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Effect upon Standard English.**

DEPARTAMENTO DE LETRAS
Curso de Pós-Graduação *lato sensu* em Língua Inglesa

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Monografia apresentada ao Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras da PUC-Rio como
requisito parcial para obtenção do título de Especialista em Língua Inglesa.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank a vast number of people who have directly and indirectly contributed to this study in many different forms. First of all, I would like to thank my family for their financial and encouraging support. It would have been impossible to conclude this project without such an aid. Secondly, I am grateful to my girlfriend, Anna Iokilevitc, who has been directly involved in all the stages of this work, making any sacrifices which have been necessary. Likewise, I wish to thank my tutor Professor Barbara J. Wilcox Hemais for her guidance throughout the project.

Additionally, I wish to thank Professor Maria Isabel Cunha for her heartening assistance. Finally, I am truly grateful to all interviewees who have participated in this project, for their willingness and commitment towards it, as it can be seen in their detailed and meticulous responses.

ABSTRACT

A constant debate that surrounds the English teaching area is related to the massive production of nonstandard forms that naturally emerge in nonnative populations. English teachers are commonly served with two opposite views: on one hand, the prescriptive view advocates on the maintenance of Standard forms, whereas on the other hand, a descriptive view defends the importance and the legitimacy of the language produced by nonnative population. This debate poses a complex puzzle to English teachers, considering the spread of communicative methods in language education, where teachers are encouraged to present students with real language. The question of whether the nonnative language production should be seen as real language, a language in its own rights, remains unanswered.

In light of such considerations this study aims at analyzing two aspects of the English language produced in Brazil: the first is related to linguistic uniformity, that is, whether or not the English produced by Brazilian speakers has notably common traits that would facilitate its acceptance as a separate variation. The second is concerned with the identification of influence that this variation may cause on native speakers of English, adding, this way, a new variable to the discussion of nonnative English recognition. As a consequence, this study has investigated the speech of eight native speakers of English who have been interacting with Brazilian speakers of English as a foreign language, in order to identify traits of language variation in the former's speech.

Not surprisingly, the majority of the interviewees have reported on identifying traits in their use of English which were not present before the mentioned interactions, although some of them have also reported on the influence of Brazilian Portuguese. In light of these results we have briefly proposed a discussion on the contemporary role of nonnative speakers of English in a global scenario, as well as on the complex role of contemporary nonnative teachers of English as error mediators, being responsible, on one hand, for the presentation of the Standard forms, and on the other hand for the valorization of the regional and cultural variations which are created by the new English users.

Keywords: English as a global language, English variation, native and nonnative speakers of English, English as a *lingua franca*, language interference, standard and nonstandard English, English as a foreign language.

RESUMO

Um debate constante que envolve a área de ensino de inglês está relacionado com a produção massiva de formas não padrão que naturalmente surgem em populações de falantes não nativos. Aos professores de inglês são comumente apresentados dois pontos de vista opostos: por um lado, a visão prescritiva defende a manutenção das formas padrão, enquanto, por outro lado, uma visão descritiva defende a importância e a legitimidade da linguagem produzida pelas populações não nativas. Esse debate apresenta uma questão complexa aos professores de inglês, levando em consideração a disseminação de métodos comunicativos no ensino de línguas, onde os professores são incentivados a apresentar linguagem real a seus alunos. A questão que preconiza se a linguagem produzida por essa população de falantes não nativos deve ser considerada como linguagem real permanece sem resposta.

À luz de tais considerações, este estudo visa analisar dois aspectos da língua inglesa produzida no Brasil: o primeiro está relacionado à uniformidade linguística, isto é, se o inglês produzido pelos falantes brasileiros tem traços notavelmente comuns que possam facilitar sua aceitação como uma variação separada. O segundo preocupa-se com a identificação da influência que esta variação pode causar a falantes nativos de Inglês, acrescentando, desta forma, uma nova variável para a discussão do reconhecimento do inglês não nativo. Como consequência, este estudo investigou o discurso de oito falantes nativos de inglês que têm interagido com brasileiros falantes de inglês como língua estrangeira, a fim de identificar traços de variação linguística no discurso nativo.

A maioria dos entrevistados relatou a identificação de traços no uso do inglês que não estavam presentes antes das mencionadas interações, embora alguns tenham relatado

também a influência do Português do Brasil em sua fala. À luz dos presentes resultados, este estudo propõe uma breve discussão sobre o papel dos falantes não nativos de inglês considerando um cenário global, assim como sobre o complexo papel dos professores não nativos de língua inglesa como mediadores da mesma, sendo responsáveis, por um lado, pela apresentação da norma culta da língua estrangeira, mas por outro lado, pela valorização das variações regionais criadas pelos novos usuários de inglês.

Palavras-chave: Inglês como língua internacional, variação da língua inglesa, falantes nativos e não nativos do inglês, inglês como *lingua franca*, interferência entre línguas, língua inglesa padrão e não padrão, inglês como língua estrangeira.

INDEX

1. INTRODUCTION	01
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	06
3. METHODOLOGY	15
4. RESULTS	20
5. DISCUSSION	26
6. CONCLUSION	30
7. REFERENCES.....	31
8. APPENDIX A	32
9. APPENDIX B	44

INTRODUCTION

One of the most universally and widely accepted premises in linguistics studies is that all languages experiment with at least a certain degree of variation in their original forms throughout their existence. Occasionally, given the nature and the extent of these changes, the resulting forms can be fairly mutually intelligible, as is the case with Portuguese from Portugal and its Brazilian variation, for instance. However, more often than not languages develop into several considerably dissimilar variations within or even outside of their original territorial boundary, as occurred with Latin, which was the origin of several of the modern languages.

Broadly speaking, in a not so distant past these changes used to occur for several reasons, which were nearly always not related to merely linguistic issues. That is to say, due to external forces such as geographical arrangements of peoples, as well as the action of nation builders, most of the reasons for language spread and variation were to a great extent much more related to a number of sociopolitical and ideological upheavals within nations than to any other linguistic reason. An illustrative example would be, again, the spread of Latin, which was a *lingua franca* for more than a thousand years, although it was violently imposed on most of its users.

If we take English, for instance, it started to spread around the world due to economic reasons, during the height of the British Empire, when pioneering voyages took the English to the Americas and Asia. Later, English continued to be spread - by means of force and regulation - to the British colonies in Africa and the South Pacific, and finally, it became the official language in many of these colonial territories, when they became independent. Economic issues can also help explain the present position that English occupies, as most people depend on it to have access to knowledge, information, well-being, business and entertainment, as we shall see later in this study.

Consequently, not only has language spread throughout history caused the disappearance of innumerable languages – such as some indigenous ones – but also it has

led to the emergence of new ones, as well as of other variations of the same languages. In order to illustrate how authoritative and overwhelming these processes have been to some nations, let us consider for a moment the abovementioned case of the disappearance of several languages. This phenomenon often referred to as language death has been the direct outcome of the attempt at linguistic unification performed by more powerful nations over smaller ones. Likewise, Cook (2003:24) states that languages which are confined to restricted areas and are spoken by specific ethnic groups are much more vulnerable, in contexts in which dominant cultures seek linguistic standardization by granting their own languages official status, suppressing or ignoring the local ones.

Although these processes of language spread and standardization by means of force and violence are not very common at present, it is relevant to emphasize that language death, as well as attempts at linguistic standardization, are not processes which have been concluded. In fact, Cook (2003:24) goes on to state that it has been estimated that half of the world's languages are likely to disappear in the twenty-first century, not by means of explicit and tangible processes of violence or language policy enforcement, but mostly due to current political, economic and sociological arrangements.

When an attempt to conceive to what extent the idea of “political, economic, and sociological arrangements” can be associated with language alteration, the role of the English language is at the forefront of any consideration. In the specific case of English variation and development, researchers such as David Crystal and Guy Cook have provided us with insightful and more contemporary facets of this phenomenon. Cook (2003: 27) raises the issue that “(...) *as English becomes more widely and globally used, recognized varieties might emerge even in places where there is no national native speaker¹ population or official status.*” That is to say, for example, it is conceivable that, in the future, due to the international spread and success of English, terms such as Chinese English or even Mexican English might become recognized as official English variations in their own right.

¹ In general, the term native speaker has recently been subjected to controversial debates in the field. Concerning English the controversy is even fiercer. A more extensive account of the debate as well as an explanation of how the concept is being applied in the present work is provided in the literature review and methodology sections, respectively.

Furthermore, according to Cook it would be somewhat unlikely to encounter any resistance to the notion of considering American, Australian, and New Zealand English variations as instances of official standard English languages – and the same applies to any other country where English is the language of the majority. However, he proceeds affirming that “...*still contested by some is the validity for countries where, although English may be a substantial or official language, it is not that of the majority*”. This seems to be the case in countries such as India, Singapore or even Nigeria. Nevertheless, despite these strong feelings of language ownership by its native users, in *English as a Global Language* (2003) Crystal makes two claims: (a) that mostly due to the current number of nonnative speakers and the consequent emergence of several variations “...the English language ceased to be the sole possession of the English some time ago” and (b) that the increasing contact between native and nonnative speakers of English, and the resulting mutual influence exerted in each other’s discourse, is a major factor in the current development of the English language.

Therefore, examining what was stated in the lines above, it is quite reasonable to infer that if a given nation has a significant amount of speakers of English as a foreign language, these learners will share some linguistic traits naturally acquired during the process of learning English, which are partly related to their L1 interference and partly due to their cultural views of the world. These English speakers form what the Indian scholar Braj Kachru (1985:11-27) referred to as the “expanding circle”, *i.e.* English speakers belonging to countries or regions where English is not the official language or the language of the majority, although its use keeps increasing in people’s everyday lives.

In fact, bearing in mind these shared traits acquired during the process of learning English as a foreign language, it is now possible to understand what Cook referred to as “recognized varieties” of English even in territories with no native speaker population, as was stated earlier in this paper. As mentioned above, very little resistance would be found in considering standard American English as a language in its own right, nor could we deny the notion of Singapore English, for example. Therefore, it follows – according to the concepts that we are advocating in this paper - that terms such as Mexican, Chinese or even Brazilian English should not cause disbelief, for these English users operate similarly and

collectively, *i.e.* they use English to express their needs, emotions, and their views on the world surrounding them. It is also reasonable to infer that this use is shaped according to their cultural, social, emotional, and psychological background(s) and, as a consequence, they will invariably, unintentionally and naturally change English to suit these very particular and unique needs.

Nevertheless, focusing on the current development of standard English, it could be argued that the existence *per se* of these worldwide English variations does not constitute a major factor in standard English evolution by itself, since they could be taken for mere deviations from the standard forms – usually the North-American and British ones. However, due to reasons that will be explained in more detail later in this study – such as the immense increase of the nonnative speaker population around the world as well as the increase in contact between native and nonnative English speakers – it can be understood that nonnative speakers and their recognized (or not) English varieties currently have a considerably relevant and, in fact, active role in standard English development.

For that reason, in the past several years David Crystal has been investigating the particular and specific influence that nonnative speakers of English throughout the world exert on standard English – his focus being mostly on American and British English², for these two variations are nearly always used as examples of standard forms and correctness in virtually all educational settings – by means of naturally occurring interactional situations, *i.e.* interactions that happen on the internet, in blogs, forums or social media websites, and so on. Such interactions illustrate where communication occurs mainly in English and somewhat often the participants' status as native or nonnative speaker is not revealed nor is it relevant to the success of the interaction. Moreover, Crystal's findings are extremely significant to nonnative English teachers and English language users altogether, since they reveal that these native/nonnative interactions have been increasing faster than

² Although we are aware of the existence of several different English variations within American and British English, these terms are being broadly used in this paper to refer to the variations which are more frequently used in the "English as a foreign language" settings, that is to say, the British English spoken in London, or "the BBC English", and the English spoken in New York instead of any regional variations spoken in Bristol or Texas, respectively.

ever – to a large extent owing to the latest technological advances in the means of communication and owing to a globalized world market where individuals from different nations communicate, do business and share knowledge mainly by means of English. These considerations lead us to a recent statement by Crystal (2010: online interview): “in a very near future the majority population of nonnative speakers of English around the world is bound to have an effect on the way standard English evolves”.

Although considerable research has been devoted to the general scope of the issue, it is worth giving more attention to a particular situation of use of English, that is, a specific account of the changes that speakers of a given L1 might make in standard English speakers’ discourse when both are communicating via English. Therefore, the present study is designed to investigate whether or not the local English variation spoken in Rio de Janeiro has had an influence on a sample of eight native speakers of English considering their interaction with Brazilians in Rio de Janeiro. The study focuses particularly on vocabulary – isolated words – as well as idiomatic expressions, grammar or even pronunciation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A) The emergence of non-standard forms of English and their new role in the contemporary world.

The perception of any language as a trait of cultural and social identity is not a recent phenomenon in languages studies. Throughout history, for instance, more powerful nations have consistently attempted to impose their culture, values, beliefs, and, as an intrinsic constituent of these three concepts, their languages, over dominated nations in order to produce cultural – and linguistic – unification. Conversely, as Cook (2003:24) states, the more successful a language is in reaching new territories, the more this fact is likely to generate the proliferation of distinct varieties of it. As a matter of fact, multilingual individuals are an inherent component of virtually all nations, since our language usage varies significantly within our own territorial boundaries. Code-switching, for instance, is a significant part of people's ability to use a language in that we do not employ the same language style or level of formality in different contexts, and our linguistic repertoire is capable of accounting for a large range of communicative situations.

Needless to say, currently the English language is at the heart of such considerations. No other language has experienced the worldwide spread that English has had over the last few decades. The reasons for the success of English are countless and, in fact, David Crystal has devoted a large amount of his attention to the understanding of the processes which have led to the current scenario. For our immediate purposes, we can summarize the reasons as follows: a historical tradition in navigation in the British Empire; political arrangements and military supremacy; commercial, industrial and scientific developments; a large investment in cultural production and its spread, such as the colossal American cinematography in Hollywood, and so on. All this has developed in England and

the United States. These reasons, however, will not be scrutinized in detail here, as that would mean a loss of focus in the study.

What is pertinent to our study is the fact that English has achieved the status of an incomparable international/global language. However, as aforementioned, such a status has a direct implication, that of creating linguistic variation. Having that in mind, it is now possible to address the term *Englishes*, which is quite well known by researchers involved in the area of English variation studies, and understand that it is used to refer to the numerous variant forms of English that can be found throughout the world, regardless of their status of officially recognized varieties or not. Therefore, at this point, it is pertinent to clarify what is meant by “officially recognized” varieties of English and the implications of using such a label. Some English variants have become quite well accepted, as is the case of American English itself, which once was considered to be a “deviation” from the “pure” British English. Yet, other variants still lack the same recognition and acceptance. Hence, whereas it has become reasonably common to find in the literature references to Indian English or Nigerian English as independent forms of English, just to mention two examples, one would consider it at least unusual to encounter the term *Brazilian English* for example.

Nevertheless, although there lacks recognition as a distinct and separate variation of English, it is fairly reasonable to infer that Brazilian learners/users of English as a foreign language share some common traits while learning as well as using English, and together these traits would constitute an independent variation of English. Thus, making an allowance for this premise, in a recent online interview (link available in the *References* section) David Crystal has made some seminal considerations on a phenomenon that has been increasing faster than ever, which can be summarized by stating that the enormous amount of language produced by nonnative speakers of English – who currently outnumber native ones – is likely to have an effect on the form of English that native English speakers use. Or as Crystal puts it (2010 - online interview): “...the majority usage in the nonnative world will eventually influence the minority usage in the native speaking world”. Mostly due to the innumerable advances in communicative technology, people are interacting – and

utilizing English as their mediator – more often than ever before, regardless of their territorial boundaries, or their previous status as native or nonnative speakers of English.

Some major factors in linguistic variation/evolution are contact and mutual influence among individuals who possess differences in their language usage, style, repertoire and perception of appropriateness according to a given situation. Or, as it is simply stated by Crystal (2010 – online interview): “If I like you and you like me, then we start talking like each other. Taking this into consideration the same process can be applied to groups of people and even nations.” It is reasonable to infer that the process to which Crystal is referring is related to the communication accommodation theory (CAT) developed by Howard Giles in the early 1970s. Plainly put, part of Giles’ (1991) theory accounts for the adjustments that people from different cultural and/or linguistic backgrounds perform when they interact, in order to literally “accommodate” to others, *i.e.* to minimize the social and cultural differences during communication.

Thus, according to Crystal (2010 – online interview) this accommodation process can be employed to explain how linguistic and cultural traits belonging to different English users (natives and nonnatives, for example) can equally penetrate each other’s discourse. This is a vital perception since more often than not there is a sort of hierarchical relationship among languages and their variations, where standard forms normally occupy the highest positions of our mental projections on languages, which leads us to – sometimes even unconsciously – consider any interference of non-standard forms as something harmful.

Conversely, this increasingly interactive contact among nonnative and native speakers of English is being observed from an unequivocally original perspective; the focus at this moment is not on the linguistic influences caused by the native speakers of English on other languages. Rather, the current focus is on the linguistic alteration caused on standard forms of English performed by individuals from a large variety of mother tongues. Ultimately, Crystal affirms that this process is virtually inevitable and that eventually some of the distinctive features that speakers of a given L1 develop when using English as a foreign language will certainly penetrate into standard English.

Although very convincing, this theory needs to be understood from our local context. To the present moment, no data is available on the particular linguistic traits that native speakers of English living in Rio de Janeiro might (or not) have incorporated into their everyday discourse due to their friendly interactions with Brazilian English users.

B) The new role played by nonnative speakers of English in its spread and variation.

The term “native speaker” is to a large extent a contentious issue in applied linguistics studies. According to Cook (2003:28), in any language a traditional view of what a native speaker is would entail particular central notions, such as personal history, language expertise and commitment to, or at least some degree of personal identification with, the cultural aspects of the region where a language is spoken. That is to say, following this rationale, a native speaker of any language would be a citizen of a given community who has learnt a given language to fulfill his/her natural necessity of communicating, and this learning would have taken place effortlessly, or to be more precise, without any sort of formal instruction. Additionally, this native speaker would be capable of inferring on the ordinary use of that language, as well as having insights on its correctness, making judgments on what would be accepted as part of the language and what would not. In other words, this individual would be equipped with an ability to use that language in a creative way, being responsible for the emergence of new words, slangs, idiomatic expressions, determining the appropriateness of its use, and so on.

Finally, the issue of cultural identification is also often raised, reinforcing the intrinsic relationship between language and culture. This term is used for the notion that a native speaker of a given language is not only an individual who uses particular words and grammar rules for communication. Rather, it accounts for individuals who linguistically behave according to a pre-established collective system, that is, individuals who use determined language functions similarly, who have comparable notions of context and appropriateness and so on.

Nevertheless, Cook sets out to refute this popular/traditional conceptualization of what a native speaker is by stating that whereas it is simpler to apply these principles to speakers of small-scale languages, it becomes considerably problematic to do so when the focus is on languages which are much more spread around the world. Particularly in the case of English the issue becomes even more controversial; while some English speakers, especially the ones from the “expanding circle” (see Braj Kachru, 1985), may have their cultural loyalty associated with a different culture and have learnt English by means of formal instruction, nothing in their background appears to have an effect on their linguistic expertise. Furthermore, although English proficiency may vary significantly among the traditionally considered nonnative speakers, many of them have the same – or a rather similar – language expertise in relation to the native speakers. In actual fact, even this belief of an alleged language expertise normally attributed to native speakers can be questioned, as oral skills are more often than not the sole object of analysis when such claims are made, while other skills are utterly disregarded. Moreover, it is possible to find, for instance, traditional native speakers of English who are completely illiterate and/or who use language in a very different form from the standard one, which is not the case for nonnative speakers, who normally learn English in formal settings and as a consequence normally use it more formally.

Another reason for questioning the supposed native speaker’s expertise towards language would be that while nonnatives learn the language systematically and are formally taught, they have to a certain degree some explicit knowledge of the target language, whereas natives can use it, but are on average unable to explain some more complex subtleties of its grammar use. Finally, being a native speaker implies nothing about one’s range of vocabulary, ability to communicate utilizing a vast variety of genres or styles, and so on. In reality, more often than not nonnative speakers are much more aware of these language traits than a large number of native speakers. Ultimately, the issue immediately and inevitably starts to emerge of who would be a consistent representative of a language as well as who has “rights” in a language – a highly proficient nonnative speaker or an average traditional native speaker.

It is worth highlighting that the purpose of these arguments is neither to question the validity of the standard forms of English nor to reduce their importance. However, in a not so distant past a severe hierarchical relationship among standard forms of English and its variations used to be applied in order to make an overt division between the nations which had the “right” to produce a certain language and its linguistic norms, from the ones which were merely given permission to use it, according to the norms of the others. An example of this can be observed when one researches into the term “*World Englishes*” and the three circles of Englishes proposed by Braj Kachru (1985). Although the website *Wikipedia* is not regarded as a particularly reliable source of academic information, it can be employed to our immediate purposes here as an instance of how the hierarchical relationship among languages is a misconception which is still present in ordinary people’s beliefs. An extract taken from the “official” *Wikipedia* website on the term “*World Englishes*” and on Braj Kachru’s proposals concludes with the following explanation of the roles attributed to each English circle:

The inner circle (UK, US etc.) is '**norm-providing**'; that means that English language norms are developed in these countries. **The outer circle** (mainly New Commonwealth countries) is '**norm-developing**'. **The expanding circle** (which includes much of the rest of the world) is '**norm-dependent**', **because it relies on the standards set by native speakers in the inner circle.**

Despite being taken from a non-academic source, the lines above reflect a mindset which is still shared not only by ordinary users of English, but also by language specialists. On the other hand, it is these precise views which are being contested in the present work, as they do not take into consideration and seem to utterly disregard that, although linguistic standardization has its place in international communication (the concept of English as a *lingua franca*), every population of a given region will complement a given target language with its own cultural and personal traits.

In fact, this phenomenon of language alteration occurs among users of the same variation of a given language (as every language evolves and changes even within its territorial boundary) resulting in the different regionalisms which can be found in every language; it also occurred with the founders of the United States resulting in the consequent

development of American English. Moreover, it is fundamental to understand that alterations in English continue to happen, while users of English around the world unintentionally add their pronunciation particularities, cultural identities and other personal traits to the standard forms of English they are taught, creating thus several English variations. These variations can no longer be simply conceived as errors or mistakes, for they are not the representation of a single individual's language use, rather they are a depiction of how that majority of individuals who belong to a certain nation express themselves in English.

Those views are shared by other scholars in the field of applied linguistics, and just to cite an instance, M.B.H Rampton (1990) goes further than Cook. Not only does he question the traditional use of the term native speaker as norms developer, but also he presents some ideological and political interests in order to justify why such fierce divisions of the roles and rights of native and nonnative speakers remain in circulation at present. According to his article entitled "Displacing the 'native speaker' expertise, affiliation, and inheritance", published in the *ELT Journal* in 1990, Rampton commences with similar suggestions to those of Cook, questioning the fact that the concept of "native speaker" has been frivolously granted as a sort of "title", that is, it has been attributed to individuals in the same fashion that a citizenship is naturally and unquestioningly given to an individual who has been born in a given region. This immutable and absolute label – one will always remain either a native or a nonnative speaker – seems to ignore language proficiency as well as the several possible social settings where a language could be learnt. In fact, depending on the individuals' level of education and on their cultural membership to a particular group, their language use/proficiency level will vary substantially. Accordingly, even a traditional native speaker can belong to or be associated with a particular social group where language expertise is neither required nor valued.

Hence, another point that could be made is that a mother tongue can be learnt from a great variety of social contexts – our initial contact with it being made typically through our parents' or other relatives' voices in childhood – and, as was stated above, some of these social contexts do not demand language expertise. Still, native speakers are granted rights in relation to these languages, regardless of their proficiency. Therefore, it would not

be unreasonable to consider “formal instruction” of a given foreign language as one of the several possible settings in its own right where people are to be granted rights in relation to a language they use. By the word “rights” it is meant the autonomy to use a given language creatively, according to a given culture’s unique needs as well as the rights of nonnative users to be included in the “productive circle” of a language they use.

In other words, what is being called for is a more flexible view of the traditional native/nonnative speaker dichotomy; while the former has been customarily authorized – by whom exactly we do not know – to operate as a sort of “norm-provider”, the latter has had to consent to the minor role of “norm-dependent”. This way, a hierarchical relationship among the available varieties of English came into being, and a hegemony of standard forms has been established.

On this issue, Rampton (1990) provides us with a very convincing argument about why and how current labels given to particular users of this language can benefit mostly American and British English by putting their speakers in a rather comfortable position in the multi-billionaire ELT market. Along with their title, natives are attributed with having some notions of correctness and perfection in terms of language use, which publishing houses, writers, material designers, teachers, and so on from these two countries know splendidly how to take advantage of.

It could be argued that the financial exploitation of a certain commercial activity should not represent a problem *per se*; however, the problem remains in denying learners fuller involvement in mainstream education by confining the language exposure to a single language variation. Additionally, a further drawback is to deny, as stated earlier, the rights of language production to certain speakers of a language, mainly based on such categorizations as native or nonnative speakers. Moreover, it is unfair to deny to certain nonnative English users the rights and the autonomy to use English in such a way as to represent their cultural identity; that is, what is unfair is that their natural occurring contributions, which are not stated in English grammar books, may be considered to be permanent errors or deviations to be corrected.

Furthermore, other authors such as Phillipson (1992:8) and Pennycook (1995) address an even more complex issue that results from the traditional use of these concepts: that the character of English teaching is not neutral and that this helps promote some political and ideological interests of the USA and Britain, while contributing to the suppression of other cultures. Although we will not advance on these topics any further – as it would not be in keeping with our original purposes – it would be worth considering how much we know about American and British cultures compared to the amount of knowledge we have gathered on other cultures, and how the spread and the overestimation of standard English forms are related to this fact.

At last, it should be reiterated that all the considerations above are not intended to reduce or diminish the importance of standard forms of English or of their speakers whatsoever. On the contrary, only by questioning the power relations that surround such terms is it possible to achieve a more equalitarian relationship between standard forms and their variations. Additionally, it is also recognized that to a certain extent some degree of standardization is necessary if English is expected to occupy the position of a *lingua franca*. However, only by establishing that native speakers are not the “holders” of all knowledge of English – but are experts in a single possible variation of it – will it be possible to understand how other English variations can emerge and how standard forms and their variations are mutually and, more importantly, equally susceptible to accept interference from each other.

That is to say, when we consider, for example, American English and the Brazilian variation of it in equal terms, both resulting from the cultural identity interference of their people on a standard form, it can be accepted that the English produced in Brazil is as likely to generate interference on standard users as the other way round. It is this exact premise that will guide the research which follows, in which eight native speakers of English were interviewed in terms of their incorporation of nonnative traits of the English spoken in Brazil.

METHODOLOGY

This study investigates whether some traits of the English variation spoken in Brazil are affecting, as well as being incorporated by, the speech of a small population of native speakers of English who are in contact with Brazilians speaking English as a foreign language. In order to do this, eight participants were examined, two through oral interviews and six through written questionnaires. The oral interviews were held in Rio de Janeiro – in São Judas Tadeu Church, since the participants are acquainted with Father Valdir, who is one of my classmates at my post-graduate course – during the period of one week. The written questionnaires were sent by email to the participants, answered, and returned for analysis, during the period of three months. The sample of the oral interviews and written questionnaires consisted of eight native speakers of English, both male and female, six North-American citizens and two British citizens. Their ages ranged from 24 to 61. For the purposes of this research, there were only included foreign citizens who have been living in Brazil and who have been extensively interacting with Brazilians by means of spoken English. An initial profile containing interviewees' personal information is provided in the following. Further information on their profile and their interactions with Brazilian English is also provided in the results section tables.

Table 1 - Participants interviewed by means of a written questionnaire

Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6
Age	58	47	31	33	61	24
Profession	EFL teacher/ Editor	History teacher	EFL teacher	EFL teacher	University professor/ former EFL teacher	University student – Bachelor of Arts (language)
Nationality	American	American	British	American	British	American
Gender	Male	Female	Female	Male	Male	Female

Table 2 - Participants interviewed by means of a spoken interview

Participant	01	02
Age	41	39
Profession	Oil and gas technician	Unemployed
Nationality	American	American
Gender	Male	Female

Additionally, the six written interviews amounted to twelve pages (see Appendix A). The remaining two oral interviews were recorded and both together amounted to about twenty-six minutes of conversation (the interview transcripts are available in Appendix B). Moreover, the two oral interviews followed a semi-structured format, in that a list of questions had been prepared, although not strictly followed. As to the written questionnaires, the questions which were sent to all participants are exactly the same as presented in Appendix B. In rather specific cases where the answers collected were considered somewhat broad or vague, and therefore insufficient to the study's purposes, some follow-up questions were sent to these participants.

It is also worth mentioning that all the interviewees are to some extent related to my personal associations, as well as to my classmates and professors from my post-graduate (*lato sensu*) course in “Língua Inglesa” at PUC-RIO. Therefore, when the participants were invited to collaborate with this project, all of them promptly accepted. It should also be mentioned that the participants were very willing to answer the oral interviews as well as the written questionnaires, providing the project with as much accurate and detailed information as possible, as can be seen in Appendixes A and B.

Since the present study was solely concerned with the identification/confirmation of any mismatch between what is regarded as standard English and the variation spoken by nonnative speakers in the Brazilian context – and its possible incorporation by the native speakers –, each occurrence was broadly classified according to the following coding system:

When I am speaking, sometimes I catch myself saying informations (sic), instead of pieces of information... / **Grammar dissimilarities**

...Sometimes I put a strong intonation when I pronounce the letter “R”, as with Brazilians do in Portuguese... / **Pronunciation dissimilarities**

... Once some friends translated a Brazilian adage and the result was something like: She is a rock in my shoes. I found it quite interesting and funny. So, firstly I started using it when talking to them, but after some time I “taught” this expression to my American friends. / **Idiomatic expressions**

Other non-verbal discursive traits were excluded, *e.g.* body language, eye contact, and so on. The written questionnaire (which was also used as a support for the oral interviews) is presented below:

Table 3 - Questions asked

1 - How long have you been living in Brazil?
2 - What is the main purpose of your stay here?
3 - Have you been learning about Brazilian culture/politics and/or any other aspect of our social organization? If so, can you describe your experiences and your personal impressions towards it?
4 - Do you have Brazilian friends and/or co-workers with whom you have the opportunity to interact in English?

5 - Can you briefly describe your impressions on the aforementioned interactions?
6 - In your opinion, are there significant differences between your own English and the one spoken in Brazil?
7 - Have you ever noticed any common linguistic traits that Brazilians speaking English as a foreign language share?
8 - Regarding your own use of the English language as a native speaker, and taking into consideration your answers for the last two questions, have you noticed any changes in your English usage after you have arrived in Brazil? If so, can you describe or exemplify some of them?
9 - Do you perform any kind of adaptation in your English use when speaking to Brazilians to facilitate communication? If so, are these adaptations being used in your natural speech?

The last three questions are in bold, as they are the focus of this study, *i.e.* the identification of common traits in the use of Brazilian English, and its possible effect upon standard forms. Finally, it is worth justifying how and why the term “native speaker of English” has been applied in this paper so far. The literature review discussed the motives for questioning the traditional/popular definitions, as well as the role(s) of native speakers of English as individuals who have simply been born in a certain country or region in which English is spoken by the majority. However, it is worth pointing out that a conscious decision was made to employ the traditional view when selecting individuals to be interviewed (only Americans and British citizens).

This reason is related to the fact that in Brazil, as with any other region where English is learnt as a foreign language, these two mainstream variations of English are taught in nearly all educational settings. Therefore, it would not be suitable for our purposes

to compare, for instance, a Brazilian citizen who has learnt, say, standard American English to a native speaker of, say, Indian English, and set out to investigate whether the speech of the former can have an influence on the speech of the latter. This is because it would be clear from the very beginning that both participants speak distinct English variations; however, when investigating a Brazilian who has been taught – and supposedly speaks –, for example, standard American English and a “native” American English speaker, it would be possible to examine how individuals who allegedly speak the same language are, in fact, utilizing different varieties of it, which are equally important and complete in their own right, and that, ultimately, both speakers can exert an influence on each other’s speech.

The word “allegedly” was employed earlier to reinforce the position supported in this paper that, in spite of its lack of official recognition as a separate English variation, the Brazilian speaker from the example above will bring along his speech traits which are common to other Brazilian learners of English, constituting, therefore, an altered and emancipated language. Whether or not these particular linguistic traits can be transmitted to standard English will be the object of our analysis. Therefore, as “Brazilian English” has been constituted of American and British English, taught mostly by means of US and/or UK materials, we have consciously employed the term “native speaker” in a limited way, to refer solely to these two English variations, in order to investigate the influence of our Brazilian variation on its “original” constituent English forms.

RESULTS

This section presents the information that was provided by the eight interviewees, in which the main idea concerning each question is summarized and put into a shorter form, as in the following example:

Question 9 - Do you perform any kind of adaptation in your English use when speaking to Brazilians to facilitate communication? If so, are these adaptations being used in your natural speech?

The question 9 is now presented in the table 4 as “linguistic adaptations performed” (for a full account of the questions asked, please refer back to the methodology section). In addition to the figures presented, some descriptive comments are made in order to highlight the most relevant points in the data collected. Finally, a number of initial interpretative commentaries are made, although they are further developed in the discussion section.

The two tables below show that subjects vary considerably in terms of their reasons for staying in Brazil, as well as in their personal views on Brazilian culture, amount of English they use while interacting with Brazilians and their own personal relationships established with Brazilian people. These complementary questions were posed in an attempt to trace a general profile of the subjects along with a brief overview of the circumstances in which such interactions happened. For the immediate purposes of this preliminary analysis we have concentrated exclusively on the occurrence or not of alterations in their standard English speech. In order to demonstrate the findings as clearly as possible, Table 4 shows the significant information that was collected in the six written interviews, whereas Table 5 demonstrates what was gathered in the remaining two spoken interviews.

– Questionnaire answers

Participant	1	2	3	4	5	6
1) Time of permanence in Brazil	Over 45 years	From July to December 2011 (6 months)	Inconstantly since 2007	Almost 4 years	For 23 years	Almost a year
2) Purposes of staying in Brazil	Permanent living / professional purposes	Academic/ Research Transitory	Academic/ professional purposes	Personal/ permanent living	Academic and personal	Academic and volunteer work
3) Contact with Brazilian cultural aspects	Yes. Extensively.	Yes. Formal instruction and personal observation.	Yes. Extensively. Due to survival and personal interest.	Yes. Empirical learning.	Yes. Extensively.	Yes. Extensively. By means of empirical learning.
4) Personal connections with Brazilians	Yes. Professional and personal.	Yes. Nature not informed.	Yes. Only professional ones.	Yes. Only professional ones.	Yes. At all levels of social and professional interactions.	Yes. At all levels of social and professional interactions.
5) Impressions on interactions with Brazilians	Very positive ones.	Mostly positive ones.	Neutral to positive.	Generally positive.	Not informed.	Mostly positive ones.

6) English dissimilarities (from Standard forms) noticed	Yes.	Yes. Vast range of English levels.	Yes.	No.	Yes. But not enough to impede communication	Yes. Mostly phonetic ones.
7) Common traits shared by Brazilian speakers of English	Yes.	Yes. A mix of English that has been evidently formally taught with several traits of Portuguese.	Yes. Predominantly derived from Portuguese.	Yes.	Yes. Varying according to level of linguistic competence.	Not reported.
8) Changes in their own speech after interactions	Yes.	Yes. Several dissimilarities from Standard English have been reported.	Yes. Mostly phonetic and eventual semantic ones.	No.	Yes. Minor phonetic and semantic ones.	No.
9) Linguistic adaptations performed	Rarely.	Yes. Extensively.	Not quite often. Only when necessary.	Yes. Very often.	Not reported.	Yes. Semantic and phonetic ones.

Focusing firstly on Table 4, it can be observed that there is a vast degree of consensus on the points; that is, five out of six interviewees reported that they detected noteworthy dissimilarities between the standard English variety with which they are familiar and the variety they have found in Rio de Janeiro (see all answers for question 6); likewise, five out of six participants reported being able to identify similar traits of that English variety spoken in Brazil (see all answers for question 7). This would reinforce the suggestion of the existence of an independent *Brazilian English* variation; finally, and most importantly, four out of six participants reported that they were able to identify some degree of alteration to their own standard English speech due to these encounters with Brazilian English, as can be seen in all answers for question 8 above (for a full account on participants' responses on that specific item, see appendix A, question 8).

On the other hand, it is worth pointing out that there was a surprise in the results found; while most participants reported alterations to their standard use of English, none of them, in fact, attributed such changes to the direct influence of nonnative Brazilian English. Unexpectedly, participants attributed these changes to the straight influence of their contact with Brazilian Portuguese (see appendix A, question 8). Although further research on that topic would be necessary before any claims be made, this surprising result might be due to the fact that English – in fact, as any other school subject – is not fairly disseminated socioeconomically through educational settings in Brazil, to a large extent being confined to a minority of financially and educationally privileged individuals in Brazil.

This notion can be corroborated in a recent research conducted by the exchange agency “Education First”, which was published in the Brazilian newspaper *O Globo* in the “Boa Chance” section of September 30th, 2012. According to this research, Brazil currently occupies one of the worst positions in terms of English proficiency in the world. Furthermore, in the same article another study carried out by the British Council states that only 5% of the Brazilian population can actually speak English. These facts *per se* would explain the low numbers of Brazilian users of English, making it more plausible for foreigners to attempt to learn Brazilian Portuguese than to strive to communicate exclusively by means of English.

Therefore, by learning Brazilian Portuguese these foreigners would be subjected to the same processes that Brazilians – and any foreign language learners – are subject to when learning English, that is, inaccurate translations, overgeneralizations, and so on, not only when using Portuguese, but also when using their own mother tongue. This could lead them to absorb an absolutely new language pattern that can occasionally make its way into their English use, or as an interviewee puts it: “Listening to a lot of Portuguese, my mind will sort of think in that pattern, so I’ll adopt little phrases...” ...so lots of these little things still make their way into my speech...” (*In English, we assume*).

Another point that can be made is that, as the background of most of the participants is not in the area of language studies, some of them might lack a profound knowledge of where the language interference is exactly coming from. In fact, only two participants have

a language background; participant number 03 is a British English teacher and participant number 05 is a linguistics teacher currently working at PUC-RIO. Other participants are working as English teachers in Brazil, but they have no formal instruction in that respect and no linguistics background. Additionally, as they have been more consistently exposed to Brazilian Portuguese than Brazilian English in the time they have spent in Brazil, it might be the case that they over generalize, by assuming that all interference comes exclusively from Brazilian Portuguese.

This view can be illustrated by another interviewee (see appendix A, interview 03) who is a very experienced British English teacher, currently teaching in Brazil. While answering question 08, she firstly attributed her language interference exclusively to Brazilian Portuguese, but later provided us with a practical situation in which her variant use of English was clearly caused by an overexposure to a typical Brazilian use of English. The extract is reproduced in the following:

“...though this seems to be related to Portuguese influence rather than the influence of another variety of English. I am not aware of any specific grammatical differences, though a very embarrassing situation took place when dining with students on an immersion course some months ago. A student uttered the phrase ‘When I was with X years’, ‘When I had X years’ I corrected him. It took a few moments before I realized what I had said. **I think I have heard this so often it has become ingrained in my memory and now almost seems correct.”**

We can assume that as an English teacher to Brazilians she has been consistently listening to the construction “I *have* X years old” from her students, as Brazilians apply the equivalent of the verb “have” to this situation in Portuguese (“tenho X anos”). Therefore, there might be more interference from Brazilian English than actually was reported by the participants. On the other hand, although quite plausible, the assumptions above must be subject to further analyses before any conclusive claims be made.

Table 5 – Perceptions of native speakers in oral interviews

Participant	1	2
1) Time of permanence in Brazil	Almost 3 months.	One month.
2) Purposes of staying in Brazil	Professional / working.	Personal / marital reasons.
3) Contact with Brazilian cultural aspects	Yes. Extensively.	Yes. Not extensively due to communication impediments.
4) Personal connections with Brazilians	Yes. Professional and personal ones.	Very few.
5) Impressions on interactions with Brazilians	Very positive. Considerable personal interest in cultural differences.	Positive, but not extensively.
6) English dissimilarities (from Standard forms) noticed	Yes. Mostly phonological ones.	Yes. Mostly phonological ones.
7) Common traits shared by Brazilian speakers of English	Yes. Mostly phonological ones, as well as cultural interference.	Yes. Mostly phonological ones.
8) Changes in their own speech after interactions	No. Only conscious ones to facilitate communication.	No. Only conscious ones to facilitate communication.
9) Linguistic adaptations performed	Yes. Mostly phonological ones to facilitate mutual understanding.	Yes. Mostly phonological ones to facilitate mutual understanding.

Considering now Table 5, it can be seen that these two participants presented some different responses from the previous six ones; although they agree that the English spoken in Brazil has significant dissimilarities from the standard form they are familiar with, and that these dissimilarities are shared by a large number of Brazilian speakers, they do not report any kind of language incorporation into their own English use, except by some rather consciously performed adaptations in order to facilitate communication. Despite the fact that this study has not scrutinized the relation that may exist between language incorporation and time of exposure, the results found in Table 5 might be attributed to the fact that these participants have little interaction with Brazilians speaking English as a foreign language.

Nevertheless, such explanatory claims cannot be validated without the support of some supplementary research. The limitations of these findings and other points will now be considered with more detail in the discussion section.

DISCUSSION

The objective of this preliminary study was to identify some possible linguistic influences of the English language spoken in Brazil on the speech of a rather small sample of native speakers of English who have been living in Brazil and interacting with Brazilians in English. Overall, the results indicate that, in fact, some traits of the nonnative English variant spoken in Brazil could be identified in the majority of the sample, although participants also reported on Brazilian Portuguese interference. Nevertheless, before making any further interpretative claim on that respect, it is pertinent to commence this discussion section by stating some of its limitations: the sample analyzed is not sufficient to produce any generalizations, for it deals with a limited population of native speakers of English who cannot be considered as representative of every conceivable type of interaction between native and nonnative speakers of English, neither in Brazil, nor around the world.

Likewise, the results of this study cannot be taken as strong evidence for the specific interference that Brazilian English may cause in standard forms of English, due to the unexpected results found in the source of the linguistic changes identified: as participants have been more overtly exposed to Brazilian Portuguese than to Brazilian English during their stay, they did not report on observing a patent interference that a non-standard form of English could cause on their standard form. Nevertheless, interference is identified in one standard language on another – Portuguese and English –, which in fact can be seen as valuable data to the proposed study, as what has been referred to as Brazilian English throughout this paper is the outcome of a blend between standard English formally taught to Brazilians with cultural and linguistic traits which are an inherent part of Brazilians. If participants did not have extensive opportunities to interact in English, but recognize that some features of Portuguese have penetrated into their standard English, a further assumption can be drawn at this stage, that some of these traits could have also been transmitted to participants, had they the opportunities to interact with Brazilians in English.

Needless to say, in order to validate the claim made above, as well as to further investigate the potential role and contributions that Brazilian English might offer to the

evolution of the English language, a complementary study should be set out. This complementary study could confine the data analyzed to a setting where interactions occur only in English, for instance, written data collected from internet interactions where English is the sole means of communication between native and nonnative speakers. Another possibility would be to focus on further oral interviews with foreign individuals who have been living in Brazil, but that were able to confine their language use to English, having no formal contact with Portuguese.

In spite of its limitations, if we refer back for a moment and examine the theories which have motivated this study, we believe that the results found can contribute with some relevant insights to the extensive debate on foreign language error and variation. Let us start by saying that the discussion on what is considered as “correct” or as a standard use of any given language and what is considered as mistakes, errors or simply variation is an ongoing discussion in every language. It is a question that remains unanswered whether we should consider as “variation” or “error” specific linguistic uses which are not presented in grammar books of a given language, but which are shared by the majority – or at least by a great number – of its speakers.

In addition, if we take the foreign language teaching and education settings and focus on the specific case of English, these issues become even more complex, mostly because of three major factors addressed throughout this study, namely: **A)** nonnative speakers of English outnumber native ones. **B)** Learners of any given foreign language tend to share some common linguistic traits because of the natural process of learning this language, constituting therefore an independent variation of any original form. According to researchers such as David Crystal and Guy Cook, it would be more than reasonable to say that in a near future it would not be a surprise to find references to *Brazilian English*, *Mexican English* and so on. Indeed, the term “*Englishes*” is already widely used by some well-known authors in the field. **C)** Mostly because of the advance of globalization, technological improvements in communication and in the social networking sites, friendly relationships among nations, commercial interests, and others, nonnative and native speakers of English are interacting more often than ever before. These interactions are opening room for a fresh perspective in language studies, that of language accommodation

and assimilation by native speakers. David Crystal (online interview: 2010) states that these cross-nation interactions are bound to have an effect on the way that standard English language evolves.

Thus, the considerations above are quite germane to native and nonnative English teachers, since these professionals are to a great extent responsible for error correction and for the maintenance – or for the alteration – of the established language patterns and rules. Conversely, in the communicative class, English teachers are also supposed to bring “real” language to class. Unavoidably, this last task means that the teacher has to go through a difficult decision-making process concerning which stretches of language would best represent “real” language: solely the ones used in English speaking countries and produced by natives, or the ones produced locally, by nonnative speakers? Consequently, we believe that this preliminary study can add more variables in the uninterrupted discussion of language variation and correctness in the English as a foreign language classroom by: **A)** Presenting a more flexible view of the roles of native and nonnative speakers of English; **B)** Criticizing the commonly held hierarchical view of standard and non-standard forms, as well as **C)** Presenting the possibility that any language is subject to the interference of other languages.

This study opens space for further areas of investigation, as it is solely concerned with the identification of linguistic alteration in the speech of native speakers of English. Truthfully, more detailed features concerning these alterations in many respects were not taken into consideration. Further research would be necessary, for instance, to determine whether there might be any form of relationship between language accommodation and nationality. Namely, will all native speakers of English, regardless of their nationality and cultural background, interact similarly with Brazilians? Is there a more profound relationship between cultural identification/empathy and language assimilation? If so, which native speaker cultures would be more likely to accept/assimilate the linguistic traits utilized in Brazilian English? Additionally, some supplementary studies could be designed, taking into consideration language assimilation and other relations, such as native speakers’ main purposes for staying in Brazil, personal experiences and associations developed here

and the duration of this linguistic influence. That is, how long do these traits last after the interaction with Brazilians has ceased? Or, perhaps, have they become permanent?

CONCLUSION

The limited results found in this study do not invalidate the main claims made, namely: the non-hierarchical relation among English variations and standard forms, the idea that nonnative speakers of English share similar patterns while learning this language, and, consequently some original English variations might arise despite the lack of their official linguistic recognition. This would imply that Brazilian learners of English are not merely passive reproducers of American or British English, but are users and producers of a variation that is the outcome of their own creative use of English, for even highly proficient English users share some linguistic traits which are typical of Brazilian learners. Finally, the constant increasing in the number of nonnative speakers of English leading to the recent scenario where nonnatives outnumber natives along with a vast increase in worldwide interaction by means of English is likely to create favorable conditions for language exchange and assimilations by individuals from different nations, speakers of different variants of English.

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Links

Crystal D.: *Is control of English shifting away from British and American native speakers?*
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APPENDIX A

Participant 01

<p>1 - How long have you been living in Brazil?</p> <p>Over 45 years.</p>
<p>2 - What is the main purpose of your stay here?</p> <p>Living. Studying. Teaching. Working in language, intercultural communication and publishing.</p>
<p>3 - Have you been learning about Brazilian culture/politics and/or any other aspect of our social organization? If so, can you describe your experiences and your personal impressions towards it?</p> <p>That is a broad question and, yes, I indeed hope that will never stop learning about the country and its fascinating culture... I could write a book about my experiences and impressions.</p>
<p>4 - Do you have Brazilian friends and/or co-workers with whom you have the opportunity to interact in English?</p> <p>Very definitely. Friends, co-workers, students & family including wife, children etc.</p>
<p>5 - Can you briefly describe your impressions on the aforementioned interactions?</p> <p>Very briefly? I have always enjoyed the interactions with Brazilians in English <i>and</i> Portuguese. Usually very positive conversation, with similar points of views.</p>
<p>6 - In your opinion, are there significant differences between your own English and the one spoken in Brazil?</p> <p>As a whole, I have met some Brazilians that have studied, traveled, and/or lived abroad and their English is quite good. In other cases the applications of the language can vary from person to person, in terms of the expressions used and/or phrasal verbs.</p> <p>At the same time, I was told by individuals that they did not fully understand group discussion, but only</p>

afterwards. People don't like to stop individuals on the spot and tell them to slow down or explain something.

7 - Have you ever noticed any common linguistic traits that Brazilians speaking English as a foreign language share?

Overall, I think that Brazilians have very good accents in comparison to some European countries. Some Cariocas have the tendency to pronounce 't' as 'ch', speak 'ED' instead of 't' (worked instead of workt) and words such as 'office' with an 'i' at the end – offici.

8 - Regarding your own use of the English language as a native speaker, and taking into consideration your answers to the last two questions, have you noticed any changes in your English usage after you have arrived in Brazil? If so, can you describe or exemplify some of them?

As have been learning Portuguese, I have also incorporated Portuguese into the everyday life. Also, I am very attentive to mistakes mentioned in number #7.

9 - Do you perform any kind of adaptation in your English use when speaking to Brazilians to facilitate communication? If so, are these adaptations being used in your natural speech?

I prefer to speak slowly as in some cases individuals need to get accustomed to my dialect and/or low voice.

Participant 02

1 - How long have you been living in Brazil?

I lived in Brazil for six months, from July to December 2011.

2 - What is the main purpose of your stay here?

Study abroad program at PUC-Rio, to learn Portuguese.

3 - Have you been learning about Brazilian culture/politics and/or any other aspect of our social organization? If so, can you describe your experiences and your personal impression towards it?

Well, some things I learned more formally, learning about some history in classes, for example. But largely, I picked things up through observation and conversation; there are many more jobs in Brazil that are automated in the US, for example (bus fare-taker, elevator operator, trash pick-up man). Dating and nightlife are different (more forward/sexualized), but there are many small differences that are natural for being in a different place, and it was not too hard to adjust to most of it.

4 - Do you have Brazilian friends and/or co-workers with whom you have the opportunity to interact in English?

Yes, I do/did.

5 - Can you briefly describe your impressions on the aforementioned interactions?

First, I went into many conversations wanting to just speak Portuguese, since I was trying to improve my language. When I was starting out, with weak skills, with fluent English speakers, I would often speak Portuguese and be responded to in English. If the case was that we could speak better in English, we would. I was often impressed with these Brazilian's English levels, though sometimes their manner of speaking was a bit formal. Sometimes, people who really only barely spoke English would insist on speaking it with me, just repeating a certain phrase with little understanding, so I would always prefer Portuguese in those situations, sometimes feeling annoyed that they assumed I needed to be spoken to in English.

6 - In your opinion, are there significant differences between your own English and the one spoken in Brazil?

Yes, definitely. I have different ways of speaking for different contexts; academic discourse language, working with adults and people I respect, and the casual, slang-filled English I share with my friends. Most Brazilians I spoke to with a high command of English had a more formal English,

which makes sense, because that's how language tends to be taught. Those who had spent significant time abroad had more casual speech, but still some idioms that weren't always used.

7 - Have you ever noticed any common linguistic traits that Brazilians speaking English as a foreign language share?

A common thing I noticed was literally translating some things from Portuguese to English. A friend the other day asked me if I could help with some "English doubts", which I assume comes from "*dúvidas*", but is not a word we use in the same context; I'd just say "questions". Or another, trying to ask if I had a boyfriend, asked; "Do you often go with him?", which matches "*sair com*" but not quite our more common "go out" phrase. Also, some people I knew ended text or internet messages by saying "kisses"; which is a very culturally Brazilian thing to do.

8 - Regarding your own use of the English language, and taking into consideration your answers for the last two questions, have you noticed any changes in it after you have arrived in Brazil? If so, can you describe or exemplify some of them?

Yes, I have noticed a few changes, but I think it comes more from the influence of Portuguese; if I've been speaking or listening to a lot of Portuguese, my mind will sort of think in that pattern, so I'll adopt little phrases, like "he made a success" instead of "he was successful", or "let's combine to do something", or "this is the hat of my friend". **Things that sort of make sense, but aren't really normal in English.** But this is more likely to happen with other bilingual (foreigner or Brazilian) friends, because I know they'll understand; **it is often unintentional, though.** Also, if I've interrupted a friend in conversation or on the phone and want them to talk again, I usually say "speak!" which is not the normal way to address that; it comes off almost aggressively in English. **So lots of these little things still make their way into my speech.**

9 - Do you perform any kind of adaptation in your English use when speaking to Brazilians? If so, can you exemplify some of them?

Yes; I always try to be *clearer* when speaking to someone who is learning the language, or who might not know all of the idioms I use. I try to speak as I would normally, since that is the best practice for anyone, but I might end up using a word order more common in Portuguese; "But it is good to see family!" I have written in an old Facebook chat- it's perfectly grammatical in English, but I don't think I would say that phrase with an American; it matches how a Brazilian might say it to me. And though it's hard to think of an example, **I know I mimic the tone and way of speaking of whoever I'm talking with, and so my English with Brazilians gains some of that formality I mentioned noticing in their speech.**

Participant 03

1 - How long have you been living in Brazil?

On and off since the end of 2007

2 - What is the main purpose of your stay here?

Study (though I also work)

3 - Have you been learning about Brazilian culture/politics and/or any other aspect of our social organization? If so, can you describe your experiences and your personal impression towards it?

I'm not sure if I've understood this question correctly, but I enjoy keeping up to date on current affairs and read the newspaper. The culture is different from the culture I grew up in, but not dramatically so. I am a fan of Brazilian arts and I am a keen observer of behavioral differences, not only for survival purposes, but also due to personal interest.

4 - Do you have Brazilian friends and/or co-workers with whom you have the opportunity to interact in English?

I teach English as a foreign language so use English with Brazilians in a classroom context. I don't use English with Brazilians outside of this context.

5 - Can you briefly describe your impressions on the aforementioned interactions?

I enjoy teaching English to Brazilians (I previously taught in France and have taught multilingual classes in the UK) as I find them communicative, curious about the language and in the case of the students I teach at least, motivated. I teach students of all levels so communicative competence varies.

6 - In your opinion, are there significant differences between your own English and the one spoken in Brazil?

I find the English spoken in Brazil tends to be more heavily influenced by North American varieties of English than any other, most likely due to the preponderance of North American films and TV shows shown on cable channels/ in cinemas etc. I find this has an impact on both pronunciation and lexis. Students might be puzzled if I use the term 'bin', but are familiar with the term 'trash can'. I am able to observe L1 interference in the English of most of the students I teach, though the amount of interference tends to vary depending on the students level. This can be anything from collocation 'gain a present' (rather than 'receive' or 'get') to grammatical 'I didn't do nothing' to pronunciation e.g. the first 'u' in 'culture', to give some examples.

7 - Have you ever noticed any common linguistic traits that Brazilians speaking English as a foreign language share?

I am able to observe L1 interference in the English of most of the students I teach, though the amount of interference tends to vary depending on the students level. This can be anything from collocation 'gain a present' (rather than 'receive' or 'get') to grammatical 'I didn't do nothing' to pronunciation e.g. the first 'u' in 'culture', to give some examples.

8 - Regarding your own use of the English language, and taking into consideration your answers for the last two questions, have you noticed any changes in it after you have arrived in Brazil? If so, can you describe or exemplify some of them?

I believe I speak with more of a lilt when speaking English, similar to the rising and falling intonation of Brazilian Portuguese. I stress the first syllable in 'Portuguese' instead of the last one, (I think I hear this word far too often). I sometimes have difficulty remembering specific vocabulary words in English, especially if I am describing an experience which took place in Brazil (i.e. in Portuguese), **though this seems to be related to Portuguese influence rather than the influence of another variety of English. I am not aware of any specific grammatical differences,** though a very embarrassing situation took place when dining with students on an immersion course some months ago. A student uttered the phrase 'When I was with X years', 'When I had X years' I corrected him. It took a few moments before I realized what I had said. **I think I have heard this so often it has become ingrained in my memory and now almost seems correct.**

9 - Do you perform any kind of adaptation in your English use when speaking to Brazilians? If so, can you exemplify some of them?

I tend not to grade my language unless I feel a student has difficulty catching the general idea of what I am saying. If necessary I will slow down, avoid idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs and try to use more Latin derived vocabulary. Sometimes I also use the past simple where I would normally use present perfect, adopting a more North American approach to the use of these tenses e.g. 'Did you eat lunch yet?' rather than 'Have you eaten lunch yet?'

Participant 04

1 - How long have you been living in Brazil?

Almost 4 years.

2 - What is the main purpose of your stay here?

I live here.

3 - Have you been learning about Brazilian culture/politics and/or any other aspect of our social organization? If so, can you describe your experiences and your personal impressions towards it?

Only through first hand experience – not a recognized course.

4 - Do you have Brazilian friends and/or co-workers with whom you have the opportunity to interact in English?

Yes – I work / have worked at various English schools staffed with Brazilians.

5 - Can you briefly describe your impressions on the aforementioned interactions?

Generally positive.

6 - In your opinion, are there significant differences between your own English and the one spoken in Brazil?

Not really.

7 - Have you ever noticed any common linguistic traits that Brazilians speaking English as a foreign language share?

Apart from translation errors?

8 - Regarding your own use of the English language as a native speaker, and taking into consideration your answers for the last two questions, have you noticed any changes in your English usage after you have arrived in Brazil? If so, can you describe or exemplify some of them?

I grade my English to the level of the listener – even when talking with relatively fluent Brazilians I would still limit the use of phrasal verbs / idioms.

9 - Do you perform any kind of adaptation in your English use when speaking to Brazilians to facilitate communication? If so, are these adaptations being used in your natural speech?

See previous answer.

Participant 05

1 - How long have you been living in Brazil?

23 years

2 - What is the main purpose of your stay here?

I moved here to continue my career and for personal reasons

3 - Have you been learning about Brazilian culture/politics and/or any other aspect of our social organization? If so, can you describe your experiences and your personal impressions towards it?

I have learnt a lot about Brazilian culture and politics. In fact, I feel more at home in these debates now than similar debates in Britain. However, I must say I don't agree with the expression "Brazilian culture", because Brazil is a multicultural society like most others. We can't speak in the singular but only in the plural about Brazilian cultures. Also, the politics here, although it has specific characteristics that come from colonization and the history of Brazilian social formation, is determined by regional and international forces that are endemic these days.

4 - Do you have Brazilian friends and/or co-workers with whom you have the opportunity to interact in English?

All of my friends and colleagues are Brazilian but I do not interact with them in English – only in Portuguese.

5 - Can you briefly describe your impressions on the aforementioned interactions?

Since I don't interact in English I can't make any comments, I'm afraid

6 - In your opinion, are there significant differences between your own English and the one spoken in Brazil?

Yes, of course there are but that does not impede communication. I used to speak English a lot with

Brazilians when I worked at the Cultura Inglesa but I never took too much notice of the differences. My principal aim was to communicate.

7 - Have you ever noticed any common linguistic traits that Brazilians speaking English as a foreign language share?

There are some phonetic aspects and, depending upon the level of competence, there could be some lexical and *sintactic* aspects as well

8 - Regarding your own use of the English language as a native speaker, and taking into consideration your answers for the last two questions, have you noticed any changes in your English usage after you have arrived in Brazil? If so, can you describe or exemplify some of them?

Only some minor interference of Portuguese, such prepositions (but not in phrasal verbs) and the use of some verbs. For example, I once caught myself saying I had passed the weekend somewhere, instead of using the correct verb “spent”.

9 - Do you perform any kind of adaptation in your English use when speaking to Brazilians to facilitate communication? If so, are these adaptations being used in your natural speech?

I’m not aware of doing this but I speak so infrequently nowadays in English here in Brazil that I can’t really say, I’m afraid.

Participant 06

1 - How long have you been living in Brazil?

I have been living in Brazil for almost a year now.

2 - What is the main purpose of your stay here?

I won a scholarship to study take graduate coursework in a country of my choosing, and I chose Brazil. Originally I was set to study in Belo Horizonte but, due to issues with the admission process, I was forced to choose another university. Since Rio is the heart of Brazilian culture, I chose to apply to Universities there to see where I was accepted. In addition to studying, I also wanted to do as much volunteer work as I could, preferably in Favelas and socioeconomically challenged neighborhoods. My final aim was to learn as much Portuguese as possible—I knew it would be tremendously useful for the rest of my life.

3 - Have you been learning about Brazilian culture/politics and/or any other aspect of our social organization? If so, can you describe your experiences and your personal impression towards it?

I have spent a lot of time learning about Brazilian culture and politics. Luckily for me, cariocas are very open and friendly, and it's extremely easy to engage in conversation with them about their country, city, and neighborhood. I learned a lot this way. I conversed with dozens of new people every day and asked many questions about their political leanings and the perceptions of their culture and society, supplementing these interactions with my own research. Overall, It was a very rich experience; I'm certain I've never learned as much in one year as I did during my year in Rio.

4 - Do you have Brazilian friends and/or co-workers with whom you have the opportunity to interact in English?

I do. Many Brazilians, almost exclusively high-income individuals, speak English with varying degrees of fluency. I found more cariocas were fluent in English than Spanish, ironically. That being said, the English-speaking Brazilians friends I made exhibited what I perceived to be a limited understanding of the structure, history, and social dimensions of other languages. This is a problem I encountered in nearly all socioeconomic circles, though I imagine it has changed of late as Brazilians have become increasingly educated and exposed to speakers of other languages.

5 - Can you briefly describe your impressions on the aforementioned interactions?

Whoops! I think I just did (see above).

6 - In your opinion, are there significant differences between your own English and the one spoken in Brazil?

Of course. There are many borrowed words from English, but the phonetic particularities of Portuguese make it very difficult to pronounce these words the way a native English speaker would. Lusophones have trouble with the grammatical structure of English as well, as is the case vice-versa.

7 - Have you ever noticed any common linguistic traits that Brazilians speaking English as a foreign language share?

The /l/ sound in Portuguese, when followed by certain vowels, sounds a lot like the /l/ in English. It might be even closer to the English pronunciation than to the Spanish pronunciation of /l/. As I mentioned earlier, many English terms (slang and otherwise) have been borrowed from English, which seems to facilitate basic communication at certain points.

8 - Regarding your own use of the English language, and taking into consideration your answers for the last two questions, have you noticed any changes in it after you have arrived in Brazil? If so, can you describe or exemplify some of them?

I haven't noticed any significant changes, though I'm generally good at preventing tendencies from one language from spilling into another.

9 - Do you perform any kind of adaptation in your English use when speaking to Brazilians? If so, can you exemplify some of them?

I speak slowly, clearly, and use Latinate words when possible, instead of their Germanic equivalents, because I often feel it's more likely I'll be understood. An example would be using retrospect in lieu of hindsight, just to illustrate.

APPENDIX B

Spoken interview 01

Wilson: Hello. This is my first interview and, please, can you tell me your full name?

A.I.: Ahm, my name is A.I.

Wilson: Ok. A.I., how old are you?

A.I.: I'm 41.

Wilson: Ok. Ahm, A.I., how long have you been living in Brazil?

A.I.: I'll say about two and a half months.

Wilson: Ok. And what is your main purpose for your stay here?

A.I.: I'm here to basically work, and provide our services to Brazilian companies.

Wilson: Oh, ok, you are working. Have you been learning about Brazilian culture or politics and... or any other aspect of our social organization, our culture?

A.I.: Yeah, I'll say yes, I have... I've actually learnt more of the culture, the people... and understand how... the way that people interact... the social media, what's important, in fact, we've just completed the week of the Carnival and, of course, Carnival, we can see, has a strong influence on the people and the society, so I am learning, I'm having some understanding of the Brazilian culture.

Wilson: It's very funny because during the Carnival, Rio de Janeiro almost stops...

A.I.: Yes, shuts down. (?)

Wilson: "Now let's have Carnival, let's have fun", and even the... the basic services, they stop. It's something... if you think about it, it's crazy.

A.I.: Yeah, it's interesting... it's unique, it's different, I think that's what makes Brazil Brazil –

Wilson: Everybody together –

A.I.: Everybody together and it's good, and I think sooner or later the rest of the world, especially those of us from America, will start to learn that not everything is work, work, work... that there's time to work and there's time to relax.

Wilson: There's at least one week to get together and forget the problems –

A.I.: Yeah –

Wilson: And... about your experiences and your opinion about your impressions towards our culture? Are you enjoying what you have been watching? Can you, I don't know, summarize your – your view on the Brazilian people and culture?

A.I.: I'll say there's a lot to learn, I mean, like I said, I only spent two and a half, three months so far here in Brazil... I have learnt so much, the experience is so unique, it's completely different from what I'm used to, it's a... it's a different culture... to me, obviously, being an English speaker, it's a different environment, not understanding the language and having to make my way –

Wilson: To try to be understood, to use body language, and try to point –

A.I.: And it's good and it's a... you also understand that it's not enough to even know Portuguese words, you have to understand the culture, and the way that people think to know how to use that in communication, so that's a very unique aspect. Then, of course, one of the things I enjoy about the culture is the diversity of the people, there's all kinds of people, different cultures, different colors, different makeup, and within all of that there's still unity, you know? There's a lot... there's unity and that, I think that's amazing, understand that the rest of the world is not like that, there's still a lot of division in many parts of the world, but in Brazil there's still... there's very much unity, so I think that is fantastic... and some of the things I've learnt from the Brazilian culture, and of course, I have to say, there are two things: one I'm surprised about, it's a... the people are very

conscious of their physical body, so you find people always running, exercising, and doing all kinds of things to stay in good shape, in good body shape, which is very good, but what I find surprising, and I'm very surprised, almost disappointed, is... I've spent two or three months in Brazil and I've been looking for a soccer team that I can play and the people at work, they don't play soccer. Most people want to go and sit down in a bar and drink and watch the game, and nobody... very few people want to play the game, I have to make a lot of effort to find people, and whenever I find someone who wants to play, he's asking me: "ahm, would you play foot volley?", which is good, but I want to play soccer! Not foot volley I want to play soccer! And then he told me to go to Flamengo, maybe the Atoro... Atero...

Wilson: Aterro do Flamengo. Yes –

A.I.: And maybe I'll find a few people to play, but anyone just tells me where to go, nobody plays soccer!

Wilson: And it's funny because you are in Brazil –

A.I.: I'm in Brazil!

Wilson: The country of soccer and you are making a huge effort to try to find –

A.I.: Geez. It's not that difficult in America!

Wilson: Hahahah so how come it is difficult here?!

A.I.: You know, that's... that's...

Wilson: That's funny... hahahah

A.I.: Yeah, sort of...

Wilson: And... do you have Brazilian friends or co-workers with whom you have the opportunity, contact in English?

A.I.: Yes, I do. I do have quite a few Brazilian friends and co-workers, and our interactions are in English most of the time, and sometimes I try to interact in Portuguese...

Wilson: And... can you briefly describe the impressions that you have of these interactions... ahm... when Brazilians are speaking English, do you notice that... it is different, of course, but for now, in my case here, sometimes I try to figure out what I'm going to say, I have to do this "ahmm", I have these pauses, so how is your interaction with Brazilians speaking English?

A.I.: So far... I'll be honest, I've been very impressed 'cause I've lived in different countries in the world, English speaking and non-English speaking, and I find that the Brazilians speaking English speak very well, but for some reason they're not confident, they're so shy that they don't want to try –

Wilson: Yes, I can say that it's true in my case...

A.I.: Because they don't want to, they're afraid of making a mistake, so they don't want to try, they want to, you know, and I think that they understand and their English is very good, they shouldn't worry, just go ahead and speak the English, it's fine, so that's what I found, I mean, I have co-workers that they would not talk to me and they don't know, and I tell them –

Wilson: "Am I talking to a native speaker? Oh my God, no!" –

A.I.: Yeah, and they're trying to be, and I'm like: "No! Say it!", whatever it is, even if you have to throw in a word of Portuguese because you cannot get better in a language unless you just try –

Wilson: Because the objective is communication, right?!

A.I.: The objective is communication –

Wilson: You're not trying to be a... to say something beautiful or to have a perfect pronunciation, you're a teacher, or you're trying to communicate, right?

A.I.: Absolutely so...

Wilson: But it's totally true, I can say this... in my case, this is true. When Valdir told me: "I will arrange an interview for you with a native speaker", I was: "Oh my God, the guy

will think that I'm unable to speak", because I'm not confident enough about my own English, you know...

A.I.: Yeah, all I can say is: I wish one day my Portuguese will be as good as English I hear Brazilians speak...

Wilson: Because Portuguese is very difficult –

A.I.: Yeah, it is –

Wilson: I don't know if someone has told you yet, but even us, Brazilians, we don't know everything about Portuguese... we are able to communicate, to do our things, but we don't know the Portuguese that's in the grammar book, you know?

A.I.: Right –

Wilson: We don't know, it's almost impossible to master the Portuguese that's in the grammar books, it's very difficult –

A.I.: Yeah...

Wilson: So, now it's the most important part here of my research: have you ever noticed any common traits that Brazilians speaking English as a foreign language share? I mean, did you notice that there are differences, as the example of "informations" as a countable noun that Brazilians speaking English, they share this common trait?

A.I.: I think there are a few of them that I've noticed, obviously, I had said, one thing is to understand and that... there's always a unique relationship between language and culture, you know? The culture comes first, the language comes second, and... which is backwards in English, in English it's just completely backwards: the language comes first, the culture comes second, so that's why if you go to an English-speaking country, a traditional English-speaking country like England or the United States, it's easier to learn the language, but not as easy to learn the culture. In Brazil, it's unique, like the rest of the world, it's easier to learn the culture, and from the culture you learn the language, **so with that said you can see the influence of the Brazilian culture in the English spoken by**

local Brazilians. Most Brazilians learnt language, they learnt English as a foreign language, so because of that, they speak it as a learnt language. A native English speaker like myself did not learn English, so I'll speak it, based on the knowledge I had got as a kid, without thinking about what I'm saying. I give you an example: this is the first place I've come and... it's also present in the Spanish world (?), but it's unique in Brazil: a word like "used", like I would say here: "I used the book", and the Brazilian would say "*I us-éd*" –

Wilson: Hmm, "*I us-éd*"...

A.I.: And Brazilians will say... whenever the word ends in *-ed*, which in English you pronounce just one word, the Brazilian will use the *-éd*...

Wilson: Ah yes, a very common pronunciation...

A.I.: It's a common pronunciation –

Wilson: The past, the simple past, the *-ed*...

A.I.: Yeah, and it's... so you see that as a unique –

Wilson: "*I studiéd**" –

A.I.: Exactly –

Wilson: Instead of "studied" –

A.I.: Exactly, so you see that as a unique thing. The other thing I would say it's unique about the language is... in the Brazilian alphabet, in the Portuguese alphabet... they speak English like they speak Portuguese. I'll give you an example: the "R" is "RR" in Brazil –

Wilson: Oh, yes, it's strong...

A.I.: Strong –

Wilson: Like your "H", like a "house" –

A.I.: It's "house", it's strong... but in Brazil, it's silent, it's a lot more silent, but the "R" is strong as a "head", so... as a native speaker, I would hear someone say, and a good one that's caught me recently was: "We're going to go to the forest". And the guy said: "If you're going to the forest, you need a 'hepellent*'",

Wilson: Ahh, yes.

A.I.: A 'hepellent'.

Wilson: With a strong "R".

A.I.: And I'm like "Hepellent? What's hepellent?". And I go: "Oh, it's Re! Oh, Repellent!", you know? But that is very unique among Brazilians, especially cariocas.

Wilson: Yeah, especially cariocas.

A.I.: You know, so those are the unique things that you see when... so you can see the influence of the Brazilian alphabet in the English language...

Wilson: The influence of the first language in the way they pronounce –

A.I.: And it's very unique, you know, so I think that it's great, but to me, it is beautiful. It is beautiful to see that, you know?

Wilson: This difference.

A.I.: It's different, you know, it's beautiful.

Wilson: How the same letter can be pronounced in another way...

A.I.: In another way, you know, so I would say those are the common things I have found amongst Brazilian speakers... then, of course, you have the culture! Just like you said, in the Brazilian way "information" is –

Wilson: It is a countable noun –

A.I.: It's a countable noun, so it was countable. Only when there's one information is it information. Anytime there is more than one, it's "informations", while in English, "information" is a non-countable noun.

Wilson: For me, it's very difficult to understand how "information" can be uncountable because if you tell me, for instance, a secret, it is *one information*, if another friend tells me another secret about the same subject, so I have two "*informations*" about this topic, you know? It's very difficult to understand that "*information*" is not countable...

A.I.: Absolutely –

Wilson: And the same for you, it's "Oh my god, how can they count information?"... hmm, let me see... I have here one of the last questions, but I think that you have already answered because if you have noticed any changes... ahh, no, if you have noticed any changes in *your* way of using English based on that traits that you identified, you know? For instance, in the case of the pronunciation that you said or the countable noun pronunciation, "*informations*", if somehow you are using your English in a different way when you are talking to Brazilians or not, or when you –

A.I.: Well, I will say this: it's a very personal question and no answer will be unique, no answer is... how do I say it? For two people, might be the same, **because different people have different ways that they hear and different ways that they pick up languages and pick up the ways that sound... just like you said, if two friends are together, and you like the friend, after a while you start to pick up... but that depends on the personal relationships between people. Now, I say that particularly because: 1) in my case, I have not spent a long time in Brazil to be able to be influenced by any of this,** but also in the short time I've spent... because I'm so eager... here's the problem, so I say it's unique for everybody... because I'm so eager to learn the language, I've naturally understood when to use the "d" in Brazil and the "g" in Brazil, so when I'm talking to people and between my wife and I, I try to say that we need to buy... in English, it's an L-E-D TV, ok? But I'm telling her we need to buy a "LED" (LÉD) TV, so...

Wilson: You're trying to facilitate for the other person, so you change your pronunciation to the way that Brazilians normally pronounce...

A.I.: Exactly.

Wilson: I see...

A.I.: That's the influence that I was saying that has happened so far.

Wilson: Ok, so I think that we have finished, so, A.I., thank you very much!

A.I.: You're welcome!

Wilson: See you.

Spoken interview 02

Wilson: Hello, this is my second interview, and... can you please tell me your full name?

R.A.I: It's R.A.I. Do you want me to write?

Wilson: Well, maybe afterwards I will ask you to write, yes, because I'm not familiar with the spelling. And... so, how old are you?

R.A.I: I'm 39 years old.

Wilson: Ok, and how long have you been living here in Brazil?

R.A.I: Just about a month. He's been here longer.

Wilson: Ok, and what's the main purpose of your stay here in Brazil?

R.A.I: My husband has been relocated for work, so we're moving over here to be together, and it's supposed to be about three years, so... should be here for about three years... only been here one month.

Wilson: You're just starting your journey.

R.A.I: I'm just starting the journey.

Wilson: Have you been learning about Brazilian culture or any other aspects of our social organization? I know that you've been here for a very short time, but could you learn something about the way Brazilians are, the way Brazilians interact or our most important celebrations, like Carnival that was just last week?

R.A.I: Yeah... I find that they are very warm people, so if we understood the language, we'd probably make more friends... yeah, because people want to talk to you, but then, you know, they're at what you say: "fala portuguese?" and everybody says "ohh, okay", then there's no point continuing, you know... so, I find that, I think they're very warm people, they want to, you know, they want to talk to you, they want to have a conversation, but obviously not very much so because you don't speak English and I don't speak Portuguese, so it's hard... but... and also the whole Carnival period is very interesting for me because I can't imagine that the whole city was, the whole country was closed down for one week... everybody comes together, but everything is shut down for almost a week.

Wilson: Yes, I think it is crazy... even we, Brazilian people, sometimes we think "Oh my God", and even the basic services, you know, hospitals and police, security, everybody is dancing on the street and you think "Oh my God!" –

R.A.I: Yes, I find it very, very... for a whole week, that's a long time, not only a day or two, but a whole week, I'm like "wow!", and it's not a small population, it's a large group of people, so –

Wilson: Brazil is almost a continent, it's very large...

R.A.I: Yes, it's most of South America, so yes... I find it very very intriguing and... I'm learning a lot, you know, trying to learn what's appropriate, like here when we greet someone, when you meet someone, you kiss the two cheeks –

Wilson: Yes, you give two kisses, normally...

R.A.I: And it doesn't, you know, you don't have to be very close to the person to do that...

Wilson: Yes, it's more about the movement, the symbol, you know? It's not about the kissing itself, it's about the... doing the... sometimes I see that people don't even touch each other, they just do the movement to show that: "I am greeting you"... it's funny...

R.A.I: Yes, I'm thinking of few things, so...

Wilson: And do you have Brazilian friends or co-workers here with whom you have the opportunity to interact by English language?

R.A.I: No, not at all... the only person I know is Father Valdir, so not a lot... not for me, for him because of work –

Wilson: Yeah, some co-workers and friends –

R.A.I: But for me, no, not really because I've only been here a month and all I've done is try to settle the kids in school and –

Wilson: To organize the family... you didn't have time to make friends and to –

R.A.I: I make friends, but only with English-speaking people...

Wilson: Only with English-speaking... you mean only with Americans or native speakers?

R.A.I: Yes...

Wilson: Not Brazilians speaking English...

R.A.I: No...

Wilson: Ok... so, yes, I have to skip these questions... oh, no, now I have to skip some questions here because they are based on –

R.A.I: So, I've had a lot of people speak English as a second language... the Portuguese speaking English as the second language, but they use a lot of words like, for instance, they would say... the "d" is a "j", so they would say "needj" instead of "need"...

Wilson: Ah, I see... you mean that the pronunciation... we, cariocas, we tend to say, to use this “dj” all the time, so they say “needj”... if it’s a common trait, I mean, you noticed this in a lot of people...

R.A.I: I noticed a lot of people that try to speak to me in English... yeah, they say that and then, originally I wouldn’t know what they’re talking about and then I’d think “oooh, it’s the “D” and the “J”! So it’s a D!”... you know, because then I don’t know, the Father doesn’t have that... Valdir doesn’t have that...

Wilson: Yes, his English is every good.

R.A.I: Yes, because he pronounces and he doesn’t put the “j” with the “d” and he doesn’t say things like... like... if you want to say “based”, he wouldn’t say “bas-ed”, he would say “based”, so I don’t find a lot of those –

Wilson: Traits of people who are learning –

R.A.I: Yes, so he is... he’s very well spoken to me and... you know, speaking English as a second language, but what I found from other people is, you know, changing the Portuguese, pronunciation with the English, “pronunciations”...

Wilson: Oh yes, he was telling me something very similar about pronunciation... about the letter “R” because in English it is “R”, but in Portuguese it has the same sound of the letter “H”, like in “house”, it is strong, you know, and people... and he was telling me that... sorry?

R.A.I: I would say “Rosinda”, right? Or “Rosana”, but you would say “Hocinda”...

Wilson: Yes, it’s something stronger, you know... our “R” here is similar to the pronunciation of “H”, like in “house”, probably in Brazil we would write “house” with “R”... I found that when I see people trying to speak, for instance, “HEAD” and “RED”... here in Brazil they confuse that all the time, like “the colour HEAD, you know, because of this difference... a lot of words like “rat”, like in mouse, and “hat”... a lot of people here in Brazil, they confuse because of the pronunciation... and, for instance, when you have here a trademark, like Redbull, you can see that everybody in Brazil, they don’t say “give me a

Redbull”, because they speak in Portuguese, so it’s “give me a HEADbull”... you say “head” the colour and the part of the body... and sometimes, if you make this mistake, there is not so much problem because there is no –

R.A.I: Here, if you’re making this mistake and you’re here, that’s okay, but if you’re out of Portuguese –

Wilson: If you’re speaking to a native speaker...

R.A.I: Yeah, they wouldn’t understand...

Wilson: A little detail, but makes a huge difference...

R.A.I: Yes, so I found those little things, but now I’m learning, so when people tell me things like... cause if I... more is more important for me because I’m not a minority here... so it’s more important for me to communicate what I’m trying to say the way that...

Wilson: They understand...

R.A.I: So, I tend to... when I say an “R”, it’s like “Ok, so it’s a “H” sound”... if I want to say like “repellent”, I’ll say “hepellent”...

Wilson: Yeah, he told me the example of... because they don’t say “repellent”, they say “hepellent”... sometimes, you can even change the intonation, the stress of the word, it’s very funny...

R.A.I: So, the emphasis... and that’s a tricky language, the emphasis’s on different things, for instance, this city or the town Barra... I would say “Bara”, but it’s a double “R”, but to the Portuguese-speaking person, it’s “Baha” because it’s a –

Wilson: Yes, because I think that in Portuguese, when you have a double “R”, it’s to show you that the stress is there... if you have, for instance, the Portuguese word for a mouse is “rato”. R-A-T-O. In this case, it’s just one “R”, “rato”, but “Barra” has a double “R”, it’s to show that it’s very very strong, you put the stress there... so, “R” here is very stressed...

R.A.I: So, it’s a major thing for... I think the “R” and the “H” –

Wilson: Now it came to my mind another pronunciation aspect... the pronunciation of the “TH” sound, like in “think”... what are your impressions towards this particular pronunciation? Because we, Brazilians, and I can include myself in that, we have a lot of difficulty pronouncing this “TH” sound because we don’t have this sound in Portuguese, like in “think”...

R.A.I: It’s a “CH” for you –

Wilson: No, the “TH”, like in “think”.

R.A.I: Yes, I’m saying you pronounce like “CH”.

Wilson: Sometimes... sometimes we pronounce like an “F”, like “I fink”.

R.A.I: Aaahh... Ok...

Wilson: Have you ever heard this, this pronunciation?

R.A.I: Well, for the English person that’s speaking, you can say you “think” –

Wilson: Because we are not used to project our tongue, so I think that it’s easier to pronounce it like an “F” sound... “my mouF” instead of “my mouTH”...”I Fink” instead of “I Think”... we pronounce an “F” sound in most of the cases...

R.A.I: Yeah, I think so... I mean, I haven’t really... I’ve had quite a few of those, but you know, a lot of times I don’t even know what they’re saying, so... I’m completely lost... I’m like “Okay”, you know, but yeah... and also my daughter’s name is Zoe...

Wilson: Oe –

R.A.I: You see? Zoe. Z-O-E. But I think... every time she says her name to a Portuguese person, they’re like “Oe”, there’s no “Z”... is there a “Z” in the Brazilian letters?

Wilson: Yes, there is “Z”.

R.A.I: How is it pronounced?

Wilson: “Zê”.

R.A.I: “Zê”.

Wilson: “Zê”. Like, for instance, now I thought about a very similar word: “zebra” in Brazil is “zebra”. The sound of “Z” for us is “Zê”, so instead of “zebra”, we say “zêbra”.

R.A.I: Oh, I see... so, like when she went to play soccer with a bunch of kids, they were Portuguese-speaking, right... she said: “My name is Zoe” and they couldn’t say...

Wilson: Really?

R.A.I: They couldn’t say! They kept saying “Sorry? Sorry?”. And then she was like: “Is it... they don’t have a “Z” in the letters?”, but I don’t know and even when we spoke to Father Valdir, he said “Zoe”, so I was like “Okay, is there a “Z”? I guess there’s a “Z”.

Wilson: There is a “Z” in Portuguese.

R.A.I: But you don’t have a lot of names beginning with a “Z”, maybe not...

Wilson: Aaahhh, yes, maybe that’s it... because there is the sound “z”, but we don’t have many names starting with the letter “Z”... yes, it’s not very common, maybe because of that...

R.A.I: So, a lot of the Portuguese kids called her Soe, but her name is actually Z-O-E. Zoe. So we, you know, we found that when I say my name is R.A.I, I’ll say “R.A.I” and they say “Oh, Hita”...

Wilson: Yes, because there is in Brazil the name R.A.I, it’s a very common name in Brazil, R.A.I...

R.A.I: But it’s spelled R-I-T-A, but pronounced “Hita”.

Wilson: Yes, R-I-T-A. But it’s “Hita”.

R.A.I: Exactly, but I would say R.A.I and when people ask me “What’s your name” and I say “R.A.I”, they say “R.A.I... R.A.I...”, then my kids are like “Mommy, it’s the “H”” and I was like “Hita”, and they “Oh, ok!”.

Wilson: It's even more difficult when you have a similar word because they say "Ah, no, it's Hita" because there is this name in Brazil.

R.A.I: Yeah, so they keep correcting me that my name is Hita! hahahah

Wilson: Correcting you hahahahah "But I know my own name!"

R.A.I: I know, I know! So, those are my experiences so far, it's just where the emphasis is placed and misunderstanding... yeah... so...

Wilson: The most important question that I was going to ask you... I think that you have already said something about that because I was going to ask you if you have noticed some difference in the way *you* are speaking English because of these interactions with Brazilians and you are saying that you have to sometimes use the Portuguese pronunciations in your English so they can understand, as you said you do with your name: "my name is Hita", you try to change the pronunciation so people can understand...

R.A.I: Yeah...

Wilson: So... I think that's it. So, R.A.I – not Hita –, thank you very much!

R.A.I: Oh, you're very welcome; I wish you all the best!

Wilson: Thank you!