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“Un Inglés Que Sea Digno”: A Study on Social Representations Towards English Varieties at  
a Chilean University’s Teaching Program

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## Introduction

Social representations have been extensively studied in the field of Linguistic Anthropology. Considering a special interest in the relationship between language and culture, and how it could possibly explain people's vision of English while at the same time it mediates abstract aspects, in reality, this study focuses on social representations of Chilean professors and students from Universidad Central towards English varieties. In order to obtain comprehensive data on pedagogical and methodological aspects, participants with previous linguistic knowledge and linguistic awareness were preferred.

Regarding literature on the subject, authors such as Duranti (1997) have pointed out the contribution of linguistic methods towards an understanding of different language aspects. These are translated into a set of cultural practices that allow the creation of internal and external representations of social order, which people have ingrained as integral nature. Moreover, researchers have shown the importance of language representations in the creation and normalization of authority and the legitimation of power that play a paramount role in cultural contact and social control among people. Hence, explaining the neglect suffered by varieties outside of the canon. In addition, language ideologies have received considerable attention, mostly due to their influence on language planning and teaching. As language teaching programs are motivated by certain language ideologies, they can reflect the worldview of authorities and elites which are then transmitted to society. Previous studies about English ideologies have mostly focused on the notions of native speakers, fluency and accent.

In Chile, knowledge of the English language has become an essential field of research, considering its global feature that has been increasingly gaining popularity. The dominant varieties taught across the country are American English and British English, popularly known by the population as the 'real English'. A conception that is held even today while other varieties are ignored or ruled out, due to reasons of power and imperialism. However, considering the subject is still in its infancy, research on English learning in Chile has been scarce.

The present study aims to fill a gap considering the issue of language awareness and the specific implications, be it political, cultural, and pedagogical, which are obtained from the process of learning English in Chile. By identifying and analyzing underlying ideologies

in the language teaching program of our choice, we seek to provide a holistic view of the language held by both professors and learners.

This study is structured as follows: Chapter I presents the identification of the study along with the research questions, objectives and methodology of the study. Chapter II presents the theoretical framework used to carry out the analysis. It is divided into 8 sections: Anthropology, Linguistic Anthropology, Folk Linguistics, Culture, Language Ideology, Social Representation, English Teaching and State of the Art. Chapter III presents the emerging concepts obtained from the data collected and an analysis and discussion of this same data, which are interviews and a focus group. Finally, chapter IV presents a conclusion summing up the analysis and chapter V the limitations encountered and our proposed possible further research.



**CHAPTER I:  
IDENTIFICATION OF THE STUDY**

## **1.1 Topic**

The dialectal variety of English in Chilean higher education: A study on the English Pedagogy Program at Universidad Central

## **1.2 General Objective**

Our general objective is to characterize the social representations towards the different English varieties.

### **1.2.1 Specific Objectives**

1. To characterize the social representation that students have towards varieties of English.
2. To characterize the social representation that teachers have towards varieties of English.
3. To determine the linguistic, cultural, pedagogical, and political implications of the preferred variety of English.

### **1.2.2 Research Questions**

1. What is the social representation that students have towards the preferred variety of English?
2. What is the social representation that teachers have towards the preferred variety of English?
3. What are the linguistic, cultural, pedagogical, and political implications that can be drawn from the preferred variety of English?

## **1.3 Methodology**

### **1.3.1 Level of Study and Methodological Strategy**

The present research corresponds to a descriptive study. This research also follows a qualitative approach.

### **1.3.2 Type of Design**

This research follows a non-experimental, cross-sectional type of study.

### **1.3.3 Participants**

The participants of this research correspond to Chilean students and teachers from the English Pedagogy Program at Universidad Central. Samples built upon social representations and cultural knowledge were obtained from these subjects. There are, in total, fourteen participants: eight students, two from each academic year, alongside six professors that teach in the same program. Participants' choice of gender was entirely self-describing. Regarding professors, they were chosen considering their different expertise distributed in their English classes included in the program's curriculum. The fact that they are academics from the university's program is of paramount importance as it allows us to gather a holistic amount of insights from experts whose points of view and attitudes may differ or be similar inside the linguistics field as well as with the students' attitudes. The age range was decided considering Larrosa's generational gaps (2004) which go from G1 (until 29 years of age) to G2 (30 to 59 years of age). The following list of participants was obtained. (See Table 1 and 2)

**Table 1**  
Focus Group Participants

<b>Focus Group Participants</b>				
<b>Participants</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age Range</b>	<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Data Collection Method</b>
S1	Female	G1	Fourth Year	Focus Group
S2	Female	G1	Third Year	Focus Group
S3	Male	G1	First Year	Focus Group
S4	Male	G1	Third Year	Focus Group
S5	Female	G1	Second Year	Focus Group
S6	Female	G1	Fourth Year	Focus Group
S7	Male	G1	Second Year	Focus Group
S8	Male	G1	First Year	Focus Group

**Table 2**  
Personal Interviews Participants

<b>Personal Interviews Participants</b>			
<b>Participants</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age Range</b>	<b>Data Collection Method</b>
P1	Female	G2	Personal Semi-structured Interview
P2	Male	G2	Personal Semi-structured Interview
P3	Female	G2	Personal Semi-structured Interview
P4	Female	G2	Personal Semi-structured Interview
P5	Male	G2	Personal Semi-structured Interview
P6	Female	G2	Personal Semi-structured Interview

### 1.3.4 Data Collection

The data collection instruments consist of one focus group with students; and for professors, a semi-structured interview was conducted. Both of these data collection methods are to be carried out in Spanish. A focus group was implemented since they are a valuable and meaningful tool that provides a more developed insight into people’s attitudes. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews are to be applied to each of the professors individually. Before these activities, a pilot focus group was held to a selection of students in order to obtain an initial snapshot of their attitudes, as well as a pilot semi-structured interview with one professor in order to test the methods at hand.

- a) Pilot Focus Group
- b) Pilot Semi-structured Interviews
- c) Focus Group
- d) Semi-structured Interviews

The main topic to be discussed during these focus groups and interviews correspond to the social representations towards varieties of English as well as the linguistic, cultural, pedagogical, and political implications of the preferred variety of English. The specific topics

to be discussed, in both the focus groups and interviews, are the participants' ideologies regarding different English varieties.

### 1.3.5 Data Analysis

The gathered data from the interviews and focus groups will be analyzed based on the theory of Language Ideologies (Kroskrity, 2004; Siegel, 2006), the Social Representations model (Moscovici, 1989), and Geertz thick description metaphor (1973).

### 1.3.6 Gantt Chart

**Table 3**

Gantt Chart

Activity	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Objectives, Methodology, and Theoretical Framework	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Progress Reports				X		X				
Data Compilation and Transcription		X					X	X		
Analysis								X	X	
Final Report								X	X	X

**CHAPTER II:  
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

## 2. Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to describing and examine the main theoretical concepts used throughout this report and the development of its design and later analysis. To start with, definitions and characterizations of the different concepts and disciplines that frame this research will be shown, such as Anthropology and Linguistic Anthropology, Folk Linguistics, Culture, Language Ideology, Social Representations, English Teaching and English Teaching in Chile. Finally, different studies that are related to the area of interest in the present investigation are described.

### 2.1 Anthropology

Simply put, anthropology can be defined as “the comparative scientific study of human societies and cultures throughout the world and throughout time” (Birx, 2006, p. 184). This definition puts forward the capacity of anthropological studies to be approached holistically, meaning it studies human beings in all its dimensions. As humans, there is a need to engage meaningfully in the world due to the awareness of our own existence, hence there is a necessity of creating a thorough understanding of our origins and the development of who we are today, in order to create an in-depth depiction of humankind (Birx, 2006). From an etymological point of view, the word anthropology comes from the Greek words *Anthropos* (human) and *logos* (discourse or science); therefore, anthropology can be interpreted as the study of the human dimension, considering all biological, historical, cultural and linguistic aspects. Nevertheless, through its history, many attempts have been made to redefine the field along with its developments (Barnard, 2000).

In Europe, in the eighteenth century, this discipline was known as ethnography, when it started its inquiries by describing indigenous people and the culturally specific. A century after, the trend in the USA embodied as anthropology, was focused on the study and observation of culture in a broader sense, focusing not only in local communities but also on every human group, leaving aside the former idea that culture could be only found in the study of indigenous groups. In this sense, to understand the dichotomy between the two branches of the field, Barnard points that “anthropology and ethnology are not one, nor two fields” (2000, p.2), he argues that they are used as focus concepts opposing one another depending on what the scope of the discussion is, anthropology for the general and ethnology for the cultural specific (2000).

Likewise, anthropology has not been spared from having a single description in the academic arena. Ahmed commented that “the major task of anthropology –the study of man–

is to enable us to understand ourselves through understanding other cultures” (1986, p. 13). Langness defined anthropology as “the scientific study of human beings— that is, of the human creature viewed in the abstract: male, female, all colors and shapes, prehistoric, ancient, and modern” (1974, p. 1). In a more recent definition of this science, Haviland, Prins, Walrath, and McBride state that anthropology is “the study of humankind in all times and places” (2011, p. 2). Moreover, they describe the main four subfields of anthropology: cultural anthropology, linguistic anthropology, physical anthropology and archaeology (2011, p. 5).

Anthropology is broader in scope; therefore, it encompasses a wider range of topics (Miller, 2011). One of the main points in these topics is language. Without it, culture cannot be communicated nor transmitted through time and generations. Language is a fundamental feature, not only for the development of humankind but also for the study of it. In that light, linguistics (the study of language) acting as a subdiscipline of anthropology, provides the field with an understanding of how human communication works which, eventually, will contribute with valuable knowledge on different cultural behaviors, the origins of a language, its history, as well as, contemporary variation and change (Birx, 2006; Miller, 2011). According to Birx, “because language is often used as a way of categorizing people and as the primary way through which culture is learned, linguists can help trace relations between people in the present and past” (2006, p.185). In this regard, linguistics contributes to the understanding of human societies and cultures in all its dimensions, throughout the past and present times and throughout the world. Therefore, along with all the sub-disciplines mentioned above, linguistics enhances and provides the basis for the holistic approach of anthropology.

## **2.2 Linguistic Anthropology**

As we have mentioned, Linguistic Anthropology is a subfield within the field of anthropology. It seeks to make sense of language as a whole by looking at, for example, how we react to different accents, how language is learned and which ideas we have about languages. Unlike linguistics, it goes beyond analyzing the structure and patterning of language. In this sense, linguistic anthropology is a comparative field that gathers and compares information “from many cultures, times, and places” (Ottenheimer, 2013, p. 4), by immersing into certain cultural systems in order to gain an exhaustive understanding of it. Therefore, linguistic anthropology can be defined as an interdisciplinary field that studies the language and language use in social, cultural and historical contexts, as well as studying



language as a cultural resource and speaking as a cultural practice (Duranti, 2001; Ottenheimer, 2013).

At the beginning of its history, linguistic anthropology was focused on studying indigenous languages as a system through a descriptive analysis of the cultural implications these had, as well as having a non-theoretical approach to the study of language (Duranti, 2001). Furthermore, the influence of Franz Boas was of tremendous contribution to the understanding of linguistic anthropology. He argued that language plays a crucial role in culture, stressing that human language was “one of the most important manifestations of mental life” (as cited in Ottenheimer, 2013), thus, it is of imperative concern that in order to learn a culture one must learn the language first. Bearing this in mind, one can go into studying how the linguistic differences of certain languages came about.

With the passage of time, linguistic anthropology went through some fundamental changes in its paradigms. During the 1960s, the new perspectives of the field include social variation in language use and language use in communicative events as the two main focus of research, which means that linguistic expressions were now studied in context, and speaking itself was being studied as a cultural activity (Duranti, 2001). More recently, there has been a focus on language as context, in which “language is seen as constituting the contexts in which it occurs or the entities that are supposed to refer to” (Duranti, 2001, p. 22). In that same decade, Hymes (1963) noted that both anthropology and linguistics have a history in common as well as a dissimilar history. He states that this is because linguistics integrates language from the perspective of language, while anthropology does it from the perspective of the man. Nevertheless, this leads to an interchange between the different topics from both of these disciplines.

The collected data can be analyzed quantitatively, qualitatively, or in both ways, nevertheless, many researchers use multiple methods in order to gather different kinds of data and, thus, obtain a fuller picture of their study (Ahearn, 2011). There are many methods used to collect this data in linguistic anthropology, such as interviews and participant observation. In the Linguistic Anthropology context, interviews are seen as a method that gathers general background information regarding cultural norms and social practices, as well as a way to gather people’s opinions about various linguistic usages from the communities that are being researched. Moreover, participant observation deals with the total immersion of the researcher in the setting they want to study. The aim of this method is to “provide essential insights and build important rapport with research subjects” (Ahearn, 2011, p. 35).

Our research is mostly centered around interviews, as we believe they can provide us with fundamental data and opinions from our participants. In relation to this aspect, Kroskrity states that language ideologies can be explored as “beliefs, feelings, and conceptions about language structure and use” (2010). Therefore, our study will rely on the analysis of the different beliefs and opinions that some speakers may give us towards a specific language use and applied to a certain context, hoping these can provide new insights into the issue under study.

### **2.3 Folk Linguistics**

The study of speakers’ beliefs and opinions about a language is called Folk Linguistics, or as Bloomfield’s has called it: “secondary responses”. Referring to the comments on language made by non-linguistics, Bloomfield’s family also coined the term “stankos” in order to “describe the language beliefs of non-linguistics” (Niedzielski & Preston, 2003). Even though the latter term underlies a pejorative meaning, folk beliefs about a language should deserve more noteworthy consideration.

Throughout its history, there has been a conflicting position between folk linguistics and linguistics, usually positioning themselves as opposites. The interest in studying the field of folk linguistics in greater depth, raised from the 1964 UCLA Sociolinguistic Conference alongside with the presentation made by Hoenigswald. He stated that: “we should be interested not only in (a) what goes on (language), but also in (b) how people react to what goes on (they are persuaded, they are put off, etc.) and in (c) what people say goes on (talk concerning language)” (1966, as cited in Niedzielski & Preston, 2000, pp. 20). Considering these beliefs, we can say that studying ideas about language is as important as studying the structure of it, for the reason that, folk linguistics beliefs may help determine the shape of language itself.

From the scientific perspective of linguistics, “folk beliefs about language are, at best, innocent misunderstandings of language or, at worst, the bases of prejudice, leading to the continuation, reformulation, rationalization, justification, and even development of a variety of social injustices” (Niedzielski & Preston, 2000). For this reason, such beliefs can lead to linguistic discrimination, for example by perpetuating stereotypes about a given speech community, or by considering some usages of language more correct than others.

Therefore, it is no surprise that many objections have been made to the study of folk linguistics, some of them based on the idea that those folk beliefs are unscientific, hence not worthy of attention. However, that view must be dismissed, in order to evolve to more

sophisticated objections, ones based on scientific proof rather than on prejudices. As an example, Niedzielski & Preston (2000) gave two specific objections: one that said that folk linguistics is impoverished, and the other one that suggests it is largely inaccessible.

#### **2.4. Culture**

The concept of culture has undergone different interpretations throughout the history of anthropology. As Barnard and Spencer (2010) state, during the seventeenth century, the metaphorical meaning of culture was commonly applied to human development. Later, in the eighteenth century, this same metaphorical meaning became a more general term. Nowadays, culture is mostly understood as an acquired characteristic of human behavior, as well as spiritual culture, a better view of civilization, and a refinement of nature (Birx, 2006). In other words, culture acts as the medium in which all the components of community work as a whole.

Emic and etic are terms coined by Kenneth Pike in order to define the different viewpoints a researcher can have when studying behavior, which as we have mentioned previously, is an important part of culture itself. According to Pike, the etic viewpoint studies it as from outside of a particular system, while the emic viewpoint studies behavior as from inside the system (as cited in Santana, 1990). Another author who made use of the terms above-mentioned was Clifford Geertz, who in his own style reformulated emic as a ‘thick description’, that is, a characterization of a culture in which every layer of it is under study. Ethnography is Thick Description, and ethnographic descriptions are interpretative of the flow of social discourse and it consists of trying to rescue what is “said” in such discourses (Geertz, 1973). The concept we are defining is a key component in linguistic anthropology studies, as mentioned in the previous section (2.2), linguistic anthropology gathers and compares information “from many cultures, times, and places” (Ottenheimer, 2013).

#### **2.5 Language ideology**

Language ideology corresponds to a fairly new concept in the field of both anthropology and linguistics. Authors such as Blommaert, Field, and Kroskrity have defined linguistic ideology as the combination of beliefs and conceptions about language which translate upon communicative practices, following the economic and political interests of groups and nations.

The earliest notion of the concept was considered by Boas as a secondary response, which he characterizes as the reasons behind actions instead of an important perception that

speakers have about their tongue (1911). He did not conceive the cultural context behind speech as a relevant core in the study of language, due to the fact that he acknowledged it as an elementary cause of inaccuracies which involved ambiguous and improper factors (1911). Furthermore, Boas mentioned the distinction between ethnological and linguistic phenomena; the first explained by its unconscious character which can rise to consciousness and emerge into re-interpretations, while linguistic phenomena remain unconscious (1911). Later on, Silverstein considered Whorf's categories to propose ideologies as a crucial element that cannot be separated from the study of language. That is to say that, ideologies shape and influence all linguistic structures and are employed by users as a justification and rationalization of how they perceive language. More recently, Kroskrity has examined the way ideologies index underlying political and economic interests, as well as ethnic ones, considering conceptions about language as a direct result of interaction between indigenous, colonial, post-colonial and professional academic perspectives, leading to awareness among communities about their own language. Cisternas (2017) offers an explanation of the concept of language ideologies based on different definitions according to various authors who have identified characteristics shared among these statements. He states that language ideologies are a group of beliefs that are related to language and its social implications; its content is highly influenced by the context in which language occurs along with the interactions between subjects and their beliefs.

Nowadays, the continued denigration of marginalized and ignored varieties may be attributed to the unchallenged existence of several intertwined ideologies related to language and education. One of them includes the Egalitarian Pluralism, a combination of “democratic egalitarianism” (Pennycook, 2001) and “integrated pluralism” (Giroux, 1985). It corresponds to the belief that, despite the presence of differences in race, ethnicity, language, values, and lifestyles, basic equality exists among all cultural groups rendering all language varieties as legitimate linguistic systems. However, it ignores the fact that the standard variety still grants access to resources, power and influence, thus it will always be taught. It dismisses the privilege that dominant social groups hold and the fact that subordinate groups will always suffer injustices and discrimination, which leads to blatant disadvantages and marginalization. Bourdieu (1991) introduces the notion of the linguistic market and states that not all varieties are equal in social terms, as the upper-middle-class where the standard is based, corresponds to the target of education whilst other variations have no place in the curriculum. One is highly praised as being correct, pure and logical and the other as incorrect, inferior, sloppy and inappropriate for formal settings.

Furthermore, strictly related to success in general life, is the concept of equal opportunity or ideology of opportunity. This concept is characterized as the principle that anybody can succeed in education if they acquire a standard variety of English (Lanehart, 1998). However, this belief has two different aspects. On one hand, it explains that if an individual works hard he or she can easily learn standard English, suggesting that anyone who does not dominate the standard variety is plain ignorant or does not want to get educated. On the other hand, this ideology implicates the fact that anybody who is willing to learn the standard variety of the language might get the same favorable circumstances for economic and educational accomplishment. Nonetheless, after a certain age, it is not simple to acquire a second dialect, in this case, the standard variety of English (Siegel, 2003). Individuals who can manage to exchange one dialect to another are commonly those who have had a connection with it from a very young age, specifically before the age of seven (Lippi-Green, 1997). Which is the reason why the two sides of the ideology of opportunity are questionable.

According to Geeraerts (2003), standard languages are supposed to be geographically neutral, however, when they are put into practice they start from an economically, culturally and politically dominant point. Likewise, although they are presumably generally functional, they are used in specific cultural, educational, scientific, administrative and political contexts; from communities that are conceived as having higher prestige or value. This weakens the conception of the standard as a social neutral variation, as it typically belongs to the language of an elite. Considering this, the mere existence of a standard variety has reinforced inequality and dominance while naturalizing it at the same time. The practice of a standard variety actively silences subordinate language groups and turns language as one of the main perpetrators of social control and power dynamics. The standard is built and proposed by dominant groups that continuously convince and promote to others the idea that their status quo is the natural order of things and should not be questioned, therefore it is forcibly considered common sense by users. Thus, the standard language ideology discussed by Lippi-Green (1997), Silverstein (1996), Winford (2003) and Wolfram (1998) corresponds to the persuasive belief in the superiority of an idealized form of language controlled through institutions, media, and education system. The media plays a huge role in denigration and stigmatizing varieties. Rickford & Rickford (2000) revised publications from the 1920s made by journalists that had characterized vernacular varieties with pejorative terms such as *lazy*, *ungrammatical*, *faulty*, *slothful*, *ugly*, *broken English*, *fractured English*, *mutant English*, *language and linguistic nightmare*. Considering the educational system, children who speak

marginalized dialects are taught that the standard is superior and leads to greater opportunities. By implication, if these marginalized varieties are ignored and kept out of the curriculum, their history and culture are also denigrated. Silverstein (1996) explains how the exercise of power and control on the basis of a wide consent and agreement leads to the dominated group becoming accomplices of their own domination. Corson (1991) adds that language usage shows the urge to voluntarily adhere to linguistic norms whilst not recognizing that they are being coerced.

Complementary to hegemonic beliefs seen in countries where English is the first language is the concept of “monolingualism” (Silverstein, 1996). Monolingualism is stated as the ideal condition in terms of the use of language and its varieties, being standard English the appropriate norm. Other dialects are recognized as inaccurate and an obstacle to communicating with people, isolating them and being marginalized from the educational system. European grammarians saw heterogeneity in language as an obstruction to nationalism leading to the ideology of monoglossic language. According to them, it was necessary to construct a standardized language to cleanse it of conceived impurities (Flores & Schissel, 2014). Explained by Bonfiglio (2010), the codification of this kind of language allowed the bourgeoisie to use a more correct and perfect grammar than the lower social classes. This Standard Language represented people with rights to land, while on the other side, all other varieties were considered as improper dialects. Monolingualism positioned itself as the standard variety which illustrated citizenship and homogeneous ethnic identity. On the contrary, heteroglossic nature places dynamic bilingualism in emergent speakers of a second language. Its goal is to embrace a proactive view of bilingualism, seeking and encouraging the use and embracement of the native or home language as a foundation to produce and understand a new one. A heteroglossic view allows for rich implementational spaces and innovative practices in the classroom.

Moreover, Geeraerts (2003) describes different cultural models of standardization as conceptions of cultural reality which are shaped by underlying patterns of thought. These models shape our conception of language as a social phenomenon, alongside representations, attitudes, and linguistic behaviors. He conceives two ideologies to interpret this reality: The Romantic ideology and the Rationalist ideology. The first one refers to language as a means of expression and a part of a speech community’s identity rather than an instrument of communication. The romantic view criticizes the Standard Language, considering the rationalist model as a mechanism of oppression and discrimination towards the speakers;

being the Instrumental Ideology a political and educational agent involved in society, their participation and its process of communication.

## **2.6 Social Representations**

Wachelke (2012) explores the notion of social representations as a socio-psychological construct that performs symbolic roles upon objects and groups. This representation substitutes the object itself and becomes its referent. Through the process of representation, this substitution becomes the social actor which links notions; becoming the object itself. The knowledge of social representations provides definitions and help us identify practices that surround different objects as it was explored by Rateau et al. (1994). Some representations possess a single central core, meaning they are autonomous socially and do not need other representations to find meaning. On the other hand, Flament (1987) classifies representations without an organized core or non-autonomous requirement of an arrangement of representations to find and justify meaningful practices. Durkheim (1986) proposed a link between the concept of collective representations and social representations. These concepts refer to the manner of conceiving reality, as well as how we perceive and think about reality. Social representation as a term was coined by Moscovici (1979), starting to be employed within the field of psychology and sociology. Moscovici's thoughts revolve around the dynamics of character and care less about the variability of the age we live in. They appear as a network of ideas, metaphors, and images that are loosely tied together. The representations we hold enable us to classify and understand elements in a social setting that establish connections and communication inside different communities. Moreover, he points out that all individuals contribute to the formation of these representations by participating in social structures.

Furthermore, Moscovici (1988) stated that it is necessary to build a bridge between people and the social world to link it with the evolution of society in order to comprehend change and innovation rather than tradition. Representation functions as a connection of concepts and images that evolve over time depending on their complexity and the determined social characteristics given between individuals who influence each other and their lives. The reason why these representations are social is the autonomy and a coherent view of the collective aspects of society.

## **2.7 English Teaching**

Before discussing the topic of English teaching and English teaching in Chile, we will discuss the topic of how English has become a global language worth learning. In South America, English has become a compulsory foreign-language subject in many school systems after the economic growth of the continent in the last two decades (Barahona, 2015; Crystal, 1997; Matear, 2008). According to Crystal, the spread of English begins with the expansion of the political power of the United Kingdom and its monarchy over different territories around the world for many centuries, as well as the later economic and political rise of the United States and its hold to their worldwide power during the twentieth century (1997). In this sense, the author stated that there are two main reasons to consider English as a global language, one reason is a geographical-historical one and the other one is socio-cultural (1997). In the case of the first aspect, it begins with the expansion to other nations and continents that with the passing of time, have positioned English as the new official or semi-official language by many newly independent states. Meanwhile, in relation to the second aspect, it derives from the economic dependence and social well-being among countries that use English as the lingua franca that serves global human relations and enhances the communication and relations between countries and international organizations (Crystal, 1997).

Over the centuries, the idea of establishing English as the official language, not only in the United Kingdom or the United States but also in many other nations, led to the classification of the language according to three concentric circles; ‘the inner circle, the outer or extended circle, and the expanding or extended circle which were represented by the types of spread, the pattern of acquisition, the range of functional domains and the societal penetration of the language’ (Braj, 1988). In this context, the inner circle plays a prominent role in the development of teaching English as a Second Language. According to Crystal, this particular circle ‘refers to the traditional bases of English, where it is the primary language’ (1997, p. 60) positioning places such as the UK and the USA as the main representatives of the language within the circle. At a Latin American level, Matear (2008) states that according to Braj’s classification the continent belongs to the expanding or extended circle, ‘as English lacks official status and its usage is restricted to specific spheres and purposes’.

### **2.7.1 English Teaching in Chile**

According to Barahona, in South America, English as a foreign language has been taught for more than a hundred years at different levels in the educational systems (2015). In particular, Chile possesses a long tradition of Second Language Teaching English



(SLTE). Nevertheless, in the last two decades, it has experienced rapid development because of a number of factors, including the implementation of national educational reforms regarding the language and the pressure for competent English speakers that can participate in a globalized world, which has led to an increase in the number of programs offered (Matear, 2008).

Although teachers of English in Chile have been trained for more than one hundred years, there is concern about the quality of SLTE in relation to national demands (Barahona, 2015). In general, the teaching of a second language sometimes looks cloudy because of the critics to the strengths of teachers versus the high status that native speakers may have. As McKay quoted from Cook, bilingual speakers have a rich linguistic repertoire to serve their communication needs (2003). In this sense what Chilean teachers of English remark from their own strengths are the fact that they are familiarized with the Chilean Culture and the language of the students. Yet, SLTE courses can have a key role in constructing the learning of teachers not only by providing them with knowledge of the language, but also facilitating their development as teachers. (Barahona, 2015; McKay, 2003).

## **2.8 State of the Art**

Under the perspective of linguistic anthropology and applied linguistics, the topic has been explored under the scope of the concept of linguistic ideology (Razfar, 2012). It implicates the perception and understanding of society towards language and how these principles or ideas are in connection to the way in which humanity reacts towards language and how they make use of it (Razfar, 2012). These approaches entitle the status of language in a community that is portrayed by the ideas of political power, identity and culture held by a dominant country or community over another (Razfar, 2012). In this matter, Standard English has been ideologized as a reference point for all descriptions of variation of the language (Milroy, 2000).

Several pieces of research considering English teaching as a second language have been carried out. The main results have highlighted the inevitable status of standard English as the norm inside current classrooms, alongside the perception of it as neutral over other linguistic varieties (Sato, 1989; Siegel, 2006; Davila, 2016). They have proposed different approaches in order to challenge the negative view of different English varieties during the learning process, such as not treating privileged Received Pronunciation (RP) or General American (GA) as the correct norm or the goal of production, but rather as a model or guidance (Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994; Jenkins, 1998). However, few researchers have tackled

this issue with an approach in linguistic anthropology, as most work has been done under the perspective of applied linguistics regarding motivation and attitudes towards language (Weger, 2013; Pennycook, 2001).

Even though English is considered as an international language, because of the growing number of speakers who are acquiring some familiarity with English as their second or third language (McKay, 2003), RP and GA are still seen as the two most important English varieties around the world, including Chile (Blundon, 2016; Ball, Bernhardt & Deby, 2006; Ball & Bernhardt, 2008), which means that they are the principal varieties taught when it comes to ESL.

The reason why these varieties are cataloged as privileged is explained under the notion of linguistic imperialism (Peltier, 2010; Sterzuk, 2011; Wiltse, 2011). Imperialism is generally understood as an economical and political device used by the developed countries for the purpose of imposing their culture and ideologies over developing countries, provoking and maintaining inequality among societies. Therefore, according to Phillipson, linguistic imperialism is seen as a type of “linguicism”. This concept refers to the ideologies and practices used to develop an unbalanced division of power and resources among groups defined according to their language (1992). Given the current status of the English language in the world, it can be concluded that it is a language that possesses major political and social implications, and therefore those ideologies can pass unnoticed or can be seen as natural.

**CHAPTER III:  
ANALYSIS**

The following section presents the main findings of this study, as well as a subsequent analysis and comments on said findings. In the first place, the definitions of the different emerging concepts from the students' focus group and the professors' interviews are presented in order to be later applied to our analysis. Secondly, the results of the data provided by students of the English pedagogy career are presented, serving as the basis to answer the first objective of the study—to characterize the social representation that students have towards varieties of English. Then, the results of the data obtained by the professors of the English pedagogy are exhibited, which served to answer the second objective—to characterize the social representation that teachers have towards varieties of English. Finally, the results of data provided by both students and professors are presented, in order to determine the linguistic, cultural, pedagogical, and political implications of the preferred variety of English, which is our third objective.

### **3. Emerging Concepts**

#### **3.1. “Prestige”**

The concept of prestige in the field of sociolinguistics refers to the attitude that speakers have towards a specific language or a certain language variety. Eckert and Rickford (2002) explain that prestige varieties, in the majority of the cases, derive from dominant classes and educated speakers, that is why society regards this type of variety as the most appropriate or correct.

#### **3.2 “Standard Variety”**

The definition of standard variety is something that has been widely debated among the linguistic field over the last few decades. The English language has not been exempt from this discussion and that is why several definitions can be encountered in the literature about this matter. In *Language, Society and Power* Thomas et al (2004) state that Standard English “is the dialect of institutions such as government and the law; it is the dialect of literacy and education; it is the dialect taught as ‘English’ to foreign learners; and it is the dialect of the higher social classes” (Thomas et al 2004: 174), in the same line, they add that Standard English is the prestige form of English (ibid.).

#### **3.3 “Native Speaker”**

One of the very first notions of the term Native Speaker was acknowledged by Bloomfield, mentioning that the first language a person learns to speak, i.e. their mother tongue; makes that human being a native speaker of that language (1933). According to Davies (2003), the native speaker has linguistic competence, referring to the ability to operate as a grammatical being or what Chomsky (1965) remarks “linguistic theory is concerned with an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by grammatically irrelevant conditions such as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance.” (1965). Both authors agree that the NS should have internalized rules and appropriate use of the language, especially considering the context in which they are involved. In this sense the native speaker is seen as the perfect model, standard or goal to achieve for the foreign learner inside an educational environment.

### **3.4 “Imitation”**

When learning a language, there are expectations for learners to 'pass' as native speakers. They may engage in 'passing techniques' to be as identical as possible to native speakers. Braine proposes that learners might 'pretend', 'imitate', or 'fake' outputs when presented to different situations that demand cultural knowledge, prompting a 'native', idealized reaction (2013). The speaker 'performs' what they conceive as a fitting native production. These are produced depending on the level of competence, fluency, and interactive skills required and are prone to fail when employed incorrectly.

Davies (2003) considers that by retaining a foreign accent and avoiding these practices, non-native speakers make a paramount choice of identity. Some speakers may purposely strive to distinguish themselves from native speakers, considering themselves both part of a linguistic community and outsiders at the same time. A speaker that swings indiscriminately between native imitation and accent retention may seem contradictory, however, it is a common practice among speakers that have reached a certain point in their fluency and pragmatic abilities.

### **3.5 “Bad Pronunciation”**

The concepts of “Good” and “Bad” pronunciation are often employed when judging how closely a speaker adheres to the Standard pronunciation rules and constraints. The more

it resembles the canon or the preferred ideal native speaker, the more “proper” or “correct” it appears. The more it deviates from the canon, the more “incorrect” or “faulty” it appears, even when intelligibility is largely achieved. The most prestigious variations are decided and pushed by the elite, which links them to the educated upper-class, meaning they are likely to be desired and pursued as a social achievement. Due to this, these assumptions are heavily tied to a prescriptive approach with an underlying political and social bias, which enables linguistic discrimination when learners produce sounds that deviate from the established standard norm. Based on this premise, adherence to the canon is encouraged, whereas deviation is heavily frowned upon.

### **3.6 “Romantic View of Language”**

Previously explained in 2.5, Language Ideology.

### **3.7 “Instrumental View of Language”**

Previously explained in 2.5, Language Ideology.

### **3.8 “Linguistic Imperialism”**

The concept of linguistic imperialism, according to Phillipson (1992) is related to all the different types of imperialism because it is related to the form, meaning conceiving language as a medium, as well as content. Phillipson (1992) also states that rivalry between powers is a crucial feature of imperialism, thus the dominance of English as a language with a major role in the world is because of the establishment and reconstitution of “structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages”. By capturing the way one language dominates others, with anglocentricity and professionalism as the central ELT (English Language Teaching) mechanisms (Phillipson, 1992). For example, English linguistic imperialism is often spread by access to different cultural activities like film, videos, and television.

### **3.9 “Linguistic Aspect”**

Previously explained in 2.2 Linguistic Anthropology.

### **3.10 “Pedagogical Implications”**

Previously explained in 2.7 English Teaching and 2.7.1 English Teaching in Chile.

### 3.11 “Cultural Aspect”

Previously explained in 2.4. Culture.

### 3.12 “Political Aspect”

Political aspects have to do with activities concerned with achieving and exerting power inside society. A critical conception of the term, embedded in Gramsci's idea of hegemony or domination by consent (1971), indicates a relationship between the process of sustaining asymmetrical power and inequality. Language is one of the main tools employed in the service of power. This power serves the interests of certain social groups by setting the standard or elite variation as the legitimate one among 'lesser' varieties. These groups are privileged in terms of resources, education and wealth. In addition, Mayr (2008) describes how communities are commonly unaware of this infliction, and yet will actively engage in behaviors that maintain and strengthen it, as they have been led to believe this dominance is legitimate and natural.

## 3.2 Social Representations that Students Have Towards Varieties of English

Regarding our first objective, in table 4 a selection of the opinions given by the students concerning the social representations they have regarding different English varieties is depicted. After this, the analysis of the data is presented.

**Table 4.**

Students’ Social representations

Social Representations	Focus Group
Prestige	<p><b>S1:</b> “Fue muy complicado aprenderlo (el acento británico) pero como mencionaba anteriormente fue un desafío y creo que por eso quizás de que el chileno es como un poco más flojo entonces esforzarse un poco más para aprender un idioma, como más elegante, como que sobresale de los límites.”</p> <p><b>S1:</b> “Yo no me siento cómoda con el acento británico (...) porque no</p>

	<p>me gustaba, lo sentía como medio siútico, no sé.”</p> <p><b>S6:</b> “Pero aún así lo encuentro lindo pero no para intentarlo, sería... tendría que mejorar cien por ciento mi inglés que tengo, así para poder intentar hablar el británico.”</p> <p><b>S8:</b> “Yo siento que la gente tiende como a pensar que el acento británico es como que, uno le da más prestigio y en verdad sólo es un acento más, una variación más (...) ¿Qué pasa si yo quiero aprender no sé, el acento hindú?, ¿entonces voy a tener menos prestigio porque estoy hablando eso? eso es lo que a la gente le hace choque, que tiende como idealizar este acento británico”</p>
<p>Imitation</p>	<p><b>S1:</b> “Yo no me siento cómoda con el acento británico, nunca me he sentido cómoda. En primer año tuve un profe de fonética con acento británico y yo nunca lo pude imitar bien.”</p> <p><b>S1:</b> “Porque a mi igual me gusta el acento británico, pero tampoco lo usaría porque siento que es algo que no se me da.”</p> <p><b>S6:</b> “A mí me gusta el británico pero no lo hago porque me da vergüenza, o no lo trato de imitar porque encuentro que no me va salir, encuentro que es más fácil el americano.”</p>
<p>Bad Pronunciation</p>	<p><b>S1:</b> “Ahora en la práctica profesional, tengo un profe que me va a evaluar a veces y dice que yo pronuncio mal, que no le gusta como pronuncio, solo porque a él le gusta el acento británico y yo no lo tengo.”</p> <p><b>S1:</b> “(Sobre el acento Británico) Teníamos un compañero que lo intentaba hacer, y el resto se burlaba de él, siempre que hablaba se reían a escondidas, así como burlándose, entonces por lo mismo me da miedo intentarlo”</p> <p><b>S6:</b> “Yo tengo un compañero que habla en Británico y también</p>



	<p>siempre se burlan de él, hay malos comentarios... yo he tratado de frenarlo porque es mi amigo y también porque a pesar de su esfuerzo, quizá no le sale así cien por ciento de maravilla pero por lo menos lo intenta y tiene el desafío de mejorarlo cada día.”</p>
<p>Instrumental View of Language</p>	<p><b>S7:</b> “Yo considero que el inglés fuera de lo académico, así fuera de que estamos estudiando para ser profesores de inglés nos sirve como una herramienta (...) hay muchos trabajos, mucho currículums que te solicitan tener un nivel básico de inglés, para cualquier cosa, hasta para ser cajero de banco (...) porque se está haciendo cada vez más global y por lo mismo yo considero que es una herramienta muy poderosa saber otros idiomas aparte del que... nuestra lengua madre.”</p> <p><b>S2:</b> “(Con respecto a la utilidad del inglés) Las posibilidades de trabajo claramente se amplían eh... podemos optar a muchas cosas (...) no sólo viajar por fines recreativos sino que trabajar en turismo (...) en embajadas por ejemplo (...) no necesariamente algo relacionado con pedagogía. “</p> <p><b>S1:</b> “Nos va a servir en algún momento cuando... yo sé que la gran mayoría de los profes de inglés o la gran mayoría de las personas quiere irse afuera conocer (...) el inglés es como un idioma que se habla bastante alrededor del mundo.”</p> <p><b>S6:</b> “Nosotros (estudiantes de pedagogía) también tenemos que ser adaptados auditivamente para poder lograr entender los...el tipo de inglés que tienen las distintas personas de diferente modo (...) es muy necesario por lo menos saber un poco aunque sea escuchándolo o identificarlo para después lograr comunicarse bien y poder entender lo que se está diciendo.”</p>

### 3.2.1 Analysis

#### Prestige and the Notion of Preferring a Variety Over Another

The participants mentioned the concept of prestige considering British English as an “elegant” and completely idealized variety. One of the participants focuses on the challenging task of learning and acquiring a British accent as well as another participant who insists on using the verbs “try” and “improve” regarding his own English in order to articulate GB and achieve the prestige that this variety represents. The adjectives “elegant”, “flamboyant”, “nice” and “prestigious” are emphasized by the participants to characterize this particular accent. Even though one of the students presents a critical vision towards this opinion by saying that the British accent is just another variety among many others, they acknowledge and accept the value and recognition that society has imposed on this particular variant. As Mayr (2008) explains in her text “Language and Power”, the elite is able to construct an artificial world representation instead of reflecting an objective reality. Established linguistic patterns are used with the purpose of preserving their power, these patterns are learned by the speakers embedded in a hierarchical society.

When sharing this perspective, the participants demonstrate that this vision is a common thought among them, one which they have internalized as a model that has to be followed and accomplished. Although, literature and theories have demonstrated the inevitability that a prestigious and elite group transforms into a powerful one that is able to be established as the standard, such as the case of the British Accent. The power, social status, and politics play a fundamental role, prompting society to accept these beliefs, as it was seen in the lack of a profound and critical questioning from the participants.

### **Imitation as the path towards “Good English”**

The category of “imitation” was surfaced only in the students’ focus group in which the participants affirmed that they did not feel comfortable when attempting to speak the British English variety since they felt like they were not able to imitate the accent features of it. It calls our attention that the concept of “imitation” arises when it comes to speaking performance, as this gives us an important insight into the social representations that students have about speaking British English. In this sense, even though two participants claimed that they do like the British variety, they feel reluctant to use it because they fear not to meet their expectations about their pronunciation performance. The fact that they feel that speaking this variety entails pretending or imitating a model, unfolds an image that Latin American learners of the English language have about their own identity. This idea is that there is a lack of status in the Latino idiosyncrasy within the English speaking community, while the British

or American varieties are highly regarded representations in the social constructs that concern the language. This constitutes a reason why students put a great effort to eliminate any trace of Chilean accent, in order to disguise or hiding, in some way, their Chilean cultural background; and also to seek validation and legitimation as English speakers in the community.

The social representation is not only concerned with language but also with speakers as individuals. By analyzing Chilean students learning English, it is possible to make a connection regarding white European students learning English as well. The latter lacks the embedded or implanted notion that they must imitate and camouflage their origins. In this view, it is likely to find institutions in the English Teaching market that offer courses whose aim is to remove Spanish accents, such as the case of KOE institute. On its webpage, they present the following advertisement:



MENOS ESPAÑOL, MÁS INGLÉS

Elimina tu acento español con KOE  
Posted on Agosto 21, 2018 by say.pri

**KOE ayuda a eliminar tu acento español del idioma inglés**

Cuando logramos aprender inglés, ya hemos superado la tarea más difícil, sin embargo, quedan detalles que hay que pulir para exponer un excelente dominio de este idioma, es por ello que hoy KOE te trae algunas sugerencias para que alejes un poco ese español nativo que llevas contigo.

The advertisement features a light orange background. At the top, the text 'MENOS ESPAÑOL, MÁS INGLÉS' is written in white, bold, uppercase letters. Below this, there are two stylized, glossy red lips. The mouth on the left is open, revealing a Union Jack flag inside. The mouth on the right is also open, revealing an American flag inside. Below the lips, the text 'Elimina tu acento español con KOE' is written in black. Underneath that, in smaller black text, it says 'Posted on Agosto 21, 2018 by say.pri'. Further down, the text '**KOE ayuda a eliminar tu acento español del idioma inglés**' is written in bold black. At the bottom, a paragraph of smaller black text reads: 'Cuando logramos aprender inglés, ya hemos superado la tarea más difícil, sin embargo, quedan detalles que hay que pulir para exponer un excelente dominio de este idioma, es por ello que hoy KOE te trae algunas sugerencias para que alejes un poco ese español nativo que llevas contigo.'

**Image 1.** KOE. *Menos Español, Más Inglés* (2018) Retrieved December 2019, from <http://koesantiago.cl/elimina-tu-acento-espanol-con-koe/> Screenshot by authors.

As the image shows above, these types of English Teaching institutions promote the idea that foreign learners should strive to eliminate any trace of their Spanish accent in their speaking performance. In this spirit, they represent the English language by referring to the

American and British flags. This not only shows that there is a disregard for the Spanish accent when it comes to speaking English in a learning context but also the neglecting of any other existing variety of English.

The problematization arises in the sense that accents themselves are not wrong or impure, on the contrary, it is the perception of speakers the one that clashes and categorizes individuals into superior and inferior social groups. This stigmatization harms minorities that will not fit into the model, such as black, mixed or indigenous people. Furthermore, the standard language ideology strengthens this division by encouraging a unitary and homogenous view of language. By compelling or seducing speakers to narrow their range of varieties, one destroys the others and acts inevitably as an instrument of centralizing authority.

However, these prescriptive norms can be defied by the desire to maintain one's identity: groups that have been historically hindered tend to assume a fierce loyalty for their dialect, creating even more conflict when they are forced to adhere to authoritarian rules. The anthropological use of identity is explored by Barnard and Spencer (2010), who tied it to both, self-identity and an individual's sense of group solidarity. Consequently, the students imply that they should be allowed to display their idiolect marks freely. As long as they are communicative, there's no reason to hide their own Chilean register or choose a variety that's considered as 'lesser than'. After all, employing alien varieties is bound to produce frustration and rejection. This vision aligns with the romantic idea of language as something beyond a system but rather an agglomeration of social features that allow membership. Although the instrumental view of language proposes a standard, logical use of English in formal contexts, most of the communication occurs in relaxed instances. Therefore, as speakers explain, different varieties should not be marginalized to the private and the home.

Consequently, the fact that some students felt awkward when trying to imitate the accent of a certain variety can be seen as a threat to their identities. The feeling that your language or in this case your accent, is not good enough, especially when compared to other language variety which is viewed as superior or of higher quality, can be detrimental to their construction of identity. Therefore, the impossibility of achieving a native accent when imitating a British accent, for example, can possibly lead to an inferiority complex that will jeopardize the identity of the students (Medgyes, 1994). That is why Chilean speakers of English tend to imitate more these privileged accents, because of the preconceived idea that

imitating a British accent is better and that our native Chilean way of speaking is of lower status.

### **Pronunciation as a Paramount Aspect for Speakers to Achieve the General British Variety**

According to the participants, pronunciation is the most important aspect considered by the participants at the time of imitating a native speaker, making an emphasis on the challenge of acquiring their desired accent. At the moment of trying to achieve this, their target is limited by their constant fear of making a fool of themselves and being mocked by their own classmates. There are students who judge the ones who have a language role model, such as a native speaker and issue criticisms when they do not reach their goals. Again, we mention the use of the verb “try” at the moment of blending with native speakers of British English, as well as highlighting the word “challenge”, which implies the scale of difficulty behind this achievement. One of the participants mentions the concept of “bad pronunciation” explaining that one of her professors did not like her accent given the fact that he has a bias preference towards British accents, a situation that became a problem for her because she insists that she does not master this variety seamlessly and is afraid of trying to.

Most of the participants are aware of the concepts “good” and “bad pronunciation”, especially in contexts where language is viewed instrumentally and pedagogically. This concept is strongly linked with the concept of “native speaker” as well as that of a language’s “standard variety” — in this case, English. The students associate the RP variety with good pronunciation as it is preferred by most of their professors, highlighting that in different settings — educational or workplace — people tend to judge when they hear a British speaker and then a speaker with a different accent, thus, perpetuating this stigma and social prestige.

Moreover, a clear connection to language ideologies can be seen at play here in the underlying influences that affect the participants. The standard language ideology is easily identified and can be tied to the assumption of ‘perfect pronunciation’, which focuses on language as an instrument of political, social, and economic control and language correction as an instrument of social stratification. According to Wiley & Lukes (1996), the involvement of the standard ideology positions speakers of different varieties of the same language within a social hierarchy and presents a canon to be followed by those in lower tiers.

### **Instrumental View Aligned to Maintaining the Standard**

The view of English as an instrumental language that would help them in a future career, not only in Chile but also overseas, is clearly present in the participants’ statements. Based on this, we can also bind this vision to the globalization of language and how it is possible to communicate in every part of the world and having the capacity of understanding the different varieties. A student points out that by being a learner of the language the person must have the faculty of understanding not only the standard but also the different varieties in order to be intelligible at the time of communicating. One of the participants also mentions the idea of English as a communicative tool for both traveling and getting to know other places, which is closely related to the notion that links globalization and language, an idea also acknowledged before by the rest of the students.

As a result of their interpretations, it is possible to infer that the English language is seen as a code that allows them to interact with other people, which in the long-term will have positive effects on their personal and professional development. This way of thinking and the belief that the students have regarding “standard language” can be associated with Geeraerts’ (2003) rationalist point of view, which indicates that this notion “ensures that men and women from all walks of life and from all corners of the nation can communicate freely” (p. 5). Therefore, allowing to establish language and English specifically, in this context, as a globalized language that is in constant evolution

### 3.3 Social representations that teachers have towards varieties of English

Concerning our second objective, in table 5 a selection of the opinions given by the professors concerning the social representations they have regarding different English varieties is depicted. Later, the analysis of the concepts that arise is presented.

**Table 5**  
Teachers’ Social Representations

Social Representations	Interviews
Prestige	<p><b>P2:</b> “Socialmente también era bien mirado como ‘Oh hablai’ inglés’, entonces tú hablabai’ inglés y la gente de al lao’ te miraba y te daba un plus, ya sea social como laboral.”</p> <p><b>P2:</b> “Y el australiano tiene esa mala fama de ser como nuestro</p>

	<p>español en Latinoamérica.”</p> <p><b>P2:</b> “Entonces la gente tiende a relacionar el inglés británico con el español de España, el inglés americano con algún otro, no sé con el Peruano, entonces socialmente yo creo que se hacen esas relaciones de prestigio, por decirlo así.”</p> <p><b>P2:</b> “Entonces claro, hace quince años atrás era como muy bien visto hablar británico y enseñar británico.”</p> <p><b>P2:</b> “Siempre la gente decía esa cuestión ‘no es que es más elegante, más formal’ el inglés británico (...) y el americano es ‘más informal’.”</p> <p><b>P2:</b> “Yo creo que eso se ve como una cosa de prestigio social.”</p> <p><b>P3:</b> “Sabía que iba como que iba a ser muy hábil con el inglés, entonces eso era lo que... lo que como que me motivó más. Y aparte que sabía que a la institución que iba era buena.”</p> <p><b>P4:</b> “O sea lo que yo te decía, que siempre como que el inglés Británico, si se considera, es un tema social como dices tú, y de prestigio en el fondo, entonces si tu hablas con acento británico la gente va a asociar o va a creer que eres mejor hablante por eso.”</p> <p><b>P4:</b> “Y como te digo, mucha gente que, los mismos estudiantes, quieren aprender a hablar o imitar un acento Británico, porque claro po’, porque es más lindo, es como más bacán. Por eso te digo (...) es algo social y es algo de creerse mejor.”</p> <p><b>P4:</b> “Yo te diría que la gente sigue pensando que el inglés británico es el más bacán de todos.”</p> <p><b>P4:</b> “Pero sí, definitivamente ha habido una evolución en la percepción de la gente que tiene del inglés, pero yo creo que es una percepción que se ha ido poniendo más positiva.”</p> <p><b>P4:</b> “Yo lo veo así, es algo social y es algo como de creerse mejor.”</p> <p><b>P5:</b> “Si la gente ve que un inglés es bueno se me van a dar más oportunidades.”</p> <p><b>P6:</b> “Pienso que con el pasar de los años se han convertido en un poco más open-minded y entender que una variación no es mejor que la otra sino que son simplemente diferentes.”</p>
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<p>Native speaker</p>	<p><b>P2:</b> “Entonces claro al hablar un inglés estándar uno se comunica así pero no de una manera tan pura como lo haría tal vez un native-like speaker.”</p> <p><b>P2:</b> “Uno trata de hablar un kind of american english pero nunca voy a ser un native, entonces claro, y lo que uno transmite es eso mismo, entonces qué espera el estudiante, que sea capaz de comunicarse de una manera, en un inglés que sea digno, que sea entendible, en el fondo un estándar.”</p> <p><b>P5:</b> “La gente ya no tiene tanta vergüenza a abrir la boca y que se le note un poco que no es nativo, o que no invirtió tanto tiempo .”</p> <p><b>P5:</b> “Acá con algún profe una vez hablábamos que, un nativo le dijo: ‘¿Y tú eri’ británico?’ y el loco le dijo: ‘no, soy chileno’, ‘¿Y por qué hablai’ con acento británico?, ¿Cuál es la necesidad de hablar con acento británico?’ ”</p>
<p>Romantic view of language</p>	<p><b>P1:</b> “Mira mi motivación vino, partió de la música porque cuando yo era chica sonaba música en inglés en la radio y a mi me gustaba.”</p> <p><b>P4:</b> “Porque ya la gente no se considera que solamente ‘ah estamos acá y acá nos quedamos’, la gente ahora está, por último, porque quiere viajar, porque quiere aprender otras culturas.”</p> <p><b>P4:</b> “Es una creencia que, yo creo que incluso la gente que no habla Inglés lo cree, porque así, a mi me ha pasado ene veces. Es gente que, no sé, ve una película y es como que “ ay no, es que el Inglés Británico es tan lindo y no es como los Americanos que hablan tan mal.”</p>
<p>Instrumental view of language</p>	<p><b>P4:</b> “Yo creo que la percepción en general de la enseñanza del inglés por supuesto que ha ido evolucionando y ahora la gente lo ve como algo totalmente necesario de aprender.”</p> <p><b>P2:</b> “Al ver un estándar, el nombre lo dice, te da la facilidad de poder comunicarte bien o semi bien, de manera digna como le digo yo, con cualquier persona del mundo que sepa algo de inglés.”</p>



	<p><b>P2:</b> “socialmente también era bien mirado como “oohhh habla inglés” entonces tú hablabai’ inglés y la gente de al lao’ te miraba y te daba un plus, ya sea social como laboral.”</p>
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### 3.3.1 Analysis

#### **Prestige and the Notion of Preferring a Variety Over Another**

The concept of prestige is explored by one of the professors when they highlight the fact that the English language is highly regarded in society, thus, mastering it gives the speaker a plus. A “plus” is defined by the Cambridge Dictionary as an advantage or a good feature. In this case, it pertains to the working aspect which is stressed by another participant who mentions that someone that speaks a "high-quality English" is rendered immediately as a better candidate, giving them more working opportunities. Therefore, the former participant emphasizes that the general opinion about English is clear; there is a patent preference for British English being described as more elegant and formal, implying that the American accent lacks these features. They add, according to their point of view, that the British accent has a direct relation with social prestige. One of the participants insists on the fact that when someone employs RP in their speech, they are considered a better speaker of the language right away. They go on to explain that even students wish to imitate this accent since it is socially much more valued, respected and admired.

One of the professors makes an analogy between the social perception of British English and Spain Spanish. On the contrary, they compare American English and Peruvian Spanish, illustrating a relation of prestige between two languages that share a common social representation. Thus, this generalized opinion categorizes certain varieties as more elegant and formal, among other favorable characteristics used to describe them. Even though standard languages are “supposed to be socially neutral” in reality they are typically the “language of an elite” (Geeraerts 2003, pp 11). These connections between the economic, cultural, and political elites with the standard language, as stated by Geeraerts (2003), can be clearly seen in the participants’ responses regarding the topic of prestige in language. Nevertheless, P4 states that there has been a positive evolution regarding social judgment towards specific varieties. Likewise, another participant adds that as time goes by this view has grown to be “more open-minded”, insisting on the fact that it is necessary to acknowledge that no variety is superior to others, but rather than each one has its own characteristics and differences which makes them unique and equally valuable.

### **The Native Speaker as an Ideal Language User**

Concerning the social representations of ‘native speaker’ which emerged among professors it was possible to find two different standpoints. On one side, one of the participants gave a great value to the figure of the native speaker by conceiving this type of speaker as someone who commands the language by using a standard variety, focusing particularly on the American variety. Moreover, these participants referred to the adjectives ‘pure’ and ‘worthy’ in regards to the constituting features of a standard variety. On the other side, the same participant claimed that nowadays people give little less importance to pronounce as a native-like speaker. Furthermore, he questioned by what means Chilean learners should keep emulating a native-like pronunciation if that neglects their Latin American identity.

Even though another of the participants seems to pose a more ground-breaking posture about pronunciation models to achieve for Chilean learners, both professors glimpse the social representation of the native speaker as someone who speaks the American or British English variety. This phenomenon is mentioned by Davies (2003) as metropolitan models, which include the British and American models. The choice of these models raises the issue of acceptability, social currency, and intelligibility.

Therefore, this reflects that there are some predilections among varieties when it comes to second language acquisition. Both participants relate the figure of the NS with varieties that represent metropolitan models such as the case of the American and the British varieties. In this sense, the preference of these professors is focused on two types of NS, letting aside other speech varieties of the English language.

Espinoza (2015) discusses the concept of idealization around the native speaker and explains that this idea works mainly under assumptions, due to several pieces of research have found that being an NS does not entail to master the language (Espinoza 2015). Besides, the fact that L2 learners try to approach to the pragmatic norm does not guarantee communicative success with other native speakers of the language (2015, p.220). In this way, the Chomskyan idea of the native speaker as a competent language user (see 3.1.4 “Native Speaker”) is no longer sustainable in time.

Rather than obeying a merely linguistic factor, the preference for some native speakers over others responds to political, social and economic reasons. As Davies (2003) states, “‘native speaker’ is foremost a political designation for social empowerment or for

peer recognition” (2003,p.167), this represents a reason for why in the L2 field this notion is so deep-rooted, because speakers seek to belong to the ruling English speaking community.

### **Romantic View Aligned to Teaching More Than One English Variety**

In the case of professors, most of them coincide with the idea that there are different motivations for language learning, like culture, music and the influence that the world powers have over other countries. One of the participants establishes that, principally, music was what influenced her decision, also highlighting the viralization of the English genre in her time. Meanwhile, another professor mentions that currently, and as a generalized opinion, people do not want to learn the language only for the prestige but because it also acts as a tool to develop themselves in English speaking countries. Encompassing both opinions, it is possible to emphasize and infer the idea that culture plays a fundamental role in the acquisition of a second language, like English in this context.

As Geeraerts (2003) mentions, “standard languages are supposed to be functionally in general, but in actual practice, they are typically used in cultural, educational, scientific, administrative, and political contexts”, therefore, there would be a strict relationship between the author’s view and the opinion of the professors have in regards to their vision about language and the motifs behind their learning. In this sense, not only the cultural aspect would interfere, but also the political one would influence in language.

### **Instrumental View Aligned to Maintaining the Standard**

An instrumental view of the language implies seeing language merely as a communicative tool that at the same time magnifies the standard variety as a neutral medium of political and social participation and sees the different varieties as a threat to the homogenization of a language. (Geeraerts 2003). Having said this, it has been found in the professor’s interviews some ideas related to this topic. The belief that people regard learning English as something utterly necessary nowadays was explored by one of the participants. Their statement relates to the idea of English as a global language, hence highlighting its instrumental features. Given the fact that our society is becoming multicultural day by day, we need to learn English if we want to communicate with people from different parts of the globe. Something similar was stated by another professor, but this time bringing the spot to the standard variety. This corresponds with the view of Geeraerts on recognizing the standard as the only alternative for being intelligible with anyone around the world, who knows a little

bit of English. Although, at the same time this vision overlooks the culture of the minorities since culture is transmitted through language and if this is trampled on the floor it will definitely have a negative impact on the social and political reality of the speakers. The same subject also mentioned that the standard variety is the “worthy” or “decent” way of communicating with people from other English-speaking countries. So, it makes the assumption that anyone who speaks a different variety would have a fraudulent or unreliable speech. We can conclude that the instrumental view of the language helps to maintain social injustices as it boosts the standard variety, supporting this ideology as the correct norm and not as a distinctive way of communicating.

### **3.4 Linguistic, cultural, pedagogical, and political implications of the preferred variety of English**

In relation to our third objective, in tables 6 and 7 (see appendix) a selection of the opinions given by the professors and students concerning linguistic, pedagogical and political implications are presented and the analysis of these categories is found below.

#### **3.4.1 Analysis**

The emergence of concepts such as “prestige”, “standard variety”, “imitation”, “bad pronunciation”, “romantic view of language”, “instrumental view of language”, “linguistic imperialism”, “linguistic aspect”, “pedagogical implications”, “cultural aspect” and “political aspect” from our participants help to map and comprehend how both English learners and teachers conceive the language.

#### **Social Representations Regarding English Varieties and Pedagogical Practice.**

It can be assumed that the omission of idiosyncratic features is part of the planning of English teaching in Chile. This is manifested in tests that punish the use of different varieties with a lower grade; therefore, the system penalizes any different variety from the canon by correcting and reprimanding. Thus, one of the pedagogical consequences drawn from this study, not only warns against Chilean accents but also other English varieties making it even more unattainable and alien. As a result, this phenomenon is perceived by teachers and students alike in the classroom, who claim these rules affect their progress negatively by breeding insecurity and fear to produce in the target language. These beliefs are deeply rooted in the standards of performance utilized thoroughly during the story of English teaching in

Chile. The point here is not to fault the efforts of teachers or students, but rather evidence how some practices can be harmful to everyone involved.

The beliefs of non-native English-speaking teachers have been explored by Mareva, R., Kaburise, P., & Klu, E. (2016). They discovered how the majority of the teachers were teaching the standard variety of English as it addressed learner’s expectations properly and prepared them for future contact with employment in metropolitan countries such as the USA, UK, New Zealand and Australia, countries which are mentioned by participants. Likewise, the participants of the study agree on the instrumental necessity to push the standard variety in order to benefit the students, even when it may not correspond to the reality of worldwide Englishes. One of the professors asserts that they feel negative towards imperialistic ideas, yet they still believe English teaching should be systematic in order to be intelligible, whereas another one believes a standard is necessary for all speakers to understand each other.

The cultural models that emerged from the participants range from S4, which argues that a professor who is knowledgeable in different accents and varieties would be a great asset for the program. This assertion can be connected to the heteroglossic stance in implementational spaces. They add that older professors hold outdated beliefs on varieties, revealing a generational gap. Professors, one of the students explains, feel much more comfortable and are used to the American and British varieties simply due to how recurring they were during their formative years. By admitting the inevitability to replicate what they have been taught, the concept of tradition and exposure appears in the pedagogical aspect. Although this student advocates for different varieties, they still make the choice of preferring the Australian variety; a metropolitan variety that still boasts great prestige. On the other hand, another of the participants believes the program already has professors that fill what they consider a ‘good model’ satisfactorily. For this speaker, the program is diverse enough regarding varieties, even though they are all metropolitan ones.

### **The Political Dimension Behind the Social Representations Concerning the Different English Varieties**

There is a close relationship between teaching a language and the political aspects and consequences that this entails. We know that language is a tool for exerting power, and this will always answer to the interests of privileged groups. Besides, as Mayr (2008) explains,

the hegemony of dominance or domination by consent as Gramsci (1971) stated means that communities can be unaware of the existence of power relations, reaching acceptability and naturalization within the society. Therefore, it is of imperative importance to continue with this dialogue and having a critical view regarding this topic. In this light, bearing in mind that teaching a standard variety implies by no means the denigration of the rest of varieties, is crucial.

In the interviews conducted, we found that the majority of the professors are conscious about the political implication of focusing on teaching only the standard varieties of English, specifically the ones from the metropolitan models, British and American English (Davies 2003). One professor asserts that is not a coincidence that the best universities in the world are placed in countries such as the United States and England since those countries are well known for their economic and educational power. Accordingly, another interviewee affirms that those nations would invest more money to make sure their language, and consequently their culture, is promoted throughout the world. For this reason, the British variety is viewed as the “cradle” of English in the mind of another set of participants, since this tradition is strictly related to political and prestige affairs. The same subject is also aware of how the standard variety is chosen by those who have power and money, and that there is a historical matter of dominance; where traditionally the developed countries such as the United States, for example, have exerted power over less developed countries in the form of colonization. The difference is that, nowadays, a new form of colonization is being transmitted through the language, where it acts as a device for maintaining social inequalities. For example, when the British or American standard variety is being constantly highlighted, the students that do not feel represented by them will feel diminished, affecting their performance in the classroom.

### **English teaching as an Intercultural Experience**

There is an undeniable association made by professors and students regarding the identity of a speaker, their culture and their language; not only in relation to their mother tongue but also as language learners. Both parties point to a very important idea related to, in this case, the standard variety of English, indicating a prominent disadvantage in which we find an evident dissociation between culture and people as human beings with an identity who feel part of a community.

One professor mentions that individuals are the ones who create language, thus, the homogeneity that standardization brings, transforms and makes speakers resemble each other

more rather than to preserve the unique characteristics that make them belong to a particular group through language, and so, losing identity. The interviewee adds that this process deprives speakers of the history behind their own language. Here the concept of cultural imperialism, which has been established by the United Kingdom and the United States in which they are presented as two great powers that are responsible for introducing their culture into mass media, a fact that is evident across the globe. Another participant reaffirms this notion by pointing out that, historically, Britain has been dedicated to spreading and imposing its culture through language. Accordingly, Davies expresses that English reduces other languages to less central roles by displacing them and stripping them of their functions in society until they are left marginalized after going from an open, functional and social environment to the privacy of a home and the loss of it.

In addition, there is a vision that sees the varieties of a language as an open door that allows us to know a culture, learn about it and preserve it, instead of encouraging speakers to choose a standardized version of it. Students point out that standardization is a limitation when inquiring about other cultures, lifestyles, and customs. They make reference to their own identity explaining that the fact of choosing an accent over another (British or American) acts as a form of cultural and linguistic imperialism that the professors themselves mentioned. One of the students said that preferring an accent and trying to blend in with the pronunciation of a native speaker is to try to imitate a culture that is not typical of them as they are Chilean. She insists that one should not fall into the stereotypes of wanting to be part of another culture just because one's own is seen by others as something inferior.

Culture and social representations play an essential role in people's perception regarding the wide varieties of a language and its particular standardization; its advantages and disadvantages. The existing association between culture and language leads us to draw complex concepts such as discrimination, loss of identity, imperialism and cultural appropriation. One professor narrates a personal experience that is directly linked to prestige, culture, and discrimination through language, specifically pronunciation. He mentions that in developed countries where English has a tendency to metropolitan models it is common to observe a rejection of foreign presences that alarm residents, often imagining that they are causing problems, which is reflected in something as basic as pronunciation. If a foreigner articulates a good pronunciation, in this case, a standardized one or with an alignment to the British or American model, they are not judged, unlike other individuals who presented a different pronunciation.

### **Standard Varieties from the professors’ perspective**

There are many discussions when talking about the standard variety of a language. That is something that we were able to appreciate when the professors gave their opinions and attitudes when they were asked about standard varieties. Even though there exist very important points and concepts in their discussion, Strevens defines standard variety as a “global currency without significant variation, universally accepted as the appropriate educational target in teaching English” (1981, pp. 2). In this sense, there is a close relationship between the definition given by the author and the impressions provided by the professors. Both of them agree on the fact that a standard variety has to be accessible for everyone and that it has to be appropriate in academic contexts or educational purposes, which is something that has been mentioned throughout the investigation.

According to the professors’ point of view in regard to the standard variety, the concept of intelligibility is once again mentioned as a crucial element in making a language the standard one. Based on their opinion, the concept plays an important role not only for native speakers but also for non-native people who are learning the language. The majority of the interviewees highlight that a standard language should be able to help people understand each other and be intelligible. One of them mentions that even though they think linguistic imperialism and its consequences on varieties are “terrible” the factors of intelligibility and consistency in a variety are more important for them.

Despite the fact that the standardization of language has its advantages for native and non-native speakers, one of the professors made known his vision about a possible problem that may arise when learning a standard variety. In relation to this, a professor states that one of the disadvantages that the accepted norm may produce in the learners is the fact that in informal contexts it can be difficult to make ourselves understood and communicate using local words or slang if we only use the formal standard variety of the English language. Nevertheless, factors such as globalization of language, technology, and immediate communication across the globe have made young people, especially learners, have more exposure to slang and more new and trendy vocabulary used on a day to day basis, especially by non-standard English speakers. Personally, we think it is interesting that none of the students during the focus group mentioned the concept of “standard variety”, as they are the ones learning the language.

### **Linguistic Imperialism from the professors’ perspective**



The concept of Linguistic Imperialism was found in the teacher's comments who were straightforward in proposing explicitly that independently of the language and its variants, a form of colonization can be perceived through the supremacy of specific countries over other nations and languages. The notorious characteristics which illustrate the meaning of this term are evident and explained throughout the definition given by Phillipson (1992), who mentions that it foreshadows the act of imposing a country's language on another along with its cultural, political and social ideologies. The author unfolds the way it works from a global power, in this sense it refers to those countries who have spread English throughout the world to remote and isolated places historically for so many years, turning it into something so essential for people that a foreign learner wishes to acquire it.

Linguistic Imperialism is a way of gathering power and resources, accumulated in the hands of a few and for their benefit instead of those who are conquered by them. One professor claims that it is possible to observe through history how the United Kingdom has put effort in spreading their culture by means of the language, establishing a relation between the power they hold and the educational material used to teach the students not only in the program the professor is part of but also in schools and other English institutes. Another professor insists on implying that it is not common to appreciate other English variations such as Australian or South African in books, therefore it is impossible to find a way to promote them among the students, stressing the influence of UK on these learners as a model to follow when it comes to pronunciation. Moreover, another interviewee fully agrees to that point of view, admitting that the instructional material offered by universities is still designed with a traditional approach, pointing out how difficult it is for them, as teachers, to change it and enhance the knowledge and expertise of the student. All these ideas expressed by the subjects are connected to the use of the standard variety in the educational material introduced in programs who deal with English as a second language, exerting its power on those who imitate this model, blending the speakers into one standardized community as well as enforcing their culture into them.

Another opinion related to Linguistic Imperialism is mentioned by a participant, who declares that the fact that the best universities attended by foreigners are placed in the United States and the United Kingdom, acknowledging the control that these countries have over the professionals in the way of teaching, the language and also the variety taught in an academic context. English is used as an instrument for diminishing the importance of other tongues in the life of a person who aims to learn English, forcing them to consume other culture to comprehend it better, giving them a sense of belonging to this community. Regarding the

metropolitan models and accents, their origins and the power that England holds as a colonizer and a major influence even in our present day, one participant affirms that the Canadian accent is seen with a dismissive glance, but insists that it is a combination of American and British English. Consequently, one participant adds that Australian English stems from the UK, concluding that all these “Englishes” come from the same place, United Kingdom and that there is no way to erase their leadership and impact they have on other countries who consider the English language as a first or second language. Davies (2003) mentions that the academics who recognize this expansion negatively discuss this hegemonization making a specific reference to how English is used to conquer through globalization, along with economic and military means.

### **3.5 Discussion**

This discussion aims to showcase how the English language and its varieties are conceived by students and teachers at Universidad Central. The study at hand depicted a critical view of varieties and the way they are handled in language teaching programs. It is possible to draw connections to the program taught at Universidad de Chile and the one employed in the study which corresponds to Universidad Central. During the program, the problematization from ambiguous and challenging terms such as ‘native speaker’ and ‘native-like fluency’ emerged quite often in different subjects. Considering the findings of this study, we may examine the profound effect certain comments can produce on students. When a learner is told ‘they sound Latino’ or ‘they sound Mexican’ and then corrected, the reproduction of imperialist and political ideas is continued. It is fair to add that, as it has been developed previously in the analysis section, these pedagogical models have been developed by powerful ideologies; it is not something teachers do voluntarily or out of malice, but rather a product of stigmatization and ideologies that seek to protect the structure of power and enforce social control.

The question at hand is how we can ease this never-ending search for the non-existent native goal and the imitation of accents. If the identity of Chileans learning English is embraced, as well as the consideration of varieties outside the canon, we can ease the naturalized aspect of language teaching. After all, English is not owned by those in power, there is no one with enough authority to claim what English should or should not be employed. In a globalizing world, with more ESL than L1 speakers of English, the question of New Englishes is more prevalent than ever, and Chile may benefit by adopting a more romantic view that embraces the legitimation of varieties, instead of blindly following norms

of usage, a process described by Graddol as ‘the fall of the native speaker’ (1999). We might question whether we are facing a new type of speaker that would benefit from not being assessed by native, ideal norms. To avoid students and teachers feeling trapped in an arbitrary system, a more reassuring approach to teaching may be implemented in the teaching of English as a Foreign Language to assure no one is acting as an instrument of linguistic imperialism.

In the same vein, an analysis of the industrial aspect of teaching can be explored. There are different institutions fixated on advertising the idea of selling ‘true English’, cleaning out all impure traces from eager learners, who have been promised that acquiring a unique variety will guarantee them benefits and privileges. These franchises take ownership of language and turn it into currency; thus language teaching enters the market and is measured in economic value. Different languages are established on their value as symbols of sociocultural identity or way to entry coveted social hierarchies (Tan and Rubdy, 2008). Linguistic as a field aligns with this industrial view of language; which exacerbates the situation. The proposal would be to make decisions about varieties and dialects not based on strongholds of religious, historical, technological and political entities, but rather favor a more heteroglossic position that considers our status as Latino learners. Therefore, a new sentiment against the economization of language might allow and encourage differences and thus, give speakers room to choose for themselves.

**CHAPTER IV:  
CONCLUSION**

#### 4. Conclusion

On the basis of the students' focus group and interviews applied to the professors, it was possible for us to rescue emerging concepts that complemented the already established and defined concepts taken from our objectives. Thus, on our first objective, we established the social representations that students have in regard to the different English varieties. With regard to the four concepts mentioned by the students, the first three have to do with a preference for British English over American or another language variety. In addition to stressing that the first one is more elegant and therefore provides a certain degree of prestige to those who seek to learn and unravel in the language. Furthermore, the concept of imitation is mentioned, a concept which in practice would allow the students to reach a certain degree of ability in the British English variety. This last point generated some debate between the students' discussion as it was immediately linked with pronunciation, which from their point of view is not always an advantage for them. Finally, the instrumental view of language is referred to by the students, they state that they see language as a tool that allows them to communicate with people from other places, as a generator of future job opportunities, and as the key to discovering other cultures.

In respect of our second objective, which concerns the social representations the professors' have regarding the different English varieties, it was also possible to distinguish emerging categories with some of them being shared with the students' categories. Some of the professors mention the concept of prestige, just as it was mentioned in the focus group, the difference lies in that the view of prestige in the interviews comes from decades ago in which the teaching or use of RP was seen as a sign of status amidst society. Although both highlight the relevance of the concept of prestige at the moment of learning a language, it is possible to appreciate that the view of some professors is more severe than the students' view, this might be attributable to the age gap. The notion of the native speaker arises as a widely mentioned concept, even though opinions are divided with respect to this point. It is possible to infer that several of the interviewees emphasize the image of the native speaker as a goal to achieve inside the standard variety, unlike other professors who believe that nowadays learners place less value on the idea of reaching a native-like language level. To conclude with social representations, the romantic and instrumental views of language are mentioned too. The former makes reference to the motivations they had to choose to study pedagogy or an English language degree, as well as mentioning the personal tastes that

influenced their decisions. In the latter, similar views to those of the students are mentioned, such as language as a communicative tool.

In our last objective pedagogical, the political and cultural implications of language varieties, along with the notion of the standard variety, and the concept of linguistic imperialism was drawn from both sets of participants. The interviewees noted in the first implication that even though teaching all the different varieties of the English language would be too complicated, it is necessary for the learners to have knowledge of them. At the same time, they point out that it is imperative for them to follow the educational model of the standard language since that is the best possible way for intelligible communication between different speakers. We also consider important to encompass the concept of linguistic imperialism along with the language's political implications. This is due to the reason that the participants demonstrate a consciousness of the fact that the English language is under the wing of dominant nations, and therefore it becomes a language in which those who contribute the most and promote it are the ones with a considerable political and economic domain. This fact is strictly related to the view of linguistic imperialism since it is under this concept that we can determine the influence of the standard variety, whether it is GA or GB, in academic contexts. The participants also mention the cultural implications and how the standard norm affects the identity of the learners because when seeking a common variety, speakers are homogenized which makes them lose their unique accents and characteristics. Finally, in relation to the standard variety of language and despite all of the above, professors refer to the latter category as an aspect that allows intelligibility and fluency in communication, thus, allowing it to reach the highest amount of learners as well as generating long term opportunities.

To conclude, accordingly to the established by the professors and students, we believe that there are some advantages and disadvantages in relation to the standard variety. Through the analysis made, it was possible for us to observe that from the professors' point of view, most of them highlight the positive aspect of the standard. We believe this is due to having an intensive formative process during the early years of their university programs and also in their daily lives with the influence of music and culture. On the other hand, from the students' perspective, we believe that it is easier to identify the negative aspects of the prevailing variety since it is mentioned in several opportunities how hard and unnatural it is to imitate a

foreign accent, in addition to the frustration of those who are not familiar with a particular variety.

**CHAPTER V:  
LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH**



## 5. Limitations and Further Research

Regarding the limitations encountered during our research, we had a hard time looking for participants and at first, our efforts were futile. We tried to contact students and professors from the English Linguistics and Literature program at Universidad Católica but we struggled a lot. Even though we had their contact information, whenever we reached out, they would not reply and whenever we asked them to reach out to us they simply would not. We spent a few months determined to do this research with these participants, but we did not succeed. Then, after realizing that it was not going to work, we decided to change the institution of our participants by contacting students from the English Pedagogy program at Universidad Católica Silva Henríquez by sending them an informational post with our contact information through a mutual friend but they did not reach out, because of this, we emailed the program coordinator who asked us for more information. After she received our information, she told us that at the moment, it was not possible for them to help us with our investigation and that we needed to keep searching for participants. Thankfully, we contacted an ex-professor who is now working at Universidad Central and he was a great help in helping us find participants in a very short span of time.

The social and political context of our country after October 18th also played a very big role in the final developments of our dissertation. Even though we managed to finish collecting our corpus the day before the social outbreak, this movement impacted profoundly not only our lives but also our environment and family. This situation restricted our time to complete the different tasks that we proposed in order to start analyzing our corpus and finish this investigation. Whereupon, our mental health, concentration, and motivation were harmed, especially because of the witnessing of the systematic cases of human rights violations that happened in this short time span. Despite this being a limitation for the normal development of our dissertation and our academic year, as a group, we are thankful that this movement revealed the deep injustices we have suffered as a country for decades. We also think that even though our dissertation topic does not have a close relationship to the social context our country is going through right now, we think that we can help bring light to the human rights issues that have occurred during the social movement from our position of privilege.

As for further research, we would have liked to compare the corpus from this research with a focus group and interviews from a public university, like Universidad de Chile, in order to have a bigger picture regarding the different opinions students' and professors' can

have as well as their ideologies regarding the various English varieties. It was our plan to establish these connections but as we mentioned before it was not possible to do it. In spite of this, we still consider that it would be good for further investigations to establish the contrast between public and private institutions regarding attitudes and ideologies of the English language and its variety, to be able to have a better scope on the matter.

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## Appendix

### 1.1 Carta de Solicitud de Colaboración



Universidad de Chile  
Facultad de Filosofía y Humanidades  
Departamento de Lingüística  
Licenciatura en Lingüística y Literatura Inglesas

Estimada Señora  
Patricia Díaz Osses  
Directora de Pedagogía en Inglés  
Facultad de Educación y Ciencias Sociales de la Universidad Central de Chile,

Mediante la presente nos dirigimos a usted para solicitar su colaboración con nuestra investigación titulada “Representaciones Sociales En Torno a Variedades del Inglés que Construyen Estudiantes y Docentes”. Somos un equipo de estudiantes de último año de la carrera de Lingüística y Literatura Inglesas de la Universidad de Chile, quienes estamos realizando el trabajo de tesis para optar al grado de licenciatura, proceso que está patrocinado por el docente e investigador responsable Dr. Cristian Lagos (kinelagos@uchile.cl).

La investigación tiene como propósito caracterizar las representaciones sociales que se construyen respecto a las diferentes variedades de inglés en la formación universitaria. Para esto, se pretende caracterizar las representaciones sociales de estudiantes y los profesores acerca de las variedades de inglés y determinar las implicancias lingüísticas, pedagógicas, culturales y políticas de la variedad preferida de inglés.

En virtud de lo anterior, quisiéramos invitar a participar a estudiantes y profesores de la carrera de Pedagogía en inglés de vuestra casa de estudios. En el caso de los estudiantes, se realizarán grupos focales y en el caso de los docentes, una entrevista individual. El grupo focal duraría aproximadamente 35 minutos y para realizarlo necesitamos 8 estudiantes que cursen distintos años de la carrera (dos estudiantes por año). En el caso de las entrevistas individuales, estas durarían aproximadamente 20 minutos. La recolección de datos se pretende realizar en las próximas semanas.

Esperando su acogida,

Se despiden atentamente,

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Estudiantes Licenciatura en Lingüística y Literatura Inglesas

## 1.2 Carta de Consentimiento Informado



Universidad de Chile  
Facultad de Filosofía y Humanidades  
Departamento de Lingüística  
Licenciatura en Lingüística y Literatura Inglesas

### Carta de Consentimiento Informado

Yo \_\_\_\_\_, RUT \_\_\_\_\_ declaro que se me ha explicado que mi participación en el estudio sobre ideologías de las variedades del inglés que consiste en responder una entrevista o participar en un focus group que pretende aportar al estudio, comprendiendo que mi participación es una valiosa contribución a este último. Acepto la solicitud de que la entrevista o focus group sea grabada en formato de audio para su posterior transcripción y análisis, a los cuales podrá tener acceso parte del equipo docente de la carrera de Lingüística y Literatura Inglesas de la Universidad de Chile, que guía la investigación así como también los estudiantes a cargo de ésta. Declaro que se me ha informado ampliamente sobre los posibles beneficios, riesgos y molestias derivados de mi participación en el estudio, y que se me ha asegurado que la información que entregue estará protegida por el anonimato y la confidencialidad. Las investigadoras responsables del estudio, se han comprometido a responder cualquier pregunta y aclarar cualquier duda que les sea planteada acerca de los procedimientos que se llevarán a cabo, riesgos, beneficios o cualquier otro asunto relacionado con la investigación. Asimismo, las entrevistadoras me han dado seguridad de que no se me identificará en ninguna oportunidad en el estudio y que los datos relacionados con mi privacidad serán manejados en forma confidencial. Por lo tanto, como participante, acepto la invitación en forma libre y voluntaria, y declaro estar informado/a de que los resultados de esta investigación tendrán como producto un informe, para ser presentado como parte de la Investigación para optar al grado académico. He leído



<p>Pedagogical implications</p>	<p><b>S4:</b> “Encuentro que sería bastante interesante tener por ejemplo a otro profesor que se haya especializado quizás en algún otro acento porque sería así como interesante de escuchar de absorber, así como lo que él aprendió.”</p> <p><b>S4:</b> “Yo me acuerdo que el Profesor X que me hizo fonética el año pasado, le conté que me gustaba el acento Australiano y me dijo ‘ Dale po’, si querí’ tráeme transcripciones en Australiano y no tengo atao’(...) yo me imagino que cualquier otro profe un poquito más viejo con una mentalidad quizás un poquito más obsoleta me hubiera dicho ‘No, yo quiero todo en Británico porque a mí me gusta escucharlo’, yo hubiera quedado así como ah ya bueno, te lo tengo que traer así.”</p> <p><b>S4:</b> “Quizás esa gente estaba como o estaban más acostumbrados al Británico o Americano, yo creo que es porque quizás estaban más expuestos a eso (...) y que quizá por los mismo ellos se centraban en el Norteamericano o en el Británico. Y eso se fue transmitiendo, como todos sabemos, los profesores transmitimos a nuestro estudiantes todo lo que nosotros hacemos, conocemos y queremos hasta cierto punto y quizás por eso mismo se mantiene esa línea de que nos enseñan dos tipos de inglés que son el norteamericano o british.”</p> <p><b>S1:</b> “Lo bueno es que tenemos profes que tienen distintos estilos y distintos acentos digamos (...) tenemos profesores que hablan Británico y son buenos modelos, entonces nosotros podemos aprender y escuchar y entender que eso no es fácil. (...) Tenemos profesores que hablan en Americano y en mi caso yo trato de imitarlos a ellos (...) yo creo que tener esa variedad también nos ayuda mucho a enriquecer nuestro vocabulario, a mejorar el cien por ciento nuestra habilidad auditiva, entre otras cosas”</p> <p><b>S1:</b> “Cada vez que tenemos listening, en algunas evaluaciones, para medir nuestro nivel de inglés o hasta en las actividades con el libro, salen distintos acentos (...) Pero nuestros profes siempre han utilizado distintos audios de distintas partes del mundo (...) por</p>
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	<p>ejemplo, los Irlandeses el inglés, los Norteamericanos, los Canadienses, los Británicos, los de Nueva Zelanda, los Australianos (...) se han preocupado de que nosotros escuchemos a distintos hablantes del inglés de distintos países para que nos acomodemos o aprendamos a identificar de dónde provienen.”</p>
<p>Cultural aspect</p>	<p><b>S2:</b> “Yo creo que estas variantes por ejemplo de las distintas zonas del mundo nos podrían ayudar a entender la cultura de cada una de esas zonas, ya sabemos que con la traducción se pierde mucho, o al intentar estandarizar, como dijo Felipe, un inglés para que sea más masivo al final solo nos perjudica y también nos limita a conocer ciertas culturas, ciertas costumbres.”</p> <p><b>S7:</b> “Hay inglés estándares dependiendo del país, dependiendo de la región, del lugar donde tú estés, así que yo considero que tenerlas en cuenta, considerar todas esas variables es algo sumamente importante.”</p> <p><b>S2:</b> “Elegir un acento para nosotros que estamos estudiando inglés yo creo que es un arma de doble filo, por un lado nos da consistencia en lo que estamos hablando pero también siento que ¿Cuál es el punto? Porque está bien queremos hablar o americano o british pero... emm en el fondo somos chilenos, siento que es tratar un poco de imitar una cultura que no es propia de nosotros.”</p> <p><b>S2:</b> “Yo creo que hay que tener cuidado con la apropiación cultural con la que nos estamos manejando, si vamos a tomar una decisión bien hay que ser consistente con el acento, sí; pero tampoco hay que caer en los estereotipos de que yo trato de pertenecer a una cultura por tanto tu cultura vale menos.”</p> <p><b>S8:</b> “Yo en algún momento del semestre pasado, le pregunté al profesor X si había algún problema en que yo hablara o tuviera ganas de especializarme en algún acento Africano. Y él me dijo que no había ningún problema. (...) Sí me recomendó que era algo que</p>

	<p>yo tenía que especializar muy bien que según lo que me dijo él, en ese tipo de cultura lo podían tomar como una mofa, que alguien blanco por apropiación cultural estuviera mofándose de su acento (...) ahora que lo pienso puede ser una razón por la que no se enseñen acentos de ese lado de África.”</p>
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**Table 7**

Teachers’ linguistic, cultural, pedagogical, and political implications

	Interviews
Linguistic aspect	<p><b>P3:</b> “Ha cambiado (la perspectiva) en las variedades del inglés, ya no se ve inglés como una sola, una lengua franca sola, sino que hay variedades.”</p> <p><b>P3:</b> “Lengua franca es lo que de verdad necesito saber, independiente como de la, de la variación cultural digamos o de la pronunciación, o del pragmatismo de lo que uno vaya a decir.”</p>
Pedagogical implications	<p><b>P1:</b> “Antes nosotros como que no teníamos la opción de de.. la opción de variedades del inglés. (...) Nos fomentaban, que... que desarrolláramos, que eran el... el inglés británico y principalmente RP”</p> <p><b>P1:</b> “Cuando uno está pregrado como que no cuestiona mucho, es así, y uno cree que esa la forma en que hay que hablar, y esa es la única forma válida, y de ahí con el tiempo cuando uno comienza a ejercer se empieza a dar cuenta que claro, hay otras variedades (...) hay otras formas de expresarse que son tan válidas como las que, como las que a uno lo formaron inicialmente po’.”</p> <p><b>P1:</b> “Procuramos siempre decir esto es lo que se supone que ustedes tienen que hacer pero también existen estas otras formas.”</p> <p><b>P1:</b> “Sería fantástico que pudiésemos aprender todos los... todas las otras variedades pero es poco efectivo.”</p> <p><b>P2:</b> “Entonces qué espera el estudiante, que sea capaz de comunicarse de una manera, en un inglés que sea digno, que sea</p>

	<p>entendible, en el fondo un estándar, entonces ese inglés estándar implica que esta persona esté estudiando aquí se pueda sentar en una mesa con un estudiante de inglés del mismo nivel, chino y otro no sé alemán y van a poder entenderse.”</p> <p><b>P3:</b> “El material que se ocupa tanto en universidades, o el enfoque o las mallas curriculares todavía tienen un enfoque mucho más tradicionalista.”</p> <p><b>P4:</b> “Desde mi perspectiva yo siempre trato de enseñar, que en el fondo, el inglés es uno solo, si es un puro idioma y lo que va cambiando es la forma de hablar, nada más.”</p> <p><b>P4:</b> “(Sobre el inglés británico) obviamente cuando uno está enseñando algo quiere irse a la fuente original. Entonces yo creo que es por eso, ellos fueron las personas que iniciaron toda la discusión del inglés en el mundo”</p> <p><b>P5:</b> “ Y yo creo que la percepción como una idea del profesor de inglés tiene que tener un acento de la variedad, ya sea el británico RP todo el rato o el General American, se ha cambiado. Como que la gente ya no tiene tanta vergüenza de dedicarse a esto y que se note que es Chileno”</p> <p><b>P5:</b> “El contexto en que se nos enseña es súper artificial, siempre tiene un enfoque súper academicista y eso restringe mi forma de comunicarme.”</p> <p><b>P5:</b> “Aquí no nos ponen un requisito de ‘oye hay que enseñar esto británico’, o ‘hay que enseñar esto en americano’, por tradiciones algunas cosas se siguen haciendo de esa manera.”</p> <p><b>P5:</b> “La enseñanza del inglés estándar está súper enfocada a dos cosas bien en particular; si uno se va a desenvolver académicamente o para gente con propósitos específicos.”</p> <p><b>P5:</b> “Ya no es tanto el tema del prestigio sino que es cómo se nos enseñó a nosotros y como que seguimos igual replicando algunas cosas. Yo enseñé acá las doce vocales como me las enseñó Miss Y, doy los ejemplos en británico (...).”</p>
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<p>Cultural aspect</p>	<p><b>P1:</b> “Hay otras variedades, también son formales por llamarlo de alguna forma, pero también está el tema de la... como, no pasar a llevar los aspectos culturales de uno mismo”</p> <p><b>P1:</b> “Históricamente en el Reino Unido se han dedicado a difundir su cultura a través de su lenguaje.”</p> <p><b>P1:</b> “Entonces, es allá (Reino Unido) donde se hace la investigación, allá es donde hay inversión.”</p> <p><b>P2:</b> “No he estado yo en Canadá, pero lo por lo que se escucha no tiene tantas como características tan propias y personales.”</p> <p><b>P3:</b> “La ventaja de un Inglés estándar es que todos nos podemos entender independientemente de la cultura de donde vengamos, o sea que hay ciertos códigos, cierta nomenclatura que todos entendemos, ya sea aquí o en China va ser la misma nomenclatura”</p> <p><b>P3:</b> “Las desventajas del estándar obviamente está desvinculado de lo que es eh la cultura, de donde se crea, y eh... está desvinculada de las personas entonces de esa misma forma son las personas que crean el lenguaje, el inglés es en sí una consecuencia de muchos procesos”</p> <p><b>P3:</b> “Despoja a los hablantes (...) de toda una historia que hay detrás de la lengua, o de influencias político-culturales. ”</p> <p><b>P3:</b> “Bueno obviamente está el imperialismo cultural que claramente las...la, se asocia el inglés con dos banderas básicamente que son las de Estados Unidos y el Reino Unido, pero es por eso, es porque hay una influencia cultural en los medios, en la comunicación de masas, en todo lo que es popular, todo lo que es pop viene de estas donaciones”</p> <p><b>P4:</b> “Yo creo que uno no debe encasillarse (...) claro, es un inglés, pero obviamente que la cultura es muy rica en muchas partes. ”</p> <p><b>P5:</b> “Creo que pa’ algunas personas la idea de cómo se escucha un acento como se escucha muy fuerte o como que se escuche muy claramente la clase social de uno, sobre todo si es que uno viene de una clase social más baja, es como el aspecto más negativo.”</p> <p><b>P5:</b> “ En mi caso mi apariencia es más de árabe, así como que que</p>
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	<p>yo soy más del medio oriente y eso tiene así un estigma súper grande en muy buena parte de los países desarrollados. Pero en el momento que me escuchan hablar inglés, se relajan todos, como que veían mi acento que estaba más trabajado, más gringo, no les llamaba la atención, no era como: ‘No, no voy a robar trabajos, no voy a hacer atentados, soy una persona educada, entonces no voy a dar problemas’.”</p>
<p>Political aspect</p>	<p><b>P1:</b> “Yo creo que por la inversión que hacen los gobiernos en las políticas de expansión de sus culturas no más, un tema netamente cuánto invierte el gobierno de un país en particular en promover su lengua.”</p> <p><b>P3:</b> “Va un poderío económico, un poderío eh educacional, por ejemplo las universidades, las mejores universidades del mundo están en esos dos países (Estados Unidos e Inglaterra), y no es coincidencia.”</p> <p><b>P4:</b> “En el fondo el inglés británico es como la cuna (...) en el fondo ellos fueron las personas que iniciaron toda la discusión del inglés en el mundo.”</p> <p><b>P5:</b> “En la tradición si está relacionada como con un tema medio político de prestigio. Como la misma parada de los británicos que ellos dicen que ahí se enseña el inglés como de verdad, esa parada hace que uno vaya por una variedad estándar.”</p> <p><b>P5:</b> “Creo que el prestigio como económico para mí no es relevante (...) sigue estando relacionado con lo que debería ser estándar, quien tiene la plata y quien tiene el poder.”</p> <p><b>P5:</b> “Enseñar la variedad estándar es una cosa que es de tradición, la tradición desde que los gringos empezaron a mandar gente para enseñar (...) es una forma de colonizar no más que se mantiene a través de los tiempos.”</p>
<p>Standard variety</p>	<p><b>P2:</b> “La variedad (estándar) tendría que dejar un poquito elementos de su pureza para poder meter un poquito en el lado más estándar.”</p>

	<p><b>P6:</b> “Pienso que para una variedad sea estándar debiese ser mayormente hablada, que una muy en particular”</p> <p><b>P4:</b> “Para ser estándar, tiene que ver con el uso que se le da (...) por eso hay que llegar a como a un consenso por así decir.”</p> <p><b>P1:</b> “(El nuevo estándar) tiene que ser inteligible no más para todos los hablantes que no sean nativos.”</p> <p><b>P3:</b> “La ventaja de un inglés estándar es que todos nos podemos entender.”</p> <p><b>P2:</b> “El inglés estándar te permite poder hablar y comunicarte de una manera neutra por decirlo así, con cualquier persona en el mundo que hable inglés, sea un argentino, un chino.”</p> <p><b>P3:</b> “Cuesta mucho sacar este estigma más tradicional de lo que, de lo que es el inglés, digamos.”</p> <p><b>P5:</b> “La gran desventaja de que se enseñe un inglés estándar o de que quizás uno solamente esté expuesto a inglés estándar, es que cuando uno va a la vida real, uno suena formal en todos lados y se hace difícil el poder comunicarse en un nivel más coloquial con las personas.”</p> <p><b>P5:</b> “Y a pesar que yo diga: “pucha, que terrible lo del imperialismo lingüístico”, lo importante es la inteligibilidad, como que yo igual me quedé pegadito con la idea de que la variedad del inglés que uno tenga tiene que ser eh... consistente y sistemática”</p>
<p>Linguistic imperialism</p>	<p><b>P1:</b> “Históricamente el Reino Unido se ha dedicado a difundir su cultura a través de su lenguaje, y por eso es que todo lo que nosotros tenemos aquí en la biblioteca es, todo es inglés británico.”</p> <p><b>P1:</b> “No tenemos libros de inglés australiano, o de inglés de sudáfrica, o de inglés de Nueva Zelanda, ¿cierto?, no hay inversión, no hay promoción por parte del gobierno de... pa’difundir su, su variedad.”</p> <p><b>P2:</b> “El inglés tiene tantas variantes, que en una misma mesa podemos tener un gringo que habla inglés, un australiano, american person, británico.”</p>

	<p><b>P2:</b> “El Canadian lo miran tan a huevo pero es como el hermano chico de estos dos (Estados Unidos e Inglaterra), pero es como una mezcla al final, pero es como un... uno que está apareciendo, emergiendo como el hermano chico que nadie quería pero todos reconocen, ¿te fijas?”</p> <p><b>P3:</b> “El material que se ocupa tanto en universidades, o el enfoque o las mallas curriculares todavía tiene un enfoque más tradicionalista.”</p> <p><b>P3:</b> “Cuesta mucho sacar este estigma más tradicional de lo que, de lo que es el inglés, digamos.”</p> <p><b>P3:</b> “Las mejores universidades del mundo están en esos dos países y no es coincidencia, es porque hay un control también de dónde vienen los académicos, de cómo se escribe el inglés.”</p> <p><b>P4:</b> “El inglés Australiano, obviamente es derivado del Británico, por eso te digo que todos al final vienen de ahí, no hay como sacarse lo Británico de encima jajaj.”</p>
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