grado).

The aim of our research is to detect your attitudes towards your own accents and the relation of these attitudes to the standard language ideology.

All the information you provide will be absolutely confidential and anonymous and will be used strictly for academic, scientific and pedagogical purposes.

If you need more information or wish to learn more about the research you can contact us at the following e-mail addresses: [jdavid98orozco@gmail.com](mailto:jdavid98orozco@gmail.com) and [sharonchacon31212@gmail.com](mailto:sharonchacon31212@gmail.com).

By means of this questionnaire we are asking you to answer a few questions and allow us to collect data on your attitudes towards English accents. Your participation is completely voluntary; if you do not wish to do so, your refusal will not cause you any inconvenience.

I wish to participate in the questionnaire:

- Yes
- No

**Appendix D- Teachers' interview (Questions)**

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**TEACHERS' INTERVIEW**

**Interview Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Interviewer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Objective:** To recognise teachers' attitudes towards English accents and the role of teaching and learning pronunciation.

1. How long have you been a teacher at Universidad Industrial de Santander? How many of those semesters/years as a phonetics and phonology teacher?
2. In your opinion, what are the most important characteristics a teacher should have regarding pronunciation?
3. What is the reason for having Peter Roach's work/book as material for the course? Why not another book? Leading: How long has the university used this book?
4. Is it important for your students to follow one of the accents that are spoken by people who speak English as their first language? Why or why not?
5. Do you try to encourage your students to speak one of the accents that are spoken by people who speak English as their first language? Why or why not?
6. As an English phonetics and phonology teacher, what do you consider a 'strong' or 'marked' accent?
7. How do you feel when your students speak English with a strong accent? Why?
8. In your years as a university student, did you have good or bad experiences because of your accent? If so, what experience was it?

**Appendix E- Pre-service teachers' interview**

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**PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' INTERVIEW**

**Interview Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Interviewer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Objective:** To identify the indirect attitudes that pre-services teachers hold towards the English accent they currently have and the English accents they are learning.

1. What would you say if someone told you that you do not know English because you do not have a standard English accent'?
2. Would you use a different English accent depending on where you would teach English in the future? Why?
3. Imagine you were a teacher in the US. How would you react if a student's parent came and told you they do not want you to be their child's teacher because of your non-standard English accent.
4. What would you do if one of your future English teachers gave you a failing grade in a speaking exam just because you do not have a standard English accent?
5. As a teacher, would you correct a future student if they had a strong Colombian accent similar to Sofia Vergara? Why?

**Appendix F- Pre-service teachers' survey (Questions)**

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**PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' SURVEY**

**Survey Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Objective:** To identify the direct attitudes that pre-services teachers hold towards the English accent they currently have and the English accents they are learning.

**SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION:** Below you will find a series of questions where certain personal information is required that will enrich our investigation. The answers to these questions will allow us to analyse the data more systematically.

**Course:**

- Foundations of English Articulatory Phonetics
- English Phonetics and Phonology 1
- English Phonetics and Phonology 2

**Gender:**

- Male
- Female
- Others: \_\_\_\_\_

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Where were you born? (city or town)**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Please, list in chronological order the places/locations where you have lived for a year or more than a year. Include the amount of time for each place/location.**

Location	Years	Month
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**What languages do you speak?**

- Spanish
- English
- French

- Portuguese
- Others: \_\_\_\_\_

### STANDARD LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY:

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Below you will find 6 statements with which you may agree more or less. Mark the option that represents your degree of agreement with the content of the statement, according to the following equivalence scale.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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(If it's hard to pick just one answer, think about what you think most of the time).

- 1) English language learners should follow closely one of the standard accents that is spoken by native in English-speaking countries (e.g. the US (General American), the UK (Received pronunciation), Australia (General Australian, etc.).

• Strongly Disagree	• Disagree	• Agree	• Strongly Agree
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- 2) It is not acceptable for English language learners to speak English with a non-standard accent such as a Colombian accent.

• Strongly Disagree	• Disagree	• Agree	• Strongly Agree
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- 3) English language learners' accent should be evaluated based on standard accents from English-speaking Countries (i.e. General American, Received Pronunciation, General Australian).

• Strongly Disagree	• Disagree	• Agree	• Strongly Agree
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- 4) English language learners should eradicate all traces of their foreign accents and stick to a standard accent such as General American or Received Pronunciation

• Strongly Disagree	• Disagree	• Agree	• Strongly Agree
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- 5) The only acceptable accents are standard accents spoken by native people in one of the English-speaking countries.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- 6) English language Teachers and English language learners should try to use an English standard accent spoken in one of the English-speaking countries.

● Strongly Disagree	● Disagree	● Agree	● Strongly Agree
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**ATTITUDES TOWARDS YOUR OWN ACCENT:**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Below you will find 6 statements with which you may agree more or less. Mark the option that represents your degree of agreement with the content of the statement, according to the following equivalence scale.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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(If it's hard to pick just one answer, think about what you think most of the time).

1. I feel satisfied with my English accent

● Strongly Disagree	● Disagree	● Agree	● Strongly Agree
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2. I believe my English accent sounds intelligent

● Strongly Disagree	● Disagree	● Agree	● Strongly Agree
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3. I feel comfortable with my English accent when participating in class

● Strongly Disagree	● Disagree	● Agree	● Strongly Agree
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4. I feel that my current English accent is ready to teach classes.

● Strongly Disagree	● Disagree	● Agree	● Strongly Agree
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5. I think my English accent sounds friendly.

● Strongly Disagree	● Disagree	● Agree	● Strongly Agree
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6. I feel confident with my English accent to have conversations in English.

● Strongly Disagree	● Disagree	● Agree	● Strongly Agree
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**ATTITUDES TOWARDS YOUR OWN ACCENT CONSIDERING STANDARD ENGLISH ACCENTS:**



**INSTRUCTIONS:** Below you will find 6 statements with which you may agree more or less. Mark the option that represents your degree of agreement with the content of the statement, according to the following equivalence scale.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
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(If it's hard to pick just one answer, think about what you think most of the time).

1. I feel happy when I notice that my English accent is more like a standard English accent spoken in one of the English-speaking countries.

<input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Agree	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree
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2. I feel happy if someone mistakenly considers that I speak as a native speaker with a Standard English accent (i.e. General American, Received pronunciation, etc.)

<input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Agree	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree
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3. I cannot tolerate when my English accent sounds different from the standard accents spoken by native people in English-speaking countries.

<input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Agree	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree
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4. I feel satisfied with my English accent, but would still like to attempt to sound like a native speaker with a Standard English accent.

<input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Agree	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree
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5. I believe that I am understood in English because my accent sounds similar to a Standard English Accent spoken in one of the English-speaking countries.

<input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Agree	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree
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6. I like to be corrected when my pronunciation in English does not sound standard.

<input type="radio"/> Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Disagree	<input type="radio"/> Agree	<input type="radio"/> Strongly Agree
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