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Claudia Helena Lombana Giraldo

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**Spanish-Speaking Students' Perceptions of EFL as Demonstrated in Writing
for an Undergraduate English Phonetics and Phonology Course
in Bogotá Colombia**

**BY
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DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy
Language, Literacy, and Sociocultural Studies**

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

July, 2015

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Dedication

To Jesus and our Mighty God

To my family in Colombia: *Lombana Giraldo* and *Lombana Herrera*

To Tina (April 18, 2015, RIP), my research companion

To my family in the United States: *The Matthews*

To my family in England: *The Pearnés*

And

To my highly motivated students of English Phonetics and Phonology

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Abstract

Students' perceptions of English as a foreign language (EFL) were studied in 20 final papers written by 44 students for the undergraduate course of *English Phonetics and Phonology* taught at a university in Bogotá, Colombia in four cohorts. Using qualitative content analysis (QCA), this study analyzes students' meanings and interpretations of the foreign language in their written ideas that emerged in the process of written and phonetic transcriptions of a *verbatim* sample chosen from the Internet. These meanings were represented in the students' words, ideas, and symbols to construe the new language and to make sense out of it. The 20 final papers are considered primary data in this particular study; the data of the instructor and a post-experience survey are classified as secondary data. These data served to contextualize the participants' perceptions in their final papers and to validate students' experiences and environmental reality of the foreign language. The role of the instructor is indirectly questioned, as the final papers are the result of a teaching-learning practice which was created and implemented by the instructor in two

and a half years of teaching *English Phonetics and Phonology* (Fall 2010-Spring 2012). The study explores the underlying dialogical relationships students established with the various semiotic texts: printed, audiovisual, and audio texts. This study uses a sociocultural framework, where issues of cognitive perception, local reality, and the abstract, dialogical, and fragmented nature of texts helped foreign language students interpret and reconstruct foreign language through virtual reality.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This dissertation aims to uncover the perceptions of 44 undergraduate students of English as a foreign language (EFL) in 20 final papers or documents (see Appendix A) that they wrote for the course *English Phonetics and Phonology* (EPP). Students wrote these papers in the four cohorts that I taught between Fall 2010 and Spring 2012¹ at Universidad de Bogota (UDB), Colombia. These documents were the main focus of this study. More indirectly, this study also questioned the instructor's role in the construction of students' papers, and addressed participants' issues about EPP and EFL as expressed in a post-experience on-line survey (39 participants).

I explored these perceptions based on how students conceptualized and represented the foreign language through their written ideas and meanings. The documents were analyzed in a dialogical relationship with the instructor's data and the course material. This is because written texts in general are not produced in a vacuum: Writers receive the influence of people and of various types of texts in a specific time and space (Bakhtin, 1981; 1986a). It was by placing students' papers in a particular context of a formal teaching-learning practice, that I explored students' meanings in their socio-historical background. The analysis of the data resulting from students' final papers was validated with the opinions students gave about their previous involvement in the EPP course in a post-experience survey conducted online in February, 2014.

¹ Seasons are nonexistent in Colombia, a tropical country. I use *Fall* and *Spring* semesters for matters of understanding the institutional division of academic terms for an American readership. In the local culture we identify these semesters as first semester and second semester of XXXX year.

This study comes at a time when technology and the electronic media have made all types of information available to people worldwide. This is also true for the field of foreign-language education at UDB, where exposure to authentic texts in the target language is not exclusively restricted to classrooms or to foreign language instructors' textbooks and pedagogical materials as it was in the past. The effect of this *democratization* of information has opened a path for students to have more foreign language exposure in their own terms through the Internet, satellite television, and videos. A new generation of students comes to the courses in the *Department of Modern Languages* (DML) at UDB with varied linguistic skills in English and diverse interpretations of this language. We, the Colombian instructors—also facilitators of knowledge—seem to fall short on the English-language needs of this new generation of students. The fast pace in which these students *appear to develop* their language skills and *interpret* the foreign language seems unlike past generations.

Because technology has been a crucial mediator in foreign language education, it has frequently helped instructors and students to bridge knowledge and information of the foreign language and culture. Before the advent of technology in educational environments, it was mainly through books and teachers that students were exposed to the foreign. Currently, the use of technology is even more pivotal in environments devoid of a natural community of speakers of the foreign (target) language. This helps students and instructors construct their understanding of the foreign language and its culture.

It was by teaching EPP that I even became more aware of the diverse perceptions that students had about the English language, and my own perceptions. About students' perceptions, I thought, they were stimulated by formal and informal exposure to several

foreign texts through electronic media in an eminently monolingual sociocultural environment of Spanish language speakers. In our process of understanding and acquiring knowledge about the speech sound system of English, we faced several challenges. The most salient issue in my view was students' personal perceptions—and my perception—of the foreign language, the main focus in this dissertation.

This course was not easy for me, as I had to learn by teaching; neither was it easy for the participants. We combined older and newer paradigms of language that helped us conceptualize how the sound system worked from a phonetic and phonological perspective, but not exclusively. Aspects of traditional linguistics combined with my personal teaching and personal views. I saw myself combining linguistic and other language theory, reading materials in printed texts and the internet, and using an eclectic approach.

The *eclectic approach* is a name that has been popular in English foreign language teaching (EFLT). Because EFL teachers have experienced that “no single perspective on language, no single explanation for learning and no unitary view of contributions of language learners will account for what they must grapple with on a daily basis” (Larsen-Freeman, 1990; as cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 30), teachers have usually combined several teaching approaches in an eclectic form: some use their intuition and others use more informed approaches in their practice, or a combination of both. The British Council gives a definition of eclecticism on their web site that reads:

In the move away from teachers following one specific methodology, the eclectic approach is the label given to a teacher's use of techniques and activities from a range of language teaching approaches and methodologies. The teacher decides what methodology or approach to use depending on the aims of the lesson and the learners in the group. Almost all modern course books have a mixture of approaches and methodologies. (British Council, 2014)

All of the above is in broad terms the background stage of this dissertation. This study is a *document analysis* and a *reflection on the final products* of the EPP course. The insights gained from this process, which originated in a particular classroom practice, were condensed in this dissertation. The papers produced by the participants in this research are a complex mixture of old and the new paradigms of foreign language teaching and learning, sprinkled with local and idiosyncratic interpretations of the foreign language. In the learning process, students and instructor underwent a shared journey where they influenced one another.

The target audience of this dissertation is students and professionals of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) who study and work in undergraduate programs at universities in Spanish-speaking environments. It may also serve ESL professionals who work with international students at universities in the United States, specifically those coming from Latin America.

Background to the Problem

The background to the problem is organized in three parts. In the first part, I give a short overview on how I became involved with the undergraduate course *English phonetics and phonology* in the *Department of Modern Languages* (DML) at UDB. In the second part I present the issue of writing papers for the EPP course. Finally, I make reference to students' perceptions of English as a foreign language (EFL), the core issue in this dissertation.

Teaching English phonetics and phonology. My first encounter with the course *English Phonetics and Phonology* (EPP) was in August 2009. I had come back to Colombia

from the United States after four years pursuing the Ph.D. program in *Language, Literacy and Sociocultural* (LLSS) at the University of New Mexico (UNM). Once back home, in the Department of Modern Languages (DML) at Universidad de Bogotá (UDB), I was offered to teach two content-based courses in foreign language: *English Phonetics and Phonology* (EPP) and *English Foreign Language (EFL) Teaching Methodology*.

The new teaching endeavor was challenging and demanding from the start. On the one hand, content-based courses are subjects whose content is based on a discipline (e.g. literature, civilization, grammar, phonetics and phonology, teaching methodology, and so on). On the other, they are taught in the foreign language that students are just learning. These two issues make these types of courses very demanding for both students and instructors. The students are assumed to acquire/learn knowledge through the foreign language they are specializing in—e.g. English, French or German; and the instructors, for their part, are expected to deliver the content of the course in the foreign language. In other words, the foreign language is the medium to learn about any discipline and at the same time acquire language skills (Brinton, Snow & Wesche, 2004). In both courses, the population of EFL learners were in the age range of 17 to 30, were Colombians, and were in third (EPP) and fifth (EFL Teaching Methodology) semesters of their undergraduate major in English at UDB.

For many years, UDB has struggled to hire native and native/like language instructors in English, French and German to teach complex content-based courses in linguistics, literature, and education. In Bogota, instructors are believed to be *bilingual*, not *foreign language learners* themselves. Therefore, perceptions of bilingualism and what Colombian students and teachers are able to do with the EFL are perceived differently from

English as a second language (ESL) in the United States. Nevertheless, while the issue of perception has been addressed academically in psychology, the conceptualization of perception with respect to foreign language teaching and learning is still abstract in Colombia. This is an issue that remains unaddressed in English foreign language teaching and research.

As a nonnative foreign language instructor, teaching two content-based courses—EPP and Foreign Language Teaching Methodology—to Colombian pre-service foreign language student-teachers was intimidating. In Fall 2009, I dedicated exclusive time to reading and studying the subject-content of the two courses; preparing lessons and pedagogical material; and dealing with foreign language and evaluation of content-learning issues.

The matter that prompted me to keep the *EPP* course over the *Methodology* course was one microteaching experience in the latter. A student-teacher prepared a lesson to teach the difference between the stop sounds [p] and [b] in English to children. However, the problem was not the contrast that she made between the voiceless and voiced consonant sounds, but the pronunciation of the vowels. In her examples *pear* and *beer* were minimal pairs, but what she really uttered was *peer* and *beer*. My overall experience with EPP amounted to three years of reading and learning about phonetics and phonology and how to teach it in a trial-and-error practice to understand the foreign language, foreign language students, and myself.

My background knowledge on phonetics and phonology came from my learning experience as an undergraduate in two courses of English phonetics and phonology, and one year of phonetics and phonology as a graduate student. This had taken place at a time when

access to international TV and other electronic media was very limited if nonexistent (videocassettes for Betamax and VHS films were the only option in the 1980s, as well as audio cassettes). However, at that time I had more contact with native speakers of the language in courses than what students at UBD have had over 20 years. My former learning experience as compared with current undergraduate foreign language students was much more in disadvantage in terms of technology. The internet is the salient medium that seems to make it totally dissimilar. In this way, I became involved in teaching EPP for the first time in my professional career.

Students' final papers for the course EPP. From the first year that I started teaching EPP, a final writing assignment was part of the requisite to complete the course. This would serve to evaluate students' content learning. After teaching the course for a year (Fall 2009 and Spring 2010), I saw little success to get the students to understand and apply the concepts of phonetics and phonology successfully. For the Fall 2010, I decided to dedicate more time and careful planning to the final project of the course. The project would have to help students rehearse concepts, write in English, and prompt group collaboration. The project would also serve as a bridge to mediate between the content of the course and the writing of the final papers.

I started this project in Fall 2010 and continued implementing it for the next three cohorts: Spring 2011, Fall 2011, and Spring 2012. At that time, my main intention in developing the project was threefold: 1) to help students with their academic writing skills and the comprehension of the content of the course; 2) to help me evaluate the content of the course; and 3) to allow me to read students' writing more easily and faster. My former experience with the other two cohorts had proved difficult at the end of each semester when

I graded students' final work: the content of phonetics and phonology mixed with errors in foreign language writing. Did the students really understand the concepts but could not express them in foreign language writing? Or, did they poorly understand the concepts of phonetics and phonology and to make things more complex they barely had the foreign language skills to express what they had learned in writing?

The Problem: Students' perceptions of the foreign language. Added to the above problem of phonetics and phonology content-learning and academic writing in EFL, there was one underlying issue that was not self-evident for me: *language perception*. The ideas of EFL that students brought to class seemed to obstruct the understanding of the subject, but more interestingly, how they perceived each other, saw their other foreign language instructors, and what they expected to do with the new language. It is not new that all students who start learning a foreign language bring their own understandings and intuitions from their knowledge of their native language and their culture (the theory of transfer is well known in second language acquisition, SLA). In the foreign language, they seem to have a self-image of how they sound when they utter words and stretches of speech. They also use their criteria to judge the pronunciation of other students, instructors, and native speakers of English.

Theories such as *language transfer* and *interlanguage* in SLA have addressed the phenomenon of native language interference in second/foreign language learning. The transfer of phonology, syntax, morphology, and lexical and language-related problems is not new, as many native speakers usually perceive the non-nativeness in foreign language speakers (accents, use of wrong words, and problems with syntax, among others). The theory of language transfer has been in the field of foreign/second language for over sixty

years (Mitchell, Myles & Marsden, 2013). *Interlanguage*, Selinker's theory proposed in the 1970s (1972) does not deny the issue of language transfer, but strongly recognizes a creative linguistic system among second language learners. This is based on the findings that the errors made by second language learners of different native language backgrounds showed similar stages of second language development in English or *interlanguages* (Selinker, 1972).

The above would be one way to look at the problem of students' errors. However, still another problem underlying students' views in EPP seemed to be related to perception. When I started dealing with the issue of language perception, I began to question problems of learning that are beyond students' and instructors' own transfer and interlanguages in EFL. Perception, I realized, seemed to hamper or prompt foreign language learning. What is more, it seemed to be compromising meaning and understanding. Beyond my teaching and students' desire to learn a foreign language, there was the matter of perception. Irrespective of exposure to foreign language texts and culture, and consciousness and awareness in learning, I thought, our perception always filters the way we understand the world. Perception, I thought, was an essential and irreducible mediator of language learning and stereotyping.

Foreign language courses have been usually based on "the transmission of information or on communicative training" (Kramsch 2004, p. 190). They usually lack a broader understanding of the importance of perception and the sociocultural context, and how these two phenomena intersect and mix making people view the world from a personal and cultural perspective. Issues on how students majoring in foreign language perceive

English has not been explored in Colombia. This is a problem that entails not only physically but experientially perception in foreign language education.

Focus and Purpose of the Study

The focus of this study is 20 final papers that 44 students in the DML at UDB wrote for the course *English Phonetics and Phonology*. These papers represent four cohorts: Fall 2010, Spring 2011, Fall 2011 and Spring 2012. The purpose of this dissertation is to do a document analysis to discover what we can learn about students' perceptions of the foreign language. This dissertation represents an attempt to develop a methodology for such an inquiry where the theory on second/foreign language learning and practice intersects with content-based instruction, linguistics, literacy, the philosophy of language and sociocultural issues. These papers will allow me to interrogate certain assumptions regarding foreign language learning and the way students construct understanding and meaning. On the other hand, this dissertation will also serve as a reflection of my teaching (practitioner research) and my assumptions and misconceptions on how we perceive the Other (Said, 1978) and adopt paradigms. The underlying issue of foreign language pedagogy and learning lies in the background of students' papers.

Main Question and Sub-questions

The question guiding this dissertation is: *What can we learn about students' perception of English foreign language based on the final papers from an English phonetics and phonology class?* We all share the experience of acquiring and living a first language (L1). We all engage in language and learn to think about language, even without any formal education in the subject area.

Language, as we experience it in our lives outside the classroom, influences how we engage in formal language study. Underlying the question for this study is what happens when our cultural and personal store of experience combines with formal knowledge of language. Students usually come to the field of language education with subjectivities and conceptions, and it is presumed that through formal study of the language they will be given a new way to understand what they intuitively knew about language. More naively, we teachers assume that we may influence students' perceptions.

Based on the main question, I submit the following sub-questions:

- 1) What are students' interpretations of English as a foreign language through the words and meanings expressed in their final papers?
- 2) What ideas and meanings can be characterized as typical Colombian sociocultural interpretations of EFL?
- 3) Which are students' views of the English language sound system—as expressed in these papers?
- 4) What intertextual relations (dialogues with other types of texts) helped students interpret the foreign language?

Because the main question in this study addresses students' perceptions of EFL, I briefly give a definition of perception. I expand on this definition in Chapter 4.

What is perception? (2015). According to the online *Psychology Dictionary* perception is:

[T]he procedure or outcome of becoming conscious of items, unions, and events by way of the senses, that comprises activities like acknowledging, viewing, and discriminating. These activities enable living beings to order and interpret the stimulus received into meaningful insight.

Perception in connection with the environment also extends to living organisms (Gibson, 1969).

According to Vygotsky (1934), an individual's perception is linked to the environment, which provides the stimulus for humans. As we grow up, our environments also change and expand: parents are in charge of expanding their babies' and infants' surroundings. In this way, added to the home environment, infants are introduced to daycare centers, pre-school, and school environments (Vygotsky, 1934). We learn to interact with these environments. They are expected to vary with the human activities that we develop over time. Depending on the environment, we undergo developmental processes that respond to the stimuli of the outside and abstract worlds (Vygotsky, 1934). This is a key issue for education, as children and adults learn by the quality of the surrounding stimuli. People develop in close correspondence to their surrounding environment.

Perception is both physical and experiential (Gibson, 1969). For Gibson (1969) perception is a functional process between the environment, awareness of events, and the organism response:

Perception, functionally speaking, is the process by which we obtain firsthand information about the world around us. It has a phenomenal aspect, the awareness of events presently occurring in the organism's immediate surroundings. It has also a responsive aspect; it entails discriminative, selective response to the stimuli in the immediate environment. (p. 3)

Perception is stimulus-oriented. Sources of stimulation such as objects, space, events, representations of these, and coded sources of stimulation (Gibson, 1969) contribute to our views and interpretations of the world. This is of key importance in education, as activities, tasks, and learning processes will need to incorporate stimulation of various sources so that perceptual learning takes place. For Gibson (1969) perceptual learning is "an increase in the

ability to extract information from the environment, as a result of experience and practice with stimulation coming from it” (p. 3).

Sociocultural issues that exist and are created in our environments stimulate our behavior, language, and what we perceive and learn about our society and culture (Vygotsky, 1934). We interpret the world through our perceptions. Our physical senses and psychological experience are involved.

Rationale and Significance of the Study

Little attention has been directly paid to the way students perceive the foreign language in Colombia, and it is just now, through this dissertation, that one such study will contribute to the field. This study aims to address the lack of information in this area.

Bogotá is a large metropolitan center where most Colombians migrate for better educational and economic opportunities. Because of this, the city enjoys a Colombian plural diversity. The linguistic culture in Colombia is mainly a monolingual Spanish-speaking one. Some indigenous groups speak Spanish as a second language. Exposure to multilingualism and multiple languages in Bogota is not common. It is now that through tourism and indigenous people’s displacement that people in this big city are being more exposed to foreigners and more indigenous vendors on the streets. The perception of English in the discourse of the Ministry of Education on bilingual education connects with the global discourse and Colombian covered colonialism (Usma, 2010), whereas the public’s general perception of indigenous languages brings a picture of poverty and discrimination.

Foreign language professionals at UDB have generally assumed that being open to understanding cultures will eventually emerge from the exposure to the language, linguistic

and civilization courses, multimedia, international food festivals, and other multicultural activities. However, understanding the Other as embedded in foreign language education can bring a lot of issues of stereotypes and biases.

As the participants in this study are 44 Colombians that interpreted the English language with a local idiosyncrasy, this study offers a way to make sense of our interpretations and representations through a *final paper* that was written with the purpose of understanding the phonological system of EFL. This study also offers an interesting way of linking an instructor's view with the products of a teaching practice, to question students' meanings, and to reflect on the teaching of EFL in Colombia. Additionally, this research incorporates the views of 37 subjects who participated in a post-experience on-line survey.

The significance of this dissertation is expected to emerge from the exploration of students' meanings that were not addressed in the initial evaluation of students' papers. The primary objective of these papers was an assessment of the *mastery* of the course material.

The above has not been characterized in research studies in Colombia recently. Two publications have focused on the issue of undergraduate students learning EFL writing and listening in modern/foreign language programs at two universities. One was a reflection article coming from one instructor at a university in Medellín (Gómez, 2011) and the second was an empirical study about listening at an undergraduate modern language program in Bogota (Hernández-Ocampo & Vargas, 2014). Gómez (2011) observed that Colombian undergraduate students presumed that Spanish language rhetoric could be transparently transferred into English without much alteration of meaning (e.g. the baroque and stiff formal style of addressing topics in written Spanish). For Gómez (2011), teaching compared rhetoric would allow students to improve their writing in English, especially if they plan to

write for an American audience in the future. Although Gómez's article was more oriented to writing in EFL, he also addressed very briefly issues of phonology transfer from Spanish into English. Phonological awareness in the native language, Spanish, and the new language, English, has shown effectiveness in processes of reading, facilitating literacy instruction among bilinguals (Bialystok, 2005). The phonological skill awareness and knowledge of phonological concepts that students can acquire in one language can be transferred to the other. This will eventually facilitate literacy skills no matter if the first language of instruction has been Spanish or English (Bialystok, 2005).

In the article by Hernández-Ocampo and Vargas (2014) an action research study with intermediate students from the undergraduate modern language program at Universidad Javeriana, Bogotá was conducted. The main problem was for students to be able to get good grades in the listening tests. The study showed how these two teachers implemented a classroom project where students were exposed to more natural English-speaking situations through the internet. Issues of phonetics and phonology were not directly addressed, but the listening situation for students' understanding of the foreign language. Issues of second language phonology and metacognition, which are crucial to understand how the listening skills can be improved, were barely addressed. A 100% of listening understanding is hardly ever acquired by second language learners because of cognitive issues that are involved in second language acquisition (Escudero, 2010).² These issues seem to be known by foreign language instructors of EFL, but testing and evaluating EFL students seem to go counter this fact.

² The issue of the native speaker understanding a 100% of what is said in his/her native language is also questioned. Language proficiency and speakers' control in style, oratory, register, range of vocabulary, range of accent, sentence structure also varies depending on the native speaker (see Davis, 2003, p. 93)

This dissertation is organized in eight chapters. Chapter 2 presents the literature review. Chapters 3 and 4 address the methodology and the theoretical framework respectively. The data from the instructor (secondary data), the 20 papers (primary data), and the survey (secondary data) are presented in three chapters: Chapter 5, 6 and 7, respectively. For methodological issues of personal involvement with the three sources of data as an instructor, I wanted to establish some distance in the presentation and analysis of these data and pay attention to my issues of bias. Chapter 8 presents the conclusion, some findings, and the limitations of this study.

Finally, this research seeks to explore sociocultural-based misunderstandings in the phenomenon of language perception and learning, and dig deeper into additional second/foreign language matters that seem to have been taken for granted in students' education in EPP, and consequently, in the practice of EPP. The fact that there is no empirical research in Colombia about issues of EFL phonetics and phonology in connection with instructional environments does not mean that foreign language instructors might not have had some experience or insights with this problematic. The results of this dissertation will advance the understanding of foreign language learning and pedagogy in content-based courses about language per-se and will serve to provide issues to discuss about foreign language curriculum and foreign language-learning planning, which may involve changing some of the teaching paradigms that we have been using.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This review covers empirical research dealing with English phonetics and phonology (EPP) as related to content-based courses in foreign/modern language undergraduate programs and second/foreign language education for pre-service (and/or in-service) teachers at universities. In contrast to the majority of undergraduate foreign/modern language programs in the United States, whose most common orientation is cultures and literatures, the focus of these programs in Colombia is teacher education. Curricula at various universities in this country include courses in linguistics, literatures, communication, and culture. Their main purpose is, however, to prepare foreign language teachers.

As stated in the introduction, the question motivating my research concerns undergraduates' perceptions of the foreign language as emerging from the analysis of their writings for the course *English Phonetics and Phonology* (EPP). This review involves multiple perspectives: second/foreign language phonetics and phonology, teaching-learning practice of pronunciation, and integration of this subject matter in foreign/modern language education. The question proposes an analysis of undergraduate work submitted for a course in linguistics, therefore knowledge on the subject area content will emerge. An important aspect of this research is the identity of the student alumni: They are non-native-speakers (NNS) of English attempting to understand what underlies the superficial structure of a new language by reflecting and writing about it. A summative aspect for analysis here is the situatedness and role of universities in third world countries. Subsumed in this analysis is an interrogation of the academic expectations of faculty members and students and the

pressures exerted on foreign or modern language programs to compete nationally and internationally.

Therefore, I will start this literature review by: 1) defining phonetics and phonology; 2) reviewing recent research in phonetics and phonology as applied to second/foreign language pedagogy in undergraduate programs; and finally, 3) situating the subject of phonetics and phonology in Colombian undergraduate programs of foreign language education, and 4) addressing ESL/EFL perception in relation to the listening skill.

Phonetics and Phonology

Listerri Boix (1990), in his book about experimental phonetics, introduces the reader to the study of phonetics by examining Singh and Singh's definition: "Phonetics is the study of speech sounds. It includes the systematic classification of sounds according to the way they are produced and how they sound to the listener" (Singh & Singh, 1982; as cited in Listerri Boix, p. 15, 1990). This definition situates phonetic studies at the level of *performance* and *perception*. Therefore, and according to Singh and Singh, the *phonetician* "specializes in phonetics and uses his knowledge of phonetics to understand the systematic classification of the speech sounds of the various languages of the world" (1982; as cited in Listerri Boix, p. 15, 1990). According to Listerri Boix (1990) this brings about two different classifications: *general phonetics* and *descriptive phonetics*. The first describes all the sounds of human languages of the world while the second specializes in the sounds of one particular language.

Listerri Boix also explains how the traditional communication model—where there is a sender, a message, a channel, and a receiver—can be transferred to the study of

phonetics. In this way, *articulatory phonetics* studies how speakers utter speech sounds in the vocal tract. *Acoustic phonetics* studies the physical properties of speech sounds in terms of waves, with emphasis on how they are transmitted and perceived. The third branch, *perceptive phonetics*, has two roles: it studies how sound waves reach the ear and are translated into nerve impulses in the brain; and how these sounds make sense by allowing us to decipher and interpret them. Phonetics, as defined above, becomes a science independent of linguistics by collaborating with other sciences such as neurology, medicine, physiology, pedagogy, cognitive science, computer science, and others which may need the knowledge explored in acoustic, perceptive, and articulatory phonetics (e.g. software for speech production and recognition; speech and language development; physical problems of speech, and so on).

Phonetics can also be part of linguistics, as in the *symbiotic* relationship of *phonetics* and *phonology*. For the phonetician Ladefoged, phonetics is part of linguistics (Listerri Boix, 1990): “Neither of these two linguistic disciplines is independent of the other” (Catford 2001; as cited in Pennington, 2007, p. 1). And for Ladefoged and Johnson (2011), there is this interconnection between them in their “explicit discussion of how phonetics relates to general linguistics” (p. x), and how “private phonetic knowledge (the more cognitive aspects of phonetics) and public phonetic knowledge (aspects of phonetics that are shared in a speech community)” (p. x) are correlated.

Although the connection between phonetics and phonology has long been acknowledged, it is also true that the two disciplines have worked independently: “[T]he focus of linguistics has generally been on phonology as an area separate from phonetics”

(Pennington 2007, p. 2). This has also been confirmed by Major (1998) who describes the relationship between phonetics and phonology far from being symbiotic with phoneticians and phonologists accusing each other of “ignoring each other’s’ research at their own peril” (Major, 1998, p. 133) and for some even considering phonetics out of linguistics departments ((Major, 1998).

If the definition of the fields has been well served by the division for research purposes between phoneticians and phonologists about the nature of speech, it has created at the same time an inveterate controversy between the relationships of the two disciplines:

... [t]he idea that phonetics is concerned with universal properties of speech studied by scientific methods, may all too easily be read as a claim that phonetics deals with objective physical or concrete reality, while phonology is somewhat apologetically concerned with the linguistic organization of this reality. Or, more or less reversing the argument phonology may be said to tackle the true mental reality behind speech, while phonetics handles ‘merely’ the concrete outworkings of this reality. (Major, 1998, p. 2)

Thus, phonetics concentrates on what is tangible—speech as it is produced, heard, and transmitted—while phonology explains the imperceptible abstract organization of the phonological system of language realization. Phonetics, declares Major, “provides us with theories and models needed for phonology; a misrepresentation of the basic elements would necessarily lead to a misguided phonology” (Major, 1998, p. 133). Therefore, phonology needs phonetics and functions at two levels: “a concrete (phonetic) one and an abstract (underlying) one” (Giegerich, 1992; as cited in Pennington, 2007, p. 2). The two levels are interrelated, as the units in both planes are connected: phonetic and phonological. This relationship has been the main issue for phonologists who define and write the rules that result from this connection.

As the field of phonology has long been entrenched in abstract dynamics separated from the real realization of speech, currently Pennington sees a refurbished phonology in the 21st century that is open to “concerns of performance and usage—incorporating perceptual processing, cognitive organization and memory, and social behavior” (Pennington, 2007, p. 3). Common research interests with respect to the “interrelationships between phonetics and phonology are reflected by the fact that the same topics are covered by phoneticians and phonologists” (Major, 1998, p.133). This is evidenced in the articles written by phoneticians and phonologists for the special issue in *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (SSLA, 1998) about interlanguage phonetics and phonology. Major, in the introduction to this issue, refers to the similarities in the lines of research in the two disciplines. This is also confirmed by Hansen Edwards and Zampini (2008) and Pennington (2007) in the introductions to their books about second language phonology.

It is important to understand the interrelatedness of phonetics and phonology, for these two disciplines inform the field of *pronunciation* in applied linguistics, specifically as it ramifies in the teaching and learning of second and foreign languages and second language acquisition (SLA) research. Pronunciation in second language teaching “began to be studied systematically shortly before the beginning of the twentieth century,” according to Celce-Murcia, Brinto, and Goodwin, (2007, p. 2). As such, the field has “developed two general approaches to the teaching of pronunciation: 1) an intuitive-imitative approach and 2) and analytic-linguistic approach” (Goodwin, 2007, p. 2). However, not much research in this practice has been reported (Baker, 2011; Baker & Murphy, 2011). In SLA, studies about second language (L2) phonology are more recent with theories and models coming

from linguistics and SLA that explain aspects of acquisition in terms of production and reception (Hansen Edwards & Zampini, 2008; Major, 1998).

Phonetics and phonology in the field of foreign language teaching. The phonetician Peter Roach (2009) in the introduction to *English Phonetics and Phonology* asks: “Why is it necessary to learn this theoretical background?” (p. 1) and gives a comparison with grammar:

... at lower levels of study one is concerned simply with setting out how to form grammatical sentences, but people who are going to work with the language at advanced level as teachers or researchers need the deeper understanding provided by the study of grammatical theory and related areas of linguistics...” (p. 1)

Therefore, English phonetics and phonology is “necessary for anyone who needs to understand the principles regulating the use of sounds in spoken English” (Roach, 2009, p. 1).

As phonetics and phonology inform the field of pronunciation pedagogy in language education where second/foreign language teachers put the theory at work—or are supposed to—the justification for its inclusion in the curriculum makes it relevant. Also, as the “[speech] sound system intersects with other skills and areas of language, such as listening, inflectional morphology, and orthography” (Celce-Murcia et al. 2007, p. ix), these other subfields need the foundations of phonological theory.

Therefore, teachers of English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) need to be acquainted with concepts native to phonetics and phonology to devise strategies and exercises in pronunciation that can fit a “communicative teaching framework that includes the accuracy-fluency continuum” (p. ix). In short, this means that teachers need to know how segmentals (individual speech sounds such as vowels and

consonants) and suprasegmentals (the prosody of the language: rhythm, stress, and intonation) work in the speech continuum of English (Celce-Murcia, et al. 2007; Derwing & Munro, 2005; Roach, 2009).

Three decades ago, Esling and Wong (1983) and Pennington and Richards (1986) also remarked on the importance of *voice quality settings* or *voice quality features* respectively, added to segmentals and suprasegmentals. Voice quality usually characterizes the sounds speakers utter in long stretches of speech by adding the *emotional coloring* (Esling & Wong, 1983). Voice quality settings “are the longest-term, ‘quasi-permanent’ component of speech (Abercrombie, 1967; as cited in Esling & Wong, 1983, p. 90). These features allow us to identify other people’s accents and voice qualities in terms of how they sound to our ears: retroflexion, nasal voice, dentalized, close jaw, uvularized, lip spreading, breathy voice, and so on (Esling & Wong, 1983). For example, although the English spoken in the United States varies according to region and social dialect, some common features prevail. They include the voice quality setting with features such as: “1) spread lips; open jaw; 3) palatalized tongue body position; 4) retroflex articulation; 5) nasal voice; 6) lowered larynx; and 7) creaky voice.” (p. 91). Esling and Wong also state that a combination of all or some of these features across dialect groups occurs.

In the same line of thought, Pennington and Richard (1986) describe voice quality in this way:

Voice quality settings is the phenomenon which accounts for our impressions of, for example, certain male Japanese and Arabic speakers as speaking their language (or English) with a hoarse-or husky-sounding voice, or of female speakers from some cultures as speaking with a high-pitched, or “pitched” quality to their voices. (pp. 209-210)

For Esling and Wong voice quantity settings may function linguistically, paralinguistically, and extralinguistically. Linguistically, voice quality settings identify the accent of a particular group of speakers; paralinguistic functions identify the mood and emotion of the speaker; and the extralinguistic characteristic identifies “the individual speaker” (p. 89). The above issues, according to Pennington and Richards, and Esling and Wong, should be known by ESL teachers, as these features may interfere with intelligibility. For these authors, the intention about teaching these features at the segmental, suprasegmental and voice setting levels is not to make ESL students sound *native* but *intelligible* to other speakers of the language. Here is when the field of teaching pronunciation finds itself at odds with ideologies in ESL that prompt native-like pronunciation on one hand, rather than having ESL and EFL students reach a degree of intelligibility, which is at the end a more attainable and realistic goal (Baker & Murphy, 2011; Derwing & Munro, 2005; Kenworthy, 1992).

By the end of 1980s there was an urge for more research on suprasegmentals (prosody) than segmentals as well as a growing interest to study speech sounds in language discourse. Thus, research on phonetics and phonology for the past decades has resulted in more fine-grained inquiries aided by increasingly sophisticated technological advances (Pennington, 2007). One would expect that these past three decades would have contributed to the field of pronunciation in second language research as second language phonetics and phonology has added more research on the analysis of speech sounds. This is what I will address in the next section.

Research on Pronunciation as Based on Phonetics and Phonology: Recent Research

Phonetics and phonology have developed independently from the field of foreign language education throughout the 20th and the first decade of the 21st century, as these disciplines have become more specialized. Phonetics can trace its beginnings to the foreign language teachers in France who started the study of language sounds by the end of the 19th century (Crystal, 2003). Although these disciplines have been more linguistically and interdisciplinarily oriented (especially phonetics), their research has implications in the field of ESL/EFL pronunciation pedagogy, user's oral production, reading, writing, listening, grammar, and other areas of language teaching and learning. This section describes my literature survey in phonetics and phonology as related to the field of ESS/EFL pedagogy in undergraduate programs targeted at pre-service teachers, as well as in research in pronunciation. The symbiosis of these fields has serious implications for research as well as for pedagogical practice in ESL and EFL contexts and teacher education.

Description of the Literature Search

My survey of phonetics *and phonology in second/foreign language* as related to the field of education (teaching-learning pronunciation in pre-and-in-service teachers' programs) has been extensive. I used data bases and reviewed online and physical journal collections. This approach allowed for the survey of a spectrum of resources, including web sites, textbooks, reports, opinions, forums, and research articles. My *ERIC First Search* reported a total of 302 documents (no time frame specified), from which I selected the 35 items most relevant to the subject. The search results are limited in comparison to other

areas of research in second/foreign language such as academic writing in L2 for adults and L2 grammar and vocabulary—only L2 academic writing yielded over 800 citations.

The above search also rendered a number of journals—47—confirming the breath of the field, interdisciplinary connections, and the diverse avenues for research. Besides the representative journals publishing about phonetics and phonology in second/foreign language education—*TESOL Quarterly*, *ELT Journal*, *Applied Linguistics*, *TESOL*, *Foreign Language Annals*, *Issues in Applied Linguistics*—and the journals concerned with theory in second language acquisition (SLA)—*Second Language Research* and *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*—there are many new journals inquiring on issues of speech sounds and language. For example, there is a publication in the Spanish journal *Neuropsychologia* about the cortical involvement for the production of languages such as Chinese, English, and Spanish (Valaki, Maestu, Simos, Zhang, Fernandex, Amo, Ortiz & Papanicolaou, 2004), one in *NeuroImage* reporting on the “neural process underlying perceptual identification of the same phonemes for native- and second-language speakers” (Callan, Jones, Callan, & Akahane-Yamada, 2004, p. 1182), and one article in *Psychology of Music* addressing the connection between perception, production, and working memory with music (Posedel, Emery, Souza, & Fountain, 2011). Journals dealing directly with linguistics and the subdisciplines of phonetics and phonology are *Journal of Pragmatics*, *Journal of Phonetics*, *Speech Communication*, and *Lingua*. One important observation is that the number of relevant articles in international publications is growing, particularly Asian journals and non-British European journals.

The topic of *phonetics and phonology* in second/foreign language acquisition in *Cambridge University Press* rendered a total of 11,158 results (224 pages). Limiting my

search to *teaching English language phonetics and phonology to second language learners* resulted in 2,284 (46 pages). As I reviewed the articles, the most salient research literature was in its great majority linguistically and psychologically oriented.

I also reviewed the publications over the past six years of three salient journals in second/foreign language *teaching and acquisition*: *TESOL Quarterly*, *Second Language Research* (SLR), and *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* (SSLA). *TESOL Quarterly* showed less studies on phonetics and phonology as applied to teaching: a total of seven research articles. The other two journals, SLR and SSLA—which are second language linguistically-and-psychologically-research oriented—rendered a total of 15 research articles and 28 respectively on English second language phonetics and phonology, including studies contrasting other languages (e.g. English speakers learning Dutch or contrasts between Spanish and Portuguese).

In a general description about the field of pronunciation, Jenkins states that “[p]ronunciation has come of age, and is unlikely to remain on the margins of language teaching in the 21st century as it did for much of the final part of the twentieth” (2004, p. 120, as cited in Morin, 2007, p. 342). As the world has more non-native speakers of English than English-native speakers, Jenkins promotes a phonology for international non-native speakers (Jenkins, 2011; Jenkins, 2002; Jenkins, 1998). Although numerous articles have been written, scholars interested in research in second/foreign language pronunciation pedagogy have reported *the neglect of the field* not only in teaching but also in classroom research as compared to other language areas in second language (Baker, 2011; Baker & Murphy, 2011; Derwing & Munro, 2005; Hashemian & Fadaei, 2011; Levis, 2005; Morin, 2007). Pronunciation has been described as the “Cinderella area of L2 teaching” (Kelly,

2000; as cited in Hashemian & Fadaei, 2011, p. 969). Grammar and vocabulary have a longer trajectory among language specialists than phonetics and pronunciation (Celce-Murcia et al., 2007), and so do the other language skills such as reading and writing. Derwing and Munro (2005) report on the “marginalized status” (p. 389) and the little training of ESL teachers in North America, Britain and Australia:

Breikreutz, Derwing, and Rossiter (2002), for instance, reported that 67% of ESL teachers surveyed in Canada had no training at all in pronunciation instruction. This phenomenon is not limited to North America: Burgess and Spencer (2000) also called more pronunciation training for teachers in Britain. MacDonald (2002) cites several studies in Australia indicating that many teachers do not teach pronunciation “because they lack confidence, skills and knowledge” (p. 3). The general lack of teacher preparation may partially explain the findings of another survey in which only 8 of 100 adult intermediate ESL learners indicated that they had received any [*sic*] pronunciation instruction, despite having been enrolled in ESL programs for extended periods of time (Derwing & Rossiter, 2002). (p. 389)

The reasons for the lack in this practice—according to Derwing and Munro (2005)—have to do with the fact that many ESL teachers rely on their “own experiences and intuitions” (p. 389) and for those more observant and experienced, research usually confirms what they already know. However, Derwing and Munro (2005) express that this trend should change, as other areas of L2 teaching receive “extensive attention in teacher preparation courses and materials, but in many instances L2 instructors are apparently left to teach themselves how to address pronunciation with their students” (p. 389).

Theories and Hypotheses in Research on Pronunciation/Second Language Phonology

Celce-Murcia, et al (2007) and Hansen Edwards and Zampini (2008) summarize the research that informs the two fields: the first authors refer to second/foreign language *pronunciation pedagogy* and the latter to *second language phonology*. The phenomenon of *foreign accent* and *native-like pronunciation* among L2 learners is one of the eminent

concerns for pedagogy and L2 research in phonology. For the first—pronunciation pedagogy—the goals of teaching and learning should be intelligibility (production) and comprehensibility (perception) in second/foreign language (Celce-Murcia, 2007; Kenworthy, 1992; Roach, 2009). This pattern of thinking has resulted from the idea of a Critical Period (CP) in learning (based on Penfield & Roberts’ 1959 postulation; as cited in Singleton, 2005) that researchers in second/foreign language acquisition/learning later claimed as the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) in language learning.³ According to the hypothesis, age is perceived as one of the main factors affecting second/foreign language acquisition, where phonology is the most affected area: “Pronunciation.... is the one area of language which shows age effects, because it has ‘neuromuscular bases” (Scovel, 1988; as cited in Singleton, 2005, p. 272). As the debate on the age factor continues (Singleton, 2005), a lot of research whether in L2/FL education or phonology still takes this hypothesis into consideration.

As for “research in linguistics and SLA at a given point in time” (Hansen Edwards & Zampini, 2008, p. 2), the problem of second/foreign language accent is still a subject of inquiry. Several factors are recognized in the *accent phenomenon*: biological (age and cognition); mother language (transfer); length of contact with the second/foreign language; type of context: second-language environment or foreign language setting (classroom only); quality of involvement within the native-speaking community; type of instruction; and cultural factors among others (Avery & Ehrlich, 2008; Celce-Murcia, et al 2007).

Hansen Edwards & Zampini (2008) also give a review of the “major constructs in L2 phonology” starting with the contribution of second language pedagogy, which later resulted

³ Lenneberg, is known as the first proponent, 1967; as cited in Singleton, 2005, and Selinker, 1972.

in the “work of Fries (1945), Weinreich (1953), and Lado (1957)... [leading] to the development of the *Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis* (CAH)” (p. 2), which is based on error production. *Markedness Differential Hypothesis* (MDH), a reformulation of CAH, which is also a leading theory in the field, states that it is “the level of markedness of different sounds [between L1 and L2] that creates learning difficulty, not the differences in and of themselves.” As my purpose here is to survey the hypotheses and theories informing the field, I will limit this theory review to the above, and add that empirical researchers base their theoretical inquiries on more sophisticated assumptions. Therefore, I will proceed to an overview of some of the publications in the fields of L2 phonetics and phonology and later in L2/FL pronunciation pedagogy.

Research in second language phonology. Research in second language phonology is usually experimental in nature with inquiries revolving around children’s and adult’s L2 acquisition of speech sound- perception and -production in comparison with control groups of native speakers of English. Current research in the field of second language phonology addresses segmentals, suprasegmentals (prosody), and voice onset, as the authors already predicted in the 1980s. The research topics in the different studies reflect these lines of inquiry in L2 phonology. For the purpose of this review, I will only refer to the studies in adult L2 phonology in second language contexts (Australia, Canada, the United States, and Ireland) and in foreign language settings.

Several studies report on the learning of L2 phonology by different adult populations in second language contexts. Trofimovich, Collins, Cardoso, White, and Horst (2012) investigated teacher’s phonological input and Quebecoise French learners’ production of the English phoneme /ð/. Antelberg’s (2005) conducted research on Spanish adults’ perception

of word boundaries in English as a second language in the U.S.. Huang and Jun (2011) studied the age of arrival in the United States and the correlation of this factor with the prosody of 10 Mandarin-Speaking speakers. Saito's (2011) investigated "the effects of explicit phonetic instruction on second language pronunciation" of 20 "native Japanese learners of English in ESL (English as a second language setting)" (p. 45). Tsukada's (2009) researched the "durational characteristics of English vowels /i / as in 'heat' and /i/ as in 'hit' produced by two groups of second language (L2) learners" (p. 287) living in Australia and of different (L1) backgrounds, " i.e. Japanese and Thai (p. 287)." Munro and Derwing (2008) conducted research on the acquisition of English segmentals of L2 adults learning English in Canada. And Skzypek's (2009) investigated cognitive-related issues in "104 non-native users of English" (p. 166) of Polish background residing in Ireland. This research investigated "the relationship between Phonological Short-Term Memory (PSTM)... and the learning of collocations in a second language" (Skzypek, 2009, p. 160).

As these studies show, there is still more research on segmentals (individual sounds) than on suprasegmentals (stress, rhythm, intonation). Measuring prosody is more cumbersome and multifaceted, requiring the use of acoustic physics and more elaborate laboratory techniques—as shown by the linguists Halliday and Greaves (2008) and the phoneticians Ladefoged and Johnson (2011). Moreover, research on the cognitive nature of speech sounds calls for interdisciplinary collaborative work between linguistics, psychology, and neuroscience.

Studies in foreign language settings—where English is not the language of the community, often referred as English Foreign Language (EFL) contexts—also go in the same direction as the aforementioned research. Jayaraman (2011) studied English L2

clusters, as they were learned by Arabic-speaking undergraduate students in the Sultanate of Oman. Wong (2008) reported on an intensive pronunciation course for Cantonese speaking speakers learning English in China. The learning of segments—alveolar lateral approximant in final position /l/, the diphthong /au/ and plural and regular-verb forms in past tense—were pretested and post-tested to inquire on the awareness of students learning these specific sounds. Han, Hwang and Choi (2011) evaluated the production of the schwa by two groups of Korean students learning English: one receiving instruction in the United States and the other in Korea. Results showed a foreign accent in both groups, but a better use of the schwa among the ones living in the United States. Binghadeer (2008) studied “Saudi EFL learners’ pitch” (p. 96) and “high and low ranges that indicate native and nonnative production” (p. 111). Only Riney and Takagi (2010) reported on voice onset time. The authors report on the measurement of voice onset time values for /p/, /t/, and /k/ as correlated to foreign accent among adult Japanese learners of English as a foreign language. The findings support this correlation. One commonality among these articles is the fact that foreign accent in adults is still perceived, but some attenuation—even if little—could be attested through interventions in pronunciation, awareness, and imitation.

As shown through these empirical studies, knowledge of English phonetics and phonology—or any other language that is contrasted—is required for conducting research in pronunciation and to guide students through their L2 phonological awareness in order to improve overall oral production and perception. Most theories and hypotheses illuminating new current trends are born in second language acquisition (SLA), with specificities in language subfields that have become even more specialized throughout the past forty years.

The different publications in the subdisciplines of linguistics and SLA are examples of the compartmentalized knowledge that has been created—making it difficult in some way— for practitioners and researchers to know what each group is doing, as Gut, Trouvain, and Barry (2007) describe the problem. Not too far, in the fields of phonetics and phonology, phoneticians and phonologists are working separately often disregarding each other’s work (Pennington, 2007) and often addressing related themes (Hansen Edwards & Zampini, 2008). As for practitioners, whose conception of the field of pronunciation is more practical, reading and understanding this type of research takes time. This empirical research is “rarely disseminated or presented in a way that is meaningful and immediately accessible to language teachers” (Gut, et al. 2007, p. 5). Another problem of this type of research for practitioners is that “[o]ften the findings of empirical research are not clear and uncontested enough to provide straightforward guideline for teachers” (p. 5). It has been a trend in the field of pronunciation to apply empirical SLA findings and theories from linguistics to language teaching as a top-down-practice (Gut, et al. 2007), or to totally disregard them. A final problem related to dissemination is that this line of research is usually unknown by practitioners of second/foreign languages, for whom “wisdom has maintained that pronunciation is not important, students will pick it up on their own, you can’t teach it anyway, and teachers don’t have the training to teach it, even if they wanted to” (Morley, 1994, as cited in Morin, 2007, p. 342).

Pronunciation Teaching at Odds with Phonetics and Phonology

Pronunciation has long been part of second/foreign language teaching-learning practice. Depending on the teaching approach adopted at a particular time, pronunciation

has been included or excluded (Celce-Murcia, et al., 2007). Currently, the communicative approach in second and foreign language teaching—introduced in the 1980s—is dominant, practically obscuring the teaching of pronunciation. This is ironic because pronunciation makes up a significant part of any oral communication, particularly as regards intelligibility (Jenkins, 1998). And while non-native accents won't disappear with pronunciation courses, they can become more intelligible (Kenworthy, 1992). The downside of the accent-issue is discrimination against people with foreign accents (Anya, Avineri, Carris, & Valencia, 2011; Foy, 2012; Tanner, 2010), which is a poorly understood phenomenon.

According to Munro (2005) “instructional materials and practices are still heavily influenced by common sense intuitive notions” (p. 380) despite the availability of numerous textbooks in the market—as I confirmed in my search—and by the diversity of research in specialized journals reporting new findings related to second/foreign language phonetics and phonology (Gut, et al., 2005). On this respect, Roach (2009) affirms that:

Pronunciation teaching has not always been popular with teachers and language-teaching theorists, and in the 1970s and 1980s it was fashionable to treat it as a rather outdated activity. It was claimed, for example, that it attempted to make learners try to sound like native speakers of Received Pronunciation, that it discouraged them through difficult and repetitive exercises and that it failed to give importance to communication. (pp. 5-6)

Hopefully, this misguided attitude has been changing recently. Roach reports as “there are more active groups of pronunciation teachers who meet at TESOL and IATEFL conferences, and exchange ideas via Internet discussions” (p. 6). This refers mainly to the situation of pronunciation in the United Kingdom, which may have changed after Burgess and Spencer (2000; as cited in Derwing & Munro, 2005) wrote about the neglect in this field in Britain.

The purpose of pronunciation courses, therefore and according to Roach, is to allow people to produce good English speech, meaning “clearly intelligible to all ordinary people” with “clear articulation” irrespective of the accent (Roach, 2009, p. 6). Intelligibility is also a more reasonable goal to be attained by non-native language teachers and students as several learners’ internal and external factors are involved (Kenworthy, 1992)—as described earlier.

As the field of pronunciation pedagogy was predicted to move in the direction of prosody—with L2 discourse integrated melodically and intonationally to make meaning—research in this specific area has even been more deficient. The little research conducted in pronunciation practice in the classroom is usually prone to overgeneralizations about its teaching. Gut et al., (2005) comment on what should happen in the classroom, assuming that this is an extended general practice with respect to the teaching of prosody:

The aim of the language teacher is to enable language learners to produce and perceive the prosody of the target language to an adequate extent, depending on the learner’s needs. This may range from minimal communicative abilities to a near-native language competence. Teachers have a wide range of methods available, including imparting theoretical knowledge, raising awareness for language structures, practical production exercises and perceptual training. Again depending on the learner’s expectations and requirements, teachers pick a combination of these methods. Typically, language teachers learned these methods in their teacher-training courses and modify and extend their repertoire with increasing teaching experience. Occasionally, teachers are encouraged to participate in further training programs. (p. 4)

The above may be true for practitioners in Germany, but it is precisely how this practice has moved forward from teaching segments to prosody that is missing in empirical research. How are students taught to produce and perceive prosody and how do they interpret and make use of it? What is involved in acquiring native-like communication? How are the methods *picked up* and *combined*? And how do the teachers acquire their experience and

theoretical knowledge in the phonology of the language they teach? How do the students interpret this knowledge and make it their own as users? As these questions emerge, I have come to conclude that there is a lot of received top-down wisdom and information about this practice, but what underlies pronunciation is still disregarded in many ESL and EFL classrooms. Except for the articles teachers write reporting pronunciation activities in the journal FORUM and the different articles in TESOL Quarterly (and others) about how to teach pronunciation and opinions on the subject, it is just now that more empirical research is emerging.

Three Studies on Pronunciation and Education

Baker (2011) explores “the role of discourse prosody in pronunciation teaching and on [ESL] teachers’ beliefs and knowledge about teaching pronunciation” (p. 268). The English native-language ESL-teachers reported to have little time in their classes to focus on pronunciation. All these teachers held between TESOL credentials and master’s degrees, and the ones with more education were pursuing applied linguistics and TESOL PhDs. A finding in this study was the difficulty these teachers had “with how to effectively teach language learners to use English phonology” (p. 286). Another finding was that teachers believed they would need more conferences, research projects, and pronunciation activities that could be linked with theory. The article concludes that “[M]ore research is needed on what experienced teachers are currently doing in their classrooms and what they find to be effective ways for teaching pronunciation” (p. 287).

Cohen and Fass (2001) conducted another study addressing EFL students’ and EFL teachers’ beliefs in *oral foreign language instruction* at the *Language Center* at a university

in Medellin, Colombia. The subjects here were 40 Spanish-speaking teachers—a few of them bilinguals who had lived in the U.S. as children—and 63 students. The center emphasized fluency and meaning and the teachers’ beliefs about these two issues in students’ oral production was evidenced when the teachers ranked nine characteristics: the first was grammar, then vocabulary, third fluency and fourth pronunciation—this ranking, according to Cohen and Fass, controverts the communicative approach. Two other characteristics, “making oneself comprehensible” and “discourse” (p. 58), ranked last in the list of items. The study found no coherence between what teachers believed and expressed, and what they did in the classroom, where oral production only comprised one-quarter of a 100-minute class. The assessment of oral production was also another conflicting issue, since teachers focused more on grammar and pronunciation, instead of a more comprehensive communicative approach. The study showed the conflicting beliefs between the institution’s goals, and the little knowledge among the teachers and the student population of what is expected in a communicative approach. This study is an indication of how a communicative approach does not contemplate pronunciation as such, but as an integral part of proficient fluency, and how teachers without enough knowledge of language issues regard traditional grammar and pronunciation as being the salient issues of an oral approach. Still, the main goal of the study was not to investigate the practice of pronunciation in the classroom, so there is no evidence of how it was done, but it is implied it was through imitation.

A third study connecting second language education and phonetics and phonology is the one by Holmes (2003). In this study, university second language students in a TESOL program at a Malaysian university wrote projects in phonetics and phonology. These

projects were analyzed to study the effects of collaborative work versus individual work and its effects on students' academic writing. Phonetics and phonology was used as subject-matter to investigate collaboration in academic writing. The first type of data reported in this study dealt with the scores given to the projects, which reflected the evaluation of three tasks: 1) recording 2 native or proficient speakers of English in their natural speech; 2) a phonemic transcription of the recorded text; and 3) "a comparative analysis of the pronunciation of the two speakers" (Holmes, 2003, p. 255). The other two sources of data were a survey administered to the students; and the course tutors (the author of the article was one of them). The research concluded that the best projects were those of the students that worked in pairs. These students were also reported to have enjoyed the activity more than the ones that worked individually.

My search as a whole showed publications in American and international journals with only four studies reporting on EFL-related issues in Latin America: language policy in Cuba (Martin, 2007); a report on EFL in the schools in Argentina and what teachers think of changes in policy and instruction (Zappa-Holman, 2007); building pedagogical awareness among language teachers in Brazil (Norton & dos Santos, 2007); and "English as a cultural capital in the Oaxacan community of Mexico" (Clemente, 2007). However, no results on either phonetics and phonology or pronunciation were found. I turned then to Colombian journals in language. This last section of this literature review, therefore, describes my findings.

The Subject of Phonetics and Phonology in Colombia

The course in *English Phonetics and Phonology* (EPP) in undergraduate programs in 12 *foreign languages* and/or *modern languages* at universities in Colombia has usually been included in the curriculum as early as the first semester in some universities and well into the fifth and seventh semesters in others. For over two decades, the course has traditionally been part of foreign/modern language *licenciaturas*—common name given in Colombia to courses of study that grant teaching credentials. Most academic programs in foreign/modern languages average 5 years in length with one program out of the 12 representative universities lasting 4.

My search for the locus of this course in the curricula of these Colombian universities (7 in Bogotá and 5 in other main cities) concluded that 9 programs grant diplomas in three languages: Spanish, English, and French. Only three universities offer English majors alone. These programs require study in linguistics, literature and culture, communication, pedagogy, research methodologies, and other electives.

By way of illustration, Universidad de Antioquia integrates Spanish, English and French in their program and offers two courses: *Phonetics and Phonology L2-L1* and *Phonetics and Phonology L3-L1*. The other two universities which combine Spanish, English, and French in their undergraduate curricula—Universidad Pedagógica and Universidad del Valle—offer one course each called *Phonetic and Phonological Systems* and *Phonology and Morphology* respectively. Universidad de Caldas offers a curriculum in the three aforementioned languages with three courses of phonetics and phonology for each language, making it the exception.

In the three universities where English is the only major, Universidad Nacional and Universidad Distrital offer one course on English Phonetics and Phonology, whereas Universidad Industrial de Santander offers two. Two universities do not include this course—Universidad Javeriana and Universidad Libre. Universidad Surcolombiana has a web page with incomplete information and does not display the specific courses included in their curriculum (see Appendix C about the subject of phonetics and phonology at the 12 Colombian universities mentioned here and their respective web sites). The curricula in these programs are complex and varied. They show differences in the way foreign languages are conceived along with the ethos of the university.

With respect to the linguistic subject of phonetics and phonology, I found no research by Colombian scholars in the three national journals addressing foreign language: *PROFILE*, *The Colombian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, and *Íkala: Revista de Lenguaje y Cultura*. In terms of books, I found one textbook published by Arias (2009) on English phonetics and phonology. This book describes the vocal track and how vowels and consonants (segments) are produced. The book is basic for students' use, does not provide much theory than needed by students, and brings along a series of exercises to pronounce words. The book does not address suprasegmentals (prosody) in English, which is finally what will allow foreign language learners to know what underlies speech production and perception. These features are essential in foreign language study, as they pertain to the musicality and distinctive rhythm of English.

I found two publications referred as *reflections* on the teaching practice of phonetics and phonology. One article was written by a Brazilian teacher, Hitotuzi (2007) and the other by two Argentine professors, Germani and Rivas (2011), at the National University of La

Pampa, Argentina. Hitotuzi (2007) addresses suprasegmentals and their function in the English language through the analysis of a dialogue in terms of intonation and tone units. This has the purpose of making L2 teachers aware of the significance of suprasegmentals as units of meaning in speaking and listening. It is by providing this analysis that teachers will be made aware of the intonation system of the English language. It is the prosody of the language that causes difficulties for “foreign/second language learners (even at advanced levels)” (Hitotuzi, 2007, p. 177) in understanding native speech and making themselves understood. Successful communication in L2 depends on the use of these features adequately, and phonetics and phonology offer different literature for teachers to understand how suprasegmentals work in English.

Germani and Rivas (2011) made a comparison between the intonational discourse models of Brazil, Courlthard and Johns’s (1980) and that of M. A. K. Halliday and Greaves’s (2008), systemic functional linguistics. By analyzing a conversation taken from a movie using the two models, the authors concluded that phonology tries to come closer to the exploration of suprasegmentals, but falls short to explain other aspects occurring in speech such as the unconscious choices that native speakers make in conversations. Students should be taught to view language in its whole complexity. In conclusion, Brazil’s et al. (1980; as cited in Germani and Rivas, 2011) model explains phonological choices using lexical and grammatical concepts, whereas Halliday and Greaves provide a more “integral view” (p. 110) of language as a system. In terms of tone units, Halliday and Greave (2008; as cited in Germani and Rivas, 2011) rely more on grammatical clauses, while Brazil et al. use pauses or pitch. Although the models helped explain some of the speaker’s choices in

terms of pitch and other intonation features, more studies need to explore these two models in relation with interpersonal meaning.

As research in the field of phonetics and phonology is almost non-existent, I focused my search on articles dealing with *pronunciation* (speech sounds) and the *listening skill* (perception). I found three articles reporting qualitative research in the teaching of music and songs in classrooms in Bogotá and this is the only source of knowledge I have about FL pronunciation. The writers, Cuestas (2006), Morales, (2008), and Pérez, (2010) used qualitative approaches such as action-research, case study, and description respectively. Cuestas (2006) conducted her research in a public school with teenagers between 14 and 17; Morales (2008) had two participants in their twenties, and Pérez (2010) conducted his research with populations between 10 and 15 in the extension courses given to the community at one university. They report that through the use of music and songs, students improved not only oral and other language skills but also wide-ranging cognitive abilities. Songs motivated students, allowed them to participate orally in social interactions, and lowered their anxiety.

The oral production—as reported by the three authors—was improved in terms of learning vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Pérez (2010)—citing Cazden (2008) and Hall (2000)—writes in the theoretical framework that, “oral production has to do with the transfer of meaning... people learn the foreign language grammar structure and connect its structures with oral ability, pronunciation and sound patterns” (p. 145). Cuestas (2006), in the conclusion, made reference to the natural phonological features contained in songs in terms of “linking weak forms that students learn to recognize” (p. 49), but did not analyze

any of these. The authors failed to provide evidence derived from a more systematic analysis of students' oral production improvement using songs.

The three authors—also practitioners—want to improve their teaching by engaging students' attention and learning. The research in all three articles involved short-lived experiences of three to six months—Morales and Pérez respectively. Cuestas fails to provide this information and shows shortcomings in the way she reports the time the tasks lasted and relevant details on how the project was staged. In general, the articles are good attempts to report classroom research and teaching recommendations, but in terms of research practice, data analysis lacks rigor and evinces several methodological problems such as coding practices, the way they arrived at general conclusions, and the analysis of oral language improvement in the students.

Research on pronunciation using a case study was reported by Tlazalo Tejada and Basurto Santos (2014). This did not take place in Colombia, but in Mexico. Two groups of (basic) elementary English-foreign language at the Language School of Universidad Veracruzana in Xalapa, Veracruz, Mexico, were studied (18 to 20 years of age). The study reported that the instruction of pronunciation consisted in drilling and “on-the-spot” correction of students' mistakes” (Tlazalo Tejada & Basurto Santos, 2014, p. 158). In both groups, there was no time to teach pronunciation per se, “nor was there an emphasis on the importance of acquiring good pronunciation habits” (Tlazalo Tejada & Basurto Santos, 2014, p.158). Choral repetition was also part of the instruction. In the reading aloud exercises, students still had not assimilated the sounds. Reading of words was also used, with error correction results. Students attributed lack of confidence in the pronunciation of words to their lack of practice (Tlazalo Tejada & Basurto Santos, 2014, p. 160). The

authors recommend further research on the aspects of pronunciation as taught in the classroom, and to “find out how students in third term who are already taking the *Linguistic System* class do or do not integrate this knowledge into their speaking and reading activities” (Tlazalo Tejada & Basurto Santos, 2014, p. 161).

With respect to *perception*, there are three articles about listening: Cardenas (2000), Lopera (2003), and Hernández-Ocampo and Vargas (2014). Cardenas’ (2000) aim is to show teachers how to use different listening strategies and activities by emphasizing that students need to “listen to more than just the sounds in order to develop listening skills” (p. 16); also, teachers have the task to “help our learners cope with listening in real life by providing permanent access to listening experiences” (Cardenas, 2000, p. 16). The article was written when the internet offered fewer possibilities of contact with English-speaking populations than today, and teachers and students had to rely on audio cassettes, videos, and CDs. The same as Cardenas (2000), Lopera (2003) also gives some basic and systematic ideas to teach songs in English, as music brings about social contexts, motivation, entertainment, and happiness. This article bases its content on the pre-listening, while-listening, and post-listening activities. Once again, these are reflections and pedagogical recommendations on what to do.

The only reported academic research about the listening skill of undergraduate students majoring in English was conducted by Hernández-Ocampo and Vargas (2014), at Universidad Javeriana, in Bogota. The authors of the article designed a teaching strategy where students had to be exposed to different media and present what they had found. This was designed to remedy a common situation where the undergraduate students’ usually expressed that one of the biggest difficulties they had was to comprehend spoken English

and to obtain good grades on listening exams. For the students, it was easier to get to write in English and to comprehend written texts than to have a good performance in listening and speaking. A major difficulty for the students at Javeriana—and as reported by the instructors—consisted in understanding any audio text whose dialect was not American. In the instructors' discernment "... it is not only the dialect but also the pace and the task proposed that prevents [students] from obtaining good results" (Hernández-Ocampo & Vargas, 2014, p. 200). Students also reported vocabulary as a major issue in the understanding of the authentic texts found in electronic media. The modern language program at Universidad Javeriana does not include the subject of English Phonetics and Phonology in the curriculum (see Appendix C).

One Colombian attempt at materials design to teach the basics of the pronunciation of the English vowels and consonants is Moreno's home produced CD (2000). In an interactive way, he uses images, words and sounds to teach elementary vocabulary in English. Moreno characterizes his CD as "An interactive multimedia product for practicing the English sounds in context. Addressed to elementary Spanish-speaking students, it is an attractive tool that provides practical instructions on how to articulate each vowel and consonant, followed by fun exercises." (F. Moreno's personal e-mail, February 3, 2013).

The review of the literature in the Colombian journals also shows a lack of research on the teaching of pronunciation. Pronunciation practice is usually embedded in the oral activities or in the songs that children and adolescents learn at schools—as reported above. It is assumed that language instructors do some pronunciation practice in their classes, but there is no research that shows how it is done or to what extent students benefit from it. English textbooks and materials usually contain some pronunciation exercises, so it is

expected that students get their pronunciation from imitating the native voices. In the same way, undergraduate programs at universities seem to follow the same course of events.

In terms of papers presented at symposia and national conferences, I have not seen any that include how instructors teach phonetics and phonology and how students learn this subject. As a content-based course that addresses linguistic issues, nobody has written what students learn, or how instructors manage to deal with the language and the specialized jargon of the discipline. I have to recognize that this is a difficult subject to be taught in the mother/first (L1) language, and even more so in the foreign one.

Finally, considering that: 1) 10 out of 12 universities in Colombia offer courses in phonetics and phonology; 2) there is only one textbook written by a Colombian instructor coming from one of these universities; and that, 3) the practice that is understood as phonetics and phonology is pronunciation, I can conclude that studies on the practice of phonetics and phonology in undergraduate programs is non-existent, but should be part of our academic endeavor for its inclusion in the curriculum has a long trajectory. Only the teaching recommendations given in the two articles written by Hitotuzi (2007) and Germani and Rivas (2011) allowed me to see how teachers understand the teaching of this subject in Brazil and Argentina respectively through their teaching reflections. For Germani and Rivas (2011), their teaching considerations on the phonological models comes after 10 years teaching phonetics and phonology in the undergraduate foreign language program that prepares teachers of English in Universidad de la Pampa Argentina. The writers also hold master's degrees from universities in the U.K.

ESL/EFL Perception and the Listening Skill

In Colombia, research on the listening skill is scarce. Worldwide it is limited in comparison to other language areas in ESL/EFL such as grammar, vocabulary, reading, and writing, for example. My search on Education Research Complete reported less than 150 articles on English language perception and listening among college and university students of ESL/EFL around the world. I browsed through 85 articles that could serve this study; the oldest article dating back to 1969 (Coltharp, 1969). In these articles, I found 8 major topics related to listening. The most prolific topic was listening and testing/evaluation (19 articles). It was followed by listening, the other language skills, and learning strategies (16 articles). In this order, the next topics were: listening and technology (12 articles); listening and perception of nonnative speakers (NNS) and native speakers (11 articles); perception and production (11 articles each); phonology and listening (8 articles); listening and metacognition (7 articles); and academic listening (1 article). Most of this literature reports on the importance of the listening skill for the adult ESL/EFL learner.

The above topics show that research trends in listening in ESL/EFL focus principally on testing. Listening may be embedded in other research whose focus may be some other language areas. Research on listening, as related to phonology, cognition, and metacognition is scarce because it involves disciplines such as linguistics, neuroscience, and psychology. Professionals from the fields of ESL/EFL are usually non-specialist researchers in these areas of knowledge. Second language acquisition (SLA) researchers are the more inclined to explain cognitive processes in SLA theoretically. The listening skill is a crucial skill in communication to get information and acquire knowledge, but it is still neglected in ESL/EFL teaching for its complexity:

Listening plays a basic role in communication, but in pedagogy and research on second and foreign language (L2/FL) learning, it has received less attention than other conventional skills. The reasons for this inadequate attention are the dearth of research and the complexity of the process of learning listening skill. (Bozorgian, 2014, p. 149)

In the late 1980s there was no empirical research that would explain how listening helped learning or how the curriculum helped ESL students with these two issues at American universities (Benson, 1989). In the absence of such information, The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) continued to be the way to prepare ESL university students in combination with exposure to authentic material in the U.S. (Benson, 1989). Teacher preparation, textbooks, and methodology included the ideal phonetic and phonological signals, said Benson (1989). This offered the learners a “slow colloquial form of English” (Benson, 1989 p. 422), which created “difficulties for the learner” (Benson, 1989, p. 422): The learner was not prepared to deal with modern spoken English (Benson, 1989). “[S]poken language ‘has a more ‘diffuse cognitive content,’ ... is not generally used to transmit ‘detailed information,’ ... and is used primarily for ‘purposes of social interaction’” (Benson, 1989, p. 422). Benson admitted that the listening practice in the ESL classroom and the listening at the university was “both quantitatively and qualitatively different” (1989, p. 422).

In a more recent study, McBride (2011)⁴ concluded that second language learners in the process of developing second language skills took advantage of the slow rate to learn grammar and vocabulary and to comprehend what they heard. It seems that students benefit from slow dialogue training, which may be connected to working memory (WM).

⁴ The article by McBride (2011) does not make part of the 85 articles. I found it by searching native speech rate and ESL/EFL adult learners. This shows that listening is connected to other areas of knowledge about language, so the numbers that I gave at the beginning of this section are an approximation of a number of studies about listening.

(McBride, 2011). Students with higher proficiencies in the second language resorted to the use of other help options (McBride, 2011). Slower input is appropriate for beginners, low intermediate and intermediate learners, but it is also important to expose students to “a variety of speaking styles...listening tasks in order to develop a range of strategic skills and an understanding when they employ them” (McBride, 2011, p. 147).

Listening and the other language skills. ESL students require the integration of the four language skills to develop academic work at universities. The receptive skills, listening and reading, help ESL/EFL students with note taking and to learn about a discipline area. Students who participated in a research conducted in the 1980s “indicated the importance in academic work of the receptive skills of reading and listening over the productive skills of speaking and writing” (Christison & Krahnke, 1986, 61). In another study conducted in 1983 among faculty members at 34 American universities (Christison & Krahnke, 1986) faculty members considered the writing skill crucial for academic success and students’ future professional lives. In this study, students wrote essays for various disciplines. A comparison between ESL writing and native-speaker writing showed that except for sentence-level features, the organization and discourse features of ESL students were similar to those of the natives (Christison & Krahnke, 1986). Rivers (1981) wrote long time ago that except for academic careers where writing is crucial, after college, writing essays may not be part of people’s professional activities.

Listening skills, different from writing, are necessary right at the moment of interaction with the sources of input (e.g., a lecture, a TV program, a class, a formal or informal conversation, as so on). Listening is of vital significance for ESL adults in second language communities. Pragmatic issues of daily life, such as jobs, education, interactions

with the community, for example, make this skill indispensable for second language adults. In the case of second/foreign language international students at U.S. universities dealing with academic listening and speaking tasks that require dexterity in note-taking and complex assignments is of great importance (Ferris & Tagg, 1996). In EFL environments, this may not be that important for adult EFL professionals, except for the ones who need to perform at high levels of proficiency in jobs that require advanced English skills (e.g., people working at airport towers and English-language teachers, says Kenworthy, 1992). Linguistic differences and sociocultural requirements in the two environments—ESL and EFL—and people’s professional and occupational activities determine the importance of English for each individual.

The listening skill in the ESL/EFL adult. The listening skill varies among EFL adult learners for personal (cognitive and sociocultural) and biological reasons (age). The so controverted critical period hypothesis (CPH)—which establishes that the brain compartmentalizes making any kind of learning (including a new language) more difficult for adults—is not conclusive (Singleton, 2005). However, native language phonology and hearing perception seems to have an age threshold. It is difficult for ESL/EFL adults to gain a native accent and have acute listening capacity in the second/foreign language. “Foreign-accented speech... can be defined as nonpathological speech produced by second language (L2) learners... [This speech] differs in partially systematic ways from the speech characteristic of native speakers of a given dialect” (Munro, 1998, 139). In the same way, the listening skill in ESL/EFL adults may show a dysfunction, disability, or impairment in a population that is not hearing impaired. ESL hearing students, the same as deaf, and hard-of-hearing American natives take advantage of blended instruction (Long, Vignare,

Rappold, & Mallory, 2007). This is instruction that integrates the traditional lecture classes with online instruction, allowing students with listening problems more active participation at their own pace by integrating technology:

In contrast to traditional lecture classes, online learning provides discussion boards, chat rooms, and other opportunities for both synchronous and asynchronous discussions related to the topic at hand. Inclusion of the online format slows the synchronous pace and allows the deaf, hard-of hearing, and ESL students, more time to compose a response or ask a relevant question. (p. 2)

ESL/EFL adults who grew up accustomed to the phonology of their first language usually have difficulties with pronunciation and hearing perception, irrespective of years of experience hearing the second/foreign language. Even experienced ESL learners show difficulties with second language contrasts (Strange & Shafer, 2008, p. 169). Perceptual confusion depends on L2 experience, and learners may respond by reorganizing perceptual processes through selective perceptual processes (Strange & Shafer, 2008, p. 169).

Training and the listening stimulus: A practical issue. Quantitative and laboratory research in the training of EFL learners to identify segments and suprasegmentals is important. This helps ESL/EFL learners be aware of how speech sounds work in the foreign language. This practice along with more natural exposure to authentic texts will help the learners get familiar with the target language speech sounds. Responding to listening stimuli with our sensory perception is common in natural interactions. In normal communication there is no time to repeat, pause, and repeat again, so many EFL listeners need to learn to cope with listening activities that demand more on-the-spot response:

According to Shohamy (1991), listening comprehension can be characterized ‘by the need for simultaneous interpretation since in most situations the listener is denied the option of reviewing and reconsidering the information presented. The listener, therefore, must rely on immediate comprehension, and on the ability to retain the information in the memory for further analysis. (Shang, 2005, p. 51)

For Murphy (1991), “speaking and listening can be defined as major skill areas of interpersonal communication; pronunciation encompasses subsets of both speaking and listening skill development (p. 52). In ESL teaching speaking, listening, and pronunciation should be integrated and “placed within the broader context of oral communication” (Murphy, 1991, p. 56). In the same way, this integration should be part of EFL teaching.

Current technology and new listening exercises in textbooks offer diverse forms of training in the listening skill. EFL students today are more exposed to natural forms of English speech and authentic texts through the Internet. Even so, EFL teaching may still continue with old listening practices. In the 1960s, technology in ESL/EFL used to integrate the laboratory to language teaching and learning. Coltrarp (1969), a researcher of the 1960s in the U.S., reported on the usefulness of the laboratory “to train the students to listen to different voices and to sharpen their skills in note-taking and in outlining in English” (p. 214). As an ESL student I also trained my listening skill in a laboratory in the 1980s and found it useful as a beginner and intermediate language student—not much as an advanced learner because of types of listening exercises, and not because of the technological tool. Researchers, of the 1980s and 1990s however, questioned “the effectiveness of language laboratories” (Chou, 2009, p. 36). This practice was abandoned in the 1990s and 2000s and has been replaced with modern technologies available to educational institutions. Chou (2009), however, confirms that language laboratories are still used in higher education institutes in Taiwan. This may continue to be so in other universities around the world, but generalizations are difficult to endorse.

Currently, recent research on listening shows that EFL professionals are taking advantage of more advanced communications technologies. In the absence of natural communities of target language speakers, technology has helped mediate the lack of a native-language environment in EFL learning. Any perceptual stimulation through technology in EFL is frequently positive. In recent research, exposing students to listening tasks through Mp3, mobile phones, podcasts, video games, information and communications technology (ICT), TV programs, and the use of computers, show changes in students' perception (Beasley & Chuang, 2006; Chen, 2011; Chen, Chang, Yen, 2012; Chen & Yang, 2013; Choi & Chen, 2008; Martinez Mateo, 2012). In most of these studies, the aural texts are accompanied by written texts and explanations. As the authentic texts come with more cultural-embedded issues, students find difficulties of comprehension. Also speed rate adds to comprehension difficulty of authentic texts. In many occasions, captions are an excellent resource.

Listening and cognition. Listening comprehension involves cognitive processes that are aided by metacognitive strategies taught in EFL classrooms. "Listening comprehension is an active process of constructing meaning resulting from the interaction between a number of information sources, including input to the listener, context of the interaction, and the listener's linguistic and general world knowledge" (Tafagjptari & Vandergrift, 2008, p. 100). The pedagogy of EFL listening usually includes the instruction of metacognitive strategies to help students improve their listening skill in the classroom (Bozorgian, 2014).

In listening comprehension, perception of speech is only one part. The central component in the listening comprehension process is the "activation of schema in the

listener's memory structures to anticipate and monitor, i.e., check what is heard for congruency with what the listener already knows" (Tafagjptari & Vandergrift, 2008, p. 100). The listening comprehension process combines the listener's background knowledge in interaction with the text (Shang, 2005). That is, the dialogical relation that the reader or listener establishes with the text, according to Bakhtin (1981).

Because the process of listening comprehension is complex, teaching listening strategies to help learners with listening comprehension is important in second/foreign language instruction. The listening process involves "cognitive, metacognitive, and social/affective functioning" (Chien & Yuan Christian, 2014, p. 25). Cognitive strategies are processes in the execution of a listening activity. They help with inference, summaries of information, and strategic ways to become independent. Metacognitive strategies refer to executive process such as planning, monitoring, and evaluation. Social/affective functioning helps to control anxiety (Chien & Yuan Christian, 2014).

Due to the complexity of the construct, most investigations in L2 listening have fallen short of providing a satisfactory explanation of the underlying processes. In addition, the implicit nature of listening has contributed to uncertainty about conceptualizing an interactive theoretical framework to explain the nature of L2 listening, its essential components, and their interaction." (Tafagjptari & Vandergrift, 2008, p. 99).

Conclusion

What is the connection of this literature review with the main question I posed in Chapter 1: *What can we learn about students' perception of English foreign language based on the final papers from an English phonetics and phonology class?* First, it was important for me to explore current research in phonetics and phonology as directly related to the fields of ESL/EFL because the data in this study are the outcome of a course on English

phonetics and phonology in EFL, at a university in Colombia. Another reason is that English second language phonetics and phonology has commonly been linked to teaching EFL/ESL pronunciation. Hearing sounds is what we experience when we communicate (first/second language), and we respond to this stimuli.

The target population in this literature review was mainly college students majoring in EFL, but not exclusively. Research with ESL adult populations learning English in native speaking countries were also reviewed. Research on phonetics and phonology in ESL/EFL programs (education) was scarce, despite the bulk of quantitative studies in the field of second language phonetics and phonology. Research on the listening skill and perception of ESL/EFL was limited as well.

Hearing perception (or the listening skill in EFL/ESL) plays a crucial role in decoding the speech sounds of the target language. Listening has been correlated with ESL/EFL speech production (pronunciation and speaking), but this needs more careful attention. For ESL/EFL adults, factors such as age, individual cognition, and the person's capacity to adjust the motor articulators to the new language speech system (phonology) will vary, regardless of their ear and listening ability (e.g., Pavarotti's great operatic tenor ear was the result of his natural musical talent, cognitive hearing training, and his motor singing training; his Italian accent in English was yet another aspect of his ESL reality).

Listening implies cognitive and metacognitive skills (Cross, 2011). Cognitive skills include learners' general linguistic knowledge such as phonological, syntactic, semantic, pragmatic (Tafaghodtari & Vandergrift, 2008). Learners also need broad information and knowledge about the world (McBride, 2011), specific sociocultural knowledge of the target language, and working memory (McBride, 2011). Pronunciation involves a good hearing

skill plus the learners' ability to use their articulatory apparatus (motor skills) to produce speech sounds in the second/foreign language. Speaking is not just about listening and pronunciation and deserves more careful study beyond the focus of this study.

First language phonology and cognition will directly affect the listening ability of ESL/EFL adults. This will pose problems of various sorts, irrespective of ESL/EFL experience and time of permanence in the natural second language environment (ESL), or in the case of EFL adults, the years of listening training.

With this in mind, the main question in Chapter 1 about Colombian students' perceptions of EFL addresses students' experiential and hearing perceptions of EFL in 20 final papers, outcomes of the course of EPP. This research will explore how students understood and perceived the new language as a vehicle of communication and meaning.

As countries in Latin American—and more specifically Colombia—also enter the globalized economy, the demands for more English courses have been growing and pressing universities at all levels, especially under the *Ministry of Education* mandate for more bilingual education meaning English only (De Mejia, 2006; Guerrero, 2008; Usma, 2009). The practice of pronunciation and listening connected to phonetics and phonology has not been reported in empirical research. While phonetics and phonology is still important in the curricula of many universities in Colombia, this literature review makes clear that there is an absence in research about how perception is addressed. This state of affairs makes emphatic the importance of the questions and concerns motivating this dissertation. Colombia, as well as Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela are countries “where the presence of English is still considerably restricted, although, as in the rest of the continent, expanding rapidly”

(Rajagopalan, 2009, p. 151). This calls for an evaluation of the views we hold for traditional and new teaching-learning practices.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This study of students' perceptions of English as a foreign language is a *document analysis* entrenched in *practitioner research thought* and rooted in a *constructionist epistemology*. I adopt a constructionist, dialectical and dialogical philosophy of foreign language literacy practice. That is, the texts produced by the participants are grounded in a local context and are the outcomes of a particular teaching-learning situation. Before I address all the above in a more extensive form in this chapter, I want to take into consideration three important issues for this study:

1) The students' perceptions that I will analyze in this study are embedded in papers students wrote for the course *English Phonetics and Phonology* (EPP). These papers (final projects or documents) constitute the primary data for this dissertation. They were written by Colombian undergraduate Spanish-speaking students majoring in English as a foreign language at a university in Bogota. They comprised four cohorts/classes between Fall 2010 and Spring 2012.

2) These papers are the result of *my pedagogical practice*, which paralleled practitioner action research in which I examined pedagogical and curricular issues of my course and made interventions. This practice, however, was not designed for research. It was motivated by the local and speech circumstances of Spanish-monolingual milieu. Therefore, the documents that I will analyze in this dissertation can be called *natural data* because students' papers were written only for the pedagogical purpose of evaluating the subject-matter of EPP. This practice was designed to match a local need. In that state of

affairs, my trial-and-error teaching and students' first contact with the academic genre in foreign language (English) are part of this dialogical dynamic. For now, this constitutes the contextual referent of the data that will make the main body of this dissertation.

3) In addition to the above, the reading and pedagogical materials for the EPP course constitute a major background to these papers. Most of the information that guided the participants' learning and actions on the subject matter revolved around these sources. This is the central principle to bear in mind: Written texts are not created in a vacuum. They represent a dynamic interaction between the participants, the different kinds of literacy events (oral, audio, visual, written, and semiotic in general), and the historical moment, establishing a dialogical relationship with the authors. Therefore, I will place these documents in a local background where there is a history and a reason for being. This will add, I hope, to the understanding of students' works.

Taking the above into account, I have organized this chapter into seven parts: 1) the orientation of this study in terms of my proposed goals and objectives; 2) my philosophical stance for qualitative research; 3) a *document analysis* approach entrenched in a *practitioner research* adaptation and subsumed in a constructivist-dialogical epistemology; 4) the procedure for document analysis: content analysis and discourse methods; 5) the data: classification of the data; selection of the data and the participants; characterization of participants; methods of analysis; data analysis; 6) trustworthiness and reliability; and 7) closing remarks. Because of the density of this chapter, I decided to address the theoretical framework in an independent chapter, following the methodology.

Goals and Objectives of the Study

The first main goal of this research project is to contribute to the field of foreign language learning by providing one more understanding of the integration of language, perception and sociocultural context, as revealed in the written assignments students produced for the course EPP. A secondary goal is to examine how students' writing, although framed in a discursive practice with a specific pedagogical goal in mind—the attainment of objectives by the end of a course—can permeate other issues of distinct nature. These issues are not always self-evident, so a more careful and detailed analysis is necessary.

Consequently, based on the goals and the main question guiding this research—*What can we learn from students' perception of English as a foreign language as demonstrated in the final papers from a phonetics and phonology class?*—I submit the following objectives:

- To interrogate students' contextual interpretations of the foreign language through their words and meanings, as expressed in their writing.
- To analyze students' sociocultural contexts as evidenced in the content of the written language and ideas as constructed through intertextuality.
- To describe a common line of thinking—if there is one—in terms of the language students used to express their understanding of the foreign language.
- To investigate what students created as part of their expressiveness in service to comprehend the foreign language.

All in all, this project may add to the development of a holistic view of foreign language learning that incorporates students' standpoints and interests in what they express, interpret, and understand. This integration is fundamentally holistic, heuristic and seamless, existing

in opposition to compartmentalized conceptions of language learning as it is still practiced at most academic institutions in Colombia. Also, analyzing language perceptions through meanings is quite different from linguistic performance (speaking and writing) and teaching. All these tasks can take separate directions, as the epistemologies of linguistics, literature, philosophy of language, pedagogy, and social sciences mix in foreign language practice forming a complex phenomenon.

Foreign language learning, per se, is a multilayered phenomenon that involves both, individual cognition and sociocultural issues—the psychological and sociocultural as stated by Vygotsky (Kozulin, 1999). Written work can provide an opportunity to study this phenomenon from a sociocultural lens and contribute to one more understanding of the phenomenon as this is “far too complex a phenomenon to be reduced to a single explanation” (Gass & Selinker, 2001, p. 76). “Second language acquisition is complex, being influenced by many factors, both linguistic and nonlinguistic” (p. 369). Foreign language learning is a phenomenological paradigm in and of itself.

As foreign language is entrenched in the field of education, which also “poses some of the most challenging questions of any profession” and for which “there is no recipe book” (Daniels, Lauder, & Porter, 2009, p. 1), this study presents a fundamental challenge:

Education is not a discipline but a phenomenon. We conceptualize education as a fuzzy set of processes that occur in events and institutions that involve both informal socialization and formal learning. Various objects are constructed in educational processes, such as the identities of teachers and learners, the subject matter learned, and the social structures produced and reproduced. These objects are constructed through mechanisms that involve various levels of organization, including psychological, interactional, cultural, and social elements. (Wortham & Jackson, 2008, p. 107)

Philosophical Disposition to Qualitative Research

This study is a qualitative interpretive analysis of students' perceptions of the foreign language. This research uses a methodology "grounded in social constructionist epistemologies" as described in Kamberelis and Dimitriades (2005, p. 31). For constructionists there is "an objective world independent of our experience" but this world has "inherent meaning... [T]hat meaning is a function of our engagement with the world." Meaning is "constructed in interaction with objective (but not inherently meaningful) reality" (p. 14). By accepting the constructionist view, I acknowledge that there is a perspective based on "knowledge, rationality and truth" (Enlightenment), which is "relative or perspectival rather than absolute" (p. 31). Therefore, and based on this constructionist approach, I present my philosophical assumptions in terms of *ontological*, *epistemological*, *axiological*, and *methodological* dimensions.

Ontological Underpinnings. In *ontological* terms, the perspective through which this study arose came organically from historical and personal circumstances. I am a Colombian native, born and raised in Bogotá, whose first language is Spanish. I am also a PhD student in the *Language Literacy and Socio-Cultural Studies* (LLSS) department at the University of New Mexico in the United States. As I have been negotiating these two cultures and languages for the past seven years, my cultural, professional and personal worldviews are presumed to be mixed, my reality changeable and dependent on time and space. Creswell (2007) characterizes this social construction as *subjective* and *multiple*, connected to a specific historical time and local circumstances of a sociocultural environment. This construction is also relative and apprehensible making our reality "socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature..., and dependent for their

form and content on the individual persons or groups holding the constructions” (Guba & Lincoln, 2004, p. 26). Therefore, contextual realities of two languages and cultures inform the way I view the experience of participants in this study. Within this perspective, I assumed the role of a genealogist. That is, I conceived “a present phenomenon or social formation” (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2005, p. 4) and recounted “how it arose, how it developed, and how it gained legitimacy” (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2005, p. 4).

Epistemological Assumptions. Similarly, my *epistemological* assumptions are founded in my personal experience as a: foreign language learner and therefore *bilingual*; professional practitioner who has been teaching English to college foreign language students for several years in Bogotá; and, PhD student in southwest United States. As a bilingual person, I can attest that my bilingualism is different from that of American bilinguals who grew up with two or more languages in the United States immersed in the culture of this country. My bilingualism was at first the result of the enculturation process of foreign language lessons in high school and then in one foreign language undergraduate program in Bogotá—where English-language lessons took place in the classroom, but apart from this contact, the foreign language had no part in the community of speakers. Moreover, there was no Internet representing current living language models of the foreign language culture, so constructions of the *Other* came through written texts, pictures, dubbed TV programs, and foreign language instructors. The bilingualism I am referring to here is similar to the one English-monolingual American students experience at universities when they learn French, German, or Japanese. On the other hand, I have also experienced the English language as a *second language* in the United States and in other English speaking communities. I have employed this experience as one more perspective through which I

understand the process of language learning and its phenomenology. I also put this epistemological background in foreign language pedagogy.

With regard to my professional background as a foreign language instructor in Colombia, I can attest that the epistemology of the field—in both my practice and research—has been informed mainly by fields such as *applied linguistics* and *second language acquisition* (SLA). Most of the theories that I know and that inform these fields come from the United States and Britain. In addition to the theories that these two related fields bring along, my daily teaching practice is shaped by individual understanding, plus the ideological influence of the educational institutions where I have studied and worked. They have informed and influenced my professional career and now inform my views as a researcher. The influence of the theories and philosophies coming from abroad combine in a localized application in my practice. I can also assert that most of the epistemology of the field in English as a foreign language in Colombia is more oriented to education, as applied linguistics constitutes a broader pragmatic field than SLA—this latter more oriented to theory building. This is supported by the publications in two main journals: *The Colombian Journal of Applied Linguistics* and *Profile*.

The above epistemological view contrasts with the field of foreign languages at American universities, whose tradition has been mainly founded in the study of cultures and literatures (Kramsch, 1991; 1998) with a more recent move towards research in second language acquisition. Freed recognized in 1991 how little foreign language scholars in the United States knew about SLA. For the past twenty years foreign language scholars have addressed SLA inquiries on internal and external variables in the acquisition of foreign

language. Sanz (2005) states this fact, by presenting compiled scholarly research on adult SLA of languages different from English as a second language with a locus in the U.S.

Empirical research in the field of SLA has often been positivist in nature and conducted systematically to construct the different theories and language models that we know now. This is evidenced by Adams, Fuji, and Mackey (2005) who state that: “Quantitative experimental approaches to research are arguably the dominant paradigm [in SLA]” (p. 69). Johnson (2004) also states this when she describes the research traditions that have “influenced theories and methods of SLA” (p. 9). Although *quantitative* research is still highly appreciated in the field, Mackey and Gass (2005) have reported more *qualitative* research recently, as research has been incorporating approaches such as “case studies, ethnographies, interviews, and diaries and journals” (p. 167). However, the authors assert that “there is [still] little general agreement in the field [of SLA] about what constitutes qualitative research” (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 167) describing this type of research as “more descriptive than truly ‘qualitative’ methods by some researchers” (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 167). Still, qualitative research contributes “its own piece of the puzzle” with rich data “of the phenomenon under study” (Mackey & Gass, 2005, p. 167).

My motivation for engaging in research finds a parallel in Block’s (2008) exposition of the beginnings of SLA: “[W]hen individuals who had language-learning experiences themselves and whose work as language teachers had led them to observe language learning in action” (p. 18); these individuals adopted “an empirical stance which allowed them to study language learning systematically” (Block, 2008, p. 18). For these scholars “the interest in second language acquisition was their starting point; it was not an appendage to an interest in linguistics, psychology or language-teaching pedagogy” (Block, 2008, p. 18).

SLA researchers have usually used linguistics and psychology to explain their theories (Gass & Selinker, 2001). However, it is practitioners, textbook writers, and pedagogy specialists who have put theories into practice (Gut, Trouvain, & Barry, 2005). Much research in SLA is theory driven and constitutes a foundation for the field of second and foreign language teaching; however, this does not necessarily mean that the theories serve pedagogical purposes per-se, but rather that they can inform the practice (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

Before SLA, the larger field of applied linguistics (AL) had informed and continues to inform language teaching (Davis & Elder, 2004; Rajagopalan, 2004) and research practices more recently (Brown, 2004). Applied linguistics, an umbrella name that includes SLA (Davis & Elder, 2004; Rajagopalan, 2004) addresses issues of language related to practical problems of life in different fields, not exclusively SLA (Wilkins, 1994). “Applied linguistics is often said to be concerned with solving or at least ameliorating social problems involving language,” (Davis & Elder, 2004, p. 1). As such, AL expands its scope of language inquiry beyond issues of bilingualism, second and foreign language acquisition, linguistics, and pedagogy. Scholars who have been more oriented to theoretical linguistics issues find their academic niche in SLA, “leaving problems related to teaching and other matters to specialists in AL” (Rajagopalan, 2004, p. 403). In this way, and according to Gregg (1996; as cited in Rajagopalan, 2004) “it is a mistake to classify L2 learning research as ‘part of a field called AL’ and argues that ‘progress in L2 acquisition theory, as in any other scientific discipline, comes by focusing on the explanatory problem, and not by looking over one’s shoulder at the possible application’” (p. 403). Epistemological disagreements about the definition of research fields such as AL and SLA and their focus of

research matters for scholars, but in the field of language education such abstract discussions need to be bridged for practical reasons.

For a long time I have also been interested in the aspects of foreign language learning that concern identity and perception. How, for example, does this new language enable us to perceive and describe the Other? How do learners understand and talk about the new language and see their own? And in what ways does the acquisition of a new language both demand and facilitate the construction of new knowledge? These questions are also extended to people in general, not teachers exclusively. As for the field of foreign language education, I wonder: How do teachers incorporate new paradigms into their professional lives, and to what extent do the new fads in education help them avoid the repetition of flawed practices? Why is it that, despite decades of research, our practice appears to be unchanged? In the middle of so much research in Colombia, how is it that teachers still seem to lack knowledge about issues of language per se? In short, this study brings a very fine line between the object of investigation and the researcher because they are interactively linked (Guba & Lincoln, 2004).

Axiological Assumptions. From an *axiological* perspective, my values as a practitioner filter much of the information I have read about second and foreign language. I have found it difficult to detach myself from the role of *instructor* and place myself in the role of a *novice researcher*. Throughout the writing of this dissertation, I have become more aware of these two intricate identities that are intertwined and that I find difficult to detach from one another. Acknowledging this, I am conscious of the possible bias that I may bring to this research by interpreting the data from my own background and also my emic view. However, and as qualitative researchers put it, it is impossible for investigators doing

qualitative research not to bring their own subjectivities and world views in the claim of a distant observer who wants to report reality from an objective stand (Guba & Lincoln, 2004). Moreover, researchers with a question in mind usually gather data based on the previous assumptions they have made, and by doing this, they are also framing their quest and data (Guba & Lincoln, 2004). Suffice it for now that the interpretation of the data will have to be grounded and will follow inductive and deductive approaches.

Methodological philosophy. This research is methodologically informed by the constructionist philosophical view that estimates that the products that result of any academic practice—higher education for this study—are a construction of social groups in a heuristic form and so are people’s interpretations. These constructions belong to the context where the literacy practice takes place (Wortham & Jackson, 2008). The knowledge exposed in these texts also comes from the social construction of the institution where they were framed along with the participants’ ideologies and interpretations (Wortham & Jackson, 2008). Thus, the academic knowledge that practitioners and students gain from texts is reproduced in their writings. Also, the views that they hold about a subject matter combine with their subjectivities resulting in a personal creation, showing the complexity of texts (written and oral), as Bakhtin (1981) describes in his essays. Any text then captures a certain practice constructed in a society at a particular space and time in history (Bakhtin, 1986a; Gee, 2011; Pennycock, 2010).

I align with Berger and Luckmann (1966; as cited in Best, 2008) when they express that knowledge is shaped by social processes where language plays a fundamental role because it “assigns meaning to the world and ... is learned from other humans” (as derived from the perspective of Alfred Schutz on phenomenology; in Best, 2008, p. 42).

“[K]nowledge (and thus truth) always emerge out of the embodied, rich, and messy process of being-in-the-world, it is always perspectival and conditional” (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2005, p. 32). In this sense, students pursuing different majors, not just foreign language, construct their identities according to their processes of enculturation.

Based on the above, the construction of knowledge and foreign worlds through a new language occurs in several sociocultural contexts at the same time. Thus, the classroom and other immediate surrounding social contexts that are of direct access to the participants, such as households, neighborhoods, educational institutions, cities, help them frame their understandings of other realities. Also, the realities that are physically distant and that belong to the foreign culture are mediated through virtual realities as portrayed in texts (printed, aural, auditory, and visual). In my interpretation of Vygotsky (1978, 1986), these mediators act as a bridge between the foreign language classroom and other foreign countries, cities, and cultures. In this way, foreign language professionals and students integrate the content of a course recreating local meanings also mediated through the native and foreign languages and their particular dialogues. Thus, people’s knowledge usually combines perspectives that are local, regional, national and global (Pennycook, 2010). But these perspectives are mainly filtered through people’s own immediate experiences and perceptions of the local culture, giving new meanings to the foreign language and its content (Pennycook, 2010).

It has usually been the case of many foreign language teaching practices around the world to take place without a natural community of speakers outside the classroom. Therefore, foreign language learning makes up for this lack by using tools such as electronic media, satellite TV, textbooks, and other sources of materials that serve the purpose in the

construction of the new language with its embedded cultural issues to mediate between the foreign language and the target community of speakers. “[H]umans do not act directly on the world—rather their activities are mediated by symbolic artifacts (for example, language, literacy, numeracy, concepts, and institutions) and material artifacts and technologies,” (Lantolf & Thorne, 2009, p. 19). Instructors (native and nonnative speakers of the target language) also help mediate meanings. Vygotsky (1978) also sees the role of people with more specialized knowledge as mediators of learning processes.

Another central issue in foreign language instruction is that adult students already possess another language and life experience (Lantolf & Thorne, 2009). They are no empty vessels or blank slates into which knowledge will be poured. Thus, in this constructionist approach, adults also contribute their own understandings and views of the new language combined with what they already know. They also exert agency showing how they understand the language phenomena, for they already possess a language. Although agency is seen as a social and cultural construction rather than individual (Schneider, 2008), “individuals are more than just passive dupes in relation to socialization and enculturation processes” (Kemberelis & Dimitriadis, 2005, p. 93). They contribute their world perspectives and experience to any construction, and ultimately, people seem to choose what they want to learn. Kramsch (2010) could not be more right when she expresses that it would be naïve to believe that foreign language students learn everything in the classroom and from the instructors. In the same way, parents teach their children, but when they grow up they may exert agency modifying previously learned behaviors.

Burr (2003) recognizes that the terms *constructivism* and *social constructionism* have differences and similarities and have posed problems of theoretical perspectives,

whose “essential difference” lies in agency: “in the extent to which the individual is seen as an agent who is in control of this construction process, and in the extent to which our constructions are the product of social forces, either structural or interactional” (Burr, 2003 p. 20). For me, both forces—individual and social—contribute to social constructions. Suffice it to know for now, that I will refer to *social constructionism* in this dissertation embedding the concept of constructivism where language is undeniable at the “heart of this construction process” (Burr, p. 46).

Therefore, from the perspective of research, participants contributed to this study with their individual and collective written constructions as participants of a local community. It is “on the participants’ view of the situation... through interaction with others... and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals’ lives” (Creswell, 2007, p. 21) that I also constructed my interpretations.

The Qualitative and Quantitative in Language Learning Research

Although this study used a *qualitative approach*, I also recognize the *positivist nature* of research on phonetics and phonology—and on linguistics and SLA as a whole. Phonetics is an interdisciplinary field that can be independent of phonology—this latter being linguistically oriented (Listerry Boix, 1990). However, phonetics and phonology are interconnected for the purpose of studying phonological systems of natural and particular languages (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2011). Phoneticians and phonologists use a quantitative approach to inquire about language and write theory (Listerri Boix, 1990). I find this important to bear in mind, for this research—although qualitative in nature—encountered

the empirical and epistemological assumptions of disciplines that eminently report quantitative research.

In the EPP course, the final projects were not experiments that could be tested in a lab in quantitative forms, although they adopted some theoretical stands. That is, students experimented with their physical perception by listening patiently to the sounds of the foreign language as uttered by different speakers they recorded from the Internet. My assumption behind not using laboratory tools in this exercise was that most foreign language users need to train their ears to the sounds of the target language because real life communicative situations do not take place in a laboratory. They also were taught how to produce sounds in the target language. The evaluation of speech was constructed through students' perceptions, and this was graded with a rubric that had the appearance of objectivity and legitimacy. Even in the natural sciences, quantitative research practices cannot claim to be totally objective, for researchers also bring their ontological prejudices and constructed experiences to their investigations (Kuhn, 1962/1996). The main point here is that most forms of evaluation in pedagogical practices, although built on quantitative assumptions in many cases, can also be subjective. Even evaluators of essays—and for the matter, evaluators of students' papers in general—bring their own biases when they “construct college students as competent or incompetent writers based on local, subjective knowledge, yet claim their evaluations are ‘objective’” (Wotham & Jackson, 2008, p. 131).

With these philosophical assumptions in mind, I now present the two approaches in this dissertation.

Two Approaches to this Study: Document Analysis and Practitioner Research

Given the very different nature of this study—which Hakim (2000) terms *opportunistic research* for it takes “advantage of some chance event or a special opportunity... such as access to an institution, group or event that is normally closed to outsiders” (p. 48)—and the need for an approach that can be suitable for this purpose, I decided to adapt two methodologies that are common in educational research: *documentary analysis* and *practitioner action research*. The reasons for this are twofold. First, and as I stated at the beginning of this chapter, what I intend to do is an analysis of documents that students produced with one goal in mind: uncovering students’ perceptions about the foreign language as demonstrated in their writing. Therefore, the papers students wrote will be revisited as *documents* for this research with new eyes. This places the papers in the position of both *documents* and *data*. In the same way, the data produced by the instructor—which will be analyzed to give a context to students’ papers—are *documents*. Second, largely due to the origin of the papers—how they were produced by the subjects in this study, and my involvement as a practitioner and now as a researcher—the study is entrenched in practitioner research. I must clarify, though, that this study does not follow the *action research* method of data collection: The data already exist as a *historical* record. However, I recognize that this study fits within these two methodologies with some variants, as I will explain.

The first approach, *documentary analysis*, is an educational research approach used to: 1) obtain information about the past; 2) discover “processes of change or continuity over time”; and 3) locate the “origins of the present that explain current structures, relationships and behaviors in the context of recent and longer term trends” (McCulloch, 2011, p. 248). It

has a historical connotation in educational research, where historians are more commonly the ones that practice this method. For them, historical research—although embedded in social contexts—is “distinct from social research” (McCulloch, 2011, p. 248). “[I]n educational research, as in other forms of social research, the use of documents has tended to appear less significant than interviews, questionnaires and techniques of direct observation” (p. 248). However, I maintain that documents that result from a foreign language practice are valid objects of research for discovering multiple issues underlying students’ writings. They show students’ in several stages of foreign language development in a historical context, for example. They can also inform about subtleties in communication and culture that are usually left untreated by instructors for the purpose of grading certain aspects of subject content. Therefore, varied issues can be addressed in foreign language writing by SLA researchers, applied linguists, and practitioners through distinct emphases.

McCulloch (2011) defines a document as “a record or an event or process” produced by “individuals or groups” (249). There are public and official documents (memoranda, minutes, birth certificates, blogs, photographs, and on the like), and private documents (letters, diaries, autobiographies, and photographs among others). There are also distinctions as whether the documents are written texts or come in other forms: visual, oral, electronic and, therefore, their multi-semiotic connotations. “[T]he documentary universe is more expansive than [textual documents] and includes a variety of other material products as well, including photographs, films, music, images, and various other traces of human activity” (Linders, 2008, p. 468).

Another distinction McCulloch (2011) makes between documents is the one that refers to documents produced by researchers for their purposes of inquiry, and those that

already exist and are independent of the researcher. In this distinction, the documents produced by researchers (data) do not constitute part of documentary research:

“Documentary research typically makes use of documents produced previously and by others, rather than in the process of the research or by the researcher” (p. 249). Finally, there are hybrid documents—edited versions of a primary document—whose modifications through editing “may reflect specific interests” (Fothergill, 1974; as cited in McCulloch, 2011, p. 250), thus compromising the original features of the primary document.

Linders (2008) positions documents, texts and archives in constructivist research. He also states how much “qualitatively oriented researchers rely on documents to make their case” (p. 467) while pointing out that “the literature on how to find, select, and draw conclusions on the basis of documents is notably sparse’ (p. 467). He reviews some issues that researchers face when they use documents—particularly in constructionist research—such as: 1) the matter of how much the documents will answer the question(s) posed by the researcher (availability); 2) how these documents will affect the researcher’s ability to draw conclusions: “the appropriateness and utility of particular sets of documents for the purpose of revealing or identifying a process or social construction” (p. 469); 3) “truth-related issues such as biases and inherent data sources... and general accuracy of the data and/or documents themselves (e.g., typographical and unintended factual errors, incompleteness of data)” (p. 469); and finally, 4) the fact that “documents, like other forms of data, do not speak for themselves but must be made to speak by the analyst” (Tierny, 1997; as cited in Linders, 2008, p. 469).

Other aspects of documents considered in the research I’m proposing are: “1) about the documents themselves, 2) about the authors(s) of documents, and 3) about the social

material (e.g., events, meanings) that constitutes the contents of documents” (Linders, 2008, p. 479). Documents can reveal specific aspects in “the construction of a particular reality” ((Linders, 2008, p. 480) and how people view the world. These people, the authors of the documents, can show how they have been “influenced by the social locations they occupy and often are made to represent in our studies” (Linders, 2008, (p. 480).

In contrast to historical documentary research in education where “there is little direct interaction with those being researched” (McCulloch, 2011, p. 254) the second approach that I have selected for this study, *practitioner research*, allows the researcher to know the participants and collaborators. For Herr and Anderson (2005), and Anderson, Herr, and Nihlen (2007) practitioner research was born out of specific research concerns and needs in the United States. The Practitioner Research Movement in North America was different from the much earlier movements empowering teacher-researchers in Britain and Latin America—e.g. Paulo Freire.

Practitioner research is classified by Herr and Anderson (2005) as only one of the numerous faces or traditions of *action research*. Action research, then, serves as the umbrella term for the other multiple varieties, including practitioner research. For these authors, this is a form of practical research used in doctorates in education (Ed. D.), but it is less popular in Ph.D. programs, although it is on the rise at colleges of education. The two most favored paradigms in academic research at universities have been the positivistic quantitative paradigm—the most preferred one—and the naturalistic or qualitative one, which has become more accepted recently. The third paradigm, which is seldom included in methodology courses at universities, is *practitioner research*, or *action research* or *practitioner action research* (Anderson et al, 2007). This is due to the limited

generalizability of this type of research, which in most cases is about a specific and local problem in a student population in a classroom or other issues involving the school setting. Another reason is the challenge that this type of research poses, when the practitioner is a researcher simultaneously teaching and conducting research in his/her own setting.

Besides the authors I have already cited, other authors I have consulted use the prevalent terms *action research* (Hopkins, 1993; Hui & Grossman, 2008; Koshy, 2010; Macintyre, 2000; Mckernan, 1996; McNiff & Whitehead 2002; Sagor, 2002; Stringer, 1999; Zeichner, 2009). Two books featuring the word *practioner* are Anderson et al. (2007) and Campbell (2004). Even Anderson et al. (2007) who had referred to *practitioner research* in previous publications decided to include the word *action*, because the former name displaced the “centrality of action” in this type of research (Anderson et al., 2007, p. 2). There is a plethora of names that refer to practitioner research, action research, and practitioner action research, but I will just refer to these three names as it is not my intention to establish a nomenclature (see Anderson et al, 2007; Herr & Anderson, 2005).

According to Anderson et al. (2007) and Herr and Anderson (2005) this third type of research is less common in Ph.D. programs, for the positivist and naturalistic academic research are more valued, as I said before. However, these authors assert a need for this type of research in education and nursing, as well as in other practical areas of knowledge, since it deals with practical social issues that are local. Campbell (2013) defines practitioner research as a broader term that includes various modalities of research on practice. He locates it within the family of action research but with a wider assortment of eclectic methods:

Practitioner research is closely related to, and draws on, the methodologies of the ‘family of action research’ described by Kemmis and McTaggart (2005, p. 560) as including: participatory research; critical action research; classroom action research; action learning; and action science. Practitioner research does draw on methods from a wider field than action research allowing practitioners to undertake small scale research in case studies, ethnographic studies and to be eclectic in their use of method as suggested by Campbell et al (2004:80). Narrative, story and fiction methods are also valuable tools for practitioner researchers. (para. 6)

Campbell (2007) and Herr and Anderson (2005) classify *practitioner research* within *action research*. As action research, practitioner research, practitioner action research—and the rest of the denominations that this type of research methodology has created—have emerged from different traditions and social contexts, Herr and Anderson (2005) advise: “Everyone who uses action research for a dissertation should be steeped in the particular tradition they are working out of and attendant methodological, epistemological, and political dilemmas” (p. 8).

In *practitioner action research* in education, researchers “study social reality by acting within it and studying the effects of their actions” (Anderson, et al. 2007, p. 1). Different from natural methodologies where the researcher is a *detached* observer that records what happens in the field, practitioner action research places practitioner-researchers in the center of research and implies *insider* research using their own sites. This type of research empowers the voices of teachers and students, or administrative staff. This can give a more democratic balance by allowing the teachers to raise their voices in matters of education, as happened in the Bay Area Writing Project, where literacy teachers used their students’ writing as data, and developed different research on teaching writing whose results had a great impact (Herr & Anderson, 2005).

Because interactions between teachers and students are not usually recorded, many issues that take place in classroom environments are unreported, but known to the practitioners. It has regularly been the case that the institutions are the ones holding power, so the tendency is for them to produce documents that show one view of the school rather than allowing teachers and students to be heard (McCulloch, 2011). The reaction of practitioners to this tendency of research—where their voices have been muted—has created the various trends of action research.

Anderson et al. (2007) describe action research “as an ongoing series of cycles that involve moments of planning actions, acting, observing the effects, and reflecting on one’s observations” (p. 3). The majority of authors I consulted have referred to this process as a spiraling one. In the field of education this type of research is done to understand a particular problem or gain insight about the institution where one works. Initially, “[a]ction research was a way of engaging directly with real social problems while developing theoretical understanding,” (Dick, 2008, p. 399). Currently, “[a]ll action research shares a commitment to both theory development and actual change.” In this sense, action research resembles grounded theory; in addition, it grounds its interpretation in the data by having an inductive oriented method of interpretation (Dick, 2008, p. 400).

One distinction between traditional academic research done at universities and action research (mostly done by teachers at schools) is that in the first, researchers go to a site to observe as *outsiders*. In the second, the practitioner is an *insider* who knows the setting and most probably has more knowledge about what is going on at the institution than for example an ethnographer (Anderson et al. 2007). Action researchers, however, have it more difficult, though, as they have to “juggle data gathering with teaching or administering a

school” (p. 11). This makes research more difficult for practitioner-researchers than for academic qualitative researchers whose only duty—but not easy either—is to gather data and conduct the research. Both approaches, as any other methodology, involve ethical issues (Anderson et al., 2007).

A definition of action research given in Mackey and Gass (2005)—especially in regard to research in second language issues—states:

Although there is little general agreement as to an all-encompassing definition of action research, it is important to realize that action research can be defined and is being implemented in many different ways in the field [SLA]. For example Wallace (1998) maintained that action research is “basically a way of reflecting on your teaching... by systematically collecting data on your everyday practice and analyzing it in order to come to some decision about what your future practice should be” (p. 4). In this view it is a mode of inquiry undertaken by teachers and is more oriented to instructor and learner development than it is to theory building, although it can be used for the latter. (p. 216)

According to Nunan (1993, as cited in Mikey & Gass, 2005) in action research of several kinds, the goals for researcher/practitioners are similar: “These include wanting a better understanding of how languages are learned and taught, together with commitment to improving the conditions, efficiency, and ease of learning” (p. 116). As the voices of the ones involved in the classroom are generally missing from research in education, Johnson (1992; as cited in Mackey & Gass, 2005) states that this type of research serves the purpose of allowing teachers to “be heard and valued.” (p. 116)

For the purpose of this study, I find it pertinent to give a list of common characteristics of action/practitioner research, which is usually considered a somewhat lesser approach than the traditional academic research in the social sciences. I have summarized the following 15 characteristics from Anderson et al. (2007), which pretty much converge with descriptions provided by the various authors cited throughout this section: 1) this

research is conducted by an insider to the educational institution or the organization; 2) it is a reflective process; 3) evidence supports assumptions and claims; 4) it is conducted through a series of actions that take place in cycles, therefore its spiraling nature; 5) it can be done in collaboration with participants, or “by or with insiders to an organization or community but never *to* or on *them*” (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p. 3); 6) teaching (or any other practice) takes place at the same time that the researcher is collecting notes and intervening to produce some change (thus, its messiness); 7) it is systematic; 8) it is bottom-up not top-down like in positivism; 9) it is value laden; 10) the goal is to solve a social problem; 11) it can adapt any qualitative research methods to address a local reality, context (thus its eclectic nature); 12) the majority of research is a small scale research in the classroom; 13) it can bring justice to unfair situations where power is overused; 14) it is a research where teachers and practitioners in general have a say on a social matter, and this can bring change; 15) in most cases it is not generalizable, but in some it may.

Because the review of the literature on practitioner research, action research, or practitioner action research describes the process of action research as evolving from a teaching practice (e.g., the classroom), where research and teaching take place at the same time, I find it necessary to clarify my position.

Document Analysis and Practitioner Research in This Study. For this study I have employed some of the features that define the two approaches, *documentary analysis* and *practitioner action research* with modifications that served my methodological purposes. Therefore, I refer to these two approaches using the terms *document analysis* and *practitioner research* for two reasons. The first, document analysis accommodated my purpose of revisiting documents written by students (and in a secondary plane, the ones

produced by the instructor) in a recent past. These documents, or final papers, were exclusively a course requirement. The second set of documents which I make part of this dissertation or instructor's pedagogical material (tasks, exercises, notes, and so on), also corresponds to a past natural teaching practice. As a researcher I adopted a historical and emic perspective. The second, practitioner research was used because the documents derived from a local teaching-learning practice in foreign language. At the moment of teaching, the instructor addressed a specific contextual educational problem of foreign language education in a cyclical way. My current role as the main researcher in this study has made me question my former involvement as the instructor of the *English Phonetics and Phonology* course and reflect on this past teaching-learning practice.

Linder's (2008) discussion of documents, texts and archives as the data for the documentary researcher puts them at the same level as any data used by qualitative researchers. These documents in the majority of the cases exist in archives and were written by people many years, even centuries back, thus making them *historical*. In the case of the documents written for the *English Phonetic and Phonology* course, called in this study the *EPP final papers*, the students (writers) are neither dead nor unknown to the researcher; thus the importance for this study to interrogate students' perceptions about their former experience through a survey. This survey served to elicit information about students' views to validate or invalidate the researcher's findings.

It is worth noting that documents are versatile as data (Linder, 2008). Even an oral production that is transcribed becomes a text, and therefore a document that researchers can analyze. If these documents were produced in the recent past, historians can also go to the authors of the documents and interview or question the living people who wrote the

documents and ask them about their experiences. There is the possibility that people will give different versions of what could have happened at the time the experience took place. For these reasons, I renamed the approach documentary analysis: *document analysis*.

Another characteristic of the *students' final papers* or *documents* or main *data* is that they are *hybrid*. They were documents produced for other purposes than research per se, and as such, they were not framed to investigate a problem. They were only a presumed *objective* form of evaluation. They were, thus, *natural data*. They also incorporated aspects that were not analyzed when they were evaluated. In addition, these documents were an edited version of previous drafts that students and instructor had worked on together. In foreign language education, these documents are usually rich in linguistic information of distinct nature and embedded meanings.

Consequently, this study is an analysis of: 1) students' *final papers* (primary data)⁵ whose authors happened to be my students; 2) the instructor's pedagogical material (secondary data) in connection to the students' work; and 3) the results of a survey (secondary data as well) as related to the other two sources of data. The exploration of these data indirectly leads to question the data produced by the instructor (pedagogical material, notes, and other).

I need to remind the reader that I was not teaching at the same time that I conducted this study. This means that I revisited my teaching practice for the sake of contextualizing students' *final papers* or *documents* to give meaning to derivative issues that would not stand by themselves through the documents alone. The elapsed time between the teaching

⁵ Because of the interdisciplinary nature of this dissertation, which explores issues of foreign language and second language and whose main focus are the students' final papers, I treat primary and secondary data in a different way from qualitative research. See the definition of the *Types of Data in this Study* in the next section.

events and the activities that took place in this research allowed me to see the data with certain detachment and from a critical perspective. I cannot claim, however, that the analysis was unbiased due to my various roles: instructor, second/foreign language speaker, and now researcher. The above frames the second contention that I bring to this discussion in terms of the additional methodology in this study, *practitioner research*.

I used the term *practitioner research* as belonging to the family of action research. As a derivative from the umbrella name, I employ practitioner research with a major variant: The data gathering did not follow the cycling/spiraling method suggested by most authors writing about action research. I must say that in the pedagogical approach that I devised as an instructor to produce the final projects—and that I called *The Four Steps* in my teaching practice—I created the kind of events that could be interpreted as cycling or spiraling. For this dissertation, the documents (or data) already existed as a result of a teaching practice that started in Fall 2009 and ended in Spring 2012. Students' documents—*final papers*—are embedded in a subject-matter (English phonetics and phonology) within a foreign language literacy practice. Here, I assume the literacy practice as an eclectic effort that points at numerous directions and includes all language skills. As for what concerns practitioner research, Campbell, McNamara, and Gilroy (2004) view practitioner research as an eclectic approach that borrows from other methodologies and “moves along a continuum of methods when collecting data” (p. 81).

In regard to teaching and conducting research at the same time—as it is done in most action research and practitioner research—I believe they are two demanding jobs (let alone doing them both at the same time). Herr and Anderson (2005) see “a double burden” (p. 5) in action research. This has to do with “both action (improvement of practice, social change,

and the like) and research (creating valid knowledge about practice)” (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p. 5). This brings about a third conflict: “rigor and relevance of research” (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p. 5). Unlike traditional social science research where researchers try not to intervene in the setting—for purposes of objectivity—practitioner action research imposes cycles of actions to modify a practice in the setting. This has been referred as a messy endeavor that can be valuable for some, but lack rigor for others (Herr & Anderson, 2005).

Although I have said in this chapter that I am an insider at a higher educational institution, and that my position is emic, the insider-outsider distinction is *blurry* for me at this time of writing. For one thing, I came back to my hometown after a four-year stay of Ph.D. academic requirements in the U.S. Once back home, things had changed politically, academically, relationally, and personally on both sides: institution, colleagues, and I. I felt in many ways marginalized and foreign among colleagues and students. The population of students also seemed to have changed. Currently, as two and a half years of separation from my teaching practice have taken place—as well as a linguistic, geographical and sociocultural distance—perspectives are not the same for me. Some detached distance has been created. The survey participants, for their part, have also undergone different experiences in their education journey.

An advantage or disadvantage for this research may be the time elapsed since that practice (two and a half years between the now and the last cohort). My thoughts about this topic and the research for this dissertation have changed some of my former ideas. Therefore, it was interesting to see how I idealized or reinvented my data, as perception usually plays tricks on people’s cognitive recall of past events.

I cannot deny the fact that the documents that constitute the main data of this dissertation resulted from a *teaching practice* where I was the instructor. I defined the goals and objectives, selected the reading content, had a teaching-learning plan, and organized the activities to guide students' projects. This involvement in the practice imposed interpretations as well as ethical related issues that I address at the end of this chapter. Because this study was not conducted in the spiraling or cyclical way that most authors claim typical practice in action research (McNeill, 1988), my methodological approach, although *practitioner research*, did not have *action* at the center. That is, I am using Campbell's (2007) and Herr and Anderson (2005) classification which places practitioner research within the umbrella term action research. Practitioner research uses the cycling way of data collection, but I employed an array of different methods and methodologies to adjust to my research purposes. As practitioner research that reports about a previous practice, I made a deliberate effort to comprehend this practice better; nevertheless, my subjective ways through the analysis of students' writings (final papers) and my owned produced data represented a great challenge.

In the analysis of students' final papers, the instructor's data, and the data of the survey, there was inevitably a *post-practice reflection*, contributing to a better understanding of what happened in the EPP teaching-learning experience. The pedagogical reflection emerged indirectly by making students' final papers and their perceptions about the foreign language focus of this study; this in interconnection with the instructor's data and her underlying ideology form an imbricate mosaic of perceptions.

Characteristics that I incorporated from practitioner research were: 1) this research was conducted by an insider (then) and an outsider to the educational institution or the

organization at the moment of putting this dissertation together, analyzing the data, and writing the final chapter. I was in the U.S. throughout all the process of dissertation writing for two and a half years; 2) this study is, indirectly, a reflective process, which could constitute a sort of *autoethnography* or *self-study*. This is another variant of action research whose purpose is to understand how I learned and developed my craft; 3) evidence supported my assumptions and claims; 4) the different actions and spiraling nature of the teaching practice took place in Colombia in my role of instructor. I developed a *practitioner action pedagogy* throughout the process of teaching EPP. This practice did not take place throughout this dissertation. 5) This research was not done in collaboration; it was an individual endeavor; 6) this research has been a mixture of traditional academic research as done in universities. It adapts documentary analysis and practitioner action research for the purpose of addressing a local practice. Therefore the names: *document analysis* and *practitioner research*; 7) it was a systematic process; 8) it had both top-down and bottom-up predisposition; therefore it was deductive and inductive; 9) it was value laden; 10) the goal was to address a social problem; (11) it was eclectic; (12) it used a qualitative analysis method: qualitative content analysis (QCA); (13) this is not a *small scale* research in the classroom, as Campbell (2007) characterized practitioner research; (14) it may bring justice to unfair situations where power is overused: top-down decisions at curricular and instruction levels; (15) it may bring change to the insider's institution; and (16) it might be generalizable. The results might serve other similar foreign language programs and situations.

One final remark is that by using document analysis and practitioner research in a systematic way, the dialogical construction of foreign language perception through language

meanings was better reflected. This implied the contextualization of historical documents and how they came to an existence through practitioner research. In the analyses of the three sources of data, the participants' voices can be heard.

Where the Data Came From

Students' final papers in EPP are the central focus and primary data in this research. They are the outcome of a natural teaching practice that was not conducted for research purposes. As a practitioner, I laid the foundations for the philosophical and academic orientation of the course EPP. I also designed the evaluation process including the final papers, the major outcome. In this study, there is a need to contextualize these primary data for purposes of meaning and interpretation: Where they come from and how they were framed. Therefore, in this section, I will describe how I classified the data, give the rationale for the selection of primary and secondary data, and characterize the student population and site.

The final papers in this research are *elicited* texts (Charmaz, 2006). This means that the researcher, in her former role of instructor, exerted influence in their production. As a foreign language educator, I asked students to answer questions in paragraph form, introduced basic issues of academic writing, and proposed readings and class tasks and activities. At the same time, because these final papers were not produced for research purposes, they are *extant texts* and *natural* data, the result of a regular teaching practice.

Although students' final papers are the product of a learning and evaluation process, I contend that "these texts, like published autobiographies, may elicit thoughts, feelings, and concerns of the thinking, acting subject, as well as give researchers ideas about what

structures and cultural values influence the person” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 36). Also, as a written discourse, these papers may bring other embedded issues that are frequently *taken for granted* (Gee, 1999).

Students’ final papers were also informed by students’ EPP reports in journal writing. This journal writing was influenced by ethnographies of language learning, which at the time the instructor viewed as a feasible tool for language self-discovery. This strategy was used to enable students to explore concepts in phonetics and phonology and apply these concepts in practical foreign language learning assignments. For example, in the analysis of the different English verbatim samples—which was the main objective of the final papers—students were encouraged to apply the concepts from phonetics and phonology and then report their findings and perceptions in a journal.

In the following subsections, I give more details about the classification and the origins of these data.

The types of data in this study. The data for this research are classified as *primary data* and *secondary data*. This distinction is based on Douglas and Selinker’s *Research methodology context-based second-language research* (1994), which I find very convenient for matters of understanding the design of this study. Thus: 1) Primary data in this research will be the final papers students wrote for the *English Phonetics and Phonology Course* (also referred here as final projects and/or documents). These are the main objects of analysis of this dissertation (Chapter 6).

(2a) Secondary data are the pedagogical materials that lie at the base of these papers as their philosophical, theoretical, instructional and practical foundations (Chapter 5). These secondary data also constitute the sociocultural background of students’ papers. Moreover,

teaching artifacts that were created for the course EPP—along with the reading material and some other texts—will allow for the interpretation and “commentary on the primary data” (Douglass & Selinker, 1994, p. 120).

(2b) Additional secondary data were the information provided by the post-experience online survey on students’ perceptions about the course EPP and their foreign language learning (Chapter 7). This shed light on: students’ former experience when they took the course; their opinions about writing their final projects; and how they perceived this experience now that time has elapsed and if it is still useful in their foreign language learning process. This was intended to give the research the opportunity to explore the participants’ comments in their own terms. I applied the online survey using UNM Opinio (see survey in Appendix B).

Other reasons for the inclusion of these secondary data are: 1) the primary data were embedded in a content-based course where the participants who are non-native speakers of English (including the instructor) produced structures related to the discipline of phonetics and phonology in their interlanguages; 2) the primary data need their technical context where “the subject-specialist informant procedures are necessary” (Douglas & Selinker, 1994, 121); 3) the participants’ current views on the foreign language and their opinions on a past experience in the course EPP provided more interpretations of these final papers; students’ after-experience perceptions gave the primary data richer significance and validation.

Additional supplementary texts embedded in students’ projects were extant texts that helped in the construction of students’ final papers, thus their intertextuality. These papers included transcriptions of audio and visual texts that students used for the phonetic and

phonological analysis of the English language. They also comprised other texts, thus the connections that writers establish to make their points: “We use language to render certain things connected or relevant (or not) to other things, that is, to build connections or relevance (Gee, 2011, p. 19). In consequence, students’ final papers were the products of a local sociocultural construction that needed to be studied in their relationship with the other texts that served to their structure and show how they were interrelated to give meaning to the new language; students’ final papers, in their abstract character, did not stand by themselves. Put the above in other terms, phenomena exist in specific contexts; therefore, they are intrinsically embedded and subsumed in internal and external relationships:

Since phenomena (or their facets) take on the quality of the relationships in which they stand, any character that the constituents may intrinsically possess is significantly modified in particular relationships. This means that a phenomena’s character in a concrete context cannot be deduced from its abstract character, or viewed in isolation, because the latter condition lacks the very relationships that constitute (define) the element-in-context. In other words, the concrete is not simply the sum of abstract properties; the concrete is a unique configuration of interrelated parts whose character grows out of the interaction. (Ratner, 1991, p. 10)

Having said that, I will now explain how I selected the students’ final papers (primary data) for this study, as well as how I selected the prospective subjects for the post-experience online survey (secondary data) which was conducted in January and February 2014.

Rationale for selection of students’ papers. I selected 20 papers for this study from a total of 51 final papers that resulted from the course EPP which I taught in two years to the cohorts Fall 2010, Spring and Fall 2011, and Spring 2012. The overall number of student writers in this study was 44 (out of 92) (see Appendix A). The selection of the 20 papers responded to the six main types of media genre and language that students chose for their phonetic and phonological analysis: 1) formal speech: *one* scientific report and *four*

journalist reports; 2) informal speech in *four* TV genres: series, comedies, shows; 3) *four* movies; 4) informal speech in cartoons: *two* TV series and *one* movie; and 5) formal and informal speech in *four* interviews. These 20 papers were written individually, in pairs, and in groups of three. These papers, discriminated by the number of writers, comprise: 1) *three* individual papers; 2) *11* papers written in pairs; and 3) *six* papers written by 18 students. In addition, the papers selected for this study were the ones that students wrote in English and not the ones in Spanish.⁶ The papers include from low intermediate to more advanced EFL writers. The 44 students obtained grades that ranged between three (3.0), the minimum passing grade, to five (5.0), the maximum grade on a scale of five (see Appendix A).

Participants in the online survey.⁷ Originally, the secondary data in this study was intended for 92 prospective subjects who had taken the course of EPP in the four cohorts. A total of 51 students responded, but 39 clicked the finish button, thus making 39 total numbers of participants' responses in the survey for this dissertation. The survey was conducted in January and February 2014 (see Appendix B, and Chapter 7) through UNM Opinio. It was sent to the e-mails of 92 prospective subjects—all the students who wrote final papers for the course. I expected a minimum of 22 respondents, a figure that surpassed the maximum number of students I had in one single class, which was 19.

As I already stated, other secondary data were my collected pedagogical material and notes for the course. An important referent was the readings included in EPP, which served as the foundation for the content of these papers.

⁶ The papers written in Spanish were not available to the researcher.

⁷ This research received the IRB approval of The University of New Mexico (see Appendix D). In the IRB Protocol, I described the sources of data as they appear in this chapter.

Students who wrote the final papers: Characterization of the population. The student population was mainly English language major students in their third semester of the *Modern Languages Undergraduate Major* at *Universidad de Bogota* (UDB) at the time they pursued the course. The students' ages ranged between 18 and 33. The great majority were born and raised in Bogotá. Out of the 44 students who wrote the final papers, only three were born and raised in other cities of Colombia. One of these three students had studied in an undergraduate program in the United States. The students who enrolled in this course had received foreign language education (mainly English) in public and private primary and secondary schools (answers confirmed in the first part of the survey). All of these students were computer literate and made extensive use of the internet.

The writers of the EPP final papers in this research, although different in their own individualities, come from similar socio-economic middle-class backgrounds and all shared the urban culture of Bogotá. Colombia is said to be a *pluralistic* nation (Colombian Constitution, 1991) where regions are culturally and linguistically distinct. However, identifiers exist for an urban culture of shared beliefs and language, one that lacks the exuberant ethnic diversity of urban environments in the United States. In this sense, the students who wrote the papers could be described as a group of Spanish speaking urban adults in a linguistically *homogeneous* environment.⁸

Characterization of site. The main setting where the final papers came from is a public higher institution in Bogota, Colombia: *Universidad de Bogota* (UDB). The *Department of Modern Languages* (DML) offers the undergraduate degree in *Modern*

⁸ In the answers to Question 8 (How would you describe your identity?) the participants described and characterized their identities as Colombians, Spanish-language speakers that make part of a bigger region, Latin America (see Chapter 7).

Languages, which students pursue with specializations in only one language (major): either in English, French, or German. The core goal of the program is to prepare foreign language teacher candidates. This department belongs to *The School of Human Sciences* and shares administrative obligations with the Department of Linguistics.

The new curricular reform that took place in 2008 in all the undergraduate programs at UDB now allows students at DML to get a minor in another language (French or German), or a different discipline—given that students take enough courses and pass them to claim the minor. Most of the curricular decisions, according to DML faculty members, responded to the university administration top-down decisions to offer less specialized undergraduate courses, include more electives, and accommodate the curricula to a system of credits. On the DML side, the new curricular changes were targeted at education and teaching than philology, linguistics, literatures and cultures as the former curriculum claimed. Thus, they curtailed a considerable number of courses in linguistics, one civilization (out of two), and two courses on literature (out of three originally). The course of phonetics and phonology for each language (English, French and German) was kept because one French language faculty member insisted in its importance. I taught the course EPP to 6 cohorts (12 groups) since my arrival from the United States in August 2009. All the classes took place at the *Audiovisual Rooms* in the building of the *Department of Modern Languages* and small lecture rooms at the *Postgraduate Building of the School of Human Sciences*.

98% of faculty members in the DFL are Colombian born instructors. There are no native speakers of English among them. There are two native speakers of French and no native speakers of German. Only one Colombian born bilingual instructor attended a

Colombian private English-Spanish bilingual school from childhood. Lecturers are hired to fulfill the necessity for English-language instructors in various courses. Some may be foreigners, but the great majority is Colombian.⁹

UDB was founded by the end of the 19th century and has a major campus in the center of Bogota. It has a student population of over 50,000 students and offers varied undergraduate and graduate programs. The curricular program of foreign languages has existed since the early 1960s under different names that have responded to several curricular reforms, language philosophical and theoretical paradigms, and political interests (Lombana, Mejia, & Ortiz, 2006).

This university is located in the center of Bogota, a city with over 10 million people—metropolitan area estimate. Although there are a good number of universities in other major cities in the country, Bogota continues to offer the best opportunities in education. However, the majority of Colombians still have little access to higher education. UNC has other branches in main cities, such as Medellin and Manizales; other branches are in distant regions, such as Leticia in the Amazon; San Andres and Providencia, an island in the Caribbean Sea; and Arauca, a region on the eastern planes bordering with Venezuela.

The public university system in Colombia has undergone different budget reforms for the past 20 years. Governmental financial cuts have been sorted out by public universities by creating graduate programs and selling academic services to the community. More recently, strikes at UDB have aired out the financial and academic crisis of this higher education institution, which is one of the few offering a reasonable education to lower

⁹ This is shown in the course schedule and the contracts that instructors sign with the Department of Modern Languages every semester.

middle classes and some other economically less favored communities. On the opposite side, the more global one, the university publicizes its achievements with the motto: “Construyendo un campus de clase mundial” (Building a world-class campus).¹⁰

Procedure to Data Analysis

In this section I describe the procedure to data analysis in this study: quantitative content analysis; the steps to data analysis; and the software to analyze qualitative data. However, before I continue with these subsections, I find it pertinent to return to my double roles in this dissertation.

My double position in the methods of analysis for this dissertation. The mixed nature of this study in terms of primary and secondary data—and my former involvement as a practitioner—enables me to take two perspectives for the analysis of the data in this dissertation. The first perspective I take is with respect to the primary data (students’ final papers) and the secondary data (prospective subjects’ responses to the online survey). My second perspective has to do with the data I produced as a practitioner, which I classified earlier as secondary data—and which is presented in Chapter 5 (Instructor’s pedagogy and her role in the framing of students’ final papers, among other themes). For the presentation and the interpretation of all three sources of data, I used *qualitative content analysis* (QCA).

My involvement in the narrative of events (researcher-practitioner) and their interpretation resembled an auto-ethnography/historical narration under the umbrella name of practitioner research. Here, a “self-reflection process focused on the individual” (Herr & Anderson, 2015, p. 32). In this process, the “I” took a primary role in my experience of problems and concerns which derived from my practice: I challenged and tried to improve

¹⁰ Brochure summarizing the achievements of UDB campus (Universidad de Bogotá, 2013).

my practice by adjusting the course of action. I judged the effectiveness of my action, evaluated the outcomes and modified my concerns, ideas, and actions taking into account students' performance and evaluation of products (adjusted text from McNiff & Whitehead, 2000; as cited in Herr & Anderson, 2015, p. 32)

Therefore, themes and issues that emerged in an inductive way from the instructor's data (observations, notes, pedagogical material, and so on) helped me confirm facts and disproved lapses in memory derived from the elapsed time since EPP was taught. Nevertheless, I maintain that the practitioner was in no way an *omniscient* character who knew it all. As I played one specific role in the framing of students' final papers, this was carefully supervised. However, I cannot claim that this analysis comes with zero biases.

The instructor's account made part of the background information that structured students' final papers. In writing a chapter about the origins of students' final papers, I expected to contextualize the teaching practice and to describe how the papers had been conceived. This helped the study to cross reference information for purposes of trustworthiness and reliability (triangulation). Once again, the practitioner is one voice among the participants.

Because of all the above, I present the data in three separate chapters: Chapter 5, Chapter 6, and Chapter 7. I intentionally adopted this strategy because of my personal involvement in the framing of the data as an instructor and now as a researcher. My purpose with three separate chapters was to allow the participants' voices to be clearer in my mind; my personal involvement with the products, the topics, and the experience made the separation of these voices blurry for me from time to time. As I had reflected on all this, I purposefully anticipated my biases. From another angle, as Colombian studying Colombian

students, a normalization of the researcher's cultural lens must have taken place: I was and am intricately attached to the institutional, regional, and national culture.

Qualitative content analysis. As I stated formerly, QCA was the method I used to analyze the data, inductively, deductively, and systematically. QCA served in the sequential and systematic construction of coding frames, their dimensions (categories), and subcategories in a hierarchical way. The specific codes given to stretches of discourse and words helped with more fine-grained aspects of data that required evidence of language structure to characterize local meanings (micro structures). This gave more support to the interpretations of data. I grounded the method in the main question of this research, its two goals, and the four objectives, as I have stated in this chapter. This allowed me to focus on the main issues I wanted to discover in the data. With QCA I navigate in the data without getting stranded in too much information (Schreier, 2012).

Qualitative content analysis. According to Schreier (2012), this method of analysis has been more popular in Europe, and less known in the United States—although it has been gaining more status recently. This was a method that originated in “communication studies” (p. 9). However, this method had a long trajectory before it became a method of analysis in the social sciences. By the end of the 18th century content analysis was used in Europe by the Church to analyze religious texts. This was done to prevent the spread of teachings that did not come from this institution. Then, the method of word analysis became popular with newspapers in the 19th century when the diverse information spread through this medium was questioned. Finally, sociologists and psychologists in the 1930s and 1940s found it useful to uncover underlying issues of “social stereotypes or attitudes” (Schreier, 2012, p.

10). During the Second World War, media messages were analyzed using content analysis, thus content analysis as a method per se was born in 1941 (Schreier, 2012).

Currently, content analysis has not only served in communication studies but in other “disciplines such as political science, psychology, education and literary studies (Krippendorff, 2004; as cited in Schreier, 2012, p. 12). From being eminently a quantitative method of analysis, Kracauer (1952; as cited in Schreier, 2012) contended for the qualitative nature of content analysis based on three arguments:

- Meaning is often complex, holistic, and context-dependent.
- Meaning is not always manifest and clear at first sight. Sometimes it is necessary to read a text in more detail to determine what exactly it means.
- Some aspects of meaning may appear only once in a text. This does not necessarily imply that such aspects are less important than aspects that are mentioned more frequently. (p. 13)

One main characteristic of QCA is that it is a systematic method that usually combines features from both traditions, quantitative and qualitative (Schreier, 2012). The quantitative serves to support the researcher’s qualitative interpretations. This method serves the purpose to analyze “what is being said [as well as]... how something is being said” (Schreier, 2012, p. 19). Therefore, QCA is not only a matter of form but also content. Additional characteristics of QCA—as pointed by Schreier—are the interpretive, naturalistic, situational, reflexive, inductive and case-oriented qualities of the method. Also, QCA has emergent flexibility and emphasizes validity (see Schreier, 2012, p. 21).

In relation to discourse analysis, QCA “does not make any assumptions about the nature of language, social reality, and how the two are related” (p. 47) although it may make

them implicitly. QCA also uses quantitative tools to interpret qualitative data, but its main purpose is not language *per se* or critical discourse analysis. Similar to other qualitative methods, QCA analysis can also be put at the service of this latter (Scheier, 2012). In this dissertation a few issues of discourse analysis (language structure and meaning) were considered. In this way, discourse analysis was “one analytical strategy amongst many” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 2). For Fairclough (2003) it often makes sense to use discourse analysis in conjunction with other forms of analysis, for instance ethnography or forms of institutional analysis” (p. 2). In this study, it made sense to use QCA and to take into account the use of discourse and language in what the participants expressed.

QCA is based on realist assumptions, where the outside reality is represented in the material that the researcher analyzes—be it the participants’ attitudes, feelings, or other issues that can be interpreted and that are not exclusively represented through language (Schreier, 2012). The issue of language (discourse) and world (reality) brings together controversial philosophical claims in the social sciences. Suffice it to say that “[t]he goal of discourse analysis in all its forms is to analyse the ways in which language contributes to the construction of social reality” (Shreier, 2012, p. 46). The issue of power, one characteristic of critical discourse analysis, also differs from one discourse analysis to another (Shreier, 2012). My concern at this time is not particularly on the type of discourse analysis that claims “the knowledge interest of ‘empowerment’ or ‘giving voice to the oppressed’” (Bauer & Gaskel, 2010, p.1). However, and as Gee (2011) states: Language itself is political and so are communities of practice. In discourse analysis, language helps us construct our reality, and we change reality through language (Shreier, 2012):

....we can perceive only what we talk about and in the terms in which we talk about it. Moreover, our being in the world is not limited to talking; we also act within and towards our reality. And what we perceive to be possible ways of acting towards a certain phenomenon will also be constrained by the way in which we speak about it. (p. 45)

For the second edition of *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method* (1999), Gee used different metaphors to explain what it was to reflect on a text; at the same time, by doing the revision and reflection, he defined discourse analysis:

When we sit back and reflect on what people have said and written—a luxury we have too little in life, but the basis of discourse analysis—we often discover better, deeper, and more humane interpretations... We believe it a matter of competence to re-read a good book or re-watch a great movie to get more out of it. But we rarely apply the same principle—which now becomes a principle of ethics—to our fellow citizens. And that is, in a sense, what discourse analysis is all about. (pp. xi & xii)

Instructors seldom have the time to revisit past teaching practice, and less time to go over students' final papers because academic terms frequently end hurriedly. By revisiting students' papers and the documents I produced as an instructor, I reevaluated my practice and discovered underlying issues of distinct nature in these documents. In short, this study allowed me to see a past practice and its products with brand new eyes.

Steps to Data Analysis

QCA is a strategic and systematic method of coding qualitative data according to what the researcher intends to find. In QCA the frequency of use of certain expressions, concepts, forms of text, ideas, and so on, gives QCA a quantitative foundation for qualitative interpretations of data. This is achieved by designing a *coding frame* that allows the researcher to focus on specific data. The researcher develops this coding frame based on his/her question(s). The coding frame is the core that characterizes QCA (Schreier, 2012).

The objective is to quantify what the researcher finds in the data according to his/her qualitative coding frame. This supports the researcher's interpretations of meaning. This gives the analysis a methodical structure to help the researcher assess when his/her interpretations are subjective. Also, because the coding is focused, the researcher is able to navigate qualitative data by directing his/her search to specific aspects that are relevant to his/her question.

The coding frame in this research. In QCA, a coding frame is the *main categories* or *dimensions* on which the researcher chooses to focus his/her analysis. It is “a way of structuring your material, a way of differentiating between different meanings *vis-à-vis* your research questions” (Schreier, 2012, p. 61). The frame is made of “main categories or dimensions and a number of subcategories for each dimension which specify the meaning in your material with respect to these main categories” (Schreier, 2012, p. 61).

The question in this research —*What can we learn from students' perception of English as a foreign language as demonstrated in the final papers from a phonetics and phonology class?*—explored students' perceptions through the representations and ideas in students' writing (final papers). Based on this—as well as the objectives guiding this research—I devised three coding frames: one for the primary data, students' final papers; and two for the secondary data, the instructor's and the online survey (see Appendix E).

Types of units in QCA. There are three types of units in QCA: 1) units of analysis; 2) units of coding; and 3) context units (Schreier, 2012, p. 129). Units of analysis refer to the “units of sampling, enumeration, and reading” (p. 130). They are the units the researcher selects for QCA purposes. Each unit responds to one text: This may be a book, a chapter, an individual's interview, a subject's survey, for example. In the data, these units correspond to

each type of material: e.g., one final paper; the instructor syllabus for one cohort; and one section in the survey. Subsequently, these data units were divided into subunits depending on the content of each unit of text, and became units of coding: e.g. the introduction in one paper; the objectives in the syllabus; the answers to one question in the survey.

Based on the above, Table 1 shows the units of analysis that I created for the three sources of data:

Table 1

Units of analysis in Three Sources of Data

Units of Analysis and Segmentation	Primary Data: <i>Students' Papers</i>	Secondary Data: <i>The Online Survey</i>	Secondary Data: <i>Instructors' Material, Notes & Memories</i>
Unit of Analysis	Each paper is a unit of analysis.	Each survey is a unit of analysis	Each of the following is a unit of analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor's Syllabus • Instructor's Class Handouts & Notes • Instructions 4 Steps • Evaluation of EPP • Instructor's Memories
Units of Analysis Using formal Criterion of Segmentation	Within each paper there are four units of analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • First part • Second part • Third part • Fourth part • Conclusion 	Within the survey there will be three main units of analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Information about the subjects (15 Questions) • Information about EFL used outside the classroom. (4 Questions) • Information about the course EPP (16 Questions) 	Within Instructor's handouts, each handout that deals with a specific topic is a unit of analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handouts about the chapters in the course textbooks. • Handouts with exercises. • Handouts for the four steps. • Handout(s) for the final project • Evaluations

The criterion that I used to divide the material into the above units of analysis corresponded to: 1) the formal thematic organization (segmentation) of students' final papers; 2) the three main sections that comprised the online survey; and, 3) the five aspects that made part of the instructor's material for the course EPP. These units of analysis responded to the systematic organization I devised to handle the data. The units of analysis in this study were "identical" (Schreier, 2012, p. 131) to some categories and units of

coding, but they did not define the main categories (dimensions) and subcategories in the structure of the coding frames that I described before.

With respect to the second units of analysis called *units of coding*, they corresponded to “those parts of the units of analysis that can be interpreted in meaningful way with respect to [the researcher’s] categories and that fit within one subcategory of [his/her] coding frame” (Schreier, 2012, p. 131). For this research, the units of coding were based on the main question and the four goals that I devised for this research (sub-questions). See how categories and subcategories were integrated in the coding frame structures in Appendix E. For each source of data, I devised the units of coding based on meaning, words, topics, and subtopics emerging from the data.

Finally the third type of units of analysis—*context units*—were the ones which lay in the background: They gave context to meaning. Schreier (2012) explains the strategy of segmenting your data in units of coding through the metaphor of *cut and paste*. This is basically what the researcher does with his/her data. The researcher takes these pieces of data away from the rest, but he/she eventually comes back to see what is left of the material. The surrounding pieces are the context units. As a researcher, I came back to the context units “in order to contextualize the meaning of a given unit of coding” (Krippendorff, 2004; Rustemeyer, 1992; in Schreier, 2012, p. 133).

How the Data Analysis Was Conducted in This Study

For reasons of method (documentary analysis and practitioner research), origin, and classification of the data, the coding and analysis of the data took varied *tempos*. I first coded and analyzed the instructor’s (secondary) data; then, I proceeded with the students’

final papers (primary data); and lastly, I coded and analyzed the third source of data, the survey (secondary data). I did this strategically, because I wanted the voice of the instructor to give her side of the story to the context of the final papers. I considered that by analyzing the instructor's data first, this would allow me to distance myself from the primary data and the survey. As an instructor I was more involved with the data I wrote for the course, so bias issues were more pressing. I did not want to compromise the analysis and the findings of the primary data with the analysis and findings of the instructor's data because of my double positionality in this study.

Based on the coding frame that I had devised for the proposal of this study using *Qualitative Content Analysis* (QCA) for the three sources of data (see Appendix E), I finally started the pilot phase and the analysis of each source of data in this order: 1) instructor's data; 2) primary data (students' papers); and 3) the survey. All the hierarchies that I proposed in the tentative code framing were kept for the three sources of data. The codes and sub-codes changed for the primary data mainly, after I did the pilot phase (See Appendix E, Final Coding Frame of Primary Data).

Secondary data: The instructor's data. The instructor's data included five main document sources: the five syllabi (one per cohort); the instructor's pedagogical materials; evaluation and grading procedures; the instructor's notes; and personal memories underlying my course of action. Because I worked on my own and not in the company of a research group with other coders, I first ran a pilot phase of the coding frame and came back to run a second one after 10 days. I started testing the coding frame and coding the data once more after another 14 days.

I devised several matrices of data, so that I could contrast the content in the written material designed by the instructor. I used Atlas.ti to find common codes and trends in the data. After that, I built matrices for all the data to compare the texts chronologically in order to see the subtle similitudes and changes (syllabi, handouts, exercises, textbooks used in each cohort, and evaluation system). For example, I organized the syllabi in comparative units of analysis displayed in matrices. I used Atlas.ti first to do a first coding of the documents of the syllabi. This strategy allowed me to see general and more specific recurrent topics, which I coded accordingly. I used the Atlas.ti initial coding in a more detailed manual analysis which I applied to each unit or dimension. In this way, specific words, inferred content, layout organization and presentation of texts (bold, capital letters, italics), repetitions, and/or overlapping information were codified according to each unit of analysis and subcategory. This coding strategy allowed me to see, for example, that the syllabi had major modifications after one year—Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 were more alike, but the syllabi for Fall 2011 and Spring 2012, which were similar, differed from the former ones. Similar trends were observed with the other sources of data.

The instructor's handouts and instructions, the tasks of *The Four Step* project, and the visual documents given to the students with instructions to do their writing were compared in the matrices and served as the basis for the narrative I present in Chapter 5.

Primary data: Students' final papers. Using Schreier's (2012) suggestion to pilot the data, I selected a 10% of the primary data (two final papers) and ran two pilot phases to adjust the coding frame with an interval of 20 days between each pilot phase. The pilot phase rendered a new classification of subcategories that were grounded in the same data. I used this inductive way to adjust the sub-categories according to the emerging codes (see

Appendix E, Final Coding Frame of Primary Data). I coded all the data according to the frequency of codes.

I used phrases, words, and ideas that could be grouped under themes and subthemes to analyze the data in the categories and subcategories. For example, the texts that resulted from coding students' papers under Code 8 (Strategies used by students) was subdivided into subcategories based on the paper that showed more in depth description of these strategies. I divided the discourse of students on 13 subcategories to analyze the content of the other 19 papers.

The original coding framework contained four dimensions: 1) local meanings and interpretations; 2) intertextuality; 3) common interpretations; and 4) personal interpretations. These dimensions were piloted and reported a total of 27 codes (and some subcodes). For the presentation of the data in Chapter 6, I merged dimensions 3 and 4. With respect to the second dimension, *intertextuality*, I decided to analyze—for procedural issues and the nature of the papers—only one final paper to study the intertextuality in a deeper way. I used a new coding frame that integrated audio, visual, and linguistic subcategories to analyze the verbatim sample (VS) that two students used in their final paper. Then I analyzed students' EPP analyses of the VS: their interpretations of meanings through the words and concepts (See Chapter 6, *Analysis of One Final Paper: Students' Ideas and Intertextuality*). The narrative of the verbatim sample in the forms of transcript,¹¹ audio and visual texts gives the discourse organization three main categories or dimensions (which in the description of the

¹¹ This transcript was made by two students in order to use it as a corpus for the phonetic analysis in the EPP final project.

data become sections or parts). These categories or dimensions were at the same time subdivided into subcategories responding to a DA coding.

Overall, issues that needed more support from language structure—as in the subcategories that showed personal/sociocultural/and physical language perception: e.g. categories (C) common language interpretation and (D) personal language understanding of Students' papers coding frame structure as shown in Appendix B. Further details were considered in each paper, as I analyzed the data inductively to see the relevance of supporting evidence of issues.

Secondary data: The survey. The QCA coding frame for the analysis of the data of the post-experience on-line survey helped with the organization of the participants' responses. For each question, I coded the most salient information given in ideas, words, and inferred information. I grouped the frequency of codes in major themes, topics and subtopics and analyzed what most of the participants (39) expressed (see Chapter 7).

The Use of Software in This Study

Glaser (2007) has argued that software can limit the way researchers can look at data via the imposition of arbitrary codes. Corbin (Corbin and Strauss, 2008), Charmaz (2006) and Creswell (2007), on the other hand, contend that software, used correctly, can help the researcher with the organization of data, the coding process, the writing of memos, and the connection of the emerging themes without the obligate imposition of bias or the arbitrary exclusion of perspectives. Evaluating the coding frames is the researcher's task and not that of the tool, however. Software can help researchers with qualitative research by facilitating thematic organization and other research amenities, but the researcher must be attentive to

predispose his/her view to how the software tool can anticipate connections across data or suggest certain coding schemes.

The above makes reference to the use of software in the grounded theory method, but irrespective of qualitative method, it is also valid in any other qualitative analyses where the researcher may want to make use of technology. Researchers new to some methods of analysis will still have to learn by doing, as there is no straight path to qualitative data analysis, with or without software.

Software and manual coding in the data analysis. The analysis of the data was time consuming, especially because I was learning to use Atlas.ti. At the same time, I had to retype the primary data that came in scanned documents. Using word, I created matrices with dimensions. The scanned documents would not allow me to analyze the primary data using Atlas.ti. Even by converting these data into a word file using Adobe Reader was troublesome: The profuse notes and comments handwritten by the instructor's revision of the final papers made the documents impossible to be coded using Atlas.ti. The secondary data was much more manageable as they came in word documents that I was able to upload as hermeneutic units in Atlas.ti.

Atlas.ti software permits the coding of qualitative data systematically and creatively and managing all kinds of data (visual, audio, printed, and so on.) in any digital format: Atlas.ti "handles an unsurpassed number of media formats... [and] supports text, graphic, audio and video formats" (Atlas.ti, p. 3). It has also been designed for solitary analysis or team-work (p. 5). Based on grounded theory coding, Atlas.ti also allows comparing data and cross referencing disciplines by leading you to connect information and withdraw conclusions based on the themes you have found in your data. By grounding your

interpretations in the data, researchers can interpret it inductively. As this program is based on hermeneutic units to sort out the emerging themes coming from different texts (data), the researcher has a powerful tool to cross reference information and establish connections among distinct data items.

I combined Atlas.ti software for qualitative analysis with manual coding. I only made use of the data that came in PDF and word formats particularly. This allowed me to work on the main dimensions and convert them into hermeneutic units. I did not take much advantage of the tool with the primary data and the media formats because of the time it took me to learn to use the new software tool. Atlas.ti was an exceptional tool to code the instructor's data, however, and part of the data of the survey. I kept manual logs (Hart, 2001; Hart, 2006) in combination with the coding of the hermeneutic units in Atlas.ti.

The advantage of coding the data manually was that this allowed me to pay more attention to the meaning and content in micro and macro texts. This served me to establish relationships, get to main themes, and connect with other information given in the various sources of data.

The data analysis was conducted in a very strategic and systematic way where the quantitative supported the qualitative and vice-versa. The pilot phases were time consuming, but rendered good results at the end. Analyzing the intertextuality of all the 20 papers in this study, as I had formerly intended, would have taken extra time and additional chapters in this dissertation. This is because each verbatim sample in the students' final papers had their individual particularities in terms of media genre and intertextuality at the audio, visual, and linguistic levels. By devising new dimensions and a coding frame to explore the intertextuality in only one paper, I created a framework that used audio, visual, and

linguistic dimensions of analysis to look at intertextual elements in various types of texts. This semiotic and linguistic analysis could be used in the future to explore the other genres of media discourse in the remaining papers. Finally, and as a round conclusion of this experience, the QCA coding frame served the analysis of the three sources of data in a focused and streamlined way.

Trustworthiness and Validity

In qualitative content analysis (QCA), as in any other qualitative method, *validity* is a more common notion than *objectivity* and *reliability* in quantitative studies (Schreier, 2012). Validity has also been referred to as *trustworthiness* in the qualitative paradigm (Guba and Lincoln, 2004). However, QCA usually combines features from both traditions, quantitative and qualitative (Schreier, 2012), which uses quantifiable language data to support qualitative interpretations. In this sense, one strategy helps the other, and the lines between quantitative and qualitative crisscross. These two paradigms should allow the researcher to explore the data and interpret it for the sake of the research.

For Bauer, Gaskell and Allumn (2010), the qualitative and quantitative traditional paradigms have brought a fruitless polemic in the social sciences. For the authors, “there is no quantification without qualification”; “no statistical analysis without interpretation; therefore, “methodological pluralism within the research process [should prevail] “beyond the law of instrument” (Bauer, Gaskell & Allumn, 2010, pp. 8-9).

The use of a survey instead of interviews in this qualitative study shows how the instrument served this research. According to Bauer et al. (2010) surveys have been viewed in the social sciences much as part of quantitative social research the same as “the

questionnaire... and standard statistical software packages” (p. 7). Here, the survey served as qualitative data because of the nature of most open questions. The participants’ answers also helped in the interpretation and triangulation of the primary data, and the instructor’s (secondary) data. The survey validated the other two types of data and at the same time brought new perspectives that I added to students’ perceptions of the foreign language.

Two important characteristics of QCA that I followed were consistency of coding, and systematization of the coding procedure. In consistency of coding, Schreier (2012) advises the use of double-coding. This is, either you ask another researcher “with similar cultural background” (Schreier, 2012, p. 34) to code some part of the data for you, or you do it yourself after 10 or 14 days of coding your material for the first time. I followed the second procedure because I was the only researcher. In systematization, “QCA always requires you to follow the same sequence of steps, regardless of your research question and your material” (Schreier, 2012, p. 34). The researcher who uses QCA needs to capture what he/she has set out to find in the data by developing a coding frame. Data will need to support the researcher’s claims on “social and personal meaning” (p.34).

I created a coding frame for the three sources of data (see Appendix E), and I ran two pilot phases that lasted between 14 and 20 days for each source of data. The time between the coding procedures helped with aspects of reliability of the frame of coding—which I had created for this study six months before (see Appendix E). I validated and disproved the first coding frame (categories, subcategories, and the hierarchical levels between them), especially the coding frame for the primary data (see Appendix E, *Final Coding Frame of Primary Data*).

In the study I included the validity procedures from QCA, as they apply to the process of interpretation of data. This process followed a systematic strategy of coding. However, this was “ not a set of ‘rules’ that can be followed step-by-linear-set to get guaranteed results. There is no ‘scientific method,’ even in the ‘hard’ sciences, if by this we mean such a set of rules to follow. Rather, research adopts and adapts specific tools of inquiry and strategies for implementing them (Gee, 2009, p. 11)

In any qualitative research, the author has to maintain an ethical accountability of his/her findings and interpretations; the investigator’s understandings of what the subjects say or write needs to be coherent with the evidence. In order to make studies reliable and valid, many researchers triangulate different data. I triangulated the data coming from students’ final papers, the data from my teaching notes and pedagogical material, and the responses from the online survey (Chapter 7). This is exactly what I had mentioned before for QCA. Besides all the above I used member check or peer review.

Member check of Chapter 5. I had three of my colleagues as external readers, or member *checks*. Nancy, Frank and Lionel helped me to critically review Chapter 5 of the dissertation especially because of my personal involvement in this self-narrative to describe and analyze my own-generated data. The first colleague, Nancy expressed:

Professor Lombana's EPP course is put together very rationally; there is a wide variety of the literature in the field, the handouts are clear, to the point, and the idea of The Four Steps, quite creative. I find the question about the emphasis of the course very relevant. In my view, the great need of Spanish speaking students of EFL is to perceive, identify and realize certain sounds – with a focus on realization, especially vowel sounds along with a few consonant sounds, nonexistent in Spanish. The other great need is that of intonation where stresses in phonic groups, clauses and stretches of discourse also needs to be perceived, identified and realized. Thus, learning phonetic transcription and indicating stress, cadence and the like are absolutely necessary.

She also suggested a more transversal use of phonetic transcription that could be a central objective of the course:

Therefore, the recommendation is to include phonetic transcription and analysis transversely and not as a discrete objective in the course plan. On the basis of linguistic theory, the concept of 'pronunciation' could be more adequately conceptualized as *realization*, *utterance* or *production*, depending on the case.

In addition to the above the complexity of the tasks in the EPP course for third semester students did not go unnoticed, and Nancy expressed:

Now, keeping in mind such needs and considering third semester students' linguistic and communicative competence in the language, it is worth taking a look at the degree of complexity of the course design. Relying on Professor Lombana's statement on page 43:¹² “many of the instructions that I wrote, scared students because of the bulk of information”, it is obvious that the amount of directions and streamlining is excessive; instead of simplifying the students' tasks, they were made more complex. The points included in the handouts could probably be considered in the class activities through demonstration, exercise and dialogic teaching. The directions could be stripped down considerably so they do not result in a distraction for the students. It is quite demanding to follow all of them.

Chapter 5 included the instructor's personal account of the context, her surrounding academic life, and the pedagogical materials that led to *The Four Steps*, the pedagogical strategy that guided students' final project of EPP. There are no field notes of how classes took place, except for the instructor's notes of class preparation and scattered information about the students' behaviors. The interaction with the students might have been developed in a dialogic teaching, but this cannot be proved for there is only documentary evidence. One thing is certain, though: Students received instructions and recommendations in the instructor's handouts. At the same time, they were also exposed to visual and practical demonstrations and explanations in class. The products that resulted from the teaching-learning practice were the primary data in this study—students' *final papers*.

¹² Former page 43 of Chapter 5 corresponds to page 216 in this dissertation.

The second colleague who read Chapter 5, Frank, acknowledged the information in Chapter 5 by saying: “I declare that all the information given by CLAUDIA HELENA LOMBANA concerning the institution in which we work, corresponds exactly to the reality she describes in her dissertation.” This seemed a type of a certification validating the information presented in Chapter 5.

The third colleague, Lionel, gave two readings to the chapter. In the first, he suggested I should work on reducing the behind the scenes description, observe the pattern of ‘personal evaluation’ and combine more visual elements with the prose, as I cite below. In his second review, I was unable to figure out the recommendations. I show below what he expressed the first time he reviewed the chapter:

- 1) You have overlapped the behind the scenes description of your practice and the conceptualisation of such work. I THINK YOU SHOULDN'T do so. I find it confusing and unfocused.
- 2) At times you fall into the pattern of 'personal evaluation' and you get carried away. You should back up your personal assessment with relevant theory, field notes and analysis of the ethos of the teaching at a public university much more often.
- 3) Try to mix visual elements with your prose much more often. I am positive some of your comments and key observations can be better understood when coupled with charts and diagrams.

I incorporated the above comments to show how valuable the readers’ perspectives were to Chapter 5. For me, the researcher, it was an intricate issue to put down this experience in writing and make it understandable. My colleagues’ critical view to Chapter 5 made me realize how difficult it was to read my personal account of a past experience relying on pedagogical material that I produced, the texts that I chose for the course, and the evaluation procedures that I implemented. The perception of myself as an instructor and researcher became blurry. Without having the fieldwork notes of what happened in the classroom, but

relying just on documents, made this study weak in terms of an account of events of teaching practice.

Chapter 5 is placed in this dissertation to give the context to the final papers, but the above comments need to be considered for a future teaching-learning practice of the content-based course of English phonetics and phonology. The teaching should be evaluated and researched by a group of researchers. A new design for some other study about the content course of EPP is highly recommended. In this study the researcher should be an outsider to the classroom and the course.

Member check of Chapters 6 and 7. In order to share the results of the analysis of the 20 papers and the survey, I invited the 44 students who wrote the 20 papers and all the students who answered the survey. I used e-mails and my Facebook page. I prepared a two-hour-presentation that took place at the *Department of Modern Languages* in the *Video Room No. 1* on February 16, 2015. Four of my former students attended: Aldo, who wrote the paper about *Obama*, and Lara and Pam who wrote the paper called *The Wedding Dress* in this study. Lara and Pam had also answered the survey. Tatum, a former student of EPP, attended the invitation but was not among the 44 students who wrote the 20 papers; she did not answer the survey either. One alumna of the program was invited by Lara and participated in this event.

Aldo expressed that he could not analyze *Obama's* intonation tracing some of his Hawaiian speech features as he wanted. I commented that this was not feasible, for the EPP was mainly a basic course; such an analysis would have needed a more advanced knowledge of English phonetics and phonology. Lara, for her part, commented that in one of my interpretations of their final paper, I had not referred to the *emotions* that they had

recognized in the voices of the speakers. I said I was going to revise that section in Chapter 6 and to refer to that aspect.

Unfortunately not many of the participants I invited attended. Several of these participants had already graduated; others were in the last semesters of their programs and about to graduate. Others had already graduated, were sophomores, or were overseas in international exchange programs. I knew two were in exchanged programs in Brazil and Germany, and one who graduated last year is in England. The participants' busy agendas and life in Bogotá might have made things really complicated for many to attend, or they might have been not interested.

Finally, in issues of trustworthiness and reliability I have had to deal with my biases in terms of what I thought, what I found, and how I interpreted the data in all the chapters. There was no time to confront the results of my findings with many of those who wrote the final papers (Maxwell, 2007). The data analysis was presented in an easy narrative, where complex issues existed. I believe there is still a need for a more heuristic and integrated outsider's perspective in this study.

Chapter 4

Theoretical Framework

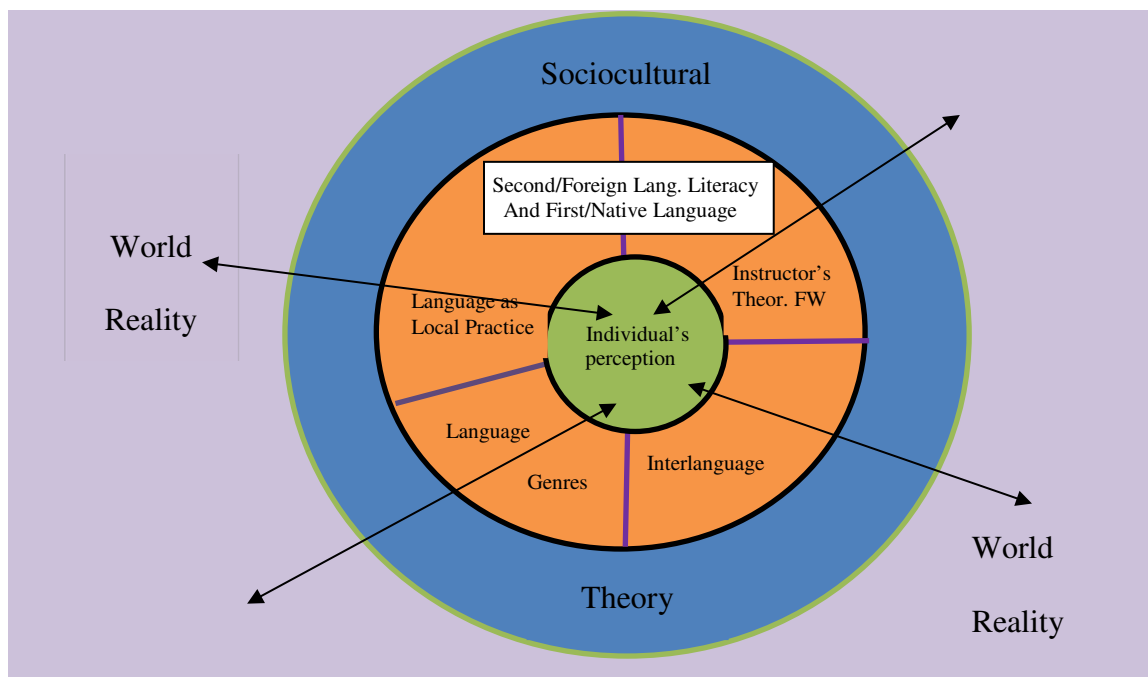
This study is framed in *Vygotsky's macro sociocultural theory* (Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991; Wertsch, 1985) with specific attention to the relationship he established between *Thought and Language* (Vygotsky, 1986), and our surrounding environment (Vygotsky, 1934). Within this frame, I place foreign language (FL) and perception in its immediate local context: the participants' instructional, local, regional and national milieus. These environments enrich local linguistic communities, whose sociocultural construction—the immediate outside, physical world—is geographically, socially and culturally specific, particular and different from that of the foreign language (also referred as *target language*, TL). It is in this local reality where our *perception* of the world allows us to interpret situations and events that are closest to us (local) or distant (foreign). This social reality is at the same time mediated by our everyday language and the language of the virtual world of texts (printed, visual, audio, and semiotic in general) within a socio historical time and space. The world of texts allows us to approximate far away represented worlds, and our physical experiential perception contributes to our understanding of these representations. That is, individuals interpret their reality from their *perceptions* using their physical senses, their cognition, and what they have experienced in their lives. We construct experiences using both, the physical and the psychological in interplay with the environment. The bridge connecting the physical world and peoples' perceptions of this world is *language*, which at the same time helps us construct our understanding of the world.

With this in mind, I have placed human perception at the core of this framework, for individuals interpret their own reality from their own perceptions (physical and experiential), and it is through the medium of language that they interpret their world and take action. I have adopted Gibson's (1968) definition of human perception in learning and development in both physical and experiential relation. This also goes in line with Vygotsky's (1934; 1986) tenet of human developmental stages where the environment influences development.

Between the sociocultural world and an individual's perception—where the relationship is far from being unidirectional—I have integrated a conceptual framework that identifies the phenomenon of language and instruction (*language literacy*) from four perspectives. The first theoretical perspective I adopt is Pennycook's (2010) theory of language as a local practice (LLP), which grounds the use of language in specific social activities. The second is Bakhtin's (1981) philosophy of language which states that “the study of verbal art can and must overcome the divorce between an abstract ‘form’ and an equally abstract ‘ideological’ approach” (p. 259). For Bakhtin, “form and content in discourse are one... [because] verbal discourse is a social phenomenon...from the sound image to the furthest reaches of abstract meaning” (p. 259). I also address Bakhtin's concepts of speech communication and genres in relationship to a broad philosophy of language and the text. The third stance of language includes Selinker's (1972) theory of *interlanguage* (IL), where the influence of the first language (native or mother) and other phenomena are perceived in the second language learner's production (outcomes). Finally, the fourth lens is the instructor's philosophical approach underlying the *Course of English Phonetics and Phonology*. These four perspectives add to Vygotsky's sociocultural macro

theory and Gibson’s definition of perception. The theoretical framework for this study is represented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The Theoretical Framework in this Dissertation



Sociocultural Theory and Issues of Second/Foreign Language Learning

The sociocultural theory of L.S. Vygotsky is important in this dissertation because it is in Robbins’s terms a *macrotheory* (2001, p. ix). It engenders the “genetic-developmental (e.g. genetic starting point) approach in both the research and pedagogy of theories of language, viewing all learners within the understanding of their *potentiality*” (Robbins, 2001, p. xi). Sociocultural theory explores the development of the individual within his or her cultural environment where language has a social function, and at the same time language is a psychological tool for thought (Vygotsky, 1986). Also, L.S. Vygotsky was not only centered in the linguistic aspect of language, but he also assumed that language, as a

social mediator, aids the development of psychological processes of thought—language is a semiotic tool that helps mediate thoughts and the knowledge of the outside world.

Vygotsky's work was grounded in “philosophical, psychological, and linguistic traditions that have influenced Western students of language” (John-Steiner, 2007, p. 136).

Different from the linguistic American classic tradition, which has been more structuralist, the Russian view of language during Vygotsky's time was more psycholinguistically oriented (Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991). Under this view, language is also a semiotic tool that allows us to represent the world as well as to reflect on it (think about it) (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). At the same time, it is through the representations we make through language that we get to know the world, and this changes us in turn. There is no wonder why Vygotsky's ideas about language have been compared to the Sapir and Whorf hypothesis, which states that we can see the world in certain ways depending on the cognitive differences that grammars have in each language (Ratner, 1991).

In Vygotsky's theory, “the Cartesian dichotomy between thought and language” (John-Steiner, 2007, p. 137) is rejected. Thinking and speaking, in Vygotsky's theory, are contained in the unit *word meaning* (John-Steiner): Thus the interlocked relationship between language and thought. The developmental changes of language can be observed throughout different periods in our lives (where history and ontogenesis combine) and in the contexts where we live (the sociocultural environment). This double function of language helps us develop different processes of thinking. This places Vygotsky's theory in the center of any social activity, and more so in formal education where language is usually the main mediator between thought, knowledge, and the outside world (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). As language is a major semiotic mediator that allows us to gain knowledge of the world around

us, Vygotsky's macrotheory permeates the other theoretical parts of the conceptual framework in this dissertation, for language and meaning are at the core of perceiving and appropriating the world for our own sake.

Second language acquisition, applied linguistics, and sociocultural theory. In the field of second/foreign language studies, it is essential to go back to the distinction I made earlier in the methodology, where I mentioned that the field of applied linguistics is an older umbrella name that includes second language acquisition (SLA). However, in orthodox SLA, Birdsong (2004, as cited in Davies, 2004) contends that SLA is an independent field that belongs more to linguistics applied as "the purpose of SLA research is to further out linguistic understanding, not to develop more effective ways of learning and teaching languages" (p. 20). Applied linguistics has more commonly addressed research about problems of language coming from language practice. This includes the field of *language education* (pedagogy) and the application of theories coming from SLA (Brown, 2004).

Traditionally, applied linguistics research has revolved around language teaching practice and has involved diverse questions and methodologies (Brown, 2004). Theories coming from SLA may revert to practical issues for second/foreign language teaching and learning in applied linguistics, but not necessarily. This is a key difference, because the main purpose of second language research is universal theory. However, according to Rosemond, Florence, and Marsden (2013) more modest theories of smaller scale in the field of second language learning have been emerging.

The field of second language acquisition (SLA) has traditionally claimed a mainstream *scientific* path of research, where language is still mainly studied through experiments conducted to test isolated variables emulating laboratory conditions, and where

language is still researched from a linguistic and psychological stand-point (Gass & Mackey, 2005). Block (2003) and Breen (2001a; as cited in Block, 2003) advocate for an “expanded agenda for SLA” that “takes into account not only cognitive and linguistic aspects of SLA, but also *what learners, their social environment and interactions between the two bring to the process of SLA*” (emphasis added) (p. 121).

The sociocultural approach to SLA has been accepted more recently, with a few SLA researchers encouraging a wider agenda to explore the social context (Block, 2003; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). The natural local environment impacts language learning and adds a layer of complexity that requires research to be more interdisciplinary (Block, 2003). Because SLA has been characterized by two salient *scientific* traditions—behaviorist and cognitive-computational—“[t]he third tradition, the dialogical, is rather unknown to the mainstream SLA community and is regarded as ‘unscientific’ by SLA researchers,” says Johnson (2004, pp. 10-11). This approach to SLA deals with various factors intervening in second language learning, which are difficult to measure, thus the unfavorable view of many SLA researchers to accept the validity of results (Block, 2003). For mainstream SLA investigators, diverse social variables in second language learning are difficult to control in natural environments, therefore the dubious reliability to test theory (Johnson, 2004).

In the theoretical discussions about second language learning, many theories only approximate this complex phenomenon. This is what Littlewood (2004) calls “‘middle-level’ [theories] rather than comprehensive theories of second language” (p. 515). Writing grand theories obviously involves a philosophical dispute between the quantitative and qualitative paradigms, which also transfers to both applied linguistics and SLA research (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Research in SLA has been eminently quantitative (empirical

research in Mackey still shows this trend), with a wider agenda that has started to explore “learner internal mechanisms that impact second language (L2) learning..., social and cultural factors” along with their initial interest on “innate linguistic universals” (Mackey, 2007, p. 1). One of the goals in SLA is to conduct research on interaction and use different researchers’ perspectives to complete a theory of interaction. Investigators have been contributing with “the multitude of variables which impact the L2 learning process” (Mackey, 2007, p. 1), and up to this day there is still no “universally accepted theory of second language acquisition” (Mackey, 2007, p. 1). Most research on interaction has focused on linguistic features in morphology and syntax, some on lexical aspects, but little interaction research has been focused on the “acquisition of phonological features or pragmatics” (p. 3) in second language. Several linguistic sub disciplines have been in charge of addressing specific problems of language phenomena, thus the diversity of linguistic inquiry. This type of research has been mainly quantitative (Mackey, 2007).

Based on the object of research that each subfield in linguistics has identified as their unit of analysis, linguistics and SLA have greatly contributed to every single aspect of language through their sub disciplines (e.g. phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, discourse, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and pragmatics among others). The influence of the linguistic methodological quantitative approach to language research and its contribution to understand language is undeniable. Each subfield in linguistics has had an influence in SLA, with specialized research on the varied issues of first and second languages (Davies, 2004).

However, the results of research in linguistics and SLA, which come from a systematic development of theory and language analysis, have to be interpreted very

carefully for purposes of language education. Language practitioners, who currently seem to do their jobs without incorporating much linguistics theory, seem to have lost confidence in the abstract information coming from linguistics and SLA. They do not seem to see a practical use for these abstract constructions on language teaching (Gut, Trouvain, & Barry, 2005). Second language phonology and the separate practice of teachers in the field of foreign languages (e.g. pronunciation) is only one example (Gut et al., 2005). This may be the major trend today, as language education relies more on pedagogy than linguistic theory.

Pennycook (2010) has criticized applied linguistics and SLA for the traditional position of looking at language from the concept of *system*, which still prevails in research and language education—Bakhtin (1981) also criticizes the prevailing structuralist nature of language studies. For both, Pennycook and Bakhtin, language conceived from the unidirectional perspective of system loses the potential as a social phenomenon localized in the community of speakers and not in the system itself. The system emerges from the localized community. In his perspective, language, which has been customarily defined from a lexicogrammatical system “rather than by locality or by their speakers” (Pennycook, 2010, p. 130), has multiple points of origin in “different social, cultural and geographical contexts” (p. 130). Language—seen as a sociocultural practice— “entertains varieties in their own right” (p. 130). For Bakhtin (1981), varied social contexts give language a natural setting for the existence of secondary genres (e.g. the language of multiple professions and human activity). These secondary genres, at the same time, build upon the speakers’ primary genre (the vernacular language), which is used by most speakers of a first language.

The linguistic influence of language viewed as a system (even in sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics) in quantitative research on second language has been countless.

Linguistic findings need to be applied carefully in the field of second/foreign language education because they need to be well interpreted, adjusted, and applied in second/foreign language teaching and learning: instructors are not describing a linguistic corpus of data in the classrooms. They are creating and mediating between the second/foreign language and the learners who need or want to develop a communicative competence in the target language.

For the past 40 years, the teaching-learning of second/foreign languages has been trying to offer a more *natural* communicative learning. Learners need to acquire a communicative competence that allows them to get their message across. According to Savignon (1997), this linguistic competence includes “grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence” (p. 49). This competence, be it in the first or second/foreign language is *relative* (Savignon, 1997, p. 45) because: “We make the best use of what we *do* know, of the contexts we have experienced, to get our message across” (Savignon, 1997, p. 45). Thus, language as a system is one important component of the second/foreign language process of learning, but not exclusively. Whether the learners are in a natural or an instructional environment, providing a complete second/foreign language education will always be a challenge. The debate between language teaching methodologies is still going on, as well as the debate about SLA theories (Brown, 2007).

Environments and the type of stimuli they offer are key factors in people’s language development—whether it is a first (*L1*), a second (*L2*), or a foreign language (*FL*). In Vygotsky’s (1934) words, the environment and the people who live in it influence the child’s development of speech and the use of concepts. This is also true for learners of *L2*

and FL. The concept “represents the meaning of our words” (Vygotsky, 1934, p. 9). We learn concepts with the people who surround us in our speech communities, and as we become adults, our child’s word meaning acquire a different structure (Vygotsky, 1934). Elementary psychological functions, given the right conditions, evolve into higher psychological functions.

The sociocultural environment that gives life to language—prompting cognition to develop thought in a dialectic relationship with the environment (Vygotsky, 1978)—needs to be addressed in a developmental, dialogical, and holistic view of language. For Vygotsky the “environment constitutes a source of all the child’s specific human traits, and if the appropriate ideal form is not present in the environment, then in the child the corresponding activity, characteristic or trait will fail to develop” (Vygotsky, 1934, p. 16). For adult second/foreign education, this has a great meaning. Adults come with a perception of the world and language. If these adults failed to obtain certain ‘ideal forms’ as Vygotsky said, second/foreign language education will be more demanding on them, especially because in instructional environments the use of concepts to learn about language itself is frequently employed (e.g. grammatical concepts, and the use of a meta-language to refer to language itself).

By using different forms of language in the classrooms, and specifically by using the academic genre (in L1, L2, or FL), the semiotic nature of the academic discourse cannot be avoided. The field of education is a secondary genre (Bakhtin, 1981) that uses a professional form of discourse: academic language. And it is in instructional environments where the Vygotskian socio-sociocultural process of language development takes place right before educators’ very eyes (see John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996).

With the advent of psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics in the 1970s, the field of applied linguistics and second language research has opened new avenues of research. Research on language has focused on language performance (use). The sub disciplines of second language phonology (Hansen Edwards & Zampini, 2011; Pennington, 2007), discourse analysis (Schiffrin & Tannen, 2001) and the exploration of language ideologies in linguistics, anthropology and other related social sciences (Schiffrin, Wooland & Kroskrity, 1998) are proof of the shifting paths linguistics has taken for the past 20 years. The new trends in the linguistic disciplines are usually disregarded in education, still showing the division between the two professional groups: “linguists who carry out research on language data, and teachers who give language classes” (Gut et al., 2005p. 3). Much of the specialized research is known among linguists in each linguistic sub discipline, but not much is known among language teachers (see literature review).

The above information shows how Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory provides the framework for this dissertation on second/foreign language education and research. Vygotsky’s interdisciplinary work and theory were not just part of psychology, but also oriented towards education and cognitive processes (Wertsch, 1985). His view of language as a sign system serving as the mediator between thought and the outside world, and in the relationship that exists between social and individual thinking processes, allowed him to place his views within a variety of disciplines inside and outside the social sciences (Wertsch, 1985). Language as a semiotic system permeates all human activities. This is what makes the core of Vygotsky’s approach so important for second and foreign language learning, in this particular case. The individual is not placed alone but in the middle of a social context where sociocultural phenomena take place continuously. For Vygotsky,

semiotic processes are part of both the individual and the social group, and our mental processes develop in connection with the surrounding cultural environment (Wertsch, 1985). Vygotsky is the bridge that connects both fields: linguists and language education (Johnson, 2004).

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

The philosophy embodied in the *sociocultural theory*—also known as cultural-historical theory (Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991)—of L. S. Vygotsky is broad and wide, reflecting the intellectual thinking of Vygotsky's socio-historical time in Russia during the first three decades of the twentieth century (Cole & Scribner, 1978; Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991; Wertsch, 1985). Reading this theory is not easy, as many of his writings were left unpublished. His students, colleagues and collaborators made the publication of his posthumous work possible, and only after the political upheaval during Stalin's Russia was eventually appeased (Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991).

Cole, John-Steiner, Scribner and Souberman, (1978), as well as Van der Veer and Valsiner (1991) and Wertsch (1985) acknowledge how Vygotsky's ideas were influenced by many thinkers of his time. His sociocultural theoretical principles derived from philosophers such as Spinoza and Humboldt, the French sociologist Durkheim, and political thinkers such as Marx and Engels. Also, the different schools of thought in German psychology were a powerful attraction in the writings of many Russian psychologists of the time, including Vygotsky and his contemporaries. Gestalt psychology and Piaget's theory on children's development are just two of Vygotsky's inquiry interests (1986), and he was very critical of both.

As this theory is wide and complex, Wertsch (1985) summarizes Vygotsky's theoretical framework in this way:

The three themes that form the core of Vygotsky's theoretical framework are 1) a reliance on a genetic or developmental method; 2) the claim that higher mental processes in the individual have their origin in social processes; and 3) the claim that mental processes can be understood only if we understand the tools and signs that mediate them. (pp. 14-15)

These themes work in interconnection with one another, as higher psychological processes would not take place if there were not genetic and developmental aspects involved. In the same line of thought, there would be no higher psychological processes if there were no mediators (people, and what cultures create as psychological tools to carry out different human activities) (Wertsch, 1985). Vygotsky's great contribution was the analysis of the internal system that was created by semiotic mediation. His theory was founded in "a number of interlocking concepts, such as the notion of higher mental processes, the notion of mediated activity, and the notion of psychological tools" (Kazulin, 1999, p.113). Higher mental processes are social and individual. They develop in sociocultural environments which offer mediational mechanisms; in consequence Vygotsky's great contribution also lies in his "concept of mediation" (Wertsch, 1985, p. 15). At the time Vygotsky contributed this concept, the study of the mind concentrated mainly on genetics.

According to Vygotsky, signs are forms of mediation, and they also have meanings (Wertsch, 1985). The mediational character of signs, including human language, makes signs serve as a bridge between the genetic, the social, and individual processes (Wertsch, 1985). In order for Vygotsky to arrive at this view in his later years, a lot of interdisciplinary work in philosophy, philology, literature, and the social sciences took place. As a result, he proposed his sociocultural theory. "Vygotsky was able to do this partly because of his

familiarity with a broad range of disciplines. However, his success at bridging disciplines also had much to do with the exciting social and intellectual milieu in which he lived” (Wertsch, 1985, p. 16).

Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory (SCT) intends to explain the nature of individuals’ cognitive processes as they evolve in a determined cultural context and time. Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory attempts to explain human mental processes (or functioning) at four levels: “phylogenesis, sociocultural history, ontogenesis, and microgenesis.” (Johnson, 2004, p. 108). Phylogenesis, according to Van der Veer and Valsiner (1991), *speculates* about aspects of human cultural psychological development from most primitive forms to more advanced forms of civilizations.¹³ The sociocultural explains the influence of the cultural environment on people’s psychological development. This, in turn, brings the ontological aspect of human cognitive advancement through the social engagement and participation in the world (Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991). Ontogenesis, therefore, refers to the biological and thinking developmental processes that we all start as babies in spontaneous behaviors. Then as infants, children, adolescents, and finally as adults, the natural and spontaneous behaviors transform aided by the sociocultural environment. This, at the same time, contributes to changes in our mental processes—therefore, the sociocultural development throughout the history of an individual. The last concept, microgenesis, introduced by Werner in the 1920s, was extended in application and given a “historical dimension” by Vygotsky and Luria (Rosenthal, 2006, p. 1) by bringing together the process of cognitive development and action. In this way, microgenesis development can

¹³ The idea of less advanced primitive people and more advanced civilizations was a theme that was popular during Vygotsky’s time among intellectual circles. This idea has been questioned and redefined more recently in the social sciences.

take place in a few seconds—“as in the case of perception and speech” (Rosenthal, 2006, p. 2)—a number of hours, days, weeks, months, and so on. “It is a living process that dynamically creates a structured coupling between a living being and its environment and sustains a knowledge relationship between that being and its world of life (*Umwelt*)” (Rosenthal, 2006, p. 2). In this way, microgenesis relates to the cognitive process in that it “brings about readiness for action” (Rosenthal, 2006, p. 2).

Vygotsky’s concept formation and word and thought. Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory (SCT) is a macrotheory. It is significant in language education because it encompasses a dialectical philosophy of the history of human cultural genesis of *thought* and *language* interconnected with our cognitive and biological development (Vygotsky, 1986). According to Vygotsky, *genesis* means *development* (Kazulin, 1986). And development can be explained through cultural and historical approaches (Kazulin, 1986).

Vygotsky (1986) poses an epistemological issue of how we apprehend our knowledge of the world. For him this is what SCT is about: All human beings acquire knowledge of their surrounding environments through developmental processes that include two planes: internal cognitive ones (elementary and higher psychological processes) and biological ones (maturation). While we grow up and develop, we apprehend the world through signs. Here language constitutes the major semiotic mediator between the external world and our learning in a system that combines speaking and thinking. Consequently, all our activities are mediated through language. Language, in turn, helps develop our elementary thinking processes as children, and then helps mediate and advance higher thinking processes. Our thoughts help us cope with our daily activities of problem solving

mediated through language. This is a symbiotic relationship where language influences thought and vice-versa.

Because Vygotsky's theory is wide, I will present two main tenets of his macrotheory: *concept formation* and *thought and word* (Vygotsky, 1986). My intention in presenting these two sections is to adapt some of Vygotsky's findings to foreign language learning and education with special focus on the *written word* and *discourse* in connection with the *meaning* intended by the writers. Phonetic and grammatical aspects of speech, as Vygotsky says, are the external features. However, on the psychological plane lies what speakers and writers intentionally or unintentionally mean. Deciphering people's meanings is not easy, because meaning is a process that entails complex relationships between speech and thinking, according to Vygotsky. In the case of young adults in the process of learning a foreign language, and assuming Vygotsky's framework of concept formation, they are/or should be at the third phase of abstract concepts in their native language. However, in the process of learning a foreign language, their development might seem behind, as they are just learning a target language.

Concept formation. The development/genesis of speech and thought and concept formation involve three perspectives: 1) *genetic*, or origin; 2) structural, or systemic interrelationships between the psyche and the external form: thinking and spoken/written language; and, 3) functional, the motivating factors that lead to communication in the "speaking/thinking system" (Mahn, 2012, p. 105).

When Vygotsky (1986) started studying concept formation in children, two primary methods of studying concepts in psychology were: 1) the method of definition; and 2) a method that integrated several other methods in the study of abstraction (psychic processes).

The two methods had the shortcoming of studying words and perception processes separately. The first method presented two problems. One was the study of the “finished product of concept formation, overlooking the dynamics and the development of the process itself” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 98). The second problem was that it disregarded “the perception and the mental elaboration of the sensory material that give birth to the concept” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 98). According to Vygotsky (1986):

The sensory material and the word are both indispensable parts of concept formation. Studying the word separately puts the process on purely verbal plane, which is uncharacteristic of the child’s thinking. The relation of the concept to reality remains unexplored; the meaning of a given word is approached through another word, and whatever we discover through this operation is not so much a picture of the child’s concepts as a record of the relation in the child’s mind between previously formed families of words. (pp. 96-97)

As for the second method, it integrated several methods whose purpose was the study of abstraction: “They are concerned with the psychic processes leading to concept formations” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 97). This method, although integrating perceptual traits of impressions, failed to incorporate the “symbol (the word) in concept formation” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 97). The two methods separated “the word from the perceptual material and operate[d] with one or the other” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 97).

Vygotsky’s new experimental method concentrated on the observation of the process of concept formation and not the finished product. He and his colleagues planned an experiment to uncover this process in children and find differences with pure concepts as used by adolescents and adults. Children were given some nonsense words with perceptual characteristics attached to each. Then children were observed in the course of the experiment with the objective of understanding how meaning emerged out of the nonsense words and connected to objects. The aim was to observe how children’s development of

concepts unfolded in the process. One advantage of this method was that it could be used with children and adults not presupposing “previous experience of knowledge on the part of the subject” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 98). A second advantage was that Vygotsky went beyond the *functional* aspect of concept formation by defining its integrated unit: “[A] concept is an active part of the intellectual process, constantly engaged in serving communication, understanding, and problem solving” (Vygotsky, 1986, p.98).

In order to study concept formation, Vygotsky analyzed the conclusions of several experiments of his time. He evaluated Ach’s and Rimat’s conclusion that “real concept formation and abstract reasoning appear only in adolescents” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 99). Ach’s criticism of schemata theory—whose concept formation emerges through the association of word and objects—was validated by Vygotsky. In Ach’s view, concept formation was “a creative, not mechanical passive process” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 99). It emerged in a complex operation whose goal was the solution of a problem. Consequently, concept formation was not merely a process of linking words and objects mechanically.

As important as Ach’s (1921; as cited in Vygotsky, 1986) critique of schema theory was, Vygotsky saw a shortcoming in Ach’s discussion of concept formation: Ach failed to take into account *the means* by which the operation was accomplished. The aspect of *problem solving* (or having a *need*) by itself could not prompt the emergence of concepts. For Vygotsky, the use of *tools* had to be incorporated in the process of problem solving because they were *evidence* of how people were able to accomplish a task. In Vygotsky’s view, explaining “higher forms of human behavior” should “uncover the means by which man learns to organize and direct his behavior” (p. 102) Vygotsky, however, criticized the fact that Ach also viewed concept development formation as unidirectional: “from separate

objects to a few generalizing concepts” (102) this is inductively, or bottom up (down up). For Vygotsky the two planes, bottom up and top down, functioned in an integrated form.

Vygotsky also took into account Uznadze’s (1966; as cited in Vygotsky, 1986, p. 100) communicative aspect of speech in concept formation. For Uznadze, the word was “a tool of [people’s] mutual understanding” (Uznadze, 1966; as cited in Vygotsky, 1986, p. 100). Words are not merely groups of sounds devoid of meaning. A word, for Uznadze, was therefore a concept. In his view, children’s use of words was just a *functional equivalent* of *mature concepts* in adolescents and adults, which varied in structure and quality. Vygotsky’s and Ash’s objection to Uznadze’s differentiation between children’s concepts and those of adults’ based on *functional similarity*, was that “equivalents that look like concepts” (p. 101) had a different mechanism, i.e. a different mode of thinking, that could not be equated with *concept*.

As important as previous experiments were, Vygotsky found that they should account for “the question of the means by which the operation [of concept formation was] accomplished” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 102). For Vygotsky, the explanation of concept formation ought to “disclose the true nature of the process—generically, functionally, or structurally” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 102). In Vygotsky’s view, children and adults used a different way of thinking to approach a problem.

The development of concepts: An experiment. In the experiment to study concept formation, Vygotsky and colleagues (Vygotsky, 1986) used the method of double simulation to observe the development of concepts in children, adolescents and adults. The experiment used double stimulation: 1) objects, and 2) signs to organize the activity. In order to achieve the objective, the experiment organized the problem solving tasks in a

pyramid of concepts: the bottom showed the concrete concepts, while the top the abstract ones. Here, the ascension from concrete to abstract (bottom to top) and vice-versa were equally important. The assumption behind this arrangement was to make the experiment similar to a situation in real life. In this experiment, function was a key issue. This was not a functional entity where the concept was *isolated* and *static*. The concepts were “studied in a live thinking process.” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 105). For this purpose, the experiment was organized in stages, each containing one functional use of a concept. The experiment included the following stages: 1) “formation of concepts”; 2) “the application of a formed concept”; 3) “the use of the concept in free associations”, and 4) “the work of concepts in the formation of judgments and new concepts” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 105).

Vygotsky arrived at the following findings:

- “The development of processes that eventually result in concept formation begins in earliest childhood.”
- “The intellectual functions that in a specific combination form the psychological basis of the process of concept formation ripen, take shape, and develop only at puberty.”
- Before puberty, “certain intellectual formations... perform functions similar to those of the genuine concepts to come.”
- “With regard to their composition, structure, and operation, these functional equivalents of concepts stand in the same relation to true concepts as the embryo to the fully formed organism. To equate the two is to ignore the lengthy developmental process between the earliest and the final stages.” (p. 106).

Vygotsky’s (Vygotsky, 1986) general observation on the experiment was:

Concept formation is the result of such complex activity, in which all basic intellectual functions take part. This process cannot, therefore, be reduced either to association, attention (G. E. Muller), imagery and judgment (K. Buhler) or determining tendencies (N. Ach). All these moments are indispensable, but they are insufficient without the use of a sign, or word. Words and other signs are those means that direct our mental operations, control their course, and channel them toward the solution of the problem confronting us. (pp. 106-107)

In preadolescents, according to Vygotsky (1986), elementary functions continued developing without much change, until the process of concept formation appeared; it was then that the concept appeared in a totally new form. These new forms are “subordinated functions whose performance is mediated by word or sign” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 107). This is crucial in understanding how thinking processes interlock in a new relationship that permits adolescents to execute problem solving operations.

Vygotsky considered *the word* the core component of concept formation: “Real concepts are impossible without verbal thinking. That is why the central moment in concept formation, and its generative cause, is a specific use of words as functional ‘tools’ (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 107). It is “neither the growth of the number of associations, nor the strengthening of attention, nor the accumulation of images and representations, nor determining tendencies... however advanced they might be, [that] can lead to concept formation” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 107).

Vygotsky (1986) saw the importance of this intellectual activity, which could not be measured quantitatively:

The process of concept formation, like any other higher form of intellectual activity, is not a quantitative overgrowth of the lower associative activity, but a qualitatively new type. Unlike the lower forms, which are characterized by the *immediacy of intellectual processes, this new activity is mediated by signs.*” (p. 109)

Also, this intellectual activity was mediated through speech: “Speech itself is based on a relation between sign and a structure of higher intellectual operations, rather than on purely associative connections” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 109).

Vygotsky described the three stages that comprised the process of development of concepts in the child. I will briefly mention the phases and their stages, without much elaboration.

Three basic phases in concept formation in the child. Based on the experiment Vygotsky and his colleagues conducted, he saw three main phases in the genetic development of concept formation. Each phase included several distinct stages with identifiable functions. The **first phase**, called *the formation of syncretic heaps*, describes how the child makes sense of the objects of his/her surrounding world in the way he/she groups them based on his/her perception. This first phase includes three stages: trial-and-error; organization of the child’s visual field (e.g., objects); and a combination of the two former stages with a more complex form in the child’s attempt to group objects (Vygotsky, 1986).

In the **second phase**, *thinking in complexes*, the principal function is “to establish bonds and relations” (p. 135). Here, the child groups objects in an associative way. To his/her subjective perception of objects, the child incorporates characteristics of the objects he/she is manipulating. That is, the child establishes bonds, or complexes to organize his/her surrounding world. These bonds are “concrete and factual rather than logical or abstract” (p. 113), and it could be said that the child’s concepts have a functional equivalence with real concepts, and that he/she already starts showing coherence in his/her thinking. This phase includes “five basic types of complexes, which succeed one another during this stage of

development” (p. 113). These phases are: associative type; collections; chain complexes; diffuse complexes; and finally *pseudoconcepts*. Pseudoconcepts are important because they are a bridge between “thinking in complexes and true concept formation” (p. 119).

The **third phase** is the development of *abstract thinking*. It comprises three stages: 1) unification of *maximally similar* objects by an abstract characteristic or *advanced concept*; 2) grouping by a single attribute called *potential concept*; and 3) the stage of *true concept*, which appears in adolescence.

In the first stage, advanced concept, the functions of unification—as used in synthesis and analysis—appear. This does not mean that the child did not have these functions before when he used complexes, but the process was more elementary then. In the abstract phase:

[T]he advanced concept presupposes more than unification. To form such a concept it is also necessary to abstract, to single out elements, and to view the abstracted elements apart from the totality of the concrete experience in which they are embedded. In genuine concept formation, it is equally important to unite and to separate: Synthesis and analysis presuppose each other as inhalation presupposes exhalation (Goethe). (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 136)

In the second stage, “potential concepts result from a series of isolating abstractions” (p. 137) and it appears in the child at an early age, not in adolescence as was previously thought. This stage is not mechanical and fixed. It can occur throughout the ontogenic development of the child and well into adulthood. Children, adolescents, and adults have elementary forms of thinking, which serve as the roots or foundations for higher processes of thinking.

The use of true concepts, the third stage, is hard to achieve. These are complex forms of thinking, for which language plays a definite role. In many ways, people may show

understanding of the concept in their practical life behaviors but lack the words to explain what it is. For Vygotsky (1986), “Analysis of reality with the help of concepts precedes analysis of the concepts themselves” (p. 139). Arriving at the last stage can be very complicated, with a majority of adults functioning at the preconceptual level only. Adolescents learn to apply concepts based on specific situations and apply them to new circumstances. This is a perceptual transfer of a concept. The concept of *time*, for example, is more difficult to explain than the concept of *table*. The first is abstract, while the second is concrete (physical, tangible).

According to Vygotsky, the task of transfer is not as difficult as trying to define a concept when there is not a previous experience and the concept is abstract: “Much more difficult than the transfer itself is the task of defining a concept when it is no longer rooted in the original situation and must be formulated on a purely abstract plane, without reference to any concrete situation or impressions” (pp. 141-142).

These three phases in concept development, with their respective stages, take the word and its meaning as the main mediator. In the pre-verbal phase, the child is developing his/her understanding of the world through his mediated environment (parents, care providers, visual images, language). In the process of concept formation, the biological (natural) and the historical (sociocultural) have a symbiotic relation. Concepts are meanings that materialize in spoken or written words.

Thought and word. Thought and speech for Vygotsky (1986) occur in a related series of processes that are the product of “the historical development of human consciousness.” (p. 210). It is not a mechanical or parallel process, but a complex dialectical phenomenon, which includes the properties of both speech and thought. In order

to study this relation, Vygotsky looked for a unit that could represent the whole of the entity of *verbal thinking*, or *speech thinking*, according to Mahn (2012).¹⁴ This unit is called *word meaning*: “Word meaning is an elementary ‘cell’ that cannot be further analyzed and that represents the most elementary form of the unity between thought and word” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 212).

For Vygotsky, the relationship between meaning and word is so entrenched that it is difficult to study:

The meaning of a word represents such a close amalgam of thought and language that it is hard to tell whether it is a phenomenon of speech or a phenomenon of thought. A word without meaning is an empty sound; meaning, therefore, is a criterion of ‘word,’ its indispensable component. (p. 212)

In Vygotsky’s English translated version *Thinking and Speech* (1987), Vygotsky’s unit is ‘*znachanie slova*,’ which translates “meaning through language” (Mahn, 2012, p. 100). In Vygotsky’s words (as cited in Mahn, 2012):

[Z]*nachanie slova*’ is nothing other than a generalization that is a concept. In essence generalization and *znachenie slova* are synonyms. Any generalization—any formation of a concept—is unquestionably a specific and true act of thought. Thus, *znachenie slova* is also a phenomenon of thinking. (p. 107)

Meaning through language would be *word meaning* as it is referred to in the English translation of *Thought and Language*, which I mentioned earlier was also translated as *Thinking and Speech*.

Vygotsky criticized the psychology and linguistics of his time, for they viewed and studied the phenomenon of thought and word separately. Psychologists explained the connection between word and meaning through an associative process “established through

¹⁴ In Mahn’s view, the English translation ‘verbal thinking’ loses Vygotsky’s intention of representing “a psychological process/formation/system,” (p. 101) which is what Vygotsky intended to do.

the repeated simultaneous perception of a certain sound and a certain object [or behaviorism]” (p. 212). In Vygotsky’s view, words recall images, situations, things, people, places, and so on, attaching a personal meaning. The linguists studied the external structure and had failed to establish the relation between the two:

Linguistics did not realize that in the historical evolution of language the very structure of meaning and its psychological nature also change. It is not merely the content of a word that changes, but the way in which reality is generalized and reflected in a word. (p. 213).

In Gestalt psychology “the relation between thought and word appears as a simple analogy, a reduction of both to a common structural denominator” (p. 215). Gestalt psychology tried to overcome the association principle in psychology, but created instead “laws of structure formation” (p. 215) to explain the problem of thinking and speech. Under these laws, the two functions became separate entities, making the relation between thought and word a mere analogy and a matter of structure. They also assumed that word meaning was a process that stopped after it emerged. Vygotsky believed that by not distinguishing the relationship between elementary perception and higher psychological functions of thinking, the process of word-meaning development was denied. This stopped the schools of psychology to discover the connection that thinking and speech have through word meaning.

For Vygotsky, the purpose of studying word meanings was “not how meanings develop over long periods of time, but the way they function in the live process of verbal thought” (p. 217). That is, how this process took place, its genesis and sociocultural aspects. In order to do this, he also conceived the development of word meanings in stages, where each stage showed “particular relation between thought and speech” (p. 217), and was an integral part in the development of concepts. For Vygotsky,

The relation of thought to word is not a thing but a process, a continual movement back and forth from thought to word and from word to thought. In that process, the relation of thought to word undergoes changes that themselves may be related as development in the functional sense. Thought is not merely expressed in words; it comes into existence through them. Every thought tends to connect something with something else, to establish a relation between things. Every thought moves, grows and develops, fulfills a function, solves a problem. This flow of thought occurs as an inner movement through a series of planes. An analysis of the interaction of thought and word must begin with an investigation of the different phases and planes a thought traverses before it is embodied in words. (p. 218)

Vygotsky distinguished between two planes of speech: one “inner, meaningful, semantic” and the other the “external, [or] phonetic aspect” (p 218). They both “form a true unity [and] have their own laws of movement” (p. 218). Children develop words. Each word used by a child can mean an entire sentence: “Semantically, the child starts from the whole, from a meaningful complex, and only later begins to master the separate semantic units, the meanings of words, and to divide this formerly undifferentiated thought into those units” (p. 219).

For Vygotsky, the semantic field of words is the inner or psychological plane of thought. This plane makes people evoke thoughts. The external plane is the phonetic and grammatical system, which contribute to meaning. Grammatical forms have their psychological doubles, which explains why a grammatical structure can have several meanings. Also, the changes that people make in structure affect meaning: “One grammatical detail may, on occasion, change the whole purpose of what is said” (p. 222).

Vygotsky differentiated between thought and speech. This is important to take into account because of the instrumentality that foreign language acquires in foreign language education and the idea that you learn a foreign language by learning merely words:

The structure of speech does not simply mirror the structure of thought; that is why words cannot be put on by thought like a ready-made garment. Thought undergoes

many changes as it turns into speech. It does not merely find expression in speech; it finds its reality and form. (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 219)

Vygotsky finds a symbiosis in the relationship between the sounds of words and their meaning, which go in opposite directions. In speech, the child starts from the part to the whole: first with babbling, then words, and later sentences. One word can have a complete thought. In meaning (or semantics) it is the opposite: the child starts from the whole (meaning) to the word; it is later when he is older that he constructs full sentences. For Vygotsky, “the semantic and the phonetic developmental processes are essentially one, precisely because of their opposite directions” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 220).

Therefore, word meanings are composed of two structures: the semantic and the “nominative function” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 223). The semantic structure comprises referent and meaning. In the child, “only the nominative function exists” at the beginning. Semantically, there is only a concrete referent. At this stage the child’s meaning only coincides objectively with the referent that adults have. The child will have to undergo several other stages in order to express meaning at the adult level:

Only when this development is completed does the child become fully able to formulate his thought and to understand the speech of others. Until then, his usage of words coincides with that of adults in its objective reference, but not in its meaning. (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 224).

Vygotsky’s ideas about this development are crucial in foreign language learning, where learning new words does not imply that young adults lack understanding of the concept in their native language. Here, the parallel with children’s learning needs to be delineated very carefully in terms of speech/writing and meaning. Also, the perception of concepts in a new language may differ culturally, semantically, and grammatically, and this makes the whole new speech/thinking system even more complex.

Vygotsky viewed our learning of the world mediated by signs. Language, as our major semiotic sign system, serves as a bridge between the outside world and our thoughts. For Vygotsky, understanding the relation between thought and word, as related to our consciousness, remained unaddressed by the psychology of his time. While psychology continued studying the relation between psychological functions, perception, memory, and thought separately, there would never be an understanding of how language and thought were interrelated (Vygotsky, 1986). Moreover, while thought and speech were considered by psychological linguists as the same thing, the problem would still remain unresolved. For Vygotsky (1978), psychological functions such as “perception, sensory motor operations, and attention” were part of a “dynamic system of behavior” (p. 31) and this is why they should be studied as such.

Perception and Foreign Language Education

In the specific case of adults learning a foreign language in an instructional environment, students already come with perceptions of their own worlds and their native language through their former experiences—which would be the functional aspect of students’ perception. The foreign language classroom, therefore, becomes an extension of this environment with the purpose of exploring and learning the new language (along the way, language is not culture free and usually comes with embedded ideologies).

In instructional environments, the general assumption is that the content of a course will somehow modify how students think, speak, and view a phenomenon. The educational institution, as well as instructors’ motivation and expectations, would be to modify both students’ perceptions on an issue as well as the way they acquire information from a

particular educational experience. Because the question of how we acquire knowledge brings issues of epistemological relativism, Marton and Booth's (1997) assumption that education has norms becomes handy. Education has norms that tell people what they should "be learning and what the outcomes of their learning should be" (p. 2). While people come to educational institutions with their knowledge, after various years in the educational system, they become enculturated. Here, it is assumed that education changes people's perceptions, behaviors, actions, and ways to see the world.

Although the relation between perception and learning has been an issue of great controversy among psychologists, "[t]oday, there is virtually full agreement that perceiving is modified by learning. Disputes now focus on the process of perceptual learning itself. Most theoretical alternatives reflect two underlying themes: discovery and enrichment" (Jolyon West, 2002, p. 487). *Discovery* theory holds that perceptual learning takes place when individuals modify behaviors once they have been exposed to certain stimuli (Gibson, 1969). With respect to *enrichment* theories, perceptual learning is "an enriching sensory experience with specific associations and with rules for its interpretation that derive from past experience" (Jolyon West, 2002, p. 487). Gibson (1969) offers a taxonomy that makes reference to the functional aspect of our perception of the environment in a "stimulus-oriented" theory where the "sources of stimulation" are "objects, space, events, representations of these, and coded sources of stimulation" (p. 15).

Perception can be influenced by conscious or unconscious stimuli in the cultural context where an individual interacts, rendering a style to perceive things (Ratner, 1991). Language plays a central role in the way people represent their worlds. According to the

Sapir and Whorf Hypothesis any particular language can frame the way we perceive the world:

Linguistic symbols are the concepts which constitute our mental schemas, and they therefore determine perception, emotion, sensation, learning, and all other psychological processes. We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation. (Sapir, 1951, p. 162; as cited in Ratner, 1991, p. 39)

Perception and its mediated form. One essential aspect of perception is its mediated form, which is addressed by Vygotsky in his sociocultural theory (Van der Veer & Valsiner, 1991). This is particularly significant in foreign language classrooms, where the entire language experience becomes a compellingly mediated practice, as there is *no natural foreign language culture of speakers* outside the educational environment. Thus, the mediated forms of language and culture that instructors bring to the classroom, in combination with students' personal exposure through electronic media, form a complex combination of people's experiences (percepts) of the foreign language. The foreign language world becomes a "kind of mediated perception, perceiving by means of representations of things and events" (Gibson, 1969, p. 481) that take place in the classroom. Perception of facts combine with peoples' subjectivities as conventional meaning interlock with subjective meanings: "Learners can play with the two levels of meaning and express either one or the other" in the new language (Kramsch, 2009, p. 3). Here, perceptual learning is not a separate process from the total cognitive process, as other processes such as remembering, attaining concepts, and using language also intervene (Gibson, 1969). The sensory stimulation (visual and auditory) and the psychological stimulation (cognitive) allows students to gain understanding of various issues involved in the new language—thus, the enhancement of learning.

A person's psychological perception can be indirectly observed through actions and language, as the "perception process is not public or directly observable (except to the perceiver himself, whose percepts are given directly in experience)" (Jolyon West, 2002, p. 481). According to Helmholtz, "All perception... has an element of inference which is wholly dependent on previous experiences. The inference is equivalent to a conclusion, but an unconscious one" (1925; as cited in Gibson, 1969, p. 21). Abstraction of ideas, such as concepts demand cognitive processes that can be removed from the perceptual process (Gibson, 1969). However, Gibson (1969) finds that in perceptual learning, representations which have taken place prior to concepts, can also serve as a generalized concept in perceptual leaning.

Perception and foreign language. With respect to a second/foreign language, when a person already processes a first language, the physical perception of a new language is said to take place through the native language filter (Avery & Ehrlich, 2008). The much debated theory of transfer from one language to the new (second, third) language is still taken into consideration in second language acquisition (Gass & Selinker, 2001). In L2/FL learning, perception plays an important role: perception of sounds, perception of accents, perceptions of how we see ourselves and others, and perception leading to awareness.

Studies show that the phonological discrimination of sounds in a language start from the time the baby is exposed to the language, allowing this baby to create neurological connections that will allow him/her later to identify the phonological system of his/her native language(s), as perception of sounds precedes production (Velleman & Vihman, 2007). When students are exposed to a foreign language as adults (and second language in general), it is more difficult to train the ear to discriminate and produce the sounds of the

new language, as developmental constraints and cognitive aspects of two language systems in adults play a crucial role (Escudero, 2007). *Production* and *reception* of the sounds of a foreign language, which are two different but related processes that rely on sensory perception (and neurological aspects), become more difficult for adults learning a second language than for very young children (Escudero, 2007). However, this generalization can have exceptions. The critical period hypothesis (CPH)—which establishes that the brain compartmentalizes making any kind of learning (including a new language) more difficult for adults—has also been an issue of debate, as definite evidence is not conclusive (Singleton, 2005). As the phonological aspect of any language is the least privileged of all language skills when learning takes place in adulthood (Celce-Murcia, Brinton & Goodwin, 2007), second language learners may have an accent. However, this is not an impediment to develop other good language skills (e.g., reading, writing, use of grammar and vocabulary, fluency).

As the physical perceptions (such as students' pronunciation) seem to be the most evident to foreign language instructors, there are other cognitive perceptions of the foreign language that come into play that are psychological and that help students grasp the experience of learning a new language. Thus, the physical perception (hearing and producing) also combines with the psychological (cognitive perceptions) resulting in an interpretation of how the foreign language is represented. Constructions through human perceptions are cognitively and culturally embedded and built on language, which serves as a mediator of our physical and cognitive experiences of the world. "Because the perceptual process is not public or directly observable (except to the perceiver himself, whose percepts

are given directly in experience), the validity of perceptual theories can be checked only indirectly” (Jolyon West, 2002, p. 481).

Given all the above, for this dissertation, it is through students’ writing about phonetics and phonology that students’ perceptions of the foreign language, English, will be analyzed. The physical perception is linked to the psychological perception, where one reinforces the other in a symbiosis, thus, allowing us to create a representation of the foreign language in the meanings we express.

Language as a Local Practice, Speech Genres and the Text, and Interlanguage

The philosophical theories that will serve me to address literacy in this framework also have a sociocultural foundation. Using the theory of *Language as a Local Practice* (Pennycook, 2010); how texts are created and the types of genres that speakers and writers can produce (Bakhtin, 1981; 1986b); and the influence of the first language in second/foreign language and the invention of a new code (interlanguage), I expect to illuminate the issue of foreign language writing and meaning. Also, having for background Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory and Bakhtin’s philosophy of written texts, I claim that the interaction among peers, instructors, and texts (audio, visual, printed, and semiotic in general) permeates what writers produce. Texts do not take shape in a vacuum, for individuals interact with other people’s ideas through their conversations and exposure to varied forms of texts. Texts result from a social practice where local discourses, people’s personal interpretations, and information of varied nature are filtered cognitively from diverse sources by language users resulting in individual textual styles (Bakhtin, 1981; 1986a).

To understand literacy in a foreign language context and how participants in this study interpreted and represented the foreign language through its use, I address Pennycook's postulation of *language as a local practice* (2010) along with Bakhtin's (1986b) *centrifugal* and *centripetal* forces that shape language. Then, I briefly discuss Bakhtin's (1986b) observations on *primary and secondary* genres and *intertextuality*. Finally, I introduce Selinker's (1972) main tenets of his theory interlanguage in second/foreign language.

Pennycook's language as a local practice. Pennycook (2010) conceives of language as originating in social *local actions* or *practices*. He maintains that it is in *bundles of actions/practices* enacted through specific social activities where language emerges. In this view, language as a system takes a secondary place, and locality and practice acquire an eminent position. Locality is studied in its "complex manifestations as place"; and practice is seen as "mediated social activity" (p. 1). Language as a local practice is, then, understood as "a set of bundled activities that are repeated over time" (p. 3) in a locality. Typically, the repetition of our actions is a key element, as we withdraw practices from the memories of past experiences and apply what we know to new actions. In this application, we withdraw acquired meaning and transfer it to new situations. Practice is defined from a social stand: "Bourdieu (1977) reminds us [that] practices are actions with a history, suggesting that when we think in terms of language practices we need to account for both time and space, history and location" (Pennycook, 2010, p. 2).

By defining language as a local practice, Pennycook (2010) favors a view where "languages are a product of the deeply social and cultural activities in which people engage" (p. 1). The notion of the local interrogates the universal, the structural, and what has been

categorized as human nature in the abstract. Pennycook's view elevates an inductive interpretation of language over grand theorizing, the most common paradigm in the social sciences in the twentieth century. In adopting this view, Pennycook questions the long prevailing truism in sociolinguistics where "people use languages in particular [abstract] contexts" (p. 2). The idea of studying language mainly as a system takes second place and is superseded by the social and cultural mediation. This is the guiding truism in Pennycook's theory, as the system emerges in the social practice in a specific locality. His objective, then, is to understand how "language operates as an integrated social and spatial activity" (Pennycook, 2010, p. 2) in a specific place and time in history.

It follows then, that it is the social action/practice as grounded in the local that gives origin to distinct genres and discourses. Discourses and genres would not happen if it were not for the multiple social activities (practices) that people engage in pragmatically in everyday life. Social practices comprise multiple forms of human activities, thus the existence of numerous genres and discourses. Deemphasizing language as a system favors the "view of language as doing" (Pennycook, 2010, p. 2).

In Pennycook's perspective, the idea of language in context is also abstract, giving way to different types of systems used according to social contexts. He then reaffirms the importance of addressing language first from the place it emerges:

A discussion of language in place... open[s] up an understanding of the interactive nature of our physical environments, suggesting not so much that language happens in particular places [contexts], but rather that language use is part of a multifaceted interplay between humans and the world. (Pennycook, 2010, p. 2)

Pennycook bases his arguments on theories originating in the social sciences such as "practice theory [and] spatial theory" (p. 3). He also analyzes *creativity* in language based

on one question: “[H]ow is it that a particular version of language with a central core and divergent edges has come to hold sway?” (p. 3). Human acts are *grounded* in everyday practice, and this also extends to the long held position in second language acquisition studies and applied linguistics (language teaching), where language has long been studied mainly from a positivist perspective; here the idea of system has long prevailed, resting value on the places and the activities where language develops.

Pennycook (2010) maintains that by looking at language as *action*, we can understand “how places are interpreted, how the meaning of places is reinforced and changed... suggest[ing] that thinking about language and locality can no longer be contained with a notion of language in context” (p. 2). In action, human agency takes a prominent position: “human agency in relation to repeated language acts” (p. 3).

The concept of local. The concept of the local is juxtaposed with the concept of the *global* in Pennycook’s work. As the concept of *global* is abstract, it can accommodate a variety of interpretations. It can be interpreted as “the homogenizing effects of capital expansion, environmental destruction, cultural demolition or economic exploitation, for example” (p. 4). The local, on the other hand, can mean “the site of resistance, of tradition, of authenticity, of all that needs to be preserved” (p. 4). The local can also carry less positive meanings: It can be judged as “being parochial, limited, constrained, and unsophisticated” (p. 4). It is in the global-local opposition that language is formed. “The local is always defined in relation to something else regional, national, global, universal, modern, new, from elsewhere” (p. 4).

The global is also understood as economic measures, environmental causes, “political organization or media influence” (p. 4). We need to pay more attention to these

ideologies and how they play in our social milieus: How do people appropriate the discourse of the global and make use of it at a local level through their actions? And how are people affected by the global locally in the interplay of language and actions? “Globalization needs to be understood not only in terms of reactions to global movements from above, made possible by media, institutions and technologies, but also in terms of local movements being made global” (p. 4). The global not only works top down, but also bottom up. Language must be understood then in the context of its social embeddedness, which questions emerging notions such as World Englishes, lingua franca, culturally-global understanding, and people’s understanding of their language not based on a European perspective: How are non-European languages understood locally? How are European languages conceived in distinct geographical places out of Europe?

For Pennycook the above question has been addressed in linguistic anthropology “with a particular interest in the notion of language ideologies, or regimes of language (Kroskrity, 2000)... [and how] languages are understood locally.” (p. 5). Ideologies always have different socio cultural components: “[L]inguistic ideologies are never just about language, but rather also concern such fundamental social notions as community, nation, and humanity itself” (Woolard, 2004, as cited in Pennycook, 2010, p. 5). By removing the social context from language, the language sciences have produced an amputated object of study throughout most of the twentieth century (Kroskrity, 2000, in Pennycook, 2010, p. 5). By studying language ideologies as contextual sets of beliefs about language, the cultural system of local beliefs with embedded social and linguistic meanings emerge, showing how people view language (Irvine, 1989, in Pennycook, 2010, p. 5).

The relativism of language. Pennycook (2010), however, warns about a relativism that assumes that all interpretations of language are acceptable. This would mean accepting everybody's perceptions and subjectivities of language at the expense of important research in linguistics. He then clarifies what we need to understand in viewing language locally:

The point in suggesting that we need to take local understandings of language seriously is not to say that anyone may have as much (or as little) to say about language as a linguist, and that therefore all local perspectives are somehow equally valid. This would be to fall into hopeless relativism that simply tries to give credit to everyone's different views. We need far more rigour in our thinking about localism than this: and this applies, to be sure to the broader project of localization: this cannot only be about valuing local perspectives on the world. What we need is to understand that all views on language are located in certain histories and articulated from certain perspectives. (Pennycook, 2010, p. 5)

Perspectives and understandings of language can be unilateral: e.g. Croft's example of traditional grammarians trying to fit modern European languages within a Classical Latin and Greek view (2001; as cited in Pennycook, 2010); in the same line of thinking, a second e.g., European ideologies that language scientists have used to think about non-European languages. On this respect, Nakata (2007; as cited in Pennycook, 2010) adds:

[U]nless we can grasp the locatedness of those languages and their speakers, the ways in which language use is part of everyday activity and the meanings given to those activities, we will not be able to grasp what those languages are and how they mean. (p. 6)

Language as practice. Language as practice is language in activity: “[W]e do literacy language and discourse” (Pennycook, 2010, p. 8) where language means *doing*. The notion of language practice challenges the notion of language *use*, as it is used in linguistics: “The notion of language use... suggests that languages exist out there in the world and can then be taken up and put to some use” (Pennycook, 2010, p. 8). On the contrary, Pennycook “suggests that language as a practice is a product of social action, not a tool to be used.

Likewise, the notion of context may suggest that the use of pre-given languages varies in different locations” (2010, p. 8).

The notion of practice in Pennycook is not something in the abstract, but extends the action to the *doing*: How we talk about language in “terms of an activity” (p. 8). The *doing* becomes the central notion where *context* is what results of the doing:

The notion of practice... presents a way of thinking where the local is not so much a context in which language changes but rather a constituent part of language practice. Practices prefigure activities, so it is the ways in which language practices are moulded by social, cultural, discursive and historical precedents and concurrent contexts that become central to any understanding of language. A focus on language practices moves the focus from language as an autonomous system that preexists its use, and competence as an internal capacity that accounts for language production, towards an understanding of language as a product of the embodied social practices that bring it about. (p. 8)

In the notion of context, as it has been prefigured in linguistics, structuralist models continue to explain the varieties of languages depending on context. According to Bourdieu (1977):

[L]inguists and anthropologists who appeal to ‘context’ or ‘situation’ in order, as it were, to ‘correct’ what strikes them as unreal and abstract in the structuralist model are in fact still trapped in the logic of the theoretical model which they are rightly trying to supersede. (As cited in Pennycook, 2010, p. 9)

Bourdieu affirmed that a theory of practice would emend the truism that language difference is based on a form of contextual variation from a core. For him, the logic between language and context was the same as in the “dichotomous relation between structure and agency” (Pennycook, 2010, p. 9). What was needed, according to Bourdieu, was a theory of practice.

In the field of applied linguistics, Kramersch also favors a theory of practice to bridge the gap between the real world and applied linguistics (2005; as cited in Pennycook, 2010).

Extending the notion of language as local practice, says Pennycook, would help applied linguistics to view language from a different stand-point:

While applied linguistics has always made a particular notion of practice central to its agenda (indeed its very disciplinary cohesion is arguably maintained by its insistence on relevance to practice), applied linguistic conceptualizations of practice as either the implementation of theory (putting things into practice) or the driver of theory (driving lessons from practice) remain considerably undertheorized precisely because practice is seen as theory's other. (Pennicook, 2010, p. 13)

In Pennycook (2010), *practice* and *use* function at the same level, because “the notion of use suggests a prior object that can be taken up and employed for certain purposes.” (p. 9). The notion of language practice is no longer dichotomous: language and use become one in *language practice*.

In interpreting Schatzki (2001), Pennycook adds:

[T]o speak in terms of language practice is to move away from both the structuralist focus on concrete system or structure and the abstract post-structuralist focus on discourse. To talk of language practices, therefore, is to move away from attempts to capture language as a system, and instead to investigate the doing of language as social activity, regulated as much by social contexts as by underlying systems. (2010, p. 9)

Van Leeuwen (2008) points out the difference of focus between the social sciences and linguistics. For the former, *what people do* has been the focus of research; for the latter, “things have generally been the other way around, with systems (grammars, paradigms) generating processes (syntagms), rather than processes (practices) generating systems (institutions and objectified forms of knowledge)” (as cited in Pennycook, 2010, p. 9).

Finally, what Pennycook (2010) seeks to understand is how “language practices and language localities construct each other” (p. 10). Attention given to “locality (a geography of social space) and language practices (what happens through language)” is central in his

understanding of language as a local practice: “‘Language’, ‘use’, and ‘context’, [he] argue[s], have similarly become part of the background, and in order to see that there are questions worth asking... we need to shift the ways in which we consider language, locality and practice” (p. 12).

Bakhtin’s philosophy of language. Condensing Bakhtin’s philosophy of language in a few pages is presumptuous. However, for the sake of this theoretical framework, I will abridge Bakhtin’s philosophy of language to four themes that I consider will help my study: 1) speech communication in Bakhtin (the dialogic and heteroglossic); 2) the utterance and language as a system; 3) speech genres; and 4) a definition of text in Bakhtin.

The ideas that I will discuss here come mainly from Bakhtin’s essays *The Problem of Speech Genres* (1986b) and *Dialogic Imagination* (1981). The problem of speech genres—Bakhtin’s (1986b) second inquiry—lies in the abstract way speech genres have been addressed in most studies of language, e.g., in linguistics and stylistics. In linguistics, language has mainly been studied as an abstract system through forms (phonetics and phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and so on). In stylistics, language has been analyzed according to various stylistic subcategories based on function (scientific, technical, commentarial, business, everyday language/discourse) (Bakhtin, 1981).¹⁵ Both approaches, according to Bakhtin (1981) have lost sight of language as a phenomenon by restricting language to a system. By doing this, the *dialogic* and *heteroglossic* aspects of language have been lost. Bakhtin (1981) explains that in approaching language in its abstract form—as a

¹⁵ It seems language functions in linguistics were not taken into account by the time Bakhtin wrote his essays in *Dialogical Imagination*. This may be the reason he does not mention the new trend that linguistics underwent in the 1970s with M.A.K. Halliday. Functional linguistics, discourse analysis and cognitive linguistics have developed more research in the past 30 years. All of these sub disciplines of linguistics also depart from the same premise of language as a system.

system—the nature of the *utterance* and its types (*speech genres*) rooted in a sociocultural setting has remained unaddressed. The separation of abstract forms of language and styles from *speech genres* consequently results in an incomplete view of the phenomenon of language.

Because the utterance encapsulates multiple meanings, depending on the speakers and their immediate cultural settings, meanings necessarily implicate the dynamics of an evolving culture: history (Bakhtin, 1981). An utterance and a word without its cultural grounding is an empty sound, for Bakhtin (1981). This is why the utterance (and the word) cannot be reduced to an analysis that only considers language mainly as a system, because meaning is beyond a system. Structural analyses of this kind in linguistics and in literary stylistics are possible, of course. However, they diminish a language's complexity of meaning and are unable to solve the problem of speech genres; language has not been seen as a “*real unit of speech communication*” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 67). A study of speech genres would allow us “to understand more correctly the nature of language units (as a system): words and sentences” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 67).

The second big theme in Bakhtin's (1986b), *Dialogic Imagination*, refers to the representational capacity that novels have over other literary genres; novels are eminently dialogical. The novel represents speech communication in all its genres and can depict an epoch and situate the speakers in a specific geographical area. The novel, a written text, can achieve intricate dialogic relations at various interactional planes, which I summarize into four relationships: 1) the novel in relation with other literary genres and the genres of diverse human activities; 2) the novel and its relation with the real outside world (space and time) and its imaginary world; 3) the multiple relations among the characters, the author,

and the readers themselves; and 4) the numerous interpretations that may be derived from thinking of the nature of language itself as being dialogic in any sort of communication, even in a monologue. The novel for Bakhtin (1981) captures the phenomenon of *speech communication* and its numerous represented genres. Written texts (and particularly the novel) show the dialogism that is intrinsic in any form of sign communication.

Speech communication in Bakhtin. Bakhtin's criticism of language studies coming from the philologists, linguists, stylistics scholars, and philosophers of language of the 19th and 20th century, centered around their minimization in their conception of the process of speech communication. In language studies of the 1900s, for example, linguists centered their attention on the creativity of the *individuum* and his/her expressive function (e.g., Vosslerians); others adopted the *thinker* reflecting in *solitude* (e.g. Humboldt) (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 67). The communicative function of language, although acknowledged, occupied a second place. According to Bakhtin, they objectified the "speaker's individual discourse" (p. 67), and made it appear as a function of necessity, disregarding the community of speakers and the dialogic nature of language. Conceptualizing language only from the individual speaker leaves out the relations with other participants: "Language is regarded from the speaker's standpoint as if there were only one speaker who does not have any necessary relation to other participants in speech communication" (p. 67). Bakhtin (1986b) understands speech communication as a complex process that involves participants (physically present, or absent as in the relationship writer-reader). This process is beyond the intervention of one individual speaker and the functional aspect that language plays in thought, as defined earlier. Language, seen only as a function, leaves out "its essence" (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 68). Another problem for Bakhtin (1986b) is also the traditional

conception of language as a collective, as something in the abstract that is usually expressed as “the spirit of the people”, a “collective personality,” or the “psychology of nations” (p. 68). The problem with making language a collective object denies “any real essential significance” to each speaker with respect to the plurality (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 68).

For Bakhtin (1986b), speech communication involves the dialogic relationship of both speakers and listeners. The listener, as well as the speaker, plays an active role in speech communication. In Saussurean linguistics, the listener has been portrayed as somebody who just perceives speech. Although Bakhtin (1986b) recognized the importance of the diagrams explaining the process of communication—which usually depict two people: a speaker and a listener—Bakhtin considers that this is a simplified version of the phenomenon: “A passive understanding of the meaning of perceived speech is only an abstract aspect of the actual whole of actively responsive understanding, which is then actualized in a subsequent response that is actually articulated” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 68). For Bakhtin (1986b), in the process of listening-understanding, the listener shows an attitude to what is being communicated. This understanding for the listener may be sometimes literal or figurative, or there may be no understanding at all. Either way, there is always a reaction from the listener to the minimum uttered word to more complex forms. Even speaker’s pauses communicate. In Bakhtin’s (1986b) view, the listener’s response makes him/her a speaker:

Any understanding of live speech, a live utterance, is inherently responsive, although the degree of this activity varies extremely. Any understanding is imbued with response and necessarily elicits it in one form or another: the listener becomes the speaker. A passive understanding of the meaning of perceived speech is only an abstract aspect of the actual whole of actively responsive understanding which is then actualized in a subsequent response that is actually articulated. Of course, an utterance is not always followed immediately by an articulated response. An actively

responsive understanding of what is heard (a command, for example) can be directly realized in action. (p. 68)

Depending on the speech genre, the listener will articulate a response, perform an action, remain silent, and/or delay a reaction. This can happen in oral and written speech “with the appropriate adjustments and additions” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 69). Considering the differences between the two forms of language, oral or written, aspects of communication may be similar but different. For Bakhtin (1986b), the listener’s and reader’s understanding is responsive, dialogic, active, and “presupposes various integral orientations and speech plans on the part of the speakers or writers.” (p. 69). The speaker (or writer) also expects some reactions from the listener (reader): There can be understanding, misunderstanding, rejection, acceptance, action, and other types of responses from the listener (or reader). The speaker always expects an answer. In order to have these communication actions and reactions speakers and listeners must share a language system. This brings the utterance to the foreground. According to Bakhtin (1986b), the utterance is a unit that makes part of a bigger picture in the more limited traditional communication speech diagram. The speaker’s utterances elicit reactions from the same person who utters them as well as from others. In this way, utterances create relationships, associations, memories and links with one another in a very complexly organized chain where speakers and listeners share more than a mere function of language.

The listener takes a very active role in the process of speech communication in Bakhtin’s view (1986b):

The listener who understands passively, who is depicted as the speaker’s partner in the schematic diagrams of general linguistics, does not correspond to the real participant in speech communication. What is represented by the diagram is only an abstract aspect of the real total act of actively responsive understanding, the sort of

understanding that evokes a response and one that the speaker anticipates. Such scientific abstraction is quite justified in itself, but under one condition: that it is clearly recognized as merely an abstraction and is not represented as the real concrete whole of the phenomenon. Otherwise it becomes a fiction. This is precisely the case in linguistics, since such abstract schemata, while perhaps not claiming to reflect real speech communication, are not accompanied by any indication of the great complexity of the actual phenomenon. As a result, the schema distorts the actual picture of speech communication, removing precisely its most essential aspects. The active role of the other in the process of speech communication is reduced to a minimum. (p. 70)

The utterance for Bakhtin (1986b) is the unit of analysis that has been missing in traditional studies of language. The utterance is the unit that brings this *essence* that is lost in most studies of language as a system in its dual expression of speech: 1) in reference to another utterance spoken “by another subject” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 93); and, 2) in reference to its self-contained expression: “intonation, feeling, emotion if you like” (p. 93). This for Bakhtin (1986b) is “a very complex and multiplanar phenomenon” that is “a link in the chain of speech communication.” (p. 93). The utterance is related to other utterances not on the compositional and stylistic planes, but “on the referentially semantic plane” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 93).

Difference between the utterance, the sentence, and words. In the above section I briefly exposed Bakhtin’s (1986b) position with respect to speech communication, the speaker and the listener, and what was missing in language studies. In this section I present Bakhtin’s (1986b) view of the utterance in relation to the sentence and the word.

Traditionally, studying language as a system has been possible through their segmentation into units (from the sentence to the segment) to analyze speech. In this way, speech is the sum of different segments, as language scientists have found. These segments can be interpreted from a particular focus: “phonetic (phoneme, syllable, speech rhythm

[*takt*] and lexical (sentence and word)” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 70). Every single unit responds to a segmentation of speech, for “speech flow can be broken down...” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 70). Countless linguistic analyses and descriptions of languages prove this. “The word is clearly divided into small sound units—syllables—syllables are divided into individual speech sounds or phonemes...” grammars explain, says Bakhtin (1986, p. 70). However, Bakhtin (1986b) finds these descriptions of speech flow lacking the precision of the same term *speech*. In Bakhtin’s view (1986b), the same term *speech* can be elusive, for it can “designate language, the speech process (i.e., speaking), the individual utterance, an entire long indefinite series of such utterances, or a particular speech genre (‘he gave a speech’)” (p. 70). In his view, linguists have been imprecise in the definition of the term *speech* with “clear-cut semantic boundaries” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 70). In his view:

This can be explained by the almost complete lack of research into the problem of the utterance and speech genres (and, consequently, of speech communication as well)... Most frequently the expression ‘our speech’ simply means any utterance of any person. But this meaning is never consistently sustained. (Bakhtin, 1986b, pp. 70-71)

The utterance makes part of a speech genre, and it is in a specific genre that “the word acquires a particular typical expression” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 75).

Different from utterances, sentences are language units that can be analyzed in isolation: “[T]he sentence as a language unit is grammatical in nature. It has grammatical boundaries and grammatical completeness and unity” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 75). The sentence, when it is viewed from the perspective of the utterance, is a whole and not a part or segment, and “it acquires stylistic properties” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 75). For Bakhtin (1986b), when this is not included in an analysis, “one distorts the nature of the sentence (and simultaneously the nature of the utterance as well, by treating it grammatically)” (p. 75).

For Bakhtin, the sentence is “a unit of language” and the utterance “a unit of speech communication” (1986b, p. 75).

As a unit of language, the sentence is neutral, not expressive. The expressiveness in a sentence is given by a concrete utterance. “Depending on the context of the utterance” a sentence acquires a distinct expression (e.g. sarcastic tone, joyous rejoinder, and so on)” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 85). The difference between the utterance, and the sentence and the word as *language units* is the expressive intonation of the utterance: “Expressive intonation is a constitutive marker of the utterance. It does not exist in the system of language as such, that is, outside the utterance. Both the word and the sentence as *language units* are devoid of expressive intonation” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 85). In contrast, the “utterance is filled with *dialogic overtones*, and they must be taken into account in order to understand fully the style of the utterance” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 92). This is so, because “our thought itself—philosophical, scientific and artistic—is born and shaped in the process of interaction and struggle with others’ thought, and this cannot but be reflected in the forms that verbally express our thought as well” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 92).

According to Bakhtin (1986b), the utterance has two features. The first feature makes reference to the boundaries of the utterance: speaking subjects create the utterance when they take turns, they give the floor; in this way, the utterance is bonded by the other utterances. This makes the first principle: the utterance is a unit of speech communication (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 76). The second feature refers to “the finalization of the utterance” which “is inseparably linked to the first” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 76).

The factors that determine the wholeness or finalization of an utterance are: “1. Semantic exhaustiveness of the theme; 2. the speaker’s plan or speech will; and 3. typical

compositional and generic forms of finalization” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 77). Semantic exhaustiveness in the theme can be inferred by the speaker and listener when there is “relative finalization under certain conditions” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 77) of the topic of conversation provided by words, intonations, tones, questions and responses, orders, and so on—depending on the speech genre. The speaker’s will is what we imagine the speaker will say, his/her plan in the conversation, what he/she wishes to say. Here, the speaker’s plan is determined by his/her “choice of the subject itself (under certain conditions of speech communication and in necessary connection with preceding utterances), as well as its boundaries and its semantic exhaustiveness.” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 77). The speaker’s will is “manifested primarily in the choice of a particular speech genre” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 78) which “is determined by the specific nature of the given sphere of speech communication, semantic (thematic considerations, the concrete situation of the speech communication, the personal composition of its participants and so on” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 78). The third factor, compositional and generic forms of finalization, make reference to shaping and exiting the speech communication, under any genre that the participants have chosen to pursue. All this can take place as part of “everyday oral communication, including the most familiar and the most intimate” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 78) dialogues and conversations.

The above argument takes us to the issue of speech genres: “We speak only in definite speech genres, that is, all our utterances have definite and relatively stable typical *forms of construction of the whole*” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 78). Speech genres have styles: familiar, neutral, formal, intimate, and so on. Styles also give “a certain sense of understanding of the addressee (the addressee of the utterance) on the part of the speaker” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 96). The addressee also responds and can anticipate the speaker.

Therefore, style in speech genres constitutes an important part of speech communication: To understand the style, one needs to pay attention to “the speaker’s attitude toward the other and his utterances (existing or anticipated)” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 98). This is what is known as the “addressivity,” the other characteristic of the utterance besides expressiveness:

Thus, addressivity, the quality of turning to someone, is a constitutive feature of the utterance; without it the utterance does not and cannot exist. The various typical forms this addressivity assumes and the various concepts of the addressee are constitutive, definitive features of various speech genres. (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 99)

It is addressivity and expressiveness, two inherent parts of the utterance, what helps bring the dialogic in our communication (oral and written), beyond the abstract conceptualization of language as a system. All we utter is connected to a former dialogue (in context and history), therefore the multifaceted nature of speech communication. Multiple dialogues exist within a common language system.

Language unity and diversity within this unity coexist in striving forces of language that are centripetal and centrifugal. In the commonly believed assumption of *language unity*, opposition pulls language towards *plurality*. It is in the opposition between centripetal forces (the centralizing norm) and the heteroglossic in any language (the centripetal pull that takes language out of the center) that genres exist. Centrifugal forces that make language heteroglossic come from individual speakers, social groups, and numerous voices and dialects of different epochs and places throughout human history. It is heteroglossia what can also characterize multiple speech genres. The unitary language is, for Bakhtin, “the theoretical expression of historical processes of linguistic unification and centralization, an expression of the centripetal forces of language” (p. 270). This opposes “the realities of heteroglossia” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 270). “A common unitary language is a system of

linguistic norms,” says Bakhtin (1981, p. 270). Language is heteroglossic because as a living body it changes over time in the sociocultural life of the speakers. As such, language becomes potentially ideological. Any attempt to unify language becomes ideological too, with processes of centralization that are “sociopolitical and cultural” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 270). Speech genres move along the opposition of both, centripetal and centrifugal forces.

Speech genres in Bakhtin. The realization of language for Bakhtin (1986b) is the utterance (oral or written). The utterance is three-dimensional: It specifies the content (theme), linguistic style (lexicon, grammar, types of phrases) and compositional structure. For Bakhtin, these three aspects are part of the utterance as a whole. This structure is determined by the specificity of communication: “Each separate utterance is individual, of course, but each sphere in which language is used develops its own relatively stable types of these utterances. These we may call *speech genres*” (p. 60).

Speech genres are heterogeneous but can be classified between “primary (simple) and secondary (complex) speech genres” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 61). For Bakhtin, this classification does not respond to a functional difference, but to a cultural form of communication that is oral and written. In this way, the primary (simple) speech genre would correspond eminently to everyday speech—what has been studied in behavioral linguistics as the rejoinders of common verbal communication in every day interactions. The secondary (complex, ideological) speech genre would correspond to “novels, dramas, all kinds of scientific research, major genres of commentary, and so forth” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 62). The languages of socio-ideological groups are culturally divided into professional language (Bakhtin, 1981). “The novel as a whole is an utterance just as rejoinders in

everyday dialogue or private letters are, the novel is a secondary (complex) utterance.” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 62).

These primary and secondary genres mix in a symbiotic relationship that has historical, ideological and epistemological connotations:

The very interrelations between primary and secondary genres and the process of the historical formation of the latter shed light on the nature of the utterance (and above all on the complex problem of the interrelations among language, ideology, and world view). (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 62)

Bakhtin characterized speech genres as multiple because they derive from “diverse areas of human activity” where language is always present: “All the diverse areas of human activity involve the use of language. Quite understandably, the nature and forms of [language] use are just as diverse as are the areas of human activity” (1986b, p. 60). In consequence speech genres are unlimited: “[S]peech genres are boundless because the various possibilities of human activity are inexhaustible, and because each sphere of activity contains an entire repertoire of speech genres that differentiate and grow as the particular sphere develops and becomes more complex” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 60).

Although heterogeneous, primary and secondary speech genres can also have a “single common level at which they can be studied” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 61): the *utterance*. The problem of speech genres, for Bakhtin (1981; 1986b) lay in the fact that no study of these genres (either in linguistics, stylistics or the philosophy of language) had studied the *utterance*, as the unit of *expressive meaning* and *thought*. Language studies had dealt with these genres mostly from the units of analysis as *language system*: the sentence and the word. Because of this approach, studies of language genres had been “excessively abstract

and empty” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 61). This constituted the main problem of speech genres for Bakhtin.

Even though people’s activities seem to be boundless—and derived from this assumption so are speech genres—Bakhtin (1986b) classifies speech genres into two: *primary* and *secondary*. The primary or *simple* speech genre for Bakhtin (1986b) is characterized by the “common verbal (language) nature” (p. 61), which exists in all speech genres. The primary genre is the everyday speech genre in its verbal form. This genre uses a dialogical feature: “mainly rejoinders in everyday dialogue” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 61). The primary genre for Bakhtin (1986b) has “specific features of everyday oral speech” (Bakhtin, 1986b, 61), but it is far from being primitive—a characteristic given to everyday language by American behaviorists. For Bakhtin (1986b), this was a “vulgarization” and a “one sided orientation toward primary genres” (p. 62). The primary genre takes form in “unmediated speech communion” and has “everyday significance” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 62).

The secondary speech genre, on the other hand, is complex. This is a genre found in “novels, dramas, all kinds of scientific research, major genres of commentary, and so forth” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 62). Secondary speech genres “arise in more complex and comparatively highly developed and organized cultural communication” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 62). The secondary genre makes up part of primary written cultural communication such as “literary works, scientific, [and] sociopolitical [discourse]” (Bakhtin, 1986b, p. 62), for example. Secondary genres are also *ideological*, which is an important feature that *differentiates* secondary speech genres from primary speech genres.

Primary and secondary speech genres are interrelated. They show the processes of history in *language* and *ideology*. The interrelations between primary and secondary genres

are ontological and epistemological in nature because language, ideology, and a world perspective are amalgamated in a symbiotic relationship. However, the second genre is constructed on the first one, and as such the first genre provides the bases for all kinds of second genres (Bakhtin, 1986b). Recapitulating, the primary genre corresponds to the language most people use in everyday speech communication. The secondary genre is made up of all sorts of professional language, the language of education, the language of science and research, including all works of literature (Bakhtin, 1981).

Historically, the most studied genre has been the literary one. This is a genre that has been linked to *art*: poetry, epic narrations, and the novel, for that matter. Other types of speech genres commonly studied since antiquity have been the rhetorical genres, e.g., the judicial and political ones. For Bakhtin (1986b), the other professional, academic and many other genres derived from human activities remained understudied or not studied at all. This, however, has been more compensated with the advent of more discourse analyses in the social sciences and the typologies of texts. The text, written or audio, constitutes the bases of research in the social sciences, the humanities, and the hard sciences. Language permeates all spheres of human life.

Bakhtin (1981) characterizes the novel as one of the most difficult written genres to analyze. The novel is the only text that can contain all the other literary genres in one long living utterance from the beginning to the end. The novel includes people's speech of various sorts: social strata, age, nationality/region, and epoch (time and space). In the same way, the reader can identify in the novel distinct voices: the author's and the characters' voices. The author's abstract voice can be recognized in the narration and description of events, scenes, and people's actions and activities. The author gives life to the characters in

the novel by identifying their voices in the forms of dialects, feelings and emotions, the use of daily speech, and the characters' thoughts. In this way, says Bakhtin, the novel has no canon of its own, and it is defined by its plasticity as a developing genre and a multigenre (Bakhtin, 1981). One last important aspect of the novel is the imaginary dialogism that it creates with respect to time and space, which for Bakhtin (1981) is *chronotopia*.

Holquist, in the introduction to Bakhtin's *Dialogic Imagination* (1981), defines Bakhtin's novel—in comparison to the other genres—as “a living language” (pp. 4-5). The novel has no canon of its own. Its plasticity is what defines it. It is a developing multigenre, never ending, and provides new ways of conceptualizing time and space as relative (*chronotopes*) and specific to the novel, “not in other areas of culture.” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 85). The term *chronotope* is a metaphor that does not separate space and time in the novel. “The *chronotope* defines genre and genetic distinctions,” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 85). For Bakhtin, “[t]he image of man is always intrinsically *chronotopic*” (1981, p. 85), as is speech communication and the text.

The text in Bakhtin. Bakhtin proposes a philosophical analysis of the text, because “it is not linguistic, philological, literary, or any special kind of analysis (study) (1986a, p. 103). His analysis moves ‘in the liminal spheres, this is on the borders of all the aforementioned disciplines, at their junctures and points of intersection’ (p. 103).

The text for Bakhtin (1986a), is “a coherent complex of signs” (p. 103) as is the fine arts, history, and music. Bakhtin defines the text as “the unmediated reality [of thought and experience]” (p. 103). Human thought (scientific, philosophical, and so forth) is embedded in the text. Where there is no text, there is no object of study and no object of thought either” (p. 103). Researchers have access to their ideas, thoughts, and meanings through

texts (oral, written, and semiotic). I summarize some of Bakhtin's main characteristics of the text in Appendix G (1986a).

Selinker's interlanguage. Several theories on second language learning attempt to explain the developmental processes learners go through when they learn a second/foreign language (Mitchell, Myles & Marsden, 2013). Taking into account the macro sociocultural theoretical frame in this dissertation, I decided to include the theory of *interlanguage* proposed by Selinker (1972), in reference to the psychological developmental processes that second/foreign language learners exhibit when they speak or write. Interlanguage views errors of *language transfer (interference)*, also referred currently as *cross-linguistic influence* (Lightbown & Spada, 2013) as something natural that happens in adults' language learning psychological processes. In adopting this theory, I intended to establish a dialogical relation with the previous theories and philosophical concepts discussed in this chapter. My assumption was that meaning passes through a continuum that goes from the native language (NL) to the new language (second/foreign or target language (TL)) and vice versa. On this continuum, a learner's interlanguage, besides being idiosyncratic, has commonalities with other learners' interlanguages. Interlanguage (IT) is expected to show a variety of linguistic creations and other influences of distinct nature.

According to Corder (1981):

The term 'interlanguage,' as we know, was introduced by Selinker in 1969 and elaborated in 1969 in an influential paper bearing that title, to refer to 'a separate linguistic system whose existence we are compelled to hypothesize, based upon the observed output which results from the (second language) learner's attempted production of a target language norm. This linguistic system we will call 'interlanguage.' (p. 87)

According to Corder (1981), Selinker's paper, however, did not explicitly state what interlanguage was. Selinker (1972) conceived interlanguage as a "dynamic system" where "the product of psycholinguistic process of interaction between two linguistic systems, those of the mother tongue and the target language" (p. 87) intervene in a *continuum*. For Selinker (1972), an interlanguage has its norms, and it is "relative to an individual learner's language development, and not to some institutionalized code of a language community." (p. 87). Interlanguage may be the result of transfer from the first language to the target (new) language, or it may be the result of a new creative process that has a system of its own. With respect to the latter statement, Vygotsky (1986) sees language and thought as a creative process that unfolds historically in a social environment; this happens in the first language and also in the second/foreign language. Learners of a second/foreign language, when exposed to meaningful forms of language learning and practice, develop various levels of interlanguage before they arrive at an advanced level (this is depending on external conditions that stimulate internal learning conditions in the individual).

The sociocultural interactions of learners acquiring a new language are truly crucial, and so are individual cognitive mechanisms (elementary and higher) in each learner (Vygotsky, 1978). Depending on internal (cognitive) and external (sociocultural) factors, learners will acquire a second/foreign language with varied degrees of competence (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Exceptional cases of second/foreign language learners that acquire a native-like competence in the second/foreign language are scarce. For Selinker (1972) barely 5% of second language adult learners would acquire a native-like competence. In the past, it was assumed that the second language learner would somehow approach the competence of a native speaker, but this has been reevaluated today.

The theory of interlanguage. In the theory of interlanguage (IT) proposed by Selinker in his article *Interlanguage* (1972), he made clear the distinction of two perspectives: second language teaching and second language learning. His paper emphasized the latter. In his view, researchers should pay attention to second language learners' language behavior to build their data and explore the psychological origins of second language learner's errors. These data would be made of "those behavioral events which would lead to an understanding of the psycholinguistic structures and processes underlying 'attempted meaningful performance' in a second language" (Selinker, 1972, p. 210). A "meaningful performance situation" for Selinker (1972) is described as: 1) the attempts adults make to express meaning—which they already have through their native language; and, 2) the psycholinguistic identification of these attempts in terms of error descriptions in the process of second language learning. His goal in establishing a *psychology of second language learning* was to be able to recognize second language phenomena through: 1) "the identification of relevant data in second language learning, and 2) the formulation of "a psycholinguistic theory of second-language learning" (1972, p. 211).

In his theory of IL, Selinker (1972) adopted the concept *interlanguage* from Weinreich's (1953) *interlingual identifications*; as for the notion *latent psychological structure*, Selinker got his idea from Lanneberg's *latent language structure* (1967; as cited in Selinker, 1972). According to the first concept, "the second language learner produces utterances where phonemes and grammatical structures share characteristics of *Languages in Contact*," (Selinker, 1972, p. 211). As this production originates psychologically in the brain, the idea of *latent* became useful in Selinker's thesis. *Latent* meant that the

psychological structure could be activated in the brain whenever a learner attempted to learn a second language.

In the *latent psychological structure*, there are two types of adult second language learners: successful learners who were able to achieve almost native-like competence (Selinker assumed this was only 5%); and the unsuccessful ones, for whom a second language would pose different kinds of problems. This second group was the majority of second language learners and was the population Selinker (1972) wanted to study. For this second group, *attempted learning* (successful or not) is activated through an assumed “genetically determined structure” (Selinker, 1972, p. 212) called the *latent psychological structure*. This structure is used by second language learners “whenever they attempt to express meanings, which they may already have, in a language which they are in the process of learning” (Selinker, 1972, p. 212).

Successful learners that achieve “native-speaker competence cannot possibly have been taught this competence,” said Selinker (1972, pp. 212-213), because language teaching falls short on this endeavor: “Successful learners must have acquired these facts (and most probably important principles of language organization) *without* having explicitly been taught them” (1972, p. 213).

The focus of the latent psychology structure. Researchers, then, should focus their “analytical attention to observable data that can relate theoretical predictions” (Selinker, 1972, p. 213) and that can be identified in three sets of utterances that second language learners produce. Thus, a framework would include: 1) “utterances in the learner’s native language (NL)” (Selinker, 1972, p. 214); 2) Interlanguage (IL) utterances; and, 3) Target

language, or “TL utterances produced by native speakers of that TL” (Selinker, 1972, p. 214)

In the second language learner’s production of the above utterances, Selinker names “five central processes that are present in the *latent psychological structure*: “1) *language transfer*; 2) *transfer-of-training*; 3) *strategies of second-language learning*; 4) *strategies of second-language communication*; 5) *overgeneralization of TL linguistic material*” (Selinker, 1972, p. 215). The researcher should associate the data “with one or more of these, or other, processes” (Selinker, 1972, p. 215)

Selinker (1972) also addresses the issue of language fossilization, as evidence of second language learner’s processes that show what is happening in the latent psychological structure:

Fossilizable linguistic phenomena are linguistic items, rules, and subsystems which speakers of a particular NL [native language] will tend to keep in their IL relative to particular TL, no matter what the age of the learner or amount of explanation and instruction he receives in the TL. (p. 215)

Second language learners produce sentences that may or may not correspond to the ways native speakers express them. Fossilization works as a mechanism in learning that makes second language learners stop their second language learning at some point. This led Selinker to hypothesize “the existence of a separate linguistic system based on the observable output which results from a learner’s attempted production of a TL norm” (1972, p. 214).

Irrespective of second language instruction or years of living in the TL community, second language errors said Selinker (1972), appeared when second language learners were: 1) anxious or in some state of excitement; 2) when subject matter that needed to be learned

was complex and beyond the IL level of the learner's foreign language; or 3) sometimes when the learner was relaxed. However, the question here was how to relate fossilization to the five central processes mentioned earlier: "The most interesting phenomena in IL performance are those items, rules, and subsystems which are fossilizable in terms of the five processes listed" (Selinker, 1972, p. 216).

In Selinker's (1972) theory, second language learners stopped learning once they knew how to get by and express meanings in an interlanguage. At this point, the second language became fossilized. Later on, Corder (1981) accorded that fossilization was a process that stopped at some point in the development of the second language:

The learner continues... to upgrade, or elaborate his understanding of the target language only so long as he has a motive for doing so. When his interlanguage grammar reaches that state of elaboration which enables him to communicate adequately for his purposes with native speakers, his motive to improve his knowledge or elaborate his approximative system disappears. Hence, the phenomenon of 'fossilization', where a learner's interlanguage ceases to develop however long he remains exposed to authentic data in the target language. (p. 73)

According to Selinker, whole groups of individuals can develop a "new dialect..., where fossilized IL competences may be the normal situation" (1972, p. 217). In today's terms, this is what Kirkpatrick (2006) calls nativization of a language by a community of non-native speakers of a TL. I could also include in this group the same foreign language instructors, who are also users of an IL (Corder, 1981). In this way, the normal way to use the new language is in the system of IL, which becomes the new creative system.

Selinker's identification of problems with his perspective. Selinker (1972) foresees five different problems with his theory: 1) the ambiguity found in identifying the five central processes: they may overlap; 2) the difficulty to predict which aspects of language would fossilize and in which interlanguage situation; 3) the ambiguity to identify which IL

utterances are correct with respect to the norm of the TL (are they slips of the tongue, or errors similar to what a native speaker would normally make?); 4) two problems of identification (a) “relevant units of this hypothesized latent psychological structure within which interlingual identifications exist” (Selinker, 1972, p. 224), and (b) evidence for the existence of these units; and 5) “how can we experiment with three linguistic systems, creating the same experimental conditions for each, with one unit which is identified interlingually across these systems? (Selinker, 1972, p. 228).

My approach in relation to Selinker’s theory. I adopted the concept of the language continuum that goes from the native language (NL/L1) to the second/foreign language (or target language, TL). In this continuum different types of interlanguage may emerge depending on the second/foreign language level of the learners. Because the data I analyzed were written by foreign language learners, I used Selinker’s (1972) framework to characterize a stylistic form of discourse organization and interlanguage that might show the three linguistic systems as described before: learner’s native language; interlanguage (IL), and, target language (TL or L2). I attempted to identify the five central processes, taking into consideration the problems that Selinker described about adopting this framework.

I did not intend to take into account predictable items that might be fossilized, but I was able to identify some interlanguage situations. It was not my purpose to identify the relevant units of the hypothesized *latent psychological structure*.

Because this dissertation was not intended to produce experiments of second-language nature—where variables can be controlled to show the three linguistic subsystems (NL, IL, and TL in action), Selinker’s (1972) framework was used to analyze data that came from a natural teaching-learning practice. This might be captured in the second/foreign

language written by second language learners in an instructional environment. Here I assume that there is a connection between linguistic units and cognitive psychological systems that allows learners to create and adopt the new language and its linguistic system without being explicitly taught. This system, I also contend, has been appropriated by the second language learners on their own.

Finally, my intent in including this theory was not to describe language from a linguistic perspective, but to use a description of pedagogical grammar that could characterize a particular style of *English nativization* among foreign language learners of English. Additionally, I attempted to interpret the language produced by second language learners, including myself, in an ecological way (respecting their outcomes and what they evince) because to expect native-language competence was unrealistic.

Instructor's Philosophical Framework in the Course EPP

Any syllabi written for a course in a higher educational institution has instructors' implicit philosophical assumptions and rationales about learning and teaching, and the same is true for the syllabus that I wrote for the course on *English Phonetics and Phonology* (EPP) (Fall 2010, Spring and Fall 2011, and Spring 2012—see Chapter 5). This syllabus was designed to set the basis for a content-based course, whose main core content was the linguistic aspects of the speech sounds of the English language. In addition, the course encompassed several topics addressing teaching American English pronunciation to speakers of a second language, and American English pronunciation for Spanish speakers. This integration of subject matter responded to what I envisioned as *must* requirements for the student population. The linguistic content was at the heart of instruction, and both the

pedagogical knowledge about pronunciation and speakers' production of sounds would help mediate the core content. The latter responded to two goals embedded in the educational milieu: the statement that 1) the undergraduate program prepares pre-service foreign language teachers, and that 2) at the same time, undergraduate students majoring in EFL need to learn the language they will soon teach.

The above also corresponds to my own perspective of the EPP course. If the students enrolled in EPP, this course should provide instruction in three content areas: 1) how the foreign language functions at the phonetic and phonological plane; 2) how it is addressed in the teaching of pronunciation; and, 3) how this knowledge works for each individual in his/her own production and perception of the English language as a non-native speaker. These three components also reflected my interpretation of the sub discipline of phonetics and phonology, the ethos of the educational institution (academic endeavors), and the needs of a student population in their third semester of an English foreign language undergraduate program at a Colombian university.

This course usually took place in one semester, and I taught four different cohorts between Fall, 2010 and Spring, 2012: 16 weeks, totaling 64 hours; four hours every week, per course. Teaching methods included: lectures, seminars, pair and group work, students' presentations, and tutoring. The evaluation was varied, as it addressed academic definitions of concepts in quizzes, planning a handout for an oral presentation, the delivery of the presentation in front of an audience, and four tasks—called *The Four Steps* and developed in a guided process—intended for the final paper of the course. In this academic paper, students addressed relevant concepts of phonetics and phonology in the analysis of a speech

sample taken from the internet. Students presented their work to the class at the end of the course (second presentation).

The final paper was students' first exposure to subject-matter academic writing in the foreign language, English. I assumed that by planning and delivering the content of phonetics and phonology through tasks and activities, the work would reflect a heuristic and holistic understanding by integrating all language skills. That is, students would understand the theory and apply it to their own experience. Another purpose of writing the project in sections (steps) and giving feedback to the students was to improve students' drafts. These drafts were the main foundation of the final paper. This eased my reading of students' writing, which in two former experiences had turned out to be extremely time consuming: Problems of content and the use of the foreign language (form) overlapped making understanding what students wrote difficult.

A phonetics and phonology content-based foreign language course. As the *English Phonetics and Phonology* course was not a typical foreign language course because of its academic nature—nor was it a regular course in linguistics because it also offered aspects of pronunciation at a practical level—I tried to follow my own version of a *content-based second language (CBL) course* model (see Model 2, Appendix F). Here the word *foreign* is embedded in *second*, for the environment where the course was taught was not that of *second language speakers* at American Universities, but that of *Spanish speakers* learning a *foreign language* in classrooms.

Brinton, Snow, and Wesche (2004) define content-based instruction “as the integration of particular content with language teaching aims” (p. 2). This instruction is used in postsecondary education imparted to second language learners in universities in the

United States. In this type of instruction, academic content is delivered in English to second language learners addressing at the same time students' English language problems. Brinton et al. (2004) describe the process as follows:

The focus for students is on acquiring information via the second language and, in the process, developing their academic language skills. Ultimately, the goal is to enable students to transfer these skills to other academic courses given in their second language. Thus, both in its overall purpose and in its implementation, content-based instruction aims at eliminating the artificial separation between language instruction and subject matter classes which exists in most education settings. (p. 2)

Although I applied the above tenets in EPP, this academic subject matter was different in Colombia: It was delivered by a non-native instructor of English, to a non-native population out of the US, and therefore stripped of the English-speaking natural environment outside the classroom. The above authors write for a readership in America addressing *second language learners* in undergraduate programs. In this situation, second language students are immersed in the academic culture and English language of the higher institutions they attend, where many instructors are English-language-native speakers teaching diverse disciplines.

Implementing any content-based academic model for foreign language speakers brings issues of distinct a nature in countries outside the United States, whose languages are different from English. It would be more relevant to compare the situation of Colombian students to that of monolingual English language speakers enrolled in French, Spanish, German, Russian, or any other foreign-language-undergraduate students pursuing content-based courses in those languages, with *non-native language instructors*—that is, American-native-speakers of English who pursue foreign language programs at universities and later become foreign language instructors.

For the purpose of teaching English phonetics and phonology, I developed a theoretical model based on *content-based second language (CBSLI) instruction*. Brinton et al. (2004) present three models in content-based instruction for second language university students: 1) *theme based*; 2) *sheltered*; and 3) *adjunct*. I will not refer to the third one here, for it requires two instructors: an expert in the discipline teaching the content of the course, and a second expert in second language instruction. In the content-based modality of a content course, second language students share the class with other native English speakers while in the sheltered modality, non-native speakers are given specific English language lessons that include the use of academic English; these lessons are coordinated and connected to the disciplinary content-based course.

The model I envisioned for this course, then, had to take into account the non-native aspect of the participants (instructor and students), as well as the Spanish language linguistic environment. Therefore, my model shared features of the *theme based* and *sheltered* models given by Brinton et al. (2004): 1) In its chief purpose, the course was intended for students to master content material (sheltered). A subordinate purpose was to help them gain competence in some language topic areas (theme based); 2) In instructional format, this was a content course primarily (sheltered) and secondary, an English Foreign Language (EFL) course—not a second language course (ESL)—to help students build skills in the language; 3) In student population, the course was for nonnative speakers (theme-based and sheltered); and 4) In focus of evaluation, the course targeted content mastery principally (sheltered) (p. 19). I thought that academic language skills in the foreign language should be embedded in the content of the course and that these skills should be a means to a major end: learning

about phonetics and phonology. In the next section I explain the rationale of the five aims I envisioned for this content-based course.

Learning rationale underlying the content of the course. Given the above educational foreign language situation, the *English Phonetics and Phonology Course* had five aims: 1) learning basic issues of English phonetics and phonology to analyze the foreign language per se; 2) applying the theoretical concepts to an analysis of an English speech sample (students' foreign language speech analysis would be discussed in this context and in the practice of foreign language skills in several acuties); 3) introducing academic writing in the foreign language to the students, so they could write about phonetics and phonology in English—evaluation; 4) developing more foreign language skills; and 5) reflecting about language (foreign, second, native). These five issues were embedded in the content and implementation of the activities for this course. As we can see, the first aim deals directly with the content of the course in linguistics: the main focus of the syllabus. The other four aims derived from the relationship between the subject matter, the foreign language (the mediator) and the targeted audience pursuing the course.

In summary, the theoretical framework that I represented in the syllabus for this class included three important fields of knowledge: 1) linguistics: phonetics and phonology theory; 2) second language education: teaching American English pronunciation to second language speakers in the United States; and 3) pronunciation: issues and exercises for Spanish speakers learning English. The textbooks chosen were coordinated by topics. That is, if the chapter about theory explained issues of the physical aspects of speech sounds, the chapter about teaching pronunciation to second language learners contained the same topic addressing second language teachers, and the textbook in the practical pronunciation book

explained articulatory problems for Spanish-speakers learning American English. I made this choice thinking about: 1) exposing students to three approaches to view speech sounds: the linguistic scientific view, the pedagogical view, and the user's view; 2) presenting similar information to the students but with variations in the use of discourse; and 3) trying to mediate between the linguistic literature about phonetics and phonology through the use of less complex concepts as presented in the pronunciation textbooks for teachers and students. My underlying assumption was that students majoring in English need to become good language users first, good language professionals second, and lastly, apply to a teaching credential program in a foreign language.

With the instructor's theoretical conceptualization of the EPP course, I conclude this theoretical framework.

Chapter 5

Students' Papers Background: The Instructor's Perspective

In this chapter, I describe how the course English Phonetics and Phonology (EPP) was conceptualized to provide the instructor's perspective and background information for the primary data for this study. This chapter provides information from the instructor's perspective, which grounded the final papers in a natural teaching experience. The teaching experience purpose was meant to be other than research and it was central because it rested at the foundation of the students' final papers. For this chapter, I reviewed several documents (or data) created by the instructor: 1) The first syllabus (Fall 2009) and the subsequent one (Spring 2010); 2) the syllabi of the four cohorts where the final papers for this study came from (Fall 2010, Spring and Fall 2011, and Spring 2012); 3) the instructor's pedagogical materials (handouts); and 4) evaluations and grading procedures; and the instructor's notes and personal memories. Also, for administrative reasons at the higher education institution where I worked, I relied on e-mails, personal information, and reports filed as an instructor of Universidad de Bogota (UDB). This provided the foundation for the major academic conversations I was part of for the three years I spent in Colombia.

This chapter is presented as follows: 1) the instructor's rationale about formal papers in a content-based foreign language course; 2) the instructor's first year experience at UDB (Fall 2009 and Spring 2010); 3) the four cohorts of the course EPP (Fall 2010, Spring 2011, Fall 2011, and Fall 2012); 4) *The Four Steps* (the foundation of students' final papers); 5) the instructor's reflections about her academic and personal involvement in EPP; and 6) the researcher's final words.

Rationale for Writing Final Papers in the Course English Phonetics and Phonology

As an instructor, I believe that writing papers are an important experience of students' academic lives at universities around the world. The writing practice is done differently depending on the institution, the academic culture of departments, the language used, the particular discipline, and the instructors' personality and background, among other factors. Students are supposed to write academic papers for their undergraduate courses. Writing papers is either an end in itself, as it is done in English and foreign language courses in the United States (to learn how to write essays), or a means to an end, as it is done in other disciplines (Rivers, 1981). In the case of the final papers for the course EPP, this writing was of the second type: The papers were a means to evaluate subject-content knowledge. In my professional belief system, these papers would give a rounded completion to the course at the same time that they would allow students to practice their written expression.

Another reason for the existence of a final paper for EPP was the fact that this course had been taught for years at UDB. As an instructor, I had little information about what students did in this course, but as a student in an undergraduate program I had taken two courses of EPP, and as a master's degree student I pursued one year of phonetics and phonology. I did not ask for the syllabi that other instructors had written, which most probably would have given me a foundation. The faculty member who coordinated the English language specialization at that time told me that the former instructor used to teach pronunciation. I also knew that, in the 1990s, one professor from the Linguistics Department had taught the course until she retired in the early 2000s.

Knowing that UDB's goal is to become a good research university,¹⁶ it was under this institutional ideology that I thought it would be convenient to expose students to their first academic paper in a foreign language, or at least to approach that aim. Although for over a decade the conversation at the Department of Modern Languages (DML) has revolved around research (e-mails received throughout 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and more recent ones),¹⁷ faculty members have usually expressed their need for stronger foundations in this area, the same as in their foreign language skills: "Teniendo en cuenta el número de profesores de planta hay pocas publicaciones, tanto de libros como de artículos en revistas indexadas... Necesidad de capacitación y formación continua... [y] aumento de la movilidad docente para la actualización del idioma."¹⁸ ("Publications of either books or articles in indexed journals are scarce in comparison with the number of faculty members in the department... There's the necessity of continuing education for faculty members [and] an increase of our mobility [to foreign countries] to update [our foreign language]") (Department of Modern Languages, 2014). Faculty members have also voiced the need to evaluate the new curriculum for the Modern Languages Undergraduate Program (MLUP)—specializations in English, French, or German—and the role of the *Curricular Area of Language Sciences*, created a few years ago.

The writing component in EPP, as I planned, took into account students' particular circumstances: third semester EFL Spanish-speaking students, students' interlanguages,

¹⁶ This is advertised in brochures, the newspaper of the university, the university's webpage; also, this is a most talked about topic, as research has become a reiterative ideological discourse for the past 15 years.

¹⁷ For this Dissertation I reread 86 (out of 569) e-mails in four folders, from Fall 2009 to Spring 2012. The 86 e-mails contained information about the two journals of the Department of Modern Languages with rhetoric about research and the problem of financial funding for one of the journals: \$25,000 US a year.

¹⁸ *Propuesta Plan de Mejoramiento* 2013-2016 (Improvement Plan 2013-2016: A Proposal). Document attached to e-mail, April 24, 2014: Invitación Reunión sobre Plan de Mejoramiento Programa de Lenguas Modernas Reacreditación (Invitation to the meeting for the re-accreditation of the Modern Languages Undergraduate Program).

students' difficulty understanding and expressing (orally and in writing) concepts of phonetics and phonology in a foreign language. I compensated for the lack of linguistic concepts and jargon by introducing readings in Spanish¹⁹ with corresponding guided exercises and instructions in their native language (see Appendix H and Appendix I). I did this during the first couple of weeks of the course. For the Spring 2011 group 01, we used more Spanish than in the other classes: The majority of students chose Spanish over English for their presentations and papers.²⁰ On this respect, my colleague Nancy opined:

The choice of Spanish or English for student papers would little remedy the deficiencies in English competence and performance. Drafting their papers in Spanish unavoidably leads to translation which is even more difficult at their level than Phonetics and Phonology. Unfortunately, most professors in the major do not include academic writing in English since its initial stages, but this is an opportunity to get students started.

My idea of a final paper for the course was also reinforced by the comments of one student in her senior year at UDB in the first *Literary Meeting* (*Tertulia* in Spanish).²¹ The student expressed her disappointment at the academic experience in her senior year of monograph writing. Students in this program have to write a monograph as a prerequisite for graduation. This is one opportunity to expose undergraduate students to problems in foreign language education and research. She expressed that writing a monograph was an experience that she had to face all at once, without receiving any previous preparation in writing throughout her undergraduate courses in the *Modern Languages Undergraduate Program* (MLUP).

¹⁹ Reading in Spanish (Llisterri Boix, 1991) in the second week of class in the cohorts Spring and Fall 2010; Spring and Fall 2011; and Spring 2012. I added the reading "Fonética y Fonología" (Quillis & Fernández, 1986) for Spring and Fall 2011, and Spring 2012. I introduced one more reading in Spanish in Spring 2012: "Historia de la Lengua" (Universidad Santo Tomas, 1981). These last three readings were not included in any syllabi because I gave them to students during the first week of class. They are in my notes, electronic and hard files.

²⁰ Half of the total number of final papers were written in Spanish in Spring 2011.

²¹ Meeting on May 7, 2010. Information ratified by Aron, the librarian of DML, in personal e-mail, October 8, 2014.

Regardless of students' language specialization in MLUP—English, French, or German—all undergraduate students have to comply with the requisite of monograph writing before graduation (MLUP Curricular Program). The EPP course would offer the opportunity of writing a paper in English as part of the evaluation process. Moreover, I assumed this exercise would expose students to a distinct writing experience from the one in short compositions in their foreign language writing courses. The paper could be written in the language of the students' choice: EFL or Spanish—whatever students felt was more convenient for them. Also, the papers would be the result of group collaboration and mutual help with ideas, concepts, and students' points of view about language and academic language issues. Collaboration was encouraged from the time students worked on their first presentations, more so in writing (see Appendix J).²²

The way I envisioned this paper, in general terms, was to allow students to express themselves in English or Spanish in what might have been their first formal exposure to academic writing (either in the native language or in the foreign one). The great majority of students chose to write their final papers in English. Here, content and form would also serve as a means to understand the subject matter (see Appendix K: *Two Rubrics to Evaluate the Final Project: Content and Editing*; and Appendix L, visual sample paper with instructions). Writing a paper would serve students to define and explain the concepts studied in phonetics and phonology as well as give them some extra practice in formal writing. Even if students' foreign language was at an interlanguage level, I believed that

²² The paper was the final process students had to develop in groups. For the two oral presentations (see Appendix J), students had to work in groups to write their notes and handouts. These groups, I explained, were like a marriage. They had to sort out ways to understand each other and collaborate. These groups were the same for the final project. On various occasions there were problems, and a few students did their work individually or became part of new groups.

students should be given the opportunity to practice the academic genre. My philosophy at that time (and currently) was that it was by practicing and doing things over and over again and with others that you learn and improve.

Instructor's First Year Experience at UDB: Fall 2009 and Spring 2010

Upon my return to Bogota from the United States on August 5, 2009, I started teaching two courses: *English Phonetics and Phonology* and *English Foreign Language Teaching Methodology. EPP* and the *EFL Teaching Methodology* courses were offered to me by DML for the Fall semester 2009 (personal e-mails exchanged with the Chair of the Department at that time and with the Coordinator of the *English Language Specialization, June 2009*). I believed teaching these courses would give me a broad perspective of what was happening in MLUP at UDB. Before Fall 2005, I had taught two courses called *Civilizations* (the USA and the UK), which were my main motivation in pursuing a Ph.D. in the United States.²³ By the time I came back to UDB, the core curriculum only required one civilization. Other instructors had already been in charge of the course, and under the circumstances I had to find my new academic role in DLM and adjust.

The new courses—*EPP* and *EFL Teaching Methodology*—allowed me to explore the subject matter in Fall 2009.²⁴ These two courses would test my teaching skills beyond my comfort zone. For Spring 2010, I was offered to teach either the *EPP* or the *EFL Teaching Methodology* course, and I chose to teach the two classes of *EPP*. I thought that what students needed most was to know more about the target language they were learning, and *EPP* would give students this opportunity. In my view, it was absurd to ask fifth

²³ Letter of Intent I wrote for universities in the United States to pursue a Ph.D., 2004. Personal file, *Fulbright Application Forms and Documents 2004-2005*.

²⁴ Claudia Lombana: UDB Instructor's Annual Academic Report 2009.

semester undergraduate students with varied levels of English interlanguages to micro teach English to children in an EFL Teaching Methodology course. Lacking fluency and communicative skills in the target language made it harder for some undergraduate students to manage teaching activities in the classroom.

The first two courses of EPP. The first course of EPP that I taught in 2009 was oriented more towards pronunciation than phonetics and phonology (although I did mention exploring concepts of phonology in the course):

This introductory course to English [language] pronunciation will examine general theoretical concepts of English phonetics and phonology in order to familiarize students with the practical pronunciation exercises they will complete in and out of class. The study of pronunciation by foreign language learners is essential for effective communication between different speakers of English, native and nonnative. The course does not aspire to produce native speakers of English. Such a pretension is born of the folk theory that assumes that by doing English undergraduate majors people somehow become *native*. “While [practicing] pronunciation will not make perfect, ignoring pronunciation totally can be a great disservice to [foreign language] students,” (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992, p. viii). Therefore, this course expects students to [:] (1) become acquainted with pronunciation obstacles in English as a foreign language in contrast to their native language and (2) acquire an ecological understanding of accent differences among speakers of native and nonnative languages. (see Appendix M, Trial Syllabus Fall 2009)

I included the distinction *native* and *non-native* pronunciations of speakers of English because I realized that in a primarily monolingual Spanish-speaking environment, devoid of a natural native-English speaking community, *natural living* referents were few. This dialogical relationship (native/nonnative) does not exist to understand where you are with respect to the Other.²⁵ Once back at UDB, I also found that students majoring in English were more exposed to a few (three) native teaching assistants than prior to my coming to

²⁵ This is in terms of *foreign*, which means from other countries. People’s Spanish-language accent from other regions but Bogota are not considered *foreign*. Yet some people seem to be biased against certain accents.

UNM. When I left UBD in August 2005, there were no native speakers of English for the English language specialization.

I was aware of my own accent in both English and Spanish: a foreign accent in English and a native in Spanish, of the Colombian variety of Bogota. Additionally, there was the issue of Colombian faculty members' accents and interlanguages in English, French, and German in DML. "The way I conceive accents," I thought, "might bridge the gap between harsh comparisons of British accent versus American accent" with the former believed to be *more educated* than the latter by many people in Bogota.

The difference between British and American accents would be the same misconception I have heard in the Southwest United States where people refer to Castilian Spanish as more educated than the Spanish of Latin America without considering social, cultural, biological, and cognitive factors that intervene in the phenomenon. Some Americans have told me they usually go to *Instituto Cervantes* to learn the *real* Spanish. Also, by accepting our foreign accent (Colombian instructors and students) and errors in the foreign language, we would start demystifying the concept of *perfect language skills* among Colombian instructors of foreign language and even among native speakers of any language.²⁶

The readings I requested for the course included three main books: Avery and Ehrlich (2008), *Teaching American English Pronunciation*; Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (1996), *Teaching American English Pronunciation: A Reference for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages*; and Roach (2009), *English Phonetics and*

²⁶ On many occasions, students would ask why they found their Colombian instructors making language mistakes (e.g. grammar and pronunciation) in their foreign language courses. The phenomenon of the second language speaker and our interlanguages at different levels was little understood. As Spanish-language speakers, we also make mistakes and lack knowledge of our language in different areas.

Phonology: A Practical Course. Other additional readings came from *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language* by David Crystal (2003), and the Internet. The evaluation process integrated reading comprehension tests (20%); practical activities (20%); two group presentations (20%); and a term project (40%). For the final project, the syllabus stated: “Students will choose a pronunciation problem that they find important to describe and analyze. Further information specifying the details of the project will be announced after students have been oriented to the course” (see Appendix M, Syllabus Fall 2009).

The course was developed in a seminar format: Students participated with their understanding of the reading material and I contributed with mine. My perception of the class was that I saw myself asking and answering questions and then answering them myself, as a model for students as well as a way to provide further information. This is something I primarily did when there was a long silence in the classroom after I asked questions. The best classes, in my view, were the ones that had students’ presentations. For the first presentation, students often chose a topic of their preference related to phonetics and phonology. They also had to write a summary of their presentations in a handout, for which they received instructions and guidelines (see Appendix J.2, Instructions on How to Write the Handout for Groups’ First Presentation). For the first oral presentations students chose varied topics that included the international phonetic alphabet (IPA); Hiberno-English dialects; the schwa sound; differences in the pronunciation of English vowels that we Spanish speakers cannot identify; and English word stress rules.²⁷

The topics of the course were taught in sixteen weeks. For each weekly assigned reading(s)—as specified in the section *Course Schedule* of the syllabus (see Appendix M)—

²⁷ My notes in the Instructor’s Binder, Fall 2009.

I made handouts with what I thought was the main information students should be able to use and remember. In my view, these handouts had to summarize the topics of the lesson, clarify and review concepts, and/or include exercises (see Appendices H and I). I also provided information of web sites in YouTube: “Always Speak Slowly,” “Fillers,” “Learn English Vowels,” “IPA Vowels,” “Diphthongs in English,” “Phonemes of American English,” “Short Vowel Sounds in British English,” and “British Short Vowel Sounds in BBC English,” among others (records kept in my electronic files).

Other academic duties at UDB. Besides teaching, my other academic duties at UDB included: tutoring undergraduate students of the MLUP; grading students’ work; attending meetings organized by the chair of DML and the coordinator of the *English Language Specialization*; attending symposia and conferences in the field of foreign language and bilingualism in Bogota.²⁸ In short, responsibilities included the academic and administrative obligations that faculty members usually have at a university.

The faculty members at UDB are asked to perform duties that most faculty members with Ph.D.s at universities in the United States perform. The difference is that most of the professors at the *Department of Modern Languages* only hold master’s degrees.²⁹ This is what González Moncada (2005) describes as part of the professional challenge of foreign language educators at public universities in Colombia. Her research puts forward the strenuous path of university foreign language educators holding mostly master’s degrees. These professionals usually attend conferences nationally and internationally; teach and

²⁸ Claudia Lombana’s Instructor’s Annual Academic Activities Report, 2009.

²⁹ First draft of the document for the accreditation of the program, Informe de Autoevaluación y Seguimiento de la Calidad con Fines de Renovación de la Acreditación de La Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas – Período 2008-2012 [Report on the Self-evaluation and Follow-up of the Modern Languages Undergraduate Program with the Purpose of Accreditation – Years 2008-2012].

publish research to advance the field of foreign language education; teach research methodologies at graduate and undergraduate levels, besides teaching foreign language. Many are asked to perform the duties of competitive professors with Ph.D.'s, yet, the profession is precariously funded and many initiatives in their professional development come from the same language professionals themselves (González Moncada, 2005).

EPP in Spring 2010. The major change that I made to EPP for Spring 2010 was the inclusion of new chapters coming from four books in the course reader: Ladefoged (1975), *A Course in Phonetics*; Llisterri Boix (1991), *Introduction to Phonetics: The Experimental Method*; Kenworthy (1992), *Teaching English Pronunciation*; and Poms and Dale (1985), *English Pronunciation for Spanish Speakers*. These books provided the foundation I wanted to teach EPP: some theoretical issues of phonetics and phonology; some information about the teaching of pronunciation; and a student-friendly description of pronunciation of American English for Spanish speaking people.

Another change to the 2010 course was the incorporation of a code of conduct in the syllabus to modify students' behavior. In the previous semester I had experienced students' tardiness, use of cellular phones in class, leaving the classroom unexpectedly at any time, and frequent absences. In 2010, good student conduct was praised with the maximum grade: 5 out of a scale of 5; any misconduct, as stated in the procedure, would take away points from this grade of 5. Conduct was part of the student evaluation as follows: professional conduct, 15%; reading comprehension tests and quizzes: 15%, practical activities: 20%; two group presentations, 20%; and *Term Project*, 30%. Once again, I stated in the syllabus for Spring 2010: "Specifications about the term project will be announced after students have been oriented to the course and after once [*sic*] some theoretical and practical issues have

been addressed” (see Appendix M, Updated Syllabus Fall 2010, which is based on Trial Syllabus Spring 2010). I also made two additions to the syllabus: a list of books on phonetics and phonology, and English language pronunciation (see Appendix M, Fall 2010). These books were available at the Library of the DML and could be checked out. The handbook of readings was available for students at the copy shop in Nunan Building. This information was given in the last page of the syllabus (see Appendix M, Syllabus: Fall 2010).

The final papers in the courses of Fall 2009 and Spring 2010 and the learning behaviors I observed embraced the activities and tasks for a foreign language course more than for a phonetics and phonology course. I was divided between pronunciation, phonetics and phonology, and the language perspectives I wanted students to gain as future language professionals. I thought that the most salient themes and organization of the course should allow students to: 1) make practical use of the concepts of phonetics and phonology and the appropriation of this discourse; 2) gain general knowledge about language issues relevant to any language professional; 3) get acquainted with how they used their foreign language; and 4) provide what they needed to take into account for their future career as ELF teachers (see Appendix F, Model 1, where I show visually how the course was conceived). The course should make students reflect more on the concepts explained in phonetics and phonology; in the same way, I wanted students to be able to understand that there is more to phonetic transcription, the singing of songs, and the modulation of sounds in isolated words as many students used to describe why they studied English. This latter reflection was the general idea that I had gained from my interaction with the students for two consecutive semesters when I asked them the first day of class what EPP was about; I also asked for personal

information about students' reasons to pursue a modern languages major. In students' romanticized version of a foreign language (tourism, travel, singing songs, living in another country) there was little room for teaching EFL or even thinking about language as a system (students' answers as reported in the instructors' notes on the first day of class). Also, it was by reading a Colombian textbook in phonetics (Arias, 2009) that I gained a wider perspective of how teachers still perceived this class in Colombia: as the teaching of isolated words and sounds, that is, in segments. Yet, it is hard to overgeneralize as I found no publications of empirical research on how this course is taught in the national or international journals. This does not mean that phonetics and phonology is inexistent at foreign language programs at universities in Colombia or elsewhere. I showed in the literature review that 10 universities, including Universidad de Bogota, offer this subject in their curricula currently.

By experiencing this course and how appropriate it was within the curriculum, I would interpret from more advanced students: "I know enough English, why should I take this course?" This student attitude came up on two occasions: Once, when I had to write two *Validation Exams* for students who only wanted to advance with their other courses and get away from pursuing EPP. That is, these students did not want to take EPP and were "testing out." The second occasion was when I had two high intermediate students that thought they could get away with their oral skills, scarcely read the assigned readings, and showed up late repeatedly to class. From these behaviors I interpreted that they imagined this was entirely a pronunciation course with the popular pronunciation drills. It seemed to me, these students thought they did not need the EPP course. However, from my perspective of these students' oral and written performance, they could still learn other issues about the system of

phonetics and phonology underlying the foreign language and allow themselves to express their ideas in more cohesive and coherent writing.

In Spring 2010, my teaching seemed to improve as compared to the previous academic term. I had evidence of this in the two presentations students made and in their final papers. Still, I thought I needed to handle the concepts of the course in a much better way, specifically the ones related to suprasegmentals or prosody. Another serious issue was that several students were not reading the material and expected to get the input and the explanations from the instructor. What if the instructor was misinterpreting the theory? In the land of the blind, I thought, they believed in the one-eyed man as king. And yet, there were ethical issues involved in the way I delivered every lesson and the material that was produced for the course. I also had to acknowledge my errors and misinterpretations.

The Course of English Phonetics and Phonology: The Four Cohorts of This Study

The previous section described in general terms what happened in the first two semesters I taught at UDB. In this section I will describe the changes that I made to the four sections of EPP (taught in Fall 2010, Spring and Fall 2011, and Spring 2012) as shown in the syllabus, the reading material, the system of evaluation, and my notes as an instructor. Each semester, I learned something new about class behavior, the subject matter, and my personal gaps in the content of the course and the class activities. I also added innovative and creative lessons that came directly from students' work in the previous courses. The quizzes and tests remained unchanged.

The syllabi of the four cohorts. The former two syllabi (Fall 2009 and Spring 2010) laid the foundation for the subsequent courses. Changes were introduced in the

description of the course in the syllabus for Fall 2010 (see Appendix M), pointing the way to the theoretical concepts that were going to be used:

This introductory course to English pronunciation will examine general theoretical concepts of English phonetics and phonology in order to familiarize students with the field and to allow them to describe the language they're learning. Also, the course is intended to introduce practical pronunciation exercises so that students complete them in and out of class as further practice. The study of pronunciation by foreign language learners is essential for effective communication between different speakers of English, native and nonnative.

As this description reads, I was still divided between the idea of teaching pronunciation and/or phonetics and phonology and was not very clear of what I wanted: Was it a course in pronunciation? Was it a course in phonetics and phonology? The course was still dealing with the phonetics and phonology subject as an appendage of a pronunciation course. The difference with previous syllabi was that now *theoretical concepts* from phonetics and phonology should allow students *to describe the language they were learning*. This was different from the previous syllabi that described that learning theoretical concepts of phonetics and phonology was done “in order to familiarize students with the practical pronunciation exercises they [would] complete in and out of class” (syllabus Fall 2009 and Fall 2010—based on Spring 2010—Appendix M). For Fall 2011, the course EPP had become more ambitious. The description of the course in the syllabus added more information to the previous syllabi in this way:

... [T]he course is intended to establish a practical connection between the reception and production of English from a phonetic perspective. In terms of phonology, the phonological systems of the foreign and native language need to be compared in order to understand the differences and similarities in both languages, English and Spanish. It is assumed that by understanding how the two systems work, students will be able to evaluate their own oral performance in both the foreign and native languages. In addition, this course also provides some information about language acquisition focusing more attention on the area of pronunciation and what this involves. In short, the course includes a theoretical foundation in phonetics and

phonology, literature about the teaching of pronunciation and language acquisition, and several useful exercises for students to practice on their own. (See Appendix M, Syllabus Fall 2011)

The two most important changes in the description of the syllabus for Fall 2011 were: the placement of phonetics before pronunciation; the comparison of phonological systems: Spanish and English; and the inclusion of language acquisition issues intended to the area of pronunciation and what this involves. In the phrase “what it involves” I wanted to imply that pronunciation has an underlying phonetic and phonological system. These changes corresponded to what I understood as the main problem in the previous courses: 1) the course had been defined as a pronunciation course; 2) I also wanted students to contrast their native Spanish sounds and suprasegmentals with those of the English language; and moreover, 3) I wanted students to deal with topics of phonetics and phonology in their first oral presentations. This last task had been performed by third semester students in the three courses of EPP I had taught previously. The presentations seemed to be beyond their foreign language level. This posed a real linguistic challenge for foreign language learners with low intermediate language levels: use of specialized academic jargon, and dealing with meaning and management of concepts in a foreign language. Finding a way where the presentations were natural and a good channel to provide information for the class was a challenge for the instructor herself.

In the last year I taught EPP (Fall 2011-Spring 2012) I allowed students to choose any language-related topic of personal interest for their first presentations—given that students found the topic easy for them to handle. In my view, this would be less difficult than the jargon in linguistics phonology and phonetics, and would motivate students to

speak about issues they wanted to know about language. In this way, they would practice their academic speech in front of an audience, as well as learn more about language.

The objectives of EPP for the cohorts Fall 2010, Spring and Fall 2011, and Fall 2012 were based on the former objectives of the cohorts Fall 2009 and Spring 2010 with new additions: objective 7 in Spring 2011, and objective 8 in Fall 2011 and Spring 2012. Table 2 presents the objectives of the course as they appeared in the most recent syllabus (Spring 2011 and Fall 2012).

Table 2

*Objectives of EPP in the Four Cohorts*³⁰

1. To become familiar with the concepts used in the study of English phonetics and phonology.
 2. To develop sensitivity to the complexities of sounds in English: consonants and vowels (segmental) and whole discourse (suprasegmental).
 3. To develop the ability to listen to strings of words combined in sentences and chunks of discourse of different kinds.
 4. To understand that as there are different accents in Spanish, so are there distinct accents in English.
 5. To be able to transcribe different texts phonetically.
 6. To be able to explore the theory and the practical exercises beyond the classroom and as part of students' own academic study and personal learning experience with the English language.
 7. To be able to read aloud and pronounce different kinds of texts (written and spoken) in class.
 8. To be able to analyze a short spoken excerpts (*sic*) using basic concepts from phonetics and phonology.
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The Reading Material. As I described earlier, the reading material changed a little between the four cohorts. By Spring 2010 I had already introduced Ladefoged's (1975) *A Course in Phonetics*, as I thought the name of the course *English Phonetics and Phonology* should respond to this title more than to pronunciation. For Spring 2011 I included a more

³⁰ Syllabi in Appendix L

recent edition of Ladefoged's: the 1993 third edition. And starting Fall 2011, I changed to the sixth edition of *A Course in Phonetics* by Ladefoged and revised by Johnson (2011) (see Appendix M, Syllabi Fall 2010 and Fall 2011). This was the most recent edition at that time. The first five chapters of Ladefoged and Johnson (2011) made up the core of the course in the handbook of readings. The other chapters were not included except for two that I thought useful for students in Fall 2011 (students could explore these readings on their own). From the book *Introducción a la Fonética: El Método Experimental* by Llisterri Boix (1991) (Introduction to Phonetics: The Experimental Method), I included the first two chapters with three purposes in mind: to explore the field of phonetics in Spanish; to familiarize students with the concepts and definitions of phonetics and phonology in Spanish, so students could make the transition into English; and to offer an overview of the field of phonetics and the experimental method for those interested in studying the subject further.

Except for Ladefoged and Johnson's sixth edition (2011), the other editions of Ladefoged (1975; 1993), the book by Llisterri Boix (1991), and the list of books that I gave to the class dated back 20 and 30 years (see Appendix M for the list of books that the Library of DML had when I taught the course). In addition, there were a dozen PDF articles that I downloaded from language journals on phonetics and phonology. However, these articles were very advanced for third semester students. They were the result of very specialized research in the field of phonetics and phonology.

The system of evaluation and grades. The system of evaluation was varied. I had explored this system for one year, and every time I taught the course I tried to improve it and make it fair. Nevertheless, I still felt ambivalent about grading a subject that I was

exploring at the same time that the students were learning it. My former knowledge on the subject was outdated, and I had to read and prepare every lesson. I also felt that I needed to expose students to the EPP material in English, but because some students had very low English language skills this became what the literature in bilingual education calls sink or swim, or submersion.³¹ This is why exposure to Spanish material and texts was also allowed, and detailed instructions for the tasks and personal tutoring were also provided. I allowed students to choose the language of preference for the evaluations: English or Spanish. I wanted to be certain that the changes in the course, my own cultural re-acclimation, and other extraneous factors were not affecting how I perceived students' work and what they were learning.

The evaluation system was mainly categorized into four types: 1) reading comprehension and quizzes (four for the most part); 2) practical activities (between four and five); 3) two group presentations; and 4) a final project, called *term project* in the syllabi. I also included the *Professional Conduct* evaluation (15% of the total grade), which I had included in the previous academic term, Spring 2011. This grade made part of the total grade in the cohorts' Spring 2010, Fall 2010, and Spring 2011. I did not evaluate professional conduct in Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 because observing and annotating students' conduct in every class diverted my attention from the content of the course; this had also taken a great part of my time and energy in the previous semesters. In addition, I

³¹ "Cohen (1986) coined the sink-or-swim approach, *submersion*." (Ovando, Combs, Collier, 2006, p. 61). In this submersion process, ESL students in the U.S. were given little help to attain good results in "academic work in math, science, social studies, and other curricular areas" (p. 61). The case of EPP was to try to give as much support to the students with the foreign language as well as with the content of the course, according to the instructor.

thought that young adult students should self-regulate. Table 3 shows the types of evaluations and their percentages based on the syllabi of the four cohorts:³²

Table 3

Types of Evaluation and Their Percentages

Spring 2010 – Fall 2010 – Spring 2011	Fall 2011 – Spring 2012
Professional Conduct: 15%	Reading Comprehension Tests and Quizzes: 30%.
Reading Comprehension Tests and Quizzes: 15%	Practical Activities: 20%
Practical Activities: 20%	Two Group Presentations: 20%
Two Group Presentations: 20%	<i>Term Project: 30%</i>
<i>Term Project: 30%</i>	

The lowest grades in all cohorts resulted from the evaluation type *reading comprehension tests and quizzes*, as compared to the average grade of the other activities.

The four cohorts had the following grade averages in four categories of evaluation. Table 4 shows this information.

Table 4

Average Grades According to Evaluation Category and Cohort

Cohort	Evaluation Category			
	Reading Comprehension Tests and Quizzes	Practical Activities	Group Presentations	Term Project
Fall 2010	2.7	3.6	4.0	3.8
Fall 2011	2.9	3.4	4.2	3.7
Spring 2011	3.3	3.6	3.7	4.1
Spring 2012	3.1	3.7	4.3	4.3

Another important fact is that in each semester I had two classes of EPP, for a total of eight classes (or groups) in the four cohorts taught on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The first

³² See Appendix J.

class was from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. (first group). The second class of EPP was from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. (second group).

The trend in the four evaluation categories was: higher scores in the first group than in the second one. The exception was the two classes, first and second groups, in Spring 2011, where the students in the second group (from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.) performed much better than the first group from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. In the 9 a. m. to 11 a.m. class, students used more Spanish in quizzes, oral presentations, and in their final papers than in any of the other seven classes (or groups).³³ The composition of this class was entirely male and except for two students that presented the final paper in English, the rest used Spanish. The second group, Spring 2011, was the only one in the schedule 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. that scored higher than its counterpart 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.; it also had fewer students, and one female student showed more advanced English skills than the two classes combined. I also observed a trend that, in general, the 9 a.m.-11 a.m. classes were more dynamic than the 11a.m. to 1 p.m. classes. Both students and instructor seemed to feel more exhausted for the 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. class. Most of my students had started their classes at 7 a.m., after commuting for an average of 45 minutes, and did not have a break until 1 p.m. I present the average scores per cohort and group in Table 5.

³³ Claudia Lombana's notes on group presentations, feedback to students, and Excel sheets with grades.

Table 5

Quizzes Average Scores per Cohort and Group

	Fall 2010		Spring 2011		Fall 2011		Spring 2012	
	Fall 2010-01	Fall 2010-02	Spring 2011-01	Spring 2011-02	Fall 2011-01	Fall 2011-02	Spring 2012-01	Spring 2012-02
Number of Quizzes	4	4	4	4	5	5	2	2
Average	2.7	2.7	2.8	3.3	3.2	2.5	3.6	2.6

I thought the evaluation system was versatile and allowed students to participate individually (quizzes and reading comprehension) and in groups (oral presentations, practical activities, and final project or term project). Also, the grading system comprised from a classical evaluation system (where rote memorization and association was involved) to other thinking skills that made use of generalizations, summaries, explanations, descriptions and practical applications of theory to short exercises.

With respect to the oral presentations, students usually surprised me with their computer literacy, visual creativity, and short-term memory skills as well as their ability to deliver their presentations in English. They also showed their creativity by the topics they chose and by their innovative involvement in the presentations. As an additional task in conjunction with their first presentation, students were required to provide a handout for the class. This handout was to contain the main ideas of the presentation, so the audience would leave the class with this summary (Appendix J). I wanted students to include the information in the handouts in their final papers, or to make use of this information in other courses or for further reference in their language studies. I tried to help with editing the handouts before making copies for the class, but this consumed a lot of my time. The course

had become so complex by Spring 2012 that I was only able to edit three handouts that I gave to the class. Students also felt the burden of this work, as they were not just students: many of them worked, a few were married with children, and the great majority commuted long distances in the very congested Bogota. Getting back and forth from our homes to UBD would take us a daily average of 90 minutes, if not longer.

My idea about the oral presentations was to rehearse the English language in formal academic discourse (see Appendix J), making everybody believe we were at an international conference. This was a make-believe game, where students had to empower themselves to play the role of an important speaker and rehearse their English skills in an academic genre. Therefore, this game was not just about pronunciation, but a make-believe rehearsal of future roles. Also, these presentations allowed us to learn about language from one another, share experiences, and add to our knowledge.

The Four Steps: The Foundation to Students' Final Papers

The Four Steps (TFS) was an activity that I created for the four cohorts. The purpose of this activity was threefold: 1) to deal with the concepts of phonetics and phonology and their application in a practical exercise; 2) to give more guidance to students to set up the foundations for their final papers; 3) and to help students with their writing, so that by the last week of the semester I could read their final papers more easily and grade faster. In the previous semesters that I had taught the course, I had problems with students' interpretations of concepts as expressed in their foreign language, but also in Spanish, their native language. I still noticed that students were not getting to the core issue of two different language sound systems: English and Spanish. In short, I was having major problems

understanding what students meant in their writing: either because of students' interlanguage, or some sort of lack of understanding of major concepts. I also think I must have made students puzzled with my interlanguage explanations. I do believe, however, that because of my Colombian accent, students might have found this familiar. Unfortunately, there are no video or audio records of my teaching.

The main purpose of TFS was to draft the foundation for the final paper (or *term project* in the syllabus) using four phases or steps. Students received precise information on how to develop each step and produce four documents (see Appendix N, Spring 2012), which were graded accordingly (see Appendix O for the graded feedback rubrics of TFS). I wanted students to work together in pairs or in groups of three. Working individually was discouraged. I wanted collaboration and mentoring among students, especially during tasks that needed: 1) students' perception of language sounds; 2) theory recall and its application; and 3) issues of writing and editing. However, there were times when personal situations pressed students to work by themselves (e.g. some peers refused to work with X or Y person, or groups broke up because a member had dropped the course, or simply the relationship did not work at all).

Sharing and practicing what we had read from the handbook and applying exercises created the foundation for the final paper. I wanted students to experience that language learning is founded on collaboration, sharing different points of view, and acknowledging individual and group efforts. In fact, my inspiration came from basketball coach John Wooden who passed away in June 2010. In the news, they said that John Wooden would teach his players how to plan the strategy; then go to the court and practice; come back to the bench and discuss what had gone wrong in the practice; then go back to the court and

practice again. Also, Walcott's (2008) *Ethnography: A Way of Seeing* inspired me with his ideas about participant observers, emic and etic perspectives, and special disposition for detail and deep description.

My motivation also came from the courses of English phonetics and phonology in my undergraduate program. I recalled how helpful IPA transcription was in listening situations when I did not understand many words, or even stretches of foreign language discourse. Writing the lyrics to songs used to be a common task and pastime for foreign language students many years ago, as there were no web pages with the lyrics. In fact, training your ear was the only way to have access to the foreign language, and in many cases it was a failed task. This may be the reason many English language textbooks include the written transcripts of the listening activities along with explanations of embedded cultural issues for foreign language teachers and students.

In short, my objective was not far from my teenage desire that I wanted to transmit to students: to be able to understand and communicate with native speakers of English and French; to be able to understand T.V. programs and movies in English and to be able to speak about them. I still remember that, as a 17-year-old teenager, I asked one senior student: "You're almost done with your French and English major, so tell me: Are you able to hold a conversation with native speakers of English and French? Do you understand everything people say in the movies?" Then the young woman replied: "No, this undergraduate program does not allow you to do that, but you do learn how to teach." Because I had gone through this bitter disappointment in my first semester of foreign language classes, I did not want this for my students. I thought my young students in EPP would like the same things I wanted at 17, even if the generation gap between them and the

instructor was wide. I had to acknowledge that my students were far beyond my old undergraduate classmates in terms of foreign language knowledge, but still discovering issues of language.

Description of the four steps. *The Four Steps* (TFS) was a planned strategy divided into four phases, with a handout containing instructions for each step of the Fall 2010 EPP course and an evaluation sheet. For the subsequent cohorts, Spring and Fall 2011 and Spring 2012, I updated the handouts. In essence, all the handouts contained this basic information. *The First Step* was an activity that included three main tasks: 1) choosing and recording a verbatim sample from the Internet (from one and a half minutes to a maximum two minutes long); 2) doing the written transcription of the oral text; and 3) annotating in a journal what happened in the first two tasks. *The Second Step* was also divided into two main tasks: 1) marking word stress and transcribing the text in a broad phonetic transcription; and 2) noticing details of the changes in sounds of segments (vowels and consonants) that were modified by neighboring sounds (or segments). This second task demanded a narrower transcription of certain stretches of speech to give examples of phonological rules. *The Third Step* included marking suprasegmentals, or prosody, on the written text: students had to mark pauses, sentence stress, word stress, intonation. *The Fourth Step* was also divided into two tasks. At first, students had to read the text in their groups, imitating the speakers of their verbatim sample and paying attention to their oral production and their phonetic notations. They had to annotate in their journals how this task had taken place, what they had perceived. Finally, the last task was to write a discussion of the whole process, what they had experienced in the four steps and what they had learned. For this discussion, I gave them four texts to elicit ideas and provide the language that four authors had used to talk

about language. These authors were Halliday (1990), Gibson (2008), Shlain (1998), and Rodriguez (1999). I added Rodriguez's text to the reading material of cohorts Fall 2011 and Spring 2012. (Appendix N includes Step 1, Step 2, Step 3, and Step 4 for the cohort Spring 2012 and their corresponding evaluation rubrics.) The versions were similar for the four cohorts with some variations that I will describe in the next section.

Changes in the four steps across the four cohorts. For the Fall semester 2010, I started off the TFS task without knowing exactly what this was about or where this would take us all. Bored after I arrived tired from class on October 19th, I checked the news on Yahoo after 5 p.m. I clicked on one video with news about France. Then I started writing it. When I was done, I decided to record it on my iPod. That became the written transcription that served as the foundation of TFS (see Appendix P, Written Transcription: Strikes in France). I framed the text in a presentable handout and took it to the two EPP classes on Thursday 21, 2010.

It was from the transcription of the verbatim sample that the rest of the tasks emerged in combination with the content of the course, along with my desire to have students experience transcribing texts in writing and phonetically. I had not thought at that time about how we were going to apply the theory. I only knew that my past experience transcribing data for my Qualitative Research Course in Fall 2007 had been revealing to me. It was not just a transcription of words and a text. I discovered then how my cognition played tricks on me, even in my native language, Spanish: I would change the wording, insert words that I thought I had heard, or skipped others. In short, the transcription of a Spanish text for the pilot project I wrote for the qualitative class helped me to inspire my

students. I wanted them to experience what it was like to transcribe a text, and especially a text in a foreign language.

From the first experience with TFS in Fall 2010, I would get more involved in this project with the next three cohorts. I will describe the changes to each step throughout the four cohorts by comparing the differences in content, wording, instructions, and other salient features.

Step 1: Verbatim text and written transcription. What had started as a fun activity in Fall 2010 had become more mandatory and detailed in the instructions and the recommended strategies that I suggested in subsequent semesters. Instructions in Fall 2010 started with “Some suggestions” in a 593-word document; by Spring 2012, the document had 1,392 words and did not have “suggestions” but more specific guidelines.

Step 1 consisted of two main activities: 1) choosing a verbatim sample, of the students’ liking, from the Internet or a video, and 2) recording and transcribing the oral text. These two tasks contained instructions organized in four sections: (A), (B), (C), and (D). In (A), students had to record a verbatim sample on a CD and listen to it. Task (B) was the listening exercise itself and the transcription of the text. Task (C) requested that students write notes on a journal about this experience; originally, this was guided through nine specific information questions that required students to rate the difficulty of the listening task, among others. The last section, (D), gave instructions to students about what they had to turn in on specific dates: a CD with the text students recorded, the transcription of the text, and the written notes they included in their journals.

The handouts for Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 had the same information in sections (A) and (B). Section (C) had some variations. Table 6 presents the original nine questions for section (C) Step 1, Fall 2010:

Table 6

Step 1. What Students Had to Annotate in Their Journals

Original Step 1- Fall 2010

C. Written Notes in Journal: Reporting on This Experience

- (1) How did you plan for this task/or what did you do? The different steps involved in the task.
- (2) What listening and writing strategies did you use? What was difficult or easy?
- (3) How did the knowledge coming from what you've read in phonetics and phonology help you with this task?
- (4) What was easy and difficult in the writing of this spoken/text? Words? Whole stretches of sentences? What segments? What suprasegmental features? Accents? The topic? The speed of the language delivered by the speakers?
- (5) How did you figure out words or stretches of spoken language that were difficult for you?
- (6) What stretches of discourse were definitely impossible to write down?
- (7) Write down how difficult/easy the task of listening was for each member of the group. If you can, rate the difficulty on a scale of 5 to 1 where:

5 = You did not have any problems.

1 = It was impossible to understand anything.

- (8) What happened to your perception as a whole?
 - (9) How did you mark the punctuation of the written text?
-

These basic nine questions became 10 in Spring 2011, with a new question (3):

“What phonetic and phonological knowledge did you apply in the identification of words?”

Also, question (4), now (5) for Spring 2011, requested more information:

(5) What was easy and difficult in the writing of ... The topic? The speed of the language delivered by the speakers? PROVE THIS WITH EXAMPLES COMING FROM THE TEXT: e.g. “It was difficult for me to identify what the reported [*sic*] said in line 17. I did not identify the word “blockades”, for I did not know this word

previously. Then I could identify the cluster “bl”, the velar stop voiceless [k] and the diphthong [eɪ].

Question (5), now (6), was reworded and asked for more details:

Explain in detail and with examples coming from the text how you figured out words or stretches of spoken language that were difficult for you: e.g., “In line 23 I had difficulties with the proper name, Nicolas Sarkozy’s. In line 26 I could not recognize the expression ‘back down’ for it was pronounced very quickly.

Question 6, now 7, added how students should write stretches of discourse that were unintelligible: “(7) What stretches of discourse were definitely impossible to write down? e.g. xxxxxxxxx.” Finally, question 9, now 10, also requested additional work: “(10) How did you mark the punctuation of the written text? *Go to a web page to learn to punctuate texts in English*” (my italics). Instead of devoting one class to the use of punctuation in English, I asked students to fill in their gaps by visiting a web page.

The comparison of Step 1, Fall 2010 and Spring 2011, and Step 1, Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 bring more differences, as these two latter are more similar in form and content. In the handouts of Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 section (A) read:

Write notes on this process (**C: Written notes on journal**): (bold letters in original)
How did you choose the text, what did you do? How did the listening of the text take place? What steps were involved, if any? How many times did you have to listen to the text? First impression (before the written transcription): did you find the text easy or difficult as a whole the first time you heard it: general idea; supporting ideas; other details. **It’s all right if you don’t have a 100% listening comprehension!!!**

For Fall 2011 and Spring 2012, this paragraph was shortened to a sentence: “While you do this task, answer the questions in part ‘**C: Written notes on journal**’ individually.”

(Handout Step 1, Fall 2011; Spring 2012). I requested all the members of the group do the task individually and then compare their transcriptions with the members of their group.

Another remarkable difference was that section (B) “Writing the Oral Text (transcribing the oral text in plain writing)” in the Handouts Step 1, Fall 2010; Spring 2011, became a long section subdivided into two subsections for Fall 2011 and Spring 2012: “***B.1 Working Individually: Your individual written transcription and journal will be turned in on November 1***” and “***B.2 Group Work: One Version of the Transcribed Text to be Turned in on Thursday, November 3***” (bold and italics in the original text). For Spring 2012, the dates were May 5th for the individual work, and May 10th for the work done in groups. This change was motivated by my observations that some group members did not work as hard as the other members. I also heard students’ complaints about group work and problems emerging from this interaction. Therefore, for Fall 2011 and Spring 2012, the group task became divided individually first, then the members had to share what they had done.

For the handouts, Fall 2011 and Spring 2012, I also modified some instructions on how to handle the punctuation of the text. Subsection (B.1) read as follows:

Also, you will have to do an analysis on how you will use punctuation marks in this text. This has to show in the transcription (practical application of this analysis).
The punctuation of the transcribed text will also be graded. (Bold text in original)

Different from the handouts I gave to the students in Fall 2010 and Spring and Fall 2011, the handout for Spring 2012 acknowledged students’ more advanced listening skills in subsection (B.1): “Students will show a different range of listening skill. Some students will understand the entire text, while others may have several errors transcribing the oral text.” Then the paragraph continued with the same idea of the former handouts, but it was expressed in this way:

Therefore, words or stretches of discourse that you **don't understand** should be written in **parentheses** as shown below. The stretches of xxxxxx can be long or short depending on the length of time it took the speaker to utter a syllable, a word, or longer utterances (pay attention to the seconds, and the lines uttered by the speakers). These stretches might vary from one student to another. This will depend on each individual's listening ability. (Spring 2012 Handout. See Appendix N.)

Bold parts of the text in all the handouts show how I wanted to emphasize certain aspects of the task; in the most recent handouts (Fall 2011 and Spring 2012), I emphasized issues that I found had worked poorly in the former courses. In the four cohorts I emphasized these issues in bold: 1) "Make sure the recorded text is easy to hear in terms of **recorded quality**"; 2) "**(C: Written notes on journal)**"; 3) "Words or stretches of discourse that you don't understand should be written in parentheses as shown below"; 4) "The goal here is not to have a perfect transcription. Instead, **what will be graded is the process that each of you will go through by making this transcription individually.**" Examples of the second kind—issues that worked poorly—are more noticeable in Fall 2011 and Spring 2012, section (B):

Once you have agreed with your group members on the oral text you're going to use for this transcription, **each of you** will do the written transcription of the text **individually**. Follow the written transcription samples by Claudia Lombana (October 19, 2010 and October 26, 2011)

For Fall 2011 and Spring 2012, I added an extra handout as a visual example of the written transcription I required: *How to Avoid Costly Home Repairs* (see Appendix P, Examples of Written Transcriptions).

In section (C2) I asked a question, and then I added the bold remark in parentheses: "Did you find the text easy or difficult as a whole the first time you listened to it: general idea; supporting ideas; other details...? **(Refer to the difficult parts in the transcript).**"

Other bold observations were about the examples that students needed to include to support their generalizations. I wrote this in Spanish for Fall 2011: **Support your generalizations with examples: No se aceptan comentarios y generalizaciones que no se sustenten con ejemplos provenientes de la transcripción. Intuiciones personales sin sustento no tendrán validez.**” For Spring 2012, I gave the same observation in English: **“Support your generalizations with examples: Generalizations have to be backed up with examples coming from the transcription.”**

I also added the following clarifications for Fall 2011: **“Make sure you identify the documents by writing your names. Remember this is a double spaced document.”** I also specified: **“I won’t accept handwritten papers”** (Fall 2011). I also emphasized the words **“As a group”** and **“Individual work”** in section (D). The handout for Fall 2011 also took into account the language, English or Spanish: **“(3) Hand in the notes about this process (C). These notes can be in English or in Spanish. You use the language you feel can serve your communicative purpose more easily.”** This was not included in Spring 2012, where there were more advanced students, particularly in the class from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Instead, I wrote some information specifically for them, but not in bold letters:

For the students who have much better listening skills and who don’t have much problem with the written transcription of the text, you will have to analyze how an oral text becomes a written text. What are the differences between both forms: speech and written language? Also, individually, there are usually some mishaps when you do a transcription, even if you’re an excellent listener. Identify these mishaps and report on them. (See Appendix N, The Four Steps, Spring 2012).

Step 2: Broad phonetic transcription and comparison with verbatim sample. Step 2 consisted of two main tasks for the four cohorts. They were organized in two sections: (A) Broad Phonetic Transcription; and (B) Comparing Your Broad Phonetic Transcription with

the Oral Text for Fall 2010 and Spring 2011. These sections became four (A), (B), (C) and (D) for the cohorts Fall 2011 and Spring 2012. One important difference in these handouts is the three editions of the book *A Course in Phonetics* by Ladefoged (1975;1993; 2011) that I used with the four cohorts: for Fall 2010 I used the 1975 edition, as I had done with the previous cohort; for Spring 2011, I changed to the 1993 edition; and for Fall 2011 and Spring 2012, I used the sixth edition by Ladefoged and Johnson (2011).

One common feature in section (A) is the referral to use the phonetic symbols in Ladefoged (1975; 1993) (Handout: Step 2, Fall 2010; Spring 2011) and Ladefoged and Johnson (2011) (Handout: Step 2, Fall 2011; Spring 2012). In the oldest edition, 1975, Ladefoged used an inverted heart symbol to transcribe what is commonly used today as a horse-shoe shaped u [ʊ] as in *book*—which I recommended. Also, there was a different symbol for the high front lax vowel, as in *pit*, so I recommended using [ɪ] instead, as in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

The two handouts for Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 are very similar. In task (A), students had to do a broad transcription of their written texts using Ladefoged’s information (1975; 1993) and the phonetic symbols on specific pages (e.g., “page 27. Table 2.2” for the 1975 edition). The instructions, however, were not clear enough, but they can be inferred in section (B). In section (A) students had to transcribe the text phonetically without listening to the recorded verbatim sample. In section (B) students had to compare their broad phonetic transcription with the oral text:

The objective here is to compare your broad phonetic transcription with the speech sample you recorded last week. Notice what happens when you hear the piece of speech as you read your phonetic transcription. Take notes in your written journal and notice the differences between what you transcribed and what you hear.

Students then had to answer 8 questions based on this experience and the application of the concepts of assimilation; coarticulation; citation forms; consonant boundaries; vowel boundaries; consonant and vowel boundaries; and polysyllabic words. This task required students to go beyond a broad phonetic transcription and to navigate in issues of narrow transcription of speech sounds.³⁴

The handouts for Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 included other tasks. In the handouts Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 I had written in bold letters: **“I do know the vowels are really difficult”** so, I recommended the use of dictionaries and on line dictionaries (e.g., “the free English dictionary on line at <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/English>). For Fall 2011 and Spring 2012, I wrote in bold letters in section (A): **“It is all right if you have doubts and don’t exactly know how some of the words are transcribed.** The important task here will be rehearsing your phonological memory; in some cases you will invent pronunciations, which is totally fine.” Then I gave the instruction to look at the transcription I did of the text *How to Avoid Costly Home Repairs* taken from Yahoo (<http://financiallyfit.yahoo.com/finance/index?ywaad=ad0035&nc>) (Appendix O).

Section (A) for Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 became more cumbersome with new instructions and more detailed information. The changes consisted in form: orientation of the text and the length of stretches of discourse. This was done with the purpose of using the same landscape layout so that students would be able to use long stretches of discourse ending in pauses at the end of each line. Students had to determine clearly what they understood by function words, content words, strong stress, and weak stress. I also gave two

³⁴ My colleague Nancy opined: “On the other hand, *systematic broad transcription* would come in more handy rather than narrow transcription in order to focus on students' realization than on transcribing the subtleties of specific utterances, except in cases where a clear differentiation between the sounds of English and Spanish need be emphasized.”

web pages where students would be able to type International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) symbols: <http://weston.ruter.net/projects/ipa-chart/view/keyboard/> and <http://ipa.typeit.org/>.

In the former cohorts, I had sent e-mails with these pages.

The Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 handouts also contained two new sections: (C) “*Writing in Your Journal*”; and (D) “*As a Group, this is what you will turn in on November 10,*” 2011 and May 17, 2012 respectively. For the Fall 2011, I gave students a warning in bold letters: “**The group member that does not work on this task will be excluded and only the ones who did the exercise will get a grade... You will report on this collaboration.**” A new important inclusion in this handout was a table that appeared as an example of how students should identify their errors in the broad phonetic transcription. I took this idea from the final paper three students had written for Fall 2010. They included their individual errors when they did the phonetic transcription in comparison with the verbatim text. This was very convenient for the reader (the instructor) and students, as the task became more systematic (see Appendix N).

Step 3: Marking sentence stress; showing intonation; marking pauses. This was one of the most challenging processes, as students had to work with sentence stress, intonation, and pauses. This was the practice of suprasegmentals or what linguists call prosody. We all had to make sense of the main concepts of intonation, tonic syllable, tone groups, and stress as given in Ladefoged (1975; 1993) and Ladefoged and Johnson (2011). Part of the task was also to contrast Ladefoged’s literature with that of Avery and Ehrlich (2008) to make sense of what we understood by intonation, sentence stress (tonic syllable), and pauses. In this way, Step 3 consisted of using the written transcription with a landscape orientation, to mark: (A) sentence stress; (B) intonation; (C) pauses. In Handout: Step 3, Fall

2010, I showed an example of how to draw the arrows of intonation, and tonic syllables and tone groups. There was also a short text to practice marking stress, sentence stress, intonation and pauses: “One Man in a Boat.” I suggested students not use the computer, as this would take them a lot of time: “Draw the lines and the dots [on tonic syllables] **by hand**. I know it’s hard to use the computer for this task.” This handout was much wordier than the other three: It had 897 words, as compared to the others: Spring 2011, 687; Fall 2011, 685; Spring 2012, 492. The tasks were basically the same, but the tasks for Fall 2011 became more specific and complex. This time, students would have to turn in five documents: 1) a written transcription that showed word stress (weak and strong), tonic syllable/tonic accent or sentence stress, and intonation lines showing tone groups; 2) A second document showing the written transcript and how students marked pauses; 3) A third document showing how the speakers in the verbatim text marked pauses; 4) A fourth document marking the speakers’ word stress, tonic accent, intonation and pauses; 5) And last, students had to explain in writing how what they heard and marked on the written transcription compared to what the speakers did on the audiotape/verbatim sample (Handout Step 3, Fall 2011).

As Step 3 had really become complex and demanded a lot from students and instructor, for Spring 2012, I wrote from the start:

For this task you will have to compare Ladefoged and Johnson (2011) with Avery and Ehrlich (2008): What do they say about word stress in connected speech, pauses, and intonation? Once you have these concepts clear, you will analyze how the speakers in your verbatim sample (VS) mark stress, make pauses, and use intonation patterns. (See Appendix N)

In the *Handout: Step 3, Spring 2012*, I gave more straight information numbering tasks. Because intonation had been a difficult concept to apply, this time I hoped that students

would compare Ladefoged and Johnson (2011) with Avery and Ehrlich (2008) and relate the concepts in phonetics with the ones given in pronunciation. In numeral (2) students had to explain how stress patterns in different utterances work; in numeral (3) they had to explain the concept of “tonic accent” and “sentence stress in Avery & (*sic*) Ehrlich”; finally, they had to write how all this worked in their verbatim samples. Also, I gave recommendations for the edition of these documents: “Your document should use the font *Times New Roman*, size **12**. Please **double space** (*sic*) **your document**. **Make sure you’re using right punctuation**. Remember, meaning is compromised by using poor punctuation. The documents should be **identified accordingly** (*Handout: Step 3, Spring 2012*). One additional feedback document also accompanied Step 3 (see Appendix N for the two documents of Step 3).

Step 4: The rehearsal and discussion of the four step process. Finally, the fourth step was an activity that included two sections: (A) *The Oral Rehearsal*; and (B) *A Discussion of the Four Step Process*. Section (A) gave instructions for how students should read the written text following the musicality and rhythm of the verbatim sample. They were to try to imitate the intonation, stress, pauses, and pronunciation of segments. They had to compare their oral performance by annotating the segments and suprasegmental behaviors that differed from the speakers in the verbatim sample. The goal here was not to erase students’ accents, but to have them perceive how they uttered words and stretches of discourse in the foreign language and to work with their group members to give positive critique and praise their accomplishments. This was the handout that had fewer changes, as compared to Step 1, Step 2, and Step 3.

For the discussion, students had to make sense of all the processes in the other steps and the rehearsal and back up their observations with ideas that came from readings:

Write a section called *Discussion* for Step 4. In this discussion, you will analyze what you have experimented [experienced] so far (Steps 1, 2, 3, and 4A). Different authors' **concepts, points of views, theories, and assumptions about both oral communication and written communication should illuminate this discussion.** Writing your own observations and experiences can improve if you allow the literature written on the subject to be part of your discussion. This will also help you back up your own interpretations. (*Handout: Step 4, Fall 2011 and Spring, 2012*)

One student in the fourth cohort (Spring 2012) expressed that having the readings before doing task 4A in Step 4 would have really helped more. However, my objective here was that students could make their observations and annotations first, and after that, the scholars would add to their experience.

Instructor's Reflections about Her Academic and Personal Involvement in EPP

I taught EPP from Fall 2009 to Spring 2012 to several groups of third semester students who were in the process of learning EFL. This was an intense journey of teaching, learning, discovery, practice, adaptation and modification of my actions. The nature of a foreign language content-based course such as EPP put a demanding amount of work and class preparation on the instructor. This was a course that dealt with a specialized metalanguage proper of the subdiscipline of linguistics (phonology) and phonetics. Additionally, this course had to adjust itself to a population of Spanish-speaking foreign language learners in the process of acquiring the target language. I am also aware of the fact that as an instructor, I was/am a second/foreign language speaker and not precisely a specialist of English phonetics and phonology or an expert in linguistics.

The preparation of pedagogical materials with instructions and visual samples were cumbersome (see the various appendices). In writing these materials, I expected to mediate in the understanding of tasks, the clarity of meaning in foreign language, and the content of the subject matter. By using the textbooks, I created and reinvented a series of exercises. I also summarized information for students to recall concepts and to draw attention to other important issues. These materials were updated and corrected every semester, the same as the syllabi. This proves my active engagement in the evaluation of my actions in order to improve my teaching practice and to build on what I had already constructed. I also added new ideas and enhancements to these materials, based on my observations of the student population, students' evaluations and ideas, as well as my new insights on the subject matter.

Current specialized literature for EPP language learners with low intermediate foreign language communicative skills was not available. Except for the book by Poms and Dale (1986) about pronunciation for Spanish-language speakers, most of the textbooks I used for the course were written for native English speakers—this could also include advanced nonnative speakers. The old collection of books about phonetics and phonology and pronunciation that I found at DML library (1970s and 1980s) proved that this field is the most ignored in second language teaching. The great majority of the books in this collection dated back to the 1970s and 1980s. This shows the little interest of the Department for the discipline of EPP and its sister practical field in foreign language teaching, pronunciation. In the literature review, I mentioned how neglected the field of pronunciation (and consequently that of phonetics and phonology) was among second language programs at universities in the United States, Canada, Britain and Australia. It seems that this abandoned

trend is also followed in other countries. My first attempt to teach the course of EPP as a pronunciation course and my little investment of time to prepare the lessons (Spring 2009) also showed my ignorance on the subject. My perception was changed later, proving that more courses of English phonetics and phonology are really needed for foreign language future professionals. The Internet was a great resource to update the old collection and to connect to more current trends.

Although the course made phonetics and phonology the center of instruction, I also wanted to integrate several issues of language learning. The course was ambitious as to address reading, pronunciation, public academic speech (presentations), and finally a written academic paper. This whole language approach demanded a lot from the instructor and the students—particularly the ones with lower English-language skills. The order of tasks, instruction, and evaluations remained the same in their structure starting in Spring 2010, but varied in detail as I gained more practice and knowledge. They were based on the knowledge I had gained during my first year of teaching EPP (Fall 2009 and Spring 2010).

Knowing that EPP was not easy, the pedagogical material was adapted to the development of the content of each class and the pace of the students. Overall, I tried to be a bridge between the specialized jargon and students' language skills. One drawback for the course was the little time I had to compare the phonology of two languages and to study and explore suprasegmentals more in depth. In order to address this more in detail, a second or even a third course of English phonetics and phonology should be offered to students in the near future.

With respect to the developmental and procedural activity called *The Four Steps* (TFS), this was an application of the theory studied for three months to a practical activity

that usually took place during the last five weeks of the semester. In TFS I tried to give students as much instruction as possible, in order to: 1) make every task comprehensible to the students; 2) guide them through the issues of phonetics and phonology that I wanted them to apply in practical exercises; 3) help them with their foreign language: the way they expressed concepts in writing, and how they were understanding the process; and 4) help them with their language perception and awareness. Many other considerations required my time.

Changes in my thinking, which might have reverted in the class dynamics, possibly created some confusion in my students. I also have to consider my own interlanguage in English (primary genre and secondary genre). Dealing with the metalanguage of English phonetics and phonology in a foreign language was also challenging for me. The combination of the two genres must have posed problems of communication with the students, but there is no evidence of what went on in this type of communication in the classroom as there is no recorded evidence.

One major aspect that I always kept in mind was to show students first how to do things, and right after that, practice what I had said; then, give feedback and more practice. Every time I taught a class, I also thought that my primary, secondary, and higher education had been a lonely journey. In this journey, most Colombian instructors blamed the teachers that had taught former grades and courses. There was always a lot of criticism, but a few instructors showed students the *why* or the *how* to things. I remember there were many gaps that I had to fill up myself. Colombian students of my generation were left alone to discover things for ourselves; we were made to feel guilty for not knowing what we were supposed to know by a specific time and without being taught. This is the reason I tried to show students

how to do every task. I also believe that many of the instructions that I wrote scared students because of the bulk of information. Added to this complexity were the ungraded authentic readings that third semester students read for the course.³⁵

All in all, there were times when I felt I was repeating the same mistakes my former teachers, professors, and instructors had made. Culturally, I thought, this is the way we transmit the culture of education: Consciously or unconsciously we repeat behaviors, perpetuate ideologies, and keep pedagogical patterns unchanged. In such natural educational environments our perceptions seem to be numbed, and we seem short sighted. We forget (or do not have the time) to step back and reflect on what we with the purpose to see beyond. We usually interact in a culture of socially created patterns. English foreign language, more than any other subject in education, brings about the ideology of the foreign language. In this respect, we incorporate the philosophies and theories produced abroad and accommodate them to our cultural context. One last reflection remains and is connected with what Nancy, my colleague who reviewed this chapter, said:

In fact, the culture of education is imprinted with two sets of belief systems coming from different walks of human practice: military life and regimen, and Taylorism. Educators need to be aware of the kind of ideology they are socializing through their pedagogical device – as Basil Bernstein would say – and praxis.

In what way was the teaching practice that I presented here unconsciously based on *regimen* and *Taylorism*? This would be an important question to address in some other study.

³⁵ One of my students, Julita, in the first group (9 a.m. to 11 a.m) of the course in Fall 2011, once questioned if these readings were not beyond their foreign language level. I said, “Yes,” but I also reassured her that I would take into account their efforts and their linguistic limitations, as long as they kept persevering. I said several times to my students that this exercise would take us all to another language level, like the workout you do in a gym.

Researcher's Last Words to Chapter 5

As I stated in the axiological assumptions of this dissertation, the identities of the instructor and the researcher are mixed. This was evident throughout the presentation of Chapter 5. The voice of the instructor emerged and recreated personal and professional issues according to the documents and data that she interpreted. This proved to be extremely difficult for the researcher /instructor. Presenting the data in a distant and objective way is a euphemism. For this reason, I will take some distance from the narrative of the instructor by using the third person from now on.

The main focus in this chapter was the instructor's journey that led to the creation of *The Four Step* (TFS), the foundation of students' *final papers*. The instructor's academic, cultural and personal encounter with UDB influenced the instructor's course of action with respect to the final project for the EPP course. This influence came from various external and internal sources. External sources were the environment at UDB (DML included) and the Conversation promoting *research*. In the internal side I was able to identify three sources of stimulus for the final project: 1) the instructor's personal experience as a foreign language student and professional; 2) her beliefs about writing in a foreign language and how it should be done in a content-based course; and 3) the application of the theory studied in the EPP course to a practical project. This constructed *research* rhetoric that has been imposed top-down at UDB and that has permeated at all levels (including undergraduate programs) influenced the instructor. This research conversation at UDB mixed with the instructor's personal experience with writing in academic contexts, and the fact that writing also serves evaluation.

As the instructor re-acclimated to her native culture after a 4-year absence abroad, she returned to the same place where she had taught before. This time, she started teaching two content-based courses in foreign language: EPP and EFL teaching methodology. She did not have any previous practice teaching any of these courses, although she had been in charge of content-based courses in the past (Civilization I and II).

The nature of content-based courses in an EFL environment—distinct from that of second language international students attending courses at American universities—puts a lot of demands on both, students and instructor. On the one hand there was the linguistic issue of the participants' interlanguage evinced in the various levels of students' foreign language. On the other, there was the specialized subject matter of EPP that the instructor had to mediate: concepts, jargon, and a specialized discourse. Here, students and instructor dealt with the discourse of EPP, a specific discipline, which Ladefoged (1975, 1993) considers part of linguistics. The language used by the participants in the EPP course is what Bakhtin (1986b) calls second genre: The professional language that belongs to a professional/academic human activity. It is in the phonetic and phonological academic activity that scholars have fabricated the jargon of the discipline. This discourse, the second genre, builds on the first genre, which is people's everyday language. The instructor addressed the development of this second genre in the EPP course. Students were encouraged to use this discourse and use it in our classroom local language practice.

The material that the instructor prepared to allow students to be acquainted with the concepts and theories of EPP was bulky. Teaching the subject-matter and the pedagogical activities took energy and time. The instructor tried to adapt her teaching and pedagogical material to this population of students with varied levels of interlanguage, but the content

was still dense. Most of this material had a lot of instructions, visual forms, examples, and repetitive issues. The instructor thought that this would help mediate understanding.

Based on the instructor's framework presented in Chapter 4, the content-based course of EPP was not an adjunct course. In an adjunct course a specialist or expert in phonetics and phonology teaches the subject-matter at the same time that a specialist or professional in second language teaching-learning helps with the students' foreign language. Here there was one instructor teaching and facing the two problematics in EFL education: a content-based course in EPP and EFL. Students' foreign language was developing at the same time that it served to acquire knowledge. The instructor was conscious of this challenge, as well as of the fact that she was not a specialist in the field of EPP. She had outdated knowledge of EPP and was an EFL/ESL speaker herself. She was, though, a specialist of EFL.

The instructor's rationale for the inclusion of a final paper in the EPP course came from her various beliefs: 1) her university experience as a student and as an instructor with writing and her personal foreign-language-learning process; 2) her observations that most departments at universities use papers to evaluate students' knowledge and that this writing is done according to the field of knowledge or discipline; 3) her knowledge that instructors' personalities and backgrounds influence students' literacy, and not simply knowledge; and 4) the surrounding Conversation at the university about *research*. The instructor also believed that as a Colombian student and instructor, her students usually inherited a tradition of *poor writing* in both the native language and the foreign language. Thus, her course of action should undertake the writing process. This would allow students to live through several steps in EPP before they turned in their final formal academic paper for the course.

This would alleviate somehow the instructor's pressure of reading and grading incomprehensible papers and punishing students for not knowing how to express their ideas in writing. She believed students might have understood the concepts, but as they were unable to express them in writing clearly for lack of language, this would go in a decrement of their final grades. The process of writing allowed the instructor to know: 1) how much students understood; 2) how much they were able or unable to describe language in writing; and 3) how much the concepts made sense to them.

The instructor was aware of bilingual submersion, so in order to avoid students' failing the course she introduced the subject-matter to students in Spanish. The first readings and classes were in Spanish starting in Spring 2010. This action was chosen so that the concepts of phonetics and phonology in Spanish could be more easily transferred to the reading material in English (the theory of transfer in second/foreign language acquisition played a crucial role here). In the same way, she paired up the books that offered jargon in phonetics (Ladefoged, 1975, 1993; Ladefoged & Johnson, 2011) with an easier reading with jargon about pronunciation (Avery & Ehlich, 2008; Poms & Dale, 1985). She believed that by familiarizing students with: 1) the types of jargon in their native language first; 2) the specialized jargon of the field of phonetics and phonology; and 3) the jargon used in ESL pronunciation, students would be able to interconnect concepts and meanings. Let us remember that the readings of the textbooks were authentic material, non-graded for EFL. The Spanish-English transition was offered to students to define concepts specific to phonetics and phonology. By understanding these concepts in the students' native language, students would be able to comprehend what phoneticians were referring to in EPP. This, in the instructor's view, would lower students' anxiety when they had to write about them. The

opportunity to use Spanish in EPP in written tasks and in presentations was offered to all the students. Most of them voluntarily chose to do them in English.

From the instructor's narrative, writing is a way to understand subject-matter and to say what students have learned. It is also a practice that leads to formal writing. Writing also serves EFL writers with different levels of interlanguages when there is a guided process. Writing also serves evaluation, and evaluation produces anxiety. In her belief system of teaching, practicing writing in combination with the other language skills makes students improve. In writing, as in the other language skills, there will always be varying levels of errors (in native and nonnative language productions (Davies, 2002)).

The instructor's experience in the first EPP courses (Fall 2009 and Spring 2010), served as the foundations to move her instruction into more pragmatic grounds: theory should be linked to praxis. Based on her experience, she introduced *The Four Step* (TFS) process in Fall 2010 and implemented it. TFS developed in class and out of class. For the instructor, TFS constituted a sort of action-research practice that would be extended to the courses of Spring and Fall 2011, and Spring 2012. In this process of language awareness for the instructor and the students, there were issues that the instructor changed and/or reinforced: instructions, actions, explanations, wordings, warnings, and procedures. TFL served to consolidate the evaluation process at a more practical level. TFL gave students the opportunity to reflect about some issues of language, think about concepts, and apply them to a project. The TFL complemented the other forms of evaluation of EPP which included classical memory quizzes; two presentations; one written handout of the first presentation; class participation; and professional conduct for two of the cohorts. The code of conduct that she used for several semesters gave an extra grade for good behavior, but she did not

include them in Fall 2011 and Fall 2012: Young adults should be able to self-regulate themselves. Acting like *the police* had taken a lot of time and energy in past courses. All these forms of evaluation consolidated steadily throughout the EPP courses.

What the instructor wanted from her experience in 2009 and 2010 was that students were able to: 1) make practical use of the concepts of EPP; 2) get knowledge about language, as language professionals; 3) get acquainted with the use of EFL; and 4) make students aware of their native and target languages.

A limitation in the narrations of events in Chapter 5 is the lack of field notes. The daily routines of EPP classes, the face-to-face interaction, and what the instructor said to the students and the students' reactions and behaviors would have helped the instructor's narrative. These observations could have added more information to the instructor's account of events.

By writing this chapter, I have noticed that conducting research in EPP and teaching at the same time would have added an extra burden to the instructor. The task of teaching a new subject matter in the foreign language puts a strenuous demand on the EFL instructor. More so, if the instructor also has to supervise students' process of target language development and grade knowledge in the particular discipline. Teaching and conducting research at the same time are demanding activities that result in much more extra work for the instructor. Issues of validity are also involved.

In the following chapter, Chapter 6, I will present and analyze the data of students' 20 *final papers*. As I have mentioned throughout this study, they are the products of the teaching practice that the instructor described in this chapter.

Chapter 6

Students' Final Papers

Chapter 6 presents the qualitative analysis of the data from the 20 papers I selected from the course EPP for this study (see Appendix A). For this selection, I took into account only the papers that students³⁶ wrote in English (EFL) because these were the ones that were available to me. An additional criterion was the varied media texts that students chose for their final project in EPP, which I have classified into six main media genres: 1) four journalistic reports; 2) four TV programs (series, shows, comedies); 3) four movies; 4) three cartoon genres; 5) one scientific lecture; and 6) four interviews (see Appendix A). These 20 papers represent 47.82% of the student population who completed the EPP course with grades between 3.0 and 5.0 on a scale of 5. The 20 papers were written by 44 students: 22 females and 22 males in Fall 2010, Spring and Fall 2011, and Spring 2012 and comprise 341 pages of content and 230 pages of appendices (see Appendix Q). The writers were between the ages of 18 and 33. Most of the students who pursued the course were Colombians from Bogota, with a few from other major cities in the country and a few from smaller towns in the region of Cundinamarca.³⁷ For ethical reasons, I have used pseudonyms to protect students' identities; in addition, I avoided the inclusion of other personal information that may compromise students' personal identification. Table 7 shows the total number of papers per cohort.

³⁶ *Students* are also called *writers* in this chapter.

³⁷ The online survey asked for place of birth and length of time living in Bogota, see Chapter 7.

Table 7

Number of Papers Per Cohort

<i>Cohort</i>	<i>Number of Papers</i>
Fall 2010	6
Spring 2011	1
Fall 2011	6
Spring 2012	7
TOTAL: 20 PAPERS	
571 Pages	

This chapter is organized in six sections. The first two sections summarize how the instructor described the final paper to the students and how students understood the purpose of the final paper. The next three sections make reference to the four topics I characterized as the main *categories* or *dimensions* in the *Qualitative Content Analysis* coding frame structure (see Appendix E), which I based on the four questions of this study (see Chapter 3): 1) local meanings and interpretations of the verbatim text; 2) intertextuality; 3) common interpretations and personal interpretations. Finally, I close the chapter with a discussion.

The Final Paper for EPP: The Instructor’s Perspective

According to the instructor, students’ final paper for EPP was described as:

[T]he compilation of all the *notes* that you have written down in your journal in *Steps 1, 2, 3* and *4*. You will present these notes in a unified cohesive and coherent text in five different sections with specific headings (*subtítulos*). You won’t refer to the content as Step 1, 2 and so on. Instead, you will refer to them as *sections* or *parts*. Don’t number the headings in your paper; just follow the instructions in this document and its visual layout. (See Appendix L, *Visual Sample Paper*, page 3 of document in the box *Final Project: Analysis of Verbatim Sample: Strikes in France*)

The final paper required the inclusion of appendices where students would present their final products of: “(1) the two transcriptions, *written* and *phonetic*; (2) the tables you’ve presented (individual problems with transcription and modification of sounds); (3) the

suprasegmental document; [*sic*] and any other table you may have.” I asked students to back up their main ideas and generalizations with evidence of their observations and information that came from these appendices. Additionally, I insisted in the instructions:

Also, *back up* your ideas with the theoretical and philosophical concepts coming from the different authors. The content should have a more *thorough* and *insightful* analysis and discussion than mere *gut feelings*. The feedback and suggestions I gave you should show in this final paper.

As an instructor I intended to make sure that the *Visual Sample Paper* (called *Final Project: Analysis of Verbatim Sample*, see Appendix L) provided the students with clear instructions and layout requirements. According to the process of phonetic and phonological discovery that had taken place in the five weeks prior to the end of the academic term (*The Four Steps*), students would have to organize and present the information in a final paper that included five sections: “1) *Choosing the verbatim sample and doing the written transcription*; 2) *Broad phonetic transcription*; 3) *Pauses, stress in connected speech and intonation*; 4) *Discussion*; and 5) *Conclusion and References*. Section 4, discussion, should “incorporate [students’] insights on language, phonetics and phonology, and written and oral communication.” This responded to the instructor’s view that students’ personal opinions about language was all right,³⁸ but students personal judgments should be channeled and supported with ideas from other texts. In the instructions for the *Discussion*, I recommended several readings:

The readings I’ve given you will help you with this analysis (Gibson, 2008; Halliday, 1990; Rodriguez, 1998; & Shlain, 1999), as well as the other authors we’ve studied in class (Avery & Erhlich, 2008; Kenworthy 1992; Ladefoged &

³⁸ The instructor’s evaluation of students’ final papers written for Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 pointed out students’ more personal insights than phonetic analysis (specifically groups 02 in Fall and 01 in Spring).

Johnson 2011; & Poms & Dale, 1985). Feel free to add any other authors you think will enrich your discussion.³⁹ (Step 4, Fall 2010 & Spring 2011)

For the instructor, students' personal appreciations of language out of the scope of phonetics and phonology would be welcome in a more academic discussion of students' understanding of language.

The Final Paper for EPP as Described by the Writers

Students described their final projects (FP) in similar but particular ways in their introductions—except for one paper without an introduction. What is common to most papers is that the project was the result of a class process in the *Course of English Phonetics and Phonology* for the undergraduate major in Modern Languages at Universidad de Bogota. This project, according to students, was the application of the knowledge acquired throughout the semester to the analysis of an English-language verbatim sample coming from different media (see Appendix A for the various media genres and their references). Table 8 shows how 12 students described their final papers. Students wrote these final papers in pairs and in groups of three, with a few written individually (see Appendix A and Appendix Q).

³⁹ Rodriguez (1998) and Ladefoged and Johnson (2011) were added for Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 (syllabi information and Appendix N, Step 4).

Table 8

Excerpts of Five Introductions Presenting the Final Papers (code 22a)

Cohort	Number and Gender of Writers	Students' Understanding of the Final Paper
Fall 2010	One Female Student: Vivian	"This paper is basically about the <i>whole process</i> that implies learning a second language, specifically English, taking into account <i>all elements from phonetics and phonology</i> . It consists of a verbatim sample taken from the BBC news about an environmental issue in China. It's about 2 minutes and the accent of the reporter is a British one. The purpose of this project is to <i>use all the elements and concepts learnt</i> from theory and put them in practice, all this through a step-by-step process that leads to a conclusion about learning English." [Emphasis added]
Fall 2010	Three Students: Two Females and One Male: Lara, Patricia, and Leo	"According to Ladefoged, 'Phonetics is concerned with describing the speech sounds that occur in the languages of the world' (1975, p. 1). We are not <i>studying extensively</i> the <i>phonetic and phonological system of the English</i> . Our purpose in this project was to make a <i>brief analysis</i> of the pronunciation of the segments of the English in citation form and in connected speech and of suprasegmentals of the verbatim sample 'The International Butter Club.' This paper informs about the steps proposed by Professor Lombana to analyze the verbatim sample." [Emphasis added]
Spring 2011	One Male Student: Aldo	"In order to <i>summarize</i> the content and activities of the course of English Phonetics and Phonology students were asked to select and analyze an oral text. In this way[,] we the students are able to give an account of this process through the semester. This writing show[s] in a systematic way the steps followed into the process of analyzing our samples reflecting the knowledge acquired in this course." [Emphasis added]
Fall 2011	Two Students: One Male and one Female: Clara and Sergio	"This paper will lead you through our analysis of a recorded sample from a native English speaker. As foreign language students, we must be able to understand a spoken message. But also as future teachers, we need to know how to reproduce it fluently, and to identify the features that make a discourse and a speaker unique."
Spring 2012	Three Female Students: Amanda, Vicky, and Gracia	"The present document is a compilation of the experience that we went through doing the final project for our class of <i>English Phonetics and Phonology</i> . Its main goal is to show step by step the whole process of analysis of a verbatim sample, in this case a scene of <i>Batman: the Dark Knight</i> film, reflecting the application of the knowledge acquired through the readings we did in class, mixing theory with practice in order to create a meaningful learning that will help us to improve our English level."

According to what students expressed above, the final paper reported on the phonetic and phonological analysis of a verbatim sample, based on the steps I had proposed. For three of the projects, these verbatim samples included a journalistic report (BBC News) and two experts from the movies *Bride Wars*⁴⁰ (Cohen, Filley, Hudson, Lube, Riche, Riche, &

⁴⁰ Students chose the scene called "The International Butter Club" of the film *Brides War*. I will refer to the students' work as *The Wedding Dress* from now on.

Yorn, 2009) (renamed excerpt in this study: *The Wedding Dress*⁴¹) and *Batman: The Dark Knight* (Nolan, Thomas & Roven, 2008).⁴² The students who omitted this information in the excerpts (shown in Table 8) added it later in the first section of their final papers. The male student from Spring 2011, Aldo, “found the sample on YouTube and it [was] an interview made to [sic] Barack Obama in [sic] the CNN network.” As for Clara and Sergio, Fall 2011, they selected an excerpt from *The Ellen DeGeneres Show* (The Ellen Show, 2010).

The verbatim sample had a specific length of time. For Vivian, it was two minutes. In the instructions given by the instructor, the verbatim sample should have duration of 1.5 to 2 minutes (see Appendix N, A (3)). Students had to describe the English speech sounds that the speakers in their verbatim samples made by applying the theory and notions of phonetics and phonology based on Ladefoged (1975) and subsequent editions (1993; 2011).

Analyzing the verbatim sample resulted in a meaningful second/language learning process to improve English. Clara and Sergio said this task made part of their identity as “foreign language students... [and] future teachers” who are required to understand a spoken message and to reproduce it fluently. Moreover, for them, teachers need to be able to identify “the features that make a discourse and a speaker unique.” Aldo said this paper was a reflection on “the knowledge acquired in this course and a summary of the content and activities of the course. And Aura, Vicky and Gracia expressed that this final paper “was a compilation of the experience that we went through doing the final project for our class of *English Phonetics and Phonology*.”

⁴¹ Appendix A gives the complete list of names given by the researcher to the 20 final papers. I will refer to these works using these abbreviated titles.

⁴² See Appendix A for the complete list of movies, videos, and audio programs used in the verbatim samples by the students. Also check out the citations so you can find the respective material in the References.

Students' Perceptions of Peoples' Speech in Their Verbatim Samples

Students' listening and writing skills were essential for transcribing the 20 verbatim samples (VSs) students chose for their EPP projects (Appendix Q).⁴³ For the transcription of these oral texts students used a series of strategies to make meaning out of what speakers said including intensive listening, writing and rewriting, repetition, and collaborative feedback. Students also described strategies involved in this process: paying attention to grammatical cues in the text, listening to the sounds of words and inventing spellings, and figuring out words from the context, among others. These strategies helped their hearing perception and listening ability. Students included the final draft of their transcribed text in *Appendix A* of their final papers.

In order to understand students' perceptions of the English language during this experience, I analyzed their descriptions of their first encounter with the verbatim samples. I organized these responses into four categories: 1) how students described their first encounter with the verbatim samples in terms of listening (Code 1); 2) how students used various mediators in terms of strategies, people, and technology (Code 8) and also how students referred to the activity of listening in terms of time, measurement, and/or frequency, misunderstood words and phrases (Code 9); 3) how students referred to cultural aspects of their verbatim samples; and finally, 4) how students heard some words and phrases and how they corrected them (Code 3).

Students first encounter with the verbatim sample. For each student, their first encounter with the verbatim sample was a personal and a group journey. This became

⁴³ I provide students' VS internet/movie sources in Appendix A. These were included in the references accordingly.

clearer when students wrote about their first exposure to the aural or/and visual text and explained why they had selected it. I, in the role of the instructor, had specified that the verbatim sample should have a length of 1.5 to 2 minutes and that a high-quality recording was recommended. Students would have to work individually first, and then get together with the members of their group in order to compare their written and phonetic transcriptions and continue with the other tasks of the project (as explained in Chapter 5).

Students' first reactions to the verbatim samples were varied, but they all have a common trend: Students thought the task of understanding the text was easy at the beginning, but eventually they discovered it was not so. Table 9 presents how 18 students described what they thought about their verbatim samples.

Table 9

Description of the Verbatim Samples According to 18 Students—10 Papers

Cohort	Genre	Writers	Description of Verbatim Sample: First Encounter
Fall 2010	Journalistic Report China Y R	1 Female	“I decided to work with a piece of news. I made that decision due to the fact that the language that should be used in this kind of genre is very formal and clear for being understandable to everyone.”
Fall 2011	Journalistic Report Bangkok	1 Female 1 Male	“The first time we listened to the audio, we found it easy as a whole because we could catch the general idea of the report which was about a flooding in Bangkok and the people’s problems with that situation.”
Fall 2010	TV Show Big Bang Theory	1 Female 2 Males	“Although the English of the video is not so difficult, because [it] is a TV Show where the audio is excellent, to understand all the words was impossible for us.”
Spring 2012	TV Show Ben Stiller	2 Females 1 Male	“[We] decided to work on <i>Between two Ferns</i> with Zack Galafinakis and Ben Stiller; the discarded options seemed either too easy or too unintelligible to work on. We heard the text within three to five times before attempting to transcribe it.”
Fall 2010	Movie Bride Wars Movie	2 Females 1 Male	“The scene “The International Butter Club” of the film “Bride Wars” accomplished the characteristics of the speech we were looking for.... [I]t was done with a very intense and emotional dialogue between Liv and her boyfriend.... We felt this conversation represented faithfully an authentic native speaker speech, full of strong expressions, body language, and done to satisfy the demanding communicative needs of an upset person.”
Fall 2011	Movie My Soul to Take	2 Males Final paper done by one	“[W]e chose, as I said before, a trailer of a horror movie: My soul to take. We picked this sample because of the sort of emotions that speakers transmitted on [<i>sic</i>] their speech. Besides, it was short and some of its lines represented a challenge for us.”
Fall 2010	Cartoon Road Runner	1 Female 1 Male	“After watching that video [the Road Runner], we were in agreement of using this for our job. We decided to analyze this video because it is funny and uses an informal language that allows us to develop our listening skills. Also, this video is different from the usual chosen recordings.” (pp. 2-3)
Spring 2015	Cartoon The Simpsons	1 Female 1 Male	“As for our general perception of the experience, Santiago said he thought the sample chosen seemed to be easy to him because of the familiarity with the characters. He also said that when he started listening to the sample, the characters started doing some non-understandable sounds.... [Cristina] noticed she was mostly paying attention to the images more than to the spoken dialogue... starting comprehending the plot of the episode but by images.”
Spring 2011	Interview Obama	1 Male	“The first time I heard the interview [with Obama] I could understand the general idea and the supporting ideas.”
Fall 2011	Interview Letterman and Emma	2 Females	“The first time we watched the video, we thought it was easy to understand because we were able to say what they [Letterman and Emma] were talking about. Sometimes we are used to think[ing] that understanding English only requires picking keywords; but unfortunately that’s not the task here. So when we had to do the written transcription, besides the fact that understanding all words was not easy, we found a series of difficulties, such as overlapping utterances; hesitations; dialect differences; phonetic reduction of some words; etc... that make this even harder.”

Except for the students that wrote the two papers based on the transcriptions of Obama's interview and the excerpt from *The Wedding Dress*, the other students (eight papers) referred to their samples in terms of effort and easiness. For them the text was *understandable to everyone, easy as a whole*, moderate in difficulty (not *too easy or too unintelligible*), *not so difficult*. This contrasted with the opposite of easy, where the text was *unintelligible, a challenge for us, impossible for us*, the text also had *non-understandable sounds*, and *understanding all words was not easy*. According to these students' ideas, a text is easy to comprehend if: 1) the formal language is clear and understandable; 2) it is a TV show; 3) it does not surpass students' threshold of intelligibility; and 4) the general idea and supporting ideas are understood, and/or listeners are able to repeat what people talk about. Other students referred to their verbatim samples in this way: "Despite the text being easily understood, there were still some words and utterances that Luis was not able to recognize [,] no matter how many times [he listened to them]" (*That Girl*, Fall 2011).

In other papers not mentioned above, two female students referred to their journalistic report on YouTube, "Animals Are Not Clowns" as follows: "Before doing the transcription we felt very comfortable because we were convinced we had understood the complete recorder [verbatim sample]. However, after we transcribed the text [,] there were missing words and incoherent utterances" (*Animals Not Clowns* Fall 2011).

All the texts students selected for this project complied with the requirements the instructor had specified. In four of the papers in Table 9, students directly expressed that the recorded text needed to comply with certain specifications: a text of moderate difficulty *to work on*; a *short* text; a piece of speech that fulfilled students' expectations. This is what students hoped to find in the texts: 1) *informal language... to develop our listening skills* and

at the same time a text that can be different from *the usual chosen recordings*; 2) *a speech full of strong expressions, body language*, and that at the same time could *satisfy the demanding communicative needs of an upset person* and that could transmit the *sort of emotions that speakers transmitted [in] their speech*. For the two female students who used the text from the *Letterman Show*, understanding English implies *overcoming a series of difficulties, such as overlapping utterances; hesitations; dialect differences; phonetic reduction of some words; etc...[These things together]make this even harder*. These ideas came from Halliday (1990), whose book was one of the assigned readings for the course.

Strategies used by the students to transcribe the verbatim samples. I made a matrix of the strategies students used to transcribe their verbatim samples under Code 8.⁴⁴ The paper with the most in depth-strategy description—based on the coding frequency and text length (Appendix R)—served as the foundation to sort out the excerpts marked with Code 8 in the remaining 19 papers. The group that transcribed the text coming from *Batman: The Dark Knight*⁴⁵ had a total of 11 Code 8s. These codes were further divided into 13 subcategories according to what students described in the process of transcription. Table 10 presents the 13 subcategories. The subcategory *other* was included assuming that the writers of the 19 papers would come up with other procedures that would add up to the 13 subcategories.

According to this sub-categorization, the matrix with information coming from all of the 20 papers rendered the following results. In nine papers, students mentioned the number

⁴⁴ Code 8: Mediators that helped in the task of transcribing the verbatim text (people, strategies, and technology).

⁴⁵ The group that described the major number of strategies was the one that transcribed *Batman* (Code 8=11) The lowest was the student who transcribed the interview with *Obama* (Code 8=1). The media was 4.4. See Appendix R for the *Matrix of Frequency: Code 8*.

of times they listened to the verbatim sample: This ranged between a *couple of times*, minimum, to *60 times* (*Letterman & Emma*). In seven of the papers, students reported to have listened to their recorded text *many times*, while in another two, students listened to their texts *several times* (*The Simpsons* and the lecture about *Architecture*). In one paper (*Argentine House*) the writers gave no information about the number of times, but provided evidence of the percentage of the words they missed: out of a total of “239 words ... Daniel missed... 10% ... and Gloria ... 9%.”

Table 10

Thirteen Strategies in One Student's Paper (Verbatim Sample: Batman, Spring 2012)

1. Number of times the listening took place	8. Activation of previous knowledge
2. Technological devices involved	9. Getting familiar with the sounds of the text and the text itself
3. Place and distractors	10. Relating words to the context
4. General listening for understanding	11. Guessing words spelling
5. Listening and writing: Intensive listening	12. Confirming spelling in the dictionary
6. Students' Realization: They could not identify every word. Reasons	13. How Video helped: body language, speakers intentions
7. Listening times (again)	14. Other Strategies

The students who transcribed the excerpt from *Between Two Ferns with Zach Galifianakis: Ben Stiller*—although advanced listeners as they identified themselves— also acknowledged their perceptual problems.⁴⁶ They said that their ‘familiarity with the speakers’ accents and manners of speaking... contributed in this part of the [transcription] process.” Unknown vocabulary, cultural embedded words, phonetic and phonological recognition (“patterns of pronunciation of specific accents”) were important issues for them.

All the students used the Internet and computers to record their verbatim texts.

Another technological device used in the process of transcription of the text was headphones

⁴⁶ As an instructor and second/foreign language user, I advised students to check with native speakers when I was definitely not able to decipher what the speakers in the verbatim samples said.

(five groups). One group who worked with the excerpt from *Shrek 2* mentioned that they used *Windows Movie Maker* and *Nero Wave Editor* to record and to edit the verbatim sample. Students also made use of online dictionaries, although only five groups explicitly reported their use.⁴⁷ It is assumed that paper dictionaries and electronic translators also served as mediators.

Because the listening task was central to the transcription of the verbatim samples, three groups referred to how this task was conducted: “Individual listening [activity] in a quiet room to avoid distractions” (*Batman*); in a room with only the audio text and no distractors such as TV and or the Internet (*Bangkok*); “in a completely silent and quite environment, without distractions” (*Animals Not Clowns*). For the others, this might have been the strategy as well because of the reiterative problems students had with certain words and phrases throughout the process of hearing perception to understand language and meaning. For foreign language listeners, surrounding noises may interfere with the message because this creates a double burden: the new sounds of the target language and noise distractors. Even native speakers may have problems understanding other native speakers’ dialects or even heavily accented native speakers when there is background noise (Munro, 1998).

The group of students that transcribed the text from *Batman* started off with a general listening strategy to “understand the whole context.” Three groups also referred to this strategy by saying that: 1) they listened to the text a couple of times to understand the whole idea of the monologue” (*Ellen DeGeneres*); they tried “to create a general structure of

⁴⁷ The instructor recommended the free online English dictionary. One group specified they used the Cambridge online dictionary.

the speech” (*Letterman and Emma*); and that 3) they wanted to “familiarize with the topic” (*NPR*).

Students had to listen to their recorded texts several more times to transcribe them word for word. This is when students started realizing that “We couldn’t identify every word because of speech speed” (*Batman*); “Mateo thought [the text] was pretty easy, then he realized it was not that easy” (*Architecture*). All students in all the courses had to stop the recordings to write at some point. This seemed to be a frustrating activity as “listening and writing at the same time is not easy. That’s why we all had to stop the recording after each sentence and in this way have the time to write down what we heard” (*Ben Stiller*). This was “intense listening,” wrote the student who transcribed Obama’s interview. Students had to listen to sounds and expressions many more times, repeating words and phrases they could not understand (*Batman, Architecture, The Road Runner*), to improve their transcriptions (all the students). Two students wrote: “Until this point, we have listened to the recording about 60 times and we have corrected around 20 errors, including the hesitations and affirmations [interjections] that we didn’t write at first” (*Letterman and Emma*).

There was a moment in this process when the frequency of the listening task started paying off for the students who had a difficult time doing the transcription. For example,

Vivian reported:

After listening to it so much times I start to fill all the blanks I had left in my paper. Then, I started to stop the video in every part I found words I didn’t understand. The process to achieve this task was the same I had used before, listening to it as many times as I needed until I was able to understand the word or the phrase. (*China Yellow River*)

Referring to the degree of difficulty of the verbatim sample students expressed:

[W]e rated the difficulty of our verbatim sample on a scale of 1 to 5 with a 4, because it was not very difficult, but there were some sections that required a high level of listening skill and a great repertoire of vocabulary. (*Batman*)

The transcriptions of the verbatim samples also improved as students completed the subsequent steps (1 and 2), which were reported in the final paper in the sections with the subheadings: *Broad Phonetic Transcription: A Comparison and Word Stress*; and *Sentence Stress, Intonation and Pauses*. For these two sections, students summarized what they found in their broad phonetic transcriptions and in the application of some phonetic and phonological concepts to recognize suprasegmentals. To transcribe phonetically and mark the suprasegmental features in the verbatim samples, students had to do more intense listening. The same student who did the transcription of *China's Yellow River* expressed:

I have some difficulties showing the intonation because it is easy for me to get confused between stress and intonation. Some times [*sic*] I was marking the stress instead of the intonation. What helped me to solve this problem was listening to the record [*sic*] once again.

The students who transcribed Ellen DeGeneres's monologue expressed:

Ellen's speaking gave us a difficulty because she handles a very unstable line of pitches and intonation, which sometimes confused us during marking stress. It is quite easy to confuse sentence stress with intonation and her verbatim sample didn't make it any easier for us.

For the students who transcribed the text from *Shrek 2*, the task of marking intonation and stress was thought to be easy, but it turned out to be the opposite. In addition, it "ended up being a much longer process than we expected."

The students in seven groups also used other skills and strategies to figure out the content of the verbatim samples.⁴⁸ They activated previous knowledge relating: the

⁴⁸ These groups were the ones that transcribed the texts of *Batman*, *Architecture*, *Bangkok Floods*, *Animals not Clowns*, *China's Yellow River*, *The Wedding Dress*, and *Ben Stiller*.

combination of grammar and sound; the combination of sounds and known vocabulary and idiomatic expressions; punctuation; and the topic itself. The more listening students did, the more they became accustomed to the accents, the intonations, and the rhythm of the language of the speakers: “The more listening brought more familiarity with the sounds and text” (*Batman*). The students who transcribed the text *Animals Not Clowns* expressed:

It was very worthwhile to find that familiarity is a very useful tool. We think that most of the findings and conclusions we made in this activity were possible because we got accustomed to ... Nicholas’s voice and speed. Each time we hear [*sic*] the recorder we found out more and more things.

Two students who said they read the text aloud found that “it helped us to give sense to the speech through punctuation” (*Ellen DeGeneres*). Two other students said they became familiar with Emma’s laugh, and that this helped them recognize her speech reductions (*Letterman and Emma*); in general, “familiarity with the speakers’ accent and manners of speaking helped” (*Ben Stiller*).

Difficult texts were those that had a lot of vocabulary that students did not know, so students tried to “assimilate the sounds of some words” (*The Road Runner*); figure out the spelling and then to look up the word in the dictionary (*Forrest Gump, NPR*); and listen to the sounds recurring times (all of the students). For three students that transcribed the text of *The Wedding Dress*,⁴⁹ irrespective of the number of times that they listened to the text, they would have never been able to figure out the words *Vera Wong*. They asked the native-English-language teaching assistant for help. This was an issue of culture that they could not possibly have known, said the students.

⁴⁹ Entitled “The International Butter Club,” but for easy reference I have shortened it to *The Wedding Dress*.

Different accents were difficult too. Students identified, however, Forrest's accent (from Alabama) and the British accents of the reporters in the journalistic reports *China Yellow River*, *Scottish TV Interview*, *Bangkok*, *Argentine's House*, and *Animals Not Clowns*. The American and British accents of Letterman and Emma Watson were also acknowledged, as well as the foreign-English accents of 1) Thai people in Bangkok; 2) the interviewee in the *Scottish TV Interview*; and 3) the "Spanish accent of Puss," the cat in *Shrek 2*. According to the students who chose British and foreign accents, they wanted to challenge their language skills by exploring speech sounds of less familiar accents. The American accent was reported to be the most familiar one to the students who participated in the EPP course. As for the students who transcribed the texts of cartoons—*The Simpsons*; *Shrek 2*; and *The Road Runner*—they were exposed to *dubbed* accents. The group who transcribed *The Simpsons* explicitly identified their voices as "fake" because of the high pitch and intonation and of the information about the character's voices: It is a woman who voices Bart Simpson.

Many students referred to the fact that the speakers *spoke fast*, or that the speed of the speaker's speech posed a lot of difficulties for identifying what they were actually saying: "[T]he speakers talk in a very fast way" (*Forrest Gump*); "[t]he speed was a factor of difficulty" (*The Big Bang Theory*); "the speaker increased the speech speed" so the student had to listen to it repeatedly (*Architecture*); and Lisa Simpson spoke "very fast" (*The Simpsons*). The students who transcribed the text to *Argentine House* also mentioned the speaker's speed. However, this did not stop Daniel from identifying "content words" that he did not know such as: "*rubbing, disbelieve, weird, sifting, vessels, sturdy and shutter.*" Daniel and Gloria explained that other problems with their text were

phonologically related to vowel sounds and spelling besides the speed of the reporter. Two other students expressed that they had understood about a 60% of the words the first time they listened to the audio (*My Soul to Take*). For the students who transcribed the *Ben Stiller* text, the problems they identified in the process of transcription dealt with: “1) Lack of a wide vocabulary, 2) lack of cultural foundations of the language, 3) knowing more than one word that fits a certain sound and 4) identifying patterns of pronunciation for specific accents.”

With the exception of one final paper based on only an audio text coming from NPR, all the students used videos. The video allowed students to get meanings from the images and context, even if they could not understand the speech sounds, as one student put it (*The Simpsons*). The videos in several instances helped students with the names of rivers, places, people, and specialized jargon: 1) *Riverton*, Massachusetts (*My Soul to Take*). The student explained that one scene in the movie helped as “there was a newspaper showing [the] town’s name.” 2) The word “Jamborette” or “Jamboret” (as spelled by students twice) was recognized because it was used in the description of the video” (*Scottish TV Interview*). 3 “Watcharapon Rakracharkarn... were unfamiliar [Thai] words that we figured out by the speaker’s speech” (*Bangkok Floods*); also, the name of the canal “Proper” was written this way “according to the title of the news report.” 6) In *The Wedding Dress* the names of truffles were unintelligible: “They are very specific names and we lack the skill to spell names in English.” To make up for the missing words in the transcription, students made use of the native-English language assistant and the movie’s subtitles.

The cultural factor was explicitly recognized by three groups: *Scottish TV Interview*, *Ben Stiller*, and *The Wedding Dress*. For the first, “wee” in the utterance “it’s a wee bit

cooler than that” was recognized as a Scottish expression that also makes up part of the community of speakers in the northern part of England: “[T]his expression is supposed to be only used in certain places of Northern England and Scotland.” Here, students said that some cultural knowledge was a key issue in the identification of the word. They made this assertion based on what they had read for their first presentation, which was about the dialect in the Yorkshire region, in the northeast of England. For the students who transcribed the text of *The Wedding Dress*, the name *Vera Wang* “would have been impossible [to transcribe] by just hearing the recording, since it contains a very specific cultural feature.”

The actions played in the scenes also helped students understand unknown and/or unintelligible vocabulary and find out what the speakers were talking about; watching the gestures of the speakers also added to the understanding of words; moreover, the general topic and some details were understood by the scenes. The audiovisual also helped students to figure out the speakers’ intentions. Students also used web pages to get information they lacked (e.g., Ellen DeGeneres’ pets’ names; the word “biomimicry” in *Architecture*; a children’s night prayer, in the transcript *My Soul to Take*; and the name of the movie *Dirty Dancing*, for the students who transcribed the excerpt from the show *That Girl*).

Students’ misinterpreted phrases and how they corrected them. Students explored diverse verbatim texts that offered utterances and words that students mistook for others. As described before, the strategies to explore the oral texts and to transcribe them were very similar but offered various challenges to students. These challenges ranged from: 1) the type of language used in the video and/or audio: formal or informal vernacular, with more specialized jargon or everyday language; 2) the variety of accents, idiolect, and students’ familiarity with them; and 3) students’ familiarity with the media genre and the

speakers' voices. These factors aided or hampered students' understanding of meaning. Students' listening skills, as described by most of them, were a key element. According to students' personal English-language level assessment, this moved along a scale from 1 to 5 where 5 was "easy" to understand.

According to students' examples of utterances that caused them *trouble* (see Appendix S), I show, in Table 11 below, examples from four final papers. As described by most of the students, the correction of these words and phrases took some time and a series of listening attempts and strategies. Students described group collaboration, comparisons between individual transcriptions, and many of the strategies already described in the former section (grammar, context clues, use of the video and of the internet, figuring out spellings and validating guessed words using dictionaries, and reiterative multiple listening attempts). The third right column of Table 11 shows the phrases and words (utterances) corrected by the students:

Table 11

What Students Understood vs. What Speakers Said According to Students' Corrections

Media Genre	Cohort	What Students Understood	Students' Correction: What the Speakers Said
G2 MOVIE <i>The Wedding Dress</i>	Fall 2010	"the nice would be fifty" "the dress doesn't fit... the dress doesn't fit" "sweet you can stop doing <i>this</i> is all your fault" "well is already hon"	"It might as well be fifty" "the dress doesn't fit and if the dress doesn't fit" "It's <i>what</i> you can stop doing, this is all your fault" "Well A, is our wedding hon"
G3 JOURN. REP. <i>Animals Not Clowns</i> (Could be Code 8 too)	Fall 2011	"their best" "cross land" "have been left shocked" "going on the cover"	"diverse" "grass land" "as are being shock" "going undercover"
G1TV SHOW <i>Ellen DeGeneres</i>	Fall 2011	"thirty people <u>detected</u> shelter" "most of the <u>air</u> "	"thirty people had to take shelter" "most of the year"
G3 CARTOON <i>The Simpsons</i>	Spring 2012	"summaries" "a necktie"	"some of this" "and a tie"

In the first example given by students who transcribed *The Wedding Dress*, the interpreted sentence “the nice would be fifty” shows a problem with the syntax of the English language; in the corrected version, the students identified the almost imperceptible reduced forms “*and*” and “*if*.” The sentence “[S]weet you can stop doing *this* is all your fault,” shows a syntax problem, but from the perspective of a spoken utterance, this could have been uttered with a small pause: “[S]weet you can stop doing/ *this* is all your fault” which shows the hesitation of the speaker and his/her change in thought. This would be what Vygotsky (1986) explains in *Thought and Language* when he refers to the thoughts rushing into your mind and getting stuck in your production. The corrected version “It’s *what* you can stop doing, this is all your fault” changed the meaning when students added the relative word *what*.

In the second example, *Animals Not Clowns*, there are some problematic issues in the perception of how English language vowels compromise meaning and understanding (e.g., diphthongs and monophthongs in “**their**” “**di**verse”; word boundaries and confusion in the recognition of segments “r” and “b” as in “**their best**” and “**di**verse”; and the absence of “r” and the fricative sound “v” in *di*verse). The utterances “*have been left shocked*” and “*are being shocked*” are examples of how temporality was interpreted and what the speaker utters: an action that is still taking place. In the words “*cross land*” and “*grass land*” stop velar sounds such as [k] and [g] can easily be mistaken because of the *devoiced* characteristic that [g] in initial syllable acquires as an allophone [g̥], sounding more similar to the voiceless counterpart [k] (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2011). This change along with the

perception of the vowels in the words *cross* and *grass*⁵⁰ may also compromise meaning depending on the variety of the English dialect. For the other utterances, I also find confusing phonological, morphological, lexical, and/or syntax changes. A deeper and more structured and systematic analysis of these errors would serve to make an inventory or recurrent linguistic problems resulting from the perception of English speech sounds in this specific student population.

In the following section, I introduce how the structured and systematic form of language was portrayed by the students in their analysis of language as a system.

Students' Understanding of Language as a System

To analyze how students understood language as a system, I used the data in students' papers that described the foreign language in a metalanguage. This refers to the second genre, or the professional language that is developed in a specific discipline and that develops once we have acquired a primary genre—or everyday language (Bakhtin, 1986b). This metalanguage was the result of what students had incorporated into their new repertoire of language to describe language throughout the course. Thus, the knowledge of concepts, specialized jargon of the discipline, and students' observations were key elements to describe the utterances they heard in their verbatim samples.

Language viewed as a system was more intended for the phonetic and phonological analysis of the verbatim samples with the purpose of evaluating students' learning and knowledge of the subject matter. Students described the language of the verbatim samples as a system in the sections *broad phonetic transcription* and the *analysis of suprasegmentals* of

⁵⁰ The word *cross* can be pronounced [kras] or [krɒs] depending on the speakers' accent (Midwestern American and/or British RP standard variety respectively) the same as [græs] or [gras], but this would not compromise meaning in a conversation exchange.

their final papers. This precisely corresponded to the information the instructor demanded in Step 2 and Step 3 of the final project, where students had to pay more attention to the use of specific concepts. I will briefly include some excerpts that evince how students understood speech as a system.

Based on the transcripts, students made a phonetic analysis of segments (vowels and consonants) where the jargon of phonetics helped to describe the perception of the speech sounds of the English language. Two students described their difficulties transcribing the text phonetically:

Vicky had some problems with the transcription of words such as *mob*, *not* and *wanted* (lines 6, 12 and 2, respectively). She could not differentiate easily between the back vowels sounds [ɔ] and [ɑ]. That's why she repeatedly committed the same mistake transcribing words that contained the [a] sound (e.g. she transcribed *mob* as [mɔb] instead of [mab])." (*Batman*)

With respect to spelling in English, knowing that in the diachronic evolution of the English language several languages had an influence in its pronunciation, and that the spelling system does not reflect this influence, helped students understand the correspondence between speech and spelling. In one of the textbooks, we read: "The present spelling of English reflects the way it used to sound many centuries ago when it still had vowel letters with values similar to those of the corresponding letters in all these other languages" (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2011, p. 30).

The above, however, is not an impediment to predict some rules in the combination of syllables (phonics), as we read in Poms and Dale (1986) how to predict the sounds of certain vowels in some specific syllable blends. In the view of three students, learning how to spell certain speech sound combinations helped:

Words like ‘mortgage’ (line 1) and “subprime” were identified but we did not know their meanings, so we looked for them [i]n the dictionary and realized that they actually exist and are financial terms. All these sounds were identified thanks to the spelling rules we had learnt in our phonetics classes. In cases like the last name “Kossof” (line 90), we perceive the low back tense /ɑ/ and we thought that it was spelled as the vowel a, but then we realized that it was spelled with o. (*NPR*)

The combination of segments and suprasegmentals come together almost at once as a string of sounds when people speak. Uttering speech sounds imply an underlying phonetic and phonological system. This is not that obvious to most speakers or to learners of foreign languages, so this needs to be better identified and understood:

Throughout this project, we have understood how segments and suprasegmental features behave in connected speech. This knowledge has also helped us to improve our oral production skills. We have not only corrected some mispronounced words, but we have also got use (*sic*) to the rhythm (stress patterns) and musicality (intonation patterns of English language. (*Letterman and Emma*)

For two other students, “In oral communication some of the most important features are linking words in connected speech, rhythm and pronunciation of vowels” (*That Girl*). These aspects of speech are necessary to understand and produce speech sounds in English. This is crucial for Spanish speakers, as our language phonology works differently from that of the English-language:

When comparing English and Spanish languages we could firmly say that an important difference is the way they are timed, stress timed in English and syllable timed in Spanish (Avery and Ehrlich, 2008, p. 73). For that reason we must use the correct prosody, stress and pauses that correspond to each language. On the other hand, [it’s] necessary to be aware of the difference of sounds between both of the languages, as we have seen, English uses more sounds than Spanish language (14 vowel sounds+ three diphthongs and several consonant sounds that we do not differentiate in Spanish language, and often we swap one sound with another due to the similarities and the perception limitations that we have as native-Spanish speakers [perceiving English-language sounds].” (*Bangkok*)

Stress, a very important feature that makes part of the rhythm of English, was difficult to

identify, and so were the vowels that were unstressed:

Our oral text has many unstressed words. Therefore, it was so difficult, that it was not easy to identify stressed syllables. One example of this is when the sentences finish in “It” and the next phrase also begins with “It”: (line 4-5) / when you really work for it//It just tastes that much better/. We thought the first one was pronounced with a schwa [fər ət// ɪt dʒʌst], but overviewing the rules we could find that the high frontal lax vowel [ɪ] is more common used in the transcription of the weak form [ɪn] this word [it].” (*The Road Runner*)

In terms of intonation, one important correlate that students needed to identify was rising and falling intonations: “Lara and Leo were the ones who perceived better the intonation on line 14 (see appendix C). They said that it was a falling intonation and Pam said it was high-rising” (*The Wedding Dress*). Another correlate to intonation was the concept of *tonic accent*, which is usually the one that carries the main expressive meaning in an utterance.

This is what students found:

When Liv’s boyfriend says: “What the hell is going on?” (see appendix C, line 2), Leo and Lara thought that the word “hell” had the tonic accent, but Pam said that it was on the word “on”. This disagreement was caused by the fact that we tended to analyze the intonation according to the impression that the recording had left in our minds more than the recording itself. It means that we remembered the recording with a different intonation to the one used in the original text, and that was the reason why two of us thought that the word “hell” had more intonation. However, this doubt was solved by listening to our oral text again and realizing that the word “on” does have the tonic accent, even if it is not a content word, because that’s where Liv’s boyfriend wants to emphasize.” (*The Wedding Dress*)

This brief description of language as a system from the students’ perspective shows general trends that are: 1) English has more vowel sounds than Spanish—English-language diphthongs differ from our Spanish language; 2) the difference in the tempos of stress that the English language has opposes the syllable-timed rhythm that we give to the English language and what Ladefoged and Johnson (2011) describe as *staccato* pronunciation; 3) concepts of intonation, pitch, and tonic syllables were problematic for students to identify;

4) perception and identification of vowels and their corresponding phonetic representation were troublesome: the concept of word stress was fundamental for the recognition and phonetic representation of vowels. In most of the descriptions made in the final papers, students only used their own perception of sounds, forcing their listening skill to modify certain psychological perceptions of the invented sounds of English that students had created through their Spanish language (see Appendix S, for students' misperception of words and phrases).

Speech sounds are a system in themselves. But it is only in the context of language use where intonations, high pitches, and voice modulations make sense. As stated by Germany and Rivas (2011) phonology approaches the exploration of suprasegmentals, but falls short to explain other aspects occurring in speech such as the unconscious choices that native speakers make in conversations. In this way, they recommend students be taught to view language in its whole complexity. A systematic analysis of suprasegmentals is not enough to allow foreign language students to predict how the speaker will use intonation and tonic syllables, for example, to make communication meaningful. This is what Vygotsky (1986) and Bakhtin (1986a; 1986b) had said about language. Language is beyond system: meaning works as a powerful engine of thought connected to the phonological system of a language. Without meaning, speech sounds are empty and communication is not possible. The acoustic perception is not the only one that enters in the understanding of a foreign language. It is an important and essential input, but speech sounds are embedded in multiple other language issues. To make sense of an audio text, cultural referents in intertextuality also need to be addressed as well as the context where this text comes from. In the following section I present the analysis of intertextuality in one final paper.

Analysis of One Final Paper: Students' Ideas and Intertextuality

In the previous sections I described the strategies students used to transcribe the speech of English-language speakers that they recorded from the Internet and their misinterpretations. The purpose of this section is to analyze one final paper to understand how students made meaning out of the language they transcribed both in writing and phonetically, and how the intertextuality of the audio-visual text affected their understanding. In general, all the final papers of the course of EPP, besides studying the speech sounds and the intonation of various verbatim samples, are the outcome of students' interpretations of meanings. By using various texts (visual, audio, written), they made sense out of the foreign language. The interpretations of these texts also seemed to be assisted by the reading material, the lectures, the handouts, e-mails, and personal interactions. Above all, students' psychological schema and frame to perceive and recognize utterances and meanings in the texts were fundamental.

For this analysis, I will use the data coming from Cristina and Miguel's final paper written in spring 2012. They based their project on one 46-minute excerpt taken from the TV series *The Simpsons*. This is an excerpt from Episode 5, *When You Dish Upon a Star* (Appel & Michels, 1998), Season 10, first aired in November 1998.⁵¹ Students recorded the audio from an episode on the Internet. Their recorded text depicts a scene with linguistic and embedded sociocultural connotations in the typical expressive *voices* of the characters and the background *sounds*. For the *visuals* we had to go to the web page students gave in their reference list. This page is no longer available. The scene in the video seems easy and

⁵¹ Information obtained from the web site IMDb, <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0701293/>, *When You Dish Upon a Star*. Students mentioned that it was episode 1005 based on the information they found on the web page where they audio-recorded the VS. This page is no longer available.

enjoyable to any audience, but it is an intricate semiotic text with intertextual representations. For Spanish-speaking students who are in the process of becoming familiar with the phonology of the English language, the scene offered a series of issues besides the characters' speech sounds. And yet, students were able to write a transcript of the entire text. They transcribed a total of 237 words (I included in this count interjections and contractions as word units).

The scene students chose—which I also call an excerpt—is titled “You want some of this?”⁵² This scene or excerpt was deconstructed into the three media semiotic texts for meaning: the audio (characters' voices and speech, music, and background noises); visual referents; and explicit and embedded connotations of the message in the utterances. The semiotics of this text—as analyzed through the *sign* (linguistic, visual, and audio) (Pierce, 1958; as cited in Bignell, 2002)—took into account the object, the situation, the representations and the intertextuality given in the scene. This analysis placed the students' interpretations and meanings at the core in relationship with the macro text.

I understand intertextuality as the dialogic relationship that the listener/reader establishes with the speaker or the writer as defined by Bakhtin (1986). The listener/reader is not passive, he/she reacts in some way—even in a non-reaction there is meaning. In this respect, the audience may coincide with the views of the ones that created the signs and communicated the message or give a new interpretation and accommodate the message to their personal perception and cultural background. All these perceptual referents are

⁵² Information given in the brochure “*Studio Tour Welcome...*” included in *The Simpsons. The Complete Tenth Season DVD Video Collector's Edition* (2014)

embedded in the heteroglossia of the text creating dialogical/ideological relationships (Bakhtin, 1986) with the audience (for this particular case, the two students).

Before I present this analysis, I will give some background information about the animated sitcom *The Simpsons* and a description of the one 46-minute scene that was used by the students for their final paper.

The animated comedy genre, cartoon, or sitcom. *The Simpsons* is widely known as the longest successful animated comedy running in American television (Crawford, 2009; Fink & Foote, 2007; Gómez Morales 2014). It is an eminently American parody of an American middle class family living in the fictitious (Nefes, 2014), utopian/omnitopia suburban Springfield (Wood & Todd, 2005). Public acceptance of the show within the United States as well as abroad is well known, for this sitcom connects with other aspects of life besides its American embedded cultural allusions (Meskill, 2007). The comedy moves along a continuum between “extremely entertaining two-dimensional depictions” and “critical sophisticated issues” (Fink & Foote, 2007, p. 47). This makes it not completely suitable for younger viewers, but for adults watching primetime television because it is “too verbal, too adult, not enough of Bart and Lisa” (Billen, 2006).

The Simpsons has been described as an animated cartoon comedy. This is an American TV subgenre that was created over 50 years ago when audiences in the United States were first introduced to primetime programs such as *The Flintstones* or *The Jetsons* (Gómez Morales, 2014). According to Gómez Morales, this subgenre has formal characteristics such as format and duration of episodes, a narrative structure (events), and transtextual strategies such as intertextuality and metatextuality. This animated comedy has made allusions to the current events, TV programs, and various texts of low and high culture

combined with the fantasy that only animation can give to the characters of a sitcom. For Gómez Morales (2014), *The Simpsons* combines parody, intertextuality, and self-reflexivity. It is through these three strategies that this comic sub-genre represents TV, is a reflection of TV, is *about* TV, and makes use of the inward TV narrative at the same time.⁵³

The portrayal of reality in *The Simpsons* has endured current varied cultural entrenched situations throughout almost 30 years of intermix satire and exaltation of the American culture. In this way, the show has been attractive and entertaining as it addresses the several cultural, social, economic, and global issues of contemporary America and the world (Fink & Foot, 2007; Nefes, 2014). Additionally, the show creates a dialogue with viewers of all ages, making the text readable to audiences not familiar with the American culture or even younger generations not acquainted with the adult humor that the show displays.

The Simpson family (Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa, and the infant Maggie) has become real in the audience's lives through the typical voices that actors put to the cartoon characters. This combines with the storyline that usually recreates a reality with sarcastic and amusing tones. This has made *The Simpsons* grow into a subculture of fan clubs and commercial paraphernalia in its own right, even inspiring academic papers and theses (Broadcasting and Cable, 2003). Currently, *The Simpsons* has 550 episodes and “still finds new ways to play Springfield and its residents for laughs” (Chan, 2014). The animated

⁵³ The article by Gomez Morales (2014) has for purpose “analizar las tres estrategias transtextuales de las que se vale la comedia animada para hacerlo: la parodia, la intertextualidad y la autorreflexividad. A través de ellas, este subgénero cómico representa a la televisión acerca de la televisión; a los textos televisivos que reflexionan sobre todos los aspectos que rodean al medio al que pertenecen. Incluso, sobre ellos mismos, que también son muestra de la narrativa televisiva” (p. 129).

sitcom has recently “celebrate[ed] its 550 episode with Lego theme” (Associated Press, 2014).

The script of *The Simpsons* is accompanied by visual images and sound effects (Kutnowski, 2008) allowing the viewer to connect with the characters, the situations, and the message. For the adults that have been called *Generation X* and *Generation Y* (1963-1977) and who grew up with TV and animated cartoons, *The Simpsons* is rich in representations of further TV genres, media topics, and most of the current events and conversations taking place at a specific time (Flink & Foote, 2007). The creativity and dexterity of Matt Groening, the creator of *The Simpsons*—along with that of the writers—allows all viewers to connect to the show in some way or another. The reinterpretation of a reality in form of parody in each episode reaches and amuses all types of audiences. Younger viewers and the audiences not familiar with the elements of high culture and literature (Eikmeier, 2008), or the American culture and the animation and TV series of the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, and beyond (Gómez Morales, 2014) may be excluded from this intertextuality as many of the referents that are hilarious may go unidentified to external audiences.

In the excerpt of *The Simpsons* that I will analyze here, the American culture of camping, national parks, and the animation of the 1960s are represented. This intertextuality exists side by side with the linguistic text, the sounds, the images, and the characters’ actions.

Description of the scene. Based on the audio, the visual, and the story narrative, the short scene “You want some of this?” taken from the episode “When You Dish Upon a

Star” (Appel & Michels, 1998) can be described in three major thematic, rhetorical, and spatial parts:

1. In Jellistone Park: Homer and Bart playing the roles of Yogi-the-Bear and Boo Boo; Ned, their next door neighbor, in the role of Ranger Ned.
2. In the parents’ bedroom: Lisa and Bart trying to wake up Homer to take them to the lake at 4 a.m.; 2a) conversation between parents and children; and 2b) Homer falling back asleep and mumbling.
3. On the road: The family is on the way to the lake facing noisy traffic and a long caravan of vehicles, then comes Homer’s clever strategy to avoid the congestion.

Analysis of the various texts: *The Simpsons* (audio, visual, linguistic) and students’ meanings as expressed in their final paper. The excerpt taken from *The Simpsons* was analyzed in relation to the meanings and interpretations expressed by the two students that wrote about it in their final paper. This was done in three parts: 1) the audio referents: noises and voices; 2) the visual meanings; 3) the phrases and the dialogue referents in their cultural context. For each part, I took into account the organization of the plot as I mentioned before: 1) at Jellistone Park - Homer’s dream; 2) in the parents’ bedroom: 2a) children waking up Homer and subsequent conversation, 2b) Homer falling back asleep; and finally, 3) on the way to the lake. I validated the audio division with the images, and the thread of the story and its big subtopics. In other words, this organization responds to the spatial referents and the plot of the excerpt combined—the latter serving as the major frame.

The audio referents: noises and voices. The audio referents: noises and voices. In the first part—Homer’s dream at *Jellistone Park*—the audio allows the listener to recognize

the music of *The Simpsons* playing in the background along with birds chirping. A conversation between Homer and Bart about picnic baskets takes place. The noise of Yogi running on his tip-toes (as in a ballet movement in *pointe shoes*) can be heard: percussion sounds played fast on a xylophone. Two indicators of the mixed intertextuality at the audio level are *The Simpsons*' animated music and the sounds coming from the *Yogi-the-Bear* cartoon of the 1960s. The first is a familiar tune of *The Simpsons*, whereas the second speaks to an audience who grew up hearing (or are aware of) the Hanna-Barbera cartoon, *Yogi-the-Bear*, sounds. The dialogue between Homer and Bart continues when a whistling noise is introduced. Ranger Ned appears in the scene and speaks to Yogi/Homer. Bart's voice can be heard. Sounds of what seems an attack follows and Homer's intense violent shouts follow—representative of this character's identity in the series. Homer, impersonating Yogi-the-Bear, shouts, "*You want some of this?*" At the same time noises of a fight follow. It is from Homer's phrase that the scene takes its name.

This first part was unintelligible for Cristina who reported her listening experience in these terms:

[T]he first 30 seconds of speech were completely non-understandable for [Cristina] because of the fake voices of the characters when they acted out a Yogy-the-Bear [*sic*] parody and the speed of the speech; she had to take up the volume even higher than she is used to. She also noted it was harder to understand Homer's utterances than the ones said by the other characters because of the quality tone of Homer's voice (it was very low).

Cristina perceived the characters' speech as unintelligible because of the characters' fake voices in the *Yogi-the-Bear parody* and the rapid delivery of the utterances. Cristina already knew that in this episode, *The Simpsons* shows a distorted version of the animated cartoon *Yogi-the-Bear* in some way. In the excerpt that students recorded, Homer, Bart, and Ned are

impersonating the characters of the *Yogi-the-Bear* cartoon show—Yogi, Boo Boo, and Ranger Smith respectively. A parody is an imitation of an original work, and salient features of the original work that make the audio a parody of this old show are the voices, the music, and the background noises. Homer, Bart, and Ned already have fake voices, so imitating the voices and mannerisms of the original characters in *Yogi*⁵⁴ is a double intertextual audio (semiotic) text. The surreal experience in Homer’s dream is also accompanied by his well-known grunting and shouting noises in the series and his animosity for Ned, his next-door neighbor. This animosity is heard when Ned and Homer’s encounter is followed by the sounds of a violent fight. The perception of the audio part may be more meaningful to audiences who are steady fans of the series. Total understanding of meaning becomes more complete with the visual and linguistic parts of the text, as I will explain later.

In the second part (2a) Bart and Lisa shout, but Lisa’s sharp voice is more audible: “*Dad, wake up, wake up.*” An interaction between the family members follows, and the scene ends with Homer snoring and mumbling the words that students transcribed: “*magilla [sic], gorilla, gorilla for sale. Hey! You should not have taken my banana, Mr. Pebbles [sic]... Aahaahh! Aahaahh! Aahaahh!*” The gorilla imitation gives an end to this part. This closure is an intertextual referent of the cartoon show from the 1960s, *Magilla Gorilla*.

Finally, the third scene’s—“On the way to the Lake”—orchestrated cartoon music introduces the final dialogue. Noises of tires screeching, horns honking, and heavy traffic frame the scene. Marge, Bart, Lisa, Lenny, and Homer’s voices are heard in this third part. There is the sound of an engine approaching before Lenny speaks. Then two cracking noises

⁵⁴ The description of Yogi’s style and voice as given in Wikipedia is that “Yogi would also often use puns in his speech, and have a habit of pronouncing large words with a long vocal flourish.”

can be heard. The scene closes with what can be interpreted as a sudden vehicle maneuver and Homer's giggling and grumping, and the children yelling.

The above illustrates the juxtaposition of various audio texts. "Barthes viewed the text not as the unique and original creation of an author but rather as 'made up of multiple meanings, drawn from many cultures, and entering into multiple relations of dialogue, parody, contestation... (148)'" (Barthes, 1977; as cited in Warnick & Heineman, 2012, p. 85). This can also be attested in the audio, the visual, and the dialogue exchange among the characters of the series. Therefore, we have three kinds of texts playing at the same time to make meaning for an audience.

Miguel's perception of the whole excerpt was different from Cristina's, and this is what they wrote:

[I]n general terms, it was easy because [Miguel] was familiarized with the characters['] voices and because out of understanding the plot[,] he could understand whole phrases just by hearing them once, such as: "I was having the most wonderful dream". But the greater difficulty for him was mostly located in terms of vocabulary because he could have had an idea of what [was] said by [the] characters, but due to the fact of not knowing the accurate word used[,] there was no way to be sure of what certain character had actually said.

The audio frame, the vernacular dialect (primary genre) in the scene, and the combination of texts (audio, visual, linguistic) are three elements in the above description. In the audio frame, *The Simpsons*, as a subgenre of an animated cartoon, has recognizable features. The characters' voices are one important element that viewers and fans have learned to identify. It seems that Miguel is a fan of this TV program. The voices, as part of the show's frame, are stereotypical and add to the characters' identity. As I mentioned earlier, the voices, the plot, and the story line become identifiable features to steady viewers. Gradoll, Cheshire, and Swan's (1994) definition of frame and accommodating it to this case here, the frame in

The Simpsons “is essentially a stereotype of a particular object or event which shows those characteristics which are essential, those which are variable, and those which past experience has shown are likely to be present” (p. 218) in the show. The voices, the introductory overture, the background sounds, and the music, make part of this frame. They complete the visual actions of the characters. All this works in an intertextual combination that makes this TV sitcom unique.

The vernacular American dialect in this excerpt is what the students called “informal speech.” This could also be framed in what Bakhtin (1986a) calls the primary genre, which serves as the foundation to build on more complex language genres (secondary ones). The primary genre seems a simple, yet not easy, “sphere in which language is used” (Bakhtin, 1986a, p. 60). The utterance “*I was having the most wonderful dream*” may have not been that difficult for Miguel, because this makes part of the *primary genre*, which culturally can be easily transferred to the Spanish speaking culture without much complication. Foreign language students are exposed to the primary genre through the representation of the English language in textbooks, and through their exposure to various media and authentic texts in and out of the classroom. However, research on speech has shown that the primary genre might be more complex than what is usually believed in foreign language courses.

With respect to the voices of the characters, in students’ terms, they were fake and showed varying intonations. This is how students described the style of the characters’ voices:

Regarding the style in the use of the pitch made by the characters, we could notice [that] the speakers tend to raise the pitch very regularly, even if there is no tonic accent[.] [W]e think this is due to the fake voices of the characters, [*sic*] in their informal speech. It is worth saying that most of the speakers—but Homer who actually seemed to [be] yelling when talking—have a high pitch in their voice

quality... Homer has a very low tone of voice [and] due to his fake voice[,] he tends to utter as closing his lips a lot. This makes it difficult to comprehend. Marge has a sharp voice, although it seems that she has a dry throat. So it makes her voice sort of course. Bart has a very sharp voice. It is worth mentioning that the person that performs his voice for the show is a woman, although she tries to make it sound as a boy-kind [of] voice. Lisa has the sharpest voice pitch of them [all] and speaks really fast.

An example of students' perception of the intonation patterns of Lisa, Bart, Homer, and Marge is given in the phonetic and phonological representation students made in the final paper. This is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Students' Example of Suprasegmentals⁵⁵

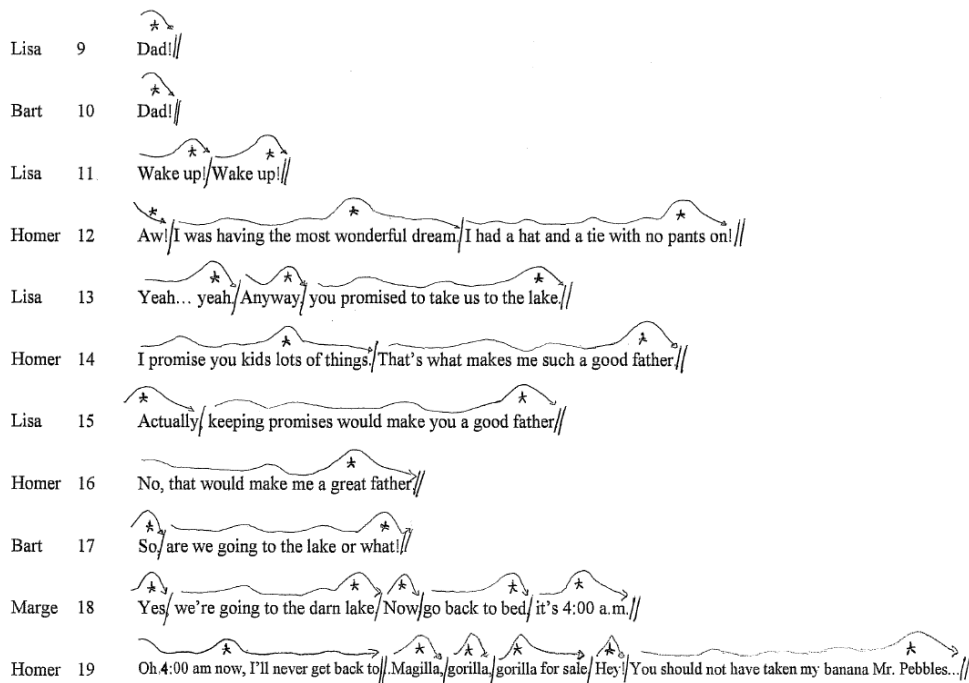


Figure 2 shows an excerpt of students' visual representation of the speakers' intonation, pauses, and tonic syllables. This served them to understand how the speakers' prosody worked and to write about it in the final paper.

⁵⁵ Part 2 of the excerpt: "Dialogue in the Parents' Bedroom."

The third and last issue about Miguel's perception of the excerpt from *The Simpsons* deals with a combination of perception at the biological level and the experiential level (Gibson, 1969). The visual, auditory, and linguistic perception of any text enters our minds through biological, cognitive, and sociocultural filters. The last filter, the sociocultural, is greatly influenced by our previous knowledge and the schemas that we have represented in our minds to give meaning to the external world. In some way, every assessment of a situation through our perception is socially constructed and cognitively engrained. Therefore, in the audio understanding of the noises, the music, and the speech in the excerpt of *The Simpsons*, the hearing perception was crucial. Here, the cognitive aspect of the phonology of the new language is blocked by the first language. When the ears have been cognitively trained to recognize the sounds of a new language, people will be able to recognize the sounds, the words, and phrases, then make sense of the grammar and try to put the meaning together. The sociocultural aspect is always present in our cognitive perception, and the visual aspect aids the auditory one in the process of meaning making.

Students arrived at the observations cited before after they analyzed the phonetic features of the segments and word stress, then intonation patterns (pitch, tonic accent, pauses). They paid attention to the transcript, and from there they transcribed the text phonetically in citation form (careful pronounced words). Then they contrasted this transcription with what the characters uttered so they could establish the differences between citation form and connected speech. The musicality of the language—which we understood as the suprasegmental features (intonation) (Avery & Ehrlich, 2008; Poms & Dale, 1985)—combined with the segments delivered in a speech chain and the rhythm of the language (stress). Therefore, phonetic perception of speech sounds (segments) and

intonation (suprasegmentals) added to the audio so that students could make meaning out of what was said.

We learned that the phonetic variability found in connected speech is greater than the variability in citation form, therefore description of connected speech can't be done only in terms of allophones (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2011). Nevertheless, we found that phonetic transcription of citation forms was a very useful tool at the beginning of the phonetic transcription process. It helped us to identify consonant sounds and the differences between strong and weak forms of the vowels at least in isolated words, and consequently[, this] let us [understand] later the reduction of vowels in connected speech... [e.g.] [T]he vowel in the conjunction "and" is dropped and pronounced [n̩] or [nd̩] (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2011, p. 109). (Students' Final Paper)

An example of the students' phonetic transcription of the text is shown in Figure 3. This is an example of how students heard the sounds of the vowels and the consonants and how they represented them in their broad phonetic transcription. Some allophones allowed the students to describe how they heard the characters' speech sounds in connected speech as they uttered them.

Figure 3. Students' Phonetic Transcription

			[a]
Lisa	9	Dad!	['dæd]
Bart	10	Dad!	['dæd]
Lisa	11	Wake up! Wake up!	['weɪk_ʌp_ 'weɪk_ʌp]
Homer	12	Aw! I was having the most wonderful dream. I had a hat and a tie with no pants on!	[ou: aɪ wəz 'hævɪŋ ðə 'moust 'wʌndəfəl 'dri:m. aɪ 'hæd ə 'hæt ŋ ə 'taɪ 'wið 'nou 'pænts ən]
Lisa	13	Yeah... yeah. Anyway, you promised to take us to the lake.	[jeə... jeə. 'eniweɪ, ju 'prɒmɪst tə 'teɪk_ʌs tə ðə 'leɪk]
Homer	14	I promise you kids lots of things. That's what makes me such a good father.	[aɪ 'prɒmɪs ju 'kɪdz 'lɒts əv 'θɪŋs. 'ðætz 'hwat 'meɪks mi 'sʌtʃ ə 'ɡʊd 'fɑ:ðə]
Lisa	15	Actually, keeping promises would make you a good father.	['æktʃʊli, 'ki:pɪŋ 'prɒmɪsəz wʊd 'meɪk ju ə 'ɡʊd 'fɑ:ðə]
Homer	16	No, that would make me a great father.	[noʊ, 'ðæt wəd 'meɪk mi ə 'ɡreɪt 'fɑ:ðə]

In addition to all the above, word stress in English helped students write what the characters said. Students “noted that content words stand out above... function words in terms of emphasis.” They supported this with the utterance “Dad you really should be watching the road” (line 22 of students’ phonetic transcription). Students explained that “the content words ‘Dad,’ ‘be,’ ‘watching,’ and ‘road’ are the first words that we could distinguish... because they stand out.” The “function words ‘you,’ ‘really,’ ‘should,’ and ‘the’” are less noticeable. In order to mark stress of content words, students said they took into account what Avery and Ehrlich (2008) said on the subject in their Chapter 6.⁵⁶ Students provided an extra appendix (Appendix C) giving specific examples of their individual problems with the phonetic transcription (Miguel - 8 problems; Cristina - 11 problems). The following words and phrases show the vowels and consonants that students found difficult to transcribe

⁵⁶ The instructor gave a summary of this chapter to the students in all cohorts.

phonetically: 1) Miguel: **some, all, ah, ah, bed, for, old, maul, with**; 2) Cristina: Bart-Bart, swipe, Ramger, ho-didly-homey, gee, wonderful, so, 4:00 **a.m.**, Pebbles. She also had problems with the transcription of sounds in connected speech in phrases such as “I had a hat and a tie,” “Hey you should not have taken my banana Mr. Pebbles,” and “the old.”. The name “Pebbles” was misspelled, but Cristina heard “[ˈpiblels], whose first vowel actually corresponds to Homer’s pronunciation of the name *Peebles*. In the correction she wrote [ˈpɛbʰlz], which is a very good correction of the phonetic transcription except for the mid front vowel [ɛ]. And yet, since she spelled the word Pebbles, the transcription was correct.

Students found that the quality of the vowels changed according to where the stress was placed, and “that most of [the] vowels found in stressed syllables and content words were the back vowels script [ɑ] and the wedge [ʌ]⁵⁷. Students also said that they had problems recognizing these vowels in the transcription of the following words: “‘Bart-Bart,’ ‘smarter,’ ‘want,’ ‘promised,’ ‘wonderful,’ ‘suckers,’ ‘lots,’ and ‘stop.’” In order to recognize the vowels in polysyllabic words, students said that “the vowels in stressed syllables present a full form (louder and longer) as compared to the vowels in unstressed syllables with weak form symbolized by [ə] or [ɪ].” An example is given: “in the word ‘beautiful,’ the diphthong [ju] presented a strong form compared to the reduced forms of the vowels in the second and third syllables [ɪ], [ə]. The same occurs in the word banana, where the second syllable (which is stressed) presents a full vowel [næ] in comparison with the vowels in the first and third syllables that are clearly reduced [bə] and [nə].

⁵⁷ The wedge [ʌ] however is a mid-vowel, whereas the script vowel [ɑ] is classified as a back one.

One last feature in the perception of people's speech was how students dealt with interjections. Interjections allow the listener to interpret the emotions of the speakers. Listening to interjections such as "Aw!" and figuring out the correct spelling was problematic for the students. In the same way, several other exclamations uttered by Homer were difficult to write because students "didn't know if such sound expressions were treated as words." Students spelled these "sound expressions" in the transcript in this way: "Aahaaahh!," "Aw," "Oh." Other interjections made by the other characters were: "Uh, Uh" (Bart), "Wow!" (Marge), "Ah" (Marge). These interjections are represented in the transcript in Spanish and English spellings: Spanish spelling "Aahaaahh!" (students' transcript, lines 5 and 9) versus the words describing the speech sounds of the characters in the script provided by Netflix: "[Shouting, Groaning, Growling]" and Spanish "Oh 4:00" versus "Aw 4:00 a.m.?" (Netflix script). Students spelled two interjections in English: "Wow" (line 23) and "Uh, Uh" (line 8)—"Uh-Uh" is hyphenated in the Netflix script.

The visual part helped the students understand the storyline and provided a referent to the places and the sequence in the story. This information was not given entirely in the audio. In literary works, such as plays and novels, descriptions of sounds, moods, emotions, and places make up for the lack of visuals and sounds—rhetorical devices that play with time (Bakhtin, 1981). Scripts for animated series, films, or TV programs in general make reference to all this information in writing first. Then, this information becomes audiovisual for the viewers.

The visual part of the text. Students explained how understanding of meaning was possible through the visual text and not so much through direct speech. Cristina wrote that "she noticed she was mostly paying attention to the images more than to the spoken

dialogue... [S]he started comprehending the plot of the episode but by images.” She explains later that she had to close her eyes so she could pay attention to the sounds instead of the visual text. The students explained this observation by quoting: ““Retinal cones and rods both engage when we speak and listen; in many instances, the listener’s eye gathers more about the meaning of the speaker’s message than does his ear’ (Shlain, 1998, p. 40)” (as cited in student’s final paper, p. 23). Then students continue, “For that reason, since [Cristina] couldn’t understand what ... the speakers [were] saying, she tried to gather information from the images in order to figure out meaning.”

For the written and phonetic transcription of the verbatim text of *The Simpsons*, the hearing and visual perception were key skills to make sense out of the text, but not exclusively. All students made use of other strategies, as I mentioned previously in this chapter. They also used their personal intuition to find the missing words or phrases that they thought fit in the missing blanks: “For instance, the word *maul* was unknown for [Miguel], but he had the idea that a word related to an aggressive attack went there,” based on what he saw in the video. Then he looked up a word in Google that would fit that context.

The visual intertextual referents used in the video are the bear appearance that Bart, as Boo Boo, and Homer, as Yogi, have. The visual part connects to the tip-toing scene that I described earlier in the section of the audio, where the xylophone marks Yogi’s movement to steal a picnic basket. The conversation with Ranger Ned becomes clearer visually as well as the attack, which was unusual in the real cartoon *Yogi-the-Bear*. The bedroom scene allows the viewer to see the interaction between the four family members. The third and last part of the excerpt is visually introduced with the image of a billboard that reads: *Lake*

Springfield, 2 Miles. The viewer can see the long line of vehicles going to the lake and Larry, Homer's friend, overpassing him. The two crack noises I described before are matched to the image of Homer turning his head around 360°.

The intertextuality in the language. Students worked on the episode “*When You Dish Upon a Star*” (1998), whose title is an intertextual reference to the song of the Disney movie animation *Pinocchio*. This title suggests what happens in the episode of *The Simpsons* when Homer meets Alec Baldwin, Kim Basinger, Brian Grazer, and Ron Howard, thus fulfilling his dream of wishing upon a star and making dreams come true. At the same time, the title also makes reference to Homer's gossip (dish on/upon) about stars Baldwin and Basinger betraying their friendship. The catchy phrases and words in Yogi's style (*pic-nic* and “After all I am smarter than the average bear”) make part of the parody of the scene. This mixes with the mannerisms and catch phrases of the characters of *The Simpsons*: e.g., Ranger Ned and his word “diddly” inserted in the middle of other words, as in Ho-diddly-omy. The names of Magilla Gorilla and Mr. Peebles bring about issues of the animation of the 1960s. *Magilla Gorilla* portrays the culture of visiting zoos in the United States. The absurd issue of an ape (Magilla) outsmarting the staff at the zoo makes the cartoon funny to the viewers. Zoos and national parks, such as Yellowstone, have been part of the American culture for over a century, so the renamed *Jellistone Park* in *Yogi the Bear*, is an intertextual game with words, referents, meanings, and images.

Common and Personal Interpretations of the Foreign Language

Most of the students in the EPP course arrived at similar interpretations of what was needed to perceive (listen) and produce (speak) in the foreign language. Learning a foreign

language is a lifetime developmental process (*Batman*). This means, it takes a long time (*China's Yellow River*). I summarize seven of the most salient issues in students' interpretations of the English language below.

Issue 1: This learning requires a lot of exposure “to the language” because this is what “finally will help us to reach a good oral performance” (*Obama*). “[T]heory without a space to practice is almost as useless as practicing without knowing the theory related to this topic [phonetics and phonology]” (*Obama*). “This entails a lot of effort and compromise. After all, ‘the more you practice, the better you will become’ (Poms & Dale, 1985, p. 151),” (*Batman*). “Describing speech sounds is a gradual process that requires not only listening skills, but a solid theoretical support” (*Ben Stiller*).

Issue 2: The English language is a timed-stress language while the Spanish language is a syllable-timed language. Most of the students quoted this from Avery and Ehrlich (2008). This resonated with them, as well as the fact that adult learners of a foreign language may achieve good intelligibility with time, but not a native-language accent. Several cognitive and sociocultural factors intervene in this phenomenon, but the most cited one was the influence of the students' Spanish language to understand and reproduce the English-language phonology in listening and speaking skills, respectively. “[O]ur ability to perceive and produce sounds is strongly influenced by the sound system or our native language” (*Ben Stiller*).

The above does not mean that students cannot attempt to improve their pronunciation skills: “Nonetheless, we are capable of imitating their intonation and using the information about the phenomena that happen in word boundaries in order to practice and so, become understood” (*The Wedding Dress*). This project helped students to “improve

our oral production skills. We have not only corrected some mispronounced words, but we have also got use [*sic*] to the rhythm (stress patterns) and musicality (intonation patterns) of [the] English language” (*Letterman Show*). Identification of sounds was also a key issue in this learning (*Letterman Show*). “Even though we made some pronunciation errors when we read the written transcription aloud, we noticed that we had internalized many [*sic*] of the rhythm and musicality, as well as the information that we required during this course” (*Architecture*).

Issue 3: Identifying content words and function words helped students with the perception of reduced forms and almost imperceptible speech sounds in connected speech. “In fluent speech most of function words will tend to be in their weak forms and has [*sic*] a reduced stress” (*My Soul to Take*). Students also compared what they had read with what they had experienced: “We agree with [Avery and Ehrlich, 2008] when they state that the linking of some words can make them sound as a one [*sic*] single one because of the reduction of the [*sic*] function words” (*NPR News*). For other students: “In oral communication some of the most important features are linking words in connected speech, rhythm and pronunciation of vowels” (*That Girl*). This statement is perhaps one of the most streamlined views generated by the literature of the phonetics and phonology course, whose objective was to rationalize speech sounds of a target phonological system.

Issue 4: Language is a system. “Language is a complex code that includes symbols, segments, structures, abstractions, sounds and some other characteristics.... The mixture of... sounds and the symbols as representation of sounds was something that took a great place during this course” (*The Big Bang Theory*). Knowing all this has “a real importance in our process as English [language] learners, future teachers, translators, linguists,

phoneticians, and more importantly[,] English [language] users” (*The Big Bang Theory*).

“English has a lot of features that should be discovered through a very careful observation process. It is not only vocabulary or pronunciation what has to concern us. There are other subtle aspects that should be considered, such as suprasegmental features...” (*Animals not Clowns*).

Issue 5: The oral expression is mediated by the visual and audio symbols to convey meaning: “The visual and audio materials are also essential in this process. It [*sic*] has helped us to carry on this work” because this is part of communication and speech (*The Big Bang Theory*).

Issue 6: Converting an oral text into a written one was difficult, but this process was at the same time a mediator in the understanding of meaning. Punctuating the text and deciphering the sounds in connected speech demanded great effort. “The speaker divides clauses into tone groups in order to convey the [*sic*] ideas clearly, pausing at the end of each tone group representing that stop graphically with a period. This situation may create a conflict, given that the speaker is constructing the text prosodically, he may punctuate phonologically or grammatically” (Halliday, 1990)” (*Scottish TV interview*). For others, the process of punctuating the text was not that difficult:

We have to say that our text was not totally oral. The criterion of oral... according to Halliday [1990] is spontaneous speech and it is evident that the report *Argentine man makes house from plastic bottles* has a written support. We could notice that in the little effort required for separating the sentences and punctuating them in the transcription” (*Argentine’s House*).

Issue 7: The identification of the English-language vowels was the most difficult aspect in the perception of English-language speech. This was explained by the students by quoting the authors Avery and Ehrlich (2008): “The articulatory characteristics of English

vowels can depend on factors such as geographical region, social class, education background, age and gender (p. 64)” (as cited by students who transcribed the text of *Forrest Gump*). Also, English has more vowels than Spanish, and the most difficult ones to identify are the middle central vowels (e.g. **Gump**, **cut**, **slur**); the low back and mid vowels (e.g. **cot**, **caught**); the back front vowel in **boot**, and the more lower one in **book**; and the high front vowels in **eat** and **it**. Spelling was also a big issue to identify sounds, and the fact that English does not have a stable correspondence between the spelling of words and their pronunciation makes it even harder for the Spanish-language speaker; this works more systematically in Spanish (Ladefoged, 1975, 1993; Ladefoged & Johnson, 2011).

Issue 8: Finally, one group specified that phonetics and phonology was only one aspect of a language. Learning and understanding a foreign language involves communication and other phenomena that students should explore deeper:

How did we develop so many differences from one language to the other? This consideration cannot be taken lightly: the phonetic distance among languages is also representing the social and cultural distance among their different speakers. So, it doesn't suffice to learn their phonetics to reach intelligibility. But, when it comes to the progress in this course, insightful examination is required for there should be an arising need of comparing what we have fulfilled in oral communication and how it has affected our written production. And still, it seems that there's so much more to explore: we need to embrace a larger perspective of English as a foreign language. It's our duty to look deeper and trace back why we learn it and what makes [it] so interesting for us. (*Ben Stiller*)

At the end, “we realized that every person perceive[s] the world in different ways... it is not just English but also our own formation as human beings” (*NPR*).

Researcher's Last Words for Chapter 6

The tasks of understanding a verbatim sample in foreign language for the EPP course went beyond the common listening activities that usually take place in foreign

language courses or in regular face-to-face exchanges in our native language. The listening task in EPP to write a transcript cannot even compare to the listening we do when we watch TV for the sake of entertainment. Transcribing a text—whether for research data or for phonetic purposes—is a strenuous task in itself—even if people are transcribing in their native language. Writing a transcript can put complex strains on the transcribers. In research in the social sciences, for example, transcriptions involve a demanding process of listening and writing to give account of what speakers have said word for word so that the researcher can interpret the data (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). This takes good listening skill, writing dexterity, and training. Transcripts usually require the linguistic dexterity of a native transcriber who is familiar with: the dialect of the speakers and knowledge of the jargon the speakers use. Sometimes the transcribers need to know this specialized jargon.

In the students' words the process of writing a transcript and transcribing this same text phonetically was complex. Transcribing a natural text (authentic), doing a phonetic transcription, and describing language were cognitive activities that demanded a lot from intermediate foreign language students.

Phonetic and phonological analyses are the activities of phoneticians and phonologists. They are seldom the activity of foreign language teachers. The two fields work independently, as I explained in the literature review. The EPP course was a bridge to engage students in the tasks of transcription, language analysis, and reflection. Engaging the students in these tasks was necessary to allow them to experience EFL. This was an experience of construction and deconstruction. Construction of language, deconstruction of text, and analysis of utterances and speech sounds.

Students and instructor needed to learn the jargon of the field to analyze and describe the language of the verbatim samples (see Chapter 5). This implied learning the concepts of a specialized discipline to explain the phenomenon of speech in the final papers. The task of language description is different from the task of becoming a fluent speaker of the target language, and from that of a foreign language teacher. The tasks that students developed in EPP aimed at language awareness. That is, metacognition.

For the foreign language learners in the course of EPP, their final papers are the outcomes of a developmental process of perceptive awareness: 1) learning to deal with a language that they are in the process of acquiring; 2) facing the listening skill, which for some was beyond their listening capacity (these were not graded listening texts, as most of the foreign language textbooks and CDs offer to foreign language teachers and learners); 3) learning to make meaning out of what students heard, and then learning to transcribe it; 4) learning the process of punctuating an oral text; and, 5) understanding how the foreign language works in speech for their own personal purposes as target language users, language analysts and describers, and foreign language learners. All this was complex.

Meaning is encapsulated in the word (Vygotsky, 1986) and in the utterance (Bakhtin, 1986b). But even in silence there is also meaning (Bakhtin, 1981). The phenomenon of thought, language and meaning is a sociocultural construction. The students underwent a cognitive and sociocultural journey through their verbatim texts: perception of the audiovisual text (visual and auditory stimuli); inner rushing thoughts (motivations, likes, dislikes, judgement of speakers' accents, the themes of conversation, the images, and so on); deciphering the meaning of unknown words by using the language system and other strategies; reconstructing the text through meaning; and sharing these texts in collaboration.

People in the verbatim samples uttered words, remained silent, used gestures, and constructed a virtual reality. Students interpreted all this and more.

Two students described how the text they transcribed came from a written source (*Argentine's House*). The journalistic text has the characteristic of bringing the news already framed in a formal language. As such, the text might be easier to understand than the texts coming from informal language (the first genre). Vernacular language texts are usually charged with sociocultural meanings and colloquial expressions belonging to a specific community of speakers. When I referred to the novel in Bakhtin (1981) as the genre that encapsulates multiple literary genres, I did it thinking of the variety of genres that exist in the media and that offer audiences multiple ways to reinvent worlds—readers of novels reinvent worlds in their imagination prompted by descriptions and narrations. Novels are written texts, and TV programs and films come from written texts too (scripts). In this way, the readers and the viewers are exposed to stimuli created by writers. The novel is the literary genre that gives life to characters, places, and epochs, and people's psychological worlds (Bakhtin, 1981). Films and TV programs are not substitutes to novels, but similar to novels they have stories, narratives, descriptions, and characters. All this influences people's perceptions and imagination.

My main point here is how foreign language students invent the foreign world and language through exposure to the text: novels, films, TV programs, and more recently, the Internet. Foreign language students usually reinterpret the Other through the stimuli embedded in texts (visual, auditory, printed). These forms of texts are consumed by foreign language learners who interpret and reinvent the Other. The foreign language learner is usually receiving a writer's construction of partial and sometimes distorted reality, which

may resemble in some way, but is not definitely the reality of the speakers of a target language. Language as a local practice in foreign language absorbs the construction of the immediate surrounding environment. The EFL becomes a version of the surrounding community and language.

The news media text is a complexity in itself, for it represents reality. They portray the thoughts of the writers, who are their ideological crafters. Therefore, foreign language students live in a world of all sorts of texts that frame their sociocultural understanding of the target culture reality. These texts help students (and viewers in general) interpret the foreign reality, and since it is only a mediated reality, this reality may be distorted and or fragmented.

By studying foreign languages, the written text becomes the main mediator of meaning. It is through texts that we approach speech, listening, reading, and writing; it is by using the text that we expand knowledge of the world and understand or become biased. This latter may be the danger of mediated texts that recreate reality, but the listener needs to actively exert some sort of critical view and evaluate what he/she perceptually consumes.

The importance of transcribing a text in writing and phonetically from the media is a deconstruction and construction of meaning to achieve meaning. It starts with our perception of the spoken word, but it goes beyond the formal linguistic characteristics of the segments that combine to make words and entire texts. It goes into the sphere of our previous knowledge, how we contrast this knowledge and appropriate it, and how we reinterpret and create new knowledge.

Chapter 7 will present the results of the survey and the triangulation of the three sources of data. I will come back to the issues that I have presented in Chapter 6 in the conclusion, Chapter 8.

Chapter 7

The Online Survey and Triangulation of the Data

Chapter 7 presents the data from the online survey conducted through UNM Opinío in early 2014. This chapter is organized in three main sections. First, I describe how the survey was conducted and what information I wanted to elicit from the participants. After that I describe the population of students according to the participants' answers. In the third section, I address students' perceptions of English as a foreign language (EFL) in three subsections: 1) why students study English; 2) students' perceptions of EFL through the content-based course of EPP; and 3) the final paper in EPP as a mediator in students' perception of EFL. I end the chapter with the triangulation of the data in this study.

The EPP Course Post-Experience Online Survey

I conducted a post-experience online survey using UNM Opinío. This survey was advertised in the *Department of Modern Languages* at Universidad de Bogotá, Colombia, through several announcements. They were posted on bulletin boards and doors starting on January 16, 2014⁵⁸ and throughout the time the survey remained active for the respondents: from January 12 to February 23, 2014. It was also advertised through an electronic poster sent to the e-mails of 92 prospective participants and through the Facebook page of the library of the Department of Modern Languages. Four automatic reminders were programmed for responders who still had not completed the survey (e-mailed on January 19th and 26th and February 2nd and 10th).

⁵⁸ Personal e-mail from the Chair of the Department of Modern Languages at UDB responding to my request to place the announcements of the survey for this study: "Atendiendo a su gentil solicitud, el afiche estará disponible en las carteleras del Departamento de Lenguas Modernas a partir del 16 de enero de 2014." E-mail received on January 10, 2014.

The potential respondents were the 92 students who wrote the final papers for the course EFF that I taught between Fall 2010 and Spring 2012. These were mostly students enrolled in their third semester of undergraduate studies in *Modern Languages* at *Universidad de Bogotá* (UDB). They ranged between the ages of 18 and 33 when they took the EPP course, so this population was between 20 and 36 when they took the survey in 2014. This survey had the purpose of collecting post-experience information and opinions on foreign language learning and the course EPP (see Appendix B). The answers provided in part A of the survey also served to validate my general description of the participants in Chapter 3.

In the report provided by UNM Opinío, the number of invitees was 104 (some invitees had more than one e-mail). I expected a minimum of 22 respondents—this number surpassed the total number of students (20) I had at once in the most crowded class. According to the report information provided by *UNM Opinío* (Tuesday, October 7, 2014), 51 invitees responded (76.57%), but 12 missed clicking the finish button (23.53%). The total number of respondents who finished the survey was 39. This corresponds to a representation of 42.4% out of 100% (92 students who took the course). This number, however, varied according to the question. From Questions 14 to 35, the average number of respondents was 30. I took into account the adjusted relative frequency of their responses, which varied depending on the question.

Description of the survey. The survey was designed in three parts: A. General Questions; B. Use of the English Language in Your Spare Time; C. Questions about the Course English Phonetics and Phonology (EPP). The first part consisted of 14 (1-14) questions to elicit participants' information about their place of birth; towns/cities where

students had lived; schools; employment; native language; and how far they were in their undergraduate program. The second part asked students included five questions (15 to 19). The third part inquires about students' experience in the course *English Phonetics and Phonology* (20 to 35).

Description of the participants' background. Thirty participants were born in Bogotá, Colombia (77%) and nine (23%) in other cities and smaller towns in the country: Manizales (Colombia); Ibagué (Tolima); San Vicente de Chucurí (Santander); Sasaima (Cundinamarca); Sogamoso (Boyacá); Guadua (Cundinamarca); Guachucal (Nariño); Cúcuta (Norte de Santander); and Zipaquirá (Colombia). Eight students born in cities and towns out of Bogotá said they had been living in the capital of Colombia for a minimum of 2.5 years to a maximum of 9 years (average 5.4 years).

43.59% of the students reported they came from other undergraduate majors.⁵⁹ The majority of the participants attended private primary schools (61.54%). Attendance at private secondary schools was lower (48.72%), yet this percentage was higher than attending public secondary schools (41.03%).

Most of the students had been employed (92.11%) and a high percentage had been employed while enrolled at the university (82.05%). Nine students named their jobs: waiter, bartender, and three said they were English-language teachers. One student reported to have worked for the National Museum of Colombia; another worked as a Customer Service

⁵⁹ Two students were enrolled in arts (graphic design and fashion design); two in the social sciences (anthropology and psychology); two were in history; three were enrolled in applied sciences (one in civil engineering and two in computer science); two in the natural sciences (physics and chemistry); two in the health sciences (veterinary and physiotherapy); one in music; one in law; one in communication and journalism; one student was an accountant. Only one student was enrolled in education at another university: elementary school education with majors in the humanities and foreign languages.

Representative (CSR) in a Call Center; and two others had been office assistants. Two described that they had held various other jobs.

How students described their identity (Questions 8 and 30). A question in the survey asked students: *How would you describe your ethnic identity?* The answers were varied. Seven students did not provide this information and wrote: “I don’t know,” “none,” “N/A,” “No ethnic identity.” Three students identified themselves as whites. Three said they were “Latin,” “Latino,” “Latin American.” Four identified themselves as Colombians. Eight students said they were “mestizos,” “mixed race,” “heterogeneous one,” “the result of inbreeding of several races and cultures... member of a mixed and non-defined ethnic group.” One student identified himself/herself as a “Colombian young university student from Bogotá.” The one who answered “heterogeneous one,” also said, “I did not think too much about that,” but actually heterogeneity is defined by the student as “Latin American,” and he/she acknowledges this diversity. There was only one student who identified himself/herself as indigenous, and one that identified her gender by saying she was “a regular white Colombian woman.” The longest descriptions to this question are included in Table 12.

Table 12

*Nine Descriptions of Ethnic Identity*⁶⁰

Question 8: How would you describe your ethnic identity? (Total answers: 30)
"i'm catholic decendent from spanish conquers and native americans"
"It's difficult to describe it because although I was born in Colombia, and speak Spanish as mother tongue, I am more interested in foreign languages and cultures."
"I am the result of the interbreeding of several races and cultures. Therefore, I see myself as member of a mixed and non-defined ethnic group."
"My ethnic identity is mainly determined by many customs and traditions passed from my parents to me. I grow up in a lower-middle class family. My father comes from a family of cotton and tobacco farmers in Espinal, Tolima while my mother comes from a single-parent family of peasants in Mongua, Boyacá but due to La Violencia between 1948 and 1958, they lost their house and had to move to Sogamoso and opened a small grocery store. Both my father and mother had to move to Bogotá to study in public universities and that also brought some changes in their customs. For instance, both grow up in homes of deep-seated Catholic faith and so I did. But in Bogotá we knew other religions and we became evangelical Christians ten years ago."
"I would say I'm Colombian. It means a mixture of cultures; afro, indigenous, European, among others. Plus having studied at public institutions and worked at private ones, gives a different version of the world and the way I see it."
"I don't have a specific ethnic identity, back I do have a traditional background due to my experience living in a small town and the interaction I had with the countryside"
"I did not think too much about that, but I would describe my ethnic identity like in heterogeneous one (as Latin Americans we are quite diversos)."
"Colombian, mixed race (Because every Colombian is of mixed race, no matter how white or black they look)."
"soy mestizo , en mi sangre hay semillas de indígena muisca , negro africano y de ser hispánico"

According to the above answers, students think of identity in terms of inbred ethnicity, race, religion (Catholic/Evangelical Christian), nationality, age, occupation, and historical ancestry. In the longest description in Table 12 (fourth row), the respondent adds traditions and customs to the list. Some other traits that make up part of ethnic identity in this student's response are geographical areas where past generations have lived and parents' education and occupations. This identity is also marked by the historical violence Colombians have lived in the past 70 years prompting populations to migrate to other

⁶⁰ The text is quoted from the exact words students wrote in the survey. The various errors in form and spelling may be attributed to various factors: students' developmental interlanguage; informality of the type of writing; my introduction to the survey, where I explicitly emphasized content and not form for issues of practicality.

regions and foreign countries for several generations. National displacement and migration overseas make up part of the history of many Colombians.⁶¹

For three students the question about ethnic identity seems to puzzle them. One states, “I don't have a specific ethnic identity.” Then he/she explains that he/she had an identity from the region where he/she has had a *life experience*: the countryside. Perhaps this student is implying that because he/she did not grow up in Bogotá, he/she may consider himself/herself an outsider. Another respondent was unaware—“I did not think too much about that...”—and then adds “heterogeneous one” as if questioning with a raised pitch at the end (one?). Then he gives an identity based on the continental region: “as Latin Americans” and acknowledges the diverse, heterogeneous make-up of our Latino identity.

It is interesting to highlight that only one student (out of thirty) linked his/her identity to his/her Colombian nationality and the language, Spanish (Table 11, see second row). The respondent seems to find ambiguity in both being a Colombian Spanish-speaker and being “more interested in foreign languages and cultures.” This response serves to introduce students’ answers to Question 10, which asked for information about other foreign languages.

Foreign languages students are interested in learning, besides English. As native Spanish-speakers from Colombia, the respondents are interested in several modern languages and cultures (Question 10 = 37 answers). For example, the second most *spoken*—

⁶¹ According to the report for the Rockefeller Foundation-Aspen Institute Diaspora Program presented by the Migration Policy Institute (July, 2014), Colombian’s migration to other countries, including the United States, is evidence of persistent violence and economic pressures for the population of this country: “Persistent violence and instability in Colombia drove many people from the country. Over the past half century, Colombia has suffered sustained periods of armed conflict and economic instability, and has become a significant battleground in the international drug trade. According to the Colombia Department of Statistics’ most recent census, 1.3 million Colombians left the country between 1995 and 2005, and another half million were projected to emigrate by 2010” (p. 3).

studied, I would say—foreign language after English is French (7 students); the third is Italian (5 students); the fourth is Portuguese (3 students); the fifth is tied between German, Farsi or Persian, and Chinese (2 students each); and the sixth language is not just one, but three: Modern Greek, Turkish, and Japanese (1 student per language). One student said she/he studied Latin and Greek, which I assume are the classical languages that you learn because of philological connections to the roots of Spanish. Only seven students said they do not speak other languages, while 10 reported they speak only English after Spanish, their mother tongue. The students who study other languages know that this learning takes time and practice, and many students try to connect with conversation clubs, electronic media offering foreign language resources, foreign-language pen pals, and chatters. Films, TV, podcasts, and music are the major sources that contribute to their foreign language exposure. One student reported that it was difficult to find time to practice the foreign language out of class. Many participants showed interest for foreign languages different from English.

Students' Perception of EFL

By the time most students start the *Modern Language* undergraduate program at UDB, they have already been exposed to the English language in their elementary and secondary schools (as implied in students' answers to Question 11). Foreign language education was made compulsory starting at elementary school by the Ministry of Education in the early 1990s (Guerrero, 2008; Usma, 2009). Some of the students in this study had received private lessons or had used the English-language media to teach themselves (informal conversations I had with students, Spring 2011, Spring 2012). One of the students had even lived in the United States and earned a bachelor's degree, and a few others had

travelled abroad as tourists and/or to visit relatives. The majority of the students in the EPP courses had studied in private primary schools (61.54%), and a lower percentage of these students studied in private secondary schools (41.03%). Public schools were more attended in secondary education (48.72%) by the EPP students; 7.69% attended private schools and 2.56% attended other secondary schools not specified. It is important to remember that secondary public schools in Bogota have historically included foreign language courses in the curriculum for a longer time than the curriculum in public primary schools (this is before 1994). Consequently, the students that took the EPP course and who had come from the public system must have been exposed to more English teaching (good or bad). The English language subject in the curricula of private schools varies depending on the school, but it usually offers more hours of classes as compared to public schools (elementary and secondary). Parents are used to paying more money for a private (and bilingual) education where the English language is believed to be an investment in their children's future.⁶² In summary, and according to the participants' answers, many of the students enrolling in the EPP course had frequently been exposed to: 1) more English in their schools (good or bad) for the past 20 years); 1) English-language media; 2) local discourse praising and portraying the *good life* overseas;⁶³ 3) and people's stories of life abroad (friends, relatives,

⁶² Parents want to have their children instructed in English. Media advertisements promote the English language. Colombians now have more relatives living overseas. Colombia is one of the countries in Latin America with more diaspora in the United States and abroad. In the Colombian government's estimates for 1997 and 2001, "some 800,000 Colombians [had] left the county" (Reuters, May 3 2001). In another source, the Colombia Department of Statistics estimated that "1.3 million Colombians had left the country between 1995 and 2005, and [that] another half million were projected to emigrate by 2010" (Migration Policy Institute, July 2014).

⁶³ By the time I went back to Bogotá in August 2014, I was surprised to see European and South American tourists on campus and tourists in the streets. The population of displaced indigenous people (mothers with babies and children) asking for money on pedestrian bridges and on crowded streets seemed to have risen too.

neighbors).⁶⁴ This information can also be inferred from students' final papers and from their answers to Questions 11 and 13.⁶⁵

In the subsections that follow, I present students' perceptions of EFL organized in three major themes: 1) Why students study English; 2) Perceptions of EFL: A retrospective look at the content-based course of EPP; 3) The final paper in EPP as a mediator to perception.

Why students study English. I found it important to ask students for their reasons behind choosing undergraduate studies in English (Question 11 = 36 answers). I specifically posed this question to validate students' previous views, as expressed on the first day of class in all cohorts. By the time the survey was conducted, most of the participants were in more advanced semesters.⁶⁶ In the EPP course, the students' choice to study English was motivated by various reasons beyond teaching. Their answers to the question, "*Why did you choose to study English?*" showed several trends. Students decided to pursue a major in English because they were highly motivated. I classified these answers into three subcategories: *inner incentives*, *linguistic ability*, and *future interests*.

Students' inner incentives to study the language were explicitly expressed as follows: "I have always liked it," "I like it." Others gave more expressive reasons, such as:

⁶⁴ The Colombian diaspora in the United States (immigrants first and second generations) is approximately 1.1 million. According to the report of the Migration Policy Institute (July, 2014) "Colombia is the largest source of South American immigration to the United States and the 14th largest source of immigrants overall, accounting for 1.7 percent of the country's foreign-born population" (p. 1). A great majority (1/3) is concentrated in metropolitan areas such as Miami (The Economist, 2001). This diaspora in other American cities and around the world may be higher.

⁶⁵ Question 11: Why did you choose to study English? Question 13: How much time do you spend with English-language media during the course of an average week?

⁶⁶ Most of the students who answered the survey had completed seven semesters (14 students), six semesters (10 students), and eight semesters (seven students) in the *Modern Language* undergraduate program by February 2014. Three students had completed nine semesters; two had completed 15 and 12 semesters each. Finally, one student had completed five semesters. The one who mentioned he/she had completed one semester provided wrong information. Information based on Question 12 of the survey, 38 answers.

“I find it fascinating”; “I have had a huge interest in the language since I was 8 years old”; “It’s my passion.”⁶⁷ These inner incentives were usually accompanied by extra information about their linguistic motivations. Students stated, “I wanted to challenge myself and learn that language”; “I was good at English at school”; “it was easy”; “I have quite good skills at it.”⁶⁸ Others said they liked English because of its phonological and syntactic qualities: “I liked the way in which English sounded”; “I wanted ... to understand things written and spoken in this language”; and “I have always liked several features of this language: phonological system, straightforward and precise style of writing, and a more fixed syntax than that of Spanish.” Four students said it’s a matter of being “able to manage the language completely,” of being “good at it,” or of “becom[ing] a proficient and accurate user of the [E]nglish language.” For one student, the *Modern Language* major offered an opportunity to be very good at English: “I think I chose this major ... because I wanted to learn English perfectly and to improve my writing skills.”

Students’ motivations to learn English are also guided by *future interests* because English “is useful and versatile and required for worldwide communication as lingua franca.” In this same line of thought, English “is essential in most walks of life, so I thought it would be good to learn it first and before any other language (“ya que el inglés es indispensable en casi todos los aspectos de la vida, pensé que sería bueno aprenderlo antes que cualquier otra [lengua]”). These two reasons condense what many expressed directly and indirectly about the advantages that learning English may bring into students’ future lives. The English language is a mediator to have “access to unlimited information”; “global

⁶⁷ Twelve students expressed directly they *like* or *love* it, and nine implied it in more expressive tones.

⁶⁸ Six students said they were good at English, and two said it was easy.

technological knowledge”; “science books”; “business, politics, and many other things, just like Chinese is now getting to do.” In summary, “it is a great advantage for my future.” English is the path to multiple professional and academic opportunities, as one student implied when he/she wrote, “Professionalism.”

Three students connect English with making a life overseas. This includes studying abroad: “[English] gives opportunities to study outside.” For the other two students, English is a mediator “to go abroad and make a life overseas. Plus, I am really into travelling and tourism and English is a really good help to do so”; perhaps immigration: “[My] interest [in the language] grew when my aunt and her daughter moved to USA and a couple of cousins moved to Europe.”⁶⁹

The English language also opens the path to other cultures and communication. Four students expressed this, when they wrote, “I knew that through the language I would be able to communicate with people from other cultures”; “[English] helps people to be open minded, because you are learning about different cultures”; “[English] allows us to communicate with people from different cultures and learn different ways of living and thinking, thus enriching our own perspective of life”; and with this language “I would be able to communicate with people from other cultures.”

For four students English was a second priority. The first two referred to English as compulsory: “I had to” and “[I study English because] I had already learned [F]rench, so [E]nglish was kind of mandatory for me as a language teacher.” For the other two students, English was a decision to secure a place at UDB because of only one entrance exam. They

⁶⁹ An estimate of approximately 8% of the Colombian population lives abroad (Aysa-Lastra, 2007). Emigration to the United States has been higher since the 1980s with an estimate of 1.1 million Colombians living in the United States (Aysa-Lastra, 2007).

both said they were good at English in high school and added: 1) “[T]he different programs related with arts required a second exam (I was afraid of that exam, so I finally chose English)”; and 2) “Also, as I could not take the degree I’d planned on majoring in (music), I thought it was a good idea to study a degree which complemented my career goals.”

Two students explicitly expressed that they chose to study English with the intention of teaching—out of 38 answers (Question 11: Why did you choose to study English). This is what one of them wrote:

After I graduated in Accounting and began my career as financial assistant, I realized for different circumstances that that was not what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. So, I decided to return to the University and study English teaching attempting to create something different from my previous undergraduate studies.

Teaching English is an opportunity to change a career course and reinvent your professional life. The second student expressed: “I like studying linguistics and English as a foreign language to teach it to young adults and teenagers.” Notice that this student does not mention teaching children.

The low number of students who want to be teachers is not surprising; in the EPP courses students’ answers also showed this trend. In one of the students’ answers to Question 28 (the motivating factor to study EPP), one student expresses that the teaching profession is not very highly regarded:

I remember we had to be very punctual and once we had to get very well dressed for the presentation of our project. Believe it or not, that little detail made me feel part of a profession, because in a context where the role of English teachers has been so undermined, it is very rare to find teachers that make students feel proud of what they do. This is an impression professor Lombana left on me.

Students' answers indicate that their interests about learning English are motivated by their personal love for the language and by external factors. The external factor is an ideology telling them that English is what professional people need to be successful. The purpose of the Modern Language program, which is language teaching, may not be attractive to students, but this may be overgeneralized, as the question did not ask students for their teaching incentives. The new undergraduate curriculum in the Department of Modern Languages and the list of academic events announced on the Internet emphasize the importance of *research* and *pedagogy* in the undergraduate program.⁷⁰ A master's degree proposal about foreign language pedagogy has been long and strongly supported by some faculty members (personal e-mails received from the server list of the *Department of Modern Languages*, November 19, 2014 and December 3, 2014).

Perceptions of EFL: A retrospective look at the content-based course of EPP.

The English language per-se seems to be a high motivator in its own right. In my perception some of the courses in the curriculum of the *Modern Language Program* were not that inspiring. I thought EPP was one of them, especially because of my negative experience in a phonetics and phonology course in a linguistics master's program that I pursued many years ago. Thus, I asked the post-experience question: "Was the grade in this course the only motivating factor for you to do the assignments in EPP? If there were other motivating factors, could you please name them?" For 30% of the students (Question 28 = 30 responses), the motivating factor to do the assignments was a practical behaviorist one: the

⁷⁰ One of the missions of the *Resource Center* of the Department of Modern Languages is "To give support to the Department of Modern Languages in its three mission tasks: Teaching, Extension, and Research. (Brochure of the *Resource Center* of the Department of Modern Languages, 2010). The brochure also includes the university motto: "science and technology for the country" on its back page ("ciencia y tecnología para el país").

final grade and students' grade point average. For the other 70%, motivation came from the language learning process itself and their love for the English language.⁷¹ One student said: "I liked what I was learning as I found it useful and I really liked the fact that I could choose the piece [verbatim sample] we had to work on. Also, I really enjoyed working with my partner."

To find out students' perceptions of EFL in the EPP course, I took into account the questions students answered in the third part of the survey, and which corresponded to Questions 20 to 35. The most recurrent comment about what was useful in the EPP course (Question 21 = 31 responses) was related to learning pronunciation (13 students)—also referred to as "oral production," or "oral skills." Nine of the students' comments mentioned how the combination of theory and practice in the analysis of one "real conversational situation in English" helped them see the language differently: "This course showed me how language can be studied scientifically. The step-by-step method gave us the chance to observed [*sic*] phonetic phenomena in detail. I must say I learnt by heart how the English phonetics and phonology works." This, however, was hard, and one of the salient issues was that the theory applied to the final project was "a challenge." Another student compared the two languages:

Even though I already knew that English had different phonetics to those of Spanish, this course helped me to really comprehend what this meant, and what I had to do in order to have a more natural and understandable pronunciation when speaking English.

Six students referred to their awareness of developing skills to identify speech sounds. Two students wrote that the course had given them information that allowed them "To recognize

⁷¹ Question 28 of the survey (responses: 30): Was the grade in this course the only motivating factor for you to do the assignments in EPP?

speech patterns in native speakers” or to learn the “[d]ifferences between isolated words and connected speech; and between function and content words.”

Four comments addressed the tools that helped in this process: 1) phonetic transcriptions (“transcripciones fonéticas”); 2) individual and group exercises (“la cantidad de ejercicios de practica individual y en grupo sobre los diferentes sonidos tanto vocalicos como consonanticos del ingles”⁷²; 3) learning to use the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA): “Another useful tool was the IPA because it helped me to understand the English language, even in the [additional] languages that I am learning); 4) “readings,” “presentations,” “recordings”; 5) “[t]he material and knowledge given to us by professor Claudia.” One student combined all the above by saying:

I raised awareness about the differences in the phonological and phonetic aspects between my mother tongue and English. I realized how difficult it was to really speak proper English, because before taking the course, I had a very narrow perception of English. I did not differentiate the pronunciation of words like /shit//sheet/or /hot/ /hut/, neither I know [sic]there was stress at the level of complete sentences. I learnt that speaking in English was like getting used to another world, and that it was not only about producing correct sounds, but about learning intonation, the stress of words, sentences. I also left some prejudices like thinking that British English was better than other English accents. I realized English is a language spoken by lots of people, and that even in England there are many accents, even in London. In these circumstances, when someone would say that they like speaking British English, one would have to ask “All right, but English from South London, Yorkshire, Bath?”

Two last comments referred to students’ language learning awareness: “It allowed me to perceive the English language from a different view. During the course I learnt the importance of intelligibility, and the accents.” The second student’s opinion summarizes most of what has been expressed before:

⁷² No Spanish orthographic accents marked in the original text.

First, [the course] helped me to be more aware of my pronunciation issues. I felt more motivated to improve the way I was expressing my ideas, to think more in English and to use more of its expressions. Also, the course was of a great help to become more confident during my presentations and handle in a better way my intonation while reading and speaking in front of an audience. Besides, I learnt how to use the IPA when I had doubts about a word's pronunciation or its accent.

As a mediator between the foreign language and students' perception of the language, the EPP course allowed students to perceive the English language as a system of "patterns" and to "understand those patterns in a more tangible way." In the words of one student:

It was the first course in which we became aware of our issues and how much we needed to improve them (pronunciation, writing, intonation, etc.) This course was the first big challenge we faced in the undergraduate [program] and it was like the call to stop just learning words or phrases and to be more alert to all the skills that were going to be required to learn if we wanted to continue with our learning English plans. After the course, I was able to understand my readings in English and the videos and TV shows I used to watch in an easier way. It was of big help to improve my English skills.

Students also understood that as the goal of studying English phonetics and phonology is not to become English-native speakers—it is impossible—they became aware of "how much they need to improve pronunciation, writing, intonation, etc." To some students, making efforts and being more careful with aspects of pronunciation would help them improve with time.

Similar ideas can be found in the conclusions two students wrote for their final paper (Spring 2012):

During the realization of this project we could improve some aspects of our English-[language] skill, such as: Reading, writing and speaking skills. We also improved in terms of the pronunciation of segments and prosody. We could realize some of our personal mistakes and we even got some tools to correct them and improve our skills (e.g. listening to the radio and talking with native speakers, recording ourselves to check our pronunciation and intonation, and reading aloud in order to improve this skill which we have not practiced in English. (*Architecture*)

For two other students, one general reflection about the process of making the EPP project was:

We usually considered the production and the reception of a language in a separated way; we also differentiate spoken from written language in courses of foreign languages for methodological reasons. But the way to acquire a second language at a high level is to work on the four language skills simultaneously. In our particular case, we lost a lot of fragments in our first attempts of transcription because we did not know some words. Besides, we had wrong impressions about how some common words sounded; some spellings misguided us. (*Argentine's House*)

What students expressed in their answers can be contrasted with the eight objectives that I wrote in the syllabus for the course of English Phonetics and Phonology and which I summarize here: 1) to get familiar with the concepts of the field of phonetics and phonology; 2) to develop a sensitivity to the complex speech sounds of the English language, including strings of words in connected speech; 3) to understand that there are distinct accents in English, the same as in Spanish; 4) to transcribe texts phonetically; 5) to put theory into practice in and out of class; 6) to pronounce and read texts aloud; and 7) to analyze a short excerpt using basic concepts from phonetics and phonology. One student expressed the following:

[The course of EPP] allowed me to perceive English language differently by progressively studying its differences regarding my own language. Through that course, I realized that the English inventory of sounds is different from the Spanish one and therefore, there are sounds difficult to articulate for Spanish speakers and also to listen to. Additionally I stopped struggling with my accent because I realized that it is a mark of identity as Colombian Spanish speaker and I focused on intelligibility and successful communication.

In the above comment, the student brings an aspect of identity that was not mentioned before: the Colombian English-language accent. Getting to know that English foreign

language speakers—including most Colombian English-language teachers—have an accent must have brought relief to some students.

Through the *Four Step Project* students also learned to critically view what they were learning in their other English-language courses and give an opinion. This is what one student expressed in the survey:

Normally, in our courses in university, we approach English language from the grammatical point of view[.] [I]n this class, we had the opportunity to approach it from the pragmatic point of view, from the use of it not by second language speakers but from native speakers.⁷³ Having said that, I think it is fundamental to highlight ... [what] real speech is like from different contexts.

Students seemed to learn that out of what they typically do in their English-language courses, the English language is “multi-faceted. Not only do we have to be aware of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation but we also have to take into account the extralinguistic factors that affect it and determine [how] we use English.” English is “a complex system that goes from phonemes and their allophones to complete thought that include suprasegmental patterns and even personal registers.” This makes it a “structured complex Language.” Students learned to read words: “My English got better after the course, I knew how to read words I had never seen before, words I had not check[ed] the phonetic transcription in a dictionary.” In general terms and “As a whole, [we learned] not just theory but practice too.”

Students expressed that the course helped them to improve their perception of the language by identifying sounds, intonations, and accents (Question 24 = 28 answers). Knowing content and function words allowed them to discriminate between stressed,

⁷³ This student may be referring to the fact that they were more accustomed to dealing with graded listening tasks for foreign language learners and not with real samples of ungraded speech.

unstressed, and reduced sounds. As a learning process, this continues developing. Most students agreed that they still seek opportunities to listen to the language through electronic media, TV, music, and so on (Question 16 = 38 answers). This is a process that demands continuous work, but will never be perfect. Table 13 shows six of the responses students gave to question 24 about their auditory perception.

Table 13

Students' Auditory Perception (Question 24 = 28 answers)

Question 24: Has your auditory perception of the English language improved after this course? Please explain why or why not.

“Once you have studied this (*sic*) features of any language, you are able to recognize them by ear. It means, for instance, you becoming able to identify differences (*sic*) in intonations which are presented in different accents.”

“Of course it has. As we learned to reflect in an ongoing basis, we have been able to go through more difficult material and become aware of many other subtleties of the language.”

“Unfortunately, I didn't have a good English level at that time as my classmates had, so I had to focus more on oral production than auditory skills, as i thought it had to come first. But, indeed i think i improved my listening skills as well.”

“Yes, it improved a lot since I pay more attention, and can difference (*sic*) words that are pronounced with similar phonemes but have different meanings.”

“It has improved, because I can understand better what the rest of people are saying. However, there are still some difficulties that I am improving.”

“Yes, my auditory perception has improved because what used to be imperceptible for me as linking, assimilations, or deletions of some sounds, now I can perceive them and I know that they are there but blended. Additionally I realize more fully than I did at the outset that intonation and rhythm play a crucial role in connected speech to convey meaning and I keep working on that.”

Except for one student who said he did not benefit from the EPP course because of his/her low level of English language (Table 12, third row), the rest of the 27 respondents acknowledged that they had learned to discriminate sounds and intonations of the English language that they could not recognize before.⁷⁴ This allowed them to identify “imperceptible” phenomena such as “linking, assimilations, or deletions of some sounds”

⁷⁴ Even the student that responded that he had not benefitted from the course admitted he had improved somehow. As an instructor dealing with foreign language students for many years, I have usually noticed their improvement several semesters or years after they first took a class with me, even the ones that seemed to lag behind the most advanced peers.

and the recognition of segments and suprasegmentals (prosody). Most of the students acknowledged that their auditory perception was better, and that the listening skill was still a work in progress.

The EPP and the final project as a mediator in students' perception of EFL.

Students gave varied opinions about the final paper that they wrote for the EPP course (Question 20 = 31 responses). Based on their descriptions, the final paper was demanding (23 students), helpful (3 students), and stressing (1 student).⁷⁵ One student referred to this paper as “not so hard, but time consuming.” Another student said that this was an “incredibly productive experience.” Others said, “It was freaking amazing”; “I loved it”; “The first long paper I had to write in English”; “It was really awesome! I enjoyed doing every single part of it”; “It was useful”; “It was very hard to write in a formal way”; “The experience was really rewarding”; “...enriching experience for me.”

Four students wrote that considering their English-language level, the tasks to write this paper were very demanding: “It was quite demanding for our level.” The paper “involved putting different findings from previous steps all together in a coherent and cohesive text what is not so easy for third semester students.” A third student said,

I think it was quite challenging given that we did not have any prior experience in writing in a foreign language. In addition, our English level ranged from elementary to low intermediate so writing an academic paper was a daunting task.

The fourth student expressed:

I remember that I made many mistakes as I was not familiar with English syntax nor [*sic*] vocabulary. The teacher had to remind me of the way I should organize the words in a sentence (SVO) because there was too much interference from Spanish in

⁷⁵ In *demanding* I include adjectives such as *challenging*, *difficult*, *daunting*, *hard* and the nouns *challenge* and the plural noun *difficulties* (23 students). In *helpful* I included *productive*.

my writing. Despite the difficulties I faced I learned a lot, and the fact that the writing was a stepped process made it easier for us to put our final paper together.

Students' comments about their low level of English (see Table 12, third row and the above citations) for the tasks required by the course allowed me to see how difficult this was for several students. My colleague Nancy commented on this too: "The way it stands, such a high quality course could be much more valued and appreciated at a greater degree of communicative competence."

The final paper seemed to have allowed students to be aware of the language, even though not all the students had a high communicative competence. Learning "writing skills" was one outcome, said one student. For another, "discipline and constancy are essential for a learning process." A third student expressed he/she learned "to reflect on my own learning process." Others answered that the project helped them to work collaboratively in a group, assist each other in linguistic and technical issues, and to provide support and feedback. Table 14 presents seven students' opinions about this paper, showing several of the issues I have already mentioned.

According to the information in Table 14, students referred to the final project as the process that was conducive to writing the final paper. As a process, there was guidance, research, discussion, feedback, analysis, group work, and practice. This was the first formal long demanding paper students had to write in English in the *Modern Language* program: "Even though we were given the option to write it in our mother tongue [Spanish], my group and I took the challenge of writing it in English." As such, it was demanding, challenging, but rewarding. The project along with its final product, the paper, was an academic task that helped students modify the way they perceived the English language. For

the ones who worked in groups, this was an opportunity to share, discuss, give feedback to one another, and perceive what they were doing right or wrong.

Table 14

Students' Perceptions. The Final Paper and Students' English-Language Skills

Question 20: What do you think about the experience of writing the final project for the course EPP? (Total answers 31)

“In some way, this project prepares students to their future papers. The most important parts are: (A) the guidance and the feedback of the teacher during the process; and also (B) the challenge for students to produce research from the experience of discussing topics.”

“That was freaking amazing, as it was the first formal, long and demanding paper I wrote in my academic program. It required a lot of analysis, work-group and language learning. I felt the methodology of Professor Lombana -like developing the project by stages- was quite helpful to achieve the final goal. I am very proud of my teacher and I feel I learnt a lot from the academic, professional and personal perspectives.”

“The final project for the EPP course was the first long paper I had to write in English and, as such, it was very demanding. Even though we were given the option to write it in our mother tongue, my group and I took the challenge of writing it in English. I think our group worked very well because each one of us had a similar level of English -upper intermediate, I would say- and we found a way to collaborate to the same extent in the final result. Our strategy was made up of the following steps: First, we read the guidelines for the project and discussed about the content that should be included in every section; second, we assigned to each member of the group the writing of certain sections, who had to take into account what we had discussed as a group in the first; third, each one of us read what the other members had written and made observations (corrections of grammatical mistakes, comments on our perception of the meaningfulness of what was written, if we agreed or not with what our partners had written, information that we thought should be added to that section, etc.); and fourth, we revised our partners observations about our writings and modified them bearing these observations in mind. These two last steps were repeated as many times as the whole group considered necessary to achieve a good result. Doing this allowed us to be more aware of our own mistakes, made us make a bigger effort when writing for we knew we were going to be examined by more than just one person, and helped us learn from our partners.”

“The experience was really rewarding. The knowledge that I obtained from it was incredibly extensive. I did not only learn the way to write academically, I also learnt to be concise and to use everything I have learnt in advance in the actual project. In addition, this final project modified the way I perceived English language; to speak in English accurately does not come even close to recognizing original speech patterns from native speakers.”

“Fue muy difícil, pero interesante. Inicialmente no tenía idea de que estaba haciendo, pero después, con los comentarios que la profesora Claudia nos escribía en los trabajos, todo fue volviéndose más claro”

(This was very difficult, but interesting. In the beginning I had no idea of what I was doing, but later on—and with the comments written by Professor Claudia in our papers, everything turned out to be clearer)

“That is the experience that helped me raise awareness of the complexity of the English language and all that entails its study. The paper we wrote was very enriching as it allowed me to reflect upon my own language knowledge and identify my weaknesses to work on them.”

“It was a really demanding academic task; it made us to face language as a set and a streaming of sounds and articulation gestures. It was up to us to raise hypothesis and conclusions from our own observation experience as related to theory. Now, the best was not the course but the teacher!”

This process was painful, caused anxiety and even tears.⁷⁶ One student honestly recognized: “I was nervous all the time, teacher’s gaze made me feel really afraid. I even felt like fainting when she asked me something.”⁷⁷ Among the most difficult issues students experienced in the EPP course, I identified five: 1) students’ skills in the English language; 2) concepts of phonetics and phonology and their application in the identification of speech sounds; 3) pronunciation and public speech; 4) dealing with a research type of exercise in an academic paper; and 5) complying with the project and the final paper deadlines.

In the first issue, students were afraid they did not have enough English skills to deal with the project (*The Four Steps*) and the final paper. Table 15 presents how some students assessed their English language skills.

Table 15

Five Examples of Students' Assessment of Their Foreign Language Skills in EPP

Question 29: What was the most difficult issue you had to deal with in this course? (Total answers 29)

“The challenge for me was that I was not used to write in such a way. Basically, because you are starting to take a theoretical framework to work.”

“In the beginning I was afraid because I thought my English was the worst. I felt frustrated because I felt I was not speaking a beautiful English. The project was also very demanding, and I was not used to that, so we had to make a great effort to achieve the best results.”

“My listening skills held me back from decodifying the message of the video I chose.”

“my low level of English in all senses”

“Interference from Spanish as well as the difficulty to read material in English fluently.”

Problematic issues directly related to phonetics and phonology—and consequently the English language—were: English language diphthongs; IPA transcriptions; “connected speech and getting to understand the theory”; “pronunciation and connected speech”;

⁷⁶ One student approached me once showing her distress. I only said that this was a hard training and that my intention as an instructor was far from having students fail. On the opposite, I suggested that after this exercise, students would feel and perceive that they had changed somehow (Spring 2012).

⁷⁷ Question 29 of the survey.

“Rhythm and intonation. This is a very difficult aspect of languages.” In some way, some students must have had a difficulty understanding the concept of intonation. It seems that this was similar to what Vygotsky (1986) said about pre-concepts and concepts. Children get an idea of what a word means, but they will need time to get a full understanding of what the word means in the adult world. It takes a developmental process to arrive at the understanding of concepts. We can only have a complete understanding of meaning of some abstract concepts after some time has passed: “To be honest, intonation was something I understood in theory but it was long afterward that I could put it in practice.” Another student also mentioned that “the management of concepts” was the problematic issue.

The recognition of the vowels in English was problematic for most students. One student said it was difficult to “identify the differences between the vocalic sounds.” Still another referred to the production of vowels as the main problem: “The pronunciation of vowel[s] has been always difficult to me. In this course I struggled to improve and it is still an aspect to pay attention to every day.” Students’ struggle with the English-language vowels was one of the most common findings reported in their final papers (perception and production) followed by intonation (perception and production).

Speaking in front of an audience was daunting for some: “The presentations. I never got to present according to what we planned with my team. I spoke more or took his topics. The professor also pointed [out that] I only looked at her while speaking, having no visual contact with my classmates.” Two other students said that the most difficult issue was public speaking (“Hablar en público”) and “my pronunciation.”

In terms of the project (*The Four Steps*) and the final paper, students found these challenges: “writing using formal language”; “the use of academic language”; “the written

production”; “to get a proper academic paper in terms of both form and content”; “The parts of the project and the fact that we had to work on real data”; taking “a theoretical framework”; “the written transcription of the verbatim sample”; “the phonetic transcription was also difficult.” In addition to the challenging English skills, “The project was also very demanding, and I was not used to that, so we had to make a great effort to achieve the best results.” In general, “Analyzing real speeches was a hard-working task and it consumed a lot of time to finish it.”

Students struggled with deadlines, and so did the instructor who had to provide prompt feedback before students could start the next step in the process of phonetic analysis. This was part of the dynamics of the final project of the course.

In summary, students and instructor were able to recognize that pronouncing the foreign language was not easy. In the words of one student: “[T]he most difficult and most important [issue] as well, was being able to recognize my own mistakes in pronunciation.”

The English-Spanish connection. Students with lower English skills in the third semester might have experienced what is known in bilingual education as a *submersion*,⁷⁸ but the real objective behind the whole task was not to have the students fail the course, according to the instructor. The main purpose was to allow students to become strategic, accomplish tasks the best they could, and learn to learn language. As the instructor I wrote, “English or Spanish is allowed.” In the answers to the survey, the respondents were allowed to use either language as well. Most respondents chose English (only one answered the survey in Spanish). This sort of dual language approach, which has been used in bilingual

⁷⁸ In submersion bilingualism, students rarely receive any extra help to understand the subject matter of a course. In the EPP course, students who had lower levels of English received personal tutoring, extra help with instructions and tasks, and flexibility in the use of either language was provided.

schools in Canada and Florida (Ovando, Combs, & Collier, 2006), was modified for the EPP course to help students understand the concepts and the jargon of the content-based course and to develop new skills and forms of expression in the new language.

One salient issue for me as an instructor was to lay the foundations in the writing process for the final paper. I did this believing that most of my students had not received much formal education in Spanish-language composition or in English. I wanted to know students' opinions about this issue by asking about their formal instruction in academic Spanish (Question 34 = 27 responses). Thirteen said they had not received any (“ninguna,” “none,” “nothing,” “no”). “I have not received any formal instruction in Spanish academic writing.” Nine students gave information about courses taken at the university: “Español Funcional” (Functional Spanish); “Español Escrito” (Written Spanish); and an “introductory course of literature”; “in the literature and morphosyntax courses”; “I took two courses at the university: redacción de ensayos [essay writing] and textos argumentativos [argumentative texts]”; “I was only taught how to write an essay about literary pieces in the introductory course of literature”; “redacción y texto lingüística”; “I took two courses at the university redacción de ensayos [essay writing] and textos argumentativos [argumentative texts]”; “My courses on General Linguistics (lingüística general) and Spanish Morphology and Syntaxis I and II... gave me the necessary theoretical input to write properly in Spanish.” These courses are usually offered by the Department of Linguistics, and the Department of Literature.

One student referred to her experience in “a former undergraduate program” in anthropology at another university:

I took a course named “Propedeutica de textos” and the main purpose of the course was to learn to write reviews and critical reviews in Spanish. I miss that course a lot, because I think we have to learn to read and to write in Spanish too. Writing requires training, and reading implies to be able to give account of a text, and I have seen many weaknesses in this aspect in me and also in some of my classmates. I have not received any formal instruction in this program and I think it is a great failure.

The student who wrote that the courses in linguistics gave him/her the academic foundations in Spanish also added: “I have noticed that my writing style in Spanish is, at times, a calque [imitation from] English. I.e. I try to write short sentences with full meaning.”

Finally, four students said that they were taught how to write in Spanish, but it is hard to identify if this was in secondary school or at the university. Three students said they learned how to write essays, narrations, reports, summaries, articles, and descriptions. One student said he/she learned how to “use... punctuation marks, connectors, etc.” and knew “the way an idea should be developed, and how to give an introduction and a proper conclusion” to a paper.

Two students that said they had not received formal instruction in academic writing in Spanish elaborated more on their observations and intuitions in a very straightforward way. The first one wrote:

I have received little instruction in academic writing in Spanish, but I realized that there are different points of view about academic writing in the different majors, for example in my case I was able to see it between the English modern language major, and the civil engineering major, as sometimes the professors give different instructions to write a paper.

The second student linked his/her difficulties in the native language to lack of formal instruction in academic writing in Spanish:

I think that is why I have difficulties when [...] writing in Spanish. Anyway, I think that this difficulty is “absurd” because it is to use something in my own language, I should know how to write “properly” a formal writing in Spanish.

These answers can be contrasted with former comments students made about writing their projects in English. As students advance in the foreign language program in the Modern Language Department, it can be inferred that there is less contact with the native language, Spanish in formal writing. The academic writing component might be provided in the courses that students take out of the department and for which they need 30 approved credits. Faculty members from other disciplines may deal with their students' writing in their respective specialized fields, but it appears there is not much research about this in the Department of Modern Languages.

Differences between writing and speech. The EPP project and its final product—the final papers—allowed students to perceive the differences between writing and speech (written language and oral language) (Question 33 = 22 answers). All students said that writing and speech were different in several ways, with six students specifically identifying this variance in terms of formal or informal language. Written language is much more formal than oral language for these six students. They expressed that: “El lenguaje escrito es mucho más formal y complicado que el oral” (Written language is more formal and complicated than oral language); “[S]peech allows the speaker to use certain structures and words that in written language would be perceived as informal”; “[The writing experience in EPP] helped me to differentiate the formality context and the vernacular or informal one. The spoken English is completely different to the written one; the latter tends to be formal”; “[I]t is hard to write in a formal language, it is easier to use oral language as it is less fixed than the written one”; “I realized I wouldn't use contractions in formal writing”; “In written English, the formality is higher than in oral English. However, writing is full of idioms and slang which is normal in both oral and writing.”

In the words of three students, this difference was seen in terms of time: “The difference that I can notice, is that whereas in speaking, you issue your ideas immediately (*sic*), in writing, you can check your ideas with more time”; “feedback and time” made the difference between speech and writing for the second student; and “the timing and the teacher’s advice were important to differentiate the two ways of communication” for the third student. This implies that speech is *evanescent* (Cameron, 2007), whereas writing can give you more time to think about what you will say.

Eight students also expressed differences between *speech sounds and spelling* and *what writing implies*—ideas, style (cohesion and coherence), context, and mechanics (form). Table 16 presents these opinions, including two about formal and informal writing.

Table 16

Differences and Similarities between Writing and Speech

Three Aspects Compared	Students' Opinions
<i>Differences between Speech Sounds and Spelling</i>	<p>“The difference that I can notice is that whereas in speaking you issue your ideas immediately, in writing you can check your ideas with more time.”⁷⁹</p> <p>“Not all the words sound like they are written and vice versa. I am more aware about how a little change in the pronuntiation (<i>sic</i>) of a word can change the sense of it or a sentence.”</p>
<i>Informal and Formal Writing</i>	<p>“I realized I couldn't use contractions in formal writing.”</p> <p>“It helped me notice how speech allows the speaker to use certain structures and words that in written language would be perceived as informal.”</p>
<i>What Writing Implies</i>	<p>“I learnt the difference between an oral and written speech. The differences regarding cohesion and coherence, the evolution of ideas, the way to transmit the message and even the kind of language you use depending also on the context.”</p> <p>“I realized writing was much more demanding. To write a text implies not only to have a quite good command of the language, but to really say something that is worth reading.”</p> <p>“I learnt written and oral language are quite different and, even more if the first one is for academic purposes. I learnt how to use the impersonal voice, how to be precise and concise.”</p>
<i>Speech, Writing, Meaning</i>	<p>“It helped me to see, how the punctuation works in a written text as the pauses in a speech. It also helped me to see the importance of the intonation in a speech, the differences in pronunciation of the words depending on the words after and before, the phonems (<i>sic</i>) used in the different cases and how all of these interacting together can change the meaning of what has been said.”</p>

For the student who said that he/she had learned “how to be precise and concise” (sixth row above), the difference between Spanish and English did not go unnoticed: “...and I learnt that in English it is not possible to go around the bush as it is done in Spanish.” Another student also contrasted the two languages: “Once you realize that English does not try to explain concepts in a (*sic*) extended way as Spanish, your writting (*sic*) skills also are enhanced.” This student also mentioned the fact that your “[written] discourse is influenced by the way in which you speak.” Jakobson and Halle (1980) affirmed that only after the word is mastered, people are able to read and write (p. 35).⁸⁰ For foreign language

⁷⁹ I modified the original punctuation in this text for issues of flow in the meaning of this student's ideas.
⁸⁰ “Sólo después de dominar la palabra se es capaz de leer y escribir” (Jakobson & Halle, 1980).

students, who already have a language, reading and writing are the tools to learn and remember the target language speech.

Undergraduate students learning English already speak and write in their native language, so they bring these perceptions and representations to the new language. Speech in all natural languages is a universal phenomenon, whereas phonetic or phonemic writing are an occasional code (Jakobson & Halle, 1980).

With respect to the process developed in the EPP final project, this seemed to have helped students perceive the differences between speech and writing. Student presentations of this project, orally and in a final paper, allowed them to experience these language skills. These two processes complemented one another. Writing had the purpose of reaching a target readership, and the oral presentation also had an audience in mind. Thus, the discourse of the analysis of a verbatim sample was presented in speech and in writing. Table 17 shows how students perceived this process.

Table 17

Writing Perception through the EPP Project

“Las diferencias o similitudes se vieron a la hora de presentar el mismo trabajo (proyecto final) tanto escrito como oral. Por medio de uno se verificaba el otro, se complementaban y permitían una mayor comprensión.” (The differences and similitudes stood out at the moment we presented the work itself (final project) both in writing and orally. Through one form, we validated the other; they complemented each other and allowed for more understanding.)

“The writing experience in the course was enlightening. Given that there was an ongoing reflection upon our own process, we could see that the language used in spoken and written language are different. Whenever we were to write, we had to choose appropriate language to meet (*sic*) the style and readership of our text. However, it was difficult for us to be fully aware of those differences as our English proficiency was very limited.”

“It allowed us to see those differences by laying ourselves open to the task of transcribing an oral text. Only through that exercise I could realize that there are so many features in oral language that definitively cannot be entirely expressed by any written form even punctuation mark[s]: pauses, hesitations, fillers, etc. These features from there on have not gone unnoticed again.”

Working on the data (the transcript), analyzing it phonetically, and writing about it were for one student a way to perceive the differences between writing and speech: “Because of the fact that we worked on real data and wrote about it, I got to see the differences [between writing and speech].” No further elaboration of these differences was given. The answer to Question 33 given by one participant summarizes in a short form what students have said about writing and speech: “writing was much more demanding,” requires “a quite good command of the language,” and “to really say something that is worth reading.”

Participants considered speech easier than writing. This may be a light assessment of the phenomenon of acquiring foreign language speech, for speech and fluency require a good command of the language to really communicate something. Cognitive factors such as working memory (Ellis, 2001), automaticity of sentence processing (Dekeyser, 2001), along with individual psychological and sociocultural factors intervene in the acquisition of speech. The phonetic and phonological aspects of a target language make for an important foundation in the acquisition of foreign language speech. This is one important aspect of the speech phenomenon, but not exclusively.

With respect to the transcription of an oral text, people who work on transcripts even in their native language have problems. It is a task that plays cognitive tricks on the person making any transcription. This is because speech and writing are different. According to Cameron (2007),

Speech cannot be processed in the same way as writing: hearing and reading are different. It is in the nature of speech to be ‘evanescent’: it consists of sound waves in the air, and sound begins to fade away as soon as it is produced... [In writing]... the whole thing can be in the reader’s field of vision at the same time, and marks on paper do not disappear as the eye passes over them. This makes it possible to deal

with writing in ways we cannot deal with speech. You can go backwards and forwards in a conversation more quickly and easily by scanning a written transcript than by rewinding and replaying a tape. Writing also reduces the load on memory. Though you have doubtless listened to your two minutes of tape so many times that you are heavily sick of it, it is doubtful that you could reproduce it unaided with total accuracy, nor answer questions like ‘how many times does the item *oh* occur?’ Your transcript functions as a permanent record of what you heard in a form that allows you to perform analytic operations like counting the *ohs*. (p. 31)

Students seemed to have had the tendency to perceive oral communication easier than writing. However, this assumption would need to be reconsidered carefully. Oral language can be formal and informal, and both may imply complex demanding processes. Because natural conversations—not exclusively limited to classroom talk⁸¹—seem to rarely take place on a daily bases for this population of students, there is a need to create a space for a more natural fulfilling oral practice, and one that is theoretically guided. What I have discovered is that there is a naïve perception about oral skills in comparison with writing; in the same way, contrasting English and Spanish communication processes of oral and written language seem to be an open field for further research to better understand the interconnection of two related yet distinct processes in speech and writing.

The Three Sources of Data: Triangulation

I have dealt in this study with three sources of data: primary data (students’ final papers) and secondary data (the instructor’s and the post-experience online survey). These three sources of data allowed me to see common interpretations and trends in the EPP course and to understand students’ motivations to do the final project for the course. In the

⁸¹ In students’ responses to Question 16—How often do you have informal English language conversations outside the classroom?—16 hardly ever practice their oral language outside the classroom (never, not very often, rarely, hardly ever, not so often, not as often as I wish, seldom). “I barely have any chances to use it orally.” The great majority practice with a few friends, classmates, or through chats with foreign friends. Four mentioned their practice with foreigners took place whenever there was a chance; this was informal conversation. The medium of chats over the Internet is usually written language (Cameron, 2007).

answers to the survey, students still remembered concepts, routines, work, phrases, authors, and above all, their learning experience.

In this section I will only address four issues in all three types of data: the purpose of the final paper; the objectives of the course and students' final papers; the role of English in the final paper; and listening and speaking—perception and production of speech—two related issues, yet two distinct complex language skills.

The purpose of the final paper. In the role of the instructor, I conceived the final paper as an activity where students would integrate the work of the course of EPP. *The Four Steps* would be the mediating process to review and apply what we all had read, discussed, and studied during two thirds of the academic term (three months). The last five weeks of the academic term would serve to develop *The Four Steps*, and this in turn, would be the major input to start framing the content of students' final papers. In this process, the concepts of phonetics and phonology would find an application in an analysis of a speech sample—which for phoneticians would be “the creation of symbolic information that is related to the signals of the corpus in some way” or speech corpora (Harrington, 2010, p. 15). Written handouts with summaries and exercises helped to mediate between reading comprehension of the texts, the students' interlanguages, and the instructor's interpretation of information that she considered important. This was deliberately combined for the EPP course as both a content-based course and a foreign language course at the same time (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 2004). As such, the course dealt with a double burden: mediating students' knowledge in a difficult subject through the same foreign language that they were in the process of acquiring.

The writing skill had to be guided in a process, so the outcomes would be more intelligible and easy to comprehend, especially the products of those students whose writing was at a more elementary level. Students would have to build on their language skills, be aided by the instructor, and use the help of the class and group partners (collaborative leaning).

For the students, the purpose of the final paper was an application of the theory that they had studied throughout the course. It was a practical activity where they had to use the concepts learned in class and apply them in the analysis of a “real” sample of speech—speech corpora. For expert phonetic transcribers, in phonetic analysis of speech, the corpus usually has to be segmented and labeled, which means that “symbols are linked to the physical time scale of one or more signals” (Harrington, 2010, p. 15). Expert transcribers do this manually, but they usually use the aid of a spectrogram. Students only had their computers, their listening ability, and their foreign English language skills to convert an audio text (which in most of the cases was visual too) into a transcript (or written transcription to differentiate it from the phonetic one). From this text, which was the foundation of the task (speech corpora), students proceeded with the phonetic analysis and the subsequent tasks and processes.

The Four Steps were the mediators in the process of concept formation and understanding of phonetic and phonological basic issues. The use of the four foreign language skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) helped to raise awareness. Because students’ interlanguages ranged from low intermediate to low advanced,⁸² as

⁸² This assessment is based on the Standards that I wrote for the Department of Modern Languages in 2000, based on Hadley, A. O. (1986), where I adapted Hadley’s description of the language proficiency students showed in the four language skills for elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels of foreign language

students were able to observe, students found the application of concepts very challenging. In students' words, concepts became blurry: understanding intonation, for example, identifying intonation patterns and producing (this is imitating the speech sample) were difficult tasks all at once. The description and identification of suprasegmentals in this project was hard, the same as the identification of English-language vowels. In the productive foreign language skills, speaking and pronunciation became an issue, and writing, as a mediator of meaning to express what was being produced at the speech level, also became one more burden for both instructor and third semester students.

In the process of *The Four Steps*, microgenesis (cognitive development and action) were embedded: practical use of concepts in class (which took three months of reading, discussion, and application to practical exercises), were implemented in the actions of the guided process of *The Four Steps*. This was, at the same time, training to write. Students were free to express their observations and findings in the two processes of transcription: 1) the transcript of a verbatim sample—speech corpora; and 2) the phonetic transcription

For these students, the project integrated concepts that were systemically developed in interrelations between their thinking, the external form of signs representing sounds, and spoken and written language. All the exercises for the project brought about a motivating factor, which was to understand communication in Vygotsky's "speaking/thinking system" (Mahn, 2012, p. 105).

Concepts and perception were studied in an integral form, not separately: "The sensory material and the word are both indispensable parts of concept formation." The

proficiency. I followed the language descriptors of the ACFL *Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century* (1996), but a more rigorous assessment to identify students' levels of proficiency is necessary.

relation of the concept to reality was put in practice in the final project, which led to the final paper. Thus, the instructor applied Vygotsky's concept of building on 'previous experience of knowledge' (1986, p. 98), and mediating between the new knowledge and what students already had. This project involved thinking and creativity in an active, not a passive, way.

As expressed in the final paper, students' perception of speech sounds in the foreign language varied in difficulty, but every student used various strategies to arrive at the final result: decoding and putting the text in writing (a transcript or speech corpora) to later analyze it phonetically. This was not an easy task, as students' interlanguages hampered the task, but the objective was not to obtain a perfect transcript, but discovering what this whole process of listening implied. The project offered sources of stimulation that were objects, space, events, representations of these, and coded sources of stimulation (Gibson, 1969). All this combined played an important role. Perception was influenced by conscious and unconscious stimuli in the local context where students interacted, rendering a style of perceiving things (Ratner, 1991).

For the EPP course, my idea of journal writing—usually implemented in foreign language education—did not come from foreign language teaching. I was inspired by Walcott's (2008) *Ethnography* and my current idea at that time to write deep descriptions. Therefore, I implemented students' journals to record their observations. Writing ethnographies occupied my time at the moment I started *The Four Steps* in fall 2010. This was a deliberate intention, as an instructor, when I designed the project. In my mind, students were language ethnographers of the conscious and unconscious, as learning and acquisition can take place intentionally or unintentionally. The input from multiple sources

in our environments stimulates our perception and vision of the world. Writing constituted a means to an end in itself to experience language at another level.

In the data presented in chapters 5, 6, and 7, the four language skills were combined so that the students would experience the language as a whole in the listening and reading tasks, as well as in writing and oral activities. Students were also asked to describe language (how speech sounds were heard) and analyze language (converting an oral text into a written one; then analyzing speech sounds; and finally, imitating the speech of the speakers).

The objectives of the EPP course as reflected in the final paper. I specified in the description of the *English Phonetics and Phonology* course that it did not “aspire to produce native speakers of English. Such a pretension is born of the folk theory that assumes that by doing English undergraduate majors people somehow become *native*” (see the syllabi of EPP in Appendix M). The course expected students to: 1) “become acquainted with pronunciation obstacles in English as a foreign language in contrast to their native language” and 2) acquire an ecological understanding of accent differences among speakers of native and nonnative languages” (see Appendix M, Course Description and Rationale). Students realized how “daunting” the task of recognizing segments (vowels and consonants), utterances (words, phrases, sentences), and speech sounds (interjections) were and how difficult it was to represent them in writing, in phonetic transcription, and in students’ non-native speech. The final papers were the result of the concepts given by the authors we all read and applied to the project. This helped students develop some sensitivity to the complexities of the English-language sounds. Strings of speech sounds combined in utterances and discourses of different kinds.

The variety of verbatim samples that students recorded for this project allowed them to be exposed to diverse voices, accents, and registers. The language in the verbatim samples ranged from formal lectures and journalist reports to informal language of TV shows (vernacular). In the process, they found problems listening and understanding expressions, identifying language syntax, discriminating between the sounds of vowels, and understanding meaning. The theory was explored and tested in personal learning experiences that allowed the students to draw their own conclusions and apply the concepts we interpreted from the authors that were the foundations of the course.

English and Spanish. Students were allowed to use Spanish in their quizzes, activities (presentations) and written papers. The great majority chose to do them in English. For the ones with low English skills, this seemed to have produced anxiety, yet they were able to work at their own pace.⁸³ In the answers to the survey, students seemed to have noticed some differences between the two language systems (English and Spanish), and speech and writing in English. Still this is an issue that will need further exploration. For now, students know that there is a vernacular language that can be informal and that writing can be more formal. A few perceived that the formality or informality in the languages can also be expressed in writing.

For the participants in this survey, it seems that formal education in Spanish-language writing had been precarious in primary and secondary school. More courses

⁸³ The ones who wrote their final papers in Spanish seemed to have skillfully done good work (Spring 2011), as the grades of the Spanish-written papers showed. However, a qualitative analysis would have allowed for a comparison between these papers and the ones written in English. This was out of the scope of this dissertation, but this issue may be addressed in another study.

focusing on academic writing at the undergraduate level are offered by departments such as linguistics or literature. It seems that the transfer of these skills from Spanish to English may work for those who have taken these courses. On the other hand, the English-language courses seem to be the ones that give students some foundations in writing to such an extent that one student expressed he was transferring this skill to his native language.

Listening and speaking: Two related, yet complex and distinct skills. In the instructor's handout of Step 1, I recognized that students would have to make several attempts at listening and that there would be many words and phrases that students would not be able to understand. The objective, we knew, was to become familiar with the sounds of the language, knowing that students would not *open* their perceptive skills to understanding the language overnight. This would require more than a basic course of EPP.

Phonetics and phonology has usually been linked to *pronunciation* in the field of foreign language education at UBD. Jakobson and Halle (1967) considered that it is difficult to prove experimentally that there is a tighter relationship between perception and articulation than between perception and immediate stimulus (p. 65). The issue of perception is a phenomenon: As native speakers of a language we can notice a foreign accent, but it is usually hard for us to articulate in this foreign language, Jakobson and Halle explained. In the same way, in the infant's process of acquiring a language, she first learns to discriminate between the phonemes that adults use in their language, and it is later on that the infant will use these phonemes in her speech.

The listening skill, two students found, was one of the forgotten language skills in foreign language teaching (Rost, 2002). I also mentioned this in the literature review, Chapter 4. Colombian foreign language instructors seem to find listening skills hard to

teach, but there is no research evidence about this. One issue is clear, instructors also struggle with this skill (and others), as many are nonnative speakers of English. Students expressed in their final papers how getting familiar with the speakers' accents and their speech features improved with a lot of exposure to the oral text. They developed some familiarity to the voices. This same familiarity is what makes students understand Colombian speakers of English more easily than native speakers of the language. They are more exposed to the Colombian-English accent in their English-language courses.

Kenworthy (1992) acknowledges this:

In general, people find listening to the English of their fellow countrymen easier, so a French speaker of English will find other French speakers of English easier to understand than, say, the English of Spanish speakers. The most obvious reason for this is that the French speakers will share features of pronunciation. It is also very likely that they have had more opportunity to listen to other French speakers speaking English. The more opportunities you have to listen to a particular type of English, the more easily intelligible that accent is to you. (p. 15)

This familiarity, says Kenworthy (1995), “works at the individual level as well.” In this way, people who have been exposed to certain foreigners and their accents on a daily basis, learn to understand these accents. The same goes for parents who understand what their toddlers say, but for unfamiliar ears, what these children utter may sound unintelligible.

Imitation (in the form of student productions), on the other hand, turned out to be a difficult task, as the gestures and movements of students' vocal tracks are more trained for Spanish than for English-language phonology. Rehearsing the English language in formal presentations was also demanding. It seemed easier for students with good ears and vocal track muscle flexibility, good short-term memory, and a little stage fright. Rehearsing and presenting in front of an audience meant pretending to be *scholars*. Pitches, intonations, accents, and stresses were practiced to make students' speech more intelligible and to raise

language awareness. Developing these skills was envisioned as an ongoing endeavor that would take a lifetime to hone, for there is no “perfect” language, native or non-native. There is just language in use and language in created texts.

The auditory perception has been usually connected to the oral production (pronunciation) in students’ responses. It is always thought that good or bad pronunciation derives from a good or bad listening skill, from the recognition of language features “by ear”—said one student (first row of Table 14). While it is true, the factor of how the vocal track works for every person to imitate the sounds of a new language needs to be monitored as well.

In a lot of published material on the teaching of English language pronunciation, the application of phonetics and phonology theory is a foundation to explanations and exercises (e.g. Kelly’s *How to Teach Pronunciation* textbook, 2004). In foreign language courses at UDB, the hearing perception (listening) is directly linked to the improvement of pronunciation (oral production, speaking, pronunciation, conversation or communication).

Although textbooks on pronunciation abound, English-language pronunciation is still a taken-for granted skill (Baker, 2011; Baker & Murphy, 2011), as is listening (Rost, 2002). The “research on second/language pronunciation is not as extensive as in other language domains” (Lightbown & Spanda, 2013, p. 68). Yet, what exists is unknown or given little attention to in the field of ESL and EFL (Baker, 2011). Understanding “the process involved in phonological development in a second language and the factors that contribute to it” (Lightbown & Spanda, 2013, p. 68) can be learned from the existing theoretical and empirical work. The influence of the communicative approach in ESL and EFL for over 30 years is to blame for the neglect of pronunciation in second/foreign

language teaching. In the views of Baker (2011) and Cohen and Fass (2001), this approach is responsible for the little attention given to English language pronunciation.

A more important reason for the neglect of pronunciation in ESL, according to Avery and Ehrlich (2008), is the critical period hypothesis. Cognition is involved in second/foreign language learning, and this goes beyond students' efforts and personal motivation to learn how to perceive and produce second/foreign speech. Perception as well as production has a biological and psychological root in the success of second/foreign language learning in people over the age of 12 (other factors may intervene too: personality, exposure, native language, and cultural factors) (Kenworthy, 1992). Critical periods relate biological and psychological developmental aspects to native and second/foreign language phonology (Escudero, 2007; Kormos, 2006; Linell, 1999; Moyer, 2004; Muñoz, 2006). When a person has passed this period, it is harder to learn to discriminate sounds and to train the vocal track to articulate the speech sounds of another language. "Nygaard, Sommers, and Pisoni (1994) have suggested that the 'mechanism responsible for encoding talker information would seem to be linked directly to those that underlie phonetic perception'" (as cited in Spence, Roillins, & Jerger, 2002).

Students in EPP found that perception leads to oral production (speaking, pronunciation, talking, and communication). The foreign language input usually comes from their foreign language courses, the electronic media, movies, and music. However, quality of the use of this input interconnected with students' oral production requires further research at UDB. Students said that they usually reflect upon their pronunciation, look up the phonetic transcription in dictionaries, try to guess the pronunciation etymologically, but

the real test is when they travel abroad and communicate with other English-language speakers (one student said).

Speaking practice using informal English is almost nonexistent for the 16 students who answered Question 16 (How often do you have informal English language conversations outside the classroom?). For the other 22, they gave answers that varied in frequency. Some said: “Daily,” “2 hours more or less,” “once or twice a week as much,” “at least once a day.” In longer answers, two students expressed: 1) “When I catch up with foreign friends. Now I am applying for a job with a tourism multinational and all the process has been in English, so I have been using English more often”; 2)

Not as often as I wish. Sometimes it is hard to find someone willing—and able—to practice with. In my group of friends, sometimes we try to practice speaking informal English, but the hectic schedules we have makes us eager to communicate faster and clearer; therefore, we use our first language.

Instructors usually tell students to keep their practice out of the classroom, but this practice is also scarce for the instructors themselves; it seems as if the teaching practice is the only one providing this oral interaction for students and teachers, and the latter are the ones that talk more in the classroom. To give an end to Chapter 7 I quote one of the student’s responses about his English-language practice out of the classroom and his observation:

When working, I have to speak with many tourist[s], so I have to explain [to] them as much as I can about the city, that have helped me to practice my English. Sometimes some of the tourists have given me feedback about my speech and my pronunciation. Fact that make [*sic*] me realize that the English that we are learning at the university is hugely different from the English that is being used in other countries and also in some other more informal contexts.

Chapter 8 will elaborate on the above issues by addressing the main question and the four sub-questions I proposed for this study.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

In this study I addressed various issues of students' perceptions of English as a foreign language (EFL) by examining 20 final papers that 44 students wrote for the course English Phonetics and Phonology (EPP) at the Universidad de Bogota (UDB), Colombia. Additional information behind these perceptions came from the instructor's narrative. A third source for students' insights was obtained from a post-experience survey conducted online to triangulate the data. I analyzed students' perceptions of English through their written accounts. Students grounded their interpretations of the new language using a recorded *verbatim* sample, which constituted the corpus of EPP analysis. Students produced two texts: 1) a transcript of the verbatim sample and 2) the transcript's subsequent phonetic transcription. Students wrote their observations in the two processes of text production, which resulted in language awareness (metacognition). All this worked in interconnection with the phonetic analysis of segments and suprasegmentals.

The final papers were the end product of a developmental teaching-learning process, which usually lasted five weeks—(*The Four Steps*) before the end of each cohort. Students' *final papers* were the main focus of this dissertation, but not exclusively. In the interpretations of students' perceptions, I indirectly played a crucial role as the instructor of EPP. In this role, my teaching practice included a local and personal interpretation. This showed in my conception of an epistemology of foreign language learning using activities and tasks that I developed with every EPP cohort (with students' final products in mind). In the process of practitioner teaching-research, I created *The Four Steps* (TFS) (see Appendix N) and established the form and content for the final papers (see Appendix L). This was

based on my ideas about what students should be able to observe in their analysis of EPP. My recollection of my personal involvement in the construction of knowledge in a foreign language is not naïve and also deserved a post-experience reflection (Chapter 5).

In Chapter 8 I answered the main question and the sub-questions I presented in the introduction. Additionally, I addressed some conflicting issues in this dissertation. I concluded with the findings, recommendations, and the limitations of this research. The main question “*What can we learn about students’ perceptions of English foreign language based on the final papers from an English phonetics and phonology class?*” was explored through the four sub-questions I enunciated at the beginning of this study, which are:

1) What are students’ interpretations of English as a foreign language through the words and meanings as expressed in their final papers?

2) What ideas and meanings can be characterized as typical Colombian sociocultural interpretations of EFL?

3) Which are students’ views of the English language sound system—as expressed in these papers? And,

4) What intertextual relations (dialogues with other types of texts) helped students interpret the foreign language?

Perception is a sensory and experiential ability that allows organisms to see, hear, and become aware of their surrounding environment. It is an intuitive neuropsychological process, a mental impression. It is the insight that people have of an experience, which they usually express through their interpretations, views, opinions, ideas, and thoughts. All this is mainly manifested through language and people’s behaviors. In this dissertation, students’ interpretations, ideas, views, opinions, thoughts, and ideologies make up part of their

perceptual construction of the foreign language. For the majority of the participants in this study, making sense of a foreign language that does not exist naturally in a community of speakers is mainly a virtual psychological experience. Ours is a community of Spanish-language speakers where getting to know the Other is mediated through texts (printed, visual, aural, and semiotic in general). What students expressed about the foreign language is what they had seen, felt, heard, and experienced in EFL before they took the EPP course. On top of these perceptions and personal knowledge, they constructed what the course provided: the instructor's way of seeing the foreign language through EPP. As active participants and owners of their free will, they also expressed themselves through their choices, ideas, meanings, and interpretations, adding to this construction.

1) What are students' interpretations of English as a foreign language through the words and meanings expressed in their final papers?

In the process of writing a transcript of an oral text with the purpose of using it as a corpus for a basic phonetic and phonological analysis, students underwent a process of language discovery: system in interconnection with meaning. In the verbatim samples, students' first perception of the English language was that understanding what the speakers said was *easy*. Then they discovered that the verbatim text was more complex than they thought: There were parts that were *unintelligible* or had *non-understandable sounds*; therefore students missed words and the meaning of what the speakers uttered. According to two students, the speakers' speech was not clear because of *overlapping utterances*, *hesitations*, *dialect differences*, *strong expressions*, and *word reductions* (Letterman and Emma). Comprehension of native speech is difficult for second/foreign language learners

because native speech deals with more than phonological issues. Language offers all its linguistic structure and sociocultural meaning at once: phonology, syntax, lexicon, semantics, pragmatics, and sociocultural meaning (cognitive and environmental issues). Speakers of a native language usually process all this information together in seconds and respond to the communicative stimulus almost instinctively and naturally—at least it seems so. This is different for foreign language learners who have to pay attention to many non-automated aspects of the new language all at once. The listening skill is a construction of meaning in itself for foreign language learners. It involves “input to the listener, context of the interaction, and the listener's linguistic and general world knowledge” (Tafaghodtari & Vandergrift, 2008, p. 100). An uttered single sound encapsulates multiple meanings, depending on the speakers and their immediate cultural setting (Bakhtin, 1981). Meanings necessarily implicate the dynamics of an evolving culture or history (Bakhtin, 1981). People’s processes of thought take time and are aided by the stimulus of the environment (Vygotsky, 1934). The utterance of the word without its cultural and historical grounding is an empty sound (Bakhtin, 1981), and more so in foreign language when the listeners are sometimes unable to establish these connections.

Another problem with hearing perception of foreign speech is that normal people’s speech is not as perfect as foreign language students pretend. Normal speech usually has hesitations, rephrasing, reductions, and referents to the local society and culture where this speech comes from (Halliday, 1990). A second issue here is the problem of speech genres, which puts language at various levels of human activity, making it specific to each profession. The second genre—the one that we create in human activities or professions—builds upon the first genre, or the everyday language (Bakhtin, 1986b). Therefore, if foreign

language students are in the process of learning the first genre, adding a second genre is harder, but not impossible (e.g., English for specific purposes or ESP). For EPP, however, third semester students already had an English level in the first genre, and this was in the process of development. Several of the low intermediate students learned to express in the second genre (EPP) with their respective interlanguages (see samples of errors that I have marked as [*sic*] in students' writing throughout this dissertation). The phenomenon of interlanguage in the primary and secondary genres was not exclusive of the students. It also extended to the instructor.

Students' first and quick assessment of *easiness* resulted from their perceptual assessment of several texts before they finally selected the verbatim sample for the EPP project. Students measured the difficulties of the texts perceptually and according to their varying English-language levels: *intermediate advanced* (*Ben Stiller*), *upper intermediate* (Question 20 of the survey, see *Table 15*, third row), and a *low level* of English (one student in the survey). The differences in students' listening levels gave them a range of *difficulty* that they evaluated personally according to their listening comprehension. Students' varying levels in the foreign language made the process of *The Four Steps* (TFS) harder. For some students with lower levels of English, anxiety was high complicating their understanding of the tasks. They seemed not to have benefited as much from the TFS activities in EPP. One student said: "Unfortunately, I didn't have a good English level at that time as my classmates had, so I had to focus more on oral production than auditory skills" (Question 24 of the survey, see *Table 24*, third row). When learners have not automatized certain procedural linguistic knowledge in the second/foreign language, attending to more demanding tasks and activities fails. Processing information is beyond language transfer for these students

because structures are “complex, abstract, communicatively redundant, infrequent or not salient” (DeKeyser, as cited in Mitchell, Myles & Marsden, 2013, p. 141). The exercises in TFS required meaningful language production, which in many cases was beyond some students’ linguistic and cognitive capacities.

Another general perception of the English language was that the speakers *spoke fast* and used unknown *vocabulary*. Students had difficulties with the rhythm and intonation patterns of the English language and with specific vocabulary that was not part of their English textbooks. The perception of fast speaking and unknown vocabulary was also reported by students who participated in a study at another university in Bogota (Hernández-Ocampo & Vargas, 2014). To the ears of foreign language learners of any target language, native speakers speak fast. Besides speed, one group identified and connected problems of understanding with their *lack of wide vocabulary* (and therefore synonyms), *lack of cultural foundations of the language*, and need for more knowledge to identify *patterns of pronunciation for specific accents* (Ben Stiller). Language is not just about vocabulary, recognition of speech sounds, and identification of grammatical structures. Meaning is compromised, in the utterance, the sentence, the word, and the structure. System gives an organization to the structure of language, which is perceived externally through speech sounds uttered by the speaker. But the ultimate end is to make meaning out of what we perceive and communicate. For Vygotsky (1986) concepts are an integration of word and thought. The unit *meaning through language* (Mahn, 2012) rests at the cognitive level in Vygotsky’s theory. It is tied to the sociocultural environment and has an external and internal form. The word is made up of speech sounds, written symbols, and grammatical categories. Beyond system, there is meaning, which is socioculturally constructed. Some of

EFL learners' difficulties to comprehend foreign language words are related to sociocultural meaning. Words charged with local environmental meaning are more difficult than the ones that have transferable meaning (e.g., every day words and routines). Some students were able to figure out unknown words by their speech sounds. But they had to look up the inferred words in the dictionary to see if they existed and to understand their meanings.

Students' first perception of *easiness* was related to capturing the general idea, so the text could be *easily understood*. I dare say that understanding the language in terms of speech sounds and utterances *per se* was only attested by the students who transcribed the text of *NPR* news, an aural and not visual text. For the rest of the students, the visual part played a tricky role in their auditory perception. One student explained that she understood the text by images more than by what the speakers uttered (*The Simpsons*). In this sense, students' visual percepts allowed them to read the context and the external signs, without explicitly understanding every word that was uttered. The relationship of understanding the meaning of language is double-sided: On one side, language is made up of a system of signs that are common to a community of speakers, and on the other, these signs are connected to the external world, the context (Jakobson & Halle, 1980). All these signs enter into a dialogical relationship, allowing the listener to establish connections and to identify primary and secondary genres, accents, motivations, intensions, and meanings (Bakhtin, 1981; 1986a; 1986b). In Vygotsky's (1934; 1986) terms, this is the sociocultural theory that connects the developmental, maturational world (the individual's cognitive world) with the environment.

The second assessment of *difficulty* came once students started the task of transcribing the verbatim sample. Students' visual and audio perceptions combined with

their knowledge of information, familiarity with the media schema and genre, knowledge of vocabulary and grammar in the foreign language, and use of several strategies (such as the use of information on web pages to figure out words and expressions). These were metacognitive strategies students used for the purpose of transcription. Proper names and place names offered a degree of great difficulty because they are culturally and historically—diachronically and synchronically—connected to language. Speakers' sociocultural environment already offers what exists in terms of human construction and language to the child (Vygotsky, 1934), and in this case to the foreign language learner. The local community already exists.

On the other hand, students' selection of the verbatim sample was not arbitrary. It aligned with the instructor's requirements in Step 1 of *The Four Steps process*: 1) a conversation between native speakers; a weather report; a documentary; a TV show; a news story and so on taken from the World Wide Web or a film; 2) the text would have a specific length range (between one and a half minutes and two minutes); and 3) this text would need to have sound quality (see Appendix N, Step 1). The instructor discouraged using verbatim samples taken from English language listening lessons because the speech rate is usually slow and conversations sound somehow unnatural. This type of language sample is usually created for foreign-language listeners and devoid of the normal faults speakers usually commit in their speech. The instructor took into account Bakhtin's (1986b) primary and secondary genres for a more natural exposure to speakers, even if this was the virtual world. The instructor knew that English-language classroom talk in foreign language courses is circumscribed to foreign speech and graded listening activities limiting the wide range of normal speech communication.

Students' selection of their verbatim samples had students' personal motivations for: certain TV programs; English-language accents (American, British, foreign); and types of language (formal or informal). This was evident in the videos and information that they chose mostly from YouTube, films, and the Web in general (Appendix A). The influence of American popular culture was obvious: TV programs, films, artists, actors, and so on.

Students worked with speech samples that had British accents (*China's Yellow River*; *Argentine's House*; and *Animals Not Clowns*), a combination of British and American accents (*Letterman and Emma*), British and foreign accents (*Scottish TV Interview*; and *Bangkok Floods*), or just American accents (*Ben Stiller*; *My Soul to Take*; *The Road Runner*; *That Girl*; *NPR*; *Obama*; *The Wedding Dress*; *Shrek II*; *Forrest Gump*; *The Dark Night*; *The Simpsons*; *The Big Bang Theory*; *Ellen's Monologue*; and *The Simpsons*). The predominant accent was the American one. This reflects the influx of the American media, as I pointed out earlier.

Students' first listening general assessment of the English language changed when they started transcribing the oral text. This was *intensive* listening (*Obama*). The fact that students had to write the text and listen at the same time was difficult even for more advanced students (*Ben Stiller*). All the students reported listening to the text many times, with one group saying they listened to the sample 60 times (*Letterman and Emma*). This might have been an estimate in the students' personal assessment of the listening task, for there was not any concrete evidence that can prove this, as most of the listening was done in the privacy of students' households. This was an answer that students gave in writing, in response to the instructor's insistence that they report the number of times that this task had taken place. The quantitative listening assessment was a language awareness task to identify

if the text was *easy*, as the students had first thought. Contrary to students' first assessment, stretches of text in the verbatim samples turned out to be *unintelligible*. In order to overcome these difficulties, students resorted to a series of strategies to decode the verbatim sample. The hearing perception fell short in deciphering what the speakers uttered word for word; the phonetic and phonological identification of speech sounds was *one more strategy* in the process of transcription, but not exclusively. Technology (computers) was accompanied by the use of: quiet spaces with no distractions; previous knowledge of information, English-language sounds, and English grammar; associations of words with the context; dictionaries to confirm spellings; and the visual and audio sections of the videos to get clues for unintelligible utterances.

The body language in the videos (people's intentions, emotions in people's voices, background music and sounds, or any exclamation or interjection) helped with specific vocabulary. The written texts on the websites where students recorded the videos usually provided some extra information: words, names, sociocultural expressions. Even the same video could give a written clue. These clues facilitated meaning. Examples of this are place names and specific jargon: "Rivertown, Massachusetts" (*My Soul to Take*) and "Jamborette" (*Scottish TV Interview*). I also found the name of the lake where the Simpsons were going on a billboard they passed by.

Students also solved the problem of proper names, place names, and cultural issues in their texts by recurring to other means. One group filled out the empty spaces in their transcript with the words *Vera Wang* with the help of a native speaker. Only three groups out of 20 directly referred to the issue of culture and language in their projects. The first group distinguished "the dialect of the Yorkshire region" and the word "wee" (*Scottish*

Interview). The second group acknowledged the cultural connection with language in the name *Vera Wang (The Wedding Dress)*; they would have never figured it out without the assistance of an American native speaker. The third group did not provide an example, but instead reflected on issues of language as a system and a culture: “[T]he phonetic distance among languages is also representing the social and cultural distance among their speakers” (*Ben Stiller*). These students concluded that *phonetics and phonology* are not *sufficient* for understanding and making meaning of language. Other groups did not directly identify the cultural connection of the utterances and words in their texts, but figured out the missing information by searching the Web: the name of the movie *Dirty Dancing (That Girl)*; the names of Ellen’s pets (*Ellen DeGeneres*); and a children’s night prayer (*My Soul to Take*). They got close to the identification of sounds, inferred the meaning from the context, and tried to deduce what was missing in the text by using context clues, inventing spellings, and ratifying their first impressions and understanding by doing a Web search. Other students looked up specific jargon: “biomimicry” (*Architecture’s Nature*). For specific words in the verbatim sample, such as “*rubbing, disbelieve, weird, sifting, vessels, sturdy and shutter*” (*Argentine’s House*), another couple of students struggled with the speech sounds and the spellings. One student transcribing the text of *The Symptoms* paid attention to the missing word *maul* in its visual context and the sounds of the word. Then he invented a spelling and subsequently found the word in an online dictionary. The same happened with specific terms of the financial world such as *mortgage* and *subprime*, which students inferred just by listening to the uttered speech sounds, then figured out the spelling, and finally confirmed their assumptions in the dictionary (*NPR*).

Depending on students' interlanguages (levels of development of the foreign language), students were able to deal with the utterances in the oral text. Then they transformed the utterances into *words* and *sentences*. Some supporting ideas were clear to the students, but others were not that comprehensible. The familiarity with the TV program (schema) and the voices (accents, intonations, voice quality) of the speakers helped students understand what people said: e.g. *Ellen DeGeneres*, *The Big Bang Theory*, and *The Simpsons*. A third factor that allowed students to comprehend the text was the type of language. Students identified *formal* English in journalistic genres and in the lecture about architecture. For two students, for example, the journalistic genre presented an oral text that was first framed in a written one (*Argentine's House*). For these students, the oral text had the same characteristics of a written text, so punctuating the transcript was easy. The students who transcribed *The Simpsons* and *Ellen's* monologue referred to the informality of the language in the dialogue and the everyday speech; this was easy for them. *Ben Stiller*, *Shrek II*, *The Road Runner*, *That Girl*, and most of the comedy genre were representations of the vernacular form of English.

Students found several characteristics that attracted them to the media texts they chose for TFS, besides language. One characteristic was familiarity with the TV program and entertainment : *Ellen's Show*; *That Girl*; *The Big Bang Theory*; *Ben Stiller* and animated cartoons such as *The Simpsons* and *Shrek 2*. The excerpt taken from *The Road Runner* had a religious connotation, which shows students' personal preferences for specific content in TV programs. Another characteristic was the type of information they could learn from the texts: scientific (*Architecture*), financial (*NPR*), environmental (*Bangkok*; *Argentine's House*; *China's River*; *Animals Not Clowns*). Some of the situations portrayed

in the videos connected with the students former knowledge: floods in Colombia; people's issues and situations in Latin America (*Argentine's House*); and contamination of rivers in Colombia and China. Beyond the phonetic and phonology task, the students had a desire to connect to the text and the speakers meaningfully and dialogically. Beyond language there was information, knowledge, entertainment, and a dialogic relationship between the text and the listeners. For Bakhtin (1986b), speech communication involves the dialogic relationship of both speakers and listeners. The listener, as well as the speaker, plays an active role in speech communication.

In sum, students' interpretations of EFL were that the language was comprehensible to an extent. Certain words and utterances could not be inferred or even interpreted automatically and posed problems that were not restricted to hearing perception but to sociocultural issues of the foreign language per se.

2) What ideas and meanings can be characterized as typical Colombian sociocultural interpretations of EFL?

The final papers are a hybrid characterization of a Colombian and textual foreign language interpretation. The discourse for each paper is framed within: 1) the jargon of phonetics and phonology; 2) the specific media genre that students used; 3) students' personal interpretations of EFL and how language works as a system; 4) students' interpretations of the authors they read for the EPP course; 5) the instructor's interpretations of EPP manifested in the pedagogical material and classes; 4) students' personal knowledge on EFL grammar, vocabulary, and metacognitive strategies; and 5) students' background knowledge. These final papers received various examples to follow as a model. They were

constructed through The Four Steps process, which was totally guided and supervised by the instructor: They were planned: They had an intention and “a realization of this plan” (Bakhtin, 1986a, p. 104) The plan and the realization of the EPP final papers determined the nature of these texts. In short, the papers had all the characteristics of texts given by Bakhtin (1986a).

These final papers are a Colombian EFL instructor’s interpretation of what an academic paper should be. The instructor wanted students to become beginner language analysts with the purpose of improving their communication in the foreign language at all levels (reading, listening, speaking, and writing). Students’ Colombo-foreign interpretations of EFL combined: students’ personal language experience and views of EFL; and students’ interpretations and applications of the reading and pedagogical material of the EPP course.

Students started the course with their personal Colombian visions of the English language—most students expressed in class their desire to improve their pronunciation. For many of these students their self-image as *foreign language speakers* was blurry. Some students would allow me to proclaim: *We do not have accents in English*. To construct the Colombo-foreign perception and to express it in writing, students added the jargon of the secondary genre: phonetics and phonology. They combined this with their understanding of language (native and foreign). An exclusive Colombian interpretation of EFL was not directly provided. The final papers showed the practical application of concepts of phonetics and phonology to an audio text, which for 95% of the students was also a visual one. The description below is an example of how EFL was interpreted through the final project:

The aim of our final project was to experience a general approach over the fundamental concepts of phonetics and phonology. That is why we had to write several independent and successive transcriptions showing different stages of

description: written transcription, phonetic and phonological transcription, tone groups, stress and intonation. (*Argentine's House*)

The above description of the aim of the project is entirely pragmatic: this is what we needed to experience, so this is what we did.

Understanding the final project required knowledge of the concepts of phonetics and phonology, successive transcriptions of two kinds (written, and phonetic and phonological), and the understanding of suprasegmentals in visual representations and in written descriptions. This allowed students to understand concepts and their meaning visually, even if they lacked the skill in the foreign language to make their descriptions explicit.

For another couple of students language could not be detached from a system of symbols, structures and abstractions to represent what people say:

Language is a complex code that includes symbols, segments, structures, abstractions, sounds and some other characteristics and complements. The mixture of symbols, sounds and the symbols as representation of sounds was something that took a great place during this course. Phonetics has taken form [sic] many authors who have given their ideas to complement this study of language... The visual and audio materials are also essential in this process... the oral expression shows how we have taken into account all the concepts to our communication. (*The Big Bang Theory*)

A third interpretation of the foreign language added the issue of identity and accent, as it is difficult to erase accent, especially when adults learn a second/foreign language:

We agree with Kenworthy [1992] when [s]he says that we are going to have our own cultural identity. What we have to look for is not native accent, but to be understandable. One way to achieve this is to notice mistakes in our speech and the best way to be conscious of this is the help that the work in group[s] give[s] us. (*NPR*)

Students' altered perceptions of second/foreign language, gained through the final project, allowed them to interpret the complexity of oral communication in EFL.

The process of learning was personal and individual, but it was also a group-guided activity. Perceptions and ideologies were shared, and the difference between Spanish and certain varieties of English (e.g., Scottish) became clearer for some: “While making the phonetic transcription we realized that the speakers produce many sounds that we were not able to identify at once, as our hearing is not accustomed to that accent and that use of lexicon” (*Scottish TV interview*). The process of language and meaning discovery was not easy, but this is not simply a Colombian trait; it is a universal problem of many second/foreign language learners.

In the process of language perception, students had to combine listening with reading and writing to fill in the gaps of their transcripts. Then, the same text of the transcript was used as corpus for data analysis in EPP. This intense EFL process was helpful for their future professional career, said one student:

On this process, we researched a lot of information[:] punctuation, vocabulary, concepts for the different steps, and so on. We... enhanced writing skills a lot. Sometimes, it was a head-ache to analyze information we were not used to analyze so deeply. However, it was really helpful to get better in future professional endeavor.” (*My Soul to Take*)

In terms of reading, explained two students, the phonology of the foreign language is important in order to connect with the ideas of authors.

As Gibson [2008] emphasizes (p. 30), even in silent and individual reading it is necessary to keep the right patterns of intonation in mind, in order to get a good understanding of the ideas and intentions of the author. (*Argentine’s House*)

EFL is also about *silence* when it comes to pauses: either to breathe, to think and rephrase, or to give meaning to expression. This was analyzed by two students when they had to explain the pauses in their verbatim samples:

According to Zellner (1994), we marked two different kinds of pauses in our verbatim sample; sample pauses referring to silent portion in the speech like inspirations, swallowing and silent expiration (e.g. when Emma wallows before saying “*and please excuse me*” on line 2); and filled pauses such as voiced sections like drawls, repetition of utterances, and sounds and false starts (e.g. David’s speech on lines 15: “*ah...ah...ah... an actress*” and 21: “*ah...ah...ah...ah...the acquisition*”) (*Letterman and Emma*)

Pauses also helped students with suprasegmental (prosodic) features in their texts:

A pause is a brief moment during which the speaker is silent” (Poms & Dale [,] 1985). Then, we listened to the pauses made by the speaker again. Then we turned to tonic accent which is the syllable that carries the major pitch change in an intonational phrase (Ladefoged and Johnson [2011]). Finally, we listened to it several times to draw [*sic*] the intonation lines. (*Architecture*)

In the process of second/foreign language learning, the first language interferes with several areas of the second/foreign language, making the latter different from the native variety:

The interferences from the mother tongue in ESL and EFL learners are not just at the level of vocabulary, grammar or phonemes; the prosodic features of a known language are transmitted automatically to the second language we are learning (Halliday, [1990], p. 49). (*Argentine’s House*)

The above examples show how difficult it is to identify a Colombian-specific characterization of the foreign language in the final papers. Students’ interpretation of the foreign language is intertextual. They combined their observations about language and communication with the ideas that came from the authors they had read for the project. This combined in a dialogical relationship with the verbatim samples. When I asked the second sub-question for this research, I thought I would be able to identify some Colombian features in students’ writing. However, I must admit that traces of a local style can be better determined in some other research that analyzes with more detail students’ use of structures, vocabulary and interlanguage.

The students' comments in the final papers allowed me to believe that this experience had turned into *perception learning* of the foreign language: Students who wrote the 20 papers followed the instructor's specifications losing some *Colombian-ness* in these writings. As a researcher and language analyst, my Colombian perception interferes with an objective answer at this point.

The 20 papers had personal interpretations and explanations about this activity. The descriptions were spontaneous and showed students' personal characterization of their written style that combined with the jargon of EPP. These are two examples showing how students perceived and interpreted the language when they impersonated the speakers of their verbatim samples:

In the [verbatim] sample I chose [,] the tone change [*sic*] constantly to keep the audience interested in the topic. It was difficult when I started to practiced [*sic*] because I am not accustom [*sic*] to speak [*sic*] with British accent, but it resulted just as a goal. I enjoy [*sic*] practicing and even putthe [*sic*] video as in a loop and just listening to it I could imitate the intonation. As most of it was citation form[,] I didn't have to speak very fast and I could vocalize. (*China's Yellow River*)

The above interpretation comes from a student who worked alone. She found tone as the one aspect that keeps an audience interested in what you say. For this student, imitating the British accent was problematic, but I wonder if imitating the American accent would have been challenging as well. In her general assessment of the English language of the reporter, she found that he used *citation speech*, which is the form people use in the pronunciation of individual words. She also added that he used *formal language*—easy to understand by *anyone*. This example shows the student's interlanguage (e.g., [*sic*]) at the grammatical and discourse levels. This is a normal characterization of an intermediate level student. The fact that the student worked alone made her awareness of certain errors blurry.

In the second example, Clara and Sergio described their impression/and or reading of Ellen DeGeneres's monologue in this way:

During our rehearsal, it was imperative for us to correct to [sic] each other the way we reproduced segments and our intonation patterns. We also helped to [sic] each other to be more aware of those segments we weren't linking correctly or mispronouncing. Even though marking pauses on paper was the easiest part, during our rehearsal, pausing and moderation our speed was the hardest part. It felt awkward to pause as Ellen does due [sic] she has an audience laughing and we just had an uncomfortable silence. Also, our nerves and anxiety often betrayed us, so we started speaking faster without even noticing it. (*Ellen DeGeneres*)

Students found it necessary to self-correct one another in collaboration. One task in this activity was easier for them: marking pauses on paper. Imitating pauses and the English rhythm of the show's hostess was problematic and caused anxiety, making students speak faster than DeGeneres. Sergio and Clara described Ellen's speech as follows:

Our general observation from this analysis of Ellen's speech is that it was a bit easy to follow and to transcribe, thanks to her clear pronunciation. Of course we had some errors at first, but even those errors were easily corrected thanks to our analysis of segments production and due [sic] the context of the story. So, there were times when Ellen spoke very quickly and we tried to figure out particular words according with other words that we used as clues. For example, in line 3, the original sentence was: "thirty people had to take shelter". Sergio perceived: "thirty people detected shelter". In line 6 "most of the year" he perceived: "most of the air". In both cases, he was not able to understand one specific word, but he tried to figure it out taking into account the context and inferring which word was suitable to complete a coherent idea. (*Ellen DeGeneres*)

The misperception of utterances is one typical issue for any foreign language learner, and more so when students are in the process of learning a foreign language in a third semester. Sergio's perception "Thirty people detected shelter" instead of "Thirty people had to take shelter" is a typical perceptual error for foreign language learners (see misinterpreted utterances in Appendix S). As a nonnative speaker I have found myself misinterpreting utterances and confusing meaning: e.g., my misperception of the name of the show *Jimmy*

Kimmel Live was *Jimmy came alive*. These are problems that deserve an analysis beyond the purpose of this dissertation. It suffices to say that these issues are phonologically, socioculturally, and perceptually (neurologically) related, so foreign language learners will always have to recur to the written text. Using the captions in videos is always helpful, even for advanced nonnative speakers of English.

3) Which are students' views of the English language sound system—as expressed in these papers?

Before I answer this question, I have to remind the reader that the final papers were *hybrid* data. This means two things. First, the final papers (documents) were edited versions of former students' first drafts, resulting from the final project called *The Four Steps*. As hybrid data they reflected specific interests of the participants (Fothergill, 1974; as cited in McCulloch, 2011). These interests include the instructor's view of what students should learn and the students' pragmatism (e.g., a good grade) and more personal motivations. Second, these hybrid documents were at the same time natural data: not produced for research purposes. As such, these documents were not framed to investigate what I formulated in the questions. These documents cannot answer the researcher's questions entirely. The survey and the instructor's data helped to fill in the gaps. The versatility of these three sources combined allowed for a wider interpretation of the answer to this third question.

The students' papers described an individual and/or group experience about the perception of speech sounds of the English language and language learning, from a Colombian perspective (the instructor's and the students'). This perspective was based in

the course textbooks, electronic media texts, and our personal views. The final papers fulfilled a learning process about a subject matter: English phonetics and phonology. The documents seem to have been successful at this, because they followed the norm of education which shows what should be learned and how it should be learned (Marton & Booth, 1997). The papers are individual accounts of students' perceptions of English speech sounds as analyzed in texts that students recorded from audiovisual sources.

Students learned that the English language is a *time-stressed language*, which is different from Spanish, and that their Spanish language has a great influence over what they *perceive* and *produce*. Language works as a system, but also has the practical and direct function of communication.

Language as a system, from the students' view, combines perceptive and acoustic phonetics (physical aspect) and cognition. Students' perception and production of the foreign language had a Spanish phonological imposition over their foreign language reception and production, but in the analysis of phonetics and phonology this reception and production became the focus of attention, making students aware of how this reception-production of foreign speech sounds took place. Syntax (grammar), speech sounds (second language phonology), writing, reading, and speaking all have structure. That is, a system. Meaning, though, cannot be placed in a rigid system. This shows the relativity of linguistics.

The psychological reality of phonology means *ability* and at the same time knowledge or *rule*, much like in contemporary phonological theory (Linell, 1979/2009): the phonological regularities of particular languages (rules) intersect with the psychological reality of a community of speakers. This allows speakers of a community to identify who belongs to the community or who is foreigner (Linell, 1979/2009). The psychological reality

of language in terms of ability and rule were combined in most of these final papers. Rule and ability, however, fell short, as meaning was involved. The problem of the utterance, the word, and the sentence was evident throughout this process. Intertextuality of audio, visual, printed, and semiotic texts in general helped this mediation in a dialogical relationship. The listener was not passive in this process of meaning making (Bakhtin, 1986b). Perception of the environment became a virtual stimulus-oriented mediation where system and meaning established dialogical relationships.

4) What intertextual relations (dialogues with other types of texts) helped students interpret the foreign language?

In the final papers of EPP, students established intertextual relations with: 1) the verbatim sample; 2) the reading and pedagogical material of the course of EPP; 3) the visual and audio texts; 4) the texts that they found on the internet to elicit information about words and meanings; 5) the information given in class; and 6) other texts that students had read or been exposed to.

Students already brought with them the intertextual relations they had established with the English language through: 1) their primary and secondary education experience; 2) the information that motivated them to study an English-language major with the purpose of using English in their future professional careers—which does not necessarily include teaching for many; 3) their experience in other language courses (English and/or Spanish); 5) a wealth of knowledge from other majors; 6) their perception of the world; 7) the constructed motivation of the language that comes from intertextual readings of the Other.

The final papers of EPP were constructed papers where there was a model to copy provided by the instructor. This final paper, as Bakhtin said (1986a), had a “plan (intention)” and a “realization of this plan” (p. 104). The intention for the instructor was to modify a learning behavior, and for the students to learn to be good speakers, good listeners, and to be able to improve their communicative skills in the foreign language (perception learning, Gibson, 1969). Students struggled with the texts in EPP readings, transcriptions, oral production, and in writing. These struggles had to do with being learners of the foreign language with different levels of language competence. For the ones with more advanced skills, intertextual connections might have been easier from the point of view of understanding the texts in English faster. This does not mean that they did not struggle with the subject matter of the course, the concepts, and their application. For the more advanced English-language learners, knowing more about the language allowed them to focus more on learning the subject matter. It was usually these students who contributed extraordinary comments and views in writing. For students with lower skills in English, tasks were difficult. This did not stop them from giving great insightful observations and analyses (e.g., students who analyzed *The Simpsons*, *My Soul to Take*, *Ellen’s Show*, and others). Their low English levels did not mean that students were unable to think at the abstract level. Their Spanish already allowed them to be aware of language learning strategies. They established interesting connections between the two languages contributing with great insights.

The final papers used ideas from external texts. They were constructed at a specific time and in a local space, Bogota (see Pennicook, 2010). As such, they incorporated the ideologies of the instructor at the moment of writing. Students also mixed the academic text

with texts coming from popular culture, news, and information that were around between 2010 and 2012. The intertextual connections with the world of American television (politics, comedy, TV shows, news, and movies) recreated the virtual reality of the foreign language for the majority; for a minority, it was the British and a few foreign-accented speakers who opened the window to other worlds. The ideologies and representations of *foreign worlds* that students have created about EFL through the media are questionable. This intertextuality is usually fragmented and only limited: texts only frame aspects of a reality according to what the authors want to express.

The semantic problems that students found transcribing the verbatim samples had to do with a lack of a wide range of vocabulary and more exposure to sociocultural aspects of the foreign culture. The verbatim samples, belonging to another culture, had dialogical and dialectical semantic problems of their own. For Bakhtin (1986a) a text establishes relationships with other texts and also has boundaries. In this sense, the text has limitations. The interpretation of a foreign language is mostly semiotic. Approaching the Other's reality is done in a restricted, indirect way: virtually. Foreign-language learners are readers of semiotic signs. They can be compared with readers of novels: readers invent the worlds and culture portrayed in novels in their minds. So do the listeners and consumers of media texts. Readers of novels perceive, reinvent, and recreate the intangible reality described in a novel. The same should be said about consumers of visual texts: foreign language and culture are virtual experiences.

The problem of the foreign language environment is partially remedied through a pedagogy of texts. Currently, technology makes the use of more virtual texts available. Virtual texts, printed texts, audiovisual, and audio texts, give a framed approximation to the

foreign language and culture. This will never compare to the real experience of living in the natural linguistic community where the target language is spoken.

Having answered the four sub-questions, I now turn to the main question in this dissertation:

What can we learn about students' perception of English foreign language based on the final papers from an English phonetics and phonology class?

Students reported in the survey that their perceptions of EFL in the EPP course came first from their previous involvement with the target language throughout their school years and their personal dialogic connection with the target language (local language perception). The EPP course was a mediator between the target language and students' previous experience with English. Students brought to class views and interpretations of the speech-sound system they were using and hearing. The learning experience that took place in EPP was a developmental process of language awareness in the four language skills. *The Four Steps* process built on students' language perception of EFL (listening), academic discourse of the discipline of EPP, and writing. Students perceived the differences between their Spanish-accented English and the speakers in their verbatim samples. This was an important issue, because most students had never considered recording their voices and comparing them with native speakers. For the listening skill, metacognition helped students make this comparison.

Two themes in perceptual learning, discovery, and enrichment (Gibson, 1969) appeared in the data: 1) modification of behavior once students were exposed to stimulation, and 2) enriched sensory experience where students associated information and interpreted the phenomenon of speech. These led to personal and group discoveries.

Some Contradictions in This Study

The issue of the utterance, words, and sentences emerges in students' efforts to understand *meaning*. The relationship between language as a *system* and meaning is complex. In this relationship concepts such as *utterance*, *word*, *sentence*, and *meaning*, converge. The utterance encapsulates meaning, according to Bakhtin (1986b). The *utterance*, is the unit of *expressive meaning* and *thought* for Bakhtin (1986b). The utterance is dialogical and gives expression, feeling, and life to our communication. In his philosophy of language, “[t]he word is clearly divided into small sound units—syllables—syllables are divided into individual speech sounds or phonemes...” Bakhtin (1986b, p. 70). The word and the sentence are *system* for Bakhtin (1986b). For Ladefoged and Johnson (2011) speech is composed of segments (vowels and consonants); they form syllables, and these in turn make utterances. The sentence is a grammatical concept. When we speak we utter words, interjections, sentences. An interjection is an uttered sound with meaning: emotion. An interjection may be considered a word, so the discussion about an utterance and a word is a philosophical and linguistic one.

In Vygotsky (1986), the word is the unit that encapsulates meaning, seen from a sociocultural perspective (which includes the psychological, the social, the cultural, and the historical). In Vygotsky's view, words recall images, situations, things, people, places, and so on, attaching a constructed personal and sociocultural meaning. They are not just associations of objects. In a word, the semantic and the nominative systems are combined. This explains why foreign language students approaching the target language have problems of understanding. The meaning of foreign words is not self-evident to foreign language learners. Learning a foreign language is not just acquiring vocabulary and syntax and

transferring them to the new language. In comprehension, translating word for word literally from the target language to the native one may not work. In these two processes (speaking and translating for comprehension) sociocultural meaning is crucial. The concepts of words may change between languages, even when we think they mean the same: e.g. *grey* hair and *white* hair in English and *cabeza cana*, *cabeza blanca*, *una cana*, *un pelo blanco*. Translators know this much better.

Underlying the linguistic *system* is the concept, “*meaning through language*” (Mahn, 2012, p. 100). Seeing language as a *system* subsides when we see that meaning is beyond system and that system gives support to meaning. The issue of the *utterance* and the *word* in Bakhtin and Vygotsky may be contradictory. For Bakhtin, the word is embedded in the utterance. Both scholars wanted to highlight the fundamental importance of *meaning*. For Bakhtin, word meant a symbol in a language represented with certain linguistic features, for Vygotsky, word connected between thought and meaning. A single word, when it is uttered in context, becomes an utterance. Both scholars criticized structuralism in psychology, linguistics, and literary studies (stylistics) for having lost the essence of language which is *meaning*.

Another contradiction that I see in this dissertation has to do with foreign language adults and Vygotsky’s theory of sociocultural elementary psychological functions in children. I eminently worked with adults who were supposed to be beyond the pre-conceptual level. That is, they were at the level of *true concepts*, and thus they used higher psychological functions. These were adults in the process of learning a foreign language at the same time that they were acquiring concepts in a specific discipline. Many of these students did not even handle the phonetic and phonological concepts in their native

language, Spanish—nobody does unless one studies phonetics and phonology. Students' understanding of the jargon of the discipline in foreign language showed in their description of language. How many of these students used pre-concepts, pseudo-concepts, or concepts? This question can be addressed in some other study. For now, I dare say that students showed their understanding of suprasegmentals, for example, in visual representations. In their written texts, descriptions in the foreign language were sometimes confusing. This was partly because of their novice level in writing in the discipline of phonetics and phonology, and because of their process of acquiring an academic genre in the foreign language. It was easier to understand what they meant in a face-to-face interaction than in their writing.

A third contradiction in this study results from the interdisciplinary nature of this dissertation: phonetics and phonology; foreign language learning; content-based courses in EFL; sociocultural issues in language learning; and texts. Terms and concepts from several fields and disciplines mixed. The quantitative paradigm in language research of the discipline of phonetics and phonology was somehow contradictory in a qualitative research that explored how students expressed their ideas about phonetics and phonology. There were times when more quantitative data would have supported the qualitative one, and vice versa. The nature of the final papers was also a contradiction in the field of phonetics and phonology. In short, this was a borderline study that was framed in a teaching practice that took into account the participants and their academic needs, as inferred by the instructor: foreign language learners; future language professionals; EFL users in a global village; future researchers and/or teachers (perhaps). Above all, as an instructor, I wanted students to be able to communicate more naturally and spontaneously.

Findings and Recommendations

I will present the findings in four sections: 1) the final papers; 2) students' contribution to the EPP course; 3) foreign language content-based courses; and 4) improving foreign language skills: beyond EPP.

The final papers. The final papers were a description about a foreign language from a basic phonetic and phonological perspective. At the same time, they were a reflection about learning how to listen for English-language speech sounds, and how to utter them. This served to compare how the speakers in the verbatim samples used speech and how Colombian students were able to perceive and articulate these same speech sounds. By the time students did their own vocal impressions of the speakers students had listened to them so many times that they had become comfortable with the voices and the characteristics of the speakers' speech. Reading, listening, writing, and speaking combined with the use of grammar, concepts of language, specific jargon related to the field of phonetics (and some of phonology), and how to put these ideas together in a formal paper.

The final papers showed a plan, or an intention, and the "realization of this plan" (Bakhtin, 1986a). For the instructor it was a form of evaluation, learning, and writing practice. For the students it was a way to analyze and experience language. This was about perceiving where they fit in this English-language world. Students' papers dealt with interconnected ideas, dialogic relationships, and technical aspects of language.

Although all the papers shared the same structure invented by the instructor, each paper was unique. All students put in them their distinctive view of the language. Moreover, the variety of media genres that they chose from the Internet offered accents, idiosyncrasies, idiolects, language melodies, and emotions. The verbatim samples offered a wealth of

vocabulary, expressions, and a more natural language use. The verbatim samples were welcome, as they served to model language. This was a tool that allowed students to explore more aspects of the English language and have a distinct exposure to the language.

Beyond the phonetic and phonological analyses in these papers, there was reflection about language as a speech system. A confrontation of what students knew or what they did not know took place. The discovery of how this system worked seems to have given the students an understanding of how they perceived English speech sounds, and most importantly, what speakers communicated. In this discovery, students had to explore strategies that were far beyond the listening tasks. The activity of written and phonetic transcription made students find ways to mediate between the foreign language and students' understanding of speech sounds and meaning.

Students' contribution to the EPP course. The students brought their accumulated knowledge and experience of their own native and foreign language to the EPP course. Students perceived the differences in foreign language skills, competence, and knowledge and acknowledged where these fit in the course. My idea of the course was to deal with all these levels and to evaluate students' individual efforts and personal perceptions of the new language. The EPP course was a dialogical construction where the instructor proposed activities and students diligently performed them. They contributed with their knowledge and inquisitive minds through the final project.

From students' final papers and their answers in the post-experience survey, I could infer that students' main motivation was to understand and to be understood. Deciphering the speech in their verbatim samples was to get to the actual words and meanings of the speakers. Understanding why there were utterances that they could not figure out, no matter

how many times they listened to them, seemed to pay off in the end. This opened a threshold of possibilities. Although the grade was important, most students responded to the challenge because of their motivation to understand the underlying phonological system of a foreign language that they *like, love, feel passionate* about, and for some, a language that they are *good at* and feel highly eager to learn.

Students also had speech communication skills that allowed them to read speakers' gestures, actions, behaviors, and so on. These students learned to read visual texts, to interact with them, and to establish dialogical ways to become active listeners. The foreign language student lives in the virtual world of texts. The distant foreign culture and language (in space and time) is conveniently mediated through psychological, strategic, and technological tools. Students showed a great capacity to find tactics to understand foreign worlds. These students were seekers of information. Students brought their knowledge of technology, news, and American popular culture to their academic work.

Content-based courses and pedagogy. The structure of the EPP content-based course opened a space for exploring academic discourse of the second genre. The course was difficult to implement: foreign language pedagogy in combination with the pedagogy for English phonetics and phonology. Exercises, instructions, activities and tasks for the students in this course try to mediate between the content, the foreign language, and meaning. The students' varying levels of proficiency complicated the course too. The instructor trial and error attempts allowed me to find a way to have students rehearse the roles of language analysts, language users, and language professionals.

The pedagogy of content-based courses is difficult to implement. It needs to be theoretically, strategically, methodologically, and linguistically supervised. It would be

advisable to use the modality of *adjunct* content-based course. In this type of course, an expert second-language linguist or educational linguist with advanced English language skills teaches the subject matter. A second expert with knowledge in second-language instruction and learning supervises and evaluates students' production (writing and speaking) and comprehension (listening and reading). This second language instructor would also need to have some knowledge of the subject matter in question. Foreign language students need constant feedback; they also require instruction on how they can improve their foreign language skills.

The issue of writing an academic paper for EPP for third semester students is questionable. Perhaps a less demanding paper at this level would suffice and more guided pronunciation exercises should be used at the suprasegmental level.

Improving foreign language skills: Beyond EPP. The participants who answered the survey said they had improved their foreign language skills. One finding is that there are not many opportunities for students to practice foreign language speaking skills out of the classroom and in informal and formal contexts. This adds to the fact that from the sixth semester on, students stop having foreign-language courses and content-based courses taught in English for these students are few, if nonexistent.

Adult students will show varying improvements in the foreign language over time, depending on the quality of exposure to the foreign language, the learners' linguistic ability, and students' motivation to find ways to practice the language. Nevertheless, biological, cultural, and personal factors can limit what foreign language students will be able to do in the foreign language, irrespective of motivation.

Vygotsky's (1934) problem of the environment needs to be considered seriously in foreign language teaching and learning. In an environment devoid of the natural linguistic stimuli in the target language, such as that of foreign language learners, stimuli in the classroom will have to be planned and strategically organized for students to learn. This stimulus can lead to language awareness and discovery, enriching students' experiential learning. Learning any language in an instructional environment is just an approximation to the foreign language. Perception between foreign and second language environments is not the same, even though most people want to think it is.

Recommendations. Several recommendations come out of this study that could help improve current teaching and learning practices in EFL. Specifically, I addressed the problem of the instructional environment of undergraduate learners majoring in foreign language in Colombia. These recommendations are for foreign language professionals in the areas of language learning and teaching.

1. Stereotypes embedded in the perception of language and culture need to be addressed when teaching foreign languages so that students understand that what we learn in instructional environments is a representation of the target language and its culture: This learning may limit in some way our natural expressiveness in the foreign language and may distort our perception. Classrooms are contrived places, so any attempt to opt for a more natural practice will need good planning. Exploring stereotypes with the students would allow them to perceive how we construct the Other's reality through texts and our lenses. By critically reflecting on local practices, and by reexamining what we do as foreign language learners and instructors, we will be able to demystify the issue of language perfection: nativeness and nonnativeness; variety of accents; EFL and native-language hearing and

listening limitations; and second and foreign language environments. We need to understand that texts change us and are at the core of EFL instruction. They change our perception and consequently our behavior. Texts are constructed by people and they influence how we see the Other.

2. A single basic course in *English Phonetics and Phonology* is not enough to explore the complex issues of second-language phonology. The student population that enrolls in EPP needs this knowledge as language users, language professionals, future teachers and perhaps researchers. Because of this population, the course should be versatile in the use of theory and practical application. English Phonetics and phonology addresses concepts that are specific to second language phonology. The wealth of information in this field should be available for students and faculty members in the field of EFL. We all should learn more about this discipline.

3. Content-based courses are an open alternative to construct academia in collaboration. The adjunct model would be a good alternative to implement an EPP course collaboratively: faculty members of linguistics and foreign language courses. This would allow for subject-content matters that need to be explained from the specialist in EPP in collaboration with the second/foreign language expert. We also construct learning communities in association with people who question issues of language. Our students are a wealth of knowledge. Research resulting from confronting ideas in communities may benefit us all.

4. Immersion in the four language skills in meaningful projects about language learning will help students to be aware of the language. Technology is only a tool, a mediator that helps nonnative instructors and students to get information, to bring the

foreign language and culture to the classroom, and to see other worlds, but technology is not a project by itself. We need to model language learning by integrating technology to serve students' personal learning purpose. We also need to allow them to question the tool and if it is serving students' personal linguistic needs and interests. Current technology helps instructional environments devoid of external natural speaking communities. This is the way to expose students to authentic audiovisual texts.

5. According to what students expressed in the survey, there is a great need for an open space for oral communication practice (speaking, pronunciation, and listening combined). This space should not replicate the environment of the classroom. It should be a space where students can rehearse what they have learned. These places should be anxiety free by providing understanding and support for the foreign language (no evaluation or testing threats). These places are needed to help students expand their communicative abilities to express themselves more naturally. These places should be the space to question what we perceive and do in language: native and foreign. The final projects showed that listening to natural texts imply linguistic and sociocultural knowledge and personal abilities. Cognitive and metacognitive exploration of the four language skills and how they are integrated may be critically addressed in these open spaces for purposes of critical awareness of language issues.

6. According to the participants' answers in the survey and student's final papers, young adults in the foreign language program at UDB come with great academic capacities to explore and question knowledge. Their great motivation to learn the language made them work hard and come up with great observations about language and their learning process. The phonetic and phonological analysis, although basic and not perfect, showed that abstract

concepts can be learned and used to describe language using the foreign language itself. Many difficult tasks for EFL learners may overwhelm them causing anxiety. Language processing takes time, and EFL learners need time to respond at their own pace so learning can take place

7. Foreign language courses should be constructed on theoretical bases about SLA, the philosophy of language, and sociocultural learning. This would in turn promote research that would revert in the population of EFL learners. Because pedagogy is always promoted in EFL undergraduate programs in Colombia, an interesting issue would be to question how we are constructing this pedagogy critically. The pedagogy that I used in EPP was created out of my necessity to accommodate to a population of foreign language learners, their linguistic necessities, and what the content of the course could offer. This pedagogy needs to be opened to the academic community and questioned. The course materials produced for EPP need to be the focus of research in the near future. It would be best to evaluate and analyze all this in collaboration with other faculty members who have taught EPP.

Limitations and Final Words

The distinct nature of this qualitative research made it both interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary. The study of language, education, and social context placed the phenomenon of foreign language perception in an intricate position to provide a sole answer to the main question and the four sub-questions. This study proposed to cross reference the fields of education (practitioner research/document(ary) analysis); linguistics and philosophy of language (language genres); second/foreign language learning; and social sciences (social meaning/sociocultural theory/local practices), but in so doing, the research

also had some limitations: the bulk of information was massive and the different approaches (depending on the various disciplines) diverted the researcher's attention and focus. More detailed analysis and further inquiry was needed for each aspect of perception of EFL. The study of language includes both system and context, for the sign can only be complete and meaningful when these two forms integrate in the communicative act. Meaning cannot do without the internal units that are related as a system forming a code; the same holds true for the external interrelationships of these codes with other associated signs in the social and cultural context (Jakobson & Halle, 1980, referring to Peirce, 1932, 1934).

Here, the methodologies, the methods, and the philosophical and empirical background from diverse disciplines needed to be mixed and bridged. This was not easy, neither was the phenomenon of foreign language perceptions and meanings embedded at the same time in the phenomenon of education. Moreover, second/foreign and native language was at the core of this study, for it is through language that we perceive and make sense of the world and the Other. In the end, this was an ontological and epistemological inquiry.

I have to mention that as a researcher, I used my critical and reflective lens as much as my perception allowed me to. This is why I presented the data in three chapters using qualitative content analysis. This method permitted me to reflect on the words and meanings expressed by the participants. This strategy supported my distance from the three sources of data, with the purpose of presenting an interpretation of this teaching-learning experience as truthful as possible.

My emic and etic perspectives were blurry at times. One positive aspect was that the analysis of the data took place with no teaching practice going on at the same time. This was a limitation as well: relying only on memories and written documents, without the direct

dialogical relationship with the participants curtailed important information. More dynamic portrayals of this learning experience could have been obtained, but this was somehow subsided by the participants' voices in the post-experience survey.

Different from most research in education, this quantitative research took on two new methodologies: document analysis and practitioner research. This places this study at a distinct level from most qualitative approaches in education, the social sciences, and foreign language research. In the same way, the classification of the data was unlike qualitative research: primary and secondary data. This was deliberately made to give preeminence to students' papers as a result of a second/foreign-language learning experience. This research was interdisciplinary: philosophies, disciplines, and paradigms interconnected. This makes this research a borderline hybrid study. The peril of such a study is that deeper discussion of every topic that emerges from the data needs to be curtailed for the sake of showing the broad phenomenon. Adjusting methods, methodologies, and reconciling philosophical epistemologies was an intricate endeavor. Language reality surpasses research.

Appendix A

The 20 Papers in This Study or Primary Data

MEDIA GENRE	No. OF PAPERS	No PART IICIP	TITLES GIVEN TO PAPERS BY RESEARCHER	COHORT		NAMES	Grade* 15% E 85% C	Group Coding
				Term	Class			
JOURNALISTIC REPORTS	1	1	China Yellow River	Fall 2010	01	Vivian	3.0	1
	1	2	Bangkok	Fall 2011	02	John & Daisy	4.4	2
	1	2	Animals Not Clowns	Fall 2011	01	Kim & Luisa	4.3	3
	1	2	Argentine's House	Spring 2012	02	Gloria & Daniel	4.6	4
TV SERIES COMEDIES SHOWS	1	2	Ellen DeGeneres	Fall 2011	01	Clara & Sergio	3.3	1
	1	2	That Girl	Fall 2011	02	Luis & Pilar	3.6	2
	1	3	Benn Stiller	Spring 2012	01	Yury, Penny & Nestor	4.0	3
	1	3	The Big Bang Theory	Fall 2010	01	Elsa, Felix & Jose	4.0	4
MOVIES	1	3	Batman	Spring 2012	01	Aura, Vicky & Gracia	4.8	1
	1	3	The Wedding Dress (Movie: Bride Wars, Scene: the International Butter Club)	Fall 2010	01	Lara, Pam & Leo	5.0	2
	1	2	Forrest Gump	Spring 2012	02	Brandon & Mauro	3.0	3
	1	1	My Soul to Take	Fall 2011	02	Angel	3.6	4
CARTOONS	1	3	Shrek 2	Fall 2010	01	Pablo, Andrés & César	4.5	1
	1	2	The Road Runner	Fall 2010	01	Naomi & Juan	4.4	2
	1	2	The Simpsons	Fall 2011	01	Christine & Miguel	4.7	3
LECTURE	1	2	Architecture	Spring 2012	01	Mateo & Carl	5	4
INTERVIEWS	1	1	Obama	Spring 2011	02	Aldo	3.4	1
	1	2	Letherman & Emma	Fall 2011	01	Miley & Adriana	4.7	2
	1	3	NPR (Radio Program)	Fall 2010	01	Chris, Alma & Stella	4.7	3
	1	3	Scottish TV Interview	Spring 2012	02	Lucy, Dario & Edward	4.5	4
6 Media Types of Genres	20 Papers	44 Writers	20 Titles	4 Cohorts	Papers per class 01: 13 02: 7	F= 22 M= 22	GPA C01=4.3 C02=3.87 GPA= 4.1	Total # Groups: 4

Five Media Genres:

- (1) Journalistic Reports: Four Papers
- (2) TV Series, Comedies and Shows: Four Papers
- (3) Movies: Four Papers
- (4) Cartoons: 3 Papers
Scientific Lecture: 1 Paper
- (5) Interviews: 4 Papers

A total of 20 papers. Total number of participants: 44 (22 Females and 22 Males).

GPA for Class 01: 4.3

GPA for Class 02: 3.87

Total GPA: 4.1 over a scale of 5.

Number of participants per group: Three groups with only one participant each for a total of 3. Ten groups with two participants each: total 20; and seven groups with three participants each, for a total of 21 participants.

Number of Groups	Number of Participants	Total
3	One participant per group	3
10	Two participants	20
7	Three participants	21
Total= 20 Groups/ 20 Papers		Total Number of Participants = 44

* The 100% grade came out of adding editing (15%) and content (85%).

**Complete Names of Video and Audio Sources Where Students Recorded their
Verbatim Samples (VS) From**

No.	Name Used In This Study	Title of Movie/ Video/ Audio Source	CITATION
1	China Yellow River	<i>BBC News - China's Famous Yellow River Is Fading</i> [Video file]	Adam85isalive.(2007, March 24)
2	Bangkok (Floodwaters)	<i>Main floodwaters reach Bangkok</i> [Video file]	Voice of America Video. (201, October 21)
3	Animals Not Clowns	<i>Animals Are Not Clowns</i> [Video file]	The Captive Animal Protection Society. (2010, April 13)
4	Argentine's House	<i>Argentine Man Makes House From Plastic Bottles</i> [Video file]	Voice of America Video. (201, October 21).
5	Ellen DeGeneres	<i>Ellen's monologue - 09/30/10</i> [Video File]	The Ellen Show. (2010, October 19)
6	That Girl	<i>New Girl-First Look Trailer</i> [Video file]	Mariie0513. (September 12, 2011)
7	Benn Stiller	<i>Between Two Ferns With Zach Galifianakis: Ben Stiller</i> [Video file]	(Unknown). (200?) ⁸⁴
8	The Big Bang Theory	<i>The Big Bang Theory - " How Do you guys became friends???"</i> [Video file]	soriaiaserrao. (2009, January 23)
9	Batman	<i>Batman: The Dark Knight</i> [Motion picture]	Nolan, C., et al. (2008)
10	The Wedding Dress	<i>Bride Wars</i> [Motion Picture]	Cohen, Filley, Hudson, Lube, Riche, Riche, & Yorn (2009)
11	Forrest Gump	<i>Forrest Gump</i> [Motion picture]	Finerman, W., et al. & Zemeckis, R. (Director). (1994)
12	My Soul to Take	<i>My Soul to Take</i> [Motion Picture]	Wess, C., et al. (Producers) & Wess, C. (Director). (2010)
13	Shrek 2	<i>Shrek 2</i> [Motion Picture]	Katzenberg, J., et al. (2004)
14	The Road Runner	<i>Coyote Finally Killed The Road-Runner</i> [Video file]	Kui Quang Ton. (2011, February 11)
15	The Simpsons	<i>When You Dish Upon a Star</i> [Television series episode]	Appel, R. (Writer), & Michels, P. (Director). (1998)

⁸⁴ Video File not found on web site.

16	Architecture	<i>Using Nature's Genius in Architecture. TED salon London</i> [Video file]	Pawlyn, M. (2010)
17	Obama	<i>Obama Interview CNN: Wolf, Blitzer, The Situation Room.</i> [Video file]	Rudygal333. (2008, October 31).
18	Letherman & Emma	<i>Emma Watson on David Letterman 15/11/20010/HD</i>	daniUruk. (2010, November 20)
19	NPR	<i>Finance Guy Apologizes for Housing Bubble</i> [Audio File]	NPR. (2010, October 22). ⁸⁵
20	Scottish TV Interview	<i>Scottish TV interview Simpson Lee in Blair Atholl 2006.</i> [Video file]	Jesse Lee. (2006, December 17)

⁸⁵ Audio File not found on web site.

Appendix B

Post-experience Opinions: Online Survey

University of New Mexico
Informed Consent Cover Letter for Anonymous Surveys

STUDY TITLE

Spanish-speaking Students' Perceptions of English as a Foreign Language: Sociocultural Representations of Foreign Language as Demonstrated in Academic Writing for a Phonetics and Phonology Course at a University in Bogota, Colombia

Dr. Anne Calhoun/Claudia H. Lombana from the Department of Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies (LLSS) are conducting a research study. The purpose of the study is to learn about students' perceptions about English as a foreign language as demonstrated in the papers written for the course English Phonetics and Phonology. You are being asked to participate in this study because you wrote a final project for this course in one of the courses Claudia Lombana taught between Fall 2010 and Spring 2012.

Your participation will involve answering a survey on line. The survey should take about 60 minutes to complete. Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate. There are no names or identifying information associated with this survey. The survey includes questions such as your learning experience in the course English Phonetics and Phonology, as well as your current experience about your English skills as a whole. You can refuse to answer any of the questions at any time. There are no known risks in this study, but some individuals may experience discomfort when answering questions. All data will be kept for one year in a locked file in my personal office and then destroyed. Electronic data will be destroyed too.

The findings from this project will provide information on your current views about a past foreign language experience, how you perceive it, and if this was useful in some way. This is of great value for the English Foreign Language undergraduate program, the way content-based courses are provided, and other issues about foreign language learning and curriculum planning. If published, results will be presented in summary form only.

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to call Claudia Lombana at (505)265-9484. If you have questions regarding your legal rights as a research subject, you may call the UNM Human Research Protections Office at (505) 272-1129.

By returning this survey via e-mail, you will be agreeing to participate in the above described research study.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Claudia H. Lombana

Ph.D. Candidate
Department of Language, Literacy and Sociocultural Studies
The College of Education
The University of New Mexico
The United States of America

You can answer the following questions in English or Spanish.

A. General Questions

1. Place of Birth: _____
2. How long have you lived in Bogota? _____
3. Have you been in an undergraduate program other than Modern Languages? If so, please provide the program name(s)? _____
4. Did you attend a private or a public elementary school? _____
5. Did you attend a private or public secondary school?
6. Have you ever been employed? _____
7. Have you ever been employed while enrolled at the university? _____
8. How would you describe your ethnic identity?
9. What is your native/mother language?
10. What other languages do you speak? _____
11. Why did you choose to study English?
12. How many semesters of Modern Languages have you completed? _____
13. Have you graduated? _____
14. Have you dropped out of the Modern Languages program? If yes, why did you leave the program?

B. Use of the English Language in Your Spare Time

15. How much time do you spend with English-language media during the course of an⁸⁶ average week (television programs, films, internet sites)? If other, please give specific information.
16. How often do you have informal English language conversations outside the classroom?
17. Do you repeat phrases and sentences aloud to yourself?
18. When do you usually rehearse your English speech aloud?
19. What other foreign language practice do you usually engage in out of school?

C. Questions about the Course English Phonetics and Phonology (EPP)

20. What do you think about the experience of writing the final project for English phonetics and phonology (EPP= content-based course)?
21. What do you think was most useful to you in that content-based course?
22. How did the course allow you to perceive the English language?
23. How did the readings help you understand the subject matter?

⁸⁶ Question 15 appeared in the survey on line in Part One as Question 13. I made a mistake when I uploaded the questions. Therefore, the responses to question 13 in the online survey was analyzed in Chapter 7 in the section it was originally intended: Section B.

24. Has your auditory perception of the English language improved after this course?
Please explain why or why not.
25. Has your oral production become more proficient and intelligible?
26. Why/why not should the course English phonetics and phonology be in the curriculum?
27. What did you find useful in the EPP that you still use and apply in other courses?
28. Did you complete the EPP assignments because of fear of a bad grade affecting your Grade Point Average—called PAPA in your institution?
29. What was the most difficult issue you had to deal with in this course?
30. Have you made practical use of what you have learned in EPP?
31. How many other academic papers have you written in English for other courses?
32. How did the writing experience in the EPP allow you to see the differences between English and Spanish?
33. How did the writing experience in the EPP allow you to see the differences/similarities between writing and speech (written language/oral language)?
34. What formal instruction have you received in **academic writing** in Spanish?
35. What formal instruction have you received in **academic writing** in English?

Appendix C

Phonetics and Phonology in 12 Modern/Foreign Languages

Undergraduate Programs in Colombia

No. Semester	University	Languages	Name of Course Offered	
¹	U. Pedagógica Nacional (Bogotá)	Spanish/English/French	Phonetic & Phonological Systems	Third
²	U. de La Salle (Bogotá)	Spanish/English/French	Spanish Phonetics and Phonology English Phonetics and Phonology	Second Third
³	U. Javeriana (Bogotá)	Spanish/English/French	None – But offers 4 courses on linguistics and one on lang. philosophy; 4 courses on Spanish language	
⁴	U. Libre (Bogotá)	Humanities/languages	None	
⁵	U. Inca	Humanities/languages/Spanish	Spanish Phonetics & Phonology English Phonetics & Phonology	Second Third
⁶	U. Nacional (Bogotá)	Three separate majors: English, French & German	English Phonetics & Phonology	Third
⁷	U. Distrital Francisco José de Caldas	Elem 1-5 & High Sch 6-11 Education/ English	English Phonetics & Phonology	Second
⁸	U. de Caldas	Spanish/French/English	English Phonetics & Phonology French Phonetics & Phonology Spanish Phonetics & Phonology	Fourth
⁹	U. Industrial de Santander	Licenciatura English	Phonetics & Phonology I Phonetics & Phonology	First Second
¹⁰	U. Sur Colombiana	Humanities/Foreign Languages	Information on Web page is not clear	
¹¹	U. de Antioquia	Spanish/French/English	Contrastive Phonetics & Phonology L2-L1 Contrastive Phonetics & Phonology L3-L1	Sixth Seventh
¹²	U. del Valle	English/French/Spanish	Phonology & Morphology	Second

Web Sites of the 12 Colombian Universities Mentioned in This Study

	Universities in Colombia	Title of Web Page	Web Site
1	U. Pedagógica Nacional (Bogotá)	Licenciatura en Español e Inglés	http://humanidades.pedagogica.edu.co/vercontenido.php?idp=434&idh=437
2	U. de La Salle (Bogotá)	Licenciatura en Lengua Castellana Inglés y Francés	http://unisalle.lasalle.edu.co/programas-academicos/pregrado/facultad-de-ciencias-de-la-educacion/licenciatura-en-lengua-castellana-ingles-frances
3	U. Javeriana (Bogotá)	Facultad de Comunicación y Lenguas Licenciatura	http://puj-portal.javeriana.edu.co/portal/page/portal/Facultad%20de%20Comunicacion/pre_car2_presentacion
4	U. Libre (Bogotá)	Licenciatura en Educación Básica	http://www.unilibre.edu.co/CienciasEducacion/humanidadesIdiomas/estructura-curricular.html
5	U. Inca (Bogotá)	UNINCA	http://www.unincca.edu.co/images/stories/pfd/publicidad-pregrados/p-ingles-2013.pdf
6	U. Nacional (Bogotá)	Por qué estudiar Filología e Idiomas	http://www.unal.edu.co/diracad/Procesos_curri/Divulgacion/Un_Aspirante/filologia.swf
7	U. Distrital Francisco José de Caldas (Bogotá)	Licenciatura en Educación Básica con Énfasis en Inglés	http://liclenguasmodernas.udistrital.edu.co:8080/plan-de-estudios;jsessionid=0A1A8C497AC6FD57431284E137437729
8	U. de Caldas	Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas	http://acad.ucaldas.edu.co/gestionacademica/planestudios/pensumver.asp?cod_carrera=022
9	U. Industrial de Santander	Plan de Estudios	http://www.uis.edu.co/webUIS/es/academia/facultades/cienciasHumanas/escuelas/idiomas/programasAcademicos/licenciaturaIngles/planEstudios.html
10	U. Sur Colombiana	Licenciatura en Educación Básica	http://www.usco.edu.co/pagina/lengua-extranjera
11	U. de Antioquia	Universidad de Antioquia	http://www.udea.edu.co/portal/page/portal/portal/b.EstudiarUdeA/a.Pregrado/a.ProgramasPregrado
12	U. del Valle	Escuela de Ciencias del Lenguaje	http://lenguaje.univalle.edu.co/nuevo/public/index.php?seccion=PREGRADO&pregrado=1

Appendix D
The University of New Mexico
IRB Approval

Template Letter	IRB_TEMPLATE_LETTER_Human_Research_Not_Engaged
v.1	Approved By: _____ Date: _____



November 15, 2013

Anne Calhoon
Claudia H. Lombana

Dear Dr. Calhoon:

On 01-06-14, the IRB reviewed the following submission:

Type of Review: Initial
Title of Study: **Spanish-speaking Students' Perceptions of English as a Foreign Language: Sociocultural Representations of Foreign Language as Demonstrated in Academic Writing for a Phonetics and Phonology Course at a University in Bogota, Colombia**

Investigator: Calhoon/Lombana

Study ID: IRB00114

Funding: N/A

Grant ID: N/A

IND, IDE, or HDE: N/A

Documents Reviewed: Study Protocol v122013 submitted 12-20-13.
Attachment 3 submitted 12-20-13.
Attachment 4 submitted 12-20-13.
Attachment 5 submitted 12-20-13.
Attachment 8 submitted 12-20-13
Informed Consent Cover Letter and survey submitted 12-20-13.

The IRB determined that the proposed activity is exempt from federal regulations. IRB review and approval by this organization is not required.

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are being considered and there are questions about whether IRB review is needed, please contact the UNM IRB for guidance.

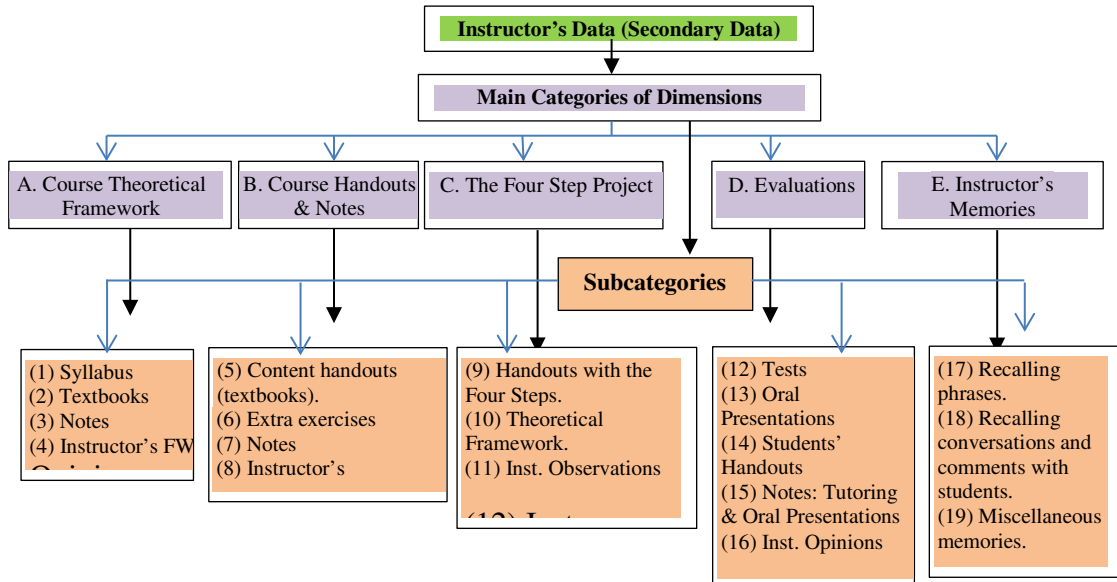
Sincerely,

J. Scott Tonigan, PhD
IRB Chair

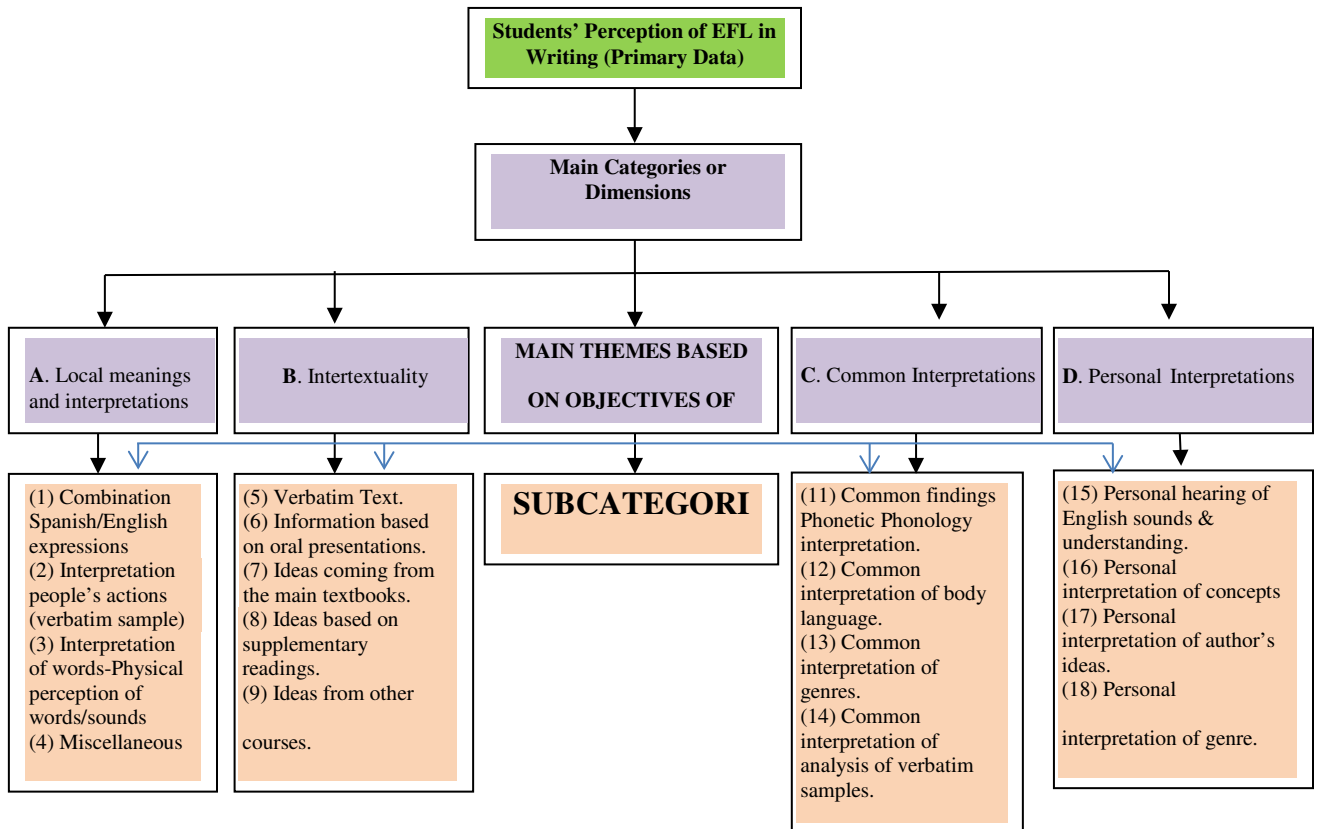
Appendix E

Coding Frame for the Three Sources of Data

QCA Structure of the Coding Frame to Analyze Instructor's Material: Hierarchical Levels

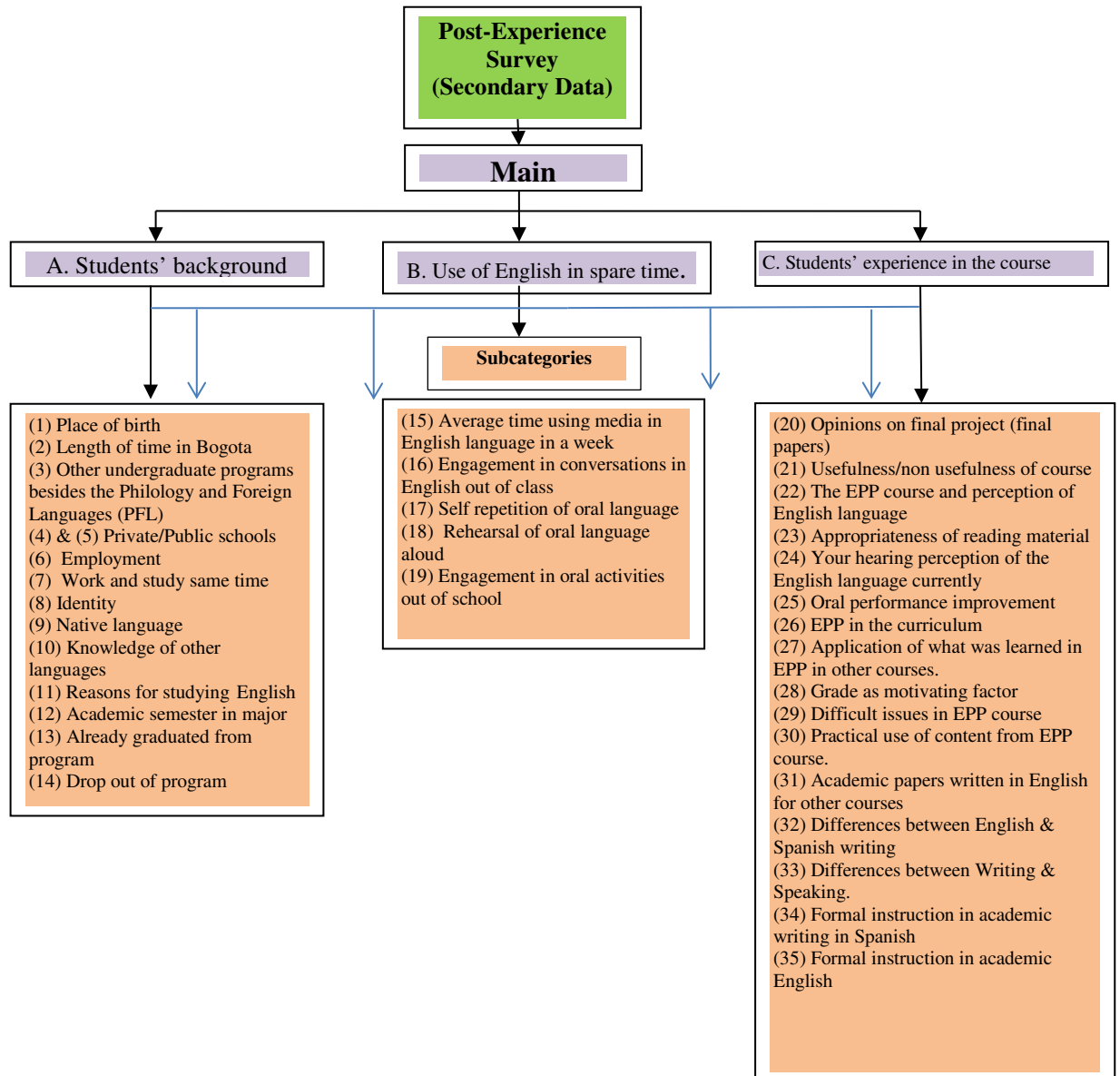


QCA Structure of Coding Frame to Students' Papers: Hierarchical Levels



QCA Structure of the Coding Frame to Analyze Information from Online Survey

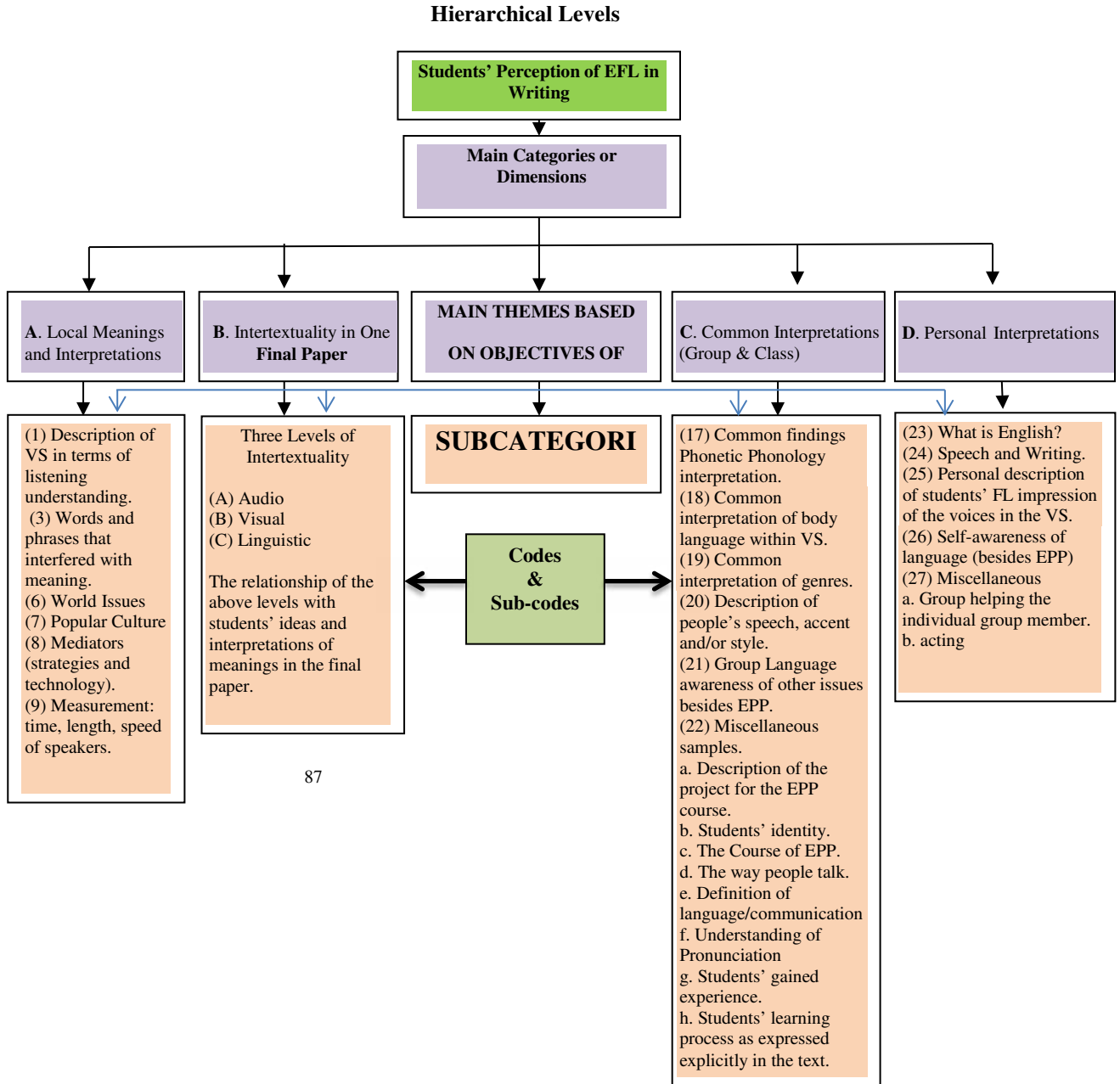
Hierarchical Levels



Final Coding Frame of Primary Data

QCA Structure of the Coding Frame Resulting from Two Coding Pilots Conducted on
2 Final Papers (10% of Primary Data)

Coding done within a 20 day interval



87

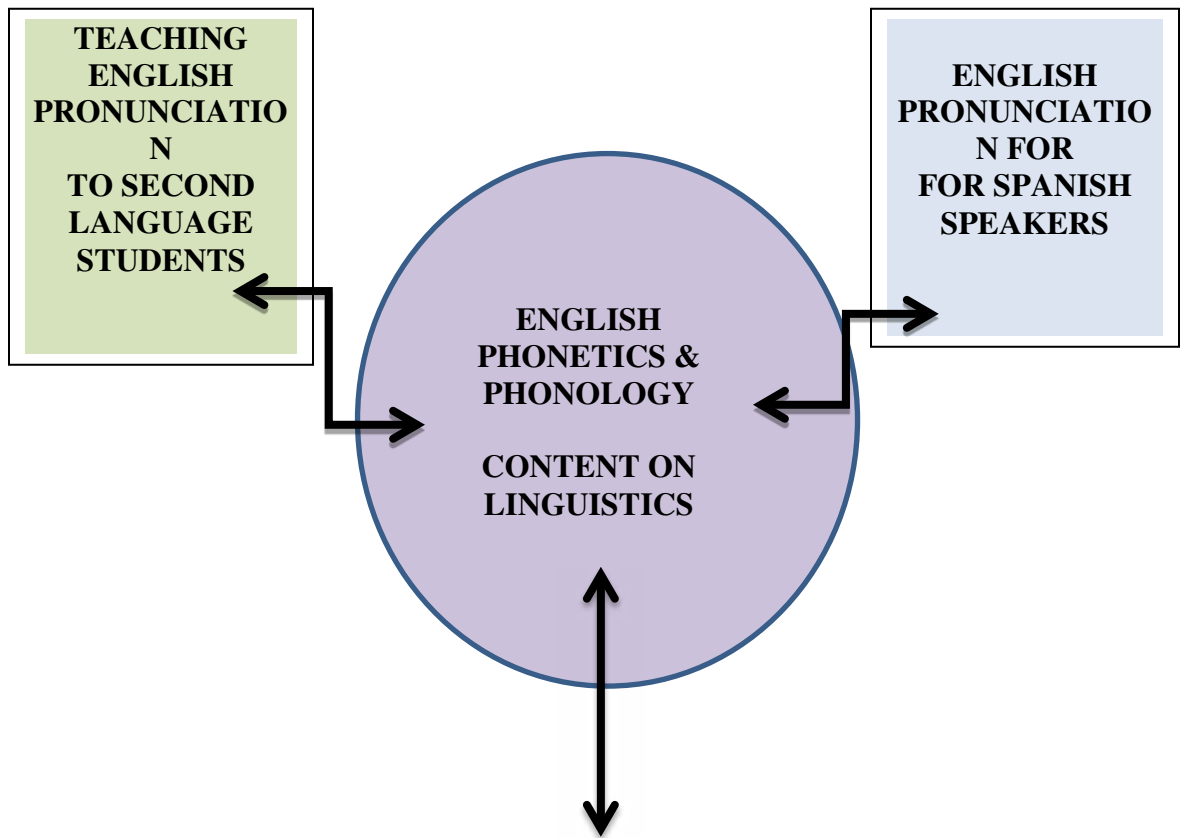
⁸⁷ The subcategories that I had created originally for the dimension *Intertextuality* were replaced by the analysis of the intertextuality in one final paper. When I tried the coding frame in two pilot phases, I adjusted it to 7 codes (from 10 to 16). Finally, I changed the whole dimension by adopting the intertextual analysis in only one final paper, so the chart shows this change in the three levels of intertextuality: audio, visual, and linguistic.

Appendix F

Model 1: Core Content for Content-Based Foreign Language Course

English Phonetics and Phonology

The pie chart below represents the content of the *English Phonetics and Phonology Course* that I taught between Fall 2010 to Spring 2012. I envisioned these visual relationships in the syllabus that I wrote (Lombana, 2012). The core was the linguistic theory on English phonetics and phonology; then I established connections with literature on teaching American English pronunciation to second language students and American pronunciation issues and exercises for Spanish speaking people.



Appendix G

Characteristics of Texts according to Bakhtin (1986a)

- (1) A text has a subject or author that can be the speaker or writer.
- (2) A text can be an *example*, a model.
- (3) Texts can be imagined and constructed texts (e.g. For linguistic and stylistic purposes)
- (4) In my opinion, texts can be natural constructions (e.g. drafts)
- (5) The first problem of the text is its limits. The text is an utterance and as such has two aspects: a “plan (intention) and a realization of this plan” (p. 104). These aspects are interrelated and have struggles: This “determines the nature of the text” (p. 104).
In the first problem, the text is “an utterance” defined as such because of two aspects: 1) “its plan (intention) and the realization of this plan.” These aspects are interrelated, have struggles, this “determines the nature of the text.” Struggles include “slips of the tongue in speech; errors in writing (in short, problems of unconscious speech or writing). In the process of text making, speakers can fail to fulfill their phonetic intention, and writers can lose their thread of thinking. We rephrase, plan again, repeat, rethink, etc.
- (6) The second problem of the text has to do with subject who is reproducing the text (this can be a researcher, a novelist, and so on): here the subject can use other texts, reframe or create new texts, evaluate, comment, object.
- (7) Texts have direct and indirect points of view which are situated in special-temporal positions of the speakers and/or writers.
- (8) Texts have interconnected ideas, realized in utterances (p. 105).
- (9) Texts have “dialogic relationships among texts and within the text. Their special nature—which is beyond linguistics. Texts have “Dialogue and dialectics” (p. 105).
- (10) Texts can have two poles: 1) a clear text: One which uses a “collective system of signs, [this is a particular] language” (p. 105); and 2) a text devoid of communication and clarity, but that still can mean something.
- (11) There are, nor can there be any pure texts. They are constructed in space and time (the chronotopic in the text)
- (12) Texts have technical aspects: “graphics, pronunciation, and so forth” (p. 105)
- (13) First pole of the text: Text as an understood, conventional text within a given collective; the text as a system of signs, a language. Behind each text stands a language system. This makes texts repeatable, reproducible. The text conforms to a language system.
- (14) Second pole of the text: the text as a creation: The text as an *utterance* “is individual, unique, and unrepeatable, and herein lies its entire significance (its plan, the purpose of which it was created).” (p. 105). This refers to the text itself and the power it has to emerge from “a particular situation and in a chain of texts (in the speech communication of a given area)” (p. 105). “This pole is linked not with emblems (repeatable) in the system of the language (signs), but with other texts (unrepeatable) by special dialogic (and dialectical, when detached from the author) relations” (p. 105)
“This second pole is inseparably linked with the aspect of authorship and has nothing to do with natural, random single units; it is realized completely by means of the sign system of the language” (p. 105) This has to do with how the author breaks up the units, establishes the boundaries, gives effects and functions to these units, give phonological and phonetic features to what is said.
- (15) Texts have a semantic problem, which is dialectical and dialogic: The interrelations of the text with other texts; with a historical time and space; and the relationship with its boundaries: limits of the text.
- (16) A text, “(as distinct from the language as a system of means) can never be completely translated, for there is no potential single text of texts.” (p. 106)
- (17) The problem of the “meeting of two texts—of ready-made and the reactive text being created—and, consequently, the meeting of two subjects and two authors.” (p. 107)

- (18) The text is not a thing, and therefore the second consciousness, the consciousness of the perceiver, can in no way be eliminated or neutralized. (p. 107)
- (19) First Pole: The language –the language of the author, of the genre, the trend, the epoch; the national language (linguistics), and finally, toward a potential language of languages (structuralism, glossemantics). It is also possible to proceed toward the second pole—toward the unrepeatable event of the text. (p. 107)
- (20) “All possible disciplines in the human sciences that evolve from the initial given of the text are located somewhere between these two poles.” (p. 107)
- (21) Both poles are unconditional: the potential language of languages is unconditional and the unique and unrepeatable text is unconditional”
- (22) “The problem of the text in textology. The philosophical side of the problem.” (p. 107)
- (23) “The utterance as a whole is shaped as such by extralinguistic (dialogic) aspects, and it is also related to other utterances. These extralinguistic (dialogic) aspects also pervade the utterance from within.” (p. 109)
- (24) “Research becomes inquiry and conversation, that is, dialogue. We do not address inquiries to nature and she does not answer us. We put questions to ourselves and we organize observations and experiments in such a way as to obtain an answer. When studying man, we search for and find signs everywhere and we try to grasp their meaning.” (p. 114)
- (25) “Dialogical relations among utterances that also pervade individual utterances from within fall into the realm of metalinguistics. They differ radically from all possible linguistic relations among elements, both in language system and in the individual utterance.” (p. 114)
- (26) “Units of speech communication—whole utterances—cannot be reproduced (although they can be quoted)” (p. 128)

Appendix H

An Example of Some of the Handouts with Questionnaires and Exercises

Given to the Class

1. Fist activity based on the text by Llisterri Boix (1991): Second Week of Class

Cohorts Fall 2010, Spring and Fall 2011, and Spring 2012

Fonética y Fonología Inglesa

Agosto 10, 2010

Llisterri Boix, Joaquim. (1991). *Introducción a la fonética: El método experimental*. Autores Textos y Temas Lingüística. Colección dirigida por Carlos Subirats. Barcelona: Editorial Anthropolos.

EL ALCANCE DE LA FONÉTICA

1. ¿Qué es la fonética?
2. ¿Cuál es el objeto de estudio de esta disciplina?
3. ¿Qué se entiende por (a) fonética general y (b) fonética descriptiva?
4. ¿Qué es la fonética experimental?
5. ¿Existe una teoría fonética? ¿En qué consiste?
6. ¿En qué ramas se divide la fonética?
7. ¿Qué es la fonética sincrónica?
8. ¿Qué es la fonética diacrónica?
9. ¿Cómo define el autor la *ortología* y la *ortofonía*?
10. ¿Qué relación establece el autor entre la fonética y las lenguas extranjeras?
11. ¿Cuál es la importancia de la fonética y la lengua materna?
12. ¿Qué relación existe entre la tecnología de la voz y la fonética?

LA FONÉTICA EN LAS CIENCIAS DEL LENGUAJE

1. ¿Qué relación existe entre fonética y lingüística?
2. ¿Qué es la fonología? ¿Qué relación existe entre la fonética y la fonología?
3. ¿Cuáles son los elementos mínimos del habla para la fonética?
4. ¿Cuál es la unidad lingüística que la fonología utiliza para codificar ondas sonoras?
5. Explique lo siguiente: “Codificamos nuestros mensajes mediante fonemas, pero los producimos y los percibimos mediante los sonidos” (p. 25).
6. Defina lo que es un *fonema*.
7. Estos corchetes cuadrados [] se utilizan en una descripción _____
8. Las barras inclinadas / / nos indican que se trata de una descripción _____
9. ¿Qué son *rasgos distintivos* también llamados *pertinentes*?

LA SITUACIÓN ACTUAL DE LA FONÉTICA

1. Explique la cita de Ladefoged que aparece en las páginas 27 y 28.
2. ¿Qué formación tienen los especialistas en fonética experimental actualmente?
3. ¿Por qué se habla de la fonética como un saber de carácter interdisciplinario?
4. ¿Con qué otras ramas del saber se puede conectar la fonética?

2. The questions in the handout below were also given to the students of the four cohorts in the second week of class.

Group Discussion

August 26, 2010

Introduction: Preliminary considerations in the teaching of pronunciation.

Peter Avery and Susan Ehrlich

- (1) What views have been common about accents? Are they right or wrong?
- (2) What factors affect the acquisition of the sound system of a second language?
- (3) What is the “critical period hypothesis”?
- (4) How do socio-cultural factors affect accents?
- (5) What do the authors hold about identity and accents? Do you agree?
- (6) Do you think you could ever sound like a native speaker of English?
- (7) What kind of personality favors the advancement and improvement of a foreign accent?
- (8) What are some problems adults who speak other languages bring into the pronunciation of English?
- (9) How do you think your Spanish influences your pronunciation in English?
- (10) What do teachers need to take into account when they teach ESL?

3. Exercise given to students to discuss the second chapter in Ladefoged’s (1975). I did updates based on the newer editions 1993 and 2011 for each semester I taught the course. I made handouts and summaries for most of the assigned readings, except for the ones that I gave to the students for the discussion in Step 4.

Phonetics and Phonology

August 24, 2010

Chapter 2. Phonology and Phonetic Transcription. Peter Ladefoged.

INTRODUCTION

1. What does it mean to learn Phonetics? The author mentions 4 tasks. Which are they?
2. What do phoneticians transcribe? What is an utterance?
3. What is phonetic transcription?
4. Why are the principles of phonology important to understand phonetic transcription?

5. What does phonology involve?
6. What are phonemes?
7. What are phonemic transcriptions?

THE TRANSCRIPTION OF CONSONANTS

1. Give three examples of contrasting consonant sounds in English.
2. What is a **minimal set**?
3. How are spelling and phonetic usage different?
4. What are other phonetic symbols needed to complement the regular alphabet? Give names to the symbols or describe them.
5. What phonetic symbols does the author say he will use in this book? Give some little background about the use of these symbols.

Different Forms of Phonetic Transcription

1. Why is it that there are different styles of transcriptions?
2. What type of phonetics is the author more concerned with in this book?
3. How does the author transcribe the English sound [y] as in *yes* in this book? What are his reasons?
3. What are the [tʃ] and [dʒ] sounds for *Ladefoged*?
4. What do the above sounds mean for other books?
5. Are there any cluster sounds with the sounds [ʃ] and [ʒ]?
6. What does the author say about contrasts in British and American English in words such as “which, witch”; “why, wye”; “whether, weather”
7. How does the author call this letter θ? It is used to transcribe the sound [θ] in the word “thanks”.

THE TRANSCRIPTION OF VOWELS

1. What is the problem in transcribing English phonetically?
2. Why is the transcription of contrasting vowels in English more difficult than the transcription of consonants? The author gives two reasons.

Minimal set of words that differ in vowel sounds

1. Pronounce the vowels given in Table 2.2: (1) American English; and (2) British English. What is the difference between American English vowels and British English vowels?

Pronunciation of the following words? Heart-hot; bud-bird; here-hair-hire

2. What are diphthongs?
3. How will the author deal with the transcription of the English vowels in this book?

4. Why is the spelling of English different from the pronunciation of sounds?

5. What are the names given to the following symbols?

[ɛ] _____ [æ] _____ [ʌ] _____

[ə] _____ [ɒ] _____ [ʌ] _____

6. What is the difference in the pronunciation of monosyllable words and words that have more than one syllable?

7. What is the commonest unstressed vowel in English? What is the grammatical rule that tells you when this vowel sound is used in monosyllable words?

CONSONANT AND VOWEL CHARTS

Have a look at the two charts and ask questions about the chart if you think there are some things you don't understand.

PHONOLOGY

1. What are **alternations**?
2. What is phonological transcription?
3. What are **allophones**? Give examples.
4. What does the author say about the length of vowels?
5. What is a **broad transcription**?
6. What is a **narrow transcription**?
7. What are **diacritics**?
8. What two aspects does the author say every transcription should consider?
9. What is called a **systematic phonetic transcription**?
10. What kind of transcription is used in Ladefoged's book?
11. What is an impressionistic transcription?

Cohorts Fall 2010, Spring and Fall 2011

4. The text *One Man in a Boat* (Alexander, 1976) was given to the students once the chapters about the vowels and consonants in Ladefoged (1975; 1993; 2011) had been discussed in class. Students had to do the broad phonetic transcription, then students and instructor corrected the transcription discussing the phonetic symbols and other important issues in the transcription.

One Man in a Boat

Broad Phonetic Transcription

1 Fishing is my favourite sport. I often fish for hours without catching anything.
[ˈfɪʃɪŋ ɪz maɪ ˈfeɪvərət ˈspɔːt// aɪ ˈɔːfən ˈfɪʃ fɔː ˈaʊəz wɪˈθaʊt ˈkætʃɪŋ ˈeniθɪŋ//

2 But this does not worry me. Some fishermen are unlucky. Instead of catching
ˈbʌt ðɪs dəz nɒt ˈwɒri mi// ˈsəm ˈfɪʃərmən ar ənˈlʌki// ɪnsˈtɛd əv ˈkætʃɪŋ

3 fish, they catch old boots and rubbish. I am even less lucky. I never catch
ˈfɪʃ/ ðeɪ ˈkætʃ ɔʊld ˈbuːts ænd rʌbɪʃ// aɪ æm ˈiːvən lɛs ˈlʌki. aɪ ˈnɛvər ˈkætʃ

4 anything. Not even old boots. After having spent whole mornings on the river,
ˈeniθɪŋ// nɒt iːvən ɔʊld buːts// æftər ˈhævɪŋ ˈspɛnt hoʊl mɔːnɪŋz ən ðə ˈrɪvər/
5 I always go home with an empty bag. “You must give up fishing!” my

aɪ ˈɒlweɪz ɡoʊ ˈhoʊm wɪθ ən ˈɛmptɪ ˈbæg// ju mʌst ˈɡɪv əp ˈfɪʃɪŋ// maɪ

6 friends say. “It’s a waste of time.” But they don’t realize one important thing.
ˈfrɛndz seɪ// ɪts ə ˈweɪst əv ˈtaɪm// bʌt ðeɪ dɒnt rɪəˈlaɪz wən ɪmpɔːtənt θɪŋ//

7 I’m not really interested in fishing. I am only interested in sitting in a boat
aɪm nɒt ˈriːli ˈɪntərəstəd ɪn ˈfɪʃɪŋ// aɪ æm ˈɔːnli ˈɪntərəstəd ɪn ˈsɪtɪŋ ɪn ə boʊt

8 and doing nothing at all!!!
ænd duɪŋ ˈnʌθɪŋ æt ɔːl//

Handout Given to Cohort Spring 2011 and Fall 2011

5. This handout summarized most of the information given in Ladefoged's (1993) first five chapters, and intended to give a practical application of the concepts in a systematic strategy that would hopefully help students to read texts aloud. I have already asked for copyright permission to include Figures 2.2 (p. 38) and 4.2 (p. 81) taken from Ladefoged's third edition.

READING ALOUD AND

Applying What You Have Learned in Phonetics and Phonology

How you will prepare a reading

1. Read any given text silently for general understanding.
2. Identify **content words** vs. **function words** as well as major stress in the word syllables.

Draw a dot on top of the stressed syllable as follows: "beautiful."

3. Proceed with a *broad phonetic transcription*.
 - 3.1 Identify the **segments** in the text: (a) consonants and (b) vowels.
4. Proceed with a *narrow phonetic transcription*: analyze how consonants can be coarticulated in the text. Use allophones (diacritics). Analyze how consonants and vowels interact in certain syllables and word boundaries.

3. BROAD PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION

A. Identify Consonant Sounds in English

<p>1. Stops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /p t k b d g n m ŋ/ <p>2. Fricatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /f θ s ʃ v ð z ʒ/ <p>3. Affricates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /tʃ dʒ/ 	<p>4. Central Approximants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /w ɹ j h/ <p>5. Lateral Approximant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • /l/
---	--

B. Identify Vowel Sounds: Monophthongs

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In order to know the quality of vowel sounds, first discriminate between content words and function words. 2. Then, mark major stress on the stressed 	<p style="text-align: center;">Vowels not Included in the figure below</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. American rhotacized vowels: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) [ɜ̞] stressed: "birthday". (b) [ə̞] unstressed: "brother" (mid-central vowel)
---	--

syllables.

3. When the text has unknown words, try to guess how vowels would be pronounced taking into account how the word is spelled:

ej. [i] is usually spelled “e, ee, ea, ie, ei”: “he, see, east, niece, belief” (Poms & Dale, 1955).

4. Check up words on line or use your dictionary if you don’t know the pronunciation.

Sometimes spellings can be misleading and there are exceptions.

5. Even if you feel sure about the pronunciations of the words you can be mistaken. Perception is a tricky business.

2. British [ɜ]: “bear, her, bird”

(Ladefoged, 1993, Figure 2.2, p. 38)

From LADEFOGED. *COURSE IN PHONETICS 3E*, 3E. © 1993 Wadsworth, a part of Cengage Learning, Inc. Reproduced by permission. www.cengage.com/permissions

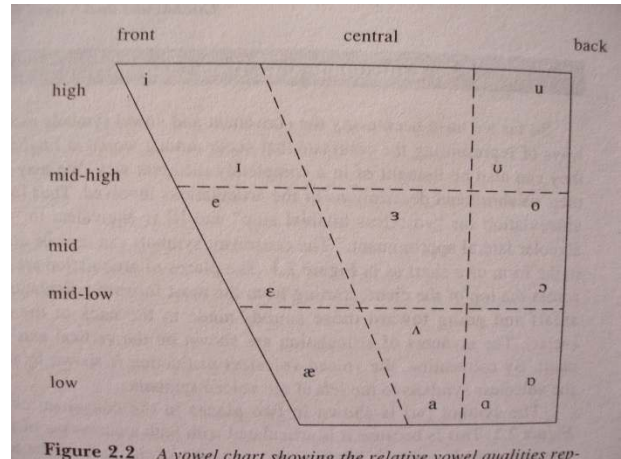
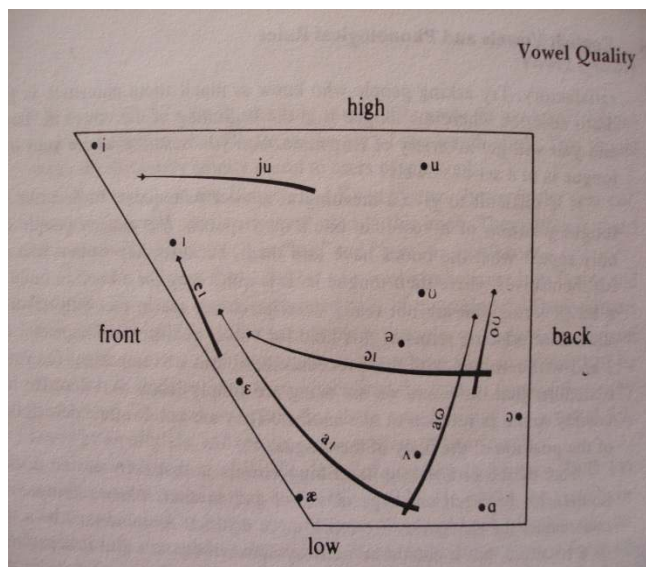


Figure 2.2. A vowel chart showing the relative vowel qualities rep-

(Ba) Identify Vowel Sounds: Diphthongs

Figure 4.2 The relative auditory qualities of some vowels of American English (Ladefoged, 1993, p. 81)

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The quality of the vowels in diphthongs

- (1) First vowel is more audible.
- (2) Second vowel is shorter and lax.

American & British English

- 1 [eɪ] May
- 2 [aɪ] my
- 3 [aʊ] caw
- 4 [oʊ] boat Am.
- [əʊ] boat Brit.
- 5 [ɔɪ] toy
- 6 [ju] you

Pay attention to the symbols used in diphthongs for phonetic transcriptions.

British English

- 7 [ɪə] = “here, beard, beer”
- 8 [ɛə] = “hair, air, pair, pear, cared, bared, bear”
- 9 [əʊ] = “hired, hire, fire”
- 10 [ʊə]

11 Some British English speakers pronounce the diphthong [ʊə] in “poor, cure”

4. NARROW PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION: USING ALLOPHONES

Identify how consonants are coarticulated in: (1) clusters; (2) same word; (3) syllables and word boundaries. Also notice how the presence of vowels and consonants can also modify consonants and vice versa. Take into account stress, unstressed and reduced syllables to identify the vowels.

Allophonic Rules for English Consonants

(1) “Consonants are longer when at the end of a phrase.”

“Most of the allophonic rules apply to only selected groups of consonants” (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2010, p. 73)

(2) Voiceless stops /p, t, d/ are aspirated when they are syllable initial: “time” [t^haɪm], “pay” [p^heɪ], “came” [k^heɪm] [t^h, p^h, k^h].

(3) Voiced obstruents (stops) /b, d, g/ and (fricatives) /v, ð, z, ʒ/ are partially voiced (a) before a voiceless sound or (b) at the end of an utterance: [b̚, d̚, g̚, v̚, ð̚, z̚, ʒ̚]

e.g. **Stops:** (a) Bob trained Ted played Two big storms
(b) It's a pub It was Ted There's a tag

Fricatives: (a) Prove Ted Breathe twice The buzz failed
[v̚] [ð̚] [z̚]
(b) Don't move You breathe It's a buzz
[v̚] [ð̚] [z̚]

Other examples: “grab, pad, Greg” [g̚ɹæb̚, p̚æd̚, g̚ɹɛg̚] and “Try to improve” [tɹaɪ tʊ ɪmproʊ̚]

ʒ= this sound is not found at the end of a syllable or utterance in English. However, it might be found in syllable boundaries (between two different words)

(4) “Voiced stops and affricates /b, d, g, dʒ/ are voiceless when syllable initial, except when immediately preceded by a voiced sound.” (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2010, p. 73)

At the beginning of a word: “day, buy, game, judge” [d̥eɪ, baɪ, geɪm, dʒʌdʒ] = partially voiced (Ladefoged, 1993, p. 50).

Except: a day, I buy, a game, the judge [ə deɪ, aɪ baɪ, ə geɪm, ðə dʒʌdʒ]

(5) /p,t,k/ voiceless stops are unaspirated after voiceless alveolar fricative /s/: spite, style, sky

(6) Voiceless obstruents /p, t, k, tʃ, f, θ, s, ʃ/ are longer than corresponding voiced obstruents / b, d, g, dʒ, v, ð, z, ʒ/ when at the end of a syllable, e.g.: Compare these minimal pairs:

mop/mob pat/pad tack/tag catch/cadge proof/prove bus/buzz wash/?

Two examples with different vowels and fricatives: breath/breathe

(7) [ɹ, w, ɹ̥, w̥] these approximants become devoiced (partially voiceless) after initial aspirated stops /p, t, k /:

“twin, try, play, cruel, cue”

[twɪn, tʃaɪ, pleɪ, kʁʊəl, kju]

(8) Consecutive stops overlap. Therefore, stops are unexploded when they are before another stop: [t̚, p̚, k̚, b̚]: “act, apt, poked” [æk̚t, ap̚t, pʊk̚t]

Eg.: robbed [rʌb̚t]; popped [pʌp̚t]; walked [wɔk̚t]; talked [tɔk̚t]

(9) [ʔ] glottal stop in syllable final /p, t, k/: tip, pit, kick [tɪʔp, pɪʔt, kɪʔ]

Does not apply to *all varieties of English*.

(10) “In many accents of English, /t/ is replaced by a glottal stop when it occurs before an alveolar nasal in the same word, as in beaten [biʔn]. Other examples are: written, Britain, important, mountain, fountain.

(11) “Nasals are syllabic at the end of a word when immediately after an obstruent, as in *leaden, chasm* [ledn̩, tʃæsm̩].

[,] syllabicity of alveolar nasal sound [n]

[n̩] at the end of a word and after an obstruent (stops & fricatives)

“mountain, Britain, beaten, written, important, captain”

[ˈmaʊntn̩, ˈbrɪtɪn̩, ˈbiʔn̩, ˈwrɪtɪn̩, ɪmˈpɔrtn̩, ˈkæptn̩]

“frozen, oven, proven, given, often, taken, bacon, broken, common, possum, chasm”

[ˈfrʊzɪn̩, ˈoʊvɪn̩, ˈprʊvɪn̩, ˈgɪvɪn̩, ˈɔfn̩, ˈteɪkn̩, ˈbeɪkn̩, ˈbrʊkɪn̩, ˈkɒmn̩, ˈkæsm̩, tʃæsm̩]

(12) “The lateral /l/ is syllabic at the end of a word when immediately after a consonant.”

[l̩] (a) at the end of a word & immediately after another consonant: (except snarl, because the /r/ makes part of the vowel)

“paddle, whistle, pistol, Bristol, chisel”

[ˈpædl̩, ˈwhɪsl̩, ˈpɪstl̩, ˈbrɪstl̩, ˈtʃɪzl̩]

(b) after a nasal: “camel, kennel, channel” (Rule 12a: liquid)

(12a) “The liquids /l/ and /r/ are syllabic at the end of a word when immediately after a consonant.”

[l, r] syllabicity [ɫ]: in most forms of American English at the end of a word and after a consonant

“sabre, razor, hammer, tailor”

[ˈseɪbɫ, ˈreɪzɫ, ˈhæmɫ, ˈtaɪlɫ]

(11) [ɾ] More American English than British English: /t/ becomes **voiced flap or tap**.

The /t/ becomes [ɾ] = t (single or double) consonant between two vowels, where the second vowel is unstressed:

“water, city, pity” [ˈwɑɾə, ˈsɪɾɪ, ˈpɪɾɪ] (single t)

“fatty, better” [ˈfæɾɪ, ˈbɛɾə] (double t)

Varieties in American English: “litter, better” (lax vowels [ɪ] for some Americans. Others pronounce the tap or flap [ɾ]).

There can be some exceptions out of the above rule: ej. “divinity” [dɪˈvɪnɪɾɪ]

Other exceptions: “attack, hasty, captive” (voiceless stop)

With tense vowels, some Americans may pronounce [t] “writer, later” or use [ɾ]

(12) [ɲ, ɽ, ʎ] dentalization of alveolar before dentals [θ, ð]: “tenth, eighth, wealth.”

Also across word boundaries: at this.

(13) /t, d/ [+alveolar] [+stop] = zero between two consonants (auditory, but may not reflect articulatory facts. (Rule 15).

“best game”, “grand master” “a post created” “trend micro”
“washed jeans” “cleaned kitchens” “walked by night”

(14) Shortening effects: two identical consonants next to one another: “big game”, “top post”, “rare road”, “drop point”, “dead deer” “class summary” “school lab” (homorganic effects)

The first consonant becomes shorter.

(15) Addition of consonants: (epenthesis: insertion of a sound into the middle of a word.

“Prince, prints”

(16) [ɫ] velarization of /l/ : “file, clap, tale”

- (a) At the end of the word
- (b) Before another consonant
- (c) After a vowel

VOWELS

(17) [ɪ̯] Vowels are longer in:

- (a) Open syllables.
- (b) Stressed syllables.

(18) [~] Vowels become nasal before nasal sounds

(19) [ɤ̞] Front vowels [i, ɪ, e, ɛ, æ] retracted: before syllable final /l/:

feel, deal, pill, pail, tell, pal,
[ˈfiɤ̞l, ˈdiɤ̞l, ˈpɪɤ̞l, ˈpeɪɤ̞l, ˈpæɤ̞l]

Small raised schwa symbol: [ə̞] before the [l]

(20) Vowel deletion [0]= zero

- (a) Unstressed vowels become voiceless (reduced) after voiceless stop and before voiceless stop: “p0tato, cat0strophe, peti0tion”
 - (b) Unstressed vowels become voiceless after voiceless stop. For some speakers, the second condition (before voiceless stop) can be omitted: “p0tato, c0ndition”
-

Appendix I

Four Samples of Summaries in Spanish Given to Students

During the First Week of Class

1. Summary made by Instructor. Reading taken from Quillis & Fernandez (1986)

Cohorts Spring 2011, Fall 2011, and Spring 2012

QUILLIS Y FERNÁNDEZ

FONÉTICA Y FONOLOGÍA

1. Fonética y Fonología.

A. Ferdinand de Saussure.

- El lenguaje y sus dos planos: lengua y habla.
- El signo lingüístico: el significante y el significado.

B. La importancia del significante para la fonética y la fonología: el aspecto fónico del signo lingüístico.

C. La enseñanza de la pronunciación.

2. Rasgos Funcionales o pertinentes y rasgos no funcionales o no pertinentes.

3. Fonema.

4. Alófono.

5. Distribución complementaria y distribución libre.

6. Oposición

7. Neutralización.

1. Fonética y Fonología

A. Ferdinand de Saussure distingue dos aspectos del lenguaje: lengua y habla.

La **lengua** es un “modelo general constante que existe en la conciencia de todos los miembros de una comunidad lingüística determinada. Es una abstracción que determina el proceso de comunicación humana. Un fenómeno social.

El **habla** es la realización concreta de la lengua en un momento y en un lugar determinados en una comunidad lingüística. Un fenómeno individual.

Cuando dos individuos hablan y se entienden comunicativamente es porque tienen en común una lengua. Esta lengua tiene unas reglas que permiten expresar ideas oralmente. La lengua se materializa a través de un acto de habla.

La lengua establece las normas por las que se rige el habla. Los planos de lengua y habla están unidos inseparablemente y constituyen el lenguaje.

Todo lo que pertenece al lenguaje tiene dos facetas: significante y significado.

Significante: la expresión. **Significado:** el concepto, el contenido, la idea. Ellos forman en **signo lingüístico**. Cada una de estas facetas del signo tiene su función en el plano de la lengua y en el plano del habla.

Significado

Significado en el habla: es una comunicación concreta.

Significado en el plano de la lengua: está representado por reglas abstractas (sintácticas, fraseológicas, morfológicas y lexicales).

Significante

Significante en el plano del habla: una corriente sonora concreta, un fenómeno físico capaz de ser percibido por el oído. Habla un número ilimitado de unidades. Número mayor de realizaciones articulatorias.

Significante en el plano de la lengua: es un sistema de reglas que ordenan el aspecto fónico del plano del habla. Existe un número finito de unidades. Número finito de realizaciones.

B. La importancia del significante para la fonética y la fonología: el aspecto fónico del signo lingüístico.

La realización del sonido [k] tiene unos matices que los hablantes no discriminan. Este sonido puede presentar diferencias de acuerdo a los otros sonidos que lo acompañen: cuna [kúna] la [k] se vuelve más posterior por influencia de la [u]. En quilo la influencia de la i hace que la “k” se vuelva

2. Summary made by the Instructor from Historia de la Lengua Española (1980)

Cohort Fall 2012, February 22 2012

1. HISTORIA DE LA LENGUA

A. Estudio Sincrónico y Diacrónico.

B. La Evolución de la Lengua.

C. La Muerte o Extinción de un Dialecto: 5 causas.

2. HISTORIA EXTERNA E HISTORIA INTERNA

A. Historia Externa: (1) ubicación: espacio temporal; (2) relaciones con otras lenguas. Estratos lingüísticos: (1) sustrato, (2) adstrato y (3) superestrato.

B. Historia Interna de una Lengua

(1) La fonética histórica (evolutiva o dinámica)

la asimilación y disimilación, la diferenciación y la metátesis.

(2) La fonología histórica o diacrónica

(3) Cambios Lexicales y Semánticos (cambios en la significación).

(4) El estudio diacrónico de la morfosintaxis

3. LENGUA “ESPAÑOLA” Y LENGUA “CASTELLANA”

1. HISTORIA DE LA LENGUA

A. Estudio Sincrónico y Diacrónico.

1.1. Estudio sincrónico: El análisis de una lengua se centra en un estudio de una época específica de su evolución.

1.2 Estudio diacrónico: Se analiza la lengua durante los diferentes estadios o períodos históricos.

1.3 Todas las lenguas están en continua evolución y esto es universal. Una lengua fluye y se transforma sin cesar. Las lenguas se van apartando de las normas y evolucionan. Surgen los dialectos. Las transformaciones dialectales pueden producir una lengua nueva. Ejemplo: Un fragmento del Mío Cid en español moderno, romance más antiguo, latín hispánico más antiguo que el texto del “Mío Cid.”

Los cambios diacrónicos en los cuatro textos: (1) vocablos del Latín; (2) cambios en la ortografía; (3) diferencias en el vocabulario y su uso semántico; (4) diferencias sintácticas (construcción).

B. La Evolución de la Lengua.

1.1 Puede dar origen al nacimiento de dialectos y de nuevas lenguas.

1.2 Circunstancias que dan origen a los dialectos: (1) variedad étnica del sustrato lingüístico;

(2) difersas contingencias sociopolíticas; (3) el aislamiento de un grupo de hablantes de una lengua y si su autonomía política se refuerza.

Lo anterior puede conllevar a la transformación de una lengua con características individualizantes que a través del tiempo pueden resultar en un dialecto ininteligible para los hablantes de la lengua de la cual se separó. En tal caso, el dialecto es considerado una lengua nueva. Este es un proceso lento en donde surgen diferentes etapas a través de un largo tiempo.

C. La Muerte o Extinción de un Dialecto.

Se puede constatar cuando es un hecho pasado: e.g. “polabio” antigua lengua eslava de la región de Laba en Polonia. Se extinguió a mediados del siglo XVIII. Otro ejemplo es el “etrusco”. Desapareció en el siglo II a. de C.

Lenguas extintas son “lenguas muertas.” La transformación de una lengua en una nueva hace que la lengua original desaparezca. E.g. (1) antiguo Egipcio; (2) Latín; (3) Griego Clásico.

Causas de Extinción de una Lengua:

- (1) Aniquilación o desaparición del pueblo que la habla.
- (2) Imposición forzosa de otra lengua.
- (3) Aceptación práctica de una lengua nueva.
- (4) Disminución progresiva del número de hablantes.
- (5) Derrumbamiento de un imperio: e.g. la lengua “hitita” del Asia Menor. Invasión frigia del año 1200 a. de C.

2. HISTORIA EXTERNA E HISTORIA INTERNA

A. Historia Externa: (1) **ubicación** de su zona de origen, delimitación geográfica de su expansión o retroceso a través del tiempo; (2) **relaciones** con otras lenguas.

Lo anterior supone un análisis de los **estratos lingüísticos: sustrato, adstrato y superestrato**. Existen estados lingüísticamente homogéneos y heterogéneos. Los segundos comparten zonas dentro de unas mismas fronteras políticas como grupos limítrofes o en zonas políglotas. En el segundo caso puede existir paridad de derechos entre las distintas lenguas habladas. En otros hay superposición de una lengua (oficial) sobre las demás lenguas del territorio nacional. En otras hay predominio de varias de las lenguas oficiales. Ver ejemplos. Suiza, Francia, Unión Soviética, Nigeria.

Sustrato lingüístico es la influencia que recibe una lengua de otras lenguas preexistentes en un lugar geográfico determinado. Esto hace parte de la historia externa en donde se puede estudiar este sustrato. La lengua del sustrato puede influir en los cambios fonéticos de la lengua posterior.

Adstrato lingüístico es la influencia que recibe una lengua de las lenguas vecinas en su historia externa. Aquí entran a hacer parte los contactos lingüísticos que no son meramente geográficos sino mentales como el bilingüismo y polilingüismo. La influencia del adstrato se puede centrar en la fonética y en el léxico.

Superestrato lingüístico es la influencia externa que convierte a la una lengua en dominante porque se impone por fuerza, o por administración oficial, o usos de los medios de comunicación, de la educación, y la convierte la dominante. El superestrato lingüístico puede determinar el retroceso o la total extinción de la lengua dominada.

B. Historia Interna de una Lengua: Estudia las modificaciones y cambios que presenta su sistema lingüístico a la largo de su historia en el aspecto fonético y fonológico, en el léxico y semántica y sus morfosintaxis.

(1) **La fonética histórica** (evolutiva o dinámica): alteraciones de la pronunciación sin tener en cuenta el sentido. Los cambios fonéticos regulares se convierten en “ley fonética.” Se tiene en cuenta la ubicación temporal geográfica. Los cambios fonéticos se deben a la influencia de un sonido en otro. Formas de influencia mutua entre sonidos próximos son: **la**

asimilación y disimilación, la diferenciación y la metátesis.

(2) La **fonología histórica o diacrónica**: estudia los cambios en los fonemas (elementos fónicos significativos) como elementos pertenecientes a un sistema determinado y completo de signos expresivos. Cambios fónicos significativos en función del sistema fonológico concreto que los experimenta en su relación con la finalidad para la que se producen.

Estudia también los cambios de estructura del sistema debido a los cambios sufridos por elementos fónicos significativos. Esta fonología diacrónica supone una base de fonética histórica detallada que ordena y da sentido a los cambios con una óptica de sistema lingüístico.

(3) **Cambios Lexicales y Semánticos (cambios en la significación)**. Las palabras tienen su historia propia: origen con una estructura, una evolución fonética concreta, una carga semántica primera y una sucesiva amplificación o reducción de contenidos. Pero trascendiendo la historia individual de cada palabra hay una corriente general del léxico. Con el transcurso del tiempo ciertos vocablos van cayendo en desuso.

(4) **El estudio diacrónico de la morfosintaxis**. Se estudian los cambios en los paradigmas nominales y verbales y la evolución en el ordenamiento de las palabras dentro de la oración y en la mezcla de construcciones.

3. LENGUA “ESPAÑOLA” Y LENGUA “CASTELLANA”

(1) En lingüística ha prevalecido el término “español” o “lengua española” sobre su equivalente “castellano” o “lengua castellana”.

El castellano absorbió los otros dos romances principales de la península: el leonés y el navarro-aragonés. La literatura se ha expresado en castellano, por encima de las otras lenguas de las otras regiones de España.

La Academia de la Lengua adoptó el nombre de “lengua española” en la edición de su Diccionario publicado en 1925.

3. Sample of Two Students' Writing in Spanish, Spring 2012 (edited version).

¿Qué es la fonética?

La fonética es, en primer lugar, el estudio de los sonidos producidos por el hablante y que hacen parte del grupo de las lenguas naturales. Adicionalmente, establece una clasificación sistemática de dichos sonidos con respecto a la producción que hace el hablante y la percepción por parte del oyente.

¿Qué es la fonología?

La fonología es una disciplina de la lingüística que se encarga de establecer las reglas que

ordenan y rigen los sonidos del habla. Ella también hace el inventario de fonemas y posibles combinaciones de consonantes y vocales para una lengua en particular. De acuerdo a esto, el sistema fonológico de una lengua específica puede tener rasgos en común con otra lengua o por el contrario ser muy diferente.

¿Porqué es importante la transcripción fonética para nosotros?

La transcripción fonética es importante para nosotros ya que al ser esta un código universal, hace posible la comprensión de los elementos fonéticos independientemente de el idioma y los asuntos lingüísticos puntuales como la semántica y la sintaxis. Por otro lado, la existencia de el IPA hace, por un lado, evidente las diferencias y semejanzas fonéticas entre los idiomas del mundo; y, al mismo tiempo, permite comprender fácilmente las particularidades de cada idioma.

Instructor's comments:

The above text is the outcome of several revisions. There are still two syntax errors in the text students wrote: e.g., The question word in Spanish “Why” comprises two words “por qué”. Students still make mistakes and use the word “because” which is written as a single word: “porque”: e.g.,

A: ¿**Por qué** no fuiste a la fiesta? (**Why** didn't you go to the party?)

B: No fui a la fiesta **porque** estaba enferma (I didn't go to the party **because** I was sick)

Another error is the preposition **de** followed by the definite masculine article **el**. The grammatical rule does not allow for the two to be de + el, but it is a combination of the two **del**. This last draft is much more coherent than former versions.

Appendix J

Handouts for Oral Presentations: Instructions, Evaluation Rubrics & Feedback

1. First handout given to students for their first presentation in Spring 2010.

Trial Teaching of EPP Spring 2010

APRIL 13TH AND 15TH: GROUP PRESENTATIONS [Spring 2010]

ORAL PRESENTATION

GROUPS OF 3 MEMBERS. PRESENTATIONS ARE IN ENGLISH. THIS WILL GIVE YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO REHEARSE YOUR ACADEMIC ORAL LANGUAGE AND PRESENTATION SKILLS IN FRONT OF AN AUDIENCE.

You will present a topic of your own interest related to the course on Phonetics and Phonology.

The presentation will last 25 minutes per group.

The oral presentation will be organized as follows:

I. Introduction:

- (1) Introduce your topic clearly (give the title and say what the presentation is going to be about).
- (2) Tell the class why you chose the topic for this presentation. Express the objective of your presentation.
- (3) Tell the audience what you found at the library: bibliographical sources (2 found at the library) and one (1) on line site. Give the complete bibliographical references to the class.
- (4) Allow the audience to know how the presentation is organized (the different parts your presentation is divided into).

II. Body of the Presentation (topics and subtopics, depending on the subject you want to present).

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____
- (4) _____

III. Conclusion: What is the conclusion you get from what you read? How can this be applied to your own learning? What is there for you or some other people who want to investigate about the same topic?

PREPARE A HANDOUT FOR THE CLASS

You will have to write a handout sheet of your presentation per group. This will be given to all the students in class. The handout summarizes your presentation. Please **do the proof reading** of the text before making copies. I suggest you send the handouts to me, so that I revise them before you print out the master copy and make final copies for everybody.

Good luck on this project!!!! ☺

2. Instructions on how to write the handout for groups' first presentation: Instructions and Lay-out.

Cohorts Fall 2010, Spring and Fall 2011, and Spring 2012

English Phonetics and Phonology - First Term 2010 - Group 01 October _____ 2010
Clara María Eusebi
Myriam Pérez
Omar Vasquez
Department of Modern Languages
Universidad de Bogotá

Title in the Center of the Page and in Upper and Lower Case Letters

Introduction

Write a short introduction about your presentation. The entire document should be single spaced, and use *Font Times New Roman 12*. The subtitles should be written on the margin and in italics, as shown in this sample handout.

The Way You Quote Sources

If you paraphrase an author's idea you have to include the last name of the author and the year of publication (Lombana, 2010). If you copy an author's idea word for word, the citation can be included within your own text "within quotation marks". However, you have to take into account that you can only write up to 40 words like this: "When we speak, we produce a continuous stream of sounds. In studying speech we divide this stream into small pieces that we can call **segments** (author's bold)," (Roach, 2009, p. 31). Notice that you write the author's last name, the year of publication, and the page. Also, if you copy examples from a text, give credit to the source and the author.

References

Include all the sources you used for this presentation and organize the list of sources in alphabetical order. **For books**, follow the editing example below.

Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). *Teaching American English pronunciation*. Oxford: Oxford Handbooks for Language Teachers.
Ladefoged, P. (1975). *A course in Phonetics*. New York: Narcpirt Brace Javanovich.
Llisterri Boix, Joaquim. (1991). *Introducción a la fonética: El método experimental*. Autores Textos y Temas Lingüística. Colección dirigida por Carlos Subirats. Barcelona: Editorial Anthropos.
Kenworthy, J. (1992). *Teaching English pronunciation*. New York: Longman.
Poms, L. & Dale, P. (1985). *English pronunciation for Spanish Speakers*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Simon.

For **Web pages** cite as follows:

De la Iglesia Diéguez, F. (n.d.). *English phonetic activities*. Retrieved February 22, 2010, from <http://club.telepolis.com/phonetics/index.html>

The handout should also contain: (1) An introduction; (2) A Body: this is some information on the content of you presentation (summary), and (3) Conclusions.

Comment [CL1]: FONT TIMES ROMAN SIZE 8

Comment [CL2]: ITALICS

Comment [CL3]: MAKE AN INDENTATION WHEN YOU START A NEW PARAGRAPH

Comment [CL4]: ITALICS AND FIRST LETTER OF WORD IN CAPITAL LETTERS (PREPOSITIONS ARE NOT CAPITALIZED)

Comment [CL5]: CHECK OUT THE INDENTATION

Comment [CL6]: CHECK OUT THE LAYOUT OF THE REFERENCE LIST.

Comment [CL7]: n.d. indicates the date of the web page is not given.

3. Instructor's rubric to evaluate the handouts of the oral presentations. This document was usually given to students so they knew how to evaluate their products and fulfill the instructor's requirements.

HANDOUT: TOTAL: 185 POINTS / 37 = GRADE OVER 5 _____		
A. QUALITY OF CONTENT = 150		
INTRODUCTION 25 Points	Topic was introduced clearly. The presenters specified why they chose this topic. The objective/s of the presentation was/were given clearly. The introduction specifies the parts the presentation was divided into & other additional information	
BODY/ CONTENT 50 Points	Clear, specific, and guides the reader into major issues. The content included in the handout is coherent with the objective/s given in the introduction. Examples are clear. Information is relevant, pertinent and summarizes main aspects. Clearly explained.	
CONCLUSION 25 Points	The conclusion the group reached is stated clearly and sends the audience to connect with further studies. The conclusion is drawn from the content given in the body. Information in the conclusion that cannot connect with what was given in the content will lower points. Check objectives stated in the introduction, see if they were met in the content, and find out if there were gaps in the information that can be stated as part of the conclusion.	
REFERENCES 50 Points	There was a complete list of references used in this presentation and written down in this handout. These references can be easily used by other interested readers because they are complete. Also, the authors in this list were properly cited in the content (the body).	
B. FORM= TOTAL OF 80 POINTS		
HEADING 4 points	Times New Roman Size 8 Specifications as given in <i>Sample Handout by Lombana, 2010.</i>	
FONT IN WHOLE DOCUMENT: 5 Points	Times New Roman size 12	
TITLE	Centered and in Upper and Lower	

3 Points	Case Letters	
INDENTATION 7 Points		
TITLES AND SUBTITLES 3 Points	On the margin and in <i>Italics</i>	
INFORMATION 10 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Development (body) • Conclusions • List of References 	
CITATION OF SOURCES 5 Points	Sources were cited within the text (body or development)	
REFERENCE LIST 5 Points	The reference list follows indications as given in <i>Sample Handout by Lombana, 2010.</i>	

4. Sample text of one handout written by two students in Fall 2011 and corrected and edited by Claudia Lombana

Cohorts Fall 2011 and Spring 2012

The handout below was written by two students in Fall 2011, group 02, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. The corrections and the edition of the final draft were made by Claudia Lombana. The main idea was to share all the handouts with the class and keep a copy for further reference. The only course where I only corrected and graded two handouts was Spring 2012, group 01 (9 a.m. to 11 a.m.)

<p>English Phonetics and Phonology – Second Term 2011 – Group 02 25, 2011 John Bold Doris Joan Barón Department of Modern Languages Universidad de Bogotá</p>	<p>October</p>
<p>Listening or the Underestimated Key to the Acquisition of L2</p>	
<p><i>Introduction</i></p> <p>There are four language skills we should take into account in second language learning: reading, speaking, writing and listening. Out of these four skills, listening continues to be an isolated skill, even though its significance was recognized by the International Association of Applied Linguistics in 1969. Listening became then the focus of research at a time when research on the other three skills was already underway. For a long time, listening had been the skill that students developed by osmosis and without much help (Mendelsohn, 1984).</p> <p>Research on the listening skill has been conducted by scholars from different disciplines such as psycholinguistics, semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis and cognitive science since 1969 (Richards, 1985, p. 189). These disciplines have informed the teaching of the listening skill. They have defined this skill, as well as given light to new ways of exploring listening. This is what we will address now.</p>	

What is Listening?

According to Rost (2002) the terms hearing and listening are often used interchangeably, but there are important differences between them. Although both hearing and listening involve sound perception, the difference in terms reflects a degree of intention. Listening is a process that involves a continuum of active processes, which are under the control of the listener, and passive processes, which are not. The passive processes start with hearing, which is the primary physiological system that allows for reception and conversion of sound waves that surround the listener. It is followed by the active, intentional processes that we term listening where consciousness takes place. However, it is the attention given to this which starts the process of listening after the hearing process (Rost, 2002).

Speech Rate: A Very Relative Topic.

Experts have been studying *rate of speech* which is the quantity of words per minute or syllables per second in speech, but it only describes speed. It forgets collateral features such as acoustics, stress and rhythm.

An Underestimated Skill

While the other three language skills receive direct instructional attention, teachers often expect students to develop their listening skills by osmosis and without help. It is considered a passive skill, acquired by everyday freely exposure through movies, music, etc. letting out the metacognitive process that should be taken into account (Byrnes, 1984)

Listening Tasks

According to Michael Rost (2002), it is important to identify three types of listening in the instructional design: intensive listening, selective listening, and interactive listening.

Intensive listening. Tasks of this type of listening are used in order to precise sounds, words, phrases, grammatical units and pragmatic units. Because its prototypical intensive listening activity is dictation—the transcription of the exact words that a speaker utters—it has to be a small part of each class session. Dictation is an activity that has many variations according to its purpose: more interaction, forced output, focusing on specific items, words, phrases or grammatical points. These variations could be fast-speed dictation (the fast reading of a passage to identify features of “fast speech”); pause and paraphrase dictation (a paused reading of a passage to identify meanings); listening cloze (a partially completed passage to fill in as the person listens or after he listens); error identification (a transcribed passage with several errors which have to be identified as they listen to the passage); and, jigsaw dictation (students work in pairs ordering and completing a passage). Another method is dictogloss where students hear an extended passage. This could be a story, with the purpose of reconstructing it as completely and as accurately as they can. It promotes the forced comprehensible output as well as the comprehensible input of information.

Selective listening. This type of listening task was proposed by Joan Morley (1972) in *Improving aural comprehension* (as cited in Rost, 2002, p. 138). According to her, selective listening is the prerequisite for more complex and more extended listening to be ready to listen and to get ideas. It consists in working in fifteen tasks per topic area, which could be

numbers, letters, sounds, time and dates. Here, the students focus on specific information rather than understand and recall everything. The useful form of selective listening is the note-taking of specific information. However, it is more used for extended texts. An important aspect of selective listening is the pre-listening portion of the task. It is linked with the previous activities about the content of the selective listening. These previous activities are used in order to give the student a background of the information after they listen to the text.

Interactive listening. Interactive listening involves the collaborative conversation where the students can formulate ideas and they are forced to get meanings while they talk with a native speaker of the target language or with a partner. It is useful because of the communicative context.

An aspect of learner involvement in this type of listening is the paused task. Here, there is a quick intervention where the student can monitor his listening and clarify ideas before continuing. It is used to work with the limitations of short-term memory.

Conclusions

Listening is a complex active process that requires more than hearing and imitating types of conversations. For that reason, the knowledge about several listening drills and teaching tenets are necessary to develop a good ability of listening comprehension.

The types of listening tasks need to be in agreement with the learning purposes, which involve the learning of grammar, vocabulary, meaning, comprehensible input and comprehensible output of the target language.

Furthermore, the punctual recognition of the learner's involvement and response will allow identifying if the listening task is working. This will help the teacher assess the learner's accomplishment.

As it can be seen, teacher's involvement is important in the teaching of comprehension as well as in the teaching of the other three language skills: reading, writing and speaking.

Finally, it is central to take advantage of research studies that have been done before. They offer interesting results that can be used with the new discoveries in language pedagogy in the listening skill in order to upgrade the capacity of teaching/learning a second language. As the majority of professionals fall in love with research, they forget to check previous literature that has already been written. This literature can be helpful and offer important knowledge.

References

- Byrnes, H. (1984). The role of listening comprehension: A theoretical base. Retrieved October 15, 2011, from http://talk.waseda.net/dialogue/no03_2004/2004dialogue03_k4.pdf
- Mackay, R. & Mountford, J. (1978). *English for specific purposes: A case study approach*. London: Longman.
- Mendelsohn, D. J. (1984). There are strategies for listening TEAL occasional papers. Foreign language annals. Retrieved October 15, 2011, from http://talk-waseda.net/dialogue/no03_2004/2004dialogue03_k4.pdf
- Rost, M. (2002). *Teaching and researching listening*. London: Longman.

5. Instructor's expectations about the handouts and grading rubric: Document given to students before turning in their handouts.

I gave this handout to two cohorts: Fall 2011 and spring 2012. This document complemented the above ones, and gave more information of what it was that I wanted in the handouts.

WRITING THE HANDOUTS OF YOUR ORAL PRESENTATIONS

The information that you will read below is intended to give you a more specific description on what it is that I want out of the written handouts of your oral presentation. First of all, the handout that your will turn in should be the written summary of your oral presentation. As such, it should contain the main items and relevant information you summarized from the sources and the information you presented in front of the audience.

As you're the author of this written text, you're the one who's weaving it. Therefore, you have the right to include what your find pertinent and you should guide the reader to your major points. This is not the type of *cut and paste* writing project.

Because many of the ideas you are using in this handout belong to different authors, you **must** give credit to them. **Plagiarism is stealing** the ideas of different scholars or writers, and as such it is **punished** severely in academia. In order to avoid such a grave fault, you must quote and cite the authors you've read accordingly. You can use the authors' exact words when you find it convenient; you are allowed to write up to 40 words between quotation marks. In this type of quotation, you will have to note down the author's last name, the year of publication and the exact page: e.g. (Roach, 2009, p. 13). In some other cases, you may want to summarize entire pages or paraphrase. When you do this, only the author's last name and the year of publication are necessary.

Once again, you will follow the same recommendations I gave to you for the oral presentations, except that for this task you will be writing a formal document and that you will have to follow specific patterns in academic writing. Thus, this handout, as the oral presentation, will also include the following:

I. **Heading.** This identifies the document by providing information about the authors, the institution and the date.

II. **Title.** In the center and in upper and lower case letters.

III. **Introduction.** This is the introduction of the topic you presented in class. As such, it will have to reflect what you did orally in class, but in a formal written way. The introduction will include:

- (1) An appealing introduction to the main topic in a clear and simple way (topic sentence).
 - (2) The objective, aim, or purpose of this document: what is this for?
 - (3) How you selected this topic, what motivated you, what made you become interested in this subject?
 - (4) The authors that have written on the subject. Write only their last names and the year of their publications in parentheses.
 - (5) State how this document will be organized: parts, sections, items, and so on.
- One single paragraph will serve the purpose of your introduction.

IV. Body or Major Content on the Subject. This includes the most relevant information of your subject organized under headings (significant topics and subtopics). The selection of this information will be similar to the one you gave in the oral presentation. In addition, it will also show the same organization you described in the **introduction** of this document.

V. Conclusion: What is the conclusion you get from what you read? How can this be applied to your own learning? What is there for you—or some other people who want to investigate about the same topic—to continue learning?

The conclusion should not be a repetition of what you have said. You cannot either arrive at conclusions that cannot be inferred or withdrawn from the information that you have provided in the body. The conclusions state what you learned from this experience, your practical purposes in learning all this and if this served your inquisitive enquiry in any particular way. Also, as this is not an ended journey in itself, more study and research will serve the purpose for further inquiry.

EDITTING and CONTENT Checklist

In your group, revise your final draft using the following checklist. Make the necessary corrections and then proceed to print out the final **hard copy of the handout**.

HEADING Font & Size: Times New Roman, 8 Heading followed the example given by Claudia Lombana (October 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information that identifies the document was laid out according to the sample paper given by Claudia Lombana (October ___ 2010). 	
TITLE	In the center First letters of important words in capital letters: check out the title in the example.	
FONT & SIZE of entire document	Times New Roman, 12	
INTRODUCTION	One paragraph	
SPACE	Single space	
INDENTATION	Each paragraph is indented	
HEADINGS (subtitles)	On the left margin and in italics	
NO JUSTIFICATION ON RIGHT	NO JUSTIFICATION ON RIGHT MARGIN	
QUOTATION OF SOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quotation embedded in text Block quotation Paraphrases & summaries Examples taken from sources 	PLEASE IT IS A MANDATE THAT YOU MENTION WHERE THIS INFORMATION COMES FROM!!!!
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Books Articles Web Pages 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters in books 	
THE USE OF RIGHT PUNCTUATION ALLOWED THE READER TO FOLLOW WHAT THE WRITERS NEEDED TO EXPRESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • Sort of • No 	
In general terms this was a well written coherent and cohesive HANDOUT that allowed the reader to understand what the writer needed to communicate unambiguously and clearly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of paragraphs (one specific topic in each paragraph) • Good combination of ideas • Good organization of ideas. • Smooth transitions between paragraphs. • Written language vs. spoken language • In general, the writer guides the reader smoothly. 	

6. Feedback given to two students in Fall 2011, group 02 (11 a.m. to 1 p.m.).

Daisy Cuevas was an advance English language speaker, but Leopold was the typical third semester student learning to speak English. The grade is given on a scale of 5 where 5=Excellent

Daisy Cuevas		
Oral 4.5 (60%) + Handout 3.5 (40%) TOTAL GRADE: 4.1		
HANDOUT TOTAL CONTENT & FORM: 130/37= 3.5		
A. QUALITY OF CONTENT = 150 : 98		
INTRODUCTION 25 Points= 25	Topic was introduced clearly. The presenters specified why they chose this topic. The objective/s of the presentation was/were given clearly. The introduction specifies the parts the presentation was divided into & other additional information	Your introduction touches on very different topics and makes it really heavy for a 30 minute presentation. It's too ambitious, and I find it quite difficult for you to be specific about " <i>some books that are currently used in classrooms</i> ". This you don't know. You could've probably avoided this by saying: "this is the current literature available in the market."
BODY/ CONTENT 50 Points= 25	Clear, specific, and guides the reader into major issues. The content included in the handout is coherent with the objective/s given in the introduction. Examples are clear. Information is relevant, pertinent and summarizes main aspects. Clearly explained.	The section of classroom practices and teaching of phonetics is quite general. It does not provide any historical dates as a frame of reference to the connections between phonetics and didactics. There is no citation of sources to give credit to what is mentioned in this section. "Although...taught or not," who says this?

		As the second section of your body, the last section is just too general as to give any substantial information.
CONCLUSION 25 Points = 18	The conclusion the group reached is stated clearly and sends the audience to connect with further studies. The conclusion is drawn from the content given in the body. Information in the conclusion that cannot connect with what was given in the content will lower points. Check objectives stated in the introduction, see if they were met in the content, and find out if there were gaps in the information that can be stated as part of the conclusion.	From this summary, I cannot see “how phonetics has indeed changed the view we have on teaching languages.” This was not proved in the presentation. Your insight: “it makes me think...” is interesting. Check your aim stated in the introduction and evaluate if you accomplished it. There is a sort of sendoff, but this could be worked on.
REFERENCES 50 Points = 30	There was a complete list of references used in this presentation and written down in this handout. These references can be easily used by other interested readers because they are complete. Also, the authors in this list were properly cited in the content (the body).	Except for Crystal (2003) and Vernon (n.d.), the other 4 references used for this work were not properly cited in the content of this handout. The list of references is quite interesting, but I doubt you really went through the contents in Celce and Murcia (1996) or even Avery & Ehrlich (2008).

B. FORM= TOTAL OF 35 POINTS Your score: 32

IDENTIFICATION HEADING 3 points = 2.5	Times New Roman Size 8 Specifications as given in <i>Sample Handout by Lombana, 2010.</i>	Date should have appeared on the top right margin.
FONT IN WHOLE DOCUMENT: 4 Points	Times New Roman size 12	Well done
TITLE 3 Points	Centered and in Upper and Lower Case Letters	Correct
INDENTATION 3 Points	= 2	Needs work
HEADINGS 4 Points	On the left margin and in <i>Italics</i>	Correct
INFORMATION 8 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Development (body) • Conclusions • List of References 	Correct
CITATION OF SOURCES 5 Points= 2.5	Sources were cited within the text (body or development)	Two authors out of 5
REFERENCE LIST 5 Points= 5	The reference list follows indications as given in <i>Sample Handout by Lombana, 2010.</i>	Not bad, but needs to work on layout.

ORAL PRESENTATION = 4.5

It was very important to address this topic and to have a short historical reference as to when the study of phonetics was initiated. Your oral presentation was fluid and quite informative. However, I still have the same comment as the one in the written handout: it could've helped us more to frame the historical development of teaching methodology based on phonetics.

In addition, you could have probably illustrated the didactic activities in the teaching of phonetics as used in each teaching methodology. This could have helped the audience to see how the teaching of pronunciation has been approached by each methodology ever since they were introduced in the field of foreign language teaching.

Once again, you really addressed a very interesting topic.

John Leopold

Oral: 4.8 (60%) + Handout: 4.5 (40%)

TOTAL GRADE: 4.7

HANDOUT TOTAL CONTENT + FORM: 130+35= 165 Over 5= 4.5

A. QUALITY OF CONTENT = 150 Your score: 130 John Leopold

INTRODUCTION 25 Points= 25	Topic was introduced clearly. The presenters specified why they chose this topic. The objective/s of the presentation was/were given clearly. The introduction specifies the parts the presentation was divided into & other additional information	You specified very clearly a very personal interest in the understanding of this topic. You also made it clear how—by studying four different authors—you could get to your main purpose. The presentation was organized based on these four studies.
BODY/ CONTENT 50 Points = 40	Clear, specific, and guides the reader into major issues. The content included in the handout is coherent with the objective/s given in the introduction. Examples are clear. Information is relevant, pertinent and summarizes main aspects. Clearly explained.	This was not very clear. The whole content in this section could have been organized better. Writing headings for each study could have guided the reader in a better way. In this way, the reader could've made the connection with the introduction more easily. The information summarized and compared four different studies and this makes this work valuable. Also, check out how you could divide the last paragraph of the first page into several different paragraphs. Avoid copying whole chunks of text exactly as they are in the source. This is plagiarism. You have to write the text in quotation marks and give the exact page where the examples and other ideas where copied from.
CONCLUSION 25 Points = 20 Because of poor writing.	The conclusion the group reached is stated clearly and sends the audience to connect with further studies. The conclusion is drawn from the content given in the body. Information in the conclusion that cannot connect with	You need much better writing skills. Avoid writing a bunch of different ideas connected by commas. This results in very bad English writing. The conclusion is too wordy and uses very bad grammar and punctuation. Simpler, well

	what was given in the content will lower points. Check objectives stated in the introduction, see if they were met in the content, and find out if there were gaps in the information that can be stated as part of the conclusion.	connected sentences would have served your purpose. You tried to go back over what you did in the introduction and what you had done in the content. It seems you achieved your purpose.
REFERENCES 50 Points = 45	There was a complete list of references used in this presentation and written down in this handout. These references can be easily used by other interested readers because they are complete. Also, the authors in this list were properly cited in the content (the body).	As I stated above, you need to be careful when you copy down whole chunks of texts from the authors. You did mention the four authors in the content, and this was really important for this work!!!

B. FORM= TOTAL OF 35 POINTS Your score: 34

IDENTIFICATION HEADING 3 points	Times New Roman Size 8 Specifications as given in <i>Sample Handout by Lombana, 2010.</i>	CORRECT
FONT IN WHOLE DOCUMENT: 4 Points	Times New Roman size 12	CORRECT
TITLE 3 Points	Centered and in Upper and Lower Case Letters	CORRECT
INDENTATION 3 Points		CORRECT
HEADINGS 4 Points	On the left margin and in <i>Italics</i>	Yes. However, as suggested in the content, you will need to introduce more headings based on the four studies and the summary you provide at the end. This will help you with the presentation of the information and will also help the reader to follow the flow.
INFORMATION 8 Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Development (body) • Conclusions • List of References 	CORRECT
CITATION OF SOURCES 5 Points= 4	Sources were cited within the text (body or development)	Yes. Still there needs to be more accuracy in the citation of sources within the text.
REFERENCE LIST 5 Points= 5	The reference list follows indications as given in <i>Sample Handout by Lombana, 2010.</i>	Well done

ORAL PRESENTATION = 4.8

You did a very important job for this presentation. The table that you gave us along with the handout really shows a tremendous work. I liked the fact that you contrasted four different authors and that you DID go to the library. This was essential for your work and this shows how committed you were for this presentation. Please, do send us the power point as you promised. It was a shame that because of the room where you presented we

could not see your power point presentation.

Instructions for Second Presentation

7. Handout for the Second Presentation.

Trial Teaching of EPP Spring 2010

ENGLISH PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY

Department of Modern Languages

Professor: Claudia Lombana

May 6, 2010

ORAL PRESENTATIONS MAY 11 AND 14

Time per group: 25 minutes

A. Steps to follow before the presentations next week:

1. Choose a topic and a type of discourse to present orally to the class (4 minutes per member).
2. Gather together to prepare the talk.
3. Rehearse your speech in English with your group members.
4. Give feedback to one another about speech errors that need to be improved. Find a way to solve pronunciation problems collaboratively: the pronunciation of certain segments, syllables, words, and discourse in general.
5. Write down the errors that each member had. Also write down what you found positive in each other's speech. This should be done using a phonological and phonetic description.
6. Write down how you have helped one another to improve the pronunciation and intelligibility of one another.
7. Write a conclusion for this task. The conclusion should be written down collaboratively.

B. There are two objectives in this presentation.

- (1) To present an *intelligible talk* in the foreign language in front of an audience.
- (2) To give a brief self-analysis of the errors in the students' speech and the difficulties students found in their Englishes. Also, this analysis will include your positive accomplishments. This analysis must make use of phonetic and phonological descriptions.

First Part: Your talk, speech, or oral activity in English (12 minutes)

Students will choose a type of discourse of their liking—a narrative, an expository or informative discourse, an argumentative discourse, a poem, etc. This is, any type of discourse that will allow the audience to evaluate how students behave orally in front of the class and how much intelligible their speech is. Each member of the group should speak for

a maximum of 4 minutes.

Second Part: The analysis of group members' speech (10 minutes)

The members of the group will present the analysis of their group's oral speech. This is the analysis that should result from the rehearsal of the talk, or speech, or activity. Here, the groups should take into account:

- *Segments* in student's own foreign language speech that were found problematic (consonant and vowel sounds). Real examples should support this analysis.
- *Suprasegmental* problems found in connected speech in terms of pitch (intonation), rhythm, linkage of sounds, and pauses, supported with examples coming from the oral rehearsal.

Remember: This analysis has to be done by all the members of the group in a collaborative way. Each member of the group evaluates his/her own performance in front of the other members, and the other members also give feedback and suggestions. You have to write down what errors you found in each member's speech and summarize what happened in the production of foreign language speech and how you went through the process of being aware of errors and what you did in order to improve them before giving the speech or talk in front of the whole class. The presentation of the analysis should not take more than 8 minutes (in Spanish if you like).

Conclusions: 3 minutes. What can you conclude about what you found? What will be your next move in terms of foreign language speech self improvement?

C. Organization of Presentation: Once again:

1. Students give an introduction of what they are going to present.
2. Students give their speech/talk to the audience (English).
3. Students give the analysis of their speech performance (English or Spanish).
4. Students give conclusions.

All the members of the group should acknowledge that there will be pronunciation errors in their speech, which is normal at this intermediate level: hesitations, deletion of sounds, changes in the sounds of segments, misplaced stress, poor vocalization of words, careless speed, ideosyncratic speech habits, and so on. The important aim here for all group members is to (1) *recognize these issues* and, (2) *identify them in the analysis that you will give to the class.*

GOOD LUCK!!!!!!



8. Handout with instructions on how to do the second presentation. This handout would be the foundation for the next three cohorts: Spring and Fall 2011, and Spring 2012.

ENGLISH PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY

Department of Modern Languages

Professor: Claudia Lombana

November 11, 2010

ORAL PRESENTATIONS NOVEMBER 18, 23 & 25

Time per group: 40 minutes

A. Introduction

- 1) Give information about what you are going to present: the recorded verbatim of a (1) news report, (2) an excerpt from the movie, (3) a TV program, and so on.
- 2) How and why did you choose this piece of discourse?
- 3) The purpose of this presentation: Why are you doing this?
- 4) How the presentation will take place: sections you have divided the presentation into (the layout of the presentation).

B. Content

- (1) Based on your recorded verbatim sample, you will present to the class **your own oral version** of this text. In other words, you will perform—live—the piece of oral speech you recorded for this project.

You will try to follow intonation patterns (pitch), pauses, pronunciation of words in connected speech, and the natural flow of speech as a whole. The (1) recorded verbatim sample as well as your (2) phonetic transcription and the (3) other exercises where you marked stress, pitch patterns and pauses should help you with this endeavor. There will be *your accents present*, there's *no doubt*. So, *don't worry about this*. The objective here is to pay attention to the pronunciation of words (stressed and unstressed ones), the musicality of the language, its intonation patterns, and pauses.

- (2) You will play the recorded text to the audience. The audience will give their appraisal.

- (3) You will then go on to present your work on your observations backed up with **EVIDENCE**. All this corresponds to the notes you've been taking about this process.

3.1 Step One: first impressions and perceptions about the listening and writing tasks, and so on.

3.2 Step Two: the broad phonetic transcription. Report on your findings: sounds that were difficult and easy. Use the notes you took in this section to report your findings to the class. What sounds were troublesome and why? Etc.

3.3. Step Three: marking stress and intonation. How did the task work out for you? Combine this with the theory we've read about stress and intonation and your findings, and so on.

- (4) You will give a general appraisal of your findings connected to the different ideas that have come from the **readings** you've done in the course and **class discussions**.

C. Conclusions

What can you conclude about this learning process? What did you find out? What will be your next move in terms of foreign language self improvement? What can you say about the English language as compared to Spanish? How did working in group help you out with your listening and pronunciation problems? What are your recommendations?

ONE LAST REMARK

All the members of the group should acknowledge that there will be pronunciation errors in their speech

rehearsal and difficulties to follow the native speaker's speed of language. This is normal. Also, in your performance, be prepared for hesitations, deletion of sounds, changes in the sounds of segments, misplaced stress, poor vocalization of words, careless speed, idiosyncratic speech habits, and so on. The important objective here is to (1) *recognize these issues as natural* and, (2) *identify them in the analysis you do and that you will give to the class.*

GOOD LUCK!!!!!! ☺

Appendix K

Two Rubrics to Evaluate The Final Paper

Content and Editing

Last Version, Spring 2012

CONTENT= 120/24= 5

<p>INTRODUCTION 10 points</p>	<p>In general terms, the introduction to this paper allows the reader to know clearly what this written document is about. The introduction is presented in a well organized and coherent paragraph.</p>	
<p>1) <i>Choosing the Verbatim Sample and Doing the Written Transcription</i> 10 points</p> <p>Appendix A Corrected version. 10 points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students explained how they chose verbatim sample. • There is explanation on how the listening took place (# times). • First impressions before writing transcription. • Impressions after writing the text. • Difficulties (specific examples taken from written transcription in Appendix A). • How students dealt with stretches of discourse that they marked (xxx) the first time. (Examples given) • How the written transcription was improved (Evidence that connects with Appendix A) • How students dealt with the punctuation of the Written Transcription. • Notes on how students corrected Appendix A 	
<p>2) <i>Broad Phonetic Transcription</i> 10 points</p> <p>Appendix B 10 points Corrected version notes on the corrections Appendix C Appendix D</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citation forms and connected speech. • Cases of assimilation and coarticulation. • Word boundaries: (C+C); (C+V); (V+V) • Word stress: major, minor and unstressed forms • Vowel quality according to stress • Polysyllabic words • Other observations • Notes on how students corrected the Broad Phonetic Transcription. • Allusion to Table 1 and what students observed. • Analysis of your findings in Table 2 	
<p>(3) <i>Pauses, Stress, and Intonation</i> 10 points</p> <p>Appendix E 10 points</p>	<p>Patterns of word stress, sentence stress (tonic syllable), intonation and pauses—as given by the authors—are discussed accordingly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word stress: examples • Sentence Stress (tonic syllable): examples • Intonation patterns: examples • Pauses: examples • Corrected version of document: Appendix E 	
<p>(4) <i>Our Oral Production</i> 20 points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students findings in their oral production. • Corrections made by the members of the group. • Segment and suprasegmental problems are clearly explained and exemplified. • Difficulties in pronunciation. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievements 	
(5) <i>Discussion</i> 20 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The authors Gibson (2008), Halliday (1990), Kenworthy (1992), Poms & Dale (1985), Shlain (1998) were added to the discussion. • Other authors consulted by students besides the authors given in the handbook of readings of the course. • In general, there is an overall connection between authors' ideas and students' insights. 	
(6) <i>Conclusions</i> 10 points	Information is substantial and gives a round-up closure to this project. What did you learn? Also, the students included information on <i>what's next?</i>	

Edition Rubric

TOTAL POINTS FOR FINAL PROJECT EDITION: 190/38= 5

COVER PAGE (Title Page) TOTAL 5 Information: 2 points Space similar to sample paper: 1 points Font & Size: 1 points Upper and Lower case letters: 1 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page header (encabezado de pie de página) • Identification of the Project. • Title • Students' Names • Identification of institution. • Course, professor, and other information at the bottom of the title page. 	
PAGINATION 3 points	Page numbers on the right hand side, top.	
FONT & SIZE 6 points	Times New Roman 12	
TITLE ON PAGE 2 3 points	In the center First letters of important words: capital letters.	
SPACE: 4 points	Double spaced document	
INDENTATION: 4 points	Each paragraph is indented	
HEADINGS: 10 points	They should not be numbered Three levels of headings are shown as indicated	
No justification on right margin 6 points		
APPENDIXES ON DIFFERENT PAGES 9 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix A • Appendix B • Appendix C • Appendix D • Appendix E 	
QUOTING SOURCES 10 pts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quotation embedded in text • Block quotation • Paraphrases & summaries • Examples taken from sources 	
REFERENCES 10 pts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Books • Articles 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbatim Sample • Other 	
<p>THE USE OF PUNCTUATION ALLOWED THE READER TO FOLLOW WHAT THE WRITERS NEEDED TO EXPRESS 60 points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • Sort of • No 	
<p>USE OF CAPITAL AND SMALL CASE LETTERS IN DOCUMENT 10 points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good use of capitalization and small case letters 	
<p>In general terms this was a well written coherent and cohesive paper that allowed the reader to understand what the writers expressed. 50 points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of paragraphs (one specific topic in each paragraph) • Good combination of ideas • Good organization of ideas. • Smooth transitions between paragraphs. • Written language vs. spoken language • In general, the writer guides the reader smoothly. 	

Appendix L

Visual Sample Paper for Final Paper: Last Version Spring 2012

Cover Page

Verbatim Sample: Strikes in France 1

Final Project: Analysis of Verbatim Sample

Analysis of Verbatim Sample: Strikes in France

Mario Mendez
Rosita del Campo
Pepe Grillo

Universidad de Bogota

English Phonetics and Phonology
Professor: Claudia Lombana
Department of Foreign Languages
School of Human Sciences
First Academic Term
Bogota, D.C. June 14, 2012

Sample Paper to Guide You with Content and Editing of FP

This is just a visual sample paper that will allow you to see how you will present and edit your final paper (FP). Your FP is the last requisite for the course *English Phonetics and Phonology*. Here you will present the phonetic analysis of the verbatim sample you have worked on during the past few weeks.

You will start off your paper with a short introduction. This time, you won't need to write a heading called *Introduction*. The reader will know that the first two paragraphs below the title will be the introduction to your paper. Make this introduction short: maximum two paragraphs. In this introduction you will allow the reader to know what this paper is about, its purpose, and how it is organized (the parts it contains).

The information you've written in the four steps will be presented here as a flowing account of your study and observations. Here you will have to make any necessary changes to the documents you turned in previously, and which we have called *the four steps*. In the body of this final paper you won't have to write the questions I asked in the four steps. Instead, you are going to write a coherent text that connects all your answers. In order to do this, you will have to use different cohesive devices in writing to keep the thread of the information. You will also have to divide the text into more defined paragraphs. Each paragraph usually develops one main idea right from the beginning. The other sentences in the paragraph are its supporting ideas and examples.

I have organized this visual sample paper in three parts. The first part makes reference to the content of your paper; the second is about the *conclusion* and the *references*; and the last one gives you some tips on how you will edit your final paper.

The Content of Your Final Paper: Different Sections

The content of this final paper is the compilation of all the *notes* that you have written down in your journal in *Steps 1, 2, 3 and 4*. You will present these notes in a unified cohesive and coherent text in five different sections with specific headings (subtítulos). You won't refer to the content as *Step 1, 2* and so on. Instead, you will refer to them as *sections* or *parts*. Don't number the headings in your paper; just follow the instructions in this document and its visual layout.

Some students will need to back up their generalizations with more evidence coming from: (1) the two transcriptions, *written* and *phonetic*; (2) the tables you've presented (individual problems with transcription and modification of sounds); (3) the suprasegmental document; and any other table you may have (if it occupies more than half a page). Also, *back up* your ideas with the theoretical and philosophical concepts coming from the different authors. The content should have a more *thorough* and *insightful* analysis and discussion than mere *gut feelings*. The feedback and suggestions I gave you should show in this final paper. The following are the five sections your FP will comprise.

Choosing the verbatim sample and doing the written transcription. In this section you will include the notes that you wrote for *Step 1* in an improved version. You will send the reader to the written transcription of your verbatim sample in *Appendix A* (see page 12 of this document). Here you will also make reference to how you punctuated the written transcription by providing some very specific examples where you used commas,

periods, ellipsis, hyphens, exclamation marks, quotation marks, colon, semi colon, and so on.

Broad phonetic transcription. In this section you will include the journal notes you wrote in Step 2. The content should be backed up by *succinct examples* taken from your broad phonetic transcription and your tables, where you analyzed: (1) problems with segments; (2) word stress (weak and strong); (3) the vowels in the polysyllabic words found in your text; (4) cases of assimilation and coarticulation; behavior of speech sounds in word boundaries (C+C / C+V/ V+V) as explained in Ladefoged and Johnson (2011), Avery and Ehrlich (2008), and others (blending sounds together). Remember that when you refer to specific ways of coarticulation and assimilation you will be using allophonic variations. Your examples will become then narrow forms of phonetic transcription where you will explain what happens.

As you did in the previous section, you will send the reader to the following appendixes: *Appendix B*, Broad Phonetic Transcription; *Appendix C*, Table 1, Individual Problems with the Transcription of Speech Sounds; *Appendix D*, Table 2, Modification of Sounds in Connected Speech.

Pauses, stress in connected speech and intonation. As with the other two sections, in this part of the document you will include the analysis— backed up with evidence of pauses, word stress, sentence stress (tonic syllable/accents), and intonation—of what you did in Step 3. A fifth appendix should show how you marked pauses, sentence stress, and intonation: *Appendix E*, Pauses, Stress in Connected Speech and Intonation.

Your oral production. In this section you will incorporate what you observed in your oral production: a description of how you connected segments and used your prosody (Step 4A).

Discussion. In this last section (what you did in Step 4B) you will discuss about the whole process of analyzing the verbatim sample: Steps 1, 2, 3 and 4A. The discussion will incorporate your own insights on language, phonetics and phonology, and written and oral communication. The readings I've given you will help you with this analysis (Gibson, 2008; Halliday, 1990; Rodriguez, 1998; and Shlain, 1999), as well as the other authors we've studied in class (Avery & Erlich, 2008; Kenworthy 1992; Ladefoged & Johnson 2011; and Poms & Dale, 1985). Feel free to add any other authors you think will enrich your discussion.

One last remark about the five sections mentioned above: make sure that in your final paper you don't write *Step 1, Step 2, Step 3* and *Step 4*. I just included the information of the steps so that you know what each section should address.

Conclusion and References

Finally, there comes the conclusion and the references. In the conclusion you will write about what you have learned in this whole process. You should also include your perceptions of the English language. In addition to this, think about how this process will be helpful/not very helpful in the future. Then write what your next step (move) will be in your way to becoming a competent user of the English language. You don't have to extend your writing, as one very thorough paragraph will be enough.

After you write the *conclusion*, you will write the *references*. Only leave a double space between the last line of the conclusion and the heading *References*. All the sources you cited in the content should appear in the reference list in alphabetical order.

After you include all the references, you will start off a new page with the title: **Appendix A**. The rest of the appendixes (**Appendix B**, **Appendix C**, **Appendix D**, and **Appendix E**) will follow in that order. Each appendix will start on a new page. More information about these appendixes and other editing suggestions will be given in the third and last section of this sample paper called *editing tips and instructions*.

Editing Tips and Instructions

The following are some editing instructions and suggestions that you must follow to edit your final paper. When you finish writing your paper, print it out, and revise the edition of the paper using the *check list* I gave to you in class. Also, do a proofreading aloud to check for punctuation, grammatical mistakes, paragraph format, cohesion devices and coherence. The check list will help you evaluate if your paper complies with the editing instructions I give below.

Paper identification information. Different from previous papers, this final paper will have a *cover page* as illustrated in this sample paper. Here you will write information that identifies the final paper: name of the project, students' names, course name, name of the institution, and city and date.

Font, size, paragraphs, indentation, and space. You will use *Times New Roman* size 12. You will double space the whole document as shown in this sample paper. You will *indent* each new paragraph on the left margin. No space should be left between paragraphs or headings. The same double space should be kept throughout the whole

document. Once again, pay attention to how this document has been laid out visually, and copy the model.

The title. Only a double space is left between the title and the first paragraph. The title should be centered and written in lower (cccc) and upper case (CCCC) letter. The first letter of the first word in the title should be capitalized as well as the first letter of *content words*. The rest goes in lower case letters. You don't use bold letters here. The title is a *Type 1 Heading*, or *Level 1*.

Other headings. Headings (subtítulos) **should not be** numbered (1, 2, 3, and so on). *Type 2 Heading*, or level 2, is aligned on the left margin and in *italics*. If there is more than one content word, the first letter of each content word is a capital letter: e.g. *The Content of Your Final Paper: Different Sections*. No period is written at the end of the heading.

Type 3 Heading, or level 3, starts with *indentation*, and only the first letter in the first word of the heading is capitalized. The heading ends with a period. Look at the headings I have given you in this sample paper: e.g. *The title*. Pay attention to how the different *levels* (1, 2, and 3) of headings are shown in this sample paper:

Analysis of Verbatim Sample: Strikes in France	← 1. Title of paper
<i>The Content of Your Final Paper: Different Sections</i>	← 2. Heading on the margin in upper and lower case letters & in italics
Type 2 Heading or Level 2	
<i>Editing Tips and Instructions</i>	← 2. Heading on the margin in lower and upper case letters & in italics
<i>Paper identification information.</i>	← 3. Type 3 Heading or Level 3
<i>Font, size, paragraph, indentation and space.</i>	← 3.
	In Italics. The first letter is capitalized and there is a period.

Independent of the headings of the content of your paper, the headings for *Conclusion* and *References* are aligned on the left margin (Level 2 or Type 2 Heading). Only one double space goes between the former paragraph and the heading *Conclusions*. The same applies to the heading *References*: Leave only one double space between the last line in the previous paragraph and the heading.

No justification needed on the right margin. This paper should not be justified (alineado a la derecha). Check out this sample and see that there is no justification on the right hand side.

Appendixes A, B, C, D and E. As mentioned before, these appendixes will respectively include (1) the written transcription of the verbatim sample: The final improved version of what you did for Step 1. (2) The corrected phonetic transcription of the verbatim sample. (3) Table 1 where you identified the problems you had with your phonetic transcription. (4) Table 2, Modification of Sounds in Connected Speech. And (5) the written text where you marked *pauses*, *sentence stress* (tonic accent), and *intonation patterns*. You will identify each appendix on top of the page by writing **Appendix A, Appendix B, Appendix C**, and so on. Below the title **Appendix A**, for example, you will identify the respective document with a title: e.g., **Written Transcription: Strikes in France** (see *Appendix A* on page 12 of this document).

The way you quote and cite sources. If you paraphrase or summarize an author's idea you have to include the last name of the author and the year of publication. Appropriation of authors' ideas without giving credit to the source will be penalized rigorously.

You dealt with this issue of citing and quoting sources when you wrote the handouts of your presentations. You can refer to the same instructions I gave to you before. In these instructions, Lombana (2010) wrote:

If you copy an author's idea word for word, the citation must be written "within quotation marks". However, you have to take into account that you can only write [fewer than] 40 words like this: "When we speak, we produce a continuous stream of sounds. In studying speech we divide this stream into small pieces that we can call **segments** (author's bold)," (Roach, 2009, p. 31). Notice that you write the author's last name, the year of publication, and the page. Also, if you copy examples from a text, give credit to the source and the author. (p. 1)

The above written block shows you a quotation of more than 40 words. You don't use quotation marks here. If you want to display a quotation of 40 or more words, you should show the whole block indented 1.3 cm (five spaces) from the left margin (American Psychological Association, 2001). See how the above example quotes, word for word, the same Lombana (2010) wrote in the instructions to write the handout. Notice that the information in brackets corrects what Lombana (2010) wrote.

References. Include all the sources you used in this project and organize the list of sources in alphabetical order. Also, make sure you include the reference of the movie, TV show, or web page where you got the verbatim sample from. Any online dictionaries, software, or tools that you used should appear here. Examples of (1) books; (2) one journal article; (3) one web page (De la Iglesia Diéguez, 2010); (4) an unpublished manuscript (Lombana 2010); and (4) a TV program (Rose, 2010) are given on page 10 of this document as a visual example. Follow the layout.

Conclusion

In summary, this paper is just a contribution to guide you in your final FP task. Writing in English as you know is a very complex process and is different from speaking (Halliday, 1990). It is very difficult for second language learners to do this even in their own native language. In writing, you will express your ideas in a lineal way. In written communication you won't have a face-to-face interaction or your body language to make up for some misunderstanding and miscommunication. Therefore, you will need good organization of ideas, accurate use of punctuation and grammar, and good use of coherence and cohesion. All in all, this will be the last great effort you'll make at the end of this academic term to prove how you express your ideas coherently in writing. I wish you luck on this final endeavor and thank you all very much for your great contributions. Your final written project is just one building block in your already brilliant academic work.

References

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Appendix A

Written Transcription: Strikes in France

Written Transcription by Claudia H. Lombana G.

Audio recorded on October 19, 2010 from video on web site:

<http://news.yahoo.com/video/world-15749633/22526307>

(Length of time: 1:58)

Strikes in France

- Reporter: 1 Youths square up to police in a second day of violent protests against
2 the French government's pension reforms. Cars were burned and rocks
3 thrown here in Nantes as well as here, in Lyon. The police fired tear
4 gas and arrested hundreds. In Paris high school students continue to block
5 roads and schools.
- Bushra: 6 We must stop this reform because we want to work. And if people are
(High 7 working until they're old, then, there won't be room for us. So we must
8 protest!
School
Student)
- Reporter: 9 Tuesday saw the 6th national strike in its many weeks. The Interior
10 Minister said nearly half a million people poured onto the streets in
11 coordinated demonstrations. Workers determined to shout down the
12 government's plans to raise the retirement age from 60 to 62.
- Bernard 13 We can't be the only country in which important laws, pension laws, are
Tahibaut 14 being reformed without there being any negotiations with the unions.
15 Mr. Sarkozy decided to increase the retirement age without a debate with
16 the Unions. So it's not surprising the whole country is paralyzed by the
17 blockades.
- Reporter: 18 And those blockades of oil refineries and distribution depots have reached
19 crisis level. Petrol stations across the country are running dry and up to
20 half the flights into Paris are being cancelled. The government vows to
21 take action against the fuel shortages and brake through the disruption.
- Francois 22 Intimidation, the blockades and the violence goes against democracy and
Fillon 23 the social contract.
Prime
Minister
- Reporter 23 Unions plan more strikes this week but despite mixed public support it
24 may be too late. The Senate is due to pass Nicolas Sarkozy's pension
25 plans by the end of the week and with this being the second plank of his
26 presidency, he's unlikely to back down.

Appendix M

Three Syllabi: Fall 2009, 2010 and 2011

I include three syllabi: The first trial syllabus I wrote for the *Course English Phonetics and Phonology for Fall 2009*. I made major changes to the syllabus Spring 2010 (which was the same foundation for Fall 2010), so I only include Fall 2010. The syllabus for Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 were almost the same, so I only include Fall 2011.

1) Trial Syllabus, Fall 2009

Department of Modern Languages
School of Human Sciences
Universidad de Bogotá

ENGLISH PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY Fonética y Fonología Inglesa I Second Semester 2009

Instructor: Claudia Helena Lombana G.

Times: Wednesdays and Fridays 11-12:50 p.m. Duration: 16 weeks=64 hours.

Minimum attendance: 90%=58 hours

Place: Building 212, room 210 Wednesdays; building 212, room 110 Fridays

Office hours: Wednesdays: 2-4 p.m. Place to be convened for there is still no office.

Phone: () e-mail: kaw_dia@yahoo.com

Code: 2016461	Credit Hours: 3	No validación	Group: Language	Component: Core	Undergraduate
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Course Description and Rationale:

This introductory course to English pronunciation will examine general theoretical concepts of English phonetics and phonology in order to familiarize students with the practical pronunciation exercises they will complete in and out of class. The study of pronunciation by foreign language learners is essential for effective communication between different speakers of English, native and nonnative. The course does not aspire to produce native speakers of English. Such a pretension is born of the folk theory that assumes that by doing English undergraduate majors people somehow become *native*. "While [practicing] pronunciation will not make perfect, ignoring pronunciation totally can be a great disservice to [foreign language] students," (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992, p. viii). Therefore, this course expects students to (1) become acquainted with pronunciation obstacles in English as a foreign language in contrast to their native language and (2) acquire an ecological understanding of accent differences among speakers of native and nonnative languages.

Objectives:

1. To become familiar with the concepts used in the study of English phonetics and phonology.
2. To develop sensitivity to the complexities of sounds in English: consonants and vowels (segmental) and whole discourse (suprasegmental).
3. To develop the ability to listen to strings of words combined in sentences and chunks of discourse of different kinds.

4. To understand that as there are different accents in Spanish, so are there distinct accents in English.
5. To be able to transcribe different texts phonetically.
6. To be able to explore the theory and the practical exercises beyond the classroom and as part of students' own academic study and personal learning experience with the English language.

Class Attendance, Participation and Preparation:

Students who are absent for 3 class sessions (6 hours) will fail the course. Being prepared for class includes reading the required texts and having the proper texts and assignments with you in class. Class participation is essential. Instructional conversations, class discussions, and pronunciation exercises will guide the course. Class starts at 11 a.m. and finishes at 12:50 pm. Class starts promptly at 11:00 and no entry will be allowed once class is in session.

Course Assignments:

Reading Comprehension tests: 20%

Practical activities: 20%

1 Group presentation: 20%

Term Project: 40%

Students will choose a pronunciation problem that they find important to describe and analyze. Further information specifying the details of the project will be announced after students have been oriented to the course.

Required Readings:

Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). *Teaching American English pronunciation*. Oxford: Oxford Handbooks for Language Teachers.

Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D. M. & Goodwin, J. (1996). *Teaching pronunciation. A reference for Teachers of English to speakers of other languages*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, D. (2003). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of language* (2nd ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Roach, P. (2009). *English phonetics and phonology: A practical course* (4th ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Course Schedule

Week	Dates	Content
1	8 5/7	Syllabus – Introduction (Avery & Ehrlich). Introduction (Roach)
2	8 12/14	The sounds of speech (Ch. 27, Crystal)/ Dictionaries
3	8 19/21	Spelling and Pronunciation (Avery & Ehrlich) (Roach) (Group present.)
4	8 26/28	The production of speech sounds (Roach) (Group presentation)
5	9 2/4	English Consonants (Group presentation)
6	9 9/11	English Vowels (Group presentation)
7	9 16/18	Long vowels, diphthongs, triphthongs (Roach) (Group presentation)
	9 23/25	CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AT UN
8	10 30/2	Phonemes and symbols (Roach) (Theoretical) (Group presentation)
9	10 7/9	Word Stress and vowel reduction (Avery & Ehrlich) (Group presentation)
10	10 14/16	Stress, rhythm, and adjustments in connected speech (Group presentation)
11	10 21/23	Connected Speech (Group presentation) (Group presentation)
12	10 28/30	Connected Speech (Group presentation) (Group presentation)
13	11 4/6	The sound system and Listening (Celce-Murcia et al.) (Group presentation)
14	11 11/13	The sound system and grammar (Celce-Murcia et al.) (Group presentation)
15	11 18/20	The sound system and orthography (Celce-Murcia et al.) (Group presentation)

16	11 25/27	FINAL PROJECT
17	12 2	Final Grades Dec. 2 Classroom from 11-12:50

Visits to the General Library, the library in the Department of Modern Languages, and other libraries and institutions that can offer information about phonetics and phonology are highly encouraged. Other ideas that might add to expanding our knowledge are also encouraged.

2) *Syllabus Fall 2010 – Based on Trial Syllabus Spring 2010*

Department of Modern Languages
School of Human Sciences
Universidad de Bogotá

ENGLISH PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY
Fonética y Fonología Inglesa I
Second Semester 2010

Instructor: Claudia Helena Lombana G.

GROUP 01

Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9-11 a.m. Duration: 16 weeks=64 hours.

Minimum attendance: 90%=58 hours

Place:

Office hours: Mondays: 9-12 p.m. previous appointment. Department of Modern Languages, Building 229: South Tower, third floor.

E-mail: chlombanag@yahoo.com

Code: 2016461	Credit Hours: 3	No validación	Group: Language	Component: Core/Disciplinar	Undergraduate
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Course Description and Rationale:

This introductory course to English pronunciation will examine general theoretical concepts of English phonetics and phonology in order to familiarize students with the field and to allow them to describe the language they're learning. Also, the course is intended to introduce practical pronunciation exercises so that students complete them in and out of class as further practice. The study of pronunciation by foreign language learners is essential for effective communication between different speakers of English, native and nonnative. The course does not aspire to produce native speakers of English. Such a pretension is born of the folk theory that assumes that by doing English undergraduate majors people somehow become *native*. "While [practicing] pronunciation will not make perfect, ignoring pronunciation totally can be a great disservice to [foreign language] students," (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992, p. viii). Therefore, this course expects students to (1) become acquainted with pronunciation obstacles in English as a foreign language in contrast to their native language and (2) acquire an ecological understanding of accent differences among speakers of native and nonnative languages.

Objectives:

1. To become familiar with the concepts used in the study of English phonetics and phonology.
2. To develop sensitivity to the complexities of sounds in English: consonants and vowels (segmental) and whole discourse (suprasegmental).

3. To develop the ability to listen to strings of words combined in sentences and chunks of discourse of different kinds.
4. To understand that as there are different accents in Spanish, so are there distinct accents in English.
5. To be able to transcribe different texts phonetically.
6. To be able to explore the theory and the practical exercises beyond the classroom and as part of students' own academic study and personal learning experience with the English language.

Class Attendance, Participation and Preparation:

Students who are absent for 3 class sessions (6 hours, 10%) will fail the course. Being prepared for class includes reading the required texts and having the proper texts and assignments with you in class. Class participation is essential. Instructional conversations, class discussions, and pronunciation exercises will guide the course. Class starts at 9 a.m. and finishes at 10:50 a.m. **Class starts promptly at 9:00 and tardiness will severely affect your final grade.**

Professional Conduct Requirement (15% of final grade) = Four grades over 50 points (one per month). *Misión. Como Universidad de la Nación fomenta el acceso con equidad al sistema educativo colombiano, provee la mayor oferta de programas académicos, forma profesionales competentes y socialmente responsables.* http://www.unal.edu.co/contenido/sobre_un/sobreun_mision.htm

Students are expected to conduct themselves like teaching professionals at all times. Professional conduct in this context includes but is not limited to punctuality, attendance, task continuity, diligence, and consideration of others.

Punctuality: Tardiness will adversely affect the ability of other students to learn and result in a failure to complete required assignments. Excessive tardiness will result in a decrement in grade.

Attendance: Failure to attend class sessions will prevent students from achieving course objectives and result in a decrement in grade.

Task continuity: Focus upon classroom activities is essential to the educational attainment of the individual and the class as a whole. Once students enter the classroom they are to remain seated and to devote their full attention to instructional activities. **Students are not to exit or enter the classroom while class is in session** without prior permission from the instructor. Students are not permitted to use any personal **electronic devices** without consent of the instructor. Use of cell phones for voice or text communication is prohibited at all times. A single violation of task continuity will result in decrement in grade. Multiple violations of task continuity will result in dismissal from the course.

Diligence: Failure to complete written assignments or deliver presentations in a timely manner retards the progress of the class as a whole and will result in grade decrement.

Consideration of Others: Failure to demonstrate consideration of others by informing the instructor and fellow students of inability to meet scheduled course obligations (e.g., presentations) at least 48 hours in advance will result in grade decrement.

Professional Conduct Grading Rubric

- **Punctuality:** 3 tardies (more than 2 minutes late to class), loss of 10 points; 3 tardies over 10 minutes, loss of 30 points.
- **Attendance:** Any unexcused absence will result in a loss of 5 points. **Three** unexcused absences will result in a combined failure of the course. This is, students who miss three class sessions (6 hours)

will fail the course. Absences may be excused by illness or medical emergency with provision of a doctor's note. On rare occasions students may be excused from class when class time conflicts with activities directly related to university welfare, e.g., student and staff strikes. On such occasions students are required to bring documentation verifying their specific and essential participation in these activities. It is recommended that any student with doubts about what constitutes an excused absence consult with the instructor before missing class.

- **Task Continuity:** A single violation of task continuity will result in a loss of 5 points. A second and third violation compound the grade decrement, with a loss of 10 and 20 points respectively. Any student with three violations of task continuity may be dismissed from the class.
- **Diligence:** Students who fail to turn in assignments on due dates or take quizzes have 0 on the assignment plus a loss of ten points (10) in their professional conduct score.
- **Consideration of others:** Students' failure to inform the instructor of problems related to students' responsibilities and obligations with the class will result in a loss of (50 points).

Course Assignments and Grading System:

Professional Conduct: 15%

Reading Comprehension Tests and Quizzes: 15%

Practical Activities: 20%

2 Group Presentations: 20%

Term Project: 30%. Specifications about the term project will be announced after students have been oriented to the course and after once some theoretical and practical issues have been addressed.

Required Readings:

Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). *Teaching American English pronunciation*. Oxford: Oxford Handbooks for Language Teachers.

Ladefoged, P. (1975). *A course in Phonetics*. New York: Narcpirt Brace Javanovich.

Llisterri Boix, Joaquim. (1991). *Introducción a la fonética: El método experimental*. Autores Textos y Temas Lingüística. Colección dirigida por Carlos Subirats. Barcelona: Editorial Antrhopos.

Kenworthy, J. (1992). *Teaching English pronunciation*. New York: Longman.

Poms, L. & Dale, P. (1985). *English pronunciation for Spanish Speakers*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Simon and Schuster.

Others

Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D. M. & Goodwin, J. (1996). *Teaching pronunciation. A reference for Teachers of English to speakers of other languages*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, D. (2003). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of language* (2nd ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Roach, P. (2009). *English phonetics and phonology: A practical course* (4th ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Course Schedule

Week	Dates	Content
1	Aug. 3/5	Syllabus – Introduction to the Course, Dictionaries, tape/digital recorders
2	10/12	Llisterri Boix. El alcance de la fonética. Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). Introduction: Preliminary considerations in the teaching of pronunciation (pp. vii-xv)
3	17/19	Ladefoged, P. (1975). Artulatory Phonetics (pp. 2-20)

4	24/26	Ladefoged, P. (1975). Phonology and Phonetic Transcription (pp. 23-42) Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). Spelling and Pronunciation (pp. 3-8)
5	Aug. 31 Sep. 2	Ladefoged, P. (1975). Consonants of English (pp. 43-62) Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). Individual sounds of English: English consonants (11-27)
6	7/9	Ladefoged, P. (1975). English Vowels and Phonological Rules (pp. 62-88) Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). Individual sounds of English: English consonants (28-37)
7	14/16	Ladefoged, P. (1975). English Words and Sentences (pp. 91-111) Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008) English Sounds in Context (40-61).
	21/23	CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AT THE UNIVERSITY
8	28/30	Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). Word Stress and Vowel Reduction (pp. 63-72)
9	Oct. 5/7	Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). Connected Speech (pp. 72-75)
10	12/14	Stress, rhythm, and adjustments in connected speech (Group presentation)
11	19/21	Connected Speech.
12	26/28	Connected Speech.
13	Nov. 2/4	The sound system and the four language skills.
14	9/11	FINAL PROJECTS
15	16/18	FINAL PROJECTS
16	23/25	Course Evaluation and Final Grades

Visits to the General Library, the library in the Department of Modern Languages, and other libraries and institutions that can offer information about phonetics and phonology are highly encouraged. Other ideas that might add to expanding our knowledge are also welcome.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT:

- The course, *English Phonetics and Phonology*, has a handbook of readings. It can be purchased at Mr. Garzón's copy shop, Nunan Building, first floor. It has a cost of \$16,000 pesos.
- \$2,000 pesos per student will be collected for the copies of exercises and other handouts necessary for the development of the class.
- Visit to the library of the Department of Modern Languages.
- A notebook to keep your notes clearly written and to do the exercises.
- A folder to keep all the handouts and assignments.
- Pens, pencils and other school supplies.
- Time management: school, jobs, personal life with your family and friends, meals, sports and entertainment.

**BOOKS ON PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY YOU WILL FIND AT THE LIBRARY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES**

1	ABERCROMBIE D.	<i>Elements of General Phonetics</i> (ed. 1967)
2	ABERCROMBIE D.	<i>Studies in Phonetics & Linguistics</i> (ed. 1966)
3	ACOSTA H.	<i>Articulatory Phonetics</i> (s. f.)
4	BAKER A.	<i>Introducing English pronunciation</i> (ed. 1982)
5	BAKER A.	<i>Introducing English Pronunciation. A Teacher's Guide to Tree or Three and Ship or Sheep</i> (ed. 1984)
6	BAKER A.	<i>Ship or Sheep. An Intermediate Pronunciation Course</i> (ed. 1986)
7	BAKER A.	<i>Ship or sheep? An intermediate pronunciation course</i> (ed. 1984)
8	BAKER A.	<i>Tree or three? An elementary pronunciation course</i> (ed. 1982)
9	CARR P.	<i>Phonology</i> (ed. 1998)
10	CLAREY E. and DIXSON R. J.	<i>Pronunciation Exercises in English</i> (ed. 1947)
11	CUNNINGHAM S. and BOWLER B.	<i>Headway. Intermediate Pronunciation</i> (ed. 1990)
12	DALTON CH. and SEIDLHOFER B.	<i>Pronunciation</i> (ed. 1995)
13	HAYCRAFT B.	<i>The Teaching of Pronunciation</i> (ed. 1978)
14	HEWINGS M.	<i>Pronunciation Practice Activities</i> (ed. 2004)
15	HOOKE R. and ROWELL J.	<i>A handbook of English Pronunciation</i> (ed. 1982)
16	JONES D.	<i>Everyman's English Pronouncing Dictionary</i> (ed. 1958)
17	KENWORTHY J.	<i>Teaching English Pronunciation</i> (ed. 1992)
18	KENWORTHY J.	<i>Teaching English Pronunciation</i> (ed. 1993)
19	KENYON J. and KNOTT T.	<i>A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English</i> (ed. 1953)
20	KENYON J. and KNOTT T.	<i>A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English</i> (ed. 1953)
21	KINGDON R.	<i>English Intonation Practice</i> (ed. 1960)
22	LADEFOGED P.	<i>A Course in Phonetics</i> (ed. 1975)
23	LADEFOGED P.	<i>A Course in Phonetics. Third Edition</i> (ed. 1993)
24	LADEFOGED P.	<i>Three Areas of Experimental Phonetics</i> (ed. 1975)
25	MALEY A. and DUFF A.	<i>Sounds Intriguing</i> (ed. 1979)
26	MALEY A. and DUFF A.	<i>Sounds Intriguing</i> (ed. 1979)
27	O' CONNOR J. and ARNOLD G.	<i>Intonation of colloquial English. Second edition</i> (ed. 1976)
28	O' CONNOR J. D.	<i>Phonetics</i> (ed. 1973)
29	PRATOR C. and WALLACE B.	<i>Manual of American English pronunciation</i> (ed. 1985)
30	PRESTON D. R.	<i>Varieties of American English</i> (ed. 1979)
31	PRESTON D. R.	<i>Varieties of American English</i> (ed. 1979)
32	PRESTON D. R.	<i>Varieties of American English</i> (ed. 1984)
33	ROACH P.	<i>English Phonetics and Phonology. A Practical Course</i> (ed. 2002)
34	ROACH P.	<i>English Phonetics and Phonology. Tutor's Book</i> (ed. 1987)
35	STOCKWELL R. and BOWEN D.	<i>The sounds of English and Spanish</i> (ed. 1965)
36	TENCH P.	<i>Pronunciation Skills</i> (ed. 1984)

*Researcher's Note, October 4, 2014: Photograph taken from the syllabus in my archives as an instructor: **Binder English Phonetics and Phonology, Fall Semester 2010.** This was the total collection of books that rested in the Library of the Department of Modern Languages. This list was given to me by the librarian in August 2010 for my course. This list was given to the students in the four cohorts and was usually a photocopy of this master copy. The list of books was a separate handout that usually accompanied the syllabus.*

Department of Modern Languages
School of Human Sciences
Universidad de Bogotá, Bogotá

ENGLISH PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY
Fonética y Fonología Inglesa I
Second Semester 2011

Instructor: Claudia Helena Lombana G.

GROUP 02

Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9-11 a.m. Duration: 16 weeks=64 hours.

Minimum attendance: 90%=58 hours

Place: T=Room 102 Building 225 / Th= Video Room 1 (104) Building 229

Office hours: Mondays: 9-12 p.m. previous appointment. Department of Modern Languages, Building 229: South Tower, third floor.

E-mail: chlombanag@yahoo.com

Code: 2016461	Credit Hours: 3	No validación	Group: Language	Component: Core/Disciplinar	Undergraduate
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Course Description and Rationale:

This is an introductory course on English phonetics and phonology. It will examine general theoretical concepts of phonetics and phonology in order to allow students to understand and describe the language they're learning. Also, the course is intended to establish a practical connection between the reception and production of English from a phonetic perspective. In terms of phonology, the phonological systems of the foreign and native language need to be compared in order to understand the differences and similarities in both languages, English and Spanish. It is assumed that by understanding how the two systems work, students will be able to evaluate their own oral performance in both the foreign and native languages. In addition, this course also provides some information about language acquisition focusing more attention on the area of pronunciation and what this involves. In short, the course includes a theoretical foundation in phonetics and phonology, literature about the teaching of pronunciation and language acquisition, and several useful exercises for students to practice on their own.

The course does not aspire to produce native speakers of English. Further practice will have to take place in students' basic courses and as part of students' own initiatives. The **pretension** of sounding like a native speaker has to be demystified. The folk theory that assumes that by doing English undergraduate majors people somehow become *native* needs to be addressed in several class discussions.

It is highly recommended that students do practice their oral language and their listening skill on their own. This course will guide students on major aspects of phonetics and phonology and pronunciation, but students will have to commit themselves to their own improvement. "While [practicing] pronunciation will not make perfect, ignoring pronunciation totally can be a great disservice to [foreign language] students," (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992, p. viii). Therefore, this course expects students to (1) become acquainted with phonetic and phonological information necessary to understand the pronunciation of the English language and (2) acquire an ecological understanding of differences in accents among native and nonnative speakers of English.

Objectives:

1. To become familiar with the concepts used in the study of English phonetics and phonology.

2. To develop sensitivity to the complexities of sounds in English: consonants and vowels (segmental) and whole discourse (suprasegmental).
3. To develop the ability to listen to strings of words combined in sentences and chunks of discourse of different kinds.
4. To understand that as there are different accents in Spanish, so are there distinct accents in English.
5. To be able to transcribe different texts phonetically.
6. To be able to explore the theory and the practical exercises beyond the classroom and as part of students' own academic study and personal learning experience with the English language.
7. To be able to read aloud and pronounce different kinds of texts (written and spoken) in class.
8. To be able to analyze a short spoken excerpt using basic concepts from phonetics and phonology.

Class Attendance, Participation and Preparation:

The maximum number of absences is **3 class sessions** (6 hours, 10%). **Students exceeding this number will automatically fail the course.** Being prepared for class includes reading the required texts and having the proper texts and assignments with you in class. Class participation is essential. Instructional conversations, class discussions, and pronunciation exercises will guide the course. Class starts at 9 a.m. and finishes at 10:50 a.m. **Class starts promptly at 9:00 and tardiness will severely affect your final grade. Students need to bring all the previously prepared reading texts to class. Failure to do so will also affect students' grades. Excused absences due to illness, health condition or family emergency will have to be notified to the professor through e-mail. In the case of illness, a medical excused will have to be issued by the UN health center.** These excuses will allow students to take a quiz or present any other assignment that may have taken place in the missed class session.

NOTE: Excused or unexcused absences are still considered **absences**. Therefore, you will have to be careful with the **number of times you miss class**. I won't be recalling this information later, but I will take action at the time I send the grades to SIA.

Professional Conduct Requirement

*Misión. Como Universidad de la Nación fomenta el acceso con equidad al sistema educativo colombiano, provee la mayor oferta de programas académicos, **forma profesionales competentes y socialmente responsables.** http://www.unal.edu.co/contenido/sobre_un/sobreun_mision.htm*

Students are expected to conduct themselves like teaching professionals at all times. Professional conduct in this context includes but is not limited to punctuality, attendance, task continuity, diligence, responsibility and consideration of others.

Punctuality: Tardiness will adversely affect the ability of other students to learn and result in a failure to complete required assignments. Excessive tardiness will result in a decrement in grade.

Attendance: Failure to attend class sessions will prevent students from achieving course objectives and result in a decrement in grade or even the failure of the course: 0.

Task continuity: Focus upon classroom activities is essential to the educational attainment of the individual and the class as a whole. Once students enter the classroom they are to remain seated and to devote their full attention to instructional activities. **Students are not to exit or enter the classroom while class is in session.** Students are not permitted to use any personal **electronic devices** without consent of the instructor. Use of cell phones for voice or text communication is prohibited **at all times**. A single violation of task continuity will result in decrement in grade. Multiple violations of task continuity will result in dismissal from the course.

Diligence: Failure to complete written assignments or deliver presentations in a timely manner retards the progress of the class as a whole and will result in grade decrement. Also, failure to bring the corresponding reading material and exercises for class discussion will adversely affect students' performance and participation.

Consideration of Others: Failure to demonstrate consideration of others by informing the instructor and fellow students of inability to meet scheduled course obligations (e.g., presentations) at least 48 hours in advance will result in grade decrement.

Course Assignments and Grading System:

Missing quizzes, being tardy, and other of the above professional conduct considerations will affect the final results of the grades mentioned below:

Reading Comprehension Tests and Quizzes: 30%.

Practical Activities: 20%

Group Presentations: 20%

Term Project: 30%. Specifications about the term project will be announced after students have been oriented to the course and after once some theoretical and practical issues have been addressed.

Required Readings:

Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). *Teaching American English pronunciation*. Oxford: Oxford Handbooks for Language Teachers.

Ladefoged, P. & Johnson, K. (2011). *A course in Phonetics* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth.

Llisterri Boix, Joaquim. (1991). *Introducción a la fonética: El método experimental*. Autores Textos y Temas Lingüística. Colección dirigida por Carlos Subirats. Barcelona: Editorial Antrhopos.

Kenworthy, J. (1992). *Teaching English pronunciation*. New York: Longman.

Poms, L. & Dale, P. (1985). *English pronunciation for Spanish Speakers*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Simon and Schuster.

Others

Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D. M. & Goodwin, J. (1996). *Teaching pronunciation. A reference for Teachers of English to speakers of other languages*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Crystal, D. (2003). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of language* (2nd ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Roach, P. (2009). *English phonetics and phonology: A practical course* (4th ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Course Schedule

Week	Dates	Content
1	August 2-4	Syllabus – Introduction to the Course.
2	8 - 10	Llisterri Boix. El alcance de la fonética. Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). Introduction: Preliminary considerations in the teaching of pronunciation (pp. vii-xv)/
3	16- 18	Ladefoged & Johnson (2011) Ch. 1 Articulation and Acoustics (p. 2-32)
4	23 - 25	Ladefoged & Johnson (2011) Ch. 2 Phonology and Phonetic Transcription (pp. 33-54) Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). Spelling and Pronunciation (pp. 3-8)
5	30 Sep 1	Ladefoged & Johnson (2011) Ch. 3 The Consonants of English (pp. 56-83) Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). Individual sounds of English: English consonants (11-27)
6	Sep 6 - 8	Ladefoged & Johnson (2011) Ch. 4 English Vowels and Phonological Rules (pp. 85-106) Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). Individual sounds of English: English consonants

		(28-37)
7	Sep 13 - 15	Ladefoged & Johnson (2011) Ch. 5 English Words and Sentences (pp. 107-134) Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008) English Sounds in Context (40-61).
	Sep 20 - 22	Cultural Activities UN
8	Sep 27 - 29	Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). Word Stress and Vowel Reduction (pp. 63-72)
9	Oct 4 - 6	Avery, P. & Ehrlich, S. (2008). Connected Speech (pp. 72-75)
10	11 - 13	Other readings
11	18 - 20	Connected Speech.
12	25 - 27	Connected Speech.
13	Nov. 1 - 3	The sound system and the four language skills.
14	8 - 10	PRESENTATION OF FINAL PROJECTS
15	15 - 17	PRESENTATION OF FINAL PROJECTS
16	22 - 24	PRESENTATION OF FINAL PROJECTS
		FINAL GRADES

Visits to the General Library, the library in the Department of Modern Languages, and other libraries and institutions that can offer information about phonetics and phonology are highly encouraged. Other ideas that might add to expanding our knowledge are also welcome.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT:

- All students will have to send an e-mail to Professor Lombana on August 2, 2011 to the following address: chlombanag@yahoo.com Communication between students and professor Lombana will take place on line throughout the semester.
- The course *English Phonetics and Phonology* has a handbook of readings. It can be purchased at Mr. Garzón's copy shop, Nunan Building, first floor. It has a cost of \$_____ pesos. Reasons to buy the handbook: (1) it will save you time and energy; (2) you can start reading and advance in the content of the course; (3) once you buy the handout you won't have to worry about making copies every week and run like crazy between classes and other personal issues you may have.
- \$2,000 pesos per student will be collected for the copies of exercises and other handouts necessary for the development of the class.
- Visits to the library of the Department of Modern Languages are highly encouraged.
- A notebook to keep your notes clearly written and to do the exercises is required.
- A binder to keep all the handouts and assignments organized is highly recommended.
- Pens, pencils and other school supplies should be brought to class.
- Students are highly encouraged to plan their agendas: time management should be considered seriously. School, jobs, personal life with your family and friends, meals, sports and entertainment should be planned for optimum performance and a healthy physical and mental LIFE during the academic period.

Appendix N

The Four Steps (TFS)

Instructions for The Four Steps: Last Version Spring 2012

PREPARING FOR YOUR FINAL PROJECT

STEP 1

A. Recording Verbatim Sample and Listening Task

B. Writing the oral Text (Written Transcription)

C. Written Notes on Journal: Reporting on this Experience

A. Recording Verbatim Sample on a CD and Listening Task.

- (1) Brainstorm some ideas in your groups and identify the type of spoken genre you want to choose for this assignment: informal conversation among native speakers; a weather report; a documentary; a TV show; a piece of news, etc.
- (2) Listen to several native oral discourses on TV, on Internet radio, or on the web. In your groups decide which oral text you want to transcribe.
- (3) Record the text: maximum length of time 2 minutes, and minimum 1:30 minutes. Make sure the recorded text is easy to hear in terms of **recorded quality**.

While you do this task answer the questions in part “**C: Written notes on journal**” individually.

Oral verbatim samples coming from listening exercises in English textbooks, or on-line English lessons won't be accepted.

B. Written Transcription of the Oral Text (Verbatim Sample)

B.1 Working Individually: Your individual written transcription and journal has to be completed by Saturday, May 5.

- (1) Once you have agreed with your group members on the oral text you're going to use for this transcription, **each of you** will do the written transcription of the text **individually**. Follow the written transcription samples by Claudia Lombana (October 19, 2010 and October 26, 2011) .
- (2) **Each of you** should **read about the use of punctuation in English, so you can punctuate this oral text**. Once you understand how to use commas, periods, full stops, parentheses, hyphens, colons, semicolons, and so on, you will punctuate your own written transcription individually.
- (3) Each member of the group will write down about his/her personal experience in part “**C: Written notes on journal**”

- (1) What happens while you listen to the oral text and you write at the same time?
- (2) How did your perceptive skill work with the writing skill? Write about this experience : the sounds of the English language and the spelling system of English.

Students will show a different range of listening skill. Some students will understand the entire text, while others may have several errors transcribing the oral text. Therefore, words or stretches of discourse that you **don't understand** should be written in **parentheses** as shown below. The stretches of xxxxxx can be long or short depending on the length of time it took the speaker to utter a syllable, a word, or longer utterances (pay attention to the seconds, and the lines uttered by the speakers). These stretches might vary from one student to another. This will depend on each individual's listening ability.

It's all right if you don't have a 100% listening comprehension!!! The goal of this exercise is not to have a perfect transcription. Instead, **what will be graded is the process that each of you will go through by making this transcription individually** and by reporting richly in your notes.

Also, you will have to do an analysis on how you will use punctuation marks in this text. This has to show in the transcription (practical application of this analysis). **The punctuation of the transcribed text will also be graded.**

For the students who have much better listening skills and who don't have much problem with the written transcription of the text, you will have to analyze how an oral text becomes a written text. What are the differences between both forms: speech and written language? Also, individually, there are usually some mishaps when you do a transcription, even if you're an excellent listener. Identify these mishaps and report on them.

B. 2 Group work: One Version of the Transcribed Text to be Turned in on Thursday, May 10, 2012.

After you have worked on your individual transcriptions and have written your individual journals, you will have to work on one group version where you unify the written transcript.

- (1) You will get together to compare each student's version of the transcription. What differences are there? Write this in your journal.
- (2) You will then work on the final version of this transcription: there will be one transcription per group.
- (3) You will analyze how the text will be finally punctuated. This will be the result of the work everyone did previously about punctuation.

(4) The group version of the written transcription will be turned in on Thursday, May 10.

What is significant here is how you will resolve some of the problems with the stretches of discourse that were difficult for each group member. The collaborative work will have to be reported. You have to be truthful to this task and note down what happens with the written text and how much each of you was able to transcribe. Mention the words, phrases, and entire sentences that were difficult and how you solved issues of text accuracy.

For those students who have much better listening skills and who don't have much problem with the written transcription of the text, you will have to analyze how an oral text becomes a written text. What are the differences between both forms: speech and written language? Also, individually, there are usually some mishaps when you do a transcription, even if you're an excellent listener. Identify these mishaps and report on them.

C. Written Notes on Journal: Reporting on This Experience Individually

Answer these questions before you get together with your peers.

C. 1 Choosing the Oral Text

- (1) What texts did you (individually) propose to the group?
- (2) How did the group members finally decide on the text?

C.2 Individual Listening Task

- (1) How did the listening of the text take place for each member of the group?
- (2) What steps were involved, if any?
- (3) How many times did you have to listen to the text?
- (4) Your first impression of the text the first time you listened to it. Did you find the text easy or difficult as a whole the first time you listened to it: general idea; supporting ideas; other details...? **(Refer to the difficult parts in the transcript.)**
- (5) What listening and writing strategies did you use? What was difficult or easy (give examples)?
- (6) How did you recognize the speech sounds in the stretches of discourse that you did not understand? (Give examples)

- (7) Could you figure out some of the spellings of unfamiliar words by recognizing the sounds uttered by the speakers? (Give examples)
- (8) What was easy or/and difficult in the transcription of this oral text? Words? Whole stretches of sentences? What segments? What suprasegmental features? Accents? The topic? The speed of the language delivered by the speakers? (Give examples)
- (9) How did you figure out words or stretches of spoken language that were difficult for you? Give specific examples by making references to the lines in the written transcription. **Support your generalizations with examples:**

e.g. "I had problems in line 3 with the personal name Rone Hazelton. At first I heard [roun], so I spelt it "Rhone." I also spelt the last name "Haselton" but my computer showed me a red underlining, so I clicked on the word and the automatic spelling program showed me how to correct it. Later I saw that the video showed the speaker's first name, so I corrected it."

Generalizations have to be backed up with examples coming from the transcription.

- (10) Rate the difficulty of the verbatim sample you transcribed on a scale of 5 to 1 where:

5= you did not have any problems, and
1= it was impossible to understand anything.

For students who are more proficient in the English language, you will have to analyze how the oral text you chose became a written text. What are the differences between both forms: speech and written language? Also, individually, there are usually some mishaps when you do a transcription, even if you're an excellent listener. Identify these mishaps and report on them.

D. What You will Turn in on May 10, 2012:

As a group:

- (1) Hand in a CD with the verbatim sample you recorded. One CD per group.
- (2) The Written Transcription of the text.
- (3) The unified journal notes—as a group—comparing your individual work, and how it was possible for the group to come up with the final written transcription.

Make sure you identify the documents by writing your names. Remember this is a double spaced document.

**Phonetic Transcription of Text
STEP 2:**

A. Broad Phonetic Transcription

In this broad phonetic transcription, you will make use of the phonetic symbols of the English consonants and vowels given in Ladefoged and Johnson (2011). You will also have to analyze certain utterances in terms of allophonic variations and verify if the phonological rules apply to your oral text. Here you will make use of diacritics to show a more narrow phonetic transcription. **It is all right if you have doubts and don't exactly know how some of the words are transcribed.** However, you will have to verify with your on-line dictionaries and determine what you hear when you do this transcription.

For this transcription you will have to change the layout of the written text. This time the text will have a horizontal orientation. Each line of your written text will end in a pause made by the speakers

in your verbatim sample. This is, the line will end in the far end of the right margin. Then you will proceed with the next line, and so on.

The new orientation of your written transcript version will serve the purpose of studying stress and tone group patterns in Step 3.

In order to do this phonetic transcription, you can make use of the phonetic typewriters found in the following web sites:

<http://ipa.typeit.org/>

<http://weston.ruter.net/projects/ipa-chart/view/keyboard/>

B. Group work: Broad Phonetic Transcription of Verbatim Sample.

Each group will decide how they want to work on this phonetic transcription:

- (1) You can each make a phonetic transcription on your own. Then you get together and compare the transcriptions and get a final version. If you decide to work on your own first, you will have to write down how you worked on this transcription.
- (2) You can all get together and make the phonetic transcription first, without listening to the recorded text. Then you can listen to the text and revise your transcription.
- (3) Any other procedure that serves the purpose of this phonetic transcription.

C. Writing in Your Journal.

What you will report in Step 2:

- (1) How your group worked on the phonetic transcription (see B).
- (2) The different problems you had with vowel and consonant sounds: make reference to specific examples.
- (3) How you marked word stress (make reference to grammatical words and content words, what you noticed); strong, weak, unstressed forms, reduced forms. Write examples based on your phonetic transcription.
- (4) Write about polysyllabic words found in your text and how the vowels behaved in these types of words and how stress was marked.
- (5) The quality of vowels in your text.
- (6) Citation forms and connected speech: What can you say about this?
- (7) Cases of assimilation and coarticulation (Phonological Rules)
- (8) Word boundaries: (C+C); (C+V); (V+V)

You can draw a table showing the different problems each person in the group had with certain utterances, by referring to the exact line and the word or words, how the student transcribed the words or utterances, and what the speakers actually did.

Example:

Group Member	Line	Word (s)	Individual Phonetic Transcription	Verbatim Sample
Richard	2	add up	[ad up]	['æɹ ʌp]

	3	Hezelton	[he'zɛlton]	['hæzəltən]
	11	actually	['aktwəlɪ]	['æktʃwəlɪ]
	15	absorbe	[æb'sɔrb]	[əb'sɔrb]
Anne	2	add	[æd 'ɹp]	['æɹ ɹp]
	10	looking	[lʊkɪŋ]	['lʊkɪŋ]
	11	causes	[kouses]	['kɔzəs]
	13	sponge	['sponch]	['spʌndʒ]
Susan	4	hundred	['handred]	['hʌndrɪd]
	21	recommend	[recommend]	[rɪkə'mɛnd]
	22	gutter	['gʊrə]	['gʌrə]
	23	spout	['spɔʊt]	['spaut]
	24	foundation	[fʊn'deɪʃən]	[faʊn'deɪʃən]

Descriptive text:

“The above table summarizes the different words that each member of the group transcribed wrongly. The corrected version is shown on the fifth column. Richard had problems with the words on lines 2, 3, 11, and 15. On line 2, he transcribed a [d] sound in the word “add”. Then he listened to the speaker and found that this [d] became a flap [ɹ] in American English. Richard was the person who actually corrected the word “absorb” on line 15. As a group we thought it was “endure” (line 14 of written transcription, November 3, 2011)...”

Then you continue with the description of the problems the other members found during this process of phonetic transcription: “Susan found herself transcribing words that did not exist, such as “sad” instead of “bad” on line 20.”

Each member of the group will have to describe his/her problems in doing this transcription.

D. As a Group, this is what you will turn in on May 17:

- (1) A unified phonetic transcription of the written text.
- (2) Answers to the questions in part C.
- (3) A similar table to the one I showed you as an example. Each person will complete his/her own part. A description of the problems shown in the table.
- (4) Examples from your phonetic transcription reported in the table *Modification of Sounds in Connected Speech* (Avery & Ehrlich, 2008). Comments about the results shown in this table.

**STEP 3:
Pauses, Stress in Connected Speech, and Intonation**

For this task you will have to compare Ladefoged and Johnson (2011) with Avery and Ehrlich (2008): What do they say about word stress in connected speech, pauses, and intonation? Once you have these concepts clear, you will analyze how the speakers in your verbatim sample (VS) mark stress, make pauses, and use intonation patterns.

What You Have to Turn in on May 29, 2012

(1) The written transcript of your verbatim sample (horizontal orientation).

You will show

- (a) The pauses made by the speakers: /= short pause // = longer.
Marking pauses allows you to figure out intonation patterns in intonational phrases.
- (b) Tonic accents.
- (c) Intonation lines.

Journal: Make a comparison between the punctuation of your written text and how the speakers make pauses. What do the authors say about pauses?

(2) Explain how the stress patterns in the different utterances work:

- (a) Explain how different stress patterns work for this verbatim sample (VS) in terms of stress intervals (refer to the authors first, then analyze this in the VS).

(3) Explain the concept of “tonic accent” (mark tonic syllable with an asterisk [*])

- (a) Tonic syllable/tonic accent (sentence stress in Avery & Ehrlich).
What do the authors say about this? How can we predict a tonic accent?
- (c) How did the speakers in your VS mark the tonic accent? Answer these questions on your journal.

(4) Intonation: Give a definition of intonation, based on your readings.

In order to show intonation, you can use the lines drawn above the sentences as indicated in Avery and Ehrlich's. For this task, I find intonation arrows drawn above the sentences more suitable (pp. 76-79). In order to mark intonation patterns, you will have to take into account these concepts:

- (a) The concept of tone group.
- (b) The concept of pitch.
- (c) How the intonation pattern works in a sentence.
- (d) Stress.

You will **describe** how these intonation patterns work in your oral text by using the theory you have studied, as well as your individual and your group perception. You may not agree with your group members. Also, it may be possible that you don't reach any agreement. You will need to report on your disagreements. Perception disagreements can only be resolved by using special lab equipment, but we don't count on this equipment for now. However, you can download the software *wavesurfer* so you can have a look at the different waves formed in speech.

Write down in your journal: What you notice in terms of speech intonation behavior in the speakers of your recorded oral text as compared to what the theory on intonation says. What difficulties did you have marking the intonation of the speakers?

Editing

Your document should use the font ***Times New Roman***, size **12**. Please **double spaced your document**.

Make sure you're using right punctuation. Remember meaning is compromised by using poor punctuation.

The documents should be **identified accordingly**.

STEP 4:

A. Reporting on the Reading of Written Transcription.

B. Using Your Reading Material to Back up Your Observations: Discussion

Maximum Number of Pages: 8

Doubled Spaced – Font: Times New Roman - Size 12

A. Reading Aloud: Reporting on this Task.

1. Individually, and also with your group members, read aloud the written transcription of your text. Record your voices and compare the rhythm and musicality of your English with that of the speakers in your verbatim sample: word stress, tonic syllables (sentence stress), pauses, and intonation patterns (pitch). Take notes on the perception of your own oral production as well as that of your group members. Note down what you find easy and difficult in terms of pronunciation and vocalization of segments, prosody (suprasegmentals), and the listening and reading skills themselves:
 - 1.1 How am I pronouncing segments and blending words together (linkage)?
 - 1.2 How are the suprasegmental concepts helping me with this task? How is my prosody working out?
 - 1.3 How am I linking words in connected speech? What is difficult? GIVE EVIDENCE, based on examples that you capture at the moment of the oral production.
 - 1.4 How is my listening skill helping me with this task?
 - 1.5 Do I find reading this text aloud difficult? Why?
 - 1.6 How difficult is it to follow the “beat” of the speakers in the verbatim sample?
 - 1.7 Do my pauses coincide with those of the speakers?

If you find that your answers are sort of repetitive because of the above questions, simply go right to the point and avoid repetition.

2. Give feedback to one another about speech errors that may occur. WRITE DOWN THE ERRORS. Find a way to solve pronunciation problems collaboratively: the pronunciation of certain segments, syllables, words, and prosody in general.

If you don't find any difficulties, think of possible problems for other Spanish speaking people reading this same text.

3. Write down the problems that each member has experienced. Also write down what you have found **positive** in each other's speech and **your accomplishments**. This should be done using a phonetic description:

e.g. “Miguel had difficulties linking the word “smart”—which ended in a voiceless alveolar stop—to the cluster [sm] in the initial syllable of the following word, “smile.” He produced the sound [ɛ]: [smartɛsmaɪ]. This vowel sound [ɛ] does not exist in words starting with “s” in English. The influence of our native language, Spanish, was perceived very clearly in the linking of these two words. After doing some pronunciation exercises, Miguel was finally able to link the identical fricatives in “class snobbery” without inserting the [ɛ].

4. Write down how you have helped one another to improve your pronunciation and the intelligibility of your reading—if this is the case.

B. Using Your Reading Material to Back up Your Observations: Discussion

Write a section called **Discussion** for Step 4. In this discussion, you will analyze what you have experimented so far (Steps 1, 2, 3, and 4A). Different authors' **concepts, points of views, theories, and assumptions about both oral communication and written communication should illuminate this discussion.** Writing your own observations and experiences can improve if you allow the literature written on the subject to be part of your discussion. This will also help you back up your own interpretations.

Besides Ladefoged and Johnson (2011), Avery and Ehrlich (2008)—and the other authors in our class handbook—, I thought the authors given below can enrich your project substantially. This literature might as well shed more light on your insights about language (speech and writing) and the English language in particular. Also, you may be able to understand at this point what you have done so far for this project. Also, feel free to add any other author(s) you consider will enrich your discussion.

Gibson, S. (2008). Reading aloud: a useful learning tool? *ELT Journal*, 62(1), 29-36.

Halliday, M.A.K. (1990). *Spoken and written language*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Shlain, L. (1998). *The alphabet versus the goddess: The conflict between word and image*. New York: Penguin Books.

Similarly, the two chapters by Joanne Kenworthy (1992) included in our handbook of readings will help you. The first chapter, *Teaching and learning pronunciation*, discusses the factors that affect pronunciation learning (the author also refers to foreigners' down-to-earth goal in terms of pronunciation). This adds to the information you've read in Avery and Ehrlich's introduction (2008). And chapter 2, *Intelligibility*, expands on aspects that affect understanding oral communication. Additionally, this chapter will allow you to interpret certain issues of intelligibility in the same verbatim excerpts.

Finally, in the last book of readings in our course handbook—*English pronunciation for Spanish speakers* (Poms & Dale, 1985)—there is more information about rhythm and intonation. Compare the aspect of *native accent* in this book and in Kenworthy's. What do you have to say about this, what is your opinion?

Add the reading we had in our class on Thursday, May 31, 2012. The complete reference is below.

Rodriguez, R. (1999). Aria. In M. E Skolik, *Rethinking America 3: An advanced cultural reader* (2nd ed.) (pp. 125-128). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

Appendix O

Instructor's Rubrics to Evaluate the Four Steps – Last Version Spring 2012

Step 1- Spring 2012

STEP 1 FEEDBACK 200/40= 5

GRADE _____

Excerpt

A. Verbatim Sample on CD and Written Transcription (30 pts.)

- (1) Transcription followed the written template by Claudia Lombana (October 19, 2010 and October 26, 2011).
- (2) The written transcript is well punctuated.
- (3) There is information about the oral text: a complete reference where this text was taken from.

C. Written Journal (50)

Double spaced document. Students used right grammatical punctuation. Intelligible writing.

C. 1 Choosing the Oral Text (20)

- (1) What texts did you (individually) propose to the group?
- (2) How did the group members finally decide on the text?

C.2 Individual and Group Listening Task (100)

- (1) How did the listening of the text take place?
- (2) What steps were involved, if any?
- (3) How many times did you have to listen to the text?
- (4) Your first impression of the text the first time you listened to it. Did you find the text easy or difficult as a whole the first time you listened to it: general idea; supporting ideas; other details...? (**Refer to the difficult parts in the transcript.**)
- (5) What listening and writing strategies did you use? What was difficult or easy (give examples)?
- (6) How did you recognize the speech sounds in the stretches of discourse that you did not understand? (Give examples)
- (7) Could you figure out some of the spellings of unfamiliar words by recognizing the sounds uttered by the speakers? (Give examples)
- (8) What was easy or/and difficult in the transcription of this oral text? Words? Whole stretches of sentences? What segments? What suprasegmental features? Accents? The topic? The speed of the language delivered by the speakers? (Give examples)
- (9) How did you figure out words or stretches of spoken language that were difficult for you? Give specific examples by making references to the lines in the written transcription. **Support your generalizations with examples.**
- (10) Rate the difficulty of the verbatim sample you transcribed on a scale of 5 to 1.

Step 2 – Spring 2012

STEP 2 FEEDBACK

TOTAL PTS. 130/26= 5 YOUR GRADE: _____

A. FORM: EDITING. (10 pts.)

Phonetic Transcription complies with requirements: horizontal orientation _____ Line #s _____

Each line ends in a pause: _____ Other comments: _____

B. QUALITY OF PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION (30 PTS.)

Problems:

C. JOURNAL. (50 pts.) (5 pts. each except for 6 and 7 which are 10 pts. each)

- (1) How your group worked on the phonetic transcription (as indicated in instructions, part B).
- (2) The different problems you had with vowel and consonant sounds: make reference to specific examples.
- (3) How you marked word stress (make reference to grammatical words and content words, what you noticed); strong, weak, unstressed forms, reduced forms. Write examples based on your phonetic transcription.
- (4) Write about polysyllabic words found in your text and how the vowels behaved in these types of words and how stress was marked.
- (5) The quality of vowels in your text.
- (6) Citation forms and connected speech: What can you say about this?
- (7) Cases of assimilation and coarticulation (Phonological Rules)
- (8) Word boundaries: (C+C); (C+V); (V+V)

You can draw a table showing the different problems each person in the group had with certain utterances, by referring to the exact line and the word or words. In general, how you transcribed the words or utterances, and what the speakers actually did.

D. TABLE 1: (20 pts.)

- (1) Individual problems with the transcription of speech sounds.
- (2) Quality of description of problems based on the table.

E. TABLE 2: (20 pts)

Examples from your phonetic transcription reported in the table *Modification of Sounds in Connected Speech* (Avery & Ehrlich, 2008). Quality of your comments: The results shown in this table.

Step 3 – Spring 2012

STEP 3	FEEDBACK	130 pts/26= 5	GRADE
<hr/>			
A. The written transcription of your verbatim sample—horizontal orientation—showing: (30 pts.)			
<ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) Pauses made by the speakers: /= short pause // = longer.(2) Tonic accents.(3) Intonation lines.			

B. Journal (80 pts.)

(1) **Write a Comparison** between the punctuation of your written text and how the speakers make pauses. What do the authors say about pauses?

(2) **Explain how the stress patterns in the different utterances work in terms of intervals.**

(3) **Explain the concept of “tonic accent” (mark tonic syllable with an asterisk [*])**

(a) Tonic syllable/tonic accent (sentence stress in Avery & Ehrlich).

What do the authors say about this? How can we predict a tonic accent?

(b) How did the speakers in your VS mark the tonic accent?

(4) **Intonation: Give a definition of intonation, based on your readings.**

(a) The concept of tone group.

(b) The concept of pitch.

(c) How the intonation pattern works in a sentence.

(d) Stress.

(C) Editing (20 pts.)

- **Times New Roman**, size 12.
- **Double spaced document.**
- **Use of punctuation.**
- **The document is clearly identified.**

Step 3 – Extra Feedback Questionnaire only for Spring 2012 Students at Their Request

STEP 3 FEEDBACK

Pts. 130/26

Grade: _____

A. The written transcription of your verbatim sample—horizontal orientation—showing:
(30 pts.)

(1) Pauses made by the speakers: /= short pause // = longer.

(2) Tonic accents.

(3) Intonation lines.

Other: _____

B. JOURNAL (80 pts.)

Pauses.

(1) What are pauses and what is their function. How did you mark pauses in your written transcription?

(2) How many intonational phrases are there in your verbatim sample?

(3) What comments can you make about these intonational phrases in terms of length?

(4) What can you say about pauses and the punctuation you marked in the written transcription? Is there any relation?

(5) How often do the speakers pause? Can you say there is a speaker's style in the way he/she speaks and how he/she pauses?

Tonic Accent and Tone groups.

- (1) How did you define tone groups?
- (2) What is tonic accent and what can you say about the tonic accents you found in your text?
- (3) In relation to the different tone groups, how many tonic accents did you find in the tone groups? In utterances with two tone groups, did you find two tonic accents or only one?

Stress

(1) According to the speakers, how did the stress in connected speech vary from citation form? Look at examples and support your general comments.

Pitch

(1) What pitches did you identify?

- Rising.
- Falling.
- Continuation rise.
- Rise-fall
- Fall-Rise

(2) Can you characterize any particular style in the way speakers use their pitch?

(3) Could you describe the speakers' voices and if there is some characteristic speech style in general that you found worth mentioning?

(C) Editing (20 pts.)

- *Times New Roman*, size 12.
- Double spaced document.
- Use of punctuation.
- The document is clearly identified.

Step 4 – Spring 2012

FEEDBACK STEP 4

Pts= 120/24

Grade: _____

A. Reading Aloud: Reporting on this Task.(40 pts.)

- (1) Individual evaluation of production.
- (2) Group awareness of errors and feedback.
- (3) Problems
- (4) Other information given by the group.

B. Discussion (60 pts.)

- The authors Gibson (2008), Halliday (1990), Kenworthy (1992), Poms & Dale (1985), Shlain (1998), Rodriguez (1999) were added to the discussion.
- Other authors consulted by students besides the authors given in the handbook of readings of the course.
- In general, there is an overall connection between authors' ideas and students' insights.

C. Editing (20)

- Font: Times New Roma; size 12;
- Double spaced document.
- Use of punctuation: poor, fair, good, excellent.
- Use of paragraphs (one specific topic in each paragraph)
- Good combination of ideas
- Good organization of ideas.
- Smooth transitions between paragraphs.
- Written language vs. spoken language

In general, the students guided the reader smoothly. Overall, this was a well written coherent and cohesive paper that allowed the reader to understand what the students wanted to express.

Appendix P

Handouts: Examples of Written Transcriptions

Text Given to The Four Cohorts: Strikes in France

Written Transcription by Claudia H. Lombana G.

Audio recorded on October 19, 2010 from video on web site:

<http://news.yahoo.com/video/world-15749633/22526307>

(Length of time: 1:58)

Strikes in France

Reporter: 1 Youths square up to police in a second day of violent protests against
2 the French government's pension reforms. Cars were burned and rocks
3 thrown here in Nantes as well as here, in Lyon. The police fired tear
4 gas and arrested hundreds. In Paris high school students continue to block
5 roads and schools.

Bushra: 6 We must stop this reform because we want to work. And if people are
(High 7 working until they're old, then, there won't be room for us. So we must
8 protest!

School 9
Student) 10

Reporter: 9 Tuesday saw the 6th national strike in its many weeks. The Interior
10 Minister said nearly half a million people poured onto the streets in
11 coordinated demonstrations. Workers determined to shout down the
12 government's plans to raise the retirement age from 60 to 62.

Bernard 13 We can't be the only country in which important laws, pension laws, are
Tahibaut 14 being reformed without there being any negotiations with the unions.
15 Mr. Sarkozy decided to increase the retirement age without a debate with
16 the Unions. So it's not surprising the whole country is paralyzed by the
17 blockades.

Reporter: 18 And those blockades of oil refineries and distribution depots have reached
19 crisis level. Petrol stations across the country are running dry and up to
20 half the flights into Paris are being cancelled. The government vows to
21 take action against the fuel shortages and brake through the disruption.

Francois 22 Intimidation, the blockades and the violence goes against democracy and
Fillon 23 the social contract.
Prime 24
Minister 25

Reporter 23 Unions plan more strikes this week but despite mixed public support it
24 may be too late. The Senate is due to pass Nicolas Sarkozy's pension
25 plans by the end of the week and with this being the second plank of his
26 presidency, he's unlikely to back down.

Second Example of a Written Transcription Given to Cohorts Fall 2011 and Spring 2010

Written Transcription by Claudia Lombana

Audio recorded on October 25, 2011 from video on web site:

<http://financiallyfit.yahoo.com/finance/index?vwaad=ad0035&nc>

(Length of Time: 1:40)

How to Avoid Costly Home Repairs

Farmoosh

Torabi: 1 As a home owner, water can be one of your worst enemies. Over time
2 water damage and other break downs can really add up. So today we're
3 visiting home improvement expert, Rone Hazelton, who's going to share
4 his maintenance check list which can save you more than a hundred
5 thousand dollars in repairs over time.

Rone

Hazelton: 6 Preventable home maintenance really starts with observation: taking a look
7 around your home to spot potential trouble before it becomes expensive.
8 And a good place to start is with the foundation. Farm, this is a good time
9 of the year to take a look at the foundation. I mean after all, the entire house is
10 resting on this and what we want to be looking for are cracks.

F. Torabi:

11 What actually causes cracks in the first place?

R. Hazelton:

12 One of the big ones is water mixing with soil. This is a good example if you
13 look at the sponge right here: think of dried soil as the dried sponge and as we
14 put the water on top of it, it increases in size and that expansion can endure a
15 lot of pressure on the foundation and basement walls. So what you want to
16 avoid is having any water soaking the ground right next to your house. Walk
17 around the house. You should not see any puddles or standing water within
18 around five feet of your home. The other place it can come from is right up
19 here: your gutters. And the problem with gutters is that they get clogged. And
20 the water spills over the edge of the gutter, comes directly down to the ground
21 right next to the foundations, saturates the soil there. That's very, very bad for
22 a foundation. I recommend gutters be cleaned at least a couple of times a year.
23 You can also consider buying gutter guard or you can have a professional
24 gutter cap put on. What I also recommend is putting on a down spout
25 extension that carries the water away from the foundation as it exits the down
26 spout.

Appendix Q

Primary Data: Number of Pages and Appendices

Group and Genre	Shortened Title	Cohort and Class		No. Participants & Gender	Total Pages Per Paper (excluding cover page and appendices)	Number of Appendices	Appendices Number of Pages
G1 Journalistic Report	China's Yellow R.	Fall 2010	01	1 F	11	3	8
G1 TV Program	Ellen DeGeneres	Fall 2011	01	1 F – 2 M	15	3	10
G1 Movie	The Dark Night	Spring 2012	01	3 F	20	5	19
G1 Cartoon	Shrek 2	Fall 2010	01	3 M	7	4	7
G1 Interview	Obama	Spring 2011	02	1 – M	6	2	7
G2 Journalistic Report	Bangkok Floodwaters	Fall 2011	02	1 F – 1 M	21	3	8
G2 TV Program	That Girl	Fall 2011	02	1 F – 1 M	14	3 (C divided into: a & b)	14
G2 Movie	International Butter Club	Fall 2010	01	2 F – 1 M	22	3 (A divided into: a & b)	6
G2 Cartoon	The Road Runner	Fall 2010	01	1 F – 1 M	19	3 (In Teacher's Evaluation Rubric)	4 (Appendix C Missing; approximately 7 pages in total)
G2 Interview	Letterman & Emma	Spring 2012	01	2 F	21	3 (C divided into: a & b)	15
G2 Journalistic Report	Animals Not Clowns	Fall 2011	01	2 F	19	3	9
G3 TV Program	Zack & Benn Stiller	Spring 2012	01	2 F – 1 M	20	5	29
G3 Movie	Forrest Gump	Spring 2012	02	2 M	18	3	8
G3 Cartoon	The Simpsons	Spring 2012	01	1 F – 1 M	28	5	12
G3 Interview	NPR Foreclosures	Fall 2010	01	2 F – 1 M	13	3	13
G4 Journalistic Report	Argentine's man House	Fall 2011	01	1 F – 1 M	18	3 (A, B and C had additional appendices each: A1, B1, and C1)	6
G4 TV Program	Big Bang Theory	Fall 2010	01	1 F – 2 M	10	3	6
G4 Movie	My Soul to Take	Fall 2011	01	1 M	18	3 (C divided into: a & b)	10
G4 Scientist Lecture	Nature Genius in Architecture	Spring 2012	01	2 M	20	7	24
G4 Interview	Simpson Lee in	Spring 2012	01	1 F – 2 M	21	5	15

	Scotland						
6 Media Genres		4 Cohorts	01=16 02= 4	44 Participants 22 F & 22 M	Total = 341 Average # 17.5	Total= 72 Average # 3.6	Total= 230 + 2 Missing pages=232 Average # 11.5

Appendix R

Matrix of Frequency: Code 8

GROUP	TITLE	Names	C8	Cohort	App Grade
G1 MOV	The Dark Night	Aura, Vicky & Gracia	11	Spring 2012	45
G4 CART	Architecture: Using Nature's Genius	Mateo & Carl	8	Spring 2012	50
G2 CART	The Road Runner	Naomi & Juan	8	Fall 2010	42
G2 JR	Main Floodwaters Bangkok	John & Daisy	7	Fall 2011	43
G3 JR	Animals not Clowns	Kim & Luisa	6	Fall 2011	45
G2 TV	That Girl	Luis & Pilar	5	Fall 2011	36
G2 INT	Letherman and Emma	Miley & Adriana	5	Fall 2011	48
G2 MOV	The International Butter Club	Lara, Pam & Leo	4	Fall 2010	5
G3 CART	The Simpsons	Christine & Miguel	4	Spring 2012	45
G4 INT	Scottish TV Interview	Lucy, Dario & Edward	4	Spring 2012	45
G4 TV	The Big Bang Theory	Elsa, Felix & Jose	3	Fall 2010	42
G4 MOV	My Soul to Take	Angel	3	Fall 2011	38
G1 JR	China's Yellow River	Vivian	3	Fall 2010	30
G1 TV	Ellen's Monologue	Clara & Sergio	3	Fall 2011	32
G3 TV	Zack Galafianakis and Ben Stiller	Yury, Penny & Nestor	3	Spring 2012	45
G3 MOV	Forest Gump	Brandon & Mauro	3	Fall 2011	31
G1 CART	Shrek	Pablo, Andrés & César	3	Fall 2010	48
G4 JR	Argentine House from Bottles	Gloria & Daniel	2	Fall 2011	46
G3 INT	NPR	Chris, Alma & Stella	2	Fall 2010	45
G1 INT	Obama	Aldo	1	Spring 2011	33
TOTAL CODES			88		
AVERAGE			4.4		

Continues...

Finding Main Themes in Code 8

Based on Rich Language Strategy Description in the Paper *Batman: The Dark Knight*

The Dark Knight	The Dark Night 11 codes	Architecture' Nature 8 codes	The Road Runner 8 codes
1. No. Times Listening	Over 10 times 15 times More than 10 times. Could identify every word because of speech speed	One member said: 10 times at least.	Listening Many times
2. Technological Devices involved	headphones	"earphones" Transcribe audio software to revise the transcription. Online dictionary to correct the transcription	
3. Place and distractors	Individual listening in quiet room to avoid distractions (alone)	Individual listening. It is inferred.	
4. General Listening for Understanding	"At first we tried to understand the whole context"	No	
5. Listening and Writing	Listened twice before writing	From the start listening and transcribing	
6. Students' Realization: They could not identify every word. Reasons	"We couldn't identify every word because of speech speed."	"...Mateo thought [the text was pretty easy, then he realized it was not that easy."	
7. Listening Times	Listening and repeating for words that were not understood.	Listening to sounds and expressions more times	Many times to identify features of connected speech.'
8. Activation of Previous knowledge	More listening and activation of previous knowledge (don't mention what this previous knowledge is about) Associated the sounds with known words. Activation of knowledge of grammar with sounds.	Mateo related "sounds and expressions" to figure out unknown scientific vocabulary. Carl contributed with his knowledge of punctuation, for his text was better punctuated than Mateo's Knowledge of the topic by reading about it on the website helped the students.	
9. Getting Familiar with the sounds of the text and the text itself	The more listening brought more familiarity with the sounds and text.	They approximated the phonological transcription of the words that they did not know and the spelling.	Stopped the video to 'assimilate the sounds of some words"
10. Relating Words to the Context	Association of words with the context	Knowledge of scientific vocabulary and relating it to the context.	Used context and grammar to figure out words.

			Added words that might be related with the idea or phrase.
11. Guessing Words Spelling	Students guessed spelling	Phonology and spelling	“writing words with normal spelling.”
12. Confirming Spelling in Dictionary	Used dictionary to confirm spelling	Software, see above	
13. How Video Helped: Body Language, Speakers Intentions.	Cite 10.	Watching the video helped “to figure out the gestures involved in producing the words [Mateo] could not understand.	Paid attention to the action described in the scene.
14. Other			

Appendix S

Code 3: Misperception of phrases

Group 1

Media Genre	Cohort	What student understood	Students' Correction of What the Speakers Said
G1 JOURN. REP. China's Yellow River	Fall 2010	"by then"	"back then"
G1TV SHOW Ellen DeGeneres	Fall 2011	Sergio "thirty people <u>detected</u> shelter" 'most of the <u>air</u> '	"thirty people had to take shelter" "most of the year"
G1 MOVIE Batman	Spring 2012	"buzzy" Suggestions occurred like: " <i>buzz</i> , <i>boozy</i> and <i>fuzzy</i> "	"fuzzy"
G1 CARTOON Shrek 2	Fall 2011	"recommend"	"reckon"
G1 Interview Obama	Spring 2011	No examples	

Group 2

Media Genre	Cohort	What student understood	Students' Correction of What the Speakers Said
G 2 JOURN. REP. Bangkok	Fall 2011	"flooding areas"	"flooded areas" "swamped the" "welled the nearby" "into nearby low"
G2 TV SHOW That girl	Fall 2011	"lipstick instead of "at least six"	"Dirty Dancing at least six"
G2 MOVIE The Wedding Dress	Fall 2010	"the nice would be fifty" "the dress doesn't fit... the dress doesn't fit" "sweet you can stop doing <i>this</i> is all your fault" "well is already hon"	"It might as well be fifty" "the dress doesn't fit and if the dress doesn't fit" "It's <i>what</i> you can stop doing, this is all your fault" "Well A, is our wedding hon"
G2 CARTOON The Road Runner	Fall 2010	"Did you used to make up a team song for yourself?"	"Did you just make a theme song for yourself?"
G2 INRVIEW Leatherman & Emma	Fall 2011	"and people giving me"	"and people were giving me"

Group 3

Media Genre	Cohort	What student understood	Students' Correction of What the Speakers Said
G3 JOURN. REP. Animals not Clowns (Could be Code 8	Fall 2011	"their best" "cross land" "have been left shocked"	"diverse" "grass land" "as are being shock"

too)		“going on the cover”	“going undercover”
G3 TV SHOW Zack & Benn Stiller	Spring 2012	What are you implying? They’re stupider after they go to your fucking movies.	What are you even plugging? They’re stupid enough to go to your fucking movies.
G3 MOVIE Forrest Gump	Spring 2012	“swim”	“swing” Complicated phrases for the students: “You’re gonna dit down, aren’t you?” “Nothing at all, thank you. My legs are just fine and dandy” “I showed her how to dangle” “heard the” was pronounced fast (connected speech made this hard for the students).
G3 CARTOON The Simpsons	Spring 2012	“summaries” “a necktie”	“maul” (unknown word, sorted out because of the content and the video). “some of this” “and a tie”
G3 INTERVIEW NPR	Fall 2011	Identified the name “Kossof” thanks to spelling rules.	“mortgage” “subprime” identified correctly but students did not know the meaning.

Group 4

Media Genre		What student understood	Students’ Correction of What the Speakers Said
G4 JOURN. REP. Argentine House		“CD coverts <u>to shut through</u> the windows” “ <u>to show through</u> ”	“CD coverts <u>to shutter</u> the windows” New words they learned: “ <i>rubbing, disbelieve, weird, sifting, vessels, sturdy and shutter.</i> ”
G4 TV SHOW Big Bang Theory		No Examples	
G4 MOVIE My Soul to Take		“knowable”	“notable”
G4 LECTURE Architecture		“bionomicry” Mateo: “achieve fact to ten, fact to one hundred maybe even fact to one thousand savings in” Carl: “achieve effect of ten, effect of one hundred, maybe even effect of one thousand savings in”	“biomimicry” Final phrase students worked out together: “achieve factor ten, factor one hundred, maybe even factor one thousand savings in”
G4 INTERVIEW Scottish TV Interview		Dario “bag-drop”	“backdrop” Problems with vowels

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