

**EXPLORATION OF THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS AFRICAN AMERICAN
VERNACULAR ENGLISH AND ITS SPEAKERS BY STUDENTS OF FOREIGN
LANGUAGES**

NOEMÍ TORRES ANGULO

**UNIVERSIDAD DEL VALLE
FACULTAD DE HUMANIDADES
ESCUELA DE CIENCIAS DEL LENGUAJE
LICENCIATURA EN LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS
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Abstract

This study aimed to find out what perceptions about AAVE (African American Vernacular English) and its speakers were upheld by Foreign Languages students at Universidad del Valle. Students from all of the English courses and some students that were not taking the English course anymore were presented with a survey where they had to distinguish four sentences containing AAVE features. In a Likert scale, they had to rate the dialect on its proximity to standard English and the speakers on personality and demographic characteristics. According to the results, students were not able to recognize the dialect and they see it as different to the standard. When it comes to their opinions about the speakers it was found that they are mostly neutral to positive although it was noted that students in the lowest levels are more likely to give negative ratings.

Keywords: Foreign Languages students, language attitudes, African American Vernacular English.

Resumen

El propósito del presente estudio es saber qué percepciones tienen los estudiantes de la Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras sobre el dialecto AAVE (African American Vernacular English) y sobre sus hablantes. Se les presentó a estudiantes de todos los niveles de inglés y a algunos que ya habían terminado de tomar el curso una encuesta donde debían distinguir cuatro oraciones con características del dialecto AAVE. En una escala de Likert, tuvieron que clasificar el dialecto respecto a su proximidad al inglés estándar y a los hablantes en cuanto a rasgos demográficos y de personalidad. Según los resultados, los estudiantes no reconocen el dialecto y lo ven distinto al estándar. En cuanto a sus opiniones sobre los hablantes se encontró que estas son por lo general de neutras a positivas aunque los estudiantes en los niveles más bajos tienden más a dar calificaciones negativas.

Palabras clave: Estudiantes de Lenguas Extranjeras, actitud lingüística, Inglés vernáculo afroamericano.

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INTRODUCTION

In the field of linguistics, research about language attitudes focused primarily on the English language. According to Carrie (2017), the limitations of the first studies rely on the fact that they do not take into account the complexity of various components of attitudes. Besides, the features of language varieties “are often portrayed as uniform and unchanging” (p. 427). Recent research shows interest in studying attitudes towards different language varieties not only by native and second language speakers but also foreign language learners.

Castelan, Takai and Rodríguez (2006) say that most studies have focused on reactions towards language accents throughout the world. According to Ryan *et al* (1984 cited in Castalan *et al*), people who speak a standard language and have a standard accent “tend to be rated highly on traits related to competence, intelligence and social status, whereas ‘non-standard’ accented speakers are evaluated less favourably along these same dimensions, even by listeners who themselves speak with a non-standard accent.” (p. 444)

The initial impressions that we have of others, and our attitude toward the way they speak, determine our judgment and the relationships we establish with them. In the field of ELT, language variety awareness has been considered an important part of language teaching. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, one of the competences students should develop is the existential competence (attitudes, motivation, values, beliefs, cognitive styles, and personality factors). Learners need to understand that learning a language involves communication with speakers from different backgrounds, accents and dialects. They need to know that language varieties are not incorrect ways of speaking; they need to develop sensibility and value all varieties for their differences since these respond to their unique cultures.

In my experience as a foreign language learner in a teaching program, I have not had enough exposure to English language varieties. One of the English varieties I am interested in is African American Vernacular English (AAVE), formerly known as Black English Vernacular or Vernacular Black English. In order to know in-service English teachers’ familiarity with AAVE and identify their attitudes toward this English variety, it is important to understand how students perceive speakers of English in relation to the language variety. The purpose of

the current study, therefore, is to describe the knowledge students have about AAVE features, their perception of speakers and how students value this as part of the language education program they study.

1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Foreign language learning is a process where internal and external elements to language conflate for the attainment of proficiency. Furthermore, when it comes to formal language learning, the dialectal diversity of the target language is not examined in depth in the classroom. This may happen due to the stigma linked to anything that deviates from the prescriptive standard model of the language.

Nevertheless, disregarding the varieties of a language helps consolidate the idea that there is just one correct way to speak it, and in turn disregards the cultural richness of the people that speak the language. Besides, language varieties do not only stay within the communities where they originate but also enter the daily language of people of different cultural or social backgrounds. This is the case of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) which has largely influenced the speech of Americans as per Luu (2020), especially the slang of American youth, through music, tv shows, movies, one-on-one interactions and social media. Therefore, ignoring the existence of this variety in the EFL classrooms does not only perpetuate biased ideas about so-called minority communities but can also lead English learners to confusion and misunderstandings when they are placed in authentic settings.

One of the reasons that may deter teachers from referring to AAVE in EFL courses is the fact that it is upheld as a dialect with low prestige by some native speakers. In fact, as Lee (1994) exposes, many young speakers of AAVE have received classes of Standard American English at school so that their experience at school can be satisfactory enough. Thus, it is not surprising that students of EFL stigmatize it and do not associate appropriate learning of English with this variant. Nonetheless, denying AAVE as a valid dialect of English neglects an important part of the cultural backstory and diversity of the United States.

Students of Licenciatura in Foreign Languages are unaware of the origins of AAVE and its incidence in American colloquial language and slang; therefore, the perception they have of this variety relies heavily on how it is compared to Standard American English. Because of this, students think of AAVE as “bad English” and, as a result, have a negative image of the speakers of this dialect. Moreover, it can be said that students of Licenciatura in Foreign

Languages have low levels of intercultural sensitivity in relation to AAVE and its speakers. Hence, these students need to learn more about the history of the dialect and its influence on American English nowadays in regards to two points. First, in order to help their future students understand when encountering this variant in opposition to the variant taught in the classroom. Second, in order to teach their students how different and diverse the English language and its speakers can be and help them learn to respect these differences. Then, due to the fact that Licenciatura in Foreign Languages students do not have firsthand experience with American culture, nor are they engaged in courses with a heavy load of cultural education, the question about their perception of such a controversial but popular dialect arises.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.1 General Objective

Explore the attitude of Licenciatura in Foreign Languages students concerning African American Vernacular English as a dialect of English and of its speakers.

2.2. Specific Objectives

- Determine the level of comprehension of AAVE by students of Licenciatura in Foreign Languages.
- Identify the perception of Licenciatura in Foreign Languages students about AAVE as a dialect.
- Describe how interculturally sensitive students are in regard to AAVE speakers.

3. JUSTIFICATION

As proficient English speakers and future teachers of the language, students of Licenciatura in Foreign Languages are required to understand the importance of this dialect in relation to three main points. First, as students of the Licenciatura make use of their second and consequent languages the need to develop their intercultural sensitivity increases; this is because knowing another language enables them to interact with people with different perspectives and see the world with a more open mind.

Second, since students of the Licenciatura will be teachers themselves, they will be questioned by their students in regards to the differences of the language they encounter in media or social networks that contrast what they learn in the classroom. Finally, as teachers with a broader perspective of the world, Licenciatura students will have the opportunity to promote tolerance and respect for others in the language learning context.

Furthermore, this type of study gives the program an opportunity to evaluate the importance given to dialectal variety in its curriculum and what idea of language correctness is imparted in the students. Moreover, on a larger scale, this study could spark more interest in language attitudes towards dialects from different ethnic or social backgrounds in Colombia, and the repercussions on social interaction.

4. PRECEDING STUDIES

In search of studies on the perception of EFL learners on varieties of the language, some studies touching on dialect and language perception in different countries were found. The nine studies were organized taking into account the similarities in their subject matter. Hence, the first two studies touch on the perception of native and non-native speakers about African American Vernacular English and its speakers. The two following studies have as a subject language learners and their language attitudes and perceptions (English learners' perception on different British English varieties; language attitudes of German learners towards Germany, its culture and its people). The next three studies will touch on the perception of native and non-native English and Luxembourgish speakers about varieties different from the standard in these languages. Afterwards, the next studies will cover the perception and attitudes of native speakers towards their own and other dialects or languages (native Spanish speakers' perceptions and attitudes towards their dialect and other varieties of Spanish; Nasa students and teachers and their attitude towards Nasa Yuwe and Spanish).

4.1 Non-native and native speakers attitudes towards AAVE

Castelan, Takai & Rodríguez (2006) investigated the attitude towards African American Vernacular English (AAVE) by Japanese people. Since it was assumed that Japan had assimilated the racial hierarchy concept of the United States, the objective was to find out the status and attractiveness ratings AAVE speakers would receive in comparison to Mainstream United States English (MUSE) speakers. Therefore, 113 undergraduate students (90 women, 22 men and 1 not specified) from two Japanese universities participated in this study. The experiment was done with a verbal guise design where the students had to listen to four AAVE speakers (two female and two male) and four speakers of MUSE (two female and two male) recite a passage of a children's story. After listening to the recordings, students had to answer a questionnaire regarding characteristics such as "intelligent-unintelligent", "rich-poor", "upper class-lower class", "educated-uneducated" in terms of status; then, "kind-unkind", "sweet-sour", "likeable-unlikeable", "friendly-unfriendly" in terms of attractiveness. Later, they had to rate their competence in English on a 12-item scale, their knowledge and familiarity with AAVE.

Finally, the results showed that the AAVE male speakers were rated as the least attractive of all speakers; meanwhile, the AAVE female speakers were rated as equally attractive as the MUSE female speakers and more attractive than the MUSE male speakers. Then, in terms of status the AAVE male speakers were again rated last for both groups and AAVE female speakers were rated behind MUSE male and female speakers. As a result, it was concluded that not only racial beliefs but also attitudes towards AAVE held in the United States have permeated the Japanese mindset.

Consequently, **Rodríguez, Castelan & Rich** (2004) sought to find out if the strength of a speaker's accent, depending on the number of AAVE phonological features displayed, would influence how they would be judged by listeners. Thus, six female native speakers were presented depicting three accent conditions (strong AAVE, moderate AAVE and Mainstream U.S English (MUSE)) while reading a definition of the term "achievement motivation". One of the speakers exhibited 12 AAVE phonological features, another one exhibited 11 phonological features and the other two AAVE speakers exhibited 7 phonological features. Besides, the participants of the study were 283 undergraduate students from a West coast university: 126 Anglo-Americans, 17 African-Americans, 59 Hispanics, 75 Asian-Americans, and 6 others who did not state. The participants were grouped as "ethnic majority" (Anglo-Americans), and "ethnic minority" (the other ethnicities). Subsequently, participants had to evaluate the speakers in terms of status ("intelligent-unintelligent", "rich-poor", "upper class-lower class", "educated-uneducated), and attractiveness ("kind-unkind", "sweet-sour", "likeable-unlikeable", "friendly-unfriendly").

The results demonstrated that the MUSE speakers received the best ratings in both the status and attractiveness items. Therefore, MUSE speakers were rated as more status-possessing and more attractive than moderate AAVE speakers; in turn, moderate AAVE speakers were rated as more status-possessing and more attractive than strong AAVE speakers. Moreover, it was found that "ethnic minority" listeners gave better ratings to the AAVE speakers than the "ethnic majority" listeners. All in all, the hypothesis that the degree of AAVE used by speakers influences the judgments listeners make about them was proven to be true. Besides, it was concluded that the downgrading of AAVE was linear regarding the phonological features presented and that both dominant and non-dominant ethnic groups give preference to the standard variety.

4.2. Perceptions and attitudes of language learners towards target language speakers and culture

First, Tévar (2014) aimed to find out the perception of Spanish speakers towards some dialectal variations of British English. The study was carried out on two groups of B2-C1 level English learners. The first one was the pilot group which were students from Escuela Oficial de Idiomas. It was made up of 12 students ranging in ages between 20 to 55 years old; also, they were in their last year of studies of the language and were well versed in Anglo-Saxon culture. The second group was composed of 60 second year English philology students from Universidad Complutense de Madrid whose ages were not specified. The pilot experiment took place in the classroom where the group was presented with recordings of the same person speaking in four varieties of British English: London Estuary, Cockney English, Scottish English and Received Pronunciation English; afterwards, they had to answer a questionnaire. The second group was asked to do the same activity but at home as an assignment for their class “English varieties”. The questionnaire had 4 quantitative indirect questions and 1 qualitative direct question. The first four questions were about students’ attitudes towards the four accents in terms of level of studies, type of house, type of job and suitability of the speaker to teach English. The last one was done to allow students to write down their subjective perceptions of the accents.

The results of this study showed that all of the participants agreed upon the Received Pronunciation English speaker as having a high level of education; in fact, most placed him in the Ph.D level. Meanwhile for the Scottish English dialect most of the participants in the first group considered this speaker did not surpass elementary education or even considered him to be illiterate. The second group, although in lower numbers, also chose this speaker as one with a low level of education. Regarding Cockney English, both groups had good impressions towards the speaker of this variety; most considered his education level corresponded to graduate or undergraduate education with only a very low percentage of the second group placing him in the illiterate category. Then, the London Estuary variant speaker was also placed as educated by most of the participants with a little higher percentage for the pilot group over Cockney English.

Also, most of the participants in both groups considered the Received pronunciation speaker to be in the category of large owner occupied but none considered him to live in a council association rented house or homeless. Contrarily, the Scottish dialect speaker was rated for most in both groups as an inhabitant of a council association rented house and in lower percentages as a council housing association owner; although in small percentages this speaker was rated as homeless in both groups. Additionally, the Cockney English speaker was rated by most in the pilot group to be living in a private rented house and at worst to be living in a council association owner occupied; none in this group rated him as homeless. Besides, the second group placed this speaker as an inhabitant of a private rented house for the most part followed as a council association owned or rented occupied inhabitant and very few rated him as homeless. Furthermore, the Estuary English speaker received the highest rating as a private rented house resident in both groups, especially in the pilot one; also no one in the pilot group rated him as homeless. In the second group the ratings that followed were average sized occupied and council association rented housing; a very small percentage of participants placed him in the homeless category.

Finally, the question regarding the appropriateness of the speakers as EFL teachers yielded the following results. Once again Received Pronunciation received the most positive ratings in both groups being rated as “absolutely appropriate” for teaching by most of the participants and zero ratings for “completely unsuitable”. Consequently, the Scottish English dialect also had consistent ratings as the lowest rated dialect since most of the participants in both groups rated it as “not appropriate” for the EFL classroom followed by “completely unsuitable” or “neutral” ratings. Then, Cockney English received only “neutral” and “appropriate” ratings by the pilot group while it received a majority of “neutral” and “not appropriate” ratings by the second group. Lastly, Estuary English was rated mostly as “appropriate” and “neutral” by both groups. In the pilot group a small percentage considered it to be “absolutely appropriate” and no one considered it to be “not appropriate” or “completely unsuitable”; meanwhile in the second group a small percentage considered it to be “not appropriate” and even less “completely unsuitable”.

All in all, the results demonstrated that Spanish EFL speakers in this study considered Received Pronunciation English as the variety of higher status despite its declining reputation among British English speakers. Furthermore, Cockney English has also a good reputation among these students despite not having it among the native speakers of Great Britain.

Second, **Dissinger** (2010) aimed to discover the perceptions towards the German language and German people by students of a Colombian public university. Consequently, the study was done with four groups of German I in the span of four years. Also, except for two students of German origin, all of the participants were Colombian. The groups were usually of 22 to 36 students within the 15 to 24 age range. Hence, in order to collect the data participants had to answer a questionnaire at the beginning of the course and another at the end of it. The first questionnaire had five questions inquiring about what they thought the German language was like and what they knew about it; why they decided to study German; what they knew about Germany and its culture; what they considered as typically German and what they considered to be a stereotypical German person. Then, at the end of the course the students had to answer a questionnaire with three questions which were: “After taking this course, what is the German language like for you?”; “After taking this course, how do you see Germany and its culture?”; “After taking this course, how would you define a German person?”

Therefore, due to the information being collected through open-ended questions, the most significant elements in every answer were grouped together with similar elements from the different questionnaires. For this reason, the answers turned out to be organized by topics from most to least mentioned. Then, the results revealed that most of the students considered German to be a difficult language, followed by “strong”, “angry-explosive”, “interesting” and “of difficult pronunciation” as the other descriptions. Besides, the answers to why they decided to study the language were in order “interesting”, “good third language to learn”, “academic or touristic trip”, “interest in academia and work”, “interest in the culture and country”. Also, when asked about what they knew about Germany and its culture, students answers were that “it had two world wars”, “it has/had many intellectuals and important scientists”, “important industry and technology”, “Hitler-National Socialism and the Berlin wall”, “beer and sausages”, “lots of culture”, “music”, “automotive industry”, “it is a world economic power”, “architecture”, “design”, “football”, “the (German) flag” and “good quality of life”. Afterwards, the answers to what was typically German were “beer”, “luxury cars”, “sausages”, “football” and “the Volkswagen beetle”. Finally, to answer what the stereotypically German is like the most answered description was “organized”, followed by “disciplined”, “serious”, “intelligent”, “punctual”, “strong character”, “racist”, “strict”, “rigid”, “tall”, “cold”, “white”, “attractive”, “cultured”, “blond”, and “rational”.

Eventually, the answers to the second questionnaire were also exposed. Once again the most significant elements were grouped together and they were organized as topics from most to least mentioned by the students. These questions were adjusted since some of the inquiries in the first questionnaire were not relevant or could be influenced by what was done in the course. Then, to the question “After taking this course, what is the German language like for you?”, the most repeated answer was “not so typical to learn”, followed by “you have to devote time and discipline”, “I like it more now”, “it is not so difficult to pronounce”, “interesting”, “it is just like/similar to English”, “it is not as strong as I thought it was”, “difficult to pronounce”, “musical and attractive”, “easier than English” and “strong”. These answers displayed a shift in the students’ perception. Now after taking the course they saw the language as less difficult and found it more appealing. Besides, the answers to how they saw Germany and its culture after taking the course were “a country to visit (I would like to go to Germany)”, “the course has increased my interest for the culture and the country”, “I learned many things about its history”, “I haven’t changed my mind about the country and its culture, I just know more”, “nice place”, “very interesting”, and “a thriving country”. Lastly, the third question “After taking this course, how would you define a German person?” was answered as “now I think they’re kind and pleasant”, “although I don’t know any I think they’re racist”, “I don’t think they’re cold”, “intelligent”, “serious and strict”, “disciplined”, “they respect cultural diversity”, “strong character”, “they don’t like losing”, “different” and “cold”.

In conclusion, the German I class was essential in leading students to a deeper understanding of Germany and its culture. Even though some of those perceptions were not changed, now there was a larger range of opinions when it came to the language, what represented the country and the culture at the end of the course. Also, there was overall a positive attitude towards Germans although some negative stereotypes were still held.

4.3. Perception of native and non-native speakers about different varieties of a language

First of all, **Gold** (2015) studies the perception of native and non-native English speakers towards Southern American English and how much this variety interferes in the listening comprehension of both groups of speakers. 20 undergraduate and graduate students from the Pacific islands between 20 and 30 years old participated in this study; 10 of the students were native English speakers and 10 were non-native English speakers. First, the participants had

to complete a questionnaire pertaining personal details and information about other English speaking areas they had previously visited or lived in. Then, in order to test the listening comprehension of the students, the author used two passages of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*; the first one being read in a Southern accent and the second one in Standard American accent. The students had to answer seven comprehension questions for each passage; they had two minutes to read the questions for each passage before listening to the audio. Finally, after the listening test, participants answered an opinion survey on each speaker's understandability, friendliness, education level, socio-economic level, and appearance.

Consequently, the results of the study were as follows. The Southern dialect speaker was rated friendly by seven of the ten non-native English speakers while it was rated friendly by only three of the native speakers. Conversely, when it came to a high level of education and good appearance it was chosen only once by a non-native English speaker and zero times by the native English speakers. Furthermore, both the non-native and native English speakers voted zero times for this dialect in terms of high socio-economic level and understandability.

Moreover, the results were that 97.14% of the native speakers could answer correctly to the questions of the passage in the Southern dialect, meanwhile only 34.29% of non-native speakers could answer them correctly. Additionally, 98.57% of the native speakers could answer correctly to the questions of the passage in Standard American dialect and 52.86% of non-native speakers could answer correctly. Then, the study evidenced that there was a correlation between the listening comprehension of the learners and their familiarity with the dialect heard.

Additionally, **Neises** (2013) conducted a study seeking to know what attitudes were held in regard to eight varieties of Luxembourgish (Uelzechtdall, Minetter, Süd-Éislécker, Miseler, Weeltzer, Atertdauler, Eechternoacher and Cliärrwer) by native and non-native speakers of the language. The participants were men and women belonging to two age groups: the first one of people between 18 to 35 years old and the second one of people between 45 to 65 years old. 40 of the participants were native speakers and 20 non-native speakers of the language; the disparity in number between the two groups was due to the unwillingness of more non-native speakers to participate in the study. Furthermore, the information was collected through a survey that had to be answered online by the participants. Thus, the questions posed were aimed

at finding out about the participants' tolerance towards dialects different from their own, their awareness of different varieties of Luxembourgish, and how they ranked the different varieties.

Therefore, the results found in the study were as follows. Regarding dialect tolerance it was found that the most tolerant group towards other varieties were the older native speakers of Luxembourgish followed by the younger native speakers. However, the difference between the native speakers and non-native speakers' rating was of minimum significance. Besides, in order to know the participants' awareness of several varieties they were asked to place these in a map of the country. It was found that all of the varieties used in the study were mentioned by them; in total, 29 varieties were placed all over the map except for the center of the country. Finally, in order to know the perception of the participants about the different varieties, they had to rank the dialects in terms of similarity to their own dialect, attractiveness, friendliness, intelligence, social status, correctness, modernity and traditionality. Consequently, before ranking the dialects, participants had to answer how they thought each variety differed from other varieties after listening to a recording of them. Out of the eight varieties studied the Uelzechtdall dialect was the one chosen as standard due to its lack of linguistic features according to the participants. Subsequently, when asked about the similarity between the other varieties and their own, Uelzechtdall was again the number one selection in both groups, especially among the native speakers. Furthermore, the same variety had the highest rankings for attractiveness, friendliness, intelligence, social status, correctness, modernity criteria, while Cliärrwer had the lowest one. Nonetheless, for the traditionality category Cliärrwer got the highest score and Uelzechtdall the lowest one. Thus, the researcher concluded that the closer a variety is to the standard the higher it is perceived in terms of correctness, and also in terms of emotional and social traits.

The third study in this category also focuses on perceptions but only by native speakers of English. **Clopper, Wagner and Pate** (2014) gave an overview of different studies regarding the perception of five and six-year old children about different dialects including their own. Then, they focused on two experiments. The first one took place at a science museum in central Ohio. This experiment aimed to find out if children could categorize speakers according to their dialect. The dialects presented were the Ohio variety of Midland American English for the home dialect; the Lancashire variety of British English for the regional dialect, and the Maharashtrian variety of Indian English for the second language dialect. In this experiment

participated 36 children were equally divided among the pairs of speech samples displayed. The samples were of two different dialects of English (home dialect vs. a regional dialect, home dialect vs. a second-language dialect, or a regional dialect vs. second-language dialect).

First, the participants were exposed to a comprehension trial task in which they listened to speakers of other dialects identifying and choosing the right picture from a set of four pictures. The purpose of this was to help the children get familiarized with a dialect different from their own. Afterwards, the participants in the groups of home dialect vs regional dialect, and home dialect vs second-language dialect listened to six samples; meanwhile the participants in the group of regional dialect vs second language dialect listened to only one sample. Second, the participants were trained to identify group membership by listening to two sentences from each dialect. Two puppets, one purple and one green, were used to represent each dialect. The participants were told they would hear what the puppet of each color sounded like and they heard the recorded sentence while seeing the corresponding puppet. Later, to finally get the children to categorize the dialects the researchers told them some of the puppets had gotten lost in the computer. Therefore, they had to put the puppets in their respective families, green or purple.

Finally, the results indicated that the participants performed above chance levels when it came to comprehension of home vs regional dialect, regional vs second language dialect and home vs second language dialect. Then, in terms of categorization the participants did better than expected when categorizing the home vs second language condition than the other two. However, the difference between the dialects in the home vs regional condition and the regional vs second language condition was not significant. Consequently, it was concluded that the regional dialect was perceived as an intermediate between the home and second language dialect by the participants.

The second experiment focused on the implicit knowledge of children about the characteristics of specific dialectal groups. The location chosen was the same science museum in Ohio and the number of participants was 36. First, the children went through a practice trial where they saw the pictures of a cow and a child and heard an audio file of a cow mooing and a child saying hello; therefore, they had to choose what picture belonged to the subject emitting the corresponding sound. Later on, for the procedure participants were exposed to both visual and auditory stimuli. On the one hand, the auditory stimuli was the same one used in the

categorization task in the first experiment. On the other hand, the visual stimuli consisted of showing participants a pair of pictures portraying houses and clothing familiar and unfamiliar to the children's culture. Moreover, six control pictures of a woman's face and the back of her head were used. Then, in 18 trials, the pictures were presented so that there would not be an overlap of the same dialects or the same pictures one after another. Subsequently, in each trial the children listened to an audio file and had to choose between two pictures.

The results revealed that the participants chose the familiar items (the clothing and housing pictures) more for the Home dialect in the Home dialect vs Second language condition and the Regional dialect in the Regional vs Second language condition. Conversely, in the Home vs Regional dialect condition the familiar items were chosen almost as frequently for both dialects. Also, when analyzing the control items (face vs back) it was found that children did not correlate dialect information with the orientation of the subjects' head; this outcome was observed as the participants not using dialect information in irrelevant contexts.

In summary, the second experiment brought to light the children's ability to make dialectal distinctions more effectively than the first experiment. In this experiment the biggest difference was found in the Regional vs Second language dialect condition contrary to the first experiment. Consequently, there was a bigger distance between the Second language dialect and the other two although the Home and Regional dialects were still difficult to distinguish for the participants.

4.4. Native speakers' attitudes towards their own variety or language

First, **Cestero and Paredes** (2018) sought to find out the perceptions, beliefs and attitudes of North-central Spanish university students towards their dialectal variety and other normative Spanish varieties. This study was part of the "Project for the study of beliefs and attitudes towards the varieties of Spanish in the 21st century (PRECAVES XXI)". The objective of this project is to document the assessments of subjects who gave an account on their perceptions and attitudes. Therefore, the participants were 204 students between 18 and 34 years old. 136 of the participants had no previous knowledge about the varieties of Spanish since 107 of them were starting their studies in Philology; meanwhile, 29 of the participants were students of other programs. The other 68 students were finishing their studies in Philology or were pursuing a Master's degree in Spanish language teaching; these participants did have knowledge about geolectal variation. Furthermore, the methodology used encompassed the

matched-guise technique and participants had to evaluate an oral speech and the reading of a text. Then, the goal of the study was to specifically answer three things: whether the studied subjects considered any variety of Spanish to be more prestigious, the value these subjects gave to their own variety and to what extent the subjects identified and valued the other varieties of Spanish.

Thus, the results displayed that the majority of the students considered there was a hierarchy among the varieties of Spanish and the one from Castilla was the preferred dialect; conversely, one out of four participants answered that all of the varieties were in equal standing. Moreover, only four people answered that the best varieties were found in Latin America. Consequently, those who had previous knowledge about dialectal variation were more likely to find all varieties to be equal.

Subsequently, results about the perception of their own dialect were as follows. Most of the students properly identified the variety presented as the North-central one and recognized it as their own. Then, concerning the direct evaluation it was found that this dialect received a general positive assessment. On the one hand, the aspects highlighted by the participants were clarity, good pronunciation, correction, closeness and the use of certain phonemes; on the other hand, monotony, slowness, the pronunciation of some consonants and the elision of final consonants were mentioned as negative aspects of the variety. There was little difference in the average assessment of the students with awareness of dialectal variety and those starting their formal education in Philology; also, although not for a large margin, students from other programs had the highest average assessment. Additionally, when it came to the indirect evaluation, most of the participants gave high ratings for the categories of job, salary and educational level of the person they were listening to. Besides, the personal characteristics of the speakers were very highly rated taking into account intelligence, friendliness, proximity and education. In this case the gap in the average assessment between people with dialectal variety knowledge and without it is even closer, though, the latter group gave slightly higher ratings to the speakers.

Then, considering the indirect evaluation of the zone where the dialect was presumed to be the following was found. On the one hand, both men and women rated the North-central region as very pretty, advanced, familiar and fun. On the other hand, the participants with knowledge

about varieties gave the higher ratings although the difference with the students without dialectal variety knowledge was not large.

Lastly, for the recognition of other varieties of Spanish it was concluded that the participants could identify them one out of two times. Furthermore, only those with formal education on dialects managed to answer correctly more than fifty percent of the time; nonetheless, those with teaching training made the most mistakes in this area. Specifically, the Río de la Plata dialect was identified the most followed by the Andalucian, Canarian, Andean, Mexican, Caribbean and Chilean varieties. Nonetheless, the Río de la Plata variety received the highest rating for prestige followed by the Canarian, Mexican, Chilean, Caribbean, Andalucian and Andean ones although with little differences. Then, taking into account possible job, salary and level of education of the speaker they heard, from highest to lowest were the Canarian, Chilean, Río de la Plata, Caribbean, Mexican, Andean and Andalucian dialect. Afterwards, evaluating the speakers by the psychological characteristics of intelligence, friendliness, education and proximity the highest to lowest rated were Canarian, Río de la Plata, Caribbean, Mexican, Chilean, Andalucian and Andean. Finally, when confronting the beliefs about the countries/regions presented and their cultures, the ratings were favorable for all of them; the Canarian dialect received the most ratings, followed by the Andalucian, Mexican, Río de la Plata, Chilean, Caribbean and Andean varieties.

To sum up, the students from the North-central area of Spain believe not all of the varieties of Spanish to be the same and consider the variety from Castilla to be the most prestigious one. However, this belief is mostly held by students with no education on dialectal variability and less found among students with formal education on the subject. Besides, the perception of their own dialect is vastly positive taking into account how it is seen as the normative variety of Spanish. Moreover, the participants have a positive perception of the other varieties of Spanish presented and have ease in recognizing them the higher knowledge is about dialect variation.

Furthermore, **Barreiro and Girón** (2018) researched about the language attitude of students and teachers from Resguardo de Jambaló about Nasa Yuwe, their native language. The study was done in two schools, Centro Rural Mixto de San Antonio for elementary education and Centro Educativo Agro-Cultural de Paletón for secondary education. Then, the data collection

was carried out through interviews to the students and teachers; the first part had 14 questions for the students and the second part 19 questions for the teachers. Besides, the teachers themselves picked the students that would participate in the interviews taking into account the level of Spanish and how outgoing they were. The interviews with the students were done in groups meanwhile the teachers were interviewed individually. The questions proposed had an objective to find out about their use of the languages (Spanish and Nasa Yuwe), their type of bilingualism, the attitude towards both languages, and also the frequency of use and importance of the languages. Therefore, three or four students were chosen per grade in Centro Rural Mixto de San Antonio and in total 21 people were interviewed counting the teachers.

The results for the children in “transición” demonstrated that they spoke and understood Nasa Yuwe perfectly but they had difficulties speaking Spanish since Nasa Yuwe is the prevalent language at home. Also, when asked if they liked speaking Nasa Yuwe students seemed not to understand and the help of a teacher that speaks Nasa Yuwe was needed. The Spanish speaking teachers were asked about the students’ use of the languages. Thus, these answered that students mostly used Nasa Yuwe among them and tried to speak Spanish to the teachers since the latter do not understand much Nasa Yuwe; they do this by using short words or signs. Moreover, although the teachers teach these students some Spanish they do not want it to take over their use of Nasa Yuwe; in fact, the teachers have demanded for more teachers who speak Nasa Yuwe in the school. Then, the students in first grade manifested use of Nasa Yuwe both at home with their parents and at school with their classmates and even with their teacher. Even though they do not speak Spanish as much as Nasa Yuwe, they like both since the former is instilled at school and the latter is their own language. The teachers said they respect the use of Nasa Yuwe, so the students who speak Spanish help the non-Nasa Yuwe speaking teachers to understand and they also help their classmates understand what is said in Spanish. Meanwhile, the Nasa Yuwe teacher tries to speak in both languages. Also, the results for the second grade showed that the students spoke both Nasa Yuwe and Spanish, though one student spoke better Nasa Yuwe than Spanish. Those who spoke both languages used both Spanish and Nasa Yuwe at home; the latter was also used at school with classmates. Moreover, the children that have been able to go out of the rural settlement have a better proficiency of Spanish in comparison to those who have not and understand more than they can speak. Although they did not explain why, the students affirmed that they liked speaking in Nasa Yuwe. Later, it was found that most of the students in the third grade could speak Nasa Yuwe except one of them. The last student has only been acquainted with Nasa Yuwe at school although his family speaks the language.

Also, according to the teacher many parents had the tendency to speak Spanish at home since they are not aware of the consequences of not speaking their own language. Hence, the students have learned Nasa Yuwe at school and have more proficiency in this language than Spanish. Consequently, all four grade students were also found to speak and understand Nasa Yuwe. Only one student could not speak Spanish since her mother could not speak the language either; however, she has been learning it little by little at school. There was also a student who had to learn Nasa Yuwe at school since he had lived in Cali and other towns before; he said he liked Nasa Yuwe because it was part of his culture and he speaks both languages with his family. Furthermore, all interviewed students from fifth grade spoke both languages fluently; however, they had better proficiency in Nasa Yuwe since they learned this language at home. The parents of these participants saw importance in their children learning both languages.

The results found in the sixth grade of Centro Educativo Agro-Cultural de Paletón demonstrated that most of the students do not speak Nasa Yuwe. These students can only say some words in Nasa Yuwe and are used to speaking Spanish both at home and at school. Meanwhile, only two students can speak both Spanish and Nasa Yuwe and the latter is only used at home and at school with classmates that can answer them in the language. Also, it was found that out of the six seventh graders interviewed two can understand Nasa Yuwe and communicate with a few words, two do not understand the language nor can they speak it, and two students speak Spanish and Nasa Yuwe. The last two students are used to Nasa Yuwe being spoken at home, meanwhile they have to speak in Spanish at school since most of their classmates speak this language. Afterwards, the interview with students from eighth grade evidenced that some of them can speak Nasa Yuwe and Spanish while others have a minimum knowledge of Nasa Yuwe. Moreover, students from ninth grade were found to only speak Spanish and have difficulty speaking Nasa Yuwe; although this language is spoken by their families it has not been transmitted to the newer generations. Nonetheless, three of the seven students that were interviewed speak Nasa Yuwe and Spanish perfectly; they learned Nasa Yuwe from their parents or grandparents and use it to communicate and tell stories about Nasa culture. Then, in tenth grade several of the students spoke Spanish and only a few words of Nasa Yuwe since they were not taught the latter language. Meanwhile, one of the students spoke very well Spanish and Nasa Yuwe since Nasa Yuwe was frequently used by the family. All of the students declared it was important to protect the use of Nasa Yuwe since it is heritage from their ancestors and it differentiates them from others.

Lastly, out of the five teachers interviewed, four of them belong to the Nasa community and one of them is from Popayán. Besides, three of the teachers have very basic knowledge of Nasa Yuwe despite being part of the community; meanwhile, the teacher from Popayán does not know any Nasa Yuwe. These teachers use Spanish and rely on Nasa/Spanish speaking students in class. Furthermore, one of the teachers has Nasa Yuwe as his first language and teaches half of the class in Spanish and half of the class in Nasa Yuwe. The teachers listed focus on technology, a passive attitude towards the language, lack of Nasa Yuwe speaking teachers and lack of identity as some of the reasons why the language is not more widely spoken by students. Nonetheless, all of the teachers agreed on Nasa Yuwe being an important part of the community's culture and identity; therefore, they consider it must be taught both at school and at home.

All in all, it was concluded that there is a general positive attitude towards Nasa Yuwe by the students and teachers participating in the study since this is part of their identity as Nasa people, it differentiates them from the rest of society and it makes part of their ancestral heritage that they cannot allow to disappear. Also, although most of the students do not speak Nasa Yuwe, they are interested in learning about it in order to communicate with their classmates since they also feel left out when they do not understand those who speak the language. Moreover, the reasons that interfere in the frequent use of Nasa Yuwe among them are few teachers who speak the language; less importance given to the language by the parents who see Spanish as more prestigious; not enough support for the schools to teach the language and the lack of identity, sense of belonging and lack of cultural value by parents.

4.5. Assessment of preceding studies

The appropriateness of all of this research in regards to the present study is elaborated next. Studies like those done by Tévar, Neises and Gold evidence how students or non-native speakers of a language tend to associate the best psychological and socioeconomic characteristics with the dialects they deem to be closer to the standard. Therefore, these are the dialects that students consider to be most suitable to be exposed to in their foreign language classes. This is relevant to this research since the dialect studied is far from the standard variety and it is of interest to know if the participants find non-standard dialects to be relevant for the language classes.

Besides, proximity plays a part in the preference for a variety but also in having more moderate perceptions towards different varieties. This was revealed in the research done with native speakers of Cestero and Paredes. Although one's own dialect was held in high regard, the knowledge of other varieties and dialect variability was fundamental for a more nuanced perception of other dialects. Thus, since the subjects of the present study are students of Licenciatura in Foreign Languages, it is important to find out how much their training has shaped their judgment on dialectal differences.

Consequently, the aforementioned resonates with the results in Dissinger's study where it was found that the language course had an incidence on students' perception of the country, people and language. Also, both studies look into the reasons why these students hold certain ideas about the dialect or language investigated and the people that speak it.

Furthermore, studies pertaining native speakers' attitudes and perceptions help to contrast non-native/learners' attitudes with those of native speakers. Clopper, Wagner and Pate's research demonstrates how even with children, proximity is important in the comprehension and perception of a variety. However, Barreiro and Girón's study shows how the influence of the standard language can become a threat to the local language and even fracture the togetherness of a community. This proves how the standard variety, or language in this case, overpowers other varieties even in environments where the attitude towards their own is positive.

Taking into account that the questionnaire will be one of the instruments used for this research, Tévar, Gold and Neises investigations serve as models when inquiring about the participants' perception towards the dialect speakers. That is because of the use of criteria that examines speakers in terms of psychological and socioeconomic traits. Furthermore, the use of individual interviews by Barreiro and Girón is aligned with the use of a qualitative instrument (focus group) in this research.

Finally, the research pertaining to AAVE (Castelan, Takai & Rodríguez; Rodríguez, Castelan & Rich) serves as support for this project's objectives. On the one hand, these studies shed light on the status that AAVE holds among both native and non-native English speakers. In this

regard, it is remarkable how non-native speakers of a language can be influenced by the diffusion of a specific variety and the judgements they make about native speakers who do not speak it. On the other hand, it is of interest to see how ethnic identity plays a role in the attitudes towards AAVE even among native English speakers.

5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

For the study of this subject there are some relevant concepts to explore, such as: variety, dialect, African American Vernacular English (AAVE), language attitude, and intercultural sensitivity.

5.1. Variety and dialect

According to Hudson (1996) the term **variety** is a broad term that refers to the displays of language in its bigger sense. The variety encompasses a set of linguistic items which include the languages spoken by a people, dialects or personal styles. Meanwhile, “a **dialect** is the variety of language of a single homogenous speech community.” (Malmstrom & Ashley, 1963). Therefore, when speech communities have different dialects but can still understand each other it can be said that they share the same language; in other words, a language is made up of different dialects. Furthermore, these authors remark that there are three aspects in which dialects differ from each other: pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar.

Concerning the **vernacular** dialect, Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (1998) describe it as the antithesis to standard varieties in a given area. Hence, the vernacular dialect is typified not only because of its contraposition to the mainstream but also because of the diversity it sustains depending on social or regional factors. Moreover, another point of contrast between the standard and vernacular varieties lies on the prestige that their speakers behold; the standard dialect holds the privilege of being spoken by the groups with higher status and the vernacular dialects are spoken by groups with lower status making them more undesirable for non-vernacular speakers.

5.2. Language and culture and varieties of language

Language is a complex and extensive concept whose nature has been better understood in relation to other factors. Consequently, it is the purpose of this section to look further into the relationship between language and culture, and find out how they impact each other. One of the ways in which the nature of language has been approached is through the prescriptive tradition. As stated by Liddicoat and Scarino (2013), viewing language as a structural system has led to granting power to some language varieties over others. This is especially observed

in both native and foreign language teaching, since learning grammar has been favored over vocabulary and language use. Thus, this focus on structure and standardization has resulted in the depreciation of some language varieties as signs of “lack of education and laziness”. Moreover, some authors have attempted to go beyond the structuralist perspective by describing language as a communicative system. Nonetheless, through this view language is seen as a transference of grammar constructions from one person to another, as stated in Saussure (cited in Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013, p. 13). Regardless, it is this angle that is often preferred in second language education. Consequently, the concept of language must go beyond that of a structural and communicative system since this conceptualization will permeate the way language teaching is approached in the classroom (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Hence, its definition must be expanded taking into account the variable and changing nature of language.

Then, when it comes to culture there are several ways in which this concept has usually been defined. According to Liddicoat and Scarino (2013), culture is a set of national attributes which considers culture to be confined in the geographical boundaries of a country. However, this perspective addresses culture as a monolithic notion and ignores the diversity it entails. Nevertheless, this is the way in which culture has usually been approached in language teaching; by using elements of “high culture” like literature in the classroom, the culture of a nation has been represented in a unidimensional way. To counteract this, some have veered towards resources from different countries that share the same language. Therefore, in this case the concept of culture is associated with language and not nation. Hence, it is the teachers’ task to help students “decenter” from their own cultural views and acquire an intercultural perspective of learning. This decentering occurs by placing the learner as an analyzer of the resulting relationship of both cultures, his own and that of the target language, in the classroom.

Another view of culture as practices focus on an interesting characteristic: culture is dialogic. That means a “discursive rearticulation of embodied actions between individuals in particular contexts located in time and space” (Bhabha, 1994, cited in Liddicoat and Scarino, 2013, p.21). The authors insist that “cultures are dynamic and emergent – they are created through the actions of individuals and in particular through the ways in which they use language.” (Idem, p.21). This dynamism in culture and language lead to different ways of speaking. Culture viewed as a “framework in which people live their lives, communicate and interpret shared

meanings, and select possible actions to achieve goals” (p.22) must lead language teachers to change their practice in order to “engage the students with the variability” (p.22) that we can find in any culture and any language.

5.3. Attitudes toward language and culture

The beginnings of **language attitudes** research is in debt with the matched-guise technique study elaborated by Lambert et al. (as cited in Giles & Coupland, 1991, p. 34). This study had two objectives: first, finding out what kind of social categorizations could be done based on speech style; second, how this would translate in the inferences done about a group.

In addition, Appel and Muysken (1987) state that the context where a language is used plays a role in the attitudes it arises in speakers. In other words, speakers relate specific varieties with specific environments and, therefore, can see a variety less favorably if it is used in a context where it has not been traditionally used. Furthermore, the attitudes held towards languages or varieties are influenced by the attitudes towards the groups that speak those varieties. Thus, the varieties that get the best reputation are those spoken by the most prestigious group in a society; also, these varieties are considered to be superior by both members of the prestigious group and minority groups.

Similarly, Grosjean (1982) says that the attitudes towards a language are interconnected with the attitudes towards the group who speak the language. Besides, in contexts where different languages coexist the attitudes held by the most powerful group end up affecting the minority group’s own perception of themselves. Therefore, the language spoken by the group with the highest status turns out to be the dominant language.

Attitudes are greatly responsible for the status a language gets in a society and, therefore, for the prestige the language acquires for individuals in that society (Baker, 1992). Consequently, attitudes enable certain behaviors towards languages and can conversely be byproducts of circumstances where a language is centered. That is to say, language attitudes can be both a cause and a result of positive or negative engagement with a language. Furthermore, Appel and Muysken (1987) explain that it is the connection with a group of speakers which influences the

attitudes towards varieties instead of their inherent nature. Besides, when it comes to minority groups the low ratings they give to some languages or varieties does not reflect the level of importance they give to them and this can be found in the affective or social ratings they give to these varieties.

Moreover, the complexity of language attitudes relies partly on the cooperation between its cognitive, affective and action components. Then, Triandis declares (as cited in Baker, 1992) that the cognitive component makes reference to the capability of thinking of an attitude and communicating it through words or other symbols. Also, the affective component refers to the adhering of feelings and emotions to attitudes. Lastly, the component of action is manifested in the behavior the attitudes ensue. Thus, even though the three components can conflate in a coherent way, it is also possible to behave in ways that do not represent both the thoughts and feelings towards a language or variety.

Additionally, Baker (1992) asserts that attitudes are learned “hypothetical constructs” that can evolve over time through experience. Besides, their degree of favorability and unfavorability can exist in extremes but also in a middle point where there are not “opinions or feelings one way or the other”. Moreover, these attitudes are formed in childhood by the influence of the attitudes of parents or peers and also because of affective factors.

5.4. Attitude functions

The theories on attitude formation and change have oscillated from a cognitive approach to a functional one. Thus, the functional approach is based on the assumption that attitude formation and change are dependent on the needs they perform for the individual. (Katz, 1960). Consequently, through this approach there are four attitude functions that have been identified. These functions are the instrumental, adjustive or utilitarian function, the ego-defensive function, the value-expressive function and the knowledge function.

5.4.1. The instrumental, adjustive or utilitarian function

The attitudes developed through this function are tied to the reward system of the person who possesses them; consequently, they seek to attract targets that evoke beneficial rewards and avoid those that remind of adverse ones. As a result, it is believed that the most positive

attitudes will be directed toward things that are in compliance with one's goals and the most negative attitudes towards things that go against them. Besides, it is through his experience that the individual can assess the level of gratification that target could provide.

5.4.2. The ego-defensive function

This function accounts for the defense mechanisms used by human beings to protect themselves from the conflicts of their inner world and of the external world. As the name suggests, these attitudes come from within to defend the self from its own insecurities. Thus, when the individual feels insecure about himself or because of the challenges of the world, he will deny or distort reality to soothe his ego. Moreover, even though everyone is bound to use these mechanisms, these can be a liability for the individual when they fall in the territory of total refusal. Also, while ego-defensive mechanisms are fairly used by everyone, individuals are usually unaware of this, and fail to see the underlying reasons for using them.

5.4.3. The value-expressive function

The attitudes involved with this function serve as an outlet for the individuality of the person. Through the articulation of his beliefs and values, the subject is rewarded with the reinforcement of his sense of self. In consequence, it is important for the individual to feel that his identity is aligned with what he considers himself to be. Conversely, there are instances when joining a new group causes the subject to adjust to the values of the group. This adjustment might happen because of any of four reasons: the values of the new group are in concordance with one's own values; the group molds its members to fit an ideal image; the group's activities allow the individual to show his skills or participate in decisions or the subject gets to enjoy the fruits of the team's efforts.

Furthermore, the conceptualization of self-identity starts to develop from the early years in the individual's life; similarly, his perception of what a good and a bad character is develops from this age and persists until adulthood.

5.4.4. The knowledge function

This function entails the need of human beings to understand the world. Therefore, it is through the culture that the unique and inexplicit nature of some things get comprehensible for the

individual; besides, it is often through stereotypes that this is achieved. Then, through these attitudes people have the chance to make sense of their world even if it is by a biased standpoint.

5.5. Change in attitudes

According to Katz (1960), in a broad sense, attitude change takes place when its function is not of use for the individual anymore. Nevertheless, changes in the utilitarian function can also be caused because of the formation of bigger expectations or the avoidance of punishment. Then, this happens when changing attitudes are seen as conducive to achieving one's goals.

Furthermore, the change in ego-defensive attitudes can be prompted by three elements: making the individual feel in a safe environment, giving the individual an outlet to express his feelings, and eliciting self-awareness in the individual.

Moreover, pertaining to attitudes in the value-expressive function, it is found that changes may occur because of any of two reasons. On the one hand, the subject might be discontent with his perception of self or his values; this discontentment might arise because of the dissonance between the current state of the world and one's belief system. On the other hand, the subject might disapprove of old attitudes that do not align with his core values due to new input whether from experience or other people's opinions. Consequently, change in attitudes in the knowledge function can occur when the individual needs to adjust his attitudes because of new information and experiences. However, factors such as contact with other people, intercultural exchange, group pressure, the impact of legislation and brainwashing can also be components for attitude change on a large scale.

5.6. Relationship between attitudes and language learning

As seen in Baker (1992), attitudes differ from one person to another one. A student can have a negative attitude towards all foreign language lessons and another one can have varying attitudes depending on the context. Moreover, as expressed by Grosjean (1982) attitudes can affect what languages are learned by the majority in multilingual contexts. In these contexts, the language spoken by the dominant group is learned also by the minority groups, meanwhile the language of the minority group is not learned by the dominant group. Furthermore, the

incidence of the prestigious language can lead to parents in minority groups to prefer their children to learn only the dominant language.

As stated by Baker (1988, 1992), (as cited in Dissinger, 2010, p. 48), the importance of attitudes relies on how they can precede or follow positive behaviors. Therefore, attitudes can be input that benefit the learning of a language or the immersion in a culture; conversely, attitudes can be output resulting from positive experiences with a culture or a language. Liddicoat and Scarino (2013) explain that language education has traditionally focused on prescriptive grammar. This is due to giving way to standardization while disregarding the richness in variability that languages possess. As a result, by giving one variety of a language prominence as the standard, the other varieties become depreciated and so do their speakers. Thus, this has led language teaching to perpetuate the idea that any variety that strays from the standard is bad language. They also say that resources have traditionally been used to give input and prompt output from language learners; however, given that these resources embody the cultural heritage of the studied language, they can serve as mediators to connect learners with the culture of the target language. That is why the employment given to resources can help students reflect on matters beyond the linguistic aspects in their learning process.

Chen and Starosta (2000) considered intercultural sensitivity to be the affective aspect of intercultural communication competence. In their own words:

Intercultural sensitivity can be treated as a mindset that helps individuals distinguish how their counterparts differ in behavior, perceptions, or feelings in the process of intercultural communication. In other words, interculturally sensitive persons are not only conscious in interactions, but also able to appreciate and respect the ideas exchanged, no matter how idiosyncratic they are, and to accept personal complexity. (p. 4)

Similarly, Kramsch (as cited in Byram & Fleming, 2001, p. 34) states the importance of going beyond the concepts of native and non-native speakers in language teaching; the alternative given to these two concepts is the notion of the intercultural speaker. On the one hand, in some contexts the intercultural speaker is prompted by enabling students to participate in exchange programs. These exchanges allow learners not only to engage with the language but also to meditate on its cultural aspects. On the other hand, in multicultural educational contexts the intercultural speaker is the one who produces culture while engaging in linguistic production.

Hence, intercultural sensitivity is evoked through activities that enable learners to reflect on what they give meaning to through written and oral production.

5.7. African American Vernacular English

African American Vernacular English, hereafter called AAVE, refers to the language variety spoken by a large number of African Americans in the United States. Even though Dillard (1972) initially pointed out this dialect was spoken by 80 percent of African Americans, Rickford (1999) clarifies this percentage is only an estimate. As stated in Green (2002), AAVE has received several denominations such as Negro dialect, Black English Vernacular or Afro American English, among others. These labels have been a reflection of the social climate correlated with the designations used for African Americans at the time.

AAVE has been a matter of debate for different reasons and one of them has been the theories about its origins. Two prominent hypotheses have been at the forefront in this debate: the Anglicist hypothesis and the Creolist hypothesis.

The Anglicist hypothesis states that AAVE was affected by the English dialects of the British isles and was in fact equivalent to Southern American English spoken by rural white people. (Wolfram & Thomas, 2002). Consequently, scholars such as McDavid and McDavid (1951) considered most of the features of this dialect to be an extension of the speech of nearby white Americans; therefore, they regarded AAVE as a “local variety of Standard English”. Furthermore, it was also thought that African Americans retained more vestiges of old English than white Americans due to the isolation of their community. Additionally, it was also believed that a great amount of vocabulary of African origin had been adopted by white Southerners and eventually extended to other regions of the country.

Moreover, this hypothesis sustains that enslaved Africans brought along several African languages, creoles and pidgins that started to dissolve by generations. Thus, these languages and varieties started to vanish as Africans increasingly socialized with white people and learned their varieties. (Wolfram & Thomas, 2002).

The early Creolist or Creole hypothesis scholars considered AAVE to originate from a creole that differed from the British English dialects. (Wolfram & Thomas, 2002). In addition, Rickford (2015) considered six elements as evidence of the Creole origins of AAVE:

1. Sociohistorical conditions (suitable for pidginization and/or creolization);
2. Historical attestations (literary texts, ex-slave narratives and recordings);
3. Diaspora recordings (Samaná, Liberian Settler English, African Nova Scotian English);
4. Creole similarities (between AAVE and Caribbean creoles, Gullah, Hawaiian, etc.);
5. African language similarities (between AAVE and West African varieties);
6. English dialect differences (between AAVE and British/White American dialects) (p.36).

Moreover, the author stated the importance of differentiating between the feasibility of a creole imported from the Caribbean and a creole formed in North America. On the one hand, it was found that the possibility of a creole surfacing in the first colonies of the United States was low due to the small number of Black people in the region at the time. On the other hand, by the end of the 17th century the population of Black people was more than half in the Caribbean islands where most of the slaves sent to North America came from. In consequence, it is likely that AAVE originated from a creole or creoles brought from the Caribbean colonies by slaves that were sent to North America between the 17th and 18th centuries.

5.7.1. Features of AAVE

Rickford (1999) distinguished 19 phonological features and 36 grammatical features of AAVE; nevertheless, it is mainly the grammatical features which are exclusive to this variety since some phonological features are shared by other groups. Additionally, these features are said to be used mostly by working-class young speakers who live in urban sectors. Besides, the frequency of use of these features may vary depending on who the speaker is talking to even in a small conversation.

Phonological features

1. Reduction of word-final consonant clusters (i.e., sequences of two or more consonants), especially those ending in *t* or *d*, as in *han'* for SE [Standard English] “hand”, *des'* for SE “desk,” *pos'* for SE “post,” and *pass'* for SE “passed” (the *-ed* suffix in “passed” is pronounced as [t]).

2. Deletion of word-final single consonants (especially nasals) after a vowel, as in *ma'* [mæ] for SE “man,” *ca'* [kæ] for SE “cat” and *ba'* [bæ:] for SE “bad.” Not as frequent as (1).
3. Devoicing of word-final voiced stops after a vowel, i.e., realization of [b] as [p], [d] as [t], and [g] as [k], as in [bæt] for SE “bad”, and [pik] for SE “pig.” The devoiced consonant may be followed or replaced by a glottal stop...(See Fasold and Wolfram 1970: 53-4, Wolfram et al. 1993: 10, Bailey and Thomas 1998: 89.)
4. Realization of final *ng* as *n* in gerunds, e.g. *walkin'* for SE “walking.”
5. Realization of voiceless *th* [θ] as *t* or *f*, as in *tin* for SE “thin and *baf* for SE “bath.”
6. Realization of voiced *th* [ð] as *d* or *v*, as in *den* for SE “then,” and *bruvver* for SE “brother.”
7. Realization of *thr* sequences as *th*, especially before [u] or [o], as in *thodown* [θodaun] for SE “throwdown.” (See Wolfram 1993: 8).
8. Deletion or vocalization (pronunciation as a weak neutral vowel) of *l* after a vowel, as in *he'p* for SE “help,” and *toah* for SE “toll.” May have the grammatical effect of deleting the “ll” of contracted *will*, as in “He be here tomorrow,” for SE “He’ll be here tomorrow, especially when the following word begins with labial *b*, *m* or *w*. (Fasold and Wolfram 1970: 51-3).
9. Deletion or vocalization of *r* after a vowel, as in *sistuh* for SE “sister” or *fouh* for SE “four”. This rule applies more often when the *r* comes at the end of a word and is followed by a word beginning with a consonant (*four posts*) rather than a word beginning with a vowel (*four apples*), but it can also apply when a vowel follows within the same word, as in *Ca'ol* for SE “Carol” or *sto'y* for SE “story.” Grammatical effects may include the use of *they* for the SE possessive “their” (Labov et al. 1968: 99-119, Fasold and Wolfram 1970: 51-3).

10. Deletion of initial *d* and *g* in certain tense-aspect auxiliaries, as in “ah *on* know” for SE “I *don*’t know” and “ah’m ‘*a* do it” for SE “I’m *gonna* do it” (see Labov et al. 1968: 252); the distinctive AAVE use of *ain*’t for “didn’t” (ibid.: 255) probably derives historically from this rule too. Note parallels in Gullah/Caribbean Creole English tense-aspect markers: *da* ~ *a*, *does* ~ *oes*, *ben* ~ *men* ~ *en*, *mos bii* ~ *mosii*, and *go* ~ *o* (Rickford 1974: 108).
11. Deletion of unstressed initial and medial syllables, as in *’fraid* for SE “afraid” and *sec’t’ry* for SE “secretary.” Strongly age-graded. According to Vaughn-Cooke (1987:22), the unstressed syllable deletion rate for speakers over 60 years old in her Mississippi sample was 85 percent, for speakers aged 40-59 it was 70 percent, and for speakers 8-20 years old, it was 52 percent.
12. Metathesis or transposition of adjacent consonants, as in *aks* for SE “ask” (one of the biggest shibboleths of AAVE, often referred to by teachers, personnel officers, and other gatekeepers in the course of putting down the variety), and *waps* for SE “wasp.”
13. Realization of SE *v* and *z* (voiced fricatives) as *d* and *z* respectively (voiced stops), especially in word-medial position before a nasal, as in *seben* for SE “seven” and *idn*’ for SE “isn’t” (phonetically, [iznt]). (See Wolfram 1993: 9, Bailey and Thomas 1998: 89).
14. Realization of syllable-initial *str* as *skr*, especially before high front vowels like “ee” [i], as in *skreet* for SE “street” and *deskroy* for “destroy” (see Dandy 1991: 44).
15. Monophthongal pronunciations of *ay* and *oy*, as in *ah* for SE “I” and *boah* for SE “boy.”
16. Neutralization/merger of [ɪ] and [ɛ] before nasals, as in [pɪn] for SE “pin” and “pen.” (See Labov et al. 1968: 119-20.)

17. Realization of “ing” as “ang” and “ink” as “ank” in some words, as in *thang* for SE “thing”, *sang* for SE “sing”, and *drank* for SE “drink.” (See Smitherman 1986: 18, Dandy 1991 : 46).
18. Stress on first rather than second syllable, as in *pólíce* instead of SE *police*, and *hótel* instead of SE *hotél*.
19. More varied intonation, with “higher pitch range and more rising and level final contours” than other American English varieties (Wolfram et al. 1993: 12; see also Rickford 1977: 205). (Rickford, 1999, pp. 4–5).

Grammatical features

Pre-verbal markers of tense, mood, and aspect

- Absence of copula/auxiliary *is* and *are* for present tense states and actions, as in “He Ø tall” for SE “He’s tall” or “They Ø running” for SE “They *are* running.” (See Labov 1969 and Rickford et al. 1988, reprinted in this volume.)
- Use of invariant *be* (sometimes *bees*) for habitual aspect, as in “He *be* walkin” (usually, regularly, versus “He Ø walkin” right now) for SE “He is usually walking/usually walks.” Used with auxiliary *do* in questions, negatives, and tag questions, as in “*Do* he *be* walking every day?” or “She *don’t be* sick, *do* she?” (Fasold 1972: 150-84, Dayton 1996, Green 1998).
- Use of invariant *be* for future “will be,” as in “He *be* here tomorrow.” This is essentially a result of the phonological rule deleting the contracted ‘*ll* of *will* (see #7 above).
- Use of *steady* as an intensified continuative marker, usually after invariant habitual *be*, but before a progressive verb, for actions that occur consistently or persistently, as in “Ricky Bell *be steady* steppin in them number nines.” (Baugh 1983: 86).

- Use of unstressed *been* or *bin* for SE “has/have been” (present perfects), as in “He *been* sick” for “He has been sick.” Unlike stressed BIN ... unstressed *been* can co-occur with time adverbials (e.g. “since last week”), and does not connote remoteness (Rickford 1975).
- Use of stressed *BIN* to mark remote phase (that the action happened or the state came into being long ago) as in “She *BIN* married” for SE “She has been married for a long time (and still is),” or “He *BIN* ate it” for SE “He ate it a long time ago” (Rickford 1975, Baugh 1983: 80-2).
- Use of *done* to emphasize the completed nature of an action, as in “He *done did* it” for SE “He’s already done it.” *Done* can co-occur with *been*, as in “By the time I got there, he *been done* gone” or, in the reverse order, “They *done been* sitting there an hour.” (See Labov 1972c: 53-7, Baugh 1983: 74-7, Smitherman 1986: 24, Dayton 1996, Green 1998).
- Use of *be done* for resultatives or the future/conditional perfect, as in “She *be done had* her baby” for SE “She *will have had* her baby.” (Baugh 1983: 77-80, Dayton 1996, Green 1998).
- Use of *finna* (sometimes *fitna*, derived from “fixin’ to”) to mark the immediate future, as in “He *finna* go” for SE “He’s about to go.”
- Use of *come* to express the speaker’s indignation about an action or event, as in “He *come* walkin in here like he owned the damn place” (Spears 1982: 852).
- Use of *had* to mark the simple past (primarily among preadolescents) as in “then we *had* went outside” for SE “then we went outside” (Rickford and Th  berge-Rafal 1989).
- Use of double modals, as in *may can*, *might can*, and *might could* (common in Southern White vernaculars) for SE “might be able to” or *must don’t* (more unique to AAVE) for SE “must not.” (See Labov et al. 1968: 260-3, Labov 1972c: 57-9).

- Use of quasi modals *liketa* and *poseta*, as in “I *liketa* drowned” for SE “I nearly drowned” and “You don’t *poseta* do it that way” for SE “You’re not supposed to do it that way.” (Labov 1972: 56, 59, Wolfram 1993: 13).

Other aspects of verbal tense marking

- Absence of third person singular present tense -s, as in “He walkØ” for SE “He walks.” The use of *don’t* instead of “doesn’t” as in “He *don’t* sing” or *have* instead of “has”, as in “She *have* it” is related, since “doesn’t and “hasn’t” include 3rd singular -s (Fasold 1972: 121-49).
- Generalization of *is* and *was* to use with plural and second person subjects (i.e., instead of *are* and *were*) as in “They *is* some crazy folk” for SE “They are crazy folk” or “We *was* there” for SE “We were there” (Wolfram 1993:14).
- Use of past tense or preterite form (V-ed) as past participle (V-en), as in “He had *bit*” for SE “He had bitten,” or “She has *ran*” for SE “She has run.” (See Fasold and Wolfram 1970: 62, Rickford and Th  berge: 1996: 232-3, reprinted in this volume).
- Use of past participle form (V-en) as past tense or preterite form (V-ed), as in “She *seen* him yesterday” for SE “She saw him yesterday” (Wolfram 1993: 12).
- Use of verb stem (V) as past tense or preterite form (V-ed), as in “He *come* down here yesterday” for SE “He came down here yesterday,” (Wolfram 1993: 12).
- Reduplication of a past tense or past participle suffix (also referred to sometimes as “double tense marking”), as in *likeded* [laiktid] for SE “liked” and *light-skinded* for SE “light skinned.” Only applies to a small set of verbs (including *liked*, *looked*, *skinned*), and more common in adolescent speech (see Wolfram 1993: 14).

Nouns and pronouns

- Absence of possessive *-s*, as in “JohnØ house” for SE “John’s house.”
- Absence of plural *-s* ... as in “two boyØ” for SE “two boys.”
- Use of *and (th)em* or *nem*, usually after a proper name, to mark associative plurals, as in *Felicia an’ (th)em* or *Felician nem* for “Felician and her friends or family or associates.” (See Mufwene 1998: 73, who finds this more similar to English creoles than to other varieties of English, although southern white varieties use it too).
- Appositive or pleonastic pronouns, as in “That teacher, *she* yell at the kids” for SE “That teacher Ø yells at the kids.” (Fasold and Wolfram 1970: 81).
- Use of *y’all* and *they* to mark second person plural and third plural possessive, respectively, as in “It’s *y’all* ball” for SE “It’s your ball” and “It’s *they* house” for SE “It’s their house” (Wolfram et al. 1993: 16).
- Use of object pronouns (*me*, *him*, and so on) after a verb as personal datives (=“(for) myself,” “(for) himself” and so on) as in “Ahma git *me* a gig” for SE “I’m going to get myself some support” (Gumperz 1982b: 31, Wolfram 1993: 16).
- Absence of relative pronoun (*who*, *which*, *what* or *that*) as in “That’s the man Ø come here” for SE “That’s the man who came here.” Note that the omitted form is a subject relative pronoun (*who*). Many varieties of English allow for the omission of object relative pronouns, e.g. “That’s the man (whom) I saw,” but the omission of subject relatives is rarer, and more unique to AAVE (Mufwene 1998: 77).

Negation

- Use of *ain'(t)* as a general preverbal negator, for SE “am not,” “isn’t,” “aren’t,” “hasn’t,” “haven’t” and “didn’t,” as in “He *ain'* here” for SE “He isn’t here,” or “He *ain'* do it” for SE “He didn’t do it.”
- Multiple negation or negative concord (that is, negating the auxiliary verb and all indefinite pronouns in the sentence), as in “He *don'* do *nothin'*” for SE “He doesn’t do anything” (Labov 1972a, 1972c; 130-96).
- Negative inversion (inversion of the auxiliary and indefinite pronoun subject), as in “*Can't nobody* say nothin” (inverted from “Nobody can’t say nothin”) for SE “Nobody can say anything” or “*Ain't nobody* home” (from “Nobody ain’t home” for SE “Nobody is home” (Sells, Rickford and Wasow 1996a, b).
- Use of *ain't but* and *don't but* for “only,” as in “He ain’t but fourteen years old” for SE “He’s only fourteen years old” or “They didn’t take but three dollars” for “They only took three dollars” (Wolfram et al. 1993: 14).

Questions

- Formation of direct questions without inversion of the subject and auxiliary verb, usually with rising intonation, as in “Why *I can't* play?” for SE “Why can’t I play?” and “*They didn't* take it?” for SE “Didn’t they take it?” (Labov et al. 1968: 291-6, Martin and Wolfram 1998: 29).
- Auxiliary verb inversion in embedded questions (without *if* or *whether*), as in “I asked him *could he* go with me” for SE “I asked him if he could go with me” (Labov et al. 1968: 296-300).

Existential and locative constructions

- Use of existential *it* (*is*, *'s*, *was*, *ain't*) instead of *there* (*is*, *'s*, *was*, *isn't*) as in “*It's* a school up there” for SE “There’s a school up there” (Labov et al. 1968: 301-3).

- Use of existential *they got* as a plural equivalent of singular *it is*, instead of *there are*, as in “*They got* some hungry women here” (line from a Nina Simone song) for “There are some hungry women here” (Labov et al. 1968: 303).
- Use of *here go* as a static locative or presentational form, as in “*Here go* my own” (said by a 12-year-old girl from East Palo Alto, California as she showed me her artwork) for SE “Here is my own.” (See Labov et al. 1968: 303.)

Complementizer/quotative *say*

- Use of *say* to introduce a quotation or a verb complement, as in “They told me *say* they couldn’t go.” Although superficially similar to the SE use of “say” to introduce quotations, note its use with verbs like *believe* and *know* (which have nothing to do with speaking) in Gullah and Caribbean creoles, and its parallels with and possible origins in the Akan complementizer *se* (Rickford 1977: 212). (Rickford, 1999, 6–9).

6. METHOD

This section presents the research method used in the study and the methodology that took place in the development of the research. Survey research was the chosen method and is presented with a definition according to Burns and Grove (cited in Wang, 2009) and DeCarlo (2018). Also, it describes the participants, procedure, themes of the survey and context of the investigation.

6.1. Survey Research

Burns and Grove (as cited in Wang, 2009, p. 520) state that survey research is a descriptive method which serves to reveal “the thoughts, ideas, opinions and attitudes of a population”. Also, according to DeCarlo (2018), this quantitative method can be used to inquire about one or several groups which can lead to more detailed research later on. Among the benefits of survey research are how cost effective it can be which allows for a large sample size if it is required. Additionally, another advantage is that surveys tend to have a dependability element since the same questions are used for all of the participants.

6.2. Participants

The sample chosen for this study were 98 students of Licenciatura in Foreign Languages at Universidad del Valle. More specifically, there were 31 students of Habilidades Integradas en Inglés IV, 23 students of Tipologías Escritas en Inglés VI, 41 students of Literatura en Inglés VIII and 3 students that had finished the English syllabus.

Students taking Habilidades Integradas en Inglés II were not included in the sample because of their smaller exposure to the language. Then, it was assumed that these students were less likely to know about different varieties of English and, therefore, would not be able to understand the phrases presented or identify their meaning.

6.3. Procedure

The data collection of this study took place between October 2018 and August 2019 and as it was mentioned, it was conducted through a survey. Taking into consideration the objectives,

the aim of the survey was determining the level of comprehension of AAVE by students of Licenciatura in Foreign Languages and identifying the perception of Licenciatura in Foreign Languages students about AAVE as a dialect and its speakers.

The chosen instrument consisted of 25 questions organized in 5 stages in order: the demographical information of the participants, their learning experience in the teaching program, their recognition of AAVE, their perception of this variety, and their perception of the speakers of this dialect. Consequently, the questions in the first 3 stages were of multiple choice, meanwhile the questions for dialect and speaker's perception were organized in a Likert scale. At the end, there was also an open question so the participants could give final comments about the survey.

6.3.1 Themes of the survey

The demographic information stage inquired about the students' age, gender, ethnic background, mother language, educational background, level of the language and the time of the day they took classes. In the stage about the learning experience in the program, the students were asked about whether or not they were exposed to different varieties of English, whether or not they recognized dialects aside from the standard one and how important they find learning different dialects of the language. Then, in the recognition of the dialect stage, participants were presented with four phrases each of them including a feature of AAVE. After stating if they recognized the sentence or not, they had to rephrase it in case they had understood its meaning. Afterwards, in the dialect perception stage there were four statements which participants had to rank depending on how much they agreed with them. The statements were presented with a Likert scale that rated from 1, the lowest value for disagreement, to 5, the highest for agreement. The next category was the one for speakers' perception which had two types of ranking. In the first one, students had to rate the speakers in terms of friendliness, intelligence and politeness. In the second one, students had to rate the speakers' possible occupation, social level and educational level. Finally, students were given the option of sharing their thoughts on the subject in the last item.

6.3.2 Survey pre-test

After creating the survey it was reviewed by one of the teachers in the Licenciatura, to make sure the questions were appropriate for this type of study. Then, 6 individuals with different English levels were chosen to answer the questionnaire in order to know if the questions would be easily understood regardless of language level.

A focus group interview was planned as a second instrument and would be carried out with a sample of the participants who answered the survey. Nonetheless, the interview could not be performed because of two reasons. First, most students did not answer when they were notified of the interview the first time which led to rescheduling it for the next semester. Then, the following semester was irregular because of the development of a students' strike. Therefore, it was not possible to gather said students for the interview. The presentation and questionnaire of the focus group was designed and then revised by the same teacher that revised the questions for the survey. Even though this instrument was not part of the study, it will be added to the appendix.

6.4. Context

The research was held in Escuela de Ciencias del Lenguaje at Universidad del Valle, particularly in the Foreign Languages Teaching Program.

Due to the changes done to the Modern Languages program and the support of the National Council of Accreditation, the Foreign Languages program saw its start in 2000. This program has been active for 20 years with approximately 200 students distributed in a double-shift schedule. The Foreign Languages program seeks to form autonomous and creative professionals at the highest academic level that can appropriately teach in a high school setting. These professionals must envision language from a social standpoint and know the reality of the educational field in the country. Also, they must exercise their academic practice with critical awareness, possess ethical engagement, besides having respect and tolerance for the ideas of others.

It was of interest to do this research with students in different semesters since there could be differences in attitudes related to the level of language that participated in the study were students of fourth, sixth, eighth and tenth semester of Licenciatura in Foreign Languages who

take the courses *Habilidades Integradas en Inglés IV*, *Tipologías Escritas en Inglés VI*, *Literatura en Inglés VIII* and those who have finished with the English syllabus in the last case.

7. RESULTS

7.1. Demographical information

The survey was answered by 98 students from which 77, 6% took morning classes (jornada diurna) and 22,4% took evening classes (jornada vespertina). 25 of the students who participated in this survey were 20 years old or younger; 60 were between 20 and 25 years old; 9 of them were between 25 and 30 years old, and 4 of the participants were older than 30 years old. Out of the 98 participants, 61 identified as “female” and 37 identified as “male”; meanwhile, 62 participants identified as “mestizo”, 8 participants identified as “black”, 7 participants identified as “indigenous” and 21 participants did not identify with any of the aforementioned ethnicities. Furthermore, all of the students had Spanish as their first language and only 7 of them studied in a bilingual school. The corresponding English levels were represented like this: 41,8% for *Literatura en Inglés VIII*; 31,6% for *Habilidades Integradas en Inglés IV*; 23,5% for *Tipologías Escritas en Inglés VI* and 3,1% of the sample had already finished the English syllabus.

7.2. Recognition of the dialect

Participants were presented with 4 sentences that included AAVE features presented in the following table.

Sentence with AAVE features	Sentence in Standard English
a.You know I'm not gon' diss you on the internet cause my mama taught me better than that.	a.You know I'm not going to insult you on the internet because my mom taught me better than that.
b.People really be saying this dude the best thing to happen to twitter [but] he the best thing to happen to earth.	b.People are really saying this man is the best thing to happen to Twitter, but he's the best thing to happen to earth.
c.Stop tryna act all fake woke when people don't wanna censor these words cause tbh it ain't your place to say that	c.Stop trying to act morally superior when people don't want to censor these words because, honestly, it's not your place to say that.
d.I lowkey want my nose pierced but I don't know if I'm ready for that commitment.	d.I have contemplated piercing my nose to some extent but I don't know if I'm ready for that commitment.

Table 1. Sentences used in the “Recognition of a dialect” stage in the survey with AAVE features vs their Standard English version.

Students were asked if they understood the meaning of the sentences and to rewrite them in Standard English. Therefore, the following is the analysis of the responses to each sentence.

7.2.1 You know I'm not gon' diss you on the internet cause my mama taught me better than that

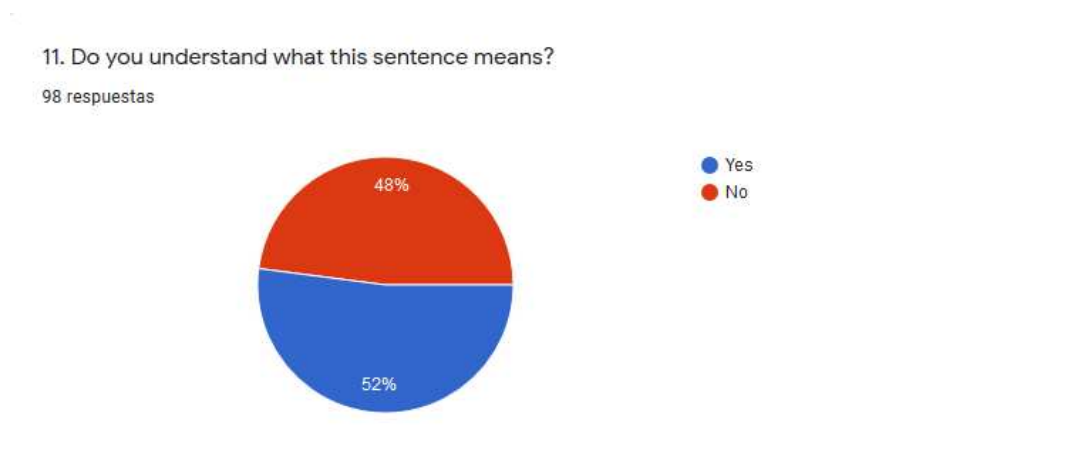


Figure 1.

Concerning the sentence, **“You know I'm not gon' diss you on the internet cause my mama taught me better than that”**, 51 participants said to have understood what it meant and 47 said to not have understood its meaning. Nonetheless, only 28 of those who answered “yes” were able to rephrase the sentence in Standard English. Also, it was not clear if 9 of these 51 participants were able to understand the sentence since they made very little changes to it and 1 participant rephrased half of the sentence correctly.

At first sight, these results show the sample divided almost in half when it comes to the understanding of the dialect. However, many of the students that answered affirmatively, regardless of language level, were not able to properly restate the phrase; added to that some did not make it clear if they understood or not. Accordingly, the implication is that most of the participants were not aware of the word “diss” as slang for disrespect or insult.¹

¹ Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Diss. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. Retrieved March 9, 2021

7.2.2 People really be saying this dude the best thing to happen to twitter [but] he the best thing to happen to earth

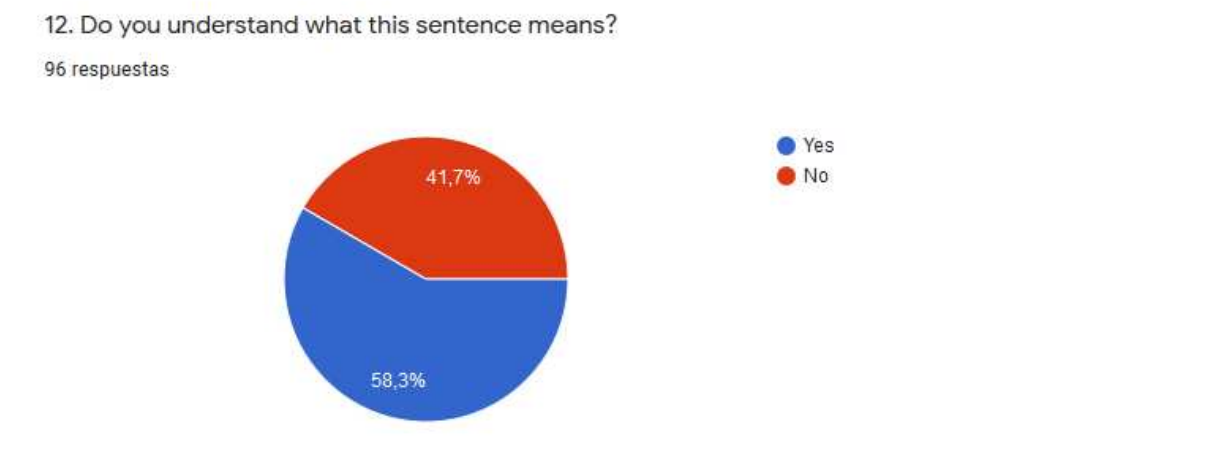


Figure 2.

Besides, 56 participants said to have understood the sentence, **“People really be saying this dude the best thing to happen to twitter [but] he the best thing to happen to earth”** ; 40 said to not have understood the sentence and 2 participants did not answer but attempted to rewrite the sentence. All of the participants who answered “yes” and the participants who did not answer were able to properly rephrase the sentence in Standard English.

In this instance, the features provided in the sentence were use of invariant *be* and absence of copula. It is possible that the students that answered “no” were expecting to find different vocabulary instead of the aforementioned features and did not notice them. Consequently, there is the possibility that the participants might see these features as grammatical mistakes instead of an intentional detour from the standard language.

7.2.3 Stop tryna act all fake woke when people don't wanna censor these words cause tbh it aint your place to say that

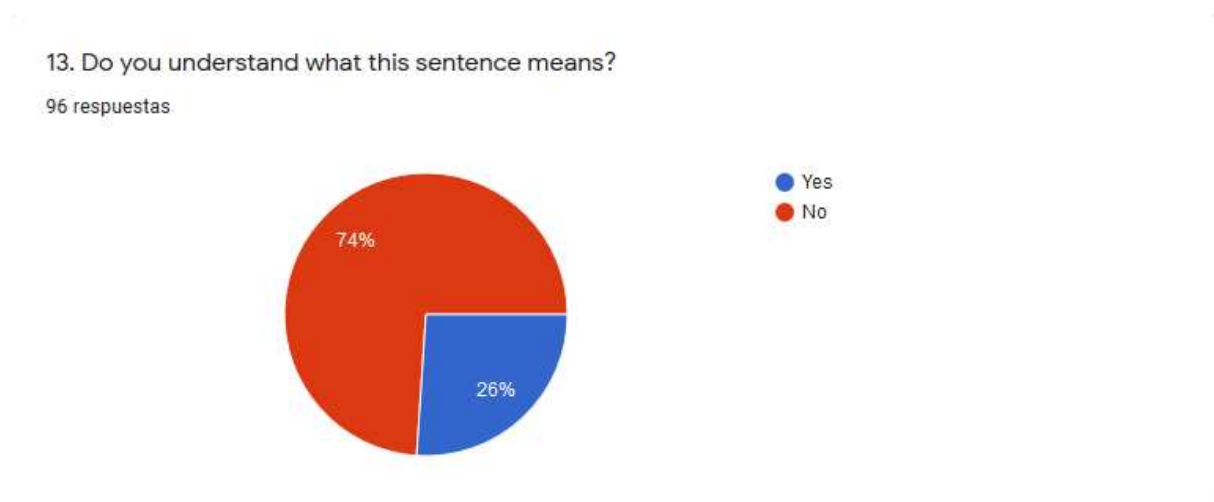


Figure 3.

Moreover, 71 of the participants said not to have understood the sentence, **“Stop tryna act all fake woke when people don't wanna censor these words cause tbh it aint your place to say that”**, and 25 said they did understand this sentence. 1 participant did not answer but paraphrased the sentence, and 1 participant neither answered nor paraphrased the sentence. However, out of the 25 people who answered affirmatively it was not clear if 7 of them understood the sentence. Also, 7 of them did not paraphrase the sentence correctly while 9 of them paraphrased it correctly and 2 of them did not rewrite the complete sentence.

This sentence includes two different features of AAVE, a slang term and an abbreviation which posed more difficulty for the understanding of the participants. The dialectal features are “tryna” which is used as “a semi-auxiliary expression of want or desire” (Lane, A. 2014) and “ain’t” which is used as negation. Most of the students who rephrased the sentence could tell that “tryna” meant “trying to”; however, this does not mean that they could recognize the feature since they could just have inferred its meaning from the context. Similarly, all of the participants understood what “ain’t” meant but in order to know if it was because they already knew the feature or because they figured it out from the context more personalized research needs to be done.

7.2.4 I lowkey want my nose pierced but I don't know if I'm ready for that commitment

14. Do you understand what this sentence means?

97 respuestas

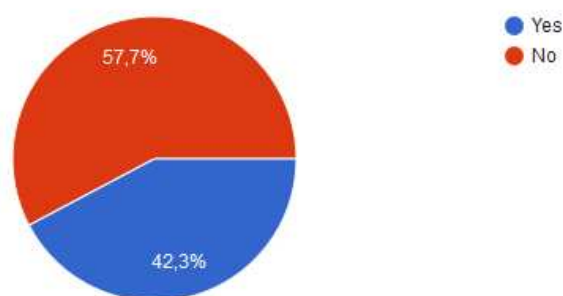


Figure 4.

Furthermore, 56 participants said to not have understood the sentence, **“I lowkey want my nose pierced but I don't know if I'm ready for that commitment”**, 41 said to have understood it and 1 participant did not answer but rewrote the sentence. Then, out of the 41 participants who said to have understood this sentence 3 did not rephrase it, 27 rephrased the sentence correctly, 1 did not rephrase the sentence completely and it was unclear if 2 participants understood the sentence.

The “key” feature in this example is the word *lowkey*. Although this term has not historically been part of AAVE, it seems to have been popularized by hip hop music in the last decade and is frequently used as slang online. Nonetheless, according to the results most of the participants do not recognize this word. Several of the students who answered “yes” used “really” as the equivalent for lowkey which is actually the opposite meaning.

This stage of the questionnaire confirmed how unfamiliar students of the Licenciatura are with AAVE. For most of the sentences, almost half or more than half of the participants admitted to not understanding their meaning. Therefore, the inference is that the lexical, syntactic and morphological changes found in the sample sentences are not something students of the Licenciatura are knowledgeable about. Due to the regularity in which these types of utterances are found in informal English speech, it leads to the conclusion that the students might not be familiar with varieties different from the standard. Consequently, this is similar to the findings

in Gold's (2015) study where the unfamiliarity with the variety (Southern) hindered the comprehension of the non-native English speakers that participated in the study.

Besides, it was found that many of the students who said they understood the sentences could not properly rephrase them; this suggests that they do not actually recognize the features of this variety. For instance, in the case of the first sentence where one of the AAVE features presented was vocabulary ("diss"), it was found that several students thought of this word as an abbreviation of the word "discuss". Moreover, in the third sentence the characteristic represented was also a vocabulary feature. It seemed that some tried to associate the term "fake woke" with "pretending to know more than others" which has some relation to the meaning of the term, although it is not exactly the same. Also, when it came to the fourth sentence those who rephrased the sentence wrongly guessed the meaning of the word "lowkey" as the opposite of its meaning. Hence, this can be contrasted with the way the second sentence was properly rephrased by all of the participants who said to have understood it. Taking into account that this sentence was the only one where the AAVE features did not correspond to vocabulary, this would reinforce the idea that this dialect is very unfamiliar to the students.

Moreover, the results in this category did not show stark differences between the different levels of the language. Most of the students in *Literatura en Inglés VIII* had difficulty identifying vocabulary and grammatical forms such as "tryna" in comparison to the invariant *be* and deletion of copula. Then, it can be deduced that there is not a wider exposure to non-standard varieties of English for the Licenciatura students as they advance academically. In fact, several students in *Habilidades Integradas en Inglés 4* were able to recognize the meaning of the sentences which can lead to believe that this was possible because of the individual exposure students had had of the variety.

7.3.1 The sentences presented in Stage 3 correspond to standard English

15. The sentences presented in Stage 3 correspond to standard English.

98 respuestas

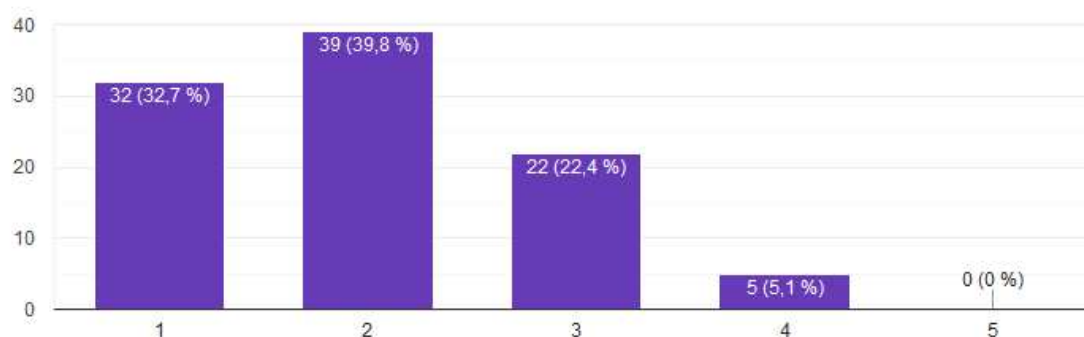


Figure 5.

In response to the statement **“The sentences presented in Stage 3 correspond to standard English”** 32 participants chose the “disagree” option; 39 participants chose the “slightly disagree” option; 22 participants chose the “neutral” option; 5 participants chose the “slightly agree” option and nobody chose the “agree” option.

Whether the participants are aware of the existence of AAVE or not, for the most part they could tell that the features found in the survey do not belong to standard English. Seeing how a few students chose the “neutral” and “slightly agree” options, it is possible that they have seen native English speakers speak like this and therefore might have conflated this with the standard language. Besides, there is also the possibility that these participants did not want to seem biased against the dialect speakers.

7.3.2 All the sentences are grammatically correct

16. All the sentences are grammatically correct.

98 respuestas

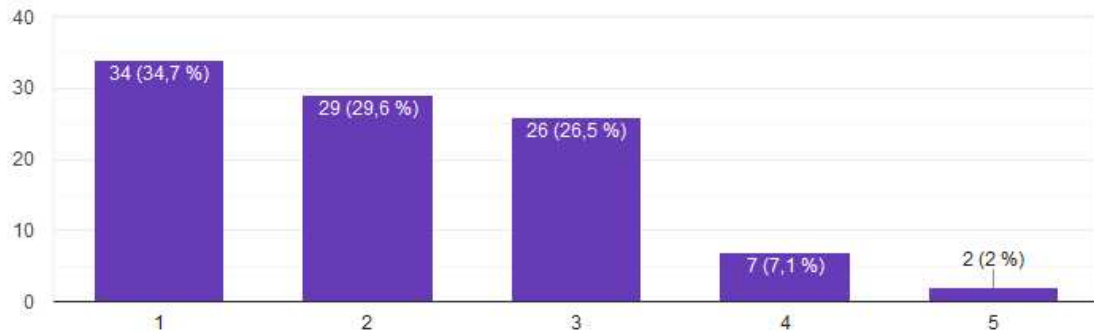


Figure 6.

Moreover, in response to the statement **“All the sentences are grammatically correct”**, 34 of the students that participated in the survey opted for the “disagree” option; 29 of them opted for the “slightly disagree” option; 26 participants opted for the “neutral” option; 7 participants opted for the “slightly agree” option and 2 participants opted for the “agree” option.

In this instance, there is also a lack of unanimity in the answers; however, for the most part, the participants consider that the features presented do not meet the grammar rules they have learned about. The question about the need to not show negative bias remains for the most positive and neutral answers.

7.3.3 It is common to hear native speakers talking like that

17. It is common to hear native speakers talking like that.

98 respuestas

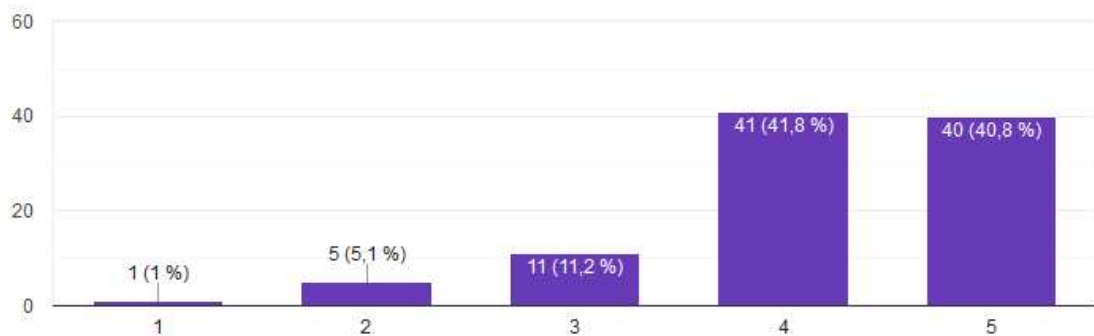


Figure 7.

Afterwards, for the statement **“It is common to hear native speakers talking like that”** 1 person selected the “disagree” option; 5 people selected the “slightly disagree” option; 11 people selected the “neutral” option; 41 people selected the “slightly agree” option and 40 people selected the “agree” option.

Then, in contrast to the previous questions, this time most of the participants agreed that it is common to hear native speakers using these features. Therefore, in this occasion there seems to be a little incongruence between this item and the previous ones where it seemed like the participants did not know about this variant. It seems like they are aware that there is dialectal variety in the language they are learning but they are not participants in the reproduction of these varieties.

7.3.4 I consider all language varieties to be equally valuable

18. I consider all language varieties to be equally valuable.

98 respuestas

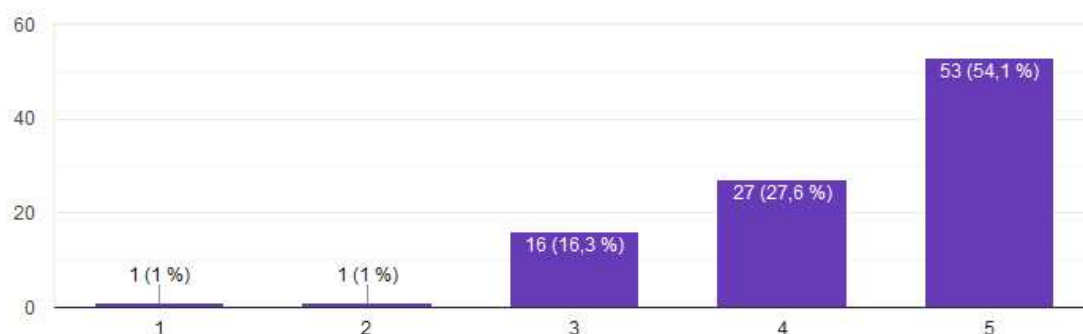


Figure 8.

Then, in response to the statement **“I consider all language varieties to be equally valuable”**, 1 participant chose the “disagree” option; 1 participant chose the “slightly disagree” option; 16 participants chose the “neutral” option; 27 participants chose the “slightly agree” option and 53 participants chose the “agree” option.

Once more, most of the participants leaned over the same answers. This time most agreed that all language varieties have the same value although they do not consider this variety to be grammatically correct.

These answers show a contrast between what students understand as standard English, the way native speakers usually communicate and what students deem valuable in communication. Although most participants do not consider the variety presented to be standard, they regard it as a representation of some English native speakers’ speech. This would be in contraposition to the previous stage where most students were not able to identify the meaning of the terms from the dialect. Then, this proves that even though students are not very familiar with varieties aside from the standard they know that in everyday life they can encounter other varieties that stray from it.

Consequently, the study done by Tévar (2014) also touches upon the participants' perception of non-standard dialects in the EFL classroom. Nevertheless, in this case the students did not consider most of the non-standard dialects studied to be as suitable for a EFL teacher to possess as the Standard British dialect (Received Pronunciation).

Furthermore, most of the participants said they find it valuable to learn about different dialects aside from the standard one; this might be indicative of the influence that the teaching training has had on the students. Similarly, participants enrolled in the Philology and Spanish teaching master programs in Cesteros and Paredes' (2018) study did not place the different varieties in a hierarchy but saw them in equal standing.

Regardless of the level of the language, most of the students did not see the sentences in this stage as representations of standard English. However, regarding the statement that all of the sentences were grammatically correct it is shown that *Literatura en Inglés VIII* students chose mostly a neutral point. Meanwhile, students in *Habilidades Integradas en Inglés IV* and *Tipologías Escritas en Inglés VI*, and those who had finished with the syllabus did not have such an unanimous answer but gravitated mostly towards disagreement. Finally, across all levels there was mostly agreement on these statements representing a type of speech common among native speakers.

7.4. Speakers' perception

To assess the students' perception of the speakers, the categories of "friendliness", "intelligence" and "politeness" were ranked from 1 to 5 with 1 being the lowest rating and 5 being the highest one. Meanwhile the categories of "possible occupation", "educational level", and "social class" had multiple choice options.

7.4.1 Friendliness

19. Friendliness

98 respuestas

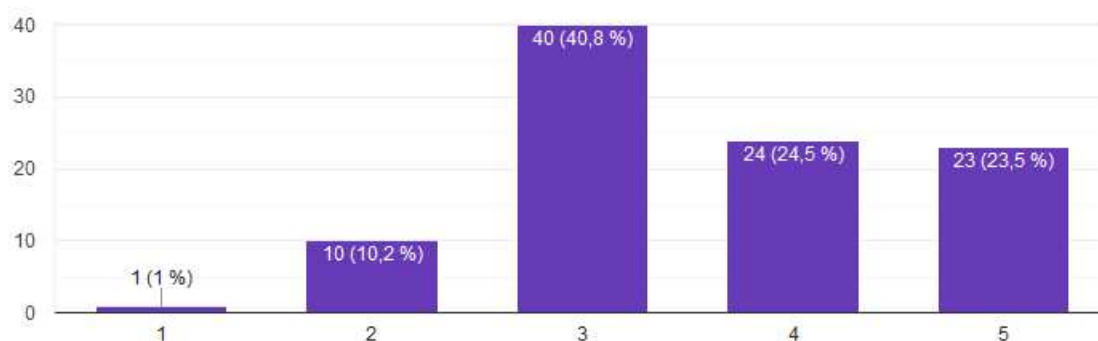


Figure 9.

In general, the ratings for the “friendliness” category were as follows. It was found that 1 participant gave a rating of 1 to the speakers in Stage 3 in this category; 10 participants gave a rating of 2; 40 participants gave a rating of 3; 24 participants gave a rating of 4 and 23 gave a rating of 5. Following is the analysis of the results for every category according to the English level.

Furthermore, out of the 31 students from *Habilidades Integradas en Inglés IV*, 6 of them gave this section a rating of 5; 7 students gave a rating of 4; 15 students gave a rating of 3; 3 students gave a rating of 2 and none gave a rating of 1. Also, out of the 23 participants from *Tipologías Escritas en Inglés VI*, 7 of them rated this section with a 5; 6 of them rated it with a 4; 7 of these participants rated this section with a 3; 2 of them rated it with a 2 and 1 rated it with a 1. Out of the 41 students from *Literatura en Inglés VIII*, 8 of them rated this category with a 5; 12 of them rated this category with a 4; 18 of them rated it with a 3; 3 of them rated it with a 2 and none of them rated it with a 1. Meanwhile, 2 of the participants who were done with the English syllabus gave this category a rating of 2 and 1 participant gave it a rating of 5.

Across all language levels there was mostly a neutral or positive rating for this category. However, the students who had finished their English classes gave negative ratings. Since the

sample for the students who were done with the English syllabus was small, it cannot be concluded that students with higher levels of English see AAVE speakers as unfriendly. Even more, taking into account that *Literatura en inglés VIII* students had mostly neutral to positive responses despite being the highest English level at the moment. Therefore, more research would be needed to find out if the mostly neutral responses are influenced by actual interactions with the dialect speakers, political correctness or any other reasons.

7.4.2 Intelligence

20. Intelligence

98 respuestas

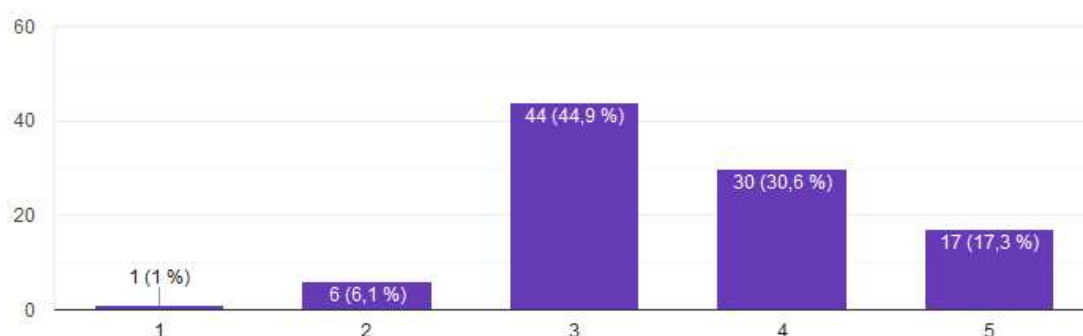


Figure 10.

In the “intelligence” category, similar results were found: 1 participant gave a rating of 1; 6 participants gave a rating of 2; 44 participants gave a rating of 3; 30 participants gave a rating of 4, and 17 participants gave a rating of 5.

Moreover, concerning participants from *Habilidades Integradas en Inglés IV*, results showed that 2 of them gave a rating of 5 in this category; 9 of them gave a rating of 4; 17 participants gave a rating of 3; 3 participants gave a rating of 2 and no one gave a rating of 1. Besides, in the case of students from *Tipologías Escritas en Inglés VI*, 6 of them chose option 5; 7 of them chose option 4; 9 of them chose option 3; 1 participant chose option 2 and none of them chose option 1. Also, regarding students from *Literatura en Inglés VIII* it was found that 9 of them gave a rating of 5; 13 students gave a rating of 4; 16 students gave a rating of 3; 2 students gave

a rating of 2 and 1 student gave a rating of 1. Meanwhile 2 students who were done with the English syllabus gave a rating of 3 and one of them gave a rating of 4.

In the Intelligence category there was much more unanimity in the responses across all language levels including those who were done with the English syllabus. Most participants gave neutral to positive ratings for this category which might show that students do not correlate dialect with intelligence.

7.4.3 Politeness

21. Politeness

97 respuestas

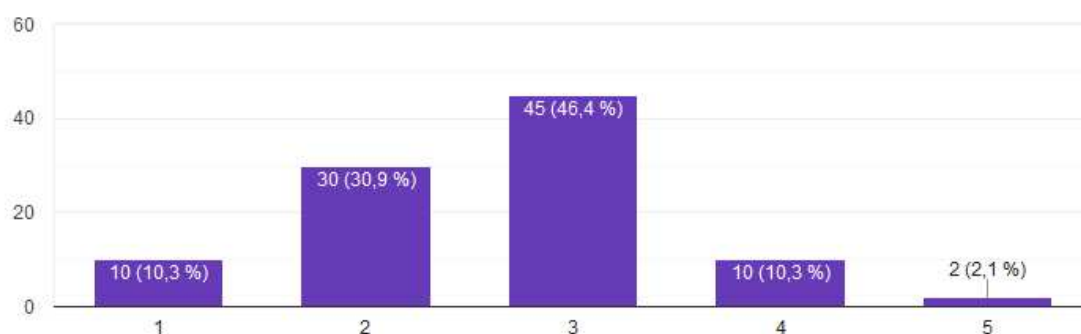


Figure 11.

Then, for the “politeness” category, 10 participants gave a rating of 1; 30 participants gave a rating of 2; 45 participants gave a rating of 3; 10 participants gave a rating of 4, and 2 participants gave a rating of 5. 1 participant did not answer this question.

Additionally, out of the 31 participants from *Habilidades en Inglés IV*, 1 of them gave a rating of 4; 14 of them gave a rating of 3; 12 of them gave a rating of 2; 4 of them gave a rating of 1 and no one gave a rating of 5. Moreover, out of the 23 participants from *Tipologías Escritas en Inglés VI*, 3 of them gave a rating of 4; 10 of them gave a rating of 3; 7 of them gave a rating of 2; 3 of them gave a rating of 1 and no one gave a rating of 5. Meanwhile, in the case of *Literatura en Inglés VIII*, 2 students chose option 5; 6 students chose option 4; 20 students

chose option 3; 9 students chose option 2; 3 students chose option 1 and 1 student did not answer. Then, out of the 3 students who were done with the English syllabus, 1 of them chose option 3 and the other 2 chose option 2.

In this category there was mostly a neutral to negative perception of the speakers. Even among the highest levels the perception of politeness for AAVE speakers is not high. Consequently, these results demonstrate that a great part of the participants have a perception of AAVE speakers that oscillate between a “neutral” and positive standpoint in terms of friendliness and intelligence. However, their perception towards AAVE speakers in terms of politeness seems to oscillate in a “neutral” to negative spectrum. Then, although most participants do not consider this variety to be in the same standing as the standard one, they do not hold overall negative views towards its speakers. It is even more remarkable how their perception of the intelligence of the speakers was not affected by their use of AAVE. However, results found in similar studies such as those by Cargile, Takai & Rodríguez show that non-native English speakers tend to give low ratings to AAVE speakers in categories that have to do with status such as intelligence.

Furthermore, students from *Habilidades Integradas en Inglés IV* tend to exhibit a more neutral position in the most positively rated categories (intelligence and friendliness) in comparison to students from English 6 and 8. Therefore, there might be a relation between less exposure to different dialects and more conservative opinions on dialectal variety. Besides, due to the small sample of students who finished with the English syllable, it is hard to gauge the difference or similarity of perception of this group with the others.

7.4.4 Possible occupation of the speakers

22. Possible occupation of the speakers

96 respuestas

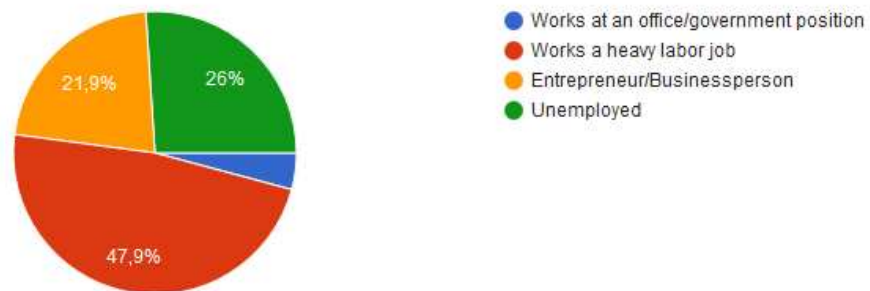


Figure 12.

Subsequently, when it came to occupation, the results indicated that 46 participants considered the speakers to fit the “Works a heavy labor job” choice; 21 participants voted for the “Entrepreneur/Businessperson” option; meanwhile 25 participants chose the “Unemployed” option and 4 participants considered the speakers to fit the “Works at an office/government position”. 2 participants opted not to answer this question.

Also, out of the 31 participants from *Habilidades en Inglés IV*, no one chose the “Works at an office/government position” option; 15 students chose the “Works a heavy labor job” option; 6 students chose the “Entrepreneur/Businessperson” option and 10 students chose the “Unemployed” option. As for students from *Tipologías Escritas en Inglés VI*, 1 student chose the “Work at an office/government position” option; 9 students chose the “Works a heavy labor job” option; 7 students chose the “Entrepreneur/Businessperson” and 6 students chose the “Unemployed” option. With respect to participants from *Literatura en Inglés VIII*, it was found that 3 participants chose the “Works at an office/government position” option; 21 participants chose the “Works a heavy labor job” option; 8 participants chose the “Entrepreneur/Businessperson” option; 7 participants chose the “Unemployed” option and 2 did not choose any of the options. Also, 2 of the students who were done with the English syllabus chose the “Unemployed” option and 1 chose the “Works a heavy labor job” one.

Across all levels the most chosen options were “Works a heavy labor job” and “Unemployed”. This can be related to the previous responses where the participants considered AAVE to not be standard English and to not be grammatically correct. It seems that many students do not consider that native speakers with “important” jobs would use a variety that seems so different from the standard.

7.4.5 Educational level of the speakers

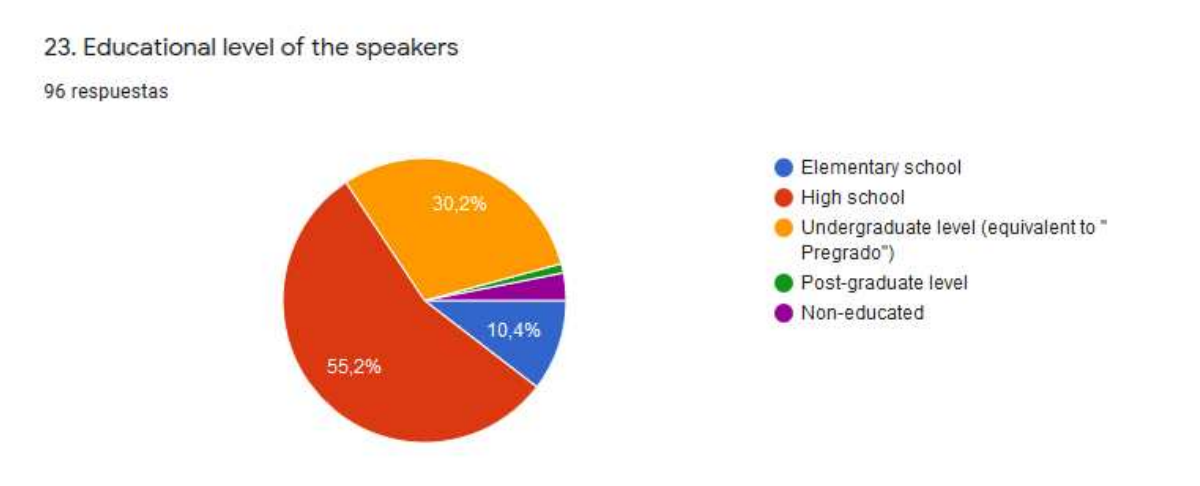


Figure 13.

Also, when it came to the “Educational level of the speakers” category, 53 participants voted for the “high school” option; 29 participants selected the “undergraduate level” option; 10 participants voted for the “elementary school” option; 3 chose the “non-educated” option and only 1 participant selected the “post-graduate level” option. This time the same 2 participants did not answer this question.

The breakdown by English level is as follows: 20 participants from *Habilidades Integradas en Inglés IV* chose the “high school” option; 8 participants chose the “undergraduate level” option; 1 participant chose the “elementary school” option; 2 participants chose the “non-educated” option and no one chose the “post-graduate level” option. In regards to participants from *Tipologías Escritas en Inglés VI*, 15 participants chose the “high school” option; 5 participants chose the “undergraduate level” option; 2 participants chose the “elementary school” option; 1 participant chose the “non-educated” option and no participant chose the “post-graduate level”

option. As for students from *Literatura en Inglés VIII*, 16 students chose the “high school” option; 16 students chose the “undergraduate level” option; 6 students chose the “elementary school” option; any student chose the “non-educated” option; 1 student chose the “post-graduate” level option and 2 students opted for not answering this. In addition, 2 of the students who were done with the English syllabus chose the “high school” option and 1 of them chose the “elementary school” option.

In all levels, there was a majority who saw "high school" as the most fitting educational background for the speakers. Just like in the "Possible occupation of the speakers" category, participants do not relate AAVE speakers with higher education for the most part. Nevertheless, *Literatura en Inglés VIII* students were slightly more balanced in this opinion. There was an equal number of participants who chose "high school" and "undergraduate level". Consequently, it seems that some of these students might have had the chance to see native speakers using this dialect regardless of their educational background.

7.4.6 Social class of the speakers

24. Social class of the speakers

96 respuestas

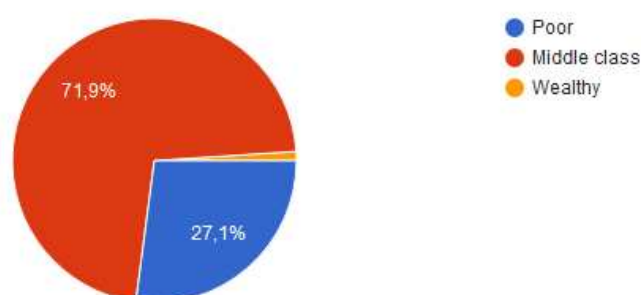


Figure 14.

Lastly, for the “Social class of the speakers” category, the results showed that 69 participants chose the “middle class” option, 26 voted for the “poor” option and 1 person for the “wealthy” option. Once again, 2 participants did not answer this question. Furthermore, out of the 31 students from *Habilidades Integradas en Inglés IV*, 12 of them chose the “poor” classification; 19 of them chose the “middle class” classification and nobody chose the “wealthy” classification. Also, out of the 23 students from *Tipologías Escritas en Inglés VI*, 6 selected the

“poor” classification; 17 selected the “middle class” classification and no one selected the “wealthy” classification. Additionally, out of the 41 students from *Literatura en Inglés VIII*, 7 of them selected the “poor” classification; 31 selected the “middle class” classification and 1 student selected the “wealthy” classification. Finally, out of the 3 students who had finished with the English syllabus, 1 of them selected the “poor” option and 2 of them selected the “middle class” classification.

In this case, despite the English level, most of the participants regarded the speakers to be middle class. This assessment is similar to the results found for “intelligence” and “politeness” where a majority of the students chose a middle ground; however, it opposes the results in the occupation of the speakers where most chose the “works a heavy labor job” option.

Results regarding the possible occupation and educational level of the speakers did not show significant differences concerning the English level of the participants. For the most part, students considered the speakers most likely worked a heavy labor job instead of working at an office or being a businessperson. In a smaller proportion they also considered the speakers to be unemployed. Moreover, in all of the levels, high school was the most chosen option regarding the education of the speakers; nonetheless, when it came to social class, “middle class” was the most chosen option among all levels. It is possible that students are aware that this dialect is not exclusive to certain social classes; conversely, taking into account their selections in possible occupation and educational level, they seem to equate this variety with low education.

8. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PROGRAM AND LANGUAGE TEACHERS

For the Program of Foreign Languages, this study could prompt the consideration of changes at the higher or structural level: the curricula, the way courses are built, the contents teachers put in them and the need to create conditions that favor pre-service teachers' acquisition or improvement of cultural awareness. This study could also contribute in fostering and reinforcing the idea of a Foreign Languages program where inclusion, interculturality and cultural diversity are at the core of the teaching-learning processes.

Consequently, this study advocates for the inclusion of AAVE in the English classes, so the learning-teaching process can be a means to foster diversity, thus, eventually lowering bias, segregation or conflicts at least inside the classroom.

At the lower and more specific level, future language teachers should take notice of the consequences of not acknowledging different varieties of a language. The possibilities of conflict in the classroom could increase for students with non-standard accents and dialects; these students could feel excluded and get discouraged which could lead to low performance.

At a certain point, not being conscious of and disregarding students' cultural diversity may negatively impact the affective filter (Krashen & Terrell, 1983) which may cause crucial variables for language learning to decrease (e.g., self-confidence, image of their own culture and personality traits). In that sense, this study encourages a shift from a standardized teaching approach to a more personalised or, at least, more eclectic approach in which diversity is highly welcome.

In addition, future teachers also need to be aware of their roles as authorities in the classroom and how they can contribute to either good or bad practices. Then, if they dismiss language varieties such as AAVE, they will foster the creation of prejudices against them. Besides, consciously or not, they will promote and reinforce a negative image of the so-called minority communities and their usually stigmatized way of speaking.

All in all, it is imperative for current and future language teachers to evaluate their own biases and how these can seep into their teaching practices. On the one hand, given the interconnection that is ever present in the modern world, learners have even more opportunities to interact with speakers from various backgrounds. Hence, the material used in the class should be as accurate a representation of the real world as possible.

On the other hand, the language class can become a great opportunity to celebrate inclusivity and respect for diversity. Teachers can challenge students' own bias against non-standard speech and, in turn, against minority groups. Thus, dispelling students' ideas that dialects like AAVE demonstrate lower status or education contributes in reducing negative stereotypes; in turn, this leads to students with better intercultural sensitivity and who can ultimately fulfill the role of the intercultural speaker.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the present study was to elucidate how much Licenciatura in Foreign Languages students recognize AAVE and what perception they have of this dialect and its speakers. A large part of the participants do not recognize AAVE as a dialect of English. This was evidenced in how their comprehension of the variety seemed to rely on the context more than preexisting knowledge. Moreover, they are not acquainted with some of the grammatical and lexical characteristics of this dialect despite their pervasiveness in English slang. Through their training as EFL teachers, the students have not been exposed to a great variety of dialects different from the standard; evidence of that is how regardless of the language level, the students had difficulties recognizing the AAVE features.

Furthermore, the students see AAVE as a variety that does not meet the grammatical requirements to be considered standard English. Nonetheless, they recognize that it can be commonly used among native speakers. Therefore, there seems to be a contradiction between the difficulty to recognize the dialect and the awareness of its prevalence among the speech of native speakers. Although most students did not demonstrate remarkably positive or negative sentiments towards the dialect, *Literatura en Inglés VIII* students were more likely to be neutral about judgement towards the correctness of the variety. Thus, proficiency level proved to have an incidence on how much understanding of contextual features the students could have.

Since students are not familiar with AAVE, they do not necessarily harbor strong positive or negative feelings about the speakers. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that the less favorable ratings for the speakers were usually given by students in the lower levels. The lack of awareness about the sociopolitical conditions that originated the dialect plays an important role in the judgements given about it. If it is expected for students in higher levels to be more educated on the reality of dialectal variety, then, it is not surprising that they would manifest more acceptance towards a non-standard dialect. Hence, it can be concluded that the higher the language proficiency of the students the more likely they are to exhibit intercultural sensitivity.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Survey

Dialect and speakers' perception survey

The purpose of this survey is to understand your perception of dialects and their speakers. Answering the questionnaire will take up to 5 to 10 minutes. This survey is confidential and the answers will only be used for academic purposes.

Stage 1: Demographical information

1. Age

- a. 20 or younger
- b. 20 to 25
- c. 25 to 30
- d. 30 or older

2. Gender

- a. Female
- b. Male

3. Ethnic background

- a. Mestizo
- b. Black
- c. Indigenous
- d. None of the above

4. Mother language

- a. Spanish
- b. English

5. Educational background

- a. Bilingual school
- b. Monolingual school

6. Level of the language

- a. Habilidades Integradas en Inglés IV
- b. Tipologías Escritas en Inglés VI
- c. Literatura en Inglés VIII

d. Done with the English syllabus

7. Jornada

a. Diurna

b. Vespertina

Stage 2: Learning experience in the teaching program

8. Have you been exposed to different varieties of English in your teaching program at university?

a. Yes

b. No

9. Do you recognize other dialects of the language aside from the standard one?

a. Yes

b. No

10. How important do you consider to learn different dialects of the languages you're learning?

a. Very important

b. Important

c. Not so important

d. Not important at all

Stage 3: Recognition of a dialect

"You know I'm not gon' diss you on the internet cause my mama taught me better than that"

11. Do you understand what this sentence means?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If your answer was yes, re-write down the sentence in standard English.

"People really be saying this dude the best thing to happen to twitter [but] he the best thing to happen to earth."

12. Do you understand what this sentence means?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If your answer was yes, re-write down the sentence in standard English.

"Stop tryna act all fake woke when people don't wanna censor these words cause tbh it aint your place to say that."

13. Do you understand what this sentence means?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If your answer was yes, re-write down the sentence in standard English.

"I lowkey want my nose pierced but I don't know if I'm ready for that commitment"

14. Do you understand what this sentence means?

- a. Yes
- b. No

If your answer was yes, re-write down the sentence in standard English.

Stage 4: Dialect perception

Rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements with 1 being the lowest score and 5 the highest one.

15. The sentences presented in Stage 3 correspond to standard English.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree	O	O	O	O	O	Agree

16. All the sentences are grammatically correct.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Disagree	O	O	O	O	O	Agree

17. It is common to hear native speakers talking like that.

	1	2	3	4	5	
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Disagree O O O O O Agree

18. I consider all language varieties to be equally valuable.

 1 2 3 4 5
 Disagree O O O O O Agree

Stage 5: Speakers' perception

Rate the speakers from Stage 3 according to the following characteristics with 1 being the lowest score and 5 the highest one.

19. Friendliness

 1 2 3 4 5
 Very unfriendly O O O O O Very friendly

20. Intelligence

 1 2 3 4 5
 Unintelligent O O O O O Intelligent

21. Politeness

 1 2 3 4 5
 Very rude O O O O O Very polite

Stage 5: Speakers' perception

Choose the characteristics that seem to describe the speakers of the dialect presented in the sentences from Stage 3.

22. Possible occupation of the speakers

- a. Works at an office/government position
- b. Works a heavy labor job
- c. Entrepreneur/Businessperson
- d. Unemployed

23. Educational level of the speakers

- a. Elementary school
- b. High school
- c. Undergraduate level (equivalent to Pregrado)
- d. Post-graduate level
- e. Non-educated

24. Social class of the speakers

- a. Poor
- b. Middle class
- c. Wealthy

25. If you have any further comments on the subject feel free to write them down.

I agree with the use of the personal information here collected for academic purposes.

a. Yes

b. No

Appendix 2. Focus group interview

1. ¿En qué cursos han sido expuestos a diferentes variedades de las lenguas que estudian?
2. ¿Esta exposición se ha dado más en los niveles básicos, intermedios o avanzados?
3. ¿Qué actividades han hecho con esta temática en las clases de inglés?
4. ¿Qué experiencia han tenido con las variedades de la lengua francesa?
5. ¿Qué experiencia han tenido en el español con las diferentes variedades?
6. ¿Qué variedades del inglés reconocen?
7. ¿Qué tanto conocen del African American Vernacular English?
8. ¿Por fuera de sus clases de inglés escuchan variedades dialectales del inglés? ¿A través de qué medios?
9. ¿Por qué consideran importante aprender diferentes variedades de la(s) lengua(s) que estudian?
10. ¿Por qué creen que se dieron estos resultados?
11. ¿Qué dificultades encontraron en la comprensión de los enunciados? ¿Por qué?
12. ¿Por qué consideran que se dio la oposición entre la percepción positiva de la variedad dialectal y lo que se considera gramaticalmente correcto y estándar?
13. ¿Qué relación encuentran ustedes entre la variedad dialectal, formación y habilidades de los hablantes?

14. ¿Por qué consideran que la gente hace este tipo de asociaciones?
15. ¿Qué sugerencias tienen para los docentes de lenguas del programa?
16. ¿En qué medida podría esta formación ser importante para ustedes como futuros docentes?