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Students' and teachers' social representations about the RP
English accent and their relationship with the notion of “Native
speaker” in the University educational level in Chile.

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ABSTRACT

The present investigation critically analyses, from Linguistic anthropology's viewpoint, some representations from teachers' and learners' common sense in the discourse in relation to the English language, its teaching and learning as an L2 as well. These representations are part of certain cultural models, which once settled down, determine learners' and teachers' practices and choices; on the one hand, their choices about where, with whom and how to study the English language, and on the other hand, their choices about what and how to teach the language. The aim of this research study is to contribute to an "ideological clarification" (Kroskrity, 2010) in this context where teachers and students are the ultimate actors involved in the process of english teaching and learning.

Consequently, some of the themes that will be discussed are (a) firstly, social representations regarding the Rp English accent, secondly, social representations about the "native speaker" in relation to the learning and teaching of English, and thirdly, the political and pedagogical implications of teachers and students involved in this process.

For this purpose, 7 teachers and 16 students from the undergraduate program "Licenciatura en educación con mención en Inglés y pedagogía en inglés" at UMCE (Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación) were interviewed by means of two different questionnaires according to whether the participant was a teacher or a student. The results showed that most of the times social representations and ideologies found had little to do with the language itself or linguistic components but are closely related to political, economical, social and historical reasons that construct the background of the English language and the use of "native speakers" in the teaching and learning of English.

Keywords: Linguistic Anthropology, "native speaker", variety, accent, English language teaching and learning as an L2, Received Pronunciation.

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INTRODUCTION

In the last 20 years the number of research studies concerning the relationship between language, man and culture has increased (Duranti 2003; Kroskrity 1998, 2002, 2009, 2010a, 2010b, 2012, 2016; Silverstein 2004; Wilce 2006; Woolard 1998, 2004). These studies have been classified as part of the interdisciplinary field of Linguistic Anthropology which is defined as the study of language and speech, where both elements are seen as a cultural resource and a cultural practice respectively (Duranti 1997). In this area, human's beliefs are relevant to these studies, but in order to examine such perceptions, first, it is important to make a review of the context in which this investigation is defined. The teaching of English in Chile is a process where different elements such as cultural models, public policies and ideas converge. Here teachers and students as the ultimate actors in learning an L2 have always something to say. Their beliefs and perceptions along with public policies like 'EODP' (English Opens Doors Program) and the 'National English Strategy 2014– 2030' constitute a fundamental role in English language teaching and learning as those perceptions promote, organize and mold the way in which English is seen, their methods and choices on teaching or studying this language as well.

In relation to all what has been already mentioned, the goals of this paper are: to present a description of the social representations teachers and students involved in the teaching and learning of English have about the RP accent and the native speaker, as well as their pedagogical and political implications concerning their cultural models. In addition, another aim of this investigation is to contribute to the 'ideological clarification' (Kroskrity 2009) that can be found in this frame.

CHAPTER I
PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND JUSTIFICATION

The teaching and learning of English in Chile has become a widely discussed topic over the last years. From the government, the implementation of certain public policies and plans such as ‘EODP’ and the ‘National English Strategy 2014– 2030’ are not free of ideologies and beliefs that influence people’s common sense among which teachers and students can be found. Considering this, it is important to examine people’s perception so as to recognize what they think and believe about relevant issues in English language teaching and learning (pedagogical practices, choices, and methods among others), and to develop an “ideological clarification” (Kroskrity 2009).

This inquiry is carried out due to motivations concerning the lack of studies in Chile and the world in which a clear definition of the native speaker term could be provided. Many researchers use this concept extensively in demographic, sociolinguistic and phonological articles as a norm for the teaching and learning of English as an L2 (e.g. Andreou & Galantomos 2009; Beltrán 2000; Davies 2008; Kubota 2004). However, articles in which the native speaker is mentioned do not provide an explicit and precise definition of this term with the exception of some which only refer to the native speaker from a partial approach providing some characteristics of this concept (e.g. Andreou & Galantomos 2009; Lee 2005; Medgyes 1999; Stern 1983).

On the contrary, there is a great variety of research articles in the world that criticize the use of the native speaker as a norm in the teaching and learning of English (e.g. Aneja 2014; Canagarajah 1999; Chacón 2000; Cook 1999, 2010; Jaffe 2015; Leung et al. 1997; Mahboob 2005; Phillipson 1996; Piller 2001; Selvi 2014).

Nevertheless, when taking into account scientific articles only written in Chile, the amount of works related to the native speaker concept are only a few (e.g. Aronsson 2015; Cocio 2012; Espinoza 2015; Pérez et al. 2016; Pérez de Arce 2017; Tapia 2008; Toledo & Toledo 2014). From those articles, only two have shown a critical viewpoint in discussing the concept (Espinoza 2015; Pérez de Arce 2017) while the others use the native speaker term to measure and compare learner’s performance (e.g. Aronsson 2015; Pérez et al. 2016; Tapia 2008).

Moreover, there is also a gap concerning the studies made about Received Pronunciation.

Most investigations have focused on introducing RP by accounting for a description of its historical development (Cruttenden 2014, Trudgill 2001), its phonetic/phonological characteristics and changes over time (Przedlacka 2005, Trudgill 2008) or people's perception in comparison to other accents from English learner (Ali 2009, Tévar 2014, Véliz 2016). Nonetheless, the discussion concerning the RP accent as a means of political and economical power has not been presented yet. Little research has been done related to the reasons every learner of English when it comes to chose RP as the accent they are going to acquire. Why would they learn an accent whose amount of native speakers is considerably lower than non-native ones? What is behind those reasons? This study will try to answers those questions basing on the participants' own perceptions and the models behind them.

In this context, it is important to bring some discussion from a critical and not only a theoretical perspective over both concepts, on the one hand the native speaker term and on the other hand, the RP accent.

1.2. OBJECTIVES

1.2.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To characterize the cultural models concerning the English language itself and its teaching and learning by university teachers and students involved in the process.

1.2.2. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

To characterize teachers' social representations about the RP accent and the "native speaker" notion.

To characterize students' social representations about the RP English accent and the "native speaker" term.

To identify the pedagogical and political implications of teachers' and students' cultural models regarding English language teaching and learning.

1.3. METHODOLOGY SECTION

1.3.1. LEVEL OF STUDY

In order to carry out this investigation, a descriptive level of study will be adopted, because there is a little amount of studies regarding the “native speaker” and “received pronunciation” terms from a theoretical or a critical approach in linguistics in the world and in Chile.

1.3.2. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The methodological approach that will be used is qualitative methods concerning different aspects in the conduction of this investigation.

1.3.3. TYPE OF DESIGN

The type of design that will be used is a Cross-sectional design.

1.3.4. PARTICIPANTS

In this research study teachers and students from the university educational level were required. On the one hand, 7 teachers from the undergraduate program “Licenciatura en educación con mención en Inglés y pedagogía en Inglés” at UMCE (Universidad Metropolitana de Ciencias de la Educación) were interviewed. On the other hand, 16 students from the same undergraduate program at UMCE were interviewed. The amount of women and men in every focus group was randomly selected according to students’ willingness to participate in this study.

As a matter of fact, both, students and teachers from this specific program, will be selected due to their previously acquired knowledge and notions about the two main concepts reviewed in this investigation. Therefore, a pilot (or experimental) study was carried out in June

in order to observe how accurate were the questionnaires and approaches taken in the initial proposal of this investigation.

1.3.5. INSTRUMENTS OF DATA COLLECTION

The instruments of data collection that will be used are focus group interviews as well as semi-structured interviews. The focus group interviews will take place first, so the participants get to feel more comfortable to give their opinion.

Subsequently, the individual interviews will be applied separately to teachers and students in order to gather their individual perceptions and beliefs and as a way to examine their answers in a deeper way.

In relation to the semi-structured interviews., some of the themes that will be discussed in these interviews are related to the use of certain strategies by teachers in the teaching of the English language, as well as their preference in specific choices concerning vocabulary and pronunciation.

1.3.6. INSTRUMENTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The instruments of data analysis that will be employed are certain categories such as: Conceptual metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson 1980), Language Ideologies Model: romanticism and rationalism (Geeraerts 2006; Polzenhagen & Dirven 2008), Symbolic Power (Bourdieu, 1985; 1991), Social Representations Model (Moscovici, 1961).

Additionally, the corpus gathered from teachers' and students' answers from the focus group and semi-structured interviews will be analyzed by focusing on certain topics and ideologies in relation to the common sense in students' and teachers' discourse:

- (1) Social representations regarding the RP accent:
 - Perceptions of the accent itself
 - Ideas about listening to someone speaking RP
 - The use of this accent in English teaching
 - Reasons for studying/teaching RP

(2) Social representations about the native speaker:

- Definition of the native speaker
- Characterization of this concept

(3) Political and pedagogical implications of cultural models concerning English language teaching and learning:

- The use of native speaker term in English teaching and learning programs such as OpenEnglish
- Association between the native speaker and a particular accent
- Choosing one accent in the teaching/learning of English

CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, the most important theoretical aspects will be reviewed in relation to the main concepts, that is to say, the native speaker term (e.g. Andreou & Galantomos 2009; Lee 2005; Medgyes 1999; Stern 1983) and the RP accent (Cruttenden 2014, Rasel 2010; Trudgill 2001). Additionally, other concepts will be presented such as Linguistic Anthropology (Duranti 1997, 2001), Symbolic Dominance and Symbolic Power (Bourdieu 1985, 1991), Social Representations (Hall 1997; Moscovici 1961), Language Ideologies (Kroskrity 2009), the Standard Language Ideology (Lippi-Green 1994), Language Ideologies Model (Geeraerts 2006; Polzenhagen & Dirven 2008), Linguistic Imperialism (Phillipson 1992), Ideological Clarification (Kroskrity 2009), Conceptual Metaphors (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 2003; Soriano 2012).

Furthermore, the most relevant scientific articles written in Chile about the native speaker (e.g. Espinoza 2015; Pérez de Arce 2017) and the RP accent (e.g. Trudgill 2001, 2008; Vásquez & Vivanco 2014; Scales et al. 2006) will be discussed as well.

2.1. KEY CONCEPTS

2.1.1. THE FIELD OF LINGUISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY

Considering the research study that will be carried out, it is important to clarify some concepts in order to provide a clear understanding of this research proposal. As a starting point, the area from which this study is part of has to be defined. Linguistic Anthropology is described by Duranti as “the study of language as a cultural resource and speaking as a cultural practice” (Duranti 1997: 2). He also says that this interdisciplinary field works with procedures and techniques from linguistics and anthropology and its purpose is to contribute to “an understanding of the multifarious aspects of language as a set of cultural practices, that is, as a system of communication that allows for interpsychological and intrapsychological representations of the social order and helps people use such representations for constitutive social acts” (ibid.: 3). Some of the most important topics of study are “the politics of representation, the constitution of authority, the legitimation of power, the cultural basis of racism and ethnic conflict, the process of socialization, the cultural construction of the person (or self), the politics of emotion, the relationship between ritual performance and forms of social control, domain-specific knowledge and cognition, artistic performance and the politics of aesthetic consumption, cultural contact and social change.” (ibid.: 4). One of the most important aspects concerning linguistic anthropology which distinguishes itself from other disciplines has to do with “the view of language as a set of practices, which play an essential role in mediating the ideational and material aspects of human existence and, hence, in bringing about particular ways of being-in-the world.” (ibid.: 4-5).

Moreover, the importance of language is reinforced as Duranti (1997) states the following:

the work done by linguistic anthropologists is about the ways in which the words said on a given occasion give participants first and researchers later a point of view, a way of thinking about the world and the nature of human existence. (ibid.: 5)

This idea highlights the type of work that researchers from this field have to do and being aware that words really matter in itself, as language usually conveys more than only a literal meaning but also “cultural affinities and cultural differentiations” (op.cit)

Consequently, it is important to mention that one of the greatest issues concerning linguistic anthropology is the written language and its expressions, which according to Duranti (1997):

Linguistic anthropologists also attach a great deal of importance to writing practices, that is, the ways in which both speech and other symbolic activities are documented and made accessible first for analysis and later for argumentation through a variety of transcription conventions and new technologies (ibid.: 6)

From this perspective, linguistic anthropology’s interest on writing language also involves the use of a great variety of methods and strategies also used by other disciplines concerned with the investigation of human behavior (1997).

In addition to what has already been mentioned, linguistic anthropology recognize the language faculty as a means of expressing individuals’ acting and thinking, as Duranti (2001) says

It assumes that the human language faculty is a cognitive and a social achievement that provides the intellectual tools for thinking and acting in the world. Its study must be done by detailed documentation of what speakers say as they engage in daily social activities. This documentation relies on participant observation and other methods, including audiovisual recording, annotated transcription, and interviews with participants. (8899)

Here, the way of collecting data for linguistic anthropologists and the social and cognitive dimensions of language are pointed out in opposition to other fields closely related to linguistic anthropology.

2.1.2. NATIVE SPEAKER

In addition, the “native speaker” term will be addressed in relation to a series of partial characterization different authors have provided. According to Andreou and Galantomos (2009) in the context of English language, an English native speaker is “someone who is born in an English-speaking country; has learned English during childhood in an English-speaking environment; speaks English as a first language; has a native-like command of English; is capable of producing fluent, spontaneous speech in English that is characterized by creativity” (201). This definition gives us an idea of what elements are supposed to be portrayed by a native speaker. They also concluded that it is important to “seek for a compromise” (Ibid.: 204), which is explained as instructors or teachers should “adopt a more flexible and functional approach to the native speaker ideal by bearing in mind that trying to make learners to get as close to a native speaker as possible is not the only and ultimate goal of foreign language learning” (loc.cit.). Also, there is another option where “instructors have to look for an alternative competence which will stand as a model for learners to adhere to” (loc.cit.). Following this line, learners will be compensated by behaviors where they play autonomy patterns and innovation in the learning process, and they will not be pushed to follow the native speakers as the only model.

However, the characterization made by Andreou and Galantomos is not the only one that has been made about the concept of native speaker. Medges (1999) mentions that English native speakers have an instinct to discriminate between grammatical and ungrammatical structures in English, where grammatical structures would constitute acceptable forms and ungrammatical ones would not. Also, Stern (1983) says that a native speaker is an individual with an underlying knowledge of grammatical rules, a natural understanding of meaning, a communicative talent to socialize with speakers from different social settings, a set of language skills and an innovative language use.

Moreover, Lee (2005) also discusses some characterizations of the native speaker as he presents a description of what a native speaker is according to Bloomfield (1933): “The first language a human being learns to speak is his native language; he is a native speaker of this language” (43). Furthermore, Lee (2005) also discusses the Chomskyan perspective regarding the native speaker which conceives this term as an ideal, transcendental and homogeneous native speaker who represents the authority in terms of grammar and competence in the community of

speakers he/she stands for (Chomsky 1965).

Finally, Lee introduces a definition of the native speaker concept based other scholars' description from the field of Second Language Acquisition:

- 1.) The individual acquired the language in early childhood (Davies 1991; McArthur 1992; Phillipson 1992) and maintains the use of the language (Kubota 2004; McArthur 1992),
- 2.) the individual has intuitive knowledge of the language (Davies 1991; Stern 1983),
- 3.) the individual is able to produce fluent, spontaneous discourse (Davies 1991; Maum 2002; Medgyes 1992),
- 4.) the individual is communicatively competent (Davies 1991; Liu 1999; Medgyes 1992), able to communicate within different social settings (Stern 1983),
- 5.) the individual identifies with or is identified by a language community (Davies 1991; Johnson & Johnson 1998; Nayar 1998)
- 6.) the individual does not have a foreign accent (Coulmas 1981; Medgyes 1992; Scovel 1969, 1988). (2005: 4)

This characterization is constituted by the work of different researchers related to the field of SLA, which are joined together in order to present a more consistent definition of what and who the native speaker concept is.

Moreover, Graddol (2003) makes a review of the state of the native speaker concept concerning the English language, where he explains the cultural and economical factors that are behind the rising of the native speaker ideal as a norm in English teaching and learning. He concludes that today the decline of the native speaker in some areas around the world has to do with “changing ideas about the centrality of the native speaker to norms of usage” (Graddol 2003: 165). The very same constitution of this ideal dates back to Chomskyan linguistics and even older with the work of traditional dialectologists, where they draw ideas in relation to “good speakers” (Ibid.: 166) who were described as old people, male and non-mobile (Op.cit.). Although, the author presents another perspective where the actual construction of a “New Europe” (Op.cit.) has lead to the constitution of identities and the awareness of the existence of other languages, both processes have debilitated the idea of the native speaker as a norm of

teaching and learning foreign or second languages (Op.cit.). He concludes with an interesting question whether people, who are going to learn English as a foreign language, will continue to consider the native speaker as an authority or a model or will they look forward.

2.1.3. SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS: LANGUAGE AND SYMBOLIC POWER

Therefore, concepts regarding the socio-cultural, political as well as economical background of communities and nations will be examined in the analysis of results, taking as a start the notions of 'Symbolic Dominance' and 'Symbolic Power' (Bourdieu 1985, 1991). The former term is defined according to Bourdieu (1985) as the disposition or perspective adopted by the predominant language market that conceives and normalises a specific language as the standard within a nation (op.cit). This decision is supported by various mechanisms related to the codification, reading and writing of the so called 'standard language' which do not suppose any coercive submission or free adherence to particular values (op.cit). The latter concept is understood as (Bourdieu 1991):

A power of constituting the given through utterances, of making people see and believe, of confirming or transforming the vision of the world and, thereby, action on the world and thus the world itself, an almost magical power which enables one to obtain the equivalent of what is obtained through force (whether physical or economic), by virtue of the specific effect of mobilization - is a power that can be exercised only if it is recognized, that is, misrecognized as arbitrary. (170).

In this definition, Bourdieu highlights the invisible power that pushes back people's perception over the world itself, and how this power is confused as having an arbitrary character, when it is completely biased on a certain social class interests. Also, Bourdieu mentions that:

Symbolic power does not reside in 'symbolic systems' in the form of an 'illocutionary force' but that it is defined in and through a given relation between those who exercise power and those who submit to it, i.e. in the very structure of the field in which belief is produced and reproduced. What creates the power of words and slogans, a power capable of maintaining or subverting the social order, is the belief in the

legitimacy of words and of those who utter them. And words alone cannot create this belief. (Op.cit)

This explanation clarifies the actual extent of the symbolic power over the symbolic systems and their relations among people with a certain power.

Furthermore, the term social representation can be understood from different approaches and authors as well. Moscovici, argues for a conceptualization of social representations, which consists of a contextualized characteristic that involves a construction from interpersonal interactions (1961). This distinction allows the subject, who is intrinsically social, to merge and to reshape himself to the reality he is placed. According to Moscovici, the social representation serves as a function that enables subjects to establish an order or organization within the environment they are part of. This function allows subjects to control it or to manage and influence it (1961). Additionally, Moscovici says these social representations help people to communicate clearly by offering members of a community or society a certain code to use it and to classify objects they can find in their common reality (1961).

Additionally, according to Hall (1997) the study of social representations is closely related to the culture, because social representations establish a link among sense, language and culture. Following this line, representations are considered as a fundamental component in the process of producing sense and it is exchanged among members from a particular culture, implicating language use, signs and images in order to represent things (1997). Besides, Hall states that the social representation is the production of sense through language and practice, that is to say, through signification as practices produce senses (1997).

2.1.4. LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES

The term ‘language ideologies’ was described by Kroskrity as:

[they] represent the perception of language and discourse that is constructed in the interest of a specific social or cultural group. A community’s conceptions of its language are critically influenced by its position in political economic and other relevant cultural systems. (2009: 72-73).

This definition points out critically how particular communities' interest prevail over the ones from other communities or social groups depending on their position in the constitution of the society. On the other hand, Rumsey (1990) defined them as “shared bodies of commonsense notions about the nature of language in the world” (as cited by Woolard 2010). Both definitions make reference to the same point: a perception about language that is shared by a specific group in society which will later help us understand why certain notions about different models are shared by the participants of the investigation.

2.1.4.1. STANDARD LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY

Among language ideologies there is one that points out which is known as ‘the standard language ideology’ (SLI). This ideology is defined as:

A bias toward an abstracted, idealized, 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 (Lippi-Green 1994: 166)

This ideology is adopted in some communities in spite of the fact that its constitution and development threatens people's choice of speaking one of the many dialects of a given language. The discrimination associated to this ideology turns it into a hateful context where speakers who are against the standard language or dialect suffer the consequences of such ideology.

2.1.5. LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES MODEL

When analyzing the data collected from semi-structured interviews, there will be another concept applied, which is the ‘Language Ideologies Model’. Considering this, Geeraerts explains that, on the one hand, languages are conceptualised under a rationalist model where they are valued as a means of communication that motivates people's participation and the constitution of

a democracy within the society they are placed. This construction is reinforced by ideas related to the Enlightenment as well (2006). On the other hand, a language can be evaluated as a way of expressing and characterizing people's identity, this notion is known as a romantic model (Geeraerts 2006; Polzenhagen & Dirven 2008). In this model, Geeraerts highlights the idea of representativity when he says: "The identity that is expressed by the language is the identity of a community, and the community is a nation when it acquires political autonomy" (2006: 289). It is important to take into account that people's identity is expressed through their ideas in relation to the language they speak and that such ideas point out the decisions and practices they have, their judgments are more than just about language, but also about the way in which they conceive themselves and their political organization as well.

2.1.6. LINGUISTIC IMPERIALISM

According to Phillipson (1992), linguistic imperialism is defined as "the imposition of one country's language on another along with its cultural, social and political models" (17). This involves a movement from the 'core', that is to say, the country that imposes a language, to the periphery, that is made up of the countries in which the language is imposed as an L2 (1992). Consequently, second language acquisition is involved in a particular level of cultural 'imperialism' due to the knowledge that is transferred from one culture into another (1992).

One of the most interesting analysis concerning the linguistic imperialism in the world is the spread of English and the relevance to native forms, which Phillipson (1992) recognizes as being a form of linguistic imperialism as well.

2.1.7. IDEOLOGICAL CLARIFICATION

Another concept to be explained in this study is "ideological clarification", which is understood as "a notion that covers the conflicts of 'beliefs, or feelings, about languages' that are the inevitable outcome of the interaction of indigenous, colonial, post-colonial, and professional academic perspectives." (Kroskrity 2009: 1). This notion is useful to understand some of the struggles people encounter when they are learning a second language, which in this study will be

English. English as a language involves a certain set of economic, political and social factors that point out its relevance within the process of learning a second language, however, these elements usually affect people's choices and practices due to the differences between the communities they belong to and others where they have to face. As the purpose of this investigation is to reveal the cultural models teachers and students conceive in relation to the teaching and learning of English, this notion of ideological clarification plays a fundamental role as a manner of exposing the elements involved in such models and practices.

2.1.8. CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS

Other concept that will be used in this study is Conceptual Metaphors, seeing one kind of thing in terms of another kind of thing (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). As also Lakoff and Johnson explained, metaphors may create realities for us, especially social realities and thus may be a guide for future action (loc. cit). Soriano provided a similar definition by saying that conceptual metaphors are a “cognitive phenomenon in which a semantic area or domain is conceptually represented in terms of another domain” (Soriano 2012: 1). Many authors have provided different kind of categorization for conceptual metaphors (Grady 1999, Lakoff y Turner 1989, Ruiz de Mendoza 1997, 2000), however, for the purpose of this study we will only refer to those made by Lakoff and Johnson in 2003. They made a distinction between three types of conceptual metaphors according to their function: structural, orientational and ontological metaphors. The first one refers to “cases where one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another” (Lakoff and Johnson 2003: 15), as for example the metaphor “time is money” where the concept of time is structured in terms of the concept of money. Even though we know that time does not actually have a monetary value in real life, we often hear expressions such as “you're wasting to your time” or “how will you be spending your time these holidays?” where money is expressed as a tangible resource of value. Secondly, there are orientational metaphors, where a whole system of concepts is organised in terms of another involving spatial orientation based on our physical and cultural experiences, which means that they give a concept a spatial orientation (loc.cit). For example, “more” and “less” are understood in terms of up and down which is seen through constructions such as “the book sales went up this past month” or “The number of

independent movies has decreased in the last decades”. And lastly, in the case of ontological metaphors, we understand “our experiences in terms of objects and substances” (Lakoff and Johnson 2003: 26) which allow us to define and categorize abstract domains as in the metaphor race as an object with examples as “the race was incredible” or “she finished the race in the second place”.

Considering those definitions and categorizations, conceptual metaphors will be crucial for the study because they will help us to understand the participants’ reality and the nature of the arguments given them and their function within their discourse, since they will not be based on rationality. However, this will not mean that their arguments will not be well founded, since truth is relative to our conceptual system which is grounded in our experiences and in our daily interactions with other people (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980).

2.1.9. RP ACCENT

Finally, concerning the socio-historical development of the RP accent, this study will present a review on the most important elements on the selection, imposition and spread of this accent as a norm in the United Kingdom and then in the rest of the world. This choice was made by a little number of people who belong to a particular area of the UK, southeast part of the nation being more specific. Cruttenden (2014) argues that different factors and actors played an important role in this process. At the beginning, the vision of well-known scholars and phoneticians such as Alexander Ellis and Henry Sweet recognised the RP accent as the most educated and cultured pronunciation spoken in the metropolis (as cited in Cruttenden 2014). This accent, whose origin is in the southern part of England, was spoken by people who worked in the court, as well as the learned people from London. Consequently, some institutions such as the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) have been contributing a long time on the standardisation of the RP accent as the norm of speech. Through different mechanisms, such as the BBC hiring only announcers with an this accent, RP was little by little impacting on people’s lives in the United Kingdom, as well as in other countries concerning the BBC, as one of the most important mass media communication in the world. Despite being considered the standard variety of English by a huge amount of people, RP’s origin is not attributed to any specific

region of the United Kingdom (Trudgill 2001). The spreading of Received Pronunciation as a model of pronunciation taught all over the world may lead people to think that the number of RP speakers exceeds the number of speakers of other models. Nevertheless, less than three percent of the population in the UK are speakers of this model of pronunciation (Trudgill 2001; Rasel 2010). In fact, as Trudgill (2008) pointed out, there is the belief that RP is disappearing as it has been decreasingly losing its status during the last decades due to the massification and less negative reception of other models of pronunciation as General American. Despite these facts, RP is hardly being left behind in the classroom, especially in the EFL ones. That is the reason why Received Pronunciation was the accent chosen for this investigation. Even though the number of native speakers of this accent is constantly decreasing, RP is still the main accent taken into account by teachers or instructors of English a second language.

2.2. STATE OF THE ART

2.2.1 RECEIVED PRONUNCIATION

There is a wide amount of works concerning the investigation of Received Pronunciation and that number has increased in the last centuries considering the promotion of English as a “global language” (Crystal 1995, 1997) Scholars have mainly worried about determine the origins of RP and its changes and evolution throughout the decades. Trudgill, for instance, explained that the accent has its origins in the southeast part of England because, unlike southwest accents, RP is non-rhotic; and unlike northern ones, it has /ɑ:/ instead of /æ/ in the lexical sets of *bath* and *dance* (2001). Despite these characteristics, there is no feature in RP that makes it associable to any specific region in England. This lack of regionality, Trudgill explains, may be due to the fact that RP had its genesis in residential schools of Britain, public schools, for the upper classes. Therefore, the accent’s birthplace cannot be traced according to regional aspects but to social ones (2001). It is precisely this feature which makes the accent so likely to change over time. In *The Historical Sociolinguistics of Elite Accent Change: On Why RP is not disappearing* (2008), Trudgill argues against the eradication of the accent. Even though nowadays people in general do not discriminate people because of their accent and are more

open minded to different variety of models, this is an erroneous misperception which is generated because of three different reasons: firstly, non-RP accents are now found in context where they would have been excluded years before For example, BBC was one the main mass media promoting the accent but now event they are not longer worried about hiring only announcers with an RP accent (2008). Secondly, now British society is no longer allowed to be seen discriminating people because of their accent. It is something that still happens sometimes, especially since accents is directly related to social classes, but to lesser extent (2008). And thirdly, the most important reason is that, of all other accents, RP is the one more likely to be object of change and the nature of said changes have mislead people into think that the accent is disappearing (2008). He added:

I therefore suggest that the answer to the question is that RP is typologically Southeastern because there is a long history of changes spreading, in the same way that the FLEECE merger did, *from* the lower prestige southeastern local accents *into* RP. There is of course a theoretical possibility that it was the other way round, but in fact all the evidence indicates that this was not the case. (2008: 4)

What Trudgill is explaining is that RP is influenced by other regional accents and this occurs mainly in the lower classes of British society. These changes, such as Intrusive /r/, Goose Fronting and T Glottaling, could make people to think that RP is becoming similar to these other regional accents, but at the same this accent is experiencing them, the other accents are also doing it (2008). But Trudgill is not the only researcher who has given account of the evolution of RP. Cruttenden made a distinction between changes that are: first, changes almost complete as the loss of distinction between /ɔ:/ and /ɔə/ (2008). Secondly, well-established changes such as “accented /tj,dj/ become /tʃ,dʒ/” (2008: 81). Thirdly, recent innovations which are pronunciations that are heard in RP but are not commonly used by most of people, such as the realization of /r/ with no upwards curling of the tip of the tongue (2008). And lastly, innovations on the verge of RP as the vocalization of dark [ɪ] as [ʊ] in a wide range of preconsonantal and final positions (2008).

Some other studies have also aimed to determine students' perceptions about accents in general, especially RP. For example, Scales et al (2006) conducted a study where students, 10 English native speakers and 37 non native, had to listen a one minute recording of four people speaking four different accents. In the study, they found out that English learners students were more likely to identify an accent if they were familiar with it since, when having to distinguish native from non native speakers, 73% and 62% rated the American and British speakers correctly (op. cit). In the same study, Scales et al pointed out that despite the fact that the American accents was said to be the easiest accent to understand by the students, they would chose RP accent as their target if they were asked to pick one when learning the language (op. cit). However, this is not the only investigation whose aim has been to gather English learners' perception about different accents. In Barrera-Pardo and Barrera-Pardo (2007), through an experiment to gather students' perception of English samples with different accents, they conclude that students tend to prefer or imitate two main accent: American or British English as "in fact they showed a high degree of intelligibility in the transcription experiment"(ibid: 1604) that the students were exposed to. Their results also shown the little knowledge students have in relation to other English accents. For example, most of the participants of the experiment identified people with South African accents as non-native speakers. These results and studies made us considered RP as the accent that has to be taken into account when it comes to the model that students and participants are most familiar with.

In the Chilean context, RP has been approached from an EFL point of view. For instance, in *Aural perceptions mistakes made by native listeners of Chilean Spanish in decoding and English spoken text* (2014), Vásquez and Vivanco aimed to "find out the most recurrent types of aural misperceptions made by native listeners of Chilean Spanish when they are faced with the task of properly decoding spoken English in its RP accent" (ibid: 115) so as to help teachers and trainers of EFL in their task. For this purpose, the participants had to listen to a recording of an interview to an English native speaker and they were later asked to provide the script of the interview, then they had to transcribe the text phonemically and finally they were required to decode articulatory details produced by the interviewee. Considering their results, the importance of word stress and sentence stress in mishearing is highlighted. They also suggested that "in order to improve spoken text decoding, EFL listeners should be exposed to real English from the beginning of their learning process" (ibid: 128).

Another study related to RP, in this case in Chile, was made by Véliz (2016). From a critical point of view, he tried to unveil the beliefs and attitudes that pre-service English teachers in Chile have with regards English varieties, foreign accent in English teachers and the spread of the language across the world (loc. cit.). He carried out structured interviews made by a trained pre-service teacher using firstly simple questions and then questions that would elicit the participant's beliefs, views, etc. Véliz realised that the accent most pre-service teachers have learned is RP and to a lesser extent, General American (loc. cit.). His results also showed that pre-service teachers have stereotypical conceptions regarding RP and GA, as thinking that the first one is more easy to understand, elegant, pure than GA which is considered to be also more informal. They also believed that teachers should acquire a native-like accent, especially RP, mentioning intelligibility as the main reason. Véliz said that the information suggested that these teachers may not eventually speak with a native accent but they wish to avoid their Chilean accents mainly because the impact it can have on their job opportunities. Which is interesting about these results is, despite Véliz did not attempt to do a deeper analysis, they show us the implications of the language ideologies that our government and people in general have when promoting the teaching of English as a Foreign language.

2.2.2 NATIVE SPEAKER

Concerning research studies published in the world about the native speaker there can be found some that criticize the use of this term as a norm (e.g. Aneja 2014; Jaffe 2015; Canagarajah 1999; Chacón 2000; Cook 1999; Leung et al.1997; Mahboob 2005; Phillipson 1992; Pierrel 2009; Piller 2001; Selvi 2014). Among these articles one that is constantly highlighted is the one that Pierrel (2009) wrote.

Pierrel presents a critical perspective after a study conducted by himself, he concludes that “there is not an absolute preference for native speaker teachers from students, although some examples indicate that native speakers are sometimes idealized as being better teachers” (2010: 11). In addition he argues that “non-native speaker teachers consider themselves as qualified to teach English, but in some areas, they feel inferior to native speaker teachers” (Ibid.: 11). These perspectives demonstrate that there is not always an homogeneous or absolutely common

viewpoint in relation to the native speaker and the attributes that are given to him, because, just like in these cases, people are conscious of a certain heterogeneity in the communities they live.

On the contrary, there are other articles that reinforce the perspective of considering the native speaker as a norm for the teaching and learning of an L2 such as English (e.g. Lev-Ari & Keysar 2010; Medgyes 1992, 1999).

In Chile the production of scientific articles regarding the native speaker has increased over the last few years (e.g. Aronsson 2015; Cocio 2012; Espinoza 2015; Pérez et al. 2016; Pérez de Arce 2017; Tapia 2008; Toledo & Toledo 2014) but from those articles, only a few present and discuss the native speaker term from a critical viewpoint (Espinoza 2015; Pérez de Arce 2017). The former article discusses the implications of the native speaker concept in the tradition of interlanguage pragmatics (ILP), where the concept is regarded as the one that possesses a superior pragmatic competence, and the pragmatic norm is an ideal expressed in the pragmatic behavior of native speakers (2015). In the latter article, Pérez de Arce (2017) discusses the differences of L2 learner's perceptions in relation to an english native speaker and a mapudungun native speaker.

CHAPTER III
RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

3.1. TEACHERS' SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT THE RP ENGLISH ACCENT AND THE "NATIVE SPEAKER" NOTION.

On the one hand, concerning the social representations that teachers have about the RP accent, a great variety of answers was found. For instance, one teacher referred to the idea that Received Pronunciation was "an old fashioned accent" (H.O., teacher) in contrast with the General British accent which is the one teacher's use for the English teaching today. Additionally, the geographical localization of where the accent started to being used was recognized as "this was the typical accent from South East England, and mostly London, including its counties" (L.D., teacher). Also, this accent is associated with a "high educational level and the upper class" (H.O., teacher) in England. In spite of the fact that historically the RP accent has been associated to the courts and the upper class (Cruttenden, 2014) the belief that RP does not change diachronically and it has been always the same is a myth (Przedlacka, 2005) because RP varies according to its speakers' age and social differences.

Another idea that was found has to do with the notion of purity as the RP accent was said to be "purer at the beginning" (L.D., teacher), a structural metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 2003) since as water, RP can be pure or dirty; and also a "most sophisticated accent" (L.D., teacher) in comparison to others, which carries a certain "prestige" (L.D., teacher). Again this notion of prestige is established in a comparison to other accents which do not carry this status. Following this idea of prestige, a teacher also stated that this has to do with "being treated in a certain way just by speaking RP accent, due to this sophistication" L.D., teacher). Also, reinforcing one of the points previously presented a teacher said that "the RP is associated to people with a very high educational level and a big cultural heritage as well" (L.D., teacher). Another interesting notion that appeared in one of the interviews was that the RP accent "open doors" (L.D., teacher) for people who speak it. The metaphor of a language opening doors functions as the representation that the knowledge and use of a particular language or accent might provide with certain characteristics to a person, in comparison to another who will not have the same things just by the use of a language. Also, this notion of the RP accent as an open doors artifact responds according to Pérez de Arce (2016):

It encloses a very narrow conception of what globalization is, where English is the only

gateway into it. That is, that by speaking in English one is entitled to not having to learn any other language, as are other people who are required to know English. (5)

As a consequence, the notion of the RP accent and the English language as well is reduced to being a simple means of acquiring something completely external to the language itself as the capacity of achieving better social opportunities.

The notion of clarity was also present in the answers given by teachers, who said that “RP was a very clear accent offering better job opportunities for an educated class” (L.D., teacher). This idea of clarity has to do with a subjective judgment where the variety of accents and heterogeneous languages is seen as a problematic landscape and as dirty language which is also related to the use of metaphors underlying the appearance of elements as abstracts as languages in people’s mind. All of these ideas support the use of the RP accent as a model for English teaching and learning which is based in non-objective thoughts but in the legacy of power and economical prestige that the RP accent has since its origin in London. This city constitutes England’s capital where economic and political power concentrates as well as the educated upper class. In this case, the symbolic dominance (Bourdieu 1985) of the english language and in particular of the RP accent comes to represent the predominance of one variety associated to the upper class in England into a great multicultural variety of other accents and communities that are left away in predominance of the standard version, which is represented by the RP in English teaching and learning as an L2.

At the same time, a teacher also highlighted some disadvantages regarding the RP as “other accents such as American, Canadian or Australian English are looked down in comparison to the RP accent” (L.D., teacher). Also, the notion of transcendence was seen as one teacher said that the RP accent makes the country to transcend more strongly than other countries” (L.D., teacher), since the influence and the economic power a country has allow it to promote the its language/accnt as the one that should be use. (Bourdieu 1991)

Therefore, teachers also said that the RP accent was “a sort of a mean term and even a little bit hateful when talking about inclusion” (H.O., teacher). As an opposition, they preferred to talk about GB or General British accent, as “the original RP was only concerned with pronunciation” (H.O., teacher). A fact that it may be true, since, people would normally discriminate others because of their accents, specially if they belonged to the lower classes (Trudgill 2008).

Likewise, teachers also argued that RP accent was “a very clear and simple accent to understand and listen to in comparison to other accents such as the American one” (A.A., teacher). Also they said it was “the most useful accent due to the high amount of sounds its phonological system has” (A.A., teacher). These ideas are based on the individual perception of people and their own cultural models regarding English teaching, in particular of the RP accent. Moreover, another idea was concerned with the consideration other people have about who speaks RP, as a teacher said “The RP accent is better understood in any English-speaking country and it is respected by people because it has a certain status” (A.A., teacher). He also mentioned the RP accent is “the clearest one and it has an easy intelligibility” (A.A., teacher). Again, this representation is directly connected to the conceptual metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) of clear water that pairs the RP accent with the water as if the former could be conceived as a clear element. The idea that RP is respected is mainly related to its origins as it was born in the public schools from the upper classes, that means that “educated and cultured people” where the first one using the accent (Trudgill, 2001).

Furthermore, other teachers asseverated that RP accent “has its benefits because it is quite formulated and it allows each university to sort of have a foundation” (J.S., teacher). This viewpoint focuses on the rationalist model highlighting the value of the RP accent in the teaching of the english language (Geeraerts 2006; Polzenhagen & Dirven 2008) However, the same teacher also said it seemed “a sort of over-inflated, kinda false, artificial sound” (J.S., teacher), and he added that it “distracts from the ability to connect with the students rather than just using one neutral accent or a natural voice” (J.S., teacher). Also, he mentioned that RP “should not be the unique and only source of phonetic learning” (J.S., teacher). In addition, he said “students here are not in need of someone who has proper RP pronunciation as much as they are too needed of a teacher who has clear understanding of the needs of the students, the methodologies and tools to be able to attract and reach the students” (J.S., teacher). Ideological clarification (Kroskrity 2009) is of main importance here, since the professor is aware of the needs of the students when learning a second language, and according to him, despite having some benefits, RP should not be the only model taught in the classroom.

Besides, another teacher mentioned “the RP accent has every time less relevance and the traditional obligatoriness in its use should decrease” (C.S., teacher), which is related to the acceptance of other accents as Trudgill explained (2008). Another teacher also stated that “its

renown has been decreasing as it sounds very pompous and fake” (M.R., teacher). Also, a teacher said “The RP is associated to the elitist and classist English social bias, and I believe this accent is on the way out” (M.R., teacher). Following this line, another teacher said “I do not agree with the use of that accent.” (L.A., teacher) and another one that “There is a political and economic thing that makes this variety into a standard and I think the prescriptivism has to be set aside” (C.S., teacher). These opinions are, one more time, related to the genesis of RP in upper classes, especially the court in London (Cruttenden 2008). People would often imitate the accent in order to be accepted by society, which is the reason that several people tend to express about RP as something that sounds unnatural, fake.

On the other hand, regarding the social representations teachers have in relation to the native speaker term, some stated that a native speaker is “a person who was born in the place where his mother tongue is spoken and he/she learnt that language since childhood” (L.D., teacher), “someone speaking his/her mother tongue” (J.S., teacher) and also that native speakers “don’t have to think too much when they use their mother tongue because they just speak” (L.D., teacher).

Moreover, another teacher mentioned that a native speaker is “a person who studied in a particular accent and he/she learnt it from his/her parents but he/she did not study pronunciation or grammar” (A.A., teacher). If these definitions would only consider such a formal characterization, they would clearly demonstrate that teachers’ social representations are unbiased, however that is not the case. As we will see below, there are many social representations that suppose value judgements which are influenced by cultural models about the teaching and learning of English.

In addition, teachers also said that native speakers “have a certain set of requirements and they are conscious of certain facts, they are able to distinguish other speakers who are not native ones” (H.O., teacher) and “they have features that are hardly dissolved and which are recognized by other native speakers “. Even “they are the best researchers regarding their own accent” (H.O., teacher). This idea reinforces the sense of considering native speakers as the experts in a language which is found in the common discourse. This notion is at the same time based on the Chomskyan assumption that native speakers are the authorities of the language they speak (Chomsky 1965).

Besides, teachers also argued that native speakers:

“are also native hearers who are able to present a set of judgements about people concerning linguistic skills regarding pronunciation, grammar and morphosyntax as well as establishing differences between social classes” (H.O., teacher).

This characterization of native speakers is also discussed as Jaffe (2015) states:

The “native speaker” is the unmarked “old/traditional” and “authentic” speaker who exists both “up”, in terms of competence, and “back”, in terms of time. This raises questions about “nativeness” as a source of authority and as a target in the upward movement of language revitalization and the creation of new speakers (23)

Furthermore, teachers mentioned that the term “native speaker is not a guarantee of excellence even when sometimes it is associated to excellence or to an effective learning” (C.S., teacher). This criticism implies the questioning of traditional assumptions such as the chomskyan perspective (1965) regarding the native speaker. This criticism is supported by Cook’s position (2010) in relation to comparing monolinguals speaker’s performance with L2 learners, something that Cook strongly disagrees:

Clearly, if we test monolingual native speakers on knowledge of another language they would score zero. The success of L2 users is not necessarily the same as that of monolingual native speakers; they are doing different things with language with different people and have a range of other abilities for code-switching and translation unavailable to monolingual native speakers. To call what the vast majority of L2 users achieve ‘failure’ is to accept that the only valid view of the world is that of the monolingual: knowing only one language is normal, knowing two is unusual. Only in a monolingual universe is a multi-competent person a failure for not speaking like a monolingual. (11)

From this cognitive approach, it is undoubtedly that native speakers should not be the norm in the teaching and learning of an L2.

Further, another teacher mentioned “there is a tendency to consider that native speakers are the authorities over a language”. (L.A., teacher). This idea demonstrates a certain awareness

in relation to one of the conceptualizations of native speakers. Also, a teacher said “the concept has been discussed” (M.R., teacher). Among these last ideas, it is important to discuss in effect who is actually the owner of a language. Hutton (2010) discusses the relationship between legal ownership and certain perspectives such as the mother tongue-native speaker tradition.

In the mother tongue–native speaker tradition, a language is the collective property of its native speakers, understood collectively as a Volk or ethnos (‘people’). The Volk is defined as a historically continuous descent group, which owns a distinct language and has a defined territory. Its language and culture are part of its collective property. Rather than an open, unstructured space, the language is a highly structured systematic object. It is stamped with the mark of its creator and owner, the community of native speakers (4-5)

What Hutton does here is to debate what the collectivity in a native speaker tradition is made of. And he contrasts this vision with the liberal perspective which considers that:

the claim is commonly made by academics that the native speakers or native English-speaking countries no longer hold a monopoly over English, and that the English language is now nobody’s property (Ibid.: 5)

As he confronts both viewpoints, it is clearly made that the ownership of a language is a polemic and non-conciliatory topic as other realities concerning politics and economics arise as well.

Table 1: Teachers’ social representations about the RP and the native speaker.

The RP accent	The “native speaker” term
Old-fashioned and Original	being born in a place where his/her mother tongue is spoken
High educational level	Learnt since childhood

Upper class	Best researchers
Sophisticated	Judgements
Prestige	Linguistic skills
Cultural heritage	Authorities
Open Doors	Not a guarantee of excellence
Better job opportunities	Distinguish between NS and NNS
Transcendence	
Quite formulated	
Purity and Clarity	
Easier and simpler understanding	
Over-inflated, false, artificial sound	

3.2. STUDENTS' SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT THE RP ENGLISH ACCENT AND THE "NATIVE SPEAKER" TERM.

Firstly, even though different answers were collected concerning students' social representations about the RP accent, almost all of the participants agreed on one particular point and that was related to how they thought the accent sounded when they heard someone using it: "elegant" (L.R. and D.B. 2nd-year students), and "cool" (R.G., 5th-year student). For instance, when being asked why they chose learning RP instead of any other accent, many of the participants admitted that they are learning it because it sounded "good" (D.M., 3rd-year student) for them or "nicer" (K.F., 3rd-year student) than other English accents. Their answers reflect the romantic model concerning language ideologies as Geeraerts (2006) states in this model people's identities are expressed in relation to their perceptions about the language itself.

Additionally, their reasons seem to be related to the metaphor of the accent as something that gives the students a certain status, especially considering the concept of elegant, because the participants are associating RP to the upper classes since, as Sweet explained, the accent was considered to be the most educated and cultured pronunciation spoken in the metropolis (as cited in Cruttenden 2014) and the only people who could be socially considered as "educated" and "cultured" are rich ones. Like people would often do, these students think of RP as something that will give them status since it is the one used by the upper classes. In that sense, RP is seen as an element that will improve their position in society and something that will also give them more job opportunities.

Another notion that arose among students during the focus groups was the standard language ideology. As it was previously explained, this ideology postulates that there is a bias disposition towards an abstracted, idealized, homogeneous language, which is imposed and maintained by certain institutions that have a dominant characteristic (Lippi-green 2006). Following this line, the idea that Received Pronunciation was the "basis of the English language" (D.M., 2nd-year student) from which other accents obtained their origin and therefore, was the accent that had to be taught by teachers and learned by students in the first place in order to get a better understanding of other accents is related to this ideology. Also, this vision is seen when students argue that "the reason why RP is still the standard accent [when teaching English] is

because the first rules and dictionaries came from it” (L.R., 2nd-year student) or even when one of the participants explained that the reason why they’re taught RP is because the program’s founders were British (C.B., 5th-year student). Those statements are related to the old spreading tradition of RP made by a powerful group of people in society. A specific social class spread and established a determined variation of a language as the most correct one because of its own benefits. As it was mentioned before, institutions and mass media as the BBC helped to that purpose. RP is hardly the basis of English language or where the dictionaries came from since just in the last four centuries the notion that one accent was socially preferable than other became to arose (Cruttenden 2008).

Furthermore, while some student highlighted the importance of teaching RP as the language’s cornerstone, some others referred to the intelligibility of the accent as one of its characteristics, since they declared that RP was the “easiest accent to understand” (A.G., 4th-year student) for an English non-native speaker. Nonetheless, there were some participants that, despite they were fond of the British accent, admitted they thought American accent as the easiest variety to understand due to the context in which we live as Chileans. Students supported their arguments by saying that they were “more familiar with the American than the British culture because of the movies, music, tv series, etc.” (C.B., 5th-year student). This exposure, they explained, allows people to be more familiar with the accent since all this content is available in their original language with Spanish subtitles most of the times. For this reason, they expressed that teaching the American accent as the “neutral accent would be a more efficient” (C.D., 2nd year-student) thing to do than using RP as the standard model of pronunciation. Also related to the familiarity notion as to argument whether the accent is easy to understand or not is the orientational metaphor used to talk about RP as something that is not close to students or people in general. One of the participants explained that the main reason that people are not familiar with the accent is because RP is usually taught in schools from the upper classes which make it an accent from the elite. For this reason, RP “distance English language from the students” (M.R., 3third year student). Students may have valid reason to explain why being more familiar with an accent allows them to understand better an accent than other, despite the fact that actually there is not an easiest variety to learn; however, subjectivity is involved in their answer. If India was a powerful nation with influence all over the globe, we would probably be learning Indian English instead of American or British. Nevertheless, since The United States is

considered to be the most powerful nation in the world, there is no doubt about why we are constantly watching, listening and reading material produced by this nation.

Likewise, students mentioned that RP accent was “globally accepted” (M.Z., 3rd-year student) for English speakers everywhere you go”. This notion reflects a certain vision and language ideology in relation to English known as ‘English as a global language’ (Crystal, 1995, 1997). The interviewees also reflected on the idea of the homogenization of the language as they said RP accent was “the only accent they are taught at their university” and it represented “the unification of English” (M.Z., 3rd-year student), which represents the loss of heterogeneity and distinctions between the variety of English accents. Besides, they also stated that learning the “RP accent would make you not to feel different or as a foreigner in England” (D.M., 3rd-year student). The concept of ideological clarification is related to these participants’ opinions because they want to be part of a global community whose, for political and economic factors, main variety of English seems to be RP. Students are willing, and are also asked, to abandon every feature of their mother tongue, such as accent, in order to sound as close as possible to a native speaker of RP so as to fit in this world community, which in the end is promoted by these powerful nations whose mother tongue is precisely English.

Leaving behind some aspect of their own identity is not the only problem they have to face. The use of RP accent also can carry some difficulties, as it was explained by participants: “it is difficult for your students to actually understand you when you are talking in RP due to the differences in vowel sounds, for instance, as well as idioms, and other things” (C.B., 5th-year student). Additionally, it seems to be an accent that “seems unreal because it is not really used by every speaker in England” (R.G., 5th-year student), as stated by students. Also, students declared that “it was difficult for people to understand the accent” due to the lack of familiarity with the sounds as vowels sounds in RP differ from vowels sounds in another accent that seems more common for people like the GA accent. One student, however, said that he does not “think RP is hard to understand but the problem has to do with its rarely common” (M.Z., 5th-year student). One more time the concept of familiarity is brought up by a participant, nonetheless this time is associated with the idea that RP is not a commonly used accent even by native speakers of the language. A fact that is supported the fact that, as it was mentioned before, only 3 percent of the population in the UK were speakers of RP (Trudgill 2001). In summary, this lack of familiarity could be associated to the fact that, despite being promoted as a popular model, RP is not

commonly used by speakers, not even native speakers of English.

Nevertheless the difficulties, some other students characterized the RP accent as a “perfect English, which has a perfect pronunciation and grammar as well” (D.M., 4th-year student) and as “the most correct and accepted one, which sounds better and it is the most beautiful accent” (M.R., 3rd-year student) as well. Another student also added that RP is “a unique and pure accent which is not influenced by any other accent” (K.F., 3rd-year student). This idea of perfection strengthens the belief that RP is an ideal type of English which is distinguished by a flawless set of sounds. Such belief is supported by the romantic model of language (Geeraerts, 2006; Polzenhagen & Dirven, 2008). This model highlights the idea of representativity, as people’s identity is expressed through perceptions of the language they speak, since here the ideal of perfection and its achievement are stressed by students.

Notwithstanding, despite being considered the perfect accent, the idea of RP as something unnatural also was mentioned by a student during the focus groups. The participant explained that even though her pronunciation was closer to the American one, when she started the program, she “tried to acquire RP but she did not feel that it was something natural” (M.Z., 5th-year student) She added that whenever she had to read texts for her phonetic classes she could do it using the British accent perfectly. Nevertheless, when it came to the use of oral communication during a regular context, the student confessed that using RP “felt fake, very less fluent and natural”(C.B., 5th-year student) Other students supported their partner in her claims and added that this unnatural idea regarding the use of RP may be related to the fact that it is only mandatory for them to use the British accent in just one subject during the program which means that in the rest of the subjects and instances of practice they are free to use the accent they prefer. Here, the romantic model of language is also involved, since the student felt the accent as something that is not part of her identity and therefore it felt fake for her to try to acquire something that it was not part of her.

In the same line of being against the use of this accent, another student argued the RP is “obsolete and it should not be used as a standard” (D.M., 4th-year student). Firstly, an ontological metaphor was used by the participant when he spoke about RP as a tangible object that is not useful anymore. On the other hand, considering the language ideologies model, the student has a rationalist model of language, since he explains that RP does not longer helps people to communicate effectively within society and does not motivate people’s participation

either.

Secondly, in connection to the term of the native speaker, students expressed several views. For example, they said that native speakers are the ones who “pronounces and speaks well” (C.R., 2nd-year student). This opinion has to do with the model of pronunciation given by the standard accent that is used by a certain group from the whole population of speakers. So native speakers should resemble more this model and not differ from it. Additionally, Students mentioned that native speakers “speak better than non-native speakers” (M.L., 3rd-year student). However, the standard language ideology is presented again when a student mentioned that “native speakers are the ones who use a certain language as their mother tongue” (D.B., 2nd-year student) then he added that “we as Spanish native speakers do not speak as good as other Spanish native speakers” (D.B., 2nd-year student), establishing a clear connection to the standard version of Spanish that is used in a certain region in Spain. This standard accent has a series of components that reinforce the ideal of achieving such variety is a synonym of a good use of the language.

Moreover, another student also said that a native speaker is someone “who has naturally acquired a language in its first five years of exposure to its mother tongue, which also involves the use of this first language” (L.R., 2nd-year student). Besides, a student stressed the notions that native speakers “acquired the language in a natural and spontaneous way” (B.C., 2nd-year student), which are concerned with the appreciation students have in relation to the environment and speed of acquisition of native speakers’ mother tongue.

In addition, students said a native speaker is someone “who learns a language since his/her birth and it becomes his/her mother tongue” (M.Z., 5th-year student). This native speaker “also achieves a certain level of perfection in terms of phonetics, grammar, as well as the use of a great variety of words in his lexicon” (C.B., 5th-year student). This notion of perfection as a subjective idea comes to represent an idealization of the vision of the native speaker, which highlights a presumption about him that reinforces the use of it as a norm or model for the teaching of a second language, in this particular case, the english language. Also, Doerr (2009) discusses the native speaker’s authority as well as language revitalization and shift involved in this process:

“a challenge to the belief in the automatic and complete competence of ‘native speakers’

in their 'native languages' "(36). and demonstrates that "linguistic competence is a product of complex processes involving education, language and cultural policies in a given society" (Op.cit).

Besides, a student mentioned that a native speaker can be defined as native if he/she "speaks in a very fluent way" (R.G., 5th-year student), which is another subjective idea related to the notion of the native speaker. Moreover, students stated that native speakers "have to be immersed in a certain context since childhood" and that "there is a certain cultural component which is only proper of native speakers and their knowledge of a particular language, but it cannot be acquired by learners of such language" (C.B., 5th-year student). This idea again marks out the conception that native speakers are mandatory to be involved in a continuous process in order to acquire their mother tongue. However, another student also mentioned that "being a native speaker changes your perception, in comparison to second language learners, native speakers do not need to translate what they think from one language into another, they rather think directly into their first language" (D.M., 4th-year student) . Also, some students said that native speakers "tend to use all the words from their vocabulary and to use their language properly" (K.F., 3rd-year student). As well as, they reflected on other aspects on the use of language as discursive markers, which students said to be different in the case of English learners as an L2 and English native speakers.

Furthermore, students also stated that native speakers are "very fluent and relax when they speak" (M.R., 3rd-year student), even if this involves "a certain hesitation or delay in when talking in their first language" (M.L., 3rd year-student). Actually, students argued that a native speaker "is able to use certain pauses as a way of creating a good intonation" (K.F., 3rd-year student) in his discourse. These ideas come to configure another angle of representations concerning the native speaker. Also, students said native speakers "are different one to each other depending on where they come from and this can arise some problems in communication, which are related to dialectal varieties of the language(s) they speak" (D.B., 2nd-year student)

Likewise, another student mentioned that native speakers "do not translate what they want to say at the moment of speaking, they just say it" (C.B., 5th-year student). Also, a student said that "native speakers use the most perfect english in the world" (M.R., 3rd-year student).

Table 2: Students' social representations about the RP and the native speaker.

The Rp accent	The "native speaker" notion
Elegant	Speak well and better
Cool, Good and Nice	Use his/her mother tongue
Unique and Pure	Naturally acquired
The basis for other accents	Spontaneous
Easier to understand	Perfection in pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary
Familiarity	Speaks very fluently and relax
Globally accepted	Cultural component
Unification of english	Not translation
Neutral	Speak the most perfect English
Unreal	
Perfect english	
Fake, very less fluent and unnatural	
Obsolete	
Rarely common	

3.3. POLITICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' CULTURAL MODELS CONCERNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Through the review of results, it is clear that the students' cultural models have an effect on their practices and choices within the classroom. However, there did not seem to be a general agreement about what model would be better to use when it comes to teaching English as a second language, but they did agree on the need of using an accent as “the base” when in the classroom. For example, one student proclaimed that it would be more efficient to teach a “neutral accent as the American one” (C.R., 2nd-year student) since, as she recalls one of her classmate's opinion, people are more familiar with the American culture. This idea of a neutral accent is actually a fallacy as every variety is based on a certain political, economical and social power among others (Bourdieu 1991).

Another male student uses again the word “efficient” when he explains his preferences for using and teaching an American accent in classes as, one more time, in a sense we are been influenced more by the American culture than the British one through movies, TV series, etc. As it is possible to notice, familiarity with a culture/accents is used as the main reason to justify their choice. Nonetheless, being more familiar with something could be just explained by the fact that said culture/accents is a powerful one with influenced around the globe. Related to this topic is the concept of symbolic dominance (Bourdieu 1985). A variety of a language is promoted as the standard through different medias which make people think that in order to be accepted by the now called global society, said variety should be used. Also regarding the previous argument given by the students, one of them attempted to give further justification for her saying and proclaimed that the “American accent is similar to Latin-American Spanish accent because of the pronunciation of some phonemes as the /ɪ/ one which is something that is difficult for us to pronounce in the RP accent.” (L.R., 2nd year student). However, there are no studies to prove that claiming.

On the other hand, other students pointed out that they would choose and agree on RP being the target accent for students since “it is the base of English language, where other accents

came from” (C.D., 2nd year student). Nonetheless, they also explained that even though RP should be taught firstly in the classroom, students should also be taught later about other accents for the sake of their knowledge and so they are able to choose the accent they prefer in the future. Also, another female student added that even though she agrees on the use of RP, “it should not be mandatory” (D.M., 3rd year student) for students to learn it which is clearly a bit of a contradiction. The concept of social representation (Moscovici 1961) arose when analysing these opinions since, in the end, participants agree of the teaching of RP accent as one of the main models of English language, and therefore, are willing to be part of a well established linguistic tradition.

Finally, there was a third group of participants that, despite not showing a preference of any accent to teach, were emphatic in their critique towards the use of RP as the main accent to be taught in the classroom. They mainly explained that RP was not a common accent in Chilean society and therefore was difficult to teach something that people were not familiar with (M.Z., 5th year student). Several participants recalled their experiences when teaching in schools to justify their thinking. One student told a story about how his students would not often understand what the teacher he was working with, who has a British accent, was saying but they would understand him when he used an American accent (C.B., 5th year student). According to their language ideology, an accent should not be considered to be taught when teaching English as a second language, especially when said accent is not so well known by the students, no matter how popular or globally accepted RP (Crystal 1995 1997) is. For these participants, the students’ needs and reality are more relevant than tradition when it comes to their pedagogical practices. As several of them explained, teaching RP in schools from the lower classes will not make any sense if their students, which in most cases are not interested in learning the language, are not familiar with the accent and therefore, do not understand what they are saying.

In the case of teachers interview concerning their cultural models and pedagogical practices, some of them shown that they agreed on having native speakers as teachers and they rely on them. For example, one teacher said “I think it is fine if they are flawless native speakers” (H.O., teacher). Also he mentioned that “contacting native speakers seems a good idea to me, though I would not have anything against someone who is not native teaching English but who should be as much trained as possible” (H.O., teacher). From this statement another idea can be inferred which considers english native speakers to be already prepared in comparison to

english non-native speakers. This presumption gives a positive valuation to native speakers over non-native speakers as the teacher interviewed mentioned “It would be ideal to acquire a native accent” (H.O., teacher). Which in this case the focus in the process of learning an L2 is set on the imitation and on relying on a native speaker’s performance. Moreover, he said “to speak and pronounce in a way near-native implies certain skills which all people don’t have” (H.O., teacher). And he also stated he would teach english with an accent that is “easily intelligible by most people such as British, American or Canadian english” (H.O., teacher). However he also remarked he “would not use an Indian English when teaching because it has certain marked characteristics” (H.O., teacher). In addition, the teacher mentioned “he is not against the use of Rp accent in English teaching as any other accent that would collect some requirements and which was originated in an english-speaking country” (H.O., teacher)

Another teacher mentioned that “some people believe that learning english with a native speaker will improve your level somehow but I do not think so, I completely disagree with that idea” (L.D., teacher). Additionally, she recognized this belief brings up negative consequences “there is a discrimination towards chilean english teachers in comparison to foreigners english native speakers who do not have the pedagogical training or linguistics knowledge to teach a language but they are seen as better teachers” (L.D., teacher). Although she considers the RP accent to be “an educated, pure and standard accent” (L.D., teacher), she also stated “there is a very structured methodology with precise ways for teaching and clearly defined contents” (L.D., teacher). When asked what accent would she teach, she argued for the GB (General British) accent and justified her choice by saying “this accent has a tradition that goes back more than a hundred years and that makes it way more easy to systemize it and to teach it” (L.D., teacher).

Another viewpoint in favor of native speakers as teachers was found when another teacher interviewed expressed “Even though a native speaker is just a native speaker and not a teacher properly, listening to him/her is very useful for training your ear” (AA, teacher). Also, he said that “listening to a native speaker is an excellent exercise as well as trying to understand how he/she normally talks” (A.A., teacher). Moreover, he stated that if he is giving the chance to select an accent of his choice for English teaching he “would teach the Rp accent because it is the accent I master, and even when I know the phonetics/phonology of the GA accent, I would teach Rp because I am better trained in that accent than in GA (A.A., teacher)

Additionally, another teacher mentioned that:

“one of the main problems in learning an L2 is that specially here in Chile one of the things that is highly regarded is the fact that someone sounds native or that someone is native rather than how many qualifications they have as teachers or what type of methodologies are they aware of to incorporate in the learning process. It’s doing its job effectively as a commercial because that’s what many people on Chile wants. But I think it’s missing the point in how to actually teach someone in another language”
(J.S., teacher)

This point constitutes one of the critics teachers and students are aware of regarding what some institutions involved in English teaching and learning offer, as they are more focused in appealing to the native speaker image as a synonym of success (e.g. Lecaros 2016a, 2016b; OpenEnglish 2016) rather than showing actual teachers whose knowledge and abilities should be clearly certified. Besides, regarding what accent would he teach given the choice, the teacher said

“for one, it’s because I do not come from the UK and so to use RP for me would be sort of antithetical to the process. And secondly, one of the things this university needs and many of the students have asked for is to be exposed to various native accents, so coming from the United States, keeping my accent as is it’s actually an asset to the students.” (J.S., teacher)

Besides, another teacher mentioned that “those commercials are directed to certain social classes because all they do is to “sell smoke” to people who are not conscious of real background” (C.S., teacher). Also, another teacher said “concerning marketing it is a good way of selling the product, as it is related to the aspirational lifestyle chilean population pursue” (M.R., teacher). And from his experience, he stated that:

“many English programs and institutions require American or British native speakers but there is no appropriate pedagogical or academic reason for them to require that. However, all they want is to have a native speaker and that’s sad because they sell you things that are beyond the language itself. The focus is set on other things that are not directly related to the language itself” (M.R., teacher)

Another teacher mentioned that “in most institutions they see the teaching and learning of English as a product” (L.A., teacher). Besides, concerning the relationship between the native speaker notion and a particular accent, a teacher said “there is a tendency to associate the native speaker term to the Rp and the GA because those two are the hegemonic varieties, even when there are more varieties” (M.R., teacher). Also, another teacher expressed the idea of making a change “we are trying to change that perspective here. I would not associate the native speaker to one accent at all” (L.A., teacher).

Furthermore, when asked whether they as teachers would choose one accent or another in the teaching of english, a teacher said “I believe in the idea of English as an international language but we have to keep developing this idea. The English language does not belong any longer to english native speakers”. Also, another teacher stated that

“we should focus on a cultural appropriation of the English language because students don’t see the point in learning a new language to communicate, so we should leave out the communicational point and to focus on the cultural component” (C.S., teacher)

Finally, another teacher said she “would teacher all the realities and I would let students speak as they want to” (L.A., teacher). Tis perspective is in connection to the ideological clarification (Kroskirty 2010) that can be constructed around english teaching and learning.

Table 3: Students’ political and pedagogical implications in relation to their cultural models about English language learning

Political and Pedagogical implications	Cultural models
Teaching GA	GA as the most neutral accent
Teaching RP to their students	RP as the basis of English language

Allowing free choice regarding accent use	No accent is better than another
Difficulty to produce sounds	Conceiving the Rp as an artificial accent

Table 4: Teachers' political and pedagogical implications in relation to their cultural models about English language teaching

Political and Pedagogical implications	Cultural models
Relying on native speakers as teachers	Native speaker as an authority/the norm in teaching and learning an L2
Positive evaluation of native speakers in comparison to non-native speakers	Native speaker's performance is superior to non-native speaker's performance
Image of formal teachers as the authorities in learning an L2	Non-misconception of the native speaker

**CHAPTER IV:
CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION**

To sum up, the variety of answers given by the students were not expected. As students who were taught RP from their first to their last year, we expected there would be a complete agreement about RP being the best model for people when learning English. On the one hand, some students constantly remarked the idea that RP was not the best option considering the social background of most of their students, which is in general the reality of the majority of Chilean students. On the other hand, there were students who still expressed a romantic view of English, being more specifically, of RP accent since they admitted learning and imitating it just because of how it sounds or how they are treated by other people when speaking it. Which was also a completely surprise was the fact that some participants considered General American to be the most neutral of all accent and therefore, the one that should be taught in schools and English related programs. Said opinion is could be related to the familiarity some people have with the accents due to the influence that its main representative, The United States, has over the world (Crystal 1995, 1997).

In the case of the teachers from the program, the results were pretty similar to the students'. While some teachers, even those who were English native speakers, thought of RP as an old fashioned accent, some others claimed the importance of the accent due to its prestige and highlighted the idea that RP can open doors to people in academic and labour matters, which has been already related to the linguistic imperialism (Phillipson 1992) that some powerful nations have practiced throughout history.

In our very personal experiences with the language, we admit that we, as most of the participants of this study, were first impressed by RP since we also considered it to be one of prestige, an accent difficult and complex to learn that would improve of job opportunities in the future. However as time passed we have realized, same as other classmates in our program, that there is no accent better than other and what matters is the communicational function of language. Learning RP or trying to imitate will not guarantee you to become a proficient speaker of the language. And here it is also related the concept of native speaker, something that many learners of English aspire to be. A fact that we have learned in the last months, and that will stay permanently in our minds, is that we cannot aspire to be like native speakers of English because we will never be one since our mother tongue is not English. Leaving our accent behind is not necessary to perform with excellence on oral speech.

**CHAPTER V:
LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH**

When discussing the limitations this research study had there are two major concerns. The first one is related to the possibility of conducting more focus group and semi-structured interviews which would have supported or explained better some of the social representations and cultural models found in this study. The second concern has to do with interviewing teachers and students from private universities and english teaching programs so as to compare and contrast social representations and cultural models from two different spheres. Additionally, one of the main issues that we had to face was the participants' disposition in terms of time as it turned to be very hard in many times to conduct the focus groups interviews with students. The main cause of this problem was related to the variety of schedules students had.

In relation to the usefulness of this inquiry, we strongly believe this research study can be used so as to set a basis on linguistic anthropology studies concerning conflicting topics such as the native speaker from which new critical investigations can be carried out. Following this line, this study could also be used in the future in the creation of more inclusive public policies.

Some of the solutions to the use of the native speaker tem that have been presented and discussed among scholars have to do with the proposal of new terms. For instance, Christophersen (1988) proposes to abandon the native speaker concept and to adapt the term of 'proficient'. Also, Rampton (1990) presents the notion of 'language expertise'. Besides, Cook (1991) suggests to use a new concept instead of the native speaker which is 'multi-competence'.

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