

NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF ORAL PERSONAL EXPERIENCE ACROSS
TWO LANGUAGES AND CULTURES: BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE
AND AMERICAN ENGLISH

by

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A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

Stories play a significant role in human culture, and storytelling is “both universal and timeless” (Wajnryb, 2003, p. 1). The importance of narratives in our everyday lives does not lie in its interactional function only, but in its ability to foster knowledge, memory, and organization of discourse (Bruner, 1991). Accordingly, this discourse mode has been one of the major themes in a variety of fields such as history, anthropology, psychology, literary studies, sociology, education, and, more recently, linguistics and cognitive science (Bloome, 2003; Johnstone, 2001). However, cross-cultural differences in storytelling are a factual possibility, and a word of caution is needed when generalizing the framework of narratives (Polanyi, 1985). Nevertheless, the majority of the works on narratives have taken a monocultural and monolingual approach, predominantly regarding American narratives, and how storytelling is conveyed in other cultures and languages remains to be uncovered.

In addition, the field of storytelling has generally been neglected in second language instruction. Telling and listening to stories, nonetheless, are among the very first tasks a language learner faces. It is not surprising then that many native and non-native speakers struggle understanding one another’s stories and ways of life, especially when they come from quite different cultures.

This study investigated the conventions governing Brazilian narratives in comparison to the narrative framework for American narratives using a Labovian approach. Further, this study explored narratives told in English by speakers of Brazilian Portuguese (BP) in order to examine the occurrence of L1 transfer of Brazilian storytelling features. The findings revealed that the

overall framework of Brazilian narratives conforms to the Labovian framework for American narratives albeit with significant and distinctive differences.

The main differences between Brazilian narratives and the Labovian American framework were their lack of abstracts, extensive use of constructed dialogue in the complicating action and resolution, non-linear orientation pattern, and absence of the historical present. These results indicate a possible language and storytelling transfer since American narratives do not normally present extensive constructed dialogue, while the historical present is typical of narratives in English. Suggestions for future research as well as practical pedagogical implications were also offered.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my wonderful parents, Alvaro and Nícia Junqueira, without whom none of this would have been possible. I am deeply grateful for their unconditional love and support. Their prayers and words of encouragement have helped me stay strong in pursuing my dreams in this country.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Narratives play a significant role in human culture forming the core of “novels, short stories, poetic and prose epic, film, folk tale, interviews, oral memoirs, chronicles, history, comic strips, graphic novels and other visual media” (Labov, n.d.). Accordingly, this discourse mode has been one of the major themes in a variety of fields such as history, anthropology, psychology, literary studies, sociology, education, and, more recently, linguistics and cognitive science (Bloome, 2003; Johnstone, 2001). According to Gulich and Quasthoff (1985), linguistic research on narrative analysis began with the development of text and discourse analysis; but today it is “one of the best and most extensively researched areas of the multi-disciplinary study of discourse” (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos, 1997).

The importance of narratives in our everyday lives does not lie in its interactional function only, but in its ability to foster knowledge, memory, and organization of discourse (Bruner, 1991). Bruner posited that “we organize our experiences and our memory of human happenings mainly in the form of narrative” (p. 4). Human beings make sense of the world and of their personal experiences by means of narratives, and storytelling is considered to be a semiotic skill innate to all people (Bruner, 1990; Gulich & Quasthoff, 1985; Johnstone, 2001). Rosen (1988) also suggested that the need to tell stories, or “autobiographical impulse,” seems to be universal, and Miller and Sperry (1988) argued that this desire to recount past events is expressed even by very young children. In view of that, scholars have proposed general structures and functions of narratives, defining their components, comprehension, and production aspects (Johnstone).

However, despite the apparent universality of narratives, they are not produced in a vacuum and shape as well as reflect social and cultural realities of the tellers (Flannery, 2004; Georgakopoulou & Goutsos, 1997). As Tannen (1993) put it,

people approach the world not as naïve, blank-slate receptacles who take in stimuli as they exist in some independent and objective way, but rather as experienced and sophisticated veterans of perception who have stored prior experiences as an “organized mass.” (p. 21)

Therefore, a word of caution is needed when generalizing the framework of narratives, as cross-cultural differences are a factual possibility. Polanyi (1985) expressed this concern in her study of “Conversational Storytelling” and called for empirical investigation in order to elicit the specific conventions of narratives across cultures. Tannen (1993) and Koven (1998, 2002) have investigated the framing between American and Greek and Portuguese and French stories, respectively. Tannen’s study investigated the structures of expectation about objects and events in a film watched and recounted by Greek and American participants, while Koven’s works examined the expression of self in stories told by Portuguese-French bilinguals. Their results revealed that whereas there may be an underlying narrative schema, the actual manifestation of narratives in context may reflect both linguistic and cultural influences.

Yet, the majority of the works on narratives have taken a monocultural and monolingual approach, predominantly regarding American narratives. For instance, Davies (2008) explored the distinctiveness of Southern storytelling, Johnstone (1990) examined Midwestern narratives, and Heath (1983) worked with two communities in the Southeastern United States: Roadville, a White working-class community, and Trackton, a Black working-class community. Davies (2008) found that Southern stories present more digression than the “mainstream American” narratives and that Southern storytelling, aligned with oral tradition, has an important socialization function in this part of the country. On the other hand, working with storytellers

from Fort Wayne, Johnstone (1990) found that these Midwesterners tell extremely detailed and realistic stories with specific information, which she called “extrathematic orientation,” such as precise dates and names of people and places in order to establish the reliability of the events being recounted. Heath (1983) studied, among other things, the storytelling habits and oral traditions of the people from Roadville and Trackton. She found that in Roadville stories are told to make fun of the storyteller, normally the main character, or of the audience. Moreover, their “stories recount an actual event either witnessed by others or previously told in the presence of others and declared by them “a good story”” (p. 149). Thus, another convention of Roadville narratives is that they need to have a moral or summary message, and the storyteller often needs to be invited to recount his/her experiences. Further, Heath examined the narratives told by the children of this community, finding that they are not allowed to tell stories, unless when called by an adult to recount something that happened to them. In addition, when Roadville kids do tell stories, “they are expected to tell non-fictional stories which ‘stick to the truth’” (p. 158).

On the other hand, Heath (1983) found that in Trackton, the African American community, stories hardly ever presented straightforward factual accounts of events and that good storytellers are people who can “talk junk” (p. 166). “Talking junk” means to creatively fictionalize events or details and resolutions of events that may have happened. Trackton kids, as opposed to their Roadville counterparts, begin telling and appreciating these fantasized and fictionalized narratives from an early age. Another difference between the oral traditions in the communities studied by Heath is that Trackton stories do not have moral summaries or messages as they focus on conflicts, resolution or attempts of it, detailed events, and personalities. These narratives are also characterized by “dramatic use of dialogue” (Heath, p. 168). Accordingly, we see that even communities in the same country present different cultural storytelling traditions

and features. However, how storytelling is conveyed in other cultures and languages remains to be uncovered.

As Koven (2004) observed, in this globalized world we have the opportunity to encounter different languages and cultures, being exposed to a gamut of social rules and traditions not our own. We share a repertoire of cultural patterns in which stories play a central role, and oftentimes we do not have the pragmatic competence needed to function effectively in these situations. This is especially true for second and foreign language learners who, beyond learning the linguistic skills of a new language, must also learn how to adapt themselves to its cultural and social aspects. As a result, researchers in second language studies have begun to tackle the pragmatic issues of language learning focusing mainly on requests, apologies, and, more recently, complaints (Koven).

In her study of cross-cultural pragmatics in American and German sociable interaction, Davies (2004) offered teachers of these languages conceptual frameworks and ideas for the classroom practice in order to “teach culture appropriately by fostering pragmatic awareness and interactional competence crossculturally” (p. 207). Further, she argued that pragmatic competence and awareness should be the highest priority in language learning. By the same token, Olshtain and Celce-Murcia (2001) advocated that language teaching should rely heavily on discourse analysis. As the authors put it, “discourse analysis and pragmatics are relevant to language teaching and language learning since they represent two related discourse worlds that characterize human communication” (p. 707). According to them, discourse analysis is related to “intended meaning transmitted within context”; that is, it is concerned with sequential relationships in production (p. 707). Pragmatics, on the other hand, represents the “interpreted meaning resulting from linguistic processing and social interaction” (p. 707). Thus, Olshtain and

Celce-Murcia, as well as Davies, proposed that teachers and students focus on different discourse characteristics in any given language activity. Moreover, they argued that possessing pragmatic competence and communication strategies based on discourse analysis are vital tools to help students compensate for a possible lack of linguistic knowledge.

However, the field of storytelling has generally been neglected in second language instruction, even in settings where pragmatics and discourse analysis have a place in the instruction. Telling and listening to stories, nonetheless, are among the very first tasks a language learner faces. As students, we study the grammar, vocabulary, spelling, phonology, and phonetics of a language, but rarely are pragmatic aspects taught; and even if we learn how to politely apologize for a mistake or request a favor, we are not told how our counterparts tell narratives and share their personal experiences. It is not surprising then that many native and non-native speakers struggle to understand one another's stories and ways of life, especially when they come from quite different cultures.

Accordingly, the purpose of this study was to investigate and offer a descriptive evaluation of the conventions governing Brazilian narratives and compare them to the narrative framework for American narratives developed by Labov and Waletzky (1967) and refined by Labov (1972). Further, this study aimed to explore narratives told in English by speakers of Brazilian Portuguese in order to locate the occurrence of L1 transfer of Brazilian storytelling features as well as to propose pedagogical implications that could afford these learners a better understanding of how American narratives are structured.

Statement of the Problem

Everyone is able to recount experiences—in one’s native language—in more or less colorful ways or with varying degrees of expertise. However, this is not always the case when learners attempt to tell their stories in a different language. Anecdotally, many extremely proficient speakers of a second language have reported not to be able to fully express themselves in a given L2 or to have people misinterpret their stories or comment on the way they narrate. As a non-native speaker living in the US, I have, numerous times, been interrupted by close American friends when I am telling personal stories. They normally question what the point of the story is or ask me to get to it sooner. Other Brazilians, who were part of this study and who have lived in the US for several years, have also reported that their American spouses and in-laws frequently interrupt their narratives and request the resolution. These constant interruptions made by Americans have piqued my interest in understanding how Brazilian narratives work and to what extent Brazilian learners of English transfer storytelling features when speaking English.

In addition, although Portuguese is “the seventh most frequently spoken language in the world” with over 200 million speakers, over 170 million in Brazil alone [Summer Institute for Linguistics (SIL) Ethnologue Survey, 1999], to date no research has been done examining the Brazilian narrative framework or investigating how Brazilian Portuguese speakers tell stories in English. According to Koven (2004), sociolinguistic studies on pragmatic behaviors of Brazilian Portuguese speakers have recently been developed with a focus on requests (see Koike, 1992 and Silva, 2000), while numerous studies have investigated discourse aspects of European Portuguese, such as forms of address, the use of diminutives, politeness, and directness among others (e.g., Carreira, 1997; Pedro, 1996; and Casanova, 1989) . Koven (1998, 2002) was the first scholar, however, to address narratives in her studies of Portuguese and French bilinguals,

but her focus was on the expression of self and role inhabitation of the speakers rather than on the framework or language transfer in storytelling. Therefore, the present study adds to the extensive body of literature on narrative analysis and initiates research on Brazilian narratives as well as on L1 transfer in storytelling.

Questions and Expectations

The purpose of this study is to analyze the storytelling patterns of Brazilian narratives and the possible L1 transfer of these patterns in conversational narratives told by Brazilian Portuguese learners of English. In order to investigate the components governing Brazilian stories and possible L1 storytelling transfer, first a set of narratives were recorded from monolingual BP speakers who were known to be good storytellers. Then, BP native speakers who were also fluent English speakers were recorded telling stories in Portuguese and in English. These narratives were then qualitatively examined and compared to the classic and influential Labovian narrative framework for American stories. To this end, four sets of questions were crafted in guiding this research.

1. How do the Brazilian narratives compare to the Labovian framework? In what ways are they different? Is it possible to generalize a “Brazilian storytelling schema” from the set of stories collected from monolingual storytellers who are acknowledged to be good storytellers by their audience?

2. Does this “Brazilian storytelling schema” abstracted from the monolingual storytellers appear in the stories told by Brazilian Portuguese native speakers fluent in English? Secondly, are these elements comparable to the framework developed by Labov?

3. How can we explain any differences in the story schemas? What are the implications for the notion of a “good storyteller” in the two cultures?

4. What are the implications for the second language classroom? How can we use these cultural differences in a protean linguistic practice to enhance the pragmatic competence of language learners?

Based on anecdotes reported by participants of this study and on my previous experience, I anticipated that Brazilian narratives would be, in general, significantly distinct from American ones and that these differences would affect how Americans perceive the stories’ effectiveness. Specifically, with regard to the first and second questions, I speculated that Brazilian narratives would lack an “abstract” and “coda”¹ and that the resolution would be given much later in the course of the story in order to create suspense. Moreover, I hypothesized that Brazilian narratives would present extensive digression and details, explaining why Americans request Brazilians to “get to the point”. As for the third question, I expected Brazilians to transfer the digression and detailed evaluation found in their L1 stories to the English version. Lastly, I also did not expect these participants to include an “abstract” or “coda” to the English versions of their narratives, which could contribute to jeopardizing the effectiveness of these stories for native speakers.

¹ “Abstract” and “coda” are, respectively, the first and last components of the Labovian narrative framework, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

What is Narrative?

Narratives are present in our everyday lives as an underlying language process closely related to memory formation and to how we make sense of the world and of ourselves as individuals. However, the definition of “narrative” is not clear-cut, and linguists have not come to a consensus on its meaning (Gulich & Quasthoff, 1985). As McCabe (1991) put it, “narrative is a word in danger of being overused” (p. xv). Various definitions for this discourse mode have been advocated according to different research paradigms, methodologies, and purposes (Bloome, 2003). In this section, I will review the most frequently used definitions of “narrative” and also indicate the working terminology used in this study.

One of the most influential definitions of “narrative” was proposed by Labov (1972), but his description has also caused recurrent confusion (Johnstone, 2001). According to Labov, narrative “is a method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events which actually occurred” (pp. 359-360). Based on this definition, he further distinguished “minimal narrative” and “fully developed narrative.” The former is “a sequence of two clauses which are temporally ordered,” while the latter includes orientation and evaluation (and often times an abstract and a coda) as well (p. 360). Labov also asserted that personal experience narrative, the story type that he worked primarily with, comprised “minimal” narratives as well as more elaborate or “fully formed” ones. Since then researchers have used this terminology to describe both conversations intended to interest people in the telling of events and any talk representing past events (Johnstone). Johnstone argued that this

misuse of the term “narrative” has also caused problems in the design and reporting of narrative research because, as she pointed out, “narrative” refers to two levels of narrative: the sequence of events that happened in the past and the act of telling these events or “story”. Johnstone, following Polanyi (1985) has opted to use the term “story” for “narrative with a point” and “narrative” for “talk that represents events in the past” (Johnstone, 2001, p. 639). In addition, Bruner (1990) claimed that a narrative’s “principal property is its inherent sequentiality; a narrative is composed of a unique sequence of events, mental states, happenings involving human beings as characters or actors” (p. 43).

Solsken and Bloome (1992, cited in Bloome, 2003) have also advocated for differences between “narrative” and “story” by claiming that “narratives are the text of the story”, not existing by themselves. They emphasized, however, that stories and narratives are inseparable aspects of storytelling. Georgakopoulou and Goutsos (1997) pointed out that the general public normally refers to “narrative” as “story,” and that the former is a more technical term which includes reports, future narration, plot summaries, procedural narratives, etc.

In addition, Gulich and Quasthoff (1985) provided an extensive review of definitional criteria used by scholars to describe the term “narrative.” Gulich and Quasthoff pointed out that Propp (1968), Jason (1977), Gulich and Raible (1977), and Ryan (1979) considered “narrative” to be a series of actions that happened in the past, whether real or fictional. This view of “narrative” was related to a unit of action or “function,” which later influenced the works in structural narrative analysis. The two key elements of this criterion were that the event was time and place bound, happening in the past at a particular place, and that fictional texts were also under the category of narrative (Quasthoff, 1980).

According to Gulich and Quasthoff (1985), the second definitional criterion refers to “narrative” as stories that contain transformation to a certain extent. That is, an event or action promotes some sort of change in the course of a story, making it a “narrative.” This concept is related to that of “reportability” discussed by Labov (1972) and van Dijk (1974-1975) in which out-of-the-ordinary circumstances take place relative to generally accepted expectations of the participants. The concept of reportability will be further explored below. Bruner (1990) also addressed this issue when he claimed that “stories achieve their meanings by explicating deviations from the ordinary in a comprehensible form” (p. 47). Furthermore, he argued that narratives are not necessary when things go as expected or as they should be. Gulich and

Another criterion used in the definition of “narrative” is that its participants need to be human or have human qualities and act like humans (van Dijk, 1972). Quasthoff (1980) was even more limiting in her definition of “conversational narrative,” asserting that the narrator has also to be one of the characters in the story.

The last frequently used criterion in the definition of “narrative” provided by Gulich and Quasthoff (1985) involves “certain formal characteristics.” Gulich and Raible (1979, in Gulich and Quasthoff, 1985), Labov and Waletzky (1967), and Labov (1972) have developed linguistic narrative macrostructures, such as structural components and evaluative functions, which will be discussed in further detail in the next section of this paper. Narrative tenses and connective devices are among other formal characteristics of narratives (Gulich, 1970 in Gulich and Quasthoff, 1985); Weinrich, 1971); and Quasthoff (1980) identified five formal features of conversational narratives: historical present, direct speech, evaluative and expressive speech devices, and high degree of detail.

The terminology used in this study is consistent with Labov's definition of "narrative," since I will use a Labovian approach in the data analysis section. Moreover, I specifically adopt Labov's terminology of "Personal Experience Narrative" for the stories told by the participants of this study as their narratives were oral accounts of their personal experiences. At times, the term "narrative" is also used interchangeably with the term "story."

Approaches to Narrative Analysis

In this section, I will review the most influential approaches to narrative analysis in as discourse. I begin with a discussion of "Structuralist Narratology," including "Story Grammar" and ethnomethodological approaches, and then focus on Labov's model of "Oral Versions of Personal Experience", which guided the methodology of the present study.

Structuralist Narratology

The internal structure of narratives has been a major concern of discourse analysts since Aristotle's *Poetics* (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos, 1997). One of the most prominent structuralist works is that of Propp (1968) on Russian folktales called *Morphology of the Folktale*, in which he identified narrative units that represent plot categories (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos). According to Johnstone (2001), Propp claimed that "all folktales have the same syntagmatic deep structure, the same sequence of "functions" or meaningful actions by characters" (p. 636). Lévi-Strauss (1964, 1966) was also interested in the universal structures of narratives, but his approach was more related to formal semantics. He argued that despite superficial differences, all traditional narratives worldwide present the same limited, basic themes (Johnstone). Following these two scholars, French literary analysts and philosophers—commonly regarded as

“French structuralists”—began studying the structure of literary narratives, prioritizing the underlying structures of stories (Gulich & Quasthoff, 1985; Johnstone). According to Johnstone and Gulich and Quasthoff, the best known French structuralists are Barthes (1966), Greimas (1966), Todorov (1967), and Genette (1966).

The narrative in structuralist analysis is viewed as a finished product and the process of narration is not taken into consideration (Gulich & Quasthoff, 1985). Further, the two main assumptions of structuralist approaches to myth and literature are that superficially different structures and meanings are in fact the same in abstract levels and that narratives can be studied separately from the events they refer to (Johnstone, 2001).

A specific approach to analyze the structures of narratives is “story grammar,” which accounts for the structures of tales and fables (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos, 1997). In line with its structuralist approach, the main assumption in “story grammar” is that there is a universal set of organizational features of stories which are “consistent with daily modes of comprehension and remembering that are also universal, regardless of type of culture or amount of schooling” (Mandler et al., cited in Georgakopoulou & Goutsos, p. 57). Story grammar analyses develop a story schema based on a goal-based structure, in which the protagonist has a set of goals and the means to achieve them. Moreover, this schema is suggested as a theoretical framework to guide readers in storing and retrieving information on the events and characters of a given story (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos). Therefore, one of the main objectives of story grammar is to account for comprehension, and several studies have been done correlating the surface of narratives with its underlying forms and how comprehension and recall are affected by these structures. These experiments, mainly done with children, have revealed that stories tend to be recalled in a conventional version, even when they do not conform to conventional structures

(Georgakopoulou & Goutsos). Georgakopoulou and Goutsos also pointed out that these studies suggested that responses to outcomes and internal responses of stories are not as well recalled as the settings, beginning, and consequences of attempts. In addition, causal relations are critical for storing as they are always recalled even if they occur far apart in a story. Overall, story grammar approaches have effectively been able to demonstrate the structures of basic types of stories.

Conversation analysts (CA) expanded the focus from the story as text to conversational storytelling by establishing what participants should do in order to produce a story—“to coproduce it conversationally” (Bloome, 2003, p. 307). In this approach, the foci are the sequentiality of turn taking and the listener and storyteller interactions (Bloome; Gulich & Quasthoff, 1985). According to Bloome, a given narrative should be topically coherent with the conversation in which it is inserted, and both the teller and the listeners, or co-participants, should collaboratively partake as recipients of the story. After the story is told, the conversation needs to be resumed by both parties as well. Accordingly, Gulich and Quasthoff emphasized that the listeners’ role is a major focus in ethnomethodological approaches as they are seen as active interactional partners.

There are, however, limitations to story grammar, ethnomethodological approaches, and structuralist narratology in general. Story grammars only focus on traditional stories (fables and tales) and fail to examine the “diversity of story pattern, even within a single culture” (de Beaugrande, 1982, p. 395). Accordingly, one of the main criticisms of structuralist approaches lies in their claims of universality provided that research has not been able to demonstrate the universals of narrative categories (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos, 1997). Moreover, structuralist analysts have focused only on the components and organization of narratives at the expense of story production, neglecting the social and cultural function of stories as well as their expressive

and affective features. Values, emotions, and attitudes are not taken into account in structuralist approaches as they fail to capture “the larger picture of communication and cognition, in which the telling and enjoying of stories is an enduring component of human activity” (de Beaugrande, p. 419). As a result, narrative analysis shifted from structuralist narratology to approaches focused on investigating the social, cultural, and cognitive functions and structures of narratives.

Oral Versions of Personal Narrative

Labov’s (1972) model of narrative analysis was the first to demonstrate the shift from the “propositional content of stories to their subjective and emotive elements” (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos, 1997, p. 59). His work on linguistic variation and social correlation in Martha’s Vineyard and in New York initiated his research on “danger of death” narratives, which led to his influential works on personal experience narrative (PEN). According to Labov, the question of “danger of death” when introduced in conversation, helps “overcome the constraints of the face-to-face interview and obtain large bodies of tape-recorded causal speech” (p. 354). These types of autobiographical stories normally elicit people’s most vernacular discourse because they cannot monitor their speech as freely when reliving intense experiences (Labov).

Using this context of dangerous and also embarrassing experiences, Labov asked people to tell stories about themselves and collected a large corpus of narratives. Fourteen of these stories are part of his and Waletzky’s (1967) classic publication “Narrative analysis: oral versions of personal narrative”, in which they proposed a formal approach to PEN. “The goal was to describe the invariable semantic deep structure of PEN, with an eye to correlating surface differences with the “social characteristics” of narrators” (Johnstone, 2001). Labov and Waletzky developed a general framework for narratives which was later refined by Labov (1972) with a

focus on evaluation. In the first model, the authors argued that a clause in PEN served two purposes: referential and evaluative. The referential function of narratives refers to the characters, setting, and events of the stories, while evaluation refers to the purposes of the storyteller and of the audience for telling and listening, respectively. Further, the evaluative function can be both evaluation clauses and evaluative aspects of referential clauses, stating or highlighting the point of the story (Johnstone).

Labov and Waletzky (1967) also defined narrative as a sequence of two clauses that are temporally-ordered, usually in the past tense. In other words, narrative clauses cannot be moved in the story without changing the order of the events (Labov, 1972). Labov provided the following excerpts as an example of the temporal order of narratives: “I punched this boy/ and he punched me” or “This boy punched me/and I punched him” (p. 360). In this case, the interpretation is clearly altered if we reverse the narrative clauses. On the other hand, the evaluation clauses, or non-narrative clauses, present a free displacement in the temporal sequence. Accordingly, as discussed in the previous section of this paper, for Labov, narrative is a sequence of clauses that is matched to a sequence of events which actually occurred, not only talk about the past (Johnstone, 2001). Some stories might only present narrative clauses, but Labov pointed out that normally PENs contain other elements. He called these narratives “fully developed” and proposed the components it may show: abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, result or resolution, and coda (p. 363).

It is important to note that Labov (1972) recognized that “there are complex chainings and embeddings of these elements,” but this seems to be the main framing of American narratives (p. 363). Further, Labov (2004) argued that narratives seem to be delivered with this same organization in different cultures. In addition, Johnstone (2001) pointed out that the

narrative components serve two purposes. First they refer back to the characters, feelings, and events at the time when the story occurred (or are understood to have happened), but they also shape the narrative interaction at the moment of the storytelling by “guiding the teller and the audience through the related events and insuring that they are comprehensible and worth recounting” (p. 637).

The first component of the Labovian framework is the *abstract*, which consists of one or two clauses at the beginning that summarize the entire story; that is, it encapsulates the point of the story (Labov, 1972). Further, it announces and makes a claim that the storyteller has a story worth the audience’s time. Abstracts may be summarizing statements or signal phrases that introduce the narrative (e.g., “Did I ever tell you about . . . ?, You’ll never guess what happened . . . ; I had a funny experience the other day., etc.” Georgakopoulou & Goutsos, 1997, p. 60). For instance, in the “danger of death” stories reported by Labov, when prompted if they had ever been in a situation where they thought they were in danger of being killed, narrators responded with the following abstracts: “I talked a man out of—Old Doc Simon I talked him out of pulling the trigger” or “My brother put a knife in my head” (p. 363). After providing these abstracts, they proceeded to elaborate the stories. It is important to keep in mind that not all stories have abstracts; very short stories often do not present an abstract, or the narrator may choose to create suspense and not give away at the onset what the story is all about.

The *orientation* identifies the place, time, characters, and their activities and is usually introduced at the onset of stories (Labov, 1972). The orientation can be found in the first narrative clauses, but Labov pointed out that there is usually an “orientation section” composed of free clauses (p. 364). A syntactic feature of the orientation is that it is normally told in the past progressive, indicating what was happening before the event to be reported (e.g., “I was sittin’ on

the corner an' shit, smokin' my cigarette, you know," p. 357). Moreover, Labov emphasized that the most interesting aspect of the orientation is its "placement," given that "it is theoretically possible for all free orientation clauses to be placed at the beginning of the narrative, but in practice, we find much of this material at strategic points later on" (pp. 364-365). When introduced later in a given narrative, the orientation can be used as evaluation and help create suspense by suspending the resolution or providing further detail in the complicating action. The functions of evaluative statements will be discussed below.

The *complicating action* consists of narrative clauses that recapitulate the main events—in the story world and in the world of the telling—and lead up to the climax, the maximum suspense in the story. It is the backbone of the story formed by the sequence of narrative clauses that reports a next event in response to a potential question, "And what happened then?" (Labov, 1982, 1997). The tension created by the complicating action keeps the audience interested and listening to the story (Johnstone, 2001).

The *resolution* or *result* releases the suspense and tells what finally happened. It often starts with the last narrative clause of the complicating action, explaining how the complication was solved. *Evaluations* are also commonly found just before the resolution. Over the past decades, Labov and others have refined this narrative framework, delving into the concepts of evaluation and in later works of reportability and credibility (Labov, 1997, 2004, n.d.). Before reviewing these concepts, it is important to go over the last element of the narrative framework proposed by Labov and Waletzky (1967): the *coda*.

Codas are free clauses found at the end of the narratives that signal the end of the story. They may be simple and straightforward statements, such as "That's it," "And that was that," and "That was one of the most important," or they might include general observations or show the

effects of the events on the narrator, as in “I was given the rest of the day off. And ever since then I haven’t seen the guy ‘cause I quit, I quit, you know. No more problems” (Labov, 1972, p. 365). There are some codas that do not seem to be connected to the main story, but they serve the purpose of bridging the gap between the events in the story world at the end of the narrative and the present moment, as in, “And you know that man who picked me out of the water? He’s a detective in Union City and I see him every now and again” (Labov, p. 365). After the introduction of a coda, the question “Then what happened?” is not possible or appropriate since codas close off the sequence of events and the narrative per se. A series of questions can also be used to represent this narrative framework:

- a. Abstract: what was this about?
- b. Orientation: who, when, what, where?
- c. Complicating action: then what happened?
- d. Evaluation: so what?
- e. Result: what finally happened? (Labov, p. 370).

According to Labov (1972), *evaluation* is one of the most important aspects of stories because it is used “by the narrators to indicate the point of the narrative, its *raison d’être*: what it was told, and what the narrator is getting at” (p. 366). In other words, the elements that serve as evaluation draw attention to interesting aspects of the story or unusual parts; in this way, the audience keeps listening and it allows the narrator to continue telling his/her story. A good storyteller uses this device well to produce narratives that captivate the audience and prevent listeners from asking the “withering rejoinder, “So what?” (Labov, p. 366). Labov pointed out that narratives of vicarious experiences are normally unevaluated, consisting mainly of narrative clauses. The following example is from Labov’s interviews with preadolescents in Harlem, in which the participants were asked about their favorite TV shows:

- a. This kid—Napoleon got shot
- b. And he had to go on a mission

- c. And so this kid, he went with Solo.
- d. So they went
- e. And this guy—they went through this window,
- f. And they caught him.
- g. And then he beat up them other people (...) (Labov, p. 367).

This short narrative is characterized by narrative clauses, no evaluation, and no orientation section, which is typical in the recounting of vicarious experiences. Personal narratives, on the other hand, especially interesting and well-told ones, have evaluative devices in almost every clause, as in this story documented by Labov (p. 367):

- a. When I was in fourth grade—
no, it was in third grade—
- b. This boy he stole my glove.
- c. He took my glove
- d. and said that his father found it downtown on the ground.
(And you fight him?)
- e. I told him that it was impossible for him to find downtown
'cause all those people were walking by
and just his father was the only one that found it?
- f. So he got all (mad). (...)

According to Labov (1972), the syntactic elements of this passage contribute to the point of self-aggrandizement, since “each element of the narrative is designed to make Norris look good and ‘this boy’ look bad” (p. 368). As a result, based on new analyses of evaluation, Labov modified the narrative scheme of Labov and Waletzky (1967), proposing waves of evaluation that permeate the narrative as follows:

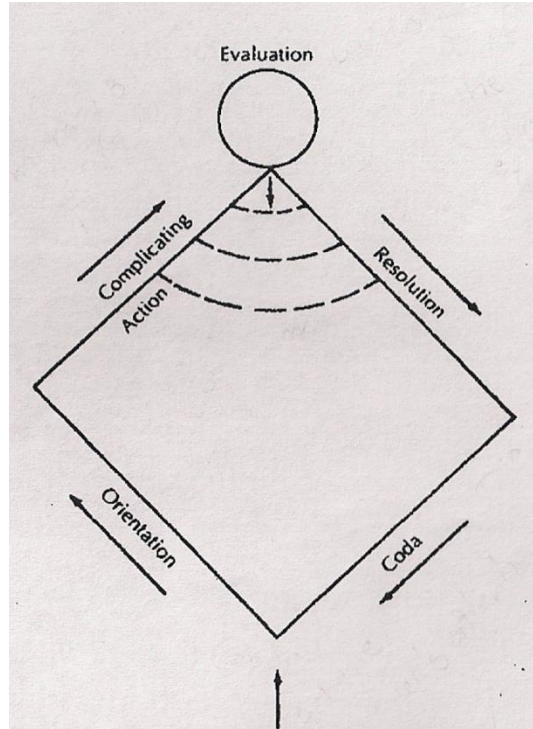


Fig. 1. Narrative schema (Labov, 1972, p. 369)

The chart represents spatially the idea that a narrative occupies its own domain. The arrows show entry from the longer conversation passage through the stages of the narrative, and re-entry into the conversation by means of the coda. This schema represents a complete narrative that begins with an orientation (an abstract at the onset is also frequently observed), continues to the complicating action, is suspended before the resolution at the focal point of the evaluation section, concludes with the resolution, and brings the audience to the present moment or acknowledges the end of the storytelling with the coda. It is important to underline, however, that the evaluation in this model, despite being concentrated after the complicating action, permeates the whole narrative as a secondary structure illustrated by the wave lines in Figure 1.

Furthermore, Labov (1972) posited that the point of a given narrative can be conveyed in numerous ways; thus, he identified different types of evaluation: external evaluation, embedding evaluation, evaluative action, and evaluation by suspension of the action. *External evaluation* refers to instances where the narrator stops recounting the events and tells the listeners what the point is (e.g., “and it was the strangest feeling because you couldn’t tell if they were really gonna make it; But it was really quite terrific, it was only a half-hour’s ride to Mexico City,” p. 371). This type of evaluation is typical of middle-class narrators and of therapeutic interviews (Labov). Instead of letting the story convey the information, some narrators tend to interrupt the narrative by using external evaluation to give the listeners the experiences. But it is also possible to provide external evaluation without overtly breaking the flow of the clauses. In this case, narrators may use evaluative remarks about themselves at the moment of events in the story world, as in “I just closed my eyes. I said, “O my God, here it is!” If the narrators do not think that such evaluative remarks will do justice to the dimension of their feelings or experiences, then they might resort to interrupting the narrative and offering a more external evaluation (e.g., “Well, ‘cause you have heard of people going to a funeral and killed themselves before they get there and that was the first thing that came to my mind,” Labov, 1972, p. 372).

Embedding evaluation has three steps for evaluating narratives while preserving the dramatic continuity of the story (Labov, 1972). First, narrators can quote the sentiment of something happening at the moment instead of explaining it to the audience outside the narrative. The second step involves narrators quoting themselves as addressing other people, as in “I say, “Calvin, I’m bust your head for that!” (p. 372). Next, storytellers may introduce a third person to evaluate the antagonist’s actions because evaluative comments hold more dramatic force when offered by neutral observers (e.g., “But that night the manager, Lloyd Burrows, said, “You better

pack up and get out because that son of a bitch never forgives anything once he gets it in his head,” p. 373). Labov emphasized that this technique is not as common as the other types of evaluation and is characteristic of older, highly skilled narrators from traditional working-class backgrounds. As previously mentioned, middle-class narrators often use external evaluations and Labov argued that embedding evaluations is seldom used by this population.

Evaluative action is a further step used to dramatize the evaluation of narratives. When using this device, narrators report what people did rather than said. Evaluative actions reveal the feelings of the characters in the story world through their actions (e.g., “and we were sitting with our feet—just sitting there waiting for this to start. People in the back saying prayers, ‘n everything . . . and when we saw what he was really over and then everybody heaved a sigh of relief”) (Labov, 1972, p. 374).

The last type of evaluation discussed by Labov (1972) is the *evaluation by suspension of the action*, which refers to the evaluation section before the resolution. While all evaluative devices reviewed thus far have the effect of suspending the action of the narrative, this is the specific goal of this evaluation section before the resolution. According to Labov, when the narrator artfully stops the complicating action and suspends the narrative, the audience’s attention is also suspended, “and the resolution comes with much greater force” (p. 374).

Other aspects of internal evaluation devices found in stories that depart from basic narrative syntax were classified by Labov (1972) as *intensifiers*, *comparators*, *correlatives*, and *explicatives*. *Intensifiers* strengthen narrative events and consist of gestures, expressive phonology, quantifiers, repetition, and ritual utterances. Gestures clearly cannot be seen in audio-recorded narratives or be transcribed, but they usually accompany a deictic “this” or “that” (e.g., “He swung and I backed up and I do like that,” p. 378). It is also possible for gestures to replace

a sound, as in “and the rock say (slap!)” (p. 379). Another frequently used intensifier is expressive phonology that is superimposed upon words of the clause, of which lengthened vowels are the most common (e.g., “And were fighting for a lo-o-o-ong ti-i-me, buddy,” p. 379). Moreover, these verbal devices are usually conventional, such as “powww” for punches or “shhhhh” for “be quiet.” The most common intensifier used by narrators of all age levels is quantifiers. For example, younger narrators often use the quantifier “*all*” at critical points in narratives, as in “and then, when the man ran in the barber shop he was all wounded he had cuts all over” (Labov, p. 379). Repetition, although syntactically simple, is a very effective intensifier device as it intensifies and suspends an action at the same time (e.g., “The rock went up—I mean went up;” “You bleedin’, you bleedin’, Speedy, you bleedin’!” (p. 379). The final intensifier described by Labov is ritual utterances, which are cultural and conventional statements used in given positions to mark and evaluate a situation. They do not present overt markers, expressive phonology, or quantifiers, yet they play an important evaluative role, as in “And there it was,” which means “and the real action started” or “and the shit was on” (p. 380).

Comparators are more syntactically complex than intensifiers, given that they compare events that occurred to events that did not. Narrators normally talk about the future or possible past situations when telling stories, even though these events did not actually happen. To this end, modals, negatives, futures, imperatives, quasimodals, questions, or-clauses, superlatives, and comparatives are used in the evaluative points of narratives. According to Labov (1972), “Negative sentences draw upon a cognitive background considerably richer than the set of events which were observed” because they are comparing and evaluating events that could possibly have occurred but that did not (p. 381).

While comparators take into consideration events unrealized and steer away from the sequences of events in the narrative, *correlatives* bring together in a single clause two events that happened (Labov, 1972). This is a complex syntactical structure and is not usually a resource of younger narrators. Examples of correlatives are progressives in *be, appended participles* (one or more verbs in *-ing* are aligned and the tense marker and *be* are deleted), *double appositives*, and *double attributives*. These last two devices are relatively rare because they are not frequently used in colloquial style. The following examples present a double appositive and a double attributive, respectively: “and then, they gave him a knife, a long one, a dagger”; “You see, a great big guy in the back alley” (p. 389).

Explicative evaluative clauses evaluate and explicate the narrative in separate clauses. They “may be qualifications connected with such conjunctions as while, though; or causal, introduced by since or because” (Labov, 1972, p. 389). Nevertheless, explicatives do not always bring actions together, as they are also used to inform the listeners of information that they are not familiar with.

Another important, and one of the most difficult narrative concepts discussed by Labov and Waletzky (1967), van Dijk (1975), Polanyi (1979), and by Labov in later works (1982, 1997, n.d.), is that of *reportability*. When telling a story, narrators hold the floor of a conversation for a certain period of time. Therefore, in order to justify the delivery of the narrative and the attention of the audience, the event must be interesting and reportable. Labov (n.d.) argued that “events that are socially ratified as justifying extended turns and re-assignment are reportable and narratives that include such events are reportable narratives” (p. 10). In other words, the story needs to meet certain criteria to be out-of-the-ordinary regarding the listeners’ expectations (Gulich & Quasthoff, 1985).

Labov (1997) pointed out that there are universal topics of interest that make events always reportable, such as topics dealing with “death, sex, and moral indignation.” These narratives can be told to anybody, without the person questioning why the narrative was told or wondering “so what?”. Events that might not be reportable to all audiences, such as what one ate for lunch or what outfit one decided to wear in a given day, can be told in more personal settings like at a dinner table with one’s family. In other words, stories or events that are considered irrelevant or maybe unexciting might not be reportable to any audience as they can be perceived as boring or not appropriate, but they are acceptable in more intimate circles, such as with family members or close friends.

Nevertheless, it is imperative to note that the reportability of a story varies greatly and depends on factors such as age, gender, culture patterns, and contexts. “Evidently, reportability is not a binary dimension but a scalar one” (Labov, 1982, p. 228). Polanyi (1979) also emphasized that general expectations are culturally specific and so are the reportability of narratives.

In addition, Labov (n.d.) pointed out that in order to be successful, narratives need to be not only reportable but also credible; otherwise they might be rejected by the listeners. Accordingly, “there is an inverse relationship between reportability and credibility: the more reportable, the less credible” (Labov). That is, experiences that are too out-of-the-ordinary and that would make great stories might present more challenges for the narrators to make them believable and credible, but there are numerous resources to enhance the credibility of a story, such as evaluation (Labov).

Another concept developed by Labov in later works (1997, 2004, n.d.) is the *assignment of praise and blame*, which “minimizes guilt, and relieves participants of responsibility for the outcome” (Labov, 2004). According to him, when telling stories, narrators re-create causal

networks that may involve conflicts and polarizing participants; thus, the assignment of praise and blame is essential for decisive events and actions as well as their outcomes (Labov, n.d.). He also pointed out that there are numerous devices used by the storytellers to assign praise or blame to the characters in their stories, such as “linguistic devices of mood, factivity and causativity, evaluative lexicon, the insertion of ‘pseudo-events’, and the wholesale omission of events” (Labov, 1997).

In this section, I have reviewed the most typical approaches to narrative within socio-linguistics; namely, structuralist narratology, story grammar, ethnomethodological approaches for conversational narratives, and the Labovian framework for oral personal narratives. I focused on the Labovian model given that this approach will guide the methodology and data analysis of this study.

Bilingualism

According to Gass and Selinker (2008), “*bilingualism* is a broad term . . . and has many forms and configurations” (p. 24). Consequently, a brief review of the terminology involving bilingualism is needed here, provided that the participants in this study who only speak Brazilian Portuguese are referred to as “monolinguals,” and the ones who speak Brazilian Portuguese and English are called “fluent English speakers/learners” rather than “bilinguals.”

First, the term bilingualism is treated differently in psychology, education, and the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). In psychology and education, the term bilingualism refers to the process of learning rather than to the end state. Because reaching native-like competence in a second language is a rare phenomenon, scholars, such as Edwards (2006) and Bathia (2006), have advocated the use of the term bilingual for learners of a second language at

different stages of proficiency. Accordingly, bilingualism can be seen as a matter of degree of proficiency in a continuum (Gass & Selinker, 2008). Valdés (2001) referred to the idea of bilingual as a person who “can pass undetected among monolingual speakers of each of two languages” as “mythical bilingual” (Gass & Selinker, p. 26). She also argued in favor of degrees of bilingualism, given that there are different types of bilinguals.

However, for second language researchers, bilingual is a more restricted term that applies to people who demonstrate the same mastery over two languages; that is, bilinguals can be considered native speakers of two languages as they show the same linguistic and cultural knowledge about them (Gass & Selinker, 2008). Kroll and Sunderman (2003) made a distinction between bilinguals and second language learners, and Deuchar and Quay (2000) defined bilinguals those who acquired two languages in their childhood (Gass & Selinker). Nevertheless, these researchers as well as Gass and Selinker have acknowledged that there are difficulties in defining bilinguals due to the various situations that can take place in bilingual acquisition. As Gass and Selinker put it, “the terminology used in bilingualism is far-reaching and overlaps to some extent with second language acquisition” (p. 26). In their book *Second Language Acquisition: An Introductory Course*, Gass and Selinker provided 37 definitions for different types of bilinguals, but emphasizing that it is very difficult to categorize all types of bilingualism since there are various combinations of ability and of learning environments.

Because of this rather ambiguous definition of bilingualism, the term “fluent second language learner/speaker” is preferred in this study. The participants who speak both Brazilian Portuguese (BP) and English are native speakers of BP and have learned English in school settings in Brazil and/or in the United States. However, none of them grew up speaking English and although they are fluent in this language, their proficiency could be assessed as very

advanced but not as native-like. Two participants have never been in an English-speaking country, and their cultural and pragmatic knowledge of English could not be compared with that of native or near-native speakers. The other participants have been in the United States for several years, but still maintain a recognizable Portuguese accent. In addition, this study aims to investigate possible language and cultural transfer in storytelling, which most likely would not be possible were the participants “true bilinguals” or native speakers of both BP and English. Thus, the terminology “fluent English speaker/learner” seems to be the most appropriate for these speakers.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Chapter III describes the research methods used to gather and analyze the data collected for this study on the framework of Brazilian narratives. The following three sections include (a) a descriptions of who the participants were and how they were selected, (b) a description of the procedures used to elicit the data, and (c) a description of the conceptual and analytical procedures used to describe the data.

Participants

The participants consisted of 10 Brazilian Portuguese native speakers: 3 of them were monolingual speakers of BP, and the other 7 were also fluent English speakers. The monolingual participants were two females and one male who lived in Brazil and were selected because they were considered good storytellers by their families and friends. It was important to record stories that were good representatives of Brazilian narratives and that depicted their framework well. The two females were related, great-aunt and niece, and lived in the same hometown in the state of Rio de Janeiro. The aunt was a 74-year-old retired government employee, and the niece was a 27-year-old recently graduated veterinarian. They are also my relatives; the older speaker is my great-aunts as well, and the younger speaker is my first degree cousin. The male monolingual was from another state in Brazil, Minas Gerais, and was a 23-year-old college student at the time of the data collection. We went to the same university and had many friends in common.

Among the other seven fluent English speakers, two had never been to the United States or any other English speaking countries, two had lived here for about 2 years but moved back to

Brazil, and three were living in the US at the time of the study. The Brazilians who had never been overseas had studied English for over 15 years and used the language on a daily basis. One was a 51-year-old female English teacher in a small town in Minas Gerais, with a Bachelor's degree in English and over 25 years of teaching experience. The other participant was a 25-year-old male dentist who lived in the state of Rio de Janeiro. The other two participants who had been in the US but moved back to Brazil were both female English teachers in the state of Minas Gerais and both held Bachelor's degrees in English and were pursuing Master's degrees in applied linguistics at the time of the study. One was 50 years old and had taught English for over 30 years, while the other was 24 years old and had been a teacher for approximately 5 years.

The other three participants were living in the US when the data were collected, more specifically in Alabama, and were all females. One of them was a 34-year-old English teacher with a Master's degree in ESL education who had been in the US for 1 year; one was an English teacher in Brazil for over 10 years and had been in the US for 5 years, as a stay-at-home mother, at the time of the study. The last English speaker participant was a 21-year-old college student at The University of Alabama and had been in the country for a little over 3 years.

These participants, unlike the monolinguals who were known as good storytellers, were selected on the basis of their language proficiency, given that fluency is essential in the production of narratives. In other words, their English fluency was the determining selection factor, not their storytelling skills. This researcher knew all participants personally as well as their language backgrounds and experiences (were are friends and former co-workers and the dentist is my brother). Accordingly, every effort was made to record speakers who would be able to tell fully developed narratives in English, without having any major language difficulties that could have caused communication breakdowns. It is important to note, however, that were the

participants by no means native-like speakers, presenting a noticeable BP accent and a few grammar and collocation errors typical of non-native speakers. Nevertheless, their pronunciation can be considered intelligible and comprehensible, in words reminiscent of Derwing and Munro (2005). According to these authors, even heavily accented speech can still be understood (intelligible) and easy to understand (comprehensible): “(a) the extent to which the speaker’s intended utterance is actually understood by a listener [is called] (intelligibility), (b) the listener’s perception of the degree of difficulty encountered when trying to understand an utterance [is called] (comprehensibility)” (p. 385).

Because of the need for participants who were fluent speakers of English and for good storytellers of Brazilian narratives, this study used non-probability sampling. That is, the participants were not selected randomly (Koven, 2004).

Data Collection

The data collection of this study lasted for approximately 1 semester. I recorded the stories from the monolingual participants and from two fluent English speakers in a trip to Brazil in the summer of 2009. In December of the same year, I went back to Brazil and recorded the other two fluent English speakers who lived in that country. Upon coming back to the US, I recorded the three Brazilians who lived in Alabama. Since I knew the participants on a personal level, the procedures of explaining the study and requesting their participation went smoothly, and they were very receptive to the project.

First, I briefly reviewed the overall goals of this study with each participant and carefully explained the procedures that they would follow, in order to determine if they wanted to participate in the study. They were also informed of confidentiality issues, how to request a copy

of the findings, and their option to not participate. I then provided each participant with a copy of the consent form (see Appendix A), which they signed after we went over it together. The consent form was originally written in English, but I translated it into Portuguese for the monolingual participants (see Appendix B). At first, the fluent English speakers expressed a certain concern or apprehension about being recorded in English, so it was important to let them know that my interest was in investigating the narratives they were going to tell, not their language proficiency. I assured them that they did not need to fret about their accents or any grammar issues that they might have, given that the study was on storytelling across cultures. I also tried to put them at ease by emphasizing that the more natural and authentic their stories sounded, the better it would be for the study. Following Koven's (1998) methodology in her study with Portuguese-French bilinguals, the order in which the fluent English speakers told the stories, English then Portuguese or Portuguese then English, was varied in order to avoid an order effect.

According to Koven (2002), the body of literature on tellings of the "same story" is small; some of the scholars who have worked with this issue are Bauman (1986), Chafe (1998), Moore (1993), Norrick (1998), Polanyi (1981), and Koven (1998, 2002), and they have taken distinct approaches in comparing the "same" stories within discourse analysis traditions: referential meaning and interactional meaning. In the former approach, the "same" stories can be told more than once, while in the latter "the interactional contexts of any two tellings will necessarily differ, the 'same' story can never be retold" (Koven, 2002, p. 169). In the current study, I adopt the same intermediate perspective followed by Koven, in which the participants may believe they are telling the same stories, making the referential content of both narratives somewhat stable. Nonetheless, the non-referential aspects of the stories may change across the

tellings, enabling the narrators to embed and perform “the ‘same’ narrated events in multiple contexts of telling” (p. 169). For this project, the participants told me the same stories in Portuguese and English, even though some of the structures and content may have been different in the two versions.

I met with each participant individually at their homes. After they signed the informed consent and answered any questions they had about the study or the recording procedures, I began the elicitation of stories of different kinds of personal experience. Accordingly, the narratives were not told spontaneously during the course of a conversation, but in response to my request for a story. The use of interview for obtaining data on language has been criticized by conversation analysts, such as Schegloff (1997), because of the effects of formal observation (i.e. speakers adjusting their speech to formal situations). However, Labov’s work on narratives has shown that these “effects are minimal in narratives of personal experience” (Labov, 1982, p. 221).

Following Labov’s (1972, 1982) proposition that stories about “danger of death,” embarrassing, or funny experiences elicit the closest approach to the phonology and syntax of the storyteller’s vernacular, I asked these questions in a casual but systematic manner, so that the interviews would be sufficiently controlled to make the contexts comparable to each other. Another criterion that I deliberately requested of the participants was that they tell rather short stories, since these would be transcribed and thoroughly examined. However, none of the participants recalled having a “danger of death” experience, opting to tell funny or remarkable personal experiences that could be recounted within 5 minutes or so.

During the recording of the stories, I, as the interviewer and audience, acted as casual and appreciative as possible by, for example, making back channeling sounds to show interest. I

refrained from participating in the stories too actively, though, in order to yield the floor as much as possible to the storytellers. This was especially important when the participants were telling stories in English, as they had expressed feeling self-conscious about being recorded in a foreign language. Thus, a constant interference could have disrupted their narrative's flow. However, in a couple of the stories told by the monolingual participants, I interacted more actively in instances where I could not understand the point they were making or by laughing and making comments about their hilarious experiences; not doing so would have seemed aberrant, since in unmonitored conversation funny stories always draw out spontaneous reactions and laughter from the interlocutors. All the stories were recorded with a digital recorder, which was placed at a table near us or held close by the participants themselves.

Data Analysis

Once collected, the narratives were transcribed verbatim according to adapted transcription conventions found in Tannen (1993) and developed by the linguists Rob Bernardo, Patricia Clancy, Pamela Downing, John DuBois, and Deborah Tannen, who worked on “the pear project” under the direction of Wallace Chafe (see Appendix C). Each numbered line represents an idea or “focus of thought” (Holsánová, 2008, p. 3). It is also important to note that these transcriptions include verbal, non-verbal, and prosodic/acoustic features of the narratives. As Holsánová put it, non-verbal features are, for instance, “gestures and laughter,” while prosodic/acoustic features refer to “intonation, rhythm, tempo, pauses, stress, voice quality, and loudness” (p. 3). Furthermore, readers should keep in mind that the transcriptions do not follow syntax and punctuation of written language and that forms that are not normally found in written discourse, such as *uhum*, *uh*, *ehh*, etc, are included (Holsánová). Additionally, the narratives told

by the BP monolinguals were translated into English by me. Excerpts from the transcriptions will be used in the results section (Chapter IV) of this paper, but complete transcriptions of all stories are found in Appendix D.

Further, the stories were extensively analyzed following the narrative framework suggested by Labov and Waletzky (1967) and Labov (1972, 1982, 1997, 2004, n.d.) and reviewed in Chapter II of this study. I closely scrutinized the narratives in order to identify the functional components of these stories. Specifically, I compared the organization of the narratives recorded for this project with the components of a fully formed narrative: abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, resolution, and coda (Labov). Moreover, the structures of these narratives were analyzed in terms of the cultural and interactional roles they might play in Brazilian storytelling. Reportability, the assignment of praise and blame, and moral dimensions of the stories were also examined using a Labovian approach. Finally, aspects of oral tradition are discussed based on Davies' (2008) study of Southern storytelling.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This section presents the analyses of the narratives recorded from the monolingual participants and fluent English speakers. First, the stories told by the monolinguals were analyzed qualitatively in order to examine the typical components of Brazilian narratives by comparing them to the framework proposed by Labov and Waletzky (1967), and Labov (1972, 1982, 1997, 2004, n.d.). Next, the stories told in English were compared to their counterparts in Portuguese, in order to locate any storytelling transfer between them. The results of these analyses are discussed below according to the following research questions found in Chapter I:

1. How do the Brazilian narratives compare to the Labovian framework? In what ways are they different? Is it possible to generalize a “Brazilian storytelling schema” from the set of stories collected from monolingual storytellers who are acknowledged to be good storytellers by their audience?
2. Does this “Brazilian storytelling schema” abstracted from the monolingual storytellers appear in the stories told by Brazilian Portuguese native speakers fluent in English?
3. How can we explain any differences in the story schemas? What are the implications for the notion of a “good storyteller” in the two cultures?

Abstracts

First, with regard to the Labovian framework, the analyses revealed that the monolingual participants did not include any sort of “abstract” in their stories, as hypothesized in chapter I. As noted earlier, in the Labovian framework abstracts are brief summaries of the narratives given by the narrators at the onset of the stories (e.g., “I talked a man of—Old Doc Simon I talked him out

of pulling the trigger” Labov, 1972, p. 363). Two of the three monolinguals began the narratives with the coordinating conjunction “so” (*então*), and the third one with the interjection “Ah,” indicating that they were getting ready to start recounting their stories. Immediately after “so” and “ah,” they provided part of the “orientation” that included “evaluation,” as seen in the excerpts below:

Monolingual speaker 1

No abstract

1. Ah...eu fui ao correio
2. E na entrada do correio um garoto assim uma aparência humilde

Translation

1. Ah..I went to the post office
2. And at the post office’s entrance a boy of a like humble appearance

Monolingual speaker 2

No abstract

1. Então...eu tinha três gatos né?...
2. Aí..éééé...a fêmea ..ela tava prenha..então eu passei a deixar ela dormir no meu quarto...porque ela a qualquer momento podia ter filhote...
3. Aí acabou foi lá ela teve filhote ...aí ela tava com 4 filhotinhos...e eu queria que ficasse perto de mim porque ela de vez em quando deitava em cima de um aí eu ajeitava e tal e tal.

Translation

1. So...I had three cats right?...
2. Then...ummm...the female...was pregnant...so I started letting her sleep in my bedroom...because she could deliver at any moment...
3. Then she had the kittens and all...then she had four kittens ...and I wanted them to stay close to me because she sometimes would lie on top of one and then I would go and rearrange them and stuff.

Monolingual speaker 3

No abstract

1. Então...teve uma vez que eu fui pra Raul Soares e durante a noite eu tava dormindo e acabou a luz que tava chovendo muito
2. E lá na minha casa de Raul Soares tem a janela toda de madeira que não deixa entrar luz nem da rua nem luz da lua
3. Fica tudo muito escuro durante noite

Translation

1. So...there was one time when I went to Raul Soares and during the night I was sleeping and the power went out because it was raining a lot
2. And there at my house in Raul Soares the windows are made of wood blocking the street lights and the moon light
3. Everything is very dark during the night.

These examples clearly show the absence of an “abstract” in the narratives. In the first narrative, the storyteller set the place and, at this point, the two participants of the story: herself and the “humble” boy. She skillfully described this boy’s appearance because this will be a relevant fact in the development of the story. The same pattern is found in the other two narratives, where the speakers provided the place and some of the stories’ participants at the same time that they evaluated them. In the second story, the participant made a point that she wanted to keep the female cat and the kittens in her bedroom in order to take good care of them, while in the third story the speaker explained where the story took place and then gave the reason that it was so dark in the room. In all three instances, the information and evaluation provided by the storytellers are important to set the assignment of praise and blame, as they mitigate their fault for the events that they were about to recall.

As for the stories that were told both in English and Portuguese, four out of the seven participants provided an “abstract” when telling the story in English, but interestingly, only two of them (6 and 7) also had an abstract for the BP version of the narratives (the abstracts are in bold face). Accordingly, it seems safe to argue that the first difference between Brazilian and American narratives is the possible preferred absence of an “abstract” in the former.

Fluent English speaker 1

No abstract: BP

1. Eu vim pro Alabama em 2006 em agosto
2. Eu vim fazer intercâmbio estudar inglês
3. Eu tinha planos de ficar 4 meses aqui de agosto a dezembro

No abstract: E

1. Um/ I came here in 2006/August of 2006 to do the ELI program study English
2. My first week here I went to a party and I met a Lebanese guy
3. Uh we started going out

Fluent English speaker 2

No abstract: BP

1. Uma vez enquanto eu ainda estava na faculdade
2. a minha namorada resolveu fazer uma festa surpresa pra mim..

No abstract: E

1. When I was at college...
2. my girlfriend tried to throw me a surprise party...

Fluent English speaker 3

No abstract

1. Quando eu tinha mais ou menos dez anos de idade
2. eu morava no Brasil com minha familia, eu tinha dois irmãos, o Edson de 7 e o Carlos de 1 ano de idade..

Abstract: E

1. **Um, this is uh a very interesting story about a little monkey that showed up at our back yard**
2. When I was about 10 years old, um,
3. I had two other brothers at the time Edson was seven and Carlos was one...

Fluent English speaker 4

No abstract: BP

1. Eu tenho três filhas, né...Uma delas mora no sul do Brasil
2. e meio longe daqui então ela não pôde vir passar o dia das mães comigo e eu tava super triste

Abstract: E

1. **I'm gonna talk about something that happened to me last Mother's Day.**
2. It was very touchy for me, yeah.
3. Umm...I have three daughters..One of them lives in the South of Brazil,
4. it's kind of far way from here and she didn't come to celebrate Mother's Day with me you know I was very sad because of that..

Fluent English speaker 5

No abstract: BP

1. Bom, eu sempre gostei muito de inglês ..desde de pequena eu fiz eh cursos ..particulares de ingles
2. E faz dez anos que eu faco curso de inglês e...
3. foi ai que eu optei por fazer a faculdade de letras

No abstract: E

1. So, as you know I always liked English and
2. Um I always wanted to go to the US to to study English and study American culture and
3. Um [?] I've been studying English for ten years and when I got into the university I had the chance to get a scholarship to go to the US and I just applied for it

Fluent English speaker 6

Abstract: BP

1. Oi, meu nome é Natalia Hickman
2. eu sou do Rio de Janeiro, Brasil.
3. Eu to morando aqui há quatro anos e meio.
4. **Eu vou falar sobre meu casamento que foi muito bonito.**

Abstract: E

1. My name is Natalia Hickman
2. I am from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and I've been living here for four and a half years.
3. **I'm gonna tell you about my wedding.**
4. It was a very special day of my life.

Fluent English speaker 7

Abstract: BP

1. **Eu vou contar aqui a historia de como a minha vida mudou ...há pouco tempo atrás**

Abstract: E

1. **I'm gonna tell a story about how my life changed this past year.**

It is important to note that Labov (1972) also argued that the abstract is not always found in the American framework, but the great majority of the stories he worked with contained abstracts. Abstracts encapsulate the point of the narratives and are especially observed in formal

interviews where stories are elicited. For instance, in Labov's study the participants provided abstracts when prompted on whether they had ever been in a situation where they were in serious danger of being killed: "My brother put a knife in my head"; "I talked a man out of pulling the trigger" (p. 363). The stories did not stop there, though. After offering these brief summaries on the "danger of death" subject, the narrators went on to tell the narrative proper. Accordingly, abstracts do not take the place of the stories, and their function is not to advertise or to warn the audience, but rather to "state what the narrative is about and why it was told" (p. 370).

Nonetheless, when telling funny stories, it appears that storytellers refrain from offering an abstract in order not to give away the climax of the story too early. In a project for a linguistics class in my master's program, I recorded and analyzed an American narrative in which the narrator also did not provide an abstract, even though her narrative was elicited in a formal interview (Junqueira, 2009a). The narrative was about an embarrassing and yet humorous experience the narrator had when living as an exchange student in Spain; thus, she most likely did not include an abstract at the beginning because she did not want to give the funny resolution away too early.

In this study, however, only two participants, two of the BP monolinguals, told humorous stories, but the others did not offer an abstract, either (with the exception of fluent English speakers 6 and 7 discussed above). Since the participants were all prompted to tell stories, as in Labov's experiments, an abstract could be expected in order to inform the interviewer about the content of the story. Based on my experiences and on the data of this study, I speculate that Brazilians normally do not include an abstract in their narratives in an attempt to suspend the action and hold the audience's attention as much as possible. This is the first indication that

storytelling might play an important social role, other than simply a means for narrating events, in Brazilian society, as will be discussed in below.

Orientation

The second component in the Labovian framework is the orientation, which also appears at the beginning of the narratives in the Brazilian stories. The orientation is fundamental to the narrative as it identifies the characters, place, time, and the “general behavior before or at the time of the first action” (Labov, 1982, p. 226), as in “This was just a few days after my father had died, and were sitting shive. This was in Coney Island” (p. 222).

In this study, all participants began the stories by setting the place and the characters and, in some cases, date and time were also provided. However, the recordings revealed an important characteristic in the arrangement of the orientation material in these narratives: the orientation found in this study was not linear, permeating the entire stories with information about characters, place, and time. Again this finding matches the hypotheses proposed in Chapter I. In other words, the monolinguals as well as the fluent English speakers provided orientation material throughout the stories and not only at the onset. In her study on digression in Southern storytelling, Davies (2008) linked digressions to the Labovian framework as “extreme elaborations or unusual manifestations in the orientation and the evaluation, located at unexpected places in the discourse” (p. 175). As suggested by Labov (1972, 2004), this is a procedure used when storytellers wish to suspend the action of the narrative.

Therefore, again we see that Brazilians appear not to want to give away too much information at the beginning, in order to capture the audience’s attention and possibly extend the storytelling process. As Davies (2008) put it, “perhaps the most obvious pragmatic implication of

the norm of digression is a cultural value placed on the extended process of storytelling” (p. 176). Nevertheless, this practice might frustrate listeners who are not familiar with this framework or cause confusion or surprise when they do not understand important background information about the stories, as seen below in my interaction with one of the monolinguals:

Monolingual speaker 2

9. Caiu...a sorte é que tem um coqueiro embaixo da minha janela...
Luciana: [laughs]
10. [laughing] ela foi pelas folhas..só que tem um pastor alemão lá embaixo esperando ela...
Luciana: É aqui? [Laughing]
11. É.. aquí...
Luciana: [laughs out loud]

Translation

9. She fell off...luckily there is a coconut tree under my window...
Luciana: [laughs]
10. She went down the leaves..but there is a German Shepherd down there waiting on her
Luciana: Is it here? [Laughing]
11. Yes, it's here..
Luciana: [laughs out loud]

In this excerpt, the monolingual speaker is recounting the complicating action of the story and moving to the resolution, yet she had failed to provide an essential piece of information at the beginning of the narration: that the event being recounted happened at her house where the interview was taking place. Moreover, this was also the house of this researcher's grandparents, which explains my surprise and laughter when I finally realized that the story took place right there, as seen in my question “Is it here?”, followed by an outburst of laughter. The participant could have acknowledged this relevant fact at the beginning of the narrative, but by not doing so, she was able to skillfully elicit a more expressive reaction from me, her audience. It is clear that she held this orientation material in order to keep the suspense, making her story more

captivating. I, of course, was not disturbed by her storytelling practices, considering that I am also Brazilian and tend to tell stories in the same fashion, but it seems quite reasonable that listeners from different cultural backgrounds might not appreciate or understand such framework as well. This could explain the requests from Americans to Brazilians to “get to the point” when they tell stories, as reported by the participants of this study who have lived in the US and as experienced by this researcher.

The second monolingual followed the same pattern and provided extensive orientation details throughout the narrative.

Monolingual speaker 2

3. Chegou perto de mim e perguntou onde era a rua tal.. eu já não me lembro mais qual é a rua.. eu falei que não sabia...
4. E ele estava.. Eu falei: “O que que você quer?”.. Ele tava com um bilhete na mão dizendo que... depois ele contou a história...
5. Nesse instante ia saindo.. um senhor bem vestido com.. parecia que era um advogado porque ele tava no no fórum

Translation

3. He got close to me and asked where the street so and so was and stuff, I don't remember what street anymore, I said that I didn't know,
4. And he was... I said: “What do you want” He had a card in his hands saying that...he told a story...
5. At this moment a well-dressed man.. was leaving with.. it seemed he was a lawyer because he was at the court house

In line 5, the storyteller introduces a new character in the story, the well-dressed man, after she had already started recounting the events. Here, she suspends the narrative action to provide more orientation and evaluation. The third monolingual story, however, is very short (53 seconds), so the speaker moves from the orientation section directly to the complicating action.

Monolingual speaker 3

4. Eu acordei no meio da noite e percebi que tava tudo muito escuro e comecei a tentar enxergar alguma coisa

5. como eu não tava conseguindo enxergar nada, eu comecei a achar que eu tava cego..
6. comecei a estapear a cara e gritar: “Júlio César tô cego, Júlio César tô cego!”

Translation

4. I woke up in the middle of the night and noticed that everything was very dark and I started trying to see something.
5. Since I was able to see nothing, I began to think that I was blind;
6. I began to slap my face and scream: “Júlio Cesar, I’m blind! Júlio Cesar, I’m blind!”

The stories told in English present a similar orientation pattern different from the typical pattern in English. The participants provided orientation material throughout the entire stories as evidenced in the following excerpts.

Fluent English Speaker 3

38. So we said: “Dad, how are we going to release him?”
39. Well/ we lived in a small town of about forty five thousand people
40. and there was there were all these small little farms in the country.

Fluent English Speaker 7

4. So I came did the interview and what was my surprise that after 15 days I was invited to work as the coordinator of the bilingual school which is going to be implemented in the Methodist Institute Isabella Hendrix.
5. This is a very traditional school here in Minas Gerais as are many other Methodist schools around the world .
6. So we are going to start the bilingualism with the small kids and then continue up to high school.
7. So I changed my life I moved from the city in the interior came to live in this big metropolis which is the capital of the state, Belo Horizonte,
8. which is a metropolitan city you know
9. and the town where I used to live was way smaller
10. and there are just all kinds of things that you can do in BH

Evaluation

In addition to providing orientation material throughout the narrative, the monolingual participants offered extensive evaluation devices in almost every clause, which—according to

Labov (1972)—is typical of older, accomplished storytellers. Stories that are limited to the complicating action, usually narratives of vicarious experiences and narratives told by children, are seen as not having a point (Labov, 1982). The functions of evaluation and evaluative devices are to indicate the point of the narrative, its “raison d’être,” as well as to suspend the action, creating suspense, and thus avoid the “withering rejoinder, “So what?” (Labov, 1972, p. 366). The following passages are examples of some evaluative devices in the monolingual stories.

Monolingual speaker 1

18. E o senhor me chamou: “Não...vamos de carro que a gente vai até lá na caixa e resolve”...
19. E eu **inocentemente** [laughing]

24. Ele... ele....aí o menino...
25. Quando eu meti a mão na porta...**que aí que eu raciocinei a burrice que eu fiz porque eu entrei no carro de uma pessoa desconhecida..**

Translation

18. And he called me: “No/ let’s go by car so that we can go there and solve this”//
19. And I **naively** (laughing)//

24. He/he/ then the boy //
25. When I grabbed the door/ **‘cause then I realized the stupidity that I did because I got in a stranger’s car.**

Line 19 is an example of embedded evaluation, in which the narrator evaluates her own behavior as “naively” without interrupting the narrative. On the other hand, line 25 is a classic case of internal evaluation that suspends the action and provides the point of the story (Labov, 1972). In the following excerpt, the second monolingual provides more orientation right before the complicating action (i.e., It was summer; It was during the night), and in line 14 she describes what she was wearing, while in line 15 she provides an external evaluation by pointing out that the dog could have killed her, which gives even more credibility to her story.

Monolingual story 2

4. Só que tava no verão isso...calorzão...quando ela ficava no meu quarto..eu deixava a janela fechada,
 15. Foi de madrugada..
 16. **Desci correndo de pijama/** fui la agarrei a cachorra..
 17. **Que ela podia ter me matado..**
-
4. But it was summer... super hot... when she stayed in my bedroom... I would leave the window closed,
 15. It was in the middle of the night
 16. I went downstairs running....**in my pajamas**....went there grabbed the dog,
 17. Which she could **have killed me**..

The third monolingual participant quoted himself in the embedded evaluation below and also used quantifiers, such as “nothing”, and “entire”. According to Labov (1972), quantifiers are the most common way of intensifying clauses, being used by narrators of all ages. As mentioned in Chapter II, Labov pointed out that the quantifier “all”. For instance, by using the quantifiers “nothing” and “entire” in lines 5 and 7 below, the narrator implies that the magnitude of his predicament was much greater than if he had simply not been able to see some things and that only his brother, Julio César, who shared the room with him, had woken up.

Monolingual speaker 3

5. Como eu **não tava conseguindo enxergar nada**, eu comecei a achar que eu tava cego;
 6. comecei a estapear a cara e gritar: “Júlio César tô cego, Júlio César tô cego.”
 7. **A casa inteira** levantou e venho ver o que tava acontecendo
-
5. **Since I could see nothing**, I began to think that I was blind;
 6. I began to slap my face and scream “Júlio Cesar, I’m blind! Júlio Cesar, I’m blind!”
 7. **The entire house** got up and came to see what was going on;

The fluent English speakers also provided extensive evaluation in the stories told in English as well as in the BP equivalents:

Fluent English speaker 3

5. and that day we came home from school and we had a **big** surprise
 6. ‘cause **it wasn’t a bird** that was in the cage/ it was a little bitty monkey
 7. **it looked kind of like the monkey on the movie um “A night at the museum”**
 8. **with uh Robin Williams the monkey that he has on his shoulder in that movie**
 9. **it looked kind of like that monkey. I’m not sure what species that monkey is.**
 10. That thing was **so** cute and it was a baby and we **just** went over the hill with our parents
 26. That was quite scary!
 33. And by the end of his stay with us that **little monkey/ poor thing/ he stank/ he smelled so bad**
-
9. Um dia a gente teve uma **grande** surpresa
 10. A gente chegou da escola e havia na no alçapão um **macaquinho/ um miquinho/pequeninho/ um bebê/**
 11. Oh ele era **tão lindo tão fofinho tão bonitinho**
 25. Então ele começou a cheirar **muito mal muito muito mal**

English speaker 5

4. **It was a very special day of my life.**
 5. I got married on June 29th 2008 in Miami Beach.
 6. Um I had 20 guests at the Ritz Carlton South Beach.
 7. **It’s a beautiful hotel.**
 8. **And we had a beautiful ceremony.**
 11. **And it was beautiful.**
 12. **I felt like a Cinderela to tell you the truth**
-
4. Eu vou falar sobre meu casamento **que foi muito bonito.**
 5. Eu me casei no dia 29 de junho de 2008 em Miami Beach
 6. Na cerimônia eu convidei 20 pessoas, eu tive 20 convidados, nós nos casamos no Ritz Carlton South Beach,
 7. **Um hotel muito bonito**
 10. e/ **foi uma festa linda eu me senti uma Cinderela**

Speaker 3, in the English version, describes something that did not happen in line 5 (“it wasn’t a bird”), which is a very common device used to evaluate narratives (Labov, 1972, 1982). In line 6, we see an instance of “double attributive” where she describes the monkey as “little bitty.” Labov (1972) argued that this type of evaluative device is very rare and normally only

used by practiced adult narrators. Moreover, in lines 7 and 8 she departs from the narrative clauses to make a comparison between the monkey that showed up in her back yard and the monkey in the movie “A Night in the Museum,” and in line 9 she continues in the moment of the storytelling by saying that she does not know the species of the monkey. In lines 10 and 33 she uses intensifiers, such as “so” and “just,” and in line 33 there is an instance of “double appositive” (“that little monkey, poor thing”) and again of double attributive (“he stank, he smelled so bad”). Finally, line 26 (“That was quite scary!”) is a classic case of “external evaluation,” where the narrator “stop[s] the narrative, turn[s] to the listener, and tell[s] him that the point is” (Labov, 1972, p. 371). One of the examples provided by Labov of external evaluation is the following: “It was quite terrific” (p. 371); in effect very close syntactically to the evaluation found here in line 26.

The same type of external evaluation is found in lines 4, 8, 11, and 12 in the narrative of speaker 5 (“It was a very special day of my life; and it was beautiful; I felt like a Cinderella to tell you the truth”). Labov (1972) pointed out that it is possible for narrators to let the events in the stories convey the information to the audience, but some storytellers resort to this type of evaluation to make their experiences clear to the listeners, and, at the same time, to suspend the action. Additionally, in line 7, this narrator departs from the narrative to evaluate the hotel at the moment of the storytelling (“It’s a beautiful hotel”).

These are just a few examples of evaluative devices used by the monolingual participants as well as by the fluent English speakers; for more examples of evaluation and orientation, see the complete transcripts verbatim in Appendix D.

The Historical Present

Additionally, the analyses of the evaluation, complicating action, and resolution revealed another significant aspects of Brazilian storytelling: the absence of the historical present.

According to Labov (1972), Quasthoff (1980), Polanyi (1985), and Georgakopoulou and Goutsos (1997), the historical present is one of the main features of conversational stories across cultures.

As mentioned in Chapter II, Quasthoff (1980) listed four characteristics, which she called “formal restrictions,” that apply to conversational narratives: “evaluative and expressive speech devices, direct speech, *historical present*, and a high degree of detail” (emphasis added, Gulich & Quasthoff, 1985, p. 172). However, the stories in BP in this study did not contain any occurrences of the historical present. The narrative clauses were recounted using different forms of the past tense, such as simple, progressive and perfect, but the present tense was used exclusively in the constructed dialogue, or direct speech. This finding corroborates Koven’s (1998) claim that the historical present is not very often used in Portuguese oral narratives. In her study with Portuguese-French bilinguals, Koven found that the narrators tended to employ the historical present much more frequently in French than in Portuguese, when telling personal stories. Accordingly, Quasthoff’s (1980) proposition that the historical present is one of the formal restrictions of conversational stories may not apply to Brazilian narratives.

Moreover, the fluent English speakers in this study did not use the historical present when telling the stories in English, with the exception of two instances (i.e., “he goes to Lebanon and comes back married”) produced by the 21-year-old college student who lived in the US. She used 30 verbs in the past tense (simple and progressive aspects) and only two instances (i.e., “he goes,” “comes back”) of the historical present. Nevertheless, the context where she employed the historical present is significant because it is the peak of the story, the moment in which she

revealed what happened and why her story is important. The fact that this narrator was a college student at an American university might have influenced her usage of the historical present, given that she normally related to American students and possibly tried to model her conversation styles in order to fit in with American students. The other participants, as previously mentioned, did not use the historical present in their English or Brazilian stories, which suggests L1 transfer, since the historical present is indeed widely used in American narratives.

Constructed Dialogue

Another important characteristic of Brazilian narratives revealed by this study was the extensive use of constructed dialogues or direct speech. The term “constructed dialogue” was coined by Tannen (1989) in order to emphasize that dialogues in stories are always transformed in some way, “even if reported accurately,” and it refers to the representation of characters’ speeches as direct quotation rather than indirect speech (reported speech). In addition, Quasthoff (1980) argued that the use of direct speech is also a formal restriction of conversational stories. According to Georgakopoulou and Goutsos (1997), the occurrence of constructed dialogues “serves as means of dramatisation and authenticity,” which brings the discourse alive “by creating a sense of concreteness, particularity and familiarity” (p. 136). Constructed dialogue was an integral part of the monolingual stories in this study, which supports Georgakopoulou and Goutsos’ claim that Brazilian narratives are highly performed and dramatized. As these authors put it, “constructed dialogue has been reported as a major involvement strategy in conversational narratives of cultures that are very close to oral styles, such as Brazilian, Greek or American Indian communities” (p. 136). Hymes (1981) and Wolfson (1978) addressed the usage of

constructed dialogue in narratives as a breakthrough into performance. The following examples are from the monolingual participants. The constructed dialogues are in bold face to show the large amount in the discourse.

Monolingual speaker 1

4. E ele estava.. **Eu falei: “O que que vc quer?”**..Ele tava com um bilhete na mão dizendo que...depois ele contou a história...
5. Nesse instante ia saindo.. um senhor bem vestido com.. parecia que era um advogado porque ele tava no no fórum,
6. E ele chegou perguntou: **“O que que aconteceu?”**.. **Eu perguntei: “O senhor conhece a rua tal”?** Ele falou : **“Não não conheço, mas o que que ele queria?”**..**“Ah, ele queria isso assim assim, ele...”**

Luciana: Mas o que ele queria?

7. Ir lá na caixa econômica.. pra levar um papel..
8. Ele contou uma história que ele trabalhava num sítio.. que era de um japonês/ deu o nome do japonês ..éé..deu o nome da da do sítio

Luciana [aham]

- 9.Mas eu não conhecia.
10. E ele disse que/ a mãe dele tinha comprado umas roupas de um senhor que passou vendendo e não tinha troco para dar a ela então ele deu a ela um bilhete/e diz ele ele que queria ir na caixa econômica para ver...

Luciana: Um bilhete de loteria?

11. É, se tinha sido premiado..
12. O senhor pegou o celular.. ligou para funcionária da caixa.. citando o nome.. dizendo, **se identificando falando: “Sou fulano”**.. pediu o resultado da loteria...
13. E.. a medida que ele foi tomando nota era exatamente os números que estavam no ..

Luciana: cartão

14. No cartão//

Luciana: [aham]

15. **Aí ele falou para mim assim: “Vamos ali na caixa?”**
16. **Eu perguntei ao rapaz “Você sabe?”**.. **vamos ali na caixa para ver se a gente consegue resolver para ele.. “Você tem documento? Você?”** ..Ele falou: **“Não não tenho meu documento”**..**Eu falei: “Você sabe assinar?” “Não não sei”**.
17. **O senhor falou: “Vamos la na caixa que a gente resolve para ele”**.
18. Só que a caixa era.. tava bem mais perto do que o lugar que estava o carro do senhor.
19. **E o senhor me chamou: “Não/ vamos de carro que a gente vai até lá na caixa e resolve”**..
20. E eu inocentemente [laughing]

Luciana: [laughs]

21. [laughing] Entrei no carro dele.. sentei.. bati a porta...
22. Aí ele virou pro rapaz atrás e **falou: “Olha nós vamos resolver o seu problema mas você vai ter que dividir comigo e ela”**/uma importância que não me lembro mais qual é..
- Luciana: O prêmio?
23. Eu não lembro também qual é..o o valor do prêmio.
24. **Aí eu falei: “Não senhor.. Porque? Eu não to fazendo nada para ele..Eu não vou aceitar dinheiro dele.. eu estou apenas dando uma informação a ele”**
25. Ele.. ele.. aí o menino,
26. Quando eu meti a mão na porta..que aí que eu raciocinei a burrice que eu fiz porque eu entrei no carro de uma pessoa desconhecida..
27. Quando eu meti a mão na porta.. a porta tava fechada eu **falei: “Eu quero sair.. a porta ta fechada”**
28. **Ele falou: “Não tem problema eu abro para senhora”.**
29. Ele abriu.. Quando eu olhei para tras..quando eu abaxei na janela assim que ele me chamou.. **ele falou éé: “A senhora não quer porque a senhora é rica?”**
30. **Eu falei: “Não, eu não sou rica não mas eu não sou desonesta, eu estou apenas dando uma informação a ele.. Vou vou receber dinheiro dele?”/**
[...]

Translation

4. And he was... **I said: “What do you want” He had a card in his hands saying that...he told a story...**
5. At this moment a well-dressed man.. was leaving with.. it seemed he was a lawyer because he was at the court house
6. And he came close to me and asked: **“What happened?”/ I asked: “Sir, do you know so and so street?” He said: “No, I don’t know, but what did he want?”..“Ah, he wanted this and that, he...”**
- Luciana: But what did he want?
7. To go to the bank ..to get a paper.
8. He told a story that he worked at a ranch of a Japanese man.. he gave the Japanese man’s name.. gave the name of the the ranch..
- Luciana: [uhm]
9. But I didn’t know it.
10. And he said that.. his mom had bought some clothes from a man that was selling it on the streets and didn’t have change to give her so he gave her the card..and he says that that wanted to go to the bank to see...
- Luciana: A lottery card?
11. Yes if he had won.
12. The gentleman got his cell phone.. called a bank teller.. giving his name.. saying.. identifying himself.. **saying: “I’m so and so”/** asked for the lottery’s result,

13. And..as he was taking notes it was exactly the numbers that were on on the...
- Luciana: Card
14. On the card//
- Luciana: [uhm]
15. **Then he said this to me like this: “Let’s go to the bank?”//**
16. **I asked the guy: “Do you know?”/ let’s go to the bank there to see if we can solve this solve for him. “Do you have an id?...You”/ He said: “No, I don’t have my id”/ I said: “Do you know how to sign your name?” “No, I don’t know”//**
17. **The gentleman said: “Let’s go to the bank so that we can solve this for him”//**
18. But the bank was/ it was much closer than the place where the gentleman’s car was//
- Luciana: [uhm]
19. **And he called me: “No/ let’s go by car so that we can go there and solve this”//**
20. And I naively [laughing]//
- Luciana: [laughs]
21. [laughing] I got in his car/ sat down/ closed the door//
22. Then he turned to the guy in the back and **said: “Look we are going to solve your problem but you are going to have to share with me and her”/** an amount that I don’t recall anymore
- Luciana: The prize?
23. I also don’t remember how much/ the the prize is anymore//
24. Then, **I said: “No sir/ Why? I’m not doing anything for him/ I’m not going to accept money from him/ I’m simply giving him some information”//**
25. He/he/ then the boy //
26. When I grabbed the door/ ‘cause then I realized the stupidity that I did because I got in a stranger’s car.
27. When I grabbed the door/ the door was locked **I said: “I want to get out/ the door is locked”/**
28. **He said: “There’s no problem I’ll open it for you, ma’am”//**
29. He opened it/ When I looked in the back/ when I leaned over the window ‘cause he called me/ **he said uh uh: “Ma’am, you don’t want it because you are rich?”**
30. **I said: “No, I’m not rich but I’m not dishonest/ I’m just giving him some information/ I’m gonna get money from him?”//**
- [...]

Monolingual speaker 2

21. Nisso acordei todas as casas né?/ Já tava todo mundo na janela..luz acesa..um desespero.. e eu **falando: “A Fifi caiu da janela”**//
22. Aí nisso.. ela..meu pai falou alguma coisa ela foi deu um miadinho/ aí meu pai **fez: “shiiii”**, sinal de silêncio, aí ela miou de novo..aí a gente ouviu da onde tava vindo o miado.. era debaixo da varanda,
23. Aí eu agachei lá fui peguei ela.. e ..subimos.. graças a Deus nao aconteceu nada com ela.. não quebrou nada tudo...
24. Só nunca mais deixei a janela...

Luciana: aberta

25. Aberta né?
26. Minha mãe.. a gata era da minha mãe, é um detalhe...
27. E minha mãe quis me matar depois,

Luciana: [laughs]

28. quando eu contei que a Fifi caiu da janela..
29. Só que o mais engraçado foi que dia no seguinte.. a vó **falou: “Não conta para sua mãe que a Fifi caiu da janela senão sua mãe vai brigar com você”**.. eu falei: **“Tá”**
30. Aí fui falar com minha mãe no telefone.. **aí.. minha mãe: “E aí como tá a Fifi e os filhotinhos?”**
31. **Falei: “Ah mãe tá bem”**..E **ela: “E a Fifi?”/ Aí falei: “Ah.. tá bem apesar de ter caído da janela ela tá tá bem”**
32. [laughing] Aí eu pensei falar assim para ela achar que eu tava brincando né?
33. **Aí ela: “Ah, Você tá brincando né?”/ Só que aí eu resolvi contar a verdade/ eu falei: “Não mãe/ é verdade a Fifi caiu da janela”**
[...]

Translation

21. By this time I had woken up all the houses, right? Everybody was in their windows, the lights on, a chaos, and I was saying: **“Fifi fell off the window!”**
22. Then my dad said something and she meowed a little then **my dad was like: “shiiii”**, silence sign, and she meowed again and then we heard from where the meowing was coming: it was under the porch
23. And I squatted down there and went and got her and we went upstairs.
Thank God nothing happened to her. She didn't break anything and stuff.
24. Just I never again left the window...

Luciana: Open

25. Open, right?
26. My mom, the cat's was my mom's, a detail.
27. And my mom wanted to kill me later..

Luciana: [Laughs]

28. when I told her that Fifi had fallen off the window

29. But the funniest thing was the next day...**Grandma said: “Don’t tell your mom that Fifi fell off the window or your mom will be mad at you.” I said: “Okay”/**
30. **Then I talked to my mom on the phone then my mom: “So how is Fifi and the kittens?” I said: “Ah mom..fine” and she was like: “And Fifi?”**
31. **I said: “She’s fine despite falling off the window she’s fine”**
32. [laughing] and I thought about saying it like this so she would think I was joking, right?
33. **Then she: “You are kidding right?” But then I decided to tell the truth...I said: “No mom it’s true, Fifi fell off the window.”**

As we can see from these excerpts, direct speech, or constructed dialogue, plays a significant role in Brazilian narratives and appears mainly in the complicating action and resolution, which are the backbone of the stories.

As for the fluent English speakers, constructed dialogue was also observed in some of the stories in English, but, in general, direct speech was used to a lesser extent in these narratives. Only two of these stories presented a considerable amount of constructed dialogue: 3 and 4 below. Possible explanations for the lack of constructed dialogue in some of the English stories may be related to linguistic skills and/or the observer’s effect, as the participants had expressed uneasiness in being recorded in a foreign language. One of the participants, fluent English speaker 2, provided a constructed dialogue when telling the story in Portuguese but not in English, as shown below.

Fluent English Speaker 2

Constructed dialogue: BP

4. E ela achou realmente que fosse ele e falou: **“Poxa tô aqui para falar que vou fazer uma festa surpresa pro Alvaro”** (*Translation: And she really thought that it was him and said: “I’m here to say that I’m going to throw a surprise party for Alvaro).*

No constructed dialogue:E

4. So she called me and I answered the phone pretending that I was him, and she bought it and told me about the surprise party accidentally, of course.

Of course, when stories are told more than once, they may undergo some changes because of mere repetition (Koven, 1998). However, Norrick (1998) argued that quotations, among other features, are not normally altered in multiple tellings of the same story. Interestingly, the fluent English speaker 3 did just the opposite: she provided several instances of direct speech in English but not in Portuguese. It is important to highlight here that this participant had lived in the US for 11 years at the time of the data collection and was an English teacher with a master's degree in ESL, whereas speaker 2 had never been overseas and was a dentist. Accordingly, speaker 3 could be trying to establish the persona of a highly proficient English teacher, especially since she was being recorded by a fellow English teacher from Brazil.

Fluent English speaker 3

No constructed dialogue:BP

12. A gente pediu nossos pais para ficar com ele e eles finalmente permitiram

27. Um belo domingo meu pai me levou a fazenda

28. ao sítio onde minha vó morava na época

(*Translation: We asked our parents to keep it and they finally agreed. One Sunday my dad took me to the farm where my grandma lived at the time*)

Constructed dialogue: E

11: “Oh please, please, let us keep it let us keep it let us keep it please”

38. So we said: “Dad, how are we going to release him?”

41: and my dad said: “Well, we’ll take it to your grandmother’s house and just release him in the woods and he’ll find his his family”

42. “Oh dad how is he gonna find his family?”

43. “Oh don’t worry he’s an animal he got instincts he will find”

Fluent English 4 provided extensive constructed dialogue as seen below, and the other participants (speakers 1, 5, 6, and, 7 did not produce direct speech). It is important to note here that these speakers, unlike the monolingual participants, were not known for their storytelling skills, which might explain the lack of dramatization in their narratives.

Fluent English speaker 4

Constructed dialogue: BP

5. Daí a campanha tocou e as meninas me **falaram: “Mãe, é pra você”**

6. **Eu falei: “Pra mim a essa hora?”**
7. Aí quando eu abri a porta tinha um rapaz com flores falando que era pra mim
8. **E falei: “Nossa mas quem me mandou?”**
9. Olhei pro meu marido e não tinha sido ele né?
10. Dai virei pro rapaz e **falei: “Você sabe quem me mandou as flores?”**
11. E ele **disse: “Tem um cartão”**
12. Quando eu li o cartão era dela...
13. Chorei tanto
14. Eu fiquei tão emocionada que eu não parava de chorar e o cara não tava entendendo nada
15. **E eu comecei a gritar “É da Pati, é da Pati!”**
16. **Daí falei pra mamãe: “Você não vai acreditar, mamãe...é da Patricia! Ela me mandou flores”**
17. Foi tão emocionante e eu chorei tanto mas de alegria
18. Claro que eu também fiquei triste porque ela não estava lá mas ao mesmo tempo foi como se ela estivesse lá como a gente
19. Daí eu peguei o telefone e liguei pra ela na hora para agradecer e falar como eu tinha ficado feliz
- 20: **Falei para ela né: “A mãe ta ficando velha você não pode fazer isso comigo mais não”**
21. **E ela falou “Eu sabia que você ia ficar assim”**

[...]

Constructed dialogue: E

7. then the door bell rang and...the girls there, my other daughters , **told me: “Mom it’s for you”**
8. **Falei: “For me at this time?”**
9. So when I opened the door I saw a guy...with a bunch of beautiful roses yeah and saying that it was for me
10. **Falei: “But who sent me that?”**
11. I looked at my husband’s face... no it was not him
12. **Falei: “Wow”**
13. **Then I asked the guy: “Do you know who sent me that?”**
14. **He told me: “Well, there’s a card”**
15. When I read the card and I saw it was from her, yeah?
16. I cried a lot aaah
17. I was soo soo sooo moved and I couldn’t stop and the guy didn’t understand a thing
18. **Falei “Oh my...it’s my daughter it’s my daughter!”**
19. So I ran away to tell my mom
20. **Falei: “Mom you won’t believe it...it’s from Patricia, mom! She sent me a bunch of flowers”**
21. And it was really nice so..

22. yeah ohh aaaa the way I cried it was something really good yeah because I was happy yeah
23. of course I felt sad she was not with us but I felt she was there in some way
24. then I I took the phone immediately and called her to thank her to say how ...how happy I was
25. but I made her promise not to do that again because I almost had a heart attack
26. **Falei: “Mom is getting old, uh? You cannot do this again... it’s your mom”**
27. **Falou: “I knew you were gonna be like that”**

[...]

It is interesting to note that the fluent English speaker 4 code-switches to Portuguese without even noticing it. In lines 8, 10, 12, 18, 20, 26, and 27 of the English version, she used the verb “said” in Portuguese (“falei, falou”) in constructing the dialogues, suggesting not only L1 transfer but possibly a storytelling transfer of Brazilian narrative components (i.e., constructed dialogue). These results corroborate Koven’s (2002) findings that Portuguese stories presented a greater authorial and character performance. In her study of speaker role inhabitation in narratives of Portuguese-French bilinguals, Koven reported that participants replayed characters’ speeches in direct discourse frequently in Portuguese, while they briefly recounted these episodes in French: “The French segment is more a dialogue between interlocutory and authorial voices, whereas the Portuguese highlights more the animated performance of characters brought to life from this other context” (p. 205). She summarized her findings by asserting that there was significantly more narration and character performance in the Portuguese stories she recorded than in the French counterparts.

In this study, the Brazilian Portuguese stories also presented greater constructed dialogue than the ones told in English, but it is important to emphasize that here the participants were not “true bilinguals,” but native BP speakers who spoke English fluently. As a result, language proficiency could have influenced the narrators’ construction of storytelling. On the other hand,

Koven's (2002) participants were "true bilinguals" of French and Portuguese, as they were raised in both languages and could be considered native speakers of both. This suggests that the use of constructed dialogue in Portuguese may be not only culturally but also linguistically shaped.

Hyperbole

Another possible distinctive characteristic found in the Brazilian narratives is the extensive use of dramatic (i.e., hyperbolic) evaluative comments that adds to the performance nature of these stories. Brazilians are famous for exaggerating events and feelings in their speeches, which is also seen in this study's stories.

Monolingual speaker 2

Hyperbole: BP

12. Aí/ eu/ **quase** (laughing) **pulei pela janela junto** atrás dela//
Luciana: [laughs out loud]
14. Aí / [laughs] **É/ meu pai não infarta nunca mais** porque nesse dia eu **gritei tanto** [laughs] **que era para ele ter infartado**//
17. Que ela **podia ter me matado**//
Luciana: [still laughing]
27. E **minha mãe quis me matar** depois...

Translation

12. Then [laughing] **I almost jumped out of the window** with her..
Luciana: [laughs out loud]
14. Then [laughs] my dad..**he will never have a heart attack because this day I screamed so much** [laughs] **that he should have had a heart attack..**
17. Which **she could have killed me**
- Luciana: [still laughing]
27. And **my mom wanted to kill me later..**

In this excerpt, the more hyperboles the monolingual narrator uses, the more laughter she elicits from her audience, and, interestingly, from herself as well. It is quite obvious that neither had she considered jumping out of the window on the second floor after her cat nor did her

mother want to kill her, but this exaggeration is well received with laughter by me, so she continues the pattern. The hyperbole in line 17 is especially interesting as she claims that the dog could have killed her, which is an extreme overstatement since the dog was the family's pet and the speaker grew up around it every day. The fact that I was her audience makes this exaggeration even more striking because we are cousins who grew up in the same house with this very same dog. It is clear then that dramatizing the story is very important to the narrator even when she knows that her audience is aware of the reality.

In the following example, fluent English speaker 3 tries to emphasize how bad the monkey smelled, and after saying that “he stank” and “he smelled so bad,” she uses the word “unbreathable” in English to express that the smell was so unbearable that they could not breathe. In the Portuguese version, she repeats the intensifier “very” (*muito*) five times and the adverb “badly” (*mal*) twice.

Fluent English speaker 3

Hyperbole: BP

25. então ele começou a cheirar muito mal muito muito muito muito mal

Hyperbole: E

33. and by the end of his stay with us that little monkey/ poor thing/ he stank/
he smelled so bad

35. but we finally got convinced because **the smell was just unbreathable**
[sic]

English speaker 4 below claims that she almost had a heart attack because she received flowers from her daughter, just as monolingual speaker 2 made a point that her father should have had a heart attack because of her screams the night her cat fell out the window. Naturally, neither situation would have been very probable, but they add drama and excitement to the participants' narrative performances.

Hyperbole: BP

25. Mas eu fiz ela prometer que não ia fazer mais isso **porque eu quase infartei**

Hyperbole: E

25. but I made her promise not to do that again **because I almost had a heart attack**

Coda

The final component in the Labovian framework, the coda, seems to work in a similar fashion in both American and Brazilian narratives, which does not corroborate my hypothesis in Chapter I that BP narratives would lack this component. According to Labov (1972), codas signal the end of the story and can be straightforward statements, such as “That’s it,” more complex observations of how the story has affected the narrator, or a link between the end of the events in the narrative and the present moment of the storytelling. These different types of codas were found in the BP narratives as well as in the English stories. The first monolingual provided an elaborate coda that assessed how the story impacted her and that also brought the narrative to the moment of the storytelling:

Monolingual speaker 1

Coda: BP

39. E nessa felizmente eu não cai porque não é minha minha intenção mesmo /não era minha intenção mesmo, né?//

Luciana: (aham)

40. Mas podia ter caído//

Luciana: Podia/foi... deu sorte

41. É//

42. De vez em quando a gente faz umas bobagens dessas com tanto anos de vida e ainda faz umas bobagens dessas//

Translation

39. And this one I fortunately didn't fall for because it's really not my my intention /it was not my intention really, right?

Luciana: (aham)

40. But I could have fallen//

Luciana: You could have. It was/ you were lucky

41. Yeah//

42. From time to time we do some foolish things like this...with so many years of age and still doing foolish things like this one//

In line 39, she concludes the resolution by saying that she did not fall for the scam that the two men were trying to play on her, and at the same time she reiterates the assignment of praise and blame by explaining that she did not and does not have intentions of taking advantage of other people. In line 40, she assesses the possibility of having believed them and then in the last line, 42, she brings the narrative to the present, the moment of the storytelling and evaluates how even older people with experience can still be susceptible to doing imprudent things.

The other two monolinguals resorted to simpler codas, especially the third one who told a very short story (53 seconds). He ends the story by simply saying "That's the story," while speaker 2 ends the narrative per se with "so that was it" but adds that the cat was still alive at the moment of the storytelling and asks me whether I understood the story: "Got it?".

Monolingual speaker 2

Coda: BP

34. Ai foi isso/ a gata ta viva ate hoje//

Luciana: Ah que bom

35 Entendeu?

Translation

34. So that was it...the cat is alive until today.

Luciana: Ah that's good

35. Got it?

Monolingual speaker 3

Coda: BP

10. Essa é a história.

Translation

10. That's the story.

It is important to remember that although the three monolinguals were considered good storytellers by their communities, the first narrator was 74 years old, while the second and the third participants were 27 and 23 years old, respectively. As expected, older and more experienced storytellers normally provide more evaluated and elaborate narratives (Labov, 1972).

The fluent English speakers also provided both complex (4, 5, 7) and simpler codas (1, 2, 4, 6) in their stories in English and in Portuguese, as seen below. The English speaker 4 offers an internal evaluation in the first line of the coda, 29, by expressing how happy she was and then brings the narrative to the moment of the telling by switching it to the present tense ("I'm proud of her") and then offering expectation for the future in line 30 ("I hope next time she can come").

English speaker 4

Coda: BP

29. Mas eu fiquei muito feliz

30. E espero que ela possa vir da próxima vez né

Coda: E

29. But yeah I was really happy at the end yeah and I'm proud of her

Luciana: That's great...That's a very good story..

30. I hope next time she can come yeah

In line 14 in the Portuguese story, English speaker 5 explains how important it is to have experience overseas, like the one she had just recounted, for Brazilian teachers of English and then ends the narrative with "That's it," line 15. In her English story, on the other hand, she begins the coda with "And that's it," in line 16, but then decided to offer more information on how her story has impacted her life, as seen in lines 17 and 18 ("I think it was a very um um how can I say? Something that uh changed my life"). Next, in lines 19 and 20 she explains how

important overseas experience is for teachers in Brazil and then returns, in line 21, to the concluding statement that she used to open the coda: “And I think that’s it”.

English speaker 5

Coda: BP

14. É e acredito que a experiencia no exterior é super importante pros professores de línguas porque eu vejo até hoje que eu uso sempre nas minhas aulas o que aprendi ... né? no exterior.
15. E é isso.

Coda: E

16. And that’s it
17. I think it was a very um um how can I say?
18. Something that uh changed my life because
19. Uh in Brazil that’s very important when you get the chance to go to the US
20. When you go back, when you come back I mean eh things change because you can get better jobs and better um
21. And I think that’s it.

The coda provided by English speaker 7 is the most complex among all the participants, as she not only concludes the story bringing it to the moment of the storytelling and evaluating how it impacted her, but she also explains why she chose to tell this story and offers the moral she wants the audience to take from it. Both codas, in Portuguese and English, are very close in meaning even though they are not literal translations of each other. The main difference is that in the English narrative, she reflects more on the importance of this story in her life, lines 32 and 33, while in the Portuguese narrative she focus more on the moral of never giving up, regardless of age. From lines 28 to 30 in the English narrative, the narrator gives the reason for choosing this story explicitly as she sets its moral. She asserts that she could have told many other stories, but this one is special because it about “victory” and never giving up (lines 30 and 31). In lines 32 and 34 she thanks God for her success and for the opportunity of starting a new career in a new city when she was about to retire. She also mentions God in the Portuguese narrative, but in

this version she says that “God always has new challenges to us,” instead of thanking Him directly as she did in the English version.

English speaker 7

Coda: BP

19. Essa é minha história pra dizer que a gente nunca deve desistir
20. A gente nunca deve achar que a nossa carreira acabou
21. Uma história pra gente ver que-- a gente tá sempre aprendendo independente da idade independente dos momentos
22. Deus sempre tem novos desafios pra nós

Coda: E

28. And I chose this story because it's my most recent story
29. I have many many funny stories sad stories
30. But this is a victorious story a story of victory
31. A story of starting over when you think you are at the end of hope ..you are at the end of your career
32. And I'm really thankful to God for this opportunity
33. Coming to BH and accepting this new challenge and... being successful as I have been
34. I know I got this because of His grace.

The following codas are simpler and, with the exception of English speaker 1, the other participants (2, 3, and 6) provided the exact same coda for both Portuguese and English narratives. In her narrative in Portuguese, speaker 1 ends the resolution in line 39, saying that she went back to school in August 2009, and in line 40 she shifts to the present tense, saying that she “continues it.” In lines 41-43 she uses the future tense as she explains she hopes to graduate from her university in two years. In her English coda, she also concludes the narrative by closing her resolution in line 26, but she does not bring it to the present or the future. And in line 27 she announces the end of the storytelling: “That’s it.”

English speaker 1

Coda: BP

39. retomei minhas aulas em agosto 2009
40. e continuo

41. Vou me formar
42. espero q me forme aqui
43. eventualmente daqui a 2 anos.

Coda: E

26. and went back to school in august 09 decided to come come back and to stay to finish up my undergraduate program.
27. That's it.

Speakers 2 and 6 below also indicate the end of the narrative with straightforward statements (i.e., “That’s it”; “And that’s it, that’s all I have to say about it”), and speaker 3 ends her story by saying that they never saw the little monkey again.

English speaker 2

Coda: BP

12. Foi isso.

Coda: E

9. That's it.

English speaker 3

Coda: BP

30. Nunca mais a gente viu o tal macaquinho.

Coda: E

46. We never saw that cute little monkey again

English speaker 6

Coda: BP

17. E é isso que eu tenho pra dizer pra você.

Coda: E

20. and that's it
21. that's all I have to say about it.

Reportability

Finally, the concept of “reportability” discussed by Labov and Waletzky (1967), van Dijk (1975), Polanyi (1979), and Labov in later works (1982, 1997, 2004, n.d.) seems indeed to be culture-specific as suggested by these scholars. By analyzing the narratives recorded for this study, we see that some of the topics chosen by the participants might not be considered reportable as “recordable material” in other cultures, such as one waking up when the lights are out and thinking he is blind, or answering one’s girlfriend’s telephone call about a surprise party, or even finding a monkey in the yard. Certainly, these topics would be appropriate in settings among friends and family members, but perhaps they would not be chosen to be recorded for an experiment by Americans, for instance. According to Labov (1997), topics such as “sex, death, and moral indignation” are universally reportable, yet none of the participants in this study recounted experiences about these subjects. When prompted to tell stories about “danger of death” experiences, the participants reported not to recall any, choosing other “lighter” topics on their own. Clearly, other studies need to be conducted on this matter in order to investigate the reportability of Brazilian story topics in American contexts; but a different perspective on what is appropriate to be recounted and where might be one of the reasons for Americans asking the Brazilian participants and this researcher to go “straight to the point,” when in effect they might just not see a point in the telling of such stories.

Brief Conclusions

In sum, this study’s findings indicate that despite important differences in the use of tense (i.e., the absence of the historical present) as well as in the cultural and performance aspects between Brazilian and American narratives, the overall Labovian framework for narratives also

applies to Brazilian stories. With the exception of the “abstract”, all stories, both in BP and English, presented the other components suggested by Labov and Waletzky (1967) and Labov (1972, 1982, 1997, 2004, n.d.): orientation, evaluation, complicating action, resolution, and coda.

The main differences in the Brazilian narratives regarding these components were the extensive use of constructed dialogue in the complicating action and resolution and the non-linear orientation pattern found in all stories, which was also reported by Davies (2008) in her studies of Southern storytelling. According to Davies, this type of digression is characteristic of oral tradition, provided that “the core idea of narrative clauses matching a chronological presentation of events is not a priority” (p. 175). Thus, the main priority or purpose of Brazilian storytelling appears to be, as also indicated by the widespread use of constructed dialogue and the absence of an abstract, the attempt to bring narrator and audience together in a community of rapport that enhances intimacy, strengthen the bonds between the participants, and values the dramatized performance of the narrators. In other words, by not including an abstract, providing orientation throughout the narrative, and constructing extensive dialogues, Brazilian narrators extend the storytelling process, creating a greater connection with the audience.

The findings of this study as well my experience indicate that storytelling as seen by Brazilians is more a vehicle of personal and social bonding than a means of simply recounting experiences. Of course, the social and interactive role of storytelling in general is undeniable, but the overt dramatization and performance in BP narratives suggest that this discourse mode may be more associated with building relationships and character performance than providing succinct accounts of events. Brazilians are known for being warm, affectionate people who value interpersonal and group relationships. Thus, the act of storytelling appears to represent an opportunity to socialize and, at the same time, entertain audiences.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Conclusions

This study offered many new insights into the structure and governing components of Brazilian narratives. The spoken data of 10 personal narratives of monolingual speakers of Brazilian Portuguese (BP) (3 participants) and of Brazilian fluent English speakers (7 participants) were analyzed through a Labovian approach, which revealed that the overall framework of Brazilian narratives conform to the Labovian framework for American narratives albeit with significant and distinctive differences.

First, the data analyses revealed that the monolingual participants did not provide “abstracts” in their narratives. In addition, only two fluent English speakers provided an abstract in their BP stories, while two offered abstracts in the English versions but not in the BP ones, and the other three did not offer an abstract in either of the narratives. This finding indicates that these three last participants might have transferred this Brazilian storytelling characteristic (i.e., absence of abstract) when telling the narratives in English, whereas the other four fluent English speakers conformed to the general American framework for the English versions of their stories by offering an abstract.

Furthermore, the results revealed that the orientation in Brazilian narratives seems to be non-linear, i.e. not restricted to the beginning of the story, as it permeates the entire stories. Davies (2008) also found that Southern stories are characterized by digression in the form of extensive orientation throughout the narratives. The next components of the Labovian framework—evaluation, complicating action, resolution, and coda—were also observed in the

BP narratives as well as in the English versions. This suggests, as noted earlier, that the overall structure of Brazilian narratives is indeed quite similar to the American one.

However, deeper qualitative analyses of the narratives revealed two possible distinctive features of Brazilian narratives: the absence of historical present and extensive constructed dialogue in the complicating action and resolution. As mentioned in Chapters II and IV, numerous studies have proposed that the historical present is a recurrent characteristic in the narratives of various cultures (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos, 1997). Nevertheless, no instance of the historical present was detected in any of the BP narratives, and of the seven narratives told in English, one only story contained just two instances of the historical present. Clearly this result indicates a language and storytelling transfer since the historical present is typical of narratives in English. This result supports Koven's (1998) findings that Portuguese stories do not normally present the historical present.

In addition, constructed dialogue was a prominent characteristic of the BP narratives in this study. The stories told in English also presented constructed dialogue but to a lesser extent, possibly due to linguistic deficiencies. Again, this result corroborates Koven's (2002) findings, in which Portuguese narratives presented significantly more constructed dialogue than the French counterparts in her study with Portuguese-French bilinguals. According to Georgakopoulou and Goutsos (1997), Brazilian narratives are known for their dramatization and character performance, which are achieved by means of direct speech or constructed dialogue.

Finally, further interesting yet less concrete findings were discussed concerning the reportability of Brazilian narratives and the use of hyperbole by some of the participants. Although the Brazilian participants were specifically prompted to tell narratives about "danger of death" or embarrassing experiences as suggested by Labov (1972), none of them conformed to

this elicitation, arguing that they did not recall any experiences about these topics. Instead, they resorted to “lighter,” funny, or sentimental stories, such as finding a monkey in the yard, the cat falling off the window, or receiving flowers on Mother’s day from a daughter who lived far away. It was argued in Chapter IV that even though these topics may be considered appropriate in more intimate circles (i.e., family gatherings or among friends), they might not be exactly seen as “recordable material” in other cultures. Of course, future research is needed in order to investigate Americans’ perspectives on Brazilians’ storytelling reportability (e.g., topic choices). However, it seems plausible that differences in the concept of reportability may cause Americans to request Brazilians to provide the resolution of their stories or ask them to “get to the point,” as reported by some of the participants and based on this researcher’s experience. According to Georgakopoulou and Goutsos (1997), “systematic research on the telling of stories has demonstrated that what is reportable ultimately depends on what is thought to be interesting or appropriate in certain social and cultural contexts, on certain occasions and for certain storytellers and audiences” (p. 131).

With regard to the use of hyperbole, some of the BP narratives presented dramatic evaluative comments, such as allusions to heart attacks, being killed by one’s own mother, or jumping off the window with a pet. Along with constructed dialogue, this use of exaggeration contributes to the highly dramatized nature of Brazilian narratives, which seems to be in line with its oral traditions and social bonding role (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos 1997).

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Despite the enlightening findings about the framework of BP narratives and possible storytelling transfer in narratives told in English by native BP speakers, this study presented

limitations that should be avoided in future research. Factors such as limited number of participants and the absence of American participants to assess the narratives told by the fluent English speakers may impact how the results can be interpreted.

First, this study was limited in the number of participants. Although 10 narrators seems to be quite a reasonable number of participants for a qualitative research like this one, there were only 3 monolinguals in the study, while there were 7 fluent English speakers. The monolinguals were good representatives of Brazilian narrators as they were considered good storytellers by their communities. Nevertheless, future studies should strive for the same number of participants in both groups (i.e., monolinguals and fluent English speakers) in order to gather a more comparable corpus of stories.

Furthermore, this study did not include Americans or any other native speaker of English to assess the effectiveness and reportability of the narratives told by the fluent English speakers. It would be interesting and informative to document the perspectives of how native speakers perceive these stories. Accordingly, future research calls for the inclusion of native English speaking raters and/or consultants to investigate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the narratives told by Brazilian participants.

In addition to these limitations regarding the participants, this study was also limited by time. Because the majority of the data were collected, compiled, and analyzed during one semester, potentially valuable information about the participants was not gathered. For instance, follow-up interviews on why the participants chose to recount the stories they did could have provided insight on reportability issues as well on the role storytelling plays in Brazilian societies. Moreover, follow-up interviews could have been used to clarify storytelling transfer issues and whether the participants were aware of doing anything different when telling the narratives in BP

and English. Thus, qualitative studies on narrative analysis like this one would benefit tremendously of the participants' perspectives, which could be explored, ideally, in follow-up interviews, but even a written questionnaire about the participants' attitudes could be very helpful.

Finally, another significant limitation of this study involved the number of researchers analyzing the data, as I was the only researcher who transcribed and analyzed all the stories. A team of researchers who spoke BP and English fluently would have been ideal to verify the transcriptions as well as translations provided in this project. However, it was not possible to bring together this team of researchers because of time constraints and the difficulty in finding BP-English bilinguals with knowledge and training in discourse analysis. This is, nevertheless, an important research aspect that future studies should strive to accomplish.

Pedagogical Implications

This section discusses ways in which this study contributes to the fields of discourse analysis and language teaching and offers suggestions grounded on literature on how to apply the findings of this research as well as pragmatic and storytelling practices in ESL and EFL classrooms.

First, it was reported by some of the participants in this study and by this researcher that their storytelling practices do not seem to be perceived as very effective by American audiences, as they have experienced American friends and family members requesting that they go "straight to the point." Olshtain and Celce-Murcia (2001) argued that "when we misjudge shared knowledge or the perceptions of the other participants in the interaction, we potentially run the risk of creating instances of minor or serious miscommunication" (p. 710).

This study's results revealed that, although the general structure of Brazilian narratives appears to be quite similar to the Labovian framework, there seem to be important characteristics that diverge from the American framework, which may explain the "impatience" or lack of understanding from Americans toward stories told by Brazilians. For example, the absence of abstracts, the non-linear placement of orientation, and the extensive constructed dialogues all contribute to extending the storytelling process, which may be appreciated in Brazilian society but not as much in other cultures; i.e., American.

Furthermore, the absence of the historical present in the narratives told by the fluent English speakers is clearly a transfer from BP stories, which—based on this study's findings—do not present this verb tense. In effect, an anecdotal account from my own experience is that I had never heard of the historical present until I went to college in the US, despite over a decade studying English in Brazil. In informally discussing the findings of this study with some of the participants, their reaction was also unawareness or lack of knowledge of this structure. They reported never having heard of the terminology "historical present," let alone the fact that it is widely used in American narratives.

These are all relatively simple issues to be tackled in English classes in Brazil, as teachers can introduce the Labovian narrative framework for American narratives and then explain to the learners what components of Brazilian narratives conform to and which ones diverge from the American framework. The use of the historical present in narratives can also be easily explained in the language classroom in an attempt to help students better understand how American stories work and adjust their storytelling practices to some extent when engaging in conversations with native speakers.

It is important to note, however, that the introduction of storytelling in the language classroom should be implemented with a focus on pragmatic and discourse analysis awareness and communicative competence. In other words, simply going over certain features of Brazilian and American narratives may not suffice to achieve the communicative goal of language teaching. As Davies (2004) put it, “trying to teach a language by organizing our syllabi around linguistic structures or isolated functions is not acceptable” (p. 208). Thus, in order to provide learners with opportunities to expand their communication strategies and cultural knowledge about other languages and their discourses, we need to plan “the language curriculum so as to accommodate communicative interaction that will enable learners to both experience and reflect on cross-cultural differences” (Olshtain & Celce-Murcia, 2001, p. 710).

Davies (2004) suggested important pedagogical perspectives in her study of developing awareness of cross-cultural pragmatics in American and German interactions, which are worth reviewing here as they could also be implemented for storytelling practices in the classroom.

First, Davies (2004) argued that speech activities should be taught as discourse instead of as isolated speech acts. Accordingly, rather than focusing on the “historical present” in American narratives, for instance, teachers could organize their teaching around storytelling and its social and cultural impacts in different societies. The second pedagogical point raised by Davies was the “need to develop in learners the ability to look for patterns, through discourse in language and culture, and give them the tools to become ethnographers of their own communication” (p. 210). This point is especially important for storytelling instruction in which learners can explore narratives and their social practices across cultures. The third pedagogical point advocated by Davies was that teachers should offer different cultural themes, so that students have the opportunity to “explore diversity within the home and target cultures” (p. 210). Clearly,

storytelling is an invaluable resource that can be used to bring different cultural themes and perspectives to the language classroom.

Another excellent resource to help language teachers introduce storytelling in the classroom is Wajnryb's (2003) book, *Stories: Narrative Activities for the Language Classroom*. In arguing that stories can greatly help students learn and acquire languages, Wajnryb provided in this book 42 activities that offer ideas and procedures for lessons and a story bank of additional stories that teachers can use. These activities focus on the text as narrative, on language for language learning, and on learner and the learning community. According to Wajnryb, the importance of stories goes beyond the entertainment and pleasures they provide, as they serve in the reproduction of culture. She claimed that "the primacy and enduring quality of storytelling are no doubt linked to its role through time in the maintenance of ethnic culture—essentially, the way in which a collective group of people maintains and bequeaths its sense of its own identity" (p. 4). Thus, narratives can be a helpful tool to introduce different cultures in the classroom.

In addition, Wajnryb (2003) argued that stories can foster the process of second language acquisition since "language is the material by which stories are forged" (p. 6). She posited that narratives impact language learning and acquisition through exposure, use, and motivation. First, the act of telling or being told a story exposes the learners to the opportunity to "engage in the calibrating, adjusting and repair work that happen in language interactions" (p. 7). With regard to use, Wajnryb argued that stories afford learners with further opportunity to use language because narratives need an audience, and in the classroom setting students will communicate with one another in the processes that precede and follow the storytelling as well as in the process of the telling itself. Finally, Wajnryb claimed that stories are powerful motivational tools in language

learning as they engage the listeners and promote social bonding among the participants in the interaction.

Another invaluable resource for language teachers to introduce storytelling practices in their teaching is the website, StoryCorps (<http://storycorps.org>), which has a corpus of more than 10,000 narratives in English. I used this website in the methodology of a study that I conducted during the Fall 2009 semester on the dialects of English and ESL students' listening comprehension and obtained excellent results and feedback from the participants (Junqueira, 2009b). I worked with 10 ESL students from a language institute at an American university, and 9 of them reported to have thoroughly enjoyed using StoryCorps and demonstrated interest in continuing accessing this website at home, as they believed it could help them improve their listening skills.

I chose to use StoryCorps for the study because my goal was to test the students' comprehension with recorded materials that would be readily accessible to ESL as well as EFL teachers and that contained authentic and meaningful information to students. According to the website (2010), "StoryCorps is an independent nonprofit project whose mission is to honor and celebrate one another's lives through listening." This project was launched by Dave Isay in 2003 and since then has recorded more than 10,000 stories from across the US. All the narratives recorded by StoryCorps are real, personal stories and are archived in the Library of Congress for generations to come. This is a nonprofit organization and they are supported by donations. Their website is available free of charge to anyone who has internet access. Moreover, anyone in the US can have their own stories recorded by the StoryCorps team, who provides the equipment, space, and staff to ensure a broadcast-quality recording.

Furthermore, the website is extremely user friendly and the recordings have a very high sound quality. The 50 American states are represented on the website by wonderful stories told by the people of this country. Accordingly, this amazing body of spoken data offers a repertoire of dialects of English that is a click away from scholars, educators, and students. The StoryCorps project is an excellent resource that linguists, dialectologists, and English teachers should use to the fullest. More information about this organization is available on their website, and the “About us” information can also be found in Appendix E. In addition to offering a rich plethora of dialects and being an accessible resource, StoryCorps provides authentic and culturally loaded listening recordings for ESL/EFL instruction. By listening to the stories on the website, not only will our students be able to practice their listening skills, but they will also have the opportunity to be exposed to American narratives.

In conclusion, the findings of this study revealed that Brazilian narratives show distinctive characteristics that may account for the communication problems reported by some of the fluent English speaking participants and by this researcher. Therefore, pedagogical approaches to storytelling instruction should be implemented in the language classroom as they may promote pragmatic and communicative competences. In words reminiscent of Wajnryb (2003), using stories in language instruction is a successful way to promote communication and cultural awareness and to foster language acquisition, which is after all our primary goal as language teachers.

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APPENDIX A

Permission and Consent

(1) UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

Informed Consent for a Research Study

Project: Narrative Analysis of Oral Personal Experience across Two Languages and Cultures: Brazilian Portuguese and American English.

You are being asked to take part in a research study. This study is called: Narrative Analyses of Personal Oral Experience across Two Cultures and Languages: Brazilian Portuguese and American English. This study is being done by Luciana Junqueira, a MA TESOL student at the University of Alabama, under the supervision of Dr. Catherine E. Davies, who is a professor of linguistics in the English Department at the University of Alabama. You will be recorded by Luciana Junqueira.

What is this study about?

This study is being done to gather data about Brazilian and American narratives and investigate whether Brazilian learners of English transfer their native storytelling skills when telling stories in English.

Why is this study important – What good will the results do?

This knowledge is important in order for us to understand how narratives are told in two different cultures and languages and to what extent non-native speakers of English (i.e. Brazilians) transfer their native storytelling skills into English. We need to establish the facts about how people actually tell stories and then document differences and changes across cultures and languages. New technology allows us to create digital recordings that can be analyzed in the present and that can be preserved for future researchers.

Why have I been asked to take part in this study?

You have been asked to take part in this study because you speak either Portuguese or English (or both).

How many people besides me will be in this study?

During this academic year of 2009, there will be about 10 people in this study.

What will I be asked to do in this study?

If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to tell a story in Portuguese or English in as natural a way as possible while being recorded. You may feel awkward or uncomfortable at first because you are aware of the digital recorder. We find that most people become engaged in conversation and gradually forget about the digital recorder.

How much time will I spend being in this study?

Being in this study will take about 5-10 minutes.

Will I be paid for being in this study?

You will not be paid for being in this study, but you will be provided a copy of any recording that is made, if you wish.

Will being in this study cost me anything?

There will be no cost to you except for your time.

Can the researcher take me out of this study?

Yes, but it would be highly unlikely.

What are the benefits (good things) that may happen to me if I am in this study?

Although benefits cannot be promised in research, if you wish, you will be provided with a copy of the recording. You may want to keep this as part of your family history. You will also have the satisfaction of knowing that you contributed to information about Brazilian Portuguese and American English narratives and also about language transfer processes. If you choose to allow your recordings to be used for pedagogical purposes, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that students may be hearing your voice and story as part of a classroom lesson.

What are the benefits to scientists or society?

Linguists and dialectologists are interested in language structure and language change. American narratives have been extensively analyzed by linguists, especially by William Labov. However, Brazilian narratives have not been studied nor have the language and cultural transfer processes of Brazilian learners of English telling stories in this language. This research archive of spoken language (narratives) will provide essential data for this analysis.

What are the risks (dangers or harms) to me if I am in this study?

The only risk during data collection would be a possible initial discomfort while you are getting used to being recorded, before you forget about the recorder. If, after you have finished recording, you realize that you have said some things that you do not wish to be included, you may ask for any part of the recording to be excluded from this release, and you have the right to discontinue participation at any time.

Will you allow audio recordings of your voice to be used for research and teaching purposes in dialectology and sociolinguistics? These recording will be held permanently. YES ____ NO ____

If you are willing to allow your recording to be used, you have the following choices:

Would you like a personal copy of the recording? YES _____ NO _____

Do you mind having your identity revealed? YES ____ NO _____

If you answered YES (that is, that you are not willing to have your identity revealed), then your recording will **not** be played in the presentation of this project. Your narrative will be available to researchers as part of the archive, but with a code that disguises your identity.

If you answered NO (that is, that you are willing to have your identity revealed), then your recording might be played at the presentation of this project. Your recording will be available to researchers as part of the archive with basic demographic information about you.

Are you willing to be contacted in the future for possible follow-up recording? YES ____ NO ____

Optional: Contact information _____

How will my confidentiality (privacy) be protected? What will happen to the information the study keeps on me?

If you answered YES, that is, that you are not willing to have your identity revealed, then your recording will **not** be played in the presentation of this project. Your narrative will be available to researchers as part of the archive, but with a code that disguises your identity.

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board (IRB) is the committee that protects the rights of people in research studies. The IRB may review study records from time to time to be sure the study is being carried out as planned.

What are the alternatives to being in this study? Do I have any other choices?

The alternative/other choice is not to participate.

What are my rights as a participant?

Taking part in this study is voluntary – it is your free choice. You may choose not to take part at all. If you start the study, you can stop at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any penalty or loss of any benefits you would otherwise receive.

Who do I call if I have questions or problems?

If you have any questions about this study right now, please ask them. If you have questions later on, please call the investigator, Luciana Junqueira, at 1 (256) 454-6239. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Ms. Tanta Myles, The University of Alabama Research Compliance Officer, at 1 (205) 348- 5152.

I have read this consent form. The study has been explained to me. I understand what I will be asked to do. I freely agree to take part in it. I will receive a copy of this consent form to keep.

Signature of Research Participant

Date

Investigator

Date

APPENDIX B

Permission and Consent in Portuguese (My Translation)

UNIVERSIDADE DO ALABAMA

Termo de Consentimento para Estudo de Pesquisa

Projeto: Análise de Narrativa de Experiência Oral Pessoal através de duas culturas e línguas: Português Brasileiro e Inglês Americano.

Você está sendo requisitado para participar de uma pesquisa. Este estudo é chamado: Análise de Narrativa de Experiência Oral Pessoal através de duas culturas e línguas: Portuguese Brasileiro e Inglês Americano. Este estudo está sendo realizado por Luciana Junqueira, mestranda em TESOL pela Universidade do Alabama, sob a supervisão de Dr. Catherine E. Davies, professora de lingüística no departamento de inglês na Universidade do Alabama. Você será gravado pro Luciana Junqueira.

Sobre o que é este estudo?

Este estudo está sendo realizado para reunir dados sobre narrativas brasileiras e americanas e para investigar se aprendizes brasileiros de inglês transferem suas habilidades nativas de contar histórias quando eles contam histórias em inglês.

Por que este estudo é importante – Quais benefícios os resultados trarão?

Esse conhecimento é importante para entendermos como narrativas são contadas em duas culturas e línguas diferentes e até que ponto falantes não nativos de inglês (brasileiros) transferem as suas habilidades nativas de contar historias para o inglês. Precisamos estabelecer os fatos de como pessoas realmente contam historias e então documentar diferenças e mudanças através de culturas e línguas, Novas tecnologias nos permitem criar gravações digitais que podem analisadas no presente e serem preservadas para futuros pesquisadores.

Por que eu fui solicitado a participar deste estudo?

Você foi selecionado para participar deste estudo porque você fala Português ou Inglês (ou ambos).

Quantas pessoas além de mim estarão neste estudo?

Durante o ano acadêmico de 2009, haverá cerca de 10 pessoas neste estudo.

O que eu serei solicitado em fazer neste estudo?

Se você decidir participar deste estudo, você será solicitado a contar uma historia em português ou inglês (ou ambos) de forma mais natural possível enquanto sendo gravado. Você poderá sentir-se estranho ou desconfortável no começo porque você estará ciente do gravador digital. A maioria das pessoas se engaja na conversa e gradualmente esquece o gravador.

Quanto tempo eu gastarei fazendo parte deste estudo?

Fazer parte deste estudo tomará cerca de 5-10 minutos.

Eu serei pago por fazer parte deste estudo?

Você não será pago por participar deste estudo, mas você receberá uma copia de qualquer gravação que seja feita, caso você deseje...

Fazer parte deste estudo vai me custar alguma coisa?

Não haveá custo algum exceto pelo seu tempo.

O pesquisador poderá me excluir deste estudo?

Sim, mas isso é muito pouco provável.

Quais são os benefícios que podem acontecer comigo se eu participar do estudo?

Apesar de benefícios não poderem ser prometidos em pesquisa, se você desejar, você receberá uma cópia das gravações. Você pode querer guardar essa cópia como parte da sua história de família. Você também terá a satisfação de saber que você contribuiu para informação sobre narrativas brasileiras e americanas e também sobre processos de transferência de idiomas. Se você permitir que suas gravações sejam usados para objetivos pedagógicos, você terá a satisfação de saber que estudantes podem estar ouvindo sua voz e história como parte de uma aula.

Quão são os benefícios para cientistas ou sociedade?

Linguistas e dialetologistas são interessados em estrutura de idiomas e transformação de idiomas. Narrativas americanas tem sido amplamente analisadas por linguistas, especialmente William Labov. Entretanto, narrativas brasileiras não são muito estudadas nem a transferência de idioma e cultural de aprendizes brasileiros de inglês contando histórias nesta língua. Este arquivo de pesquisa de língua falada (narrativas) irão oferecer dados essenciais para essa análise.

Quais são os riscos (perigos) pra mim se eu estiver neste estudo?

O único risco durante a coleta de dados seria um possível desconforto inicial enquanto você está sendo gravado, antes de você esquecer o gravador. Se, depois que você tiver terminado de gravar, você se der conta que disse algumas coisas que você não quer que sejam incluídas, você pode pedir para qualquer parte da gravação ser excluída, e você tem o direito de descontinuar sua participação a qualquer momento.

Você autorizará gravações orais da sua voz serem usadas para pesquisa e com objetivos de ensino em sociolinguística? Essas gravações serão retidas permanentemente. SIM___ NÃO___

Se você estiver de acordo em permitir que suas gravações sejam usadas, você tem as seguintes opções:

Você gostaria de uma cópia pessoal da gravação? SIM___ NÃO___

Você se importa em ter sua identidade revelada? SIM___ NÃO___

Se você respondeu que SIM (ou seja, que você não está de acordo em ter sua identidade revelada), então sua gravação não será tocada na apresentação deste projeto. Sua narrativa estará disponível para pesquisadores como parte do arquivo, mas com um código que disfarça sua identidade.

Se você respondeu que NÃO (ou seja, que você está de acordo em ter sua identidade revelada), então sua gravação poderá ser tocada na apresentação deste projeto. Sua gravação estará disponível para pesquisadores como parte do arquivo com informações demográficas básicas a seu respeito.

Você está disposto a ser contactado no futuro para uma possível gravação dando seguimento a esta? SIM___ NÃO___

Opcional: Informação para contato _____

Como a minha privacidade será protegida? O que acontecerá com as informações que o estudo mantiver sobre mim?

Se você respondeu que SIM, ou seja, que você não está de acordo em ter sua identidade revelada, então sua gravação não será tocada na apresentação deste projeto. Sua narrativa estará disponível para pesquisadores como parte do arquivo, mas com um código que disfarça sua identidade. O conselho de revisão da Universidade do Alabama (IRB) é o comitê que protege os direitos das pessoas em estudos de pesquisa. O IRB pode revisar os relatos do estudo de tempo em tempo para ter certeza que o estudo está sendo conduzido como planejado.

Quais são as alternativas em estar neste estudo? Tenho outras opções?

A alternativa/outra opção é não participar.

Quais são meus direitos como participante?

Participar deste estudo é voluntário – é sua livre escolha. Você pode escolher não participar. Se você começar o estudo, você pode parar a qualquer momento. Sair do estudo não resultará em nenhuma penalidade ou perda de qualquer benefício que você receberia de outro modo

Para quem eu devo ligar se eu tiver perguntas ou problemas?

Se você tiver qualquer pergunta sobre este estudo agora, por favor pergunte. Se você tiver perguntas mais tarde, por favor ligue para a investigadora, Luciana Junqueira, no telefone 1 (256) 454-6239. Se você tiver qualquer dúvida sobre seus direitos como um participante de pesquisa, você pode contactar a senhora Tanta Myles, The University of Alabama Research Compliance Officer, at 1 (205) 348- 5152.

Eu li este termo de consentimento. O estudo foi explicado para mim. Eu entendo o que serei pedido a fazer. Eu livremente concordo em participar. Eu vou receber uma cópia deste termo de consentimento para guardar.

Assinatura do Participante

Data

Investigadora

Data

APPENDIX C
Transcription Conventions

(Adapted from Tannen, D. (1993). What's in a frame? Surface evidence for underlying expectations. In. D. Tannen (Ed.), *Framing in discourse* (pp. 14-56). New York: Oxford University Press.)

... is a measurable pause, more than 0.1 second.

...is a slight break in timing.

. indicates sentence-final intonation

, indicates clause-final intonation ("more to come").

-- indicates length of preceding phoneme or syllable.

// enclose transcriptions which are not certain.

[] enclose phonemic transcriptions or nonverbal utterances such as laughter.

? is a glottal stop: an abrupt cutting of breath.

APPENDIX D
Transcripts Verbatim

Monoligual participant 1

1. Ah eu fui ao correio...
2. E na entrada do correio.. um garoto assim uma aparência humilde...
3. Chegou perto de mim e perguntou onde era a rua tal.. eu ja não me lembro mais qual é a rua eu falei que não sabia.
4. E ele estava Eu falei: “O que que você quer?” Ele tava com um bilhete na mão dizendo que... depois ele contou a história,
5. Nesse instante ia saindo.. um senhor bem vestido.. com... parecia que era um advogado porque ele tava no no fórum,
- Luciana: [uhm]
6. E ele chegou perguntou: “O que que aconteceu?” Eu perguntei: “O senhor conhece a rua tal”? Ele falou : “Não não conheço, mas o que que ele queria?” “Ah, ele queria isso assim assim, ele queria...”
- Luciana: Mas o que e ele queria?
7. Ir lá na caixa econômica... para levar um papel..ele contou uma história que ele trabalhava num sítio.. que era de um japonês.. deu o nome do japonês ..éé-- deu o nome da da do sítio...
- Luciana: [uhm]
8. Mas eu não conhecia
9. E ele disse que .. a mãe dele tinha comprado umas roupas de um senhor que passou vendendo ..e não tinha troco para dar a ela.. então ele deu a ela um bilhete ... e diz ele ele que queria ir na caixa econômica para ver...
- Luciana: Um bilhete de loteria?
10. É.. se tinha sido premiado.
11. O senhor pegou o celular.. ligou para funcionária da caixa.. citando o nome dizendo se identificando falando: “Sou fulano”.. pediu o resultado da loteria.
12. E.. a medida que ele foi tomando nota era exatamente os números que estavam no no
- Luciana: cartão
13. No cartão
- Luciana: [uhm]
14. Aí ele falou para mim assim: “Vamos ali na caixa?”
15. Eu perguntei ao rapaz “Você sabe?”, vamos ali na caixa para ver se a gente consegue resolver para ele “Você tem documento? Você?”, Ele falou: “Não não tenho meu documento”.. Eu falei: “Você sabe assinar?” “Não não sei”
16. O senhor falou: “Vamos lá na caixa que a gente resolve para ele”.
17. Só que a caixa era.. tava bem mais perto do que o lugar que estava o carro do senhor,
- Luciana: [uhm]
18. E o senhor me chamou: “Não vamos de carro que a gente vai até lá na caixa e resolve”
19. E eu inocentemente... [laughing]
- Luciana: [laughs]
20. [laughing] Entrei no carro dele.. sentei.. bati a porta.

21. Aí ele virou pro rapaz atrás e falou: “Olha nós vamos resolver o seu problema mas você vai ter que dividir comigo e ela”..uma importância que não me lembro mais qual é.

Luciana: O prêmio?

22. Eu não lembro também qual é ..o o valor do prêmio.

23. Aí eu falei: “Não senhor.. Porquê? Eu não tô fazendo nada para ele/Eu não vou aceitar dinheiro dele eu estou apenas dando uma informação a ele”

24. Ele..ele.. aí o menino,

25. Quando eu meti a mão na porta..que aí que eu raciocinei a burrice que eu fiz porque eu entrei no carro de uma pessoa desconhecida,

26. Quando eu meti a mão na porta... a porta tava fechada eu falei: “Eu quero sair a porta ta fechada”. Ele falou: “Não tem problema eu abro para senhora”

27. Ele abriu.. Quando eu olhei para trás quando eu abaxei na janela assim que ele me chamou.. ele falou.. éé--: “A senhora não quer porque a senhora é rica?” Eu falei: “Não, eu não sou rica não mas eu não sou deshonesta eu estou apenas dando uma informação a ele vou vou receber dinheiro dele?”

28. E que eu olhei para trás o menino já tinha saído, era um rapazinho

Luciana [uhm]

29. Um garoto assim magrinho..Ele ja tinha desaparecido do carro.. eu não vi porque eu tava abaixada falando com o senhor não vi para onde o rapaz foi..

Luciana: [uhm]

30. Você vê que esparrela que eu ia me enfiando? [laughs]

Luciana [laughs] Então os dois estavam combinados?

31. Eu acho que os dois estavam de acordo.. porque aconteceu dias depois o mesmo lance.. a característica da da pessoa era a mesma

Luciana [uhm]

32. Só que nessas outras casas que ele.. nessas outras pessoas que ele abordou

33. Ele entrou na casa de uma

Luciana: Nossa senhora

33. de uma pessoa.. conseguiu tirar alguma coisa

Luciana: [uhm]

34. Da outra não sei se conseguiu levar alguma coisa.. Eu não sei se eu fui protegida ..ou ele e achou com cara de tão inocente que [laughing] que ele resolveu

Luciana: Ou de pobre [laughs]

35. [laughing] Ou de pobre demais

36.[laughing] Perguntou se eu era rica.. porque eu não queria

37. Ele admirou né?

Luciana: [aham]

38. Porque normalmente a pessoa.. cai né?

Luciana: Cai

39. E nessa felizmente.. eu não cai porque não é minha minha intenção mesmo não era minha intenção mesmo, né?

Luciana: [aham]

40. Mas podia ter caído

Luciana: Podia..foi.. deu sorte

41. É.

42. De vez em quando a gente faz umas bobagens dessas com tanto anos de vida e ainda faz umas bobagens dessas.

Luciana: Pois é, tem que tomar cuidado né?

Translation

1. Ah I went to the post office

2. And at the post office's entrance a boy a humble appearance

3. Got close to me and asked where the street so and so was and stuff, I don't remember what street anymore, I said that I didn't know

4. And he was... I said: "What do you want" He had a card in his hands saying that...he told a story...

5. At this moment a well-dressed man was leaving with it seemed he was a lawyer because he was at the court house

Luciana: [uhm]

6. And he came close to me and asked: "What happened?" I asked: "Sir, do you know so and so street?" He said: "No, I don't know, but what did he want?" "Ah, he wanted this and that, he..."

Luciana: But what did he want?

7. To go to the bank to take a paper he told a story that he worked at a ranch of a Japanese man he gave the Japanese man's name gave the name of the the ranch

Luciana: [uhm]

8. But I didn't know it

9. And he said that his mom had bought some clothes from a man that was selling it on the streets and didn't have change to give her so he gave her the card/ and he says that that wanted to go to the bank to see...

Luciana: A lottery card?

10. Yes if he had won.

11. The gentleman got his cell phone called a bank teller giving his name saying identifying himself saying: "I'm so and so" asked for the lottery's result

Luciana: 12. And as he was taking notes it was exactly the numbers that were on on the... Card

13. On the card

Luciana: [uhm]

14. Then he said this to me like this: "Let's go to the bank?"

15. I asked the guy: "Do you know?" Let's go to the bank there to see if we can solve this solve for him. "Do you have an id?...You" He said: "No, I don't have my id", I said: "Do you know how to sign your name?" "No, I don't know"

16. The gentleman said: "Let's go to the bank so that we can solve this for him"

17. But the bank was.. it was much closer than the place where the gentleman's car was

Luciana: [uhm]

18. And he called me: "No let's go by car 'cause so we can go there and solve this"

19. And I naively [laughing]

Luciana: [laughs]

20. [laughing] I got in his car sat down closed the door

21. Then he turned to the guy in the back and said: “Look we are going to solve your problem but you are going to have to share with me and her”..an amount that I don’t recall anymore

Luciana: The prize?

22. I also don’t remember how much the the prize is anymore

23. Then I said: “No sir..Why? I’m not doing anything for him.. I’m not going to accept money from him, I’m simply giving him some information”.

24. He he then the boy

25. When I grabbed the door.. ‘cause then I realized the stupidity that I did because I got in a stranger’s car.

26. When I grabbed the door the door was locked I said: “I want to get out the door is locked”.. He said: “There’s no problem I’ll open it for you, ma’am”

27. He opened it.. When I looked in the back.. when I leaned over the window ‘cause he called me/ he said uh uh: “Ma’am, you don’t want it because you are rich?”

28. I said: “No, I’m not rich but I’m not dishonest, I’m just giving him some information, I’m gonna get money from him?”

28. And when I looked in the back the boy had already left he was a young guy

Luciana [uhm]

29. A boy like skinny.. He had already disappeared from the car.. I didn’t see it because I was leaning talking to the sir I didn’t see where the guy went

Luciana: [uhm]

30. You see the mess I was getting myself into? [laughs]

Luciana [laughs] So the two of them were in it together?

31. I think they had a deal because it happened a couple of days later the same thing..the person’s characteristic was the same

Luciana [uhm]

32. But in these other houses that he.. these other people that he approached..

33. He entered in the house of a...

Luciana: Goodness Gracious!

33. of a person and was able to take something

Luciana: [uhm]

34. And of the other I don’t know if he was able to take anything.. I don’t know if I was blessed or if he thought I had such a naïve face [laughing] that he decided...

Luciana: Or of poor [laughing]

35. [laughing] Or of too poor

36. [laughing] He asked if I was rich because I didn’t want it

37. He admired it,right?

Luciana: [Aham]

38. Because normally.. the person falls for it, right?

Luciana: Yeah

39. And this one I fortunately didn’t fall for because it’s really not my my intention..it was not my intention really, right?

- Luciana: [aham]
 40. But could have fallen
 Luciana: You could. It wa.. you were luck
 41. Yeah
 42. From time to time we do some foolish things like this even someone my age
 (“with so many years of age” – literal) and still doing foolish things like this one
 Luciana: Yeah we need to be careful, right?

Monolingual participant 2

1. Então eu tinha três gatos né?
2. Aí..éééé-- a fêmea ela tava prenha então eu passei a deixar ela dormir no meu quarto porque ela a qualquer momento podia ter filhote
3. Aí acabou foi lá ela teve filhote .. aí ela tava com 4 filhotinhos e eu queria que ficasse perto de mim porque ela de vez em quando deitava em cima de um aí eu ajeitava e tal e tal
4. Só que tava no verão isso calorzão quando ela ficava no meu quarto eu deixava a janela fechada
5. Aí só que como tava calor eu deixei fui abri uma fresta aí ela para ver porque é segundo andar né então para ver se ela não ia subir na janela e cair la em baixo
6. Então fui aos poucos aos poucos ao poucos até que quando eu vi a janela podia ficar aberta ela subia e deitava no no peitoral da janela e beleza
7. Então tá foi dormia minha cama é embaixo da janela dormia todo dia e ela com os filhotinhos dela não sei o que
8. Um dia de noite ela pu.. veio da do chão.. pulou na cama e pulou na janela.. só que nisso ela escorregou na janela e foi parar la em baixo/
9. Caiu.. a sorte é que tem um coqueiro embaixo da minha janela...
- Luciana: [laughs]
10. [laughing] Ela foi pelas folha..só que tem um pastor alemão lá embaixo esperando ela...
- Luciana: É aqui? [Laughs]
11. É.. aqui.
- Luciana: [laughs out loud]
12. Aí eu quase [laughing] pulei pela janela junto atrás dela
- Luciana: [laughs out loud]
13. Você não tava em casa não [laughing]?
- Luciana: [laughing] Não
14. Aí [laughs] É.. meu pai não infarta nunca mais porque nesse dia eu gritei tanto [laughs] que era para ele ter infartado
- Luciana: [still laughing]
15. Foi de madrugada
16. Desci correndo de pijama fui la agarrei a cachorra
17. Que ela podia ter me matado
18. Mas eu agarrei ela e joguei ela dentro do canil

- Luciana: [laughs out loud]
 19. Fechei e comecei a [laughing] procurar a minha gata
 20. [laughing] Aí meu pai desceu atrás correndo
 21. Nisso acordei todas as casas né?/ Já tava todo mundo na janela luz acesa um desespero e eu falando: “A Fifi caiu da janela”
- Luciana: [laughs]
 22. Aí nisso ela meu pai falou alguma coisa ela foi deu um miadinho aí meu pai fez: “shiiii” sinal de silêncio aí ela miou de novo aí a gente ouviu da onde tava vindo o miado era debaixo da varanda
 23. Aí eu agachei lá fui peguei ela e subimos graças a Deus não aconteceu nada com ela não quebrou nada tudo
 24. Só nunca mais deixei a janela...
- Luciana: Aberta
 25. Aberta né?
 26. Minha mãe a gata era da minha mãe é um detalhe
 27. E minha mãe quis me matar depois...
- Luciana: [laughs]
 28. Quando eu contei q a Fifi caiu da janela
 29. Só que o mais engraçado foi que dia no seguinte a vó falou: “Não conta pra sua mãe que a Fifi caiu da janela senão sua mãe vai brigar com você” eu falei: “Tá”
 30. Aí fui falar com minha mãe no telefone aí minha mãe: “E aí como tá a Fifi e os filhotinhos?”
 31. Falei: “Ah mãe tá bem” E ela: “E a Fifi?” Aí falei: “Ah tá bem apesar de ter caído da janela ela tá tá bem”
- Luciana: [laughs]
 32. [laughing] Aí eu pensei falar assim para ela achar que eu tava brincando né?
 33. Ai ela: “Ah, Você ta brincando né?” Só que aí eu resolvi contar a verdade eu falei: “Não mãe é verdade a Fifi caiu da janela”
 34. Não acreditou de jeito nenhum só quando chegou aqui que meu pai contou para ela a verdade entendeu?
- Luciana: [Aham]
 35. Aí foi isso a gata ta viva ate hoje
- Luciana: Ah que bom
 36. Entendeu?

Translation

1. So I had three cats right?
2. Then ummm the female was pregnant so I started letting her sleep in my bedroom because she could deliver at any moment
3. Then she had the kittens and all. Then she had four kittens and I wanted them to stay close to me because she sometimes would lie on top of one and then I would go and rearrange them and stuff and all
4. But it was summer, super hot .. when she stayed in my bedroom, I would leave the window closed

5. Then..but since it was hot, I left, I opened it just a crack, then, she, to see because it's the second floor, so to see if she wouldn't climb on the window and fall off down there
6. So little by little, slowly, slowly, until one day the window could be open and she would climb on the window pane and lie down there and okay cool
7. So okay.. she would go there and sleep, my bed is under the window, she slept with her kittens and stuff .
8. One day at night she came from the floor, jumped on the bed, and jumped on the window but then she slipped on the window and wound up down there.
9. She fell off. Luckily there is a coconut tree under my window.

Luciana: [Laughs]

10. She went down the leaves. But there is a German Sheppard down there waiting on her.

Luciana: [Laughs] Is it here?

11. Yes, it's here..

Luciana: [Laughs out loud]

12. Then [laughing] I almost jumped out of the window with her..

Luciana: [still laughing out loud]

13. [Laughing] You weren't home?

Luciana: No [laughing]

14. Then.. [laughing] my dad.. he will never have a heart attack because this day I screamed so much that he should have had a heart attack.

Luciana [laughs]

15. It was in the middle of the night.

16. I went downstairs running..in my pajamas..went there grabbed the dog

17. Which she could have killed me

18. But I grabbed her and threw her in her cage

Luciana: [laughs out loud]

19. I locked it [laughing] and started looking for my cat

20. [laughing] Then my dad went downstairs running

21. And by this time I had woken up all the houses, right, everybody was in their windows, the lights on, a chaos, and I was saying: "Fifi fell off the window"

Luciana: [Laughs]

22. Then my dad said something and she meowed a little then my dad was like: "Shiiiiii", silence sign, and she meowed again and then we heard from where the meowing was coming: it was under the porch ..

23. And I squatted down there and went and got her and we went upstairs. Thank God nothing happened to her. She didn't break anything and stuff.

24. Just I never again left the window...

Luciana: Open

25. Open, right?

26. My mom, the cat's was my mom's , a detail.

27. And my mom wanted to kill me later..

Luciana: [Laughs]

28. When I told her that Fifi had fallen off the window

29. But the funniest thing was the next day.. Grandma said: “Don’t tell your mom that Fifi fell off the window or your mom will be mad at you.” I said: “Okay”/
30. Then I talked to my mom on the phone then my mom: “So how is Fifi and the kittens?” I said: “Ah mom..fine” and she was like: “And Fifi?”

31. I said: “She’s fine despite falling off the window she’s fine”

32. [laughing] and I thought about saying it like this so she would think I was joking, right?

33. Then she: “You are kidding right?” But then I decided to tell the truth.. I said: “No mom it’s true, Fifi fell off the window.”

34. But she just wouldn’t believe me .. only when she came here and my dad told her the truth, you know?

Luciana [Aham]
35. So that was it, the cat is alive until today.
Luciana: Ah that’s good.
36. Got it?

Monolingual participant 3

1. Então, teve uma vez que eu fui pra Raul Soares e durante a noite eu tava dormindo e acabou a luz que tava chovendo muito
2. E lá na minha casa de Raul Soares tem a janela toda de madeira que não deixa entrar luz nem da rua nem luz da lua.
3. Fica tudo muito escuro durante noite.
4. Eu acordei no meio da noite e percebi que tava tudo muito escuro e comecei a tentar enxergar alguma coisa.
5. Como eu não tava conseguindo enxergar nada, eu comecei a achar que eu tava cego,
6. comecei a estapear a cara e gritar: “Julio César tô cego , Julio César tô cego!”
7. A casa inteira levantou e venho ver o que tava acontecendo,
8. Minha.. minha mãe ascendeu uma vela ,
9. E eu ..nó quando vi a luz assim descobri que eu não tava cego e fiquei mó aliviado e tal que não sei o que...
10. Essa é a história.

Translation

1. So, there was one time when I went to Raul Soares and during the night I was sleeping and the power went out because it was raining a lot.
2. And there at my house in Raul Soares the windows are made of wood, blocking the street lights and the moon light.

3. Everything gets very dark during the night.
4. I woke up in the middle of the night and noticed that everything was very dark and I started trying to see something.
5. Since I wasn't able to see anything, I began to think that I was blind;
6. I began to slap my face and scream "Julio Cesar, I'm blind! Julio Cesar, I'm blind!"
7. The entire house got up and came see what was going on,
8. my ..my mom lit a candle,
9. and I, man, when I saw the light, like, I found out that I wasn't blind and was super relieved and all...
10. That's the story.

Fluent English Speaker 1

BP Version

1. Eu vim pro Alabama em 2006 em agosto
2. Eu vim fazer intercambio estudar inglês
3. Eu tinha planos de ficar 4 meses aqui de agosto a dezembro
4. Na minha primeira semana aqui eu conheci um homen um garato do líbano numa festa queeu tinha ido
5. E a gente comecou a sair
6. A gente saiu o semester inteiro
7. E a gente comecou a namorar eveltualmente
8. E qdo meu programa de ingles terminou eu decidi aplicar para universidade para poder ficar aqui
9. Ah porque eu tava namorando
10. Eu fiquei o primeiro semestre.. uma beleza tudo
11. Fui pro Brasil nas férias
12. Normal também continuava namorando
13. Passei 3 meses no Brasil super apaixonada foi meu primeiro namorado
14. Voltei em agosto
15. A gente sempre teve problemas porque eu sou judia e ele era mulçumano
16. Então problemas religiosos sempre existiam
17. Mas eu era bobinha e acreditava que "ai não vai durar pra sempre"
18. E em janeiro de 2007.. não.. 2008,
19. Janeiro de 2008 ele teve queir pro líbano voltar pra casa
20. E quando ele voltou ele voltou casado
21. Sem nunca ter [laughing] terminado comigo
22. E eu descobri assim de uma forma meio uh inapropriada
23. Eu descrobi pela internet eu achei muito chato isso
24. Ah eu fiquei bem abalada
25. Eu consegui
26. Eu fiquei doente também
27. Eu tive problems de bulimia e anemia
28. Mas eu consegui terminar meu semestre

29. E voltei pro brasil nas ferias
 30. Eu.. tava bem triste entrei em depressao
 31. Quando eu voltei pra cá em agosto pras aulas de volta eu fiquei uma semana aqui e tive que embora
 32. Percebi q não ia consegui ficar
 33. Então eu tirei 1 ano de férias
 34. Eu fui para França por 3 meses pra estudar francês
 35. Eu voltei pro Brasil em novembro de 2008
 36. Em janeiro de 2009 eu vim pra cá para visitar uns amigos eu fiquei aqui 2 meses
 37. Voltei pro Brasil em abril
 38. E voltei agora em agosto pra retomar
 39. Retomei minhas aulas em agosto 2009
 40. E continuo.
- Luciana: E deve formar aqui?
41. Vou me formar
 42. Espero q me forme aqui
 43. Eventualmente daqui a 2 anos.

English version

1. Um/ i came here in 2006/august of 2006 to do the eli program study english
2. My first week here i went to a party and i met a lebanese guy
3. Uh we started going out
4. And my plan was only do to the program for like four months and go back to brazil
5. But since i was dating i decided to stay
6. Applied for the university um i got in
7. And i stayed because of the guy.
8. Um everything okay first year wonderful my first boyfriend
9. Um i went home for the summer
10. We were still dating and talking every day
10. I came back in august for school again
11. Dating everything is good
12. Um we had religion issues for me being jewish and he being muslim
13. So you know but i believed that wouldn't be a problem that everything would be okay
14. Uh in january 2008 he goes to lebanon and comes back married without ever telling me about it or breaking up with me
15. So that really affected me somehow
16. I got sick
17. Um had a really hard time finishing up the semester but i did
18. And when the semester was over i went back to brazil for vacation
19. Came back in august for school uh stayed a week
20. Realized couldn't stay wasn't in conditions to stay.
21. I was still very depressed so i went back to brazil uh
22. Ended up going to france for 3 months to study french
23. Back to brazil
24. Came here um spring 09 to visit some friends for 2 months

25. And back to Brazil for summer
26. And went back to school in august 09 decided to come come back and to stay to finish up my undergraduate program.
27. That's it.

Fluent English Speaker 2

BP Version

1. Uma vez enquanto eu ainda estava na faculdade, a minha namorada resolveu fazer uma festa surpresa pra mim,
2. E aí ela ligou para casa de um amigo meu, pro celular dele, para falar pra ele é a festa que ela estava planejando.
3. E eu tava na casa dele, só que ele tava no banho e eu ouvi o celular dele tocar e resolvi , atendi fazendo, tentando imitar a voz dele, ne
4. E ela achou realmente que fosse ele e falou: “Poxa to aqui para falar que vou fazer uma festa surpresa pro Alvaro”,
5. Aí eu fiquei sem saber o que falar né e desliguei o telefone.
6. Aí chamei ele que ele tava tomando banho, expliquei pra ele tudo que aconteceu e pedi pra ele ligar de volta para ela falando que caiu a ligação,
7. Falou que já tinha entendido e tal e que ele ia chamar todos os outros meus amigos,
8. Aí ele foi ligou para ela, explicou tudo e a festa acabou sendo no dia seguinte na casa dela.
9. Aí no seguinte eu cheguei la no apartamento, todo mundo fingindo que ainda era uma festa surpresa para mim, pra minha namorada acreditar que era uma festa surpresa, ela era a única que não sabia que eu já sabia...
10. E aí foi assim.. todo mundo achou engraçado,
11. Depois eu acabei contando para ela.. ela ficou meio triste... mas entendeu que eu não falei nada para não estragar a felicidade dela de fazer a festa surpresa para mim.
12. Foi isso.

English Version

1. When I was at college, my girlfriend tried to throw me a surprise party,
2. So she called all my friends to invite them.
3. I was at uh a friend's house and he was taking a bath,
4. So she called me and I answered the phone pretending that I was him, and she bought it and told me about the surprise party accidentally, of course.
5. So I turned off the cell phone and explained him so he could call her back.
6. In the end of the story, the party happened,
7. Everyone knew that it was a surprise party for her not for me because I knew about it.
8. When I told her what happened, she was a little bit upset, but it turned out fine.
9. That's it.

Fluent English Speaker 3

BP Version

1. Quando eu tinha mais ou menos dez anos de idade,
2. Eu morava no Brasil com minha família, eu tinha dois irmãos, o Edson de 7 e o Carlos de 1 ano de idade.
3. A gente tinha um habito de deixar ah ah
4. Qual a palavra pra traps? [Laughs]
- Luciana: É..é...armadilha
5. Armadilhas, alcar...al tem uma palavra que eu não consigo me lembrar...
- Luciana: Alçapão.
6. Alçapão! Thank you.. Alçapão..
7. A gente deixava al al al alçapão, alçapões para pegar passarinhos,
8. E quando a gente voltava da escola a gente queira ver se pegou um passarinho
9. Um dia a gente teve uma grande surpresa,
10. A gente chegou da escola e havia na no alçapão um macaquinho.. um miquinho.. pequenininho.. um bebê..
11. Oh! Ele era tão lindo tão fofinho tão bonitinho
12. A gente pediu nossos pais para ficar com ele e eles finalmente permitiram.
13. E no início estava tudo muito bem,
14. A gente o colocou numa jaula grande que era usada pra pássaros,
15. E dava banhos ..dava comidinha.. dava água,
16. Mas aí o Chico começou a se desenvolver muito mais rápido do que um bebê humano..
17. E..claro.. ele começou a nas...começou a nascer dentes no Chico.
18. E o Chico começou a ficar muito bravo.
19. Quando a gente tentava colocar água ou comida lá ele tentava nos morder..
20. E no início a gente dava banhos nele como um cachorro
21. Nessa parte do Brasil é bem quente então todo dia a gente dava um banhinho nele,
22. Ele nunca pegou um resfriado dos banhos
23. E quando o Chico começou a nos morder,
24. A gente não conseguia dar banhos nele mais,
25. Então ele começou a cheirar muito mal muito muito mal
26. E por causa desse cheiro horrroso e.. da hostilidade dele com a gente, a gente ..nós fomos obrigados a devolve-lo ao seu habit natural.
27. Um belo domingo ..meu pai me levou a fazenda,
28. Ao sítio onde minha vó morava na época
29. E.. o Chico foi embora ..no meio do mato.. feliz e saltitante
30. Nunca mais a gente viu o tal macaquinho.

English Version

1. Um, this is uh a very interesting story about a little monkey that showed up at our back yard

2. When I was about 10 years old, um, I had too other brothers at the time Edson was seven and Carlos was one
 3. And one day we came home from school and we had these traps to catch birds
 4. It was kind of like a little game we had just to catch a bird to see what happened
 5. And that day we came home from school and we had a big surprise
 6. 'cause it wasn't a bird that was in the cage.. It was a little bitty monkey
 7. It looked kind of like the monkey on the movie um "A night at the museum"
 8. With uh Robin Williams the monkey that he has on his shoulder in that movie
 9. It looked kind of like that monkey I'm not sure what species that monkey is
 10. That thing was so cute and it was a baby and we just went over the hill with our parents
 - 11: "Oh please, please, let us keep it let us keep it let us keep it please"
 12. And of course they didn't want to say no but they said yes
 13. There were three of was asking
 14. And we got we had a big cage my dad used to have uh birds in cages and there was an empty cage
 15. We put the monkey there
 16. We named the monkey Chico, which is in Portuguese is short for Francisco
 17. And we put Chico there and we tried to figure out what we should feed him and the water and all
 18. And everything was really going well for the first few weeks because he was a baby
 19. And then he developed quite quickly and he started getting teeth
 20. And he started getting out of his sweet baby persona
 21. Uh one morning uh
 22. In Brazil we come home from school around lunch time in most schools
 23. And we came home around lunch time
 24. And my mom had us feed him it was our responsibility
 25. When we went to feed him he wanted to eat our hands instead
 26. That was quite scary!
 27. Well.. Nobody wanted to feed him
 28. And we used to give him baths to keep him clean and all that
 29. Well nobody could bathe him
 30. Uh my dad had to feed him
 31. And no one was bathing him
 32. Uh that went on for about two months and we had him a total of three months
 33. And by the end of his stay with us that little monkey/ poor thing/ he stank/ he smelled so bad
 34. And we didn't want to let go of him
 35. But we finally got convinced because the smell was just unbreathable
- Luciana: [laughs]
36. And/ we were so sad to let go of Chico but I mean there was no way you could keep him
 37. He was biting you, he didn't want to be there, he was unhappy, we couldn't cuddle with him like at the beginning,

38. So we said: “Dad, how are we going to release him?”
39. Well/ we lived in a small town of about forty five thousand people
40. And there was there were all these small little farms in the country
41. and my dad said: “Well, we’ll take it to your grandmother’s house and just release him in the woods and he’ll find his his family”
42. “Oh dad how is he gonna find his family?”
43. “Oh don’t worry he’s an animal he got instincts he will find”
44. So we were really concerned about Chico.. But we had no choice
45. One Sunday we went uh after lunch and uh we released Chico out in the woods and happily he went
46. We never saw that cute little monkey again

Fluent English Speaker 4

BP Version

1. Eu tenho três filhas, né...Uma delas mora no sul do Brasil
2. É meio longe daqui então ela não pôde vir passar o dia das mães comigo e eu tava super triste
3. Minha família de Visconde do Rio Branco vieram passar o dias das mães comigo né com com minha mãe também claro né
4. Eu eu tava na cozinha fazendo nosso almoço
5. Daí a campainha tocou e as meninas me falarm: “Mãe, é pra você”
6. Eu falei: “Pra mim a essa hora?”
7. Aí quando eu abri a porta tinha um rapaz com flores falando que era pra mim
8. E falei: “Nossa mas quem me mandou?”
9. Olhei pro meu marido e não tinha sido ele né
10. Daí virei pro rapaz e falei: “Você sabe quem me mandou as flores?”
11. E ele disse: “Tem um cartão”
12. Quando eu li o cartão era dela...
13. Chorei tanto
14. Eu fiquei tao emocionada que eu nao parava de chorar e o cara não tava entendendo nada
15. E eu comecei a gritar “E da Pati, é da Pati!”
16. Daí falei pra mamãe: “Você não vai acreditar, mamãe...é da Patricia! Ela me mandou flores”
17. Foi tão emocionante e eu chorei tanto mas de alegria
18. claro que eu também fiquei triste porque ela não estava lá mas eu ao mesmo tempo foi como se ela estivesse la como a gente
19. Daí eu peguei o telefone e liguei pra ela na hora pra agradecer e falar como eu tinha ficado feliz
- 20: Falei para ela né: “A mãe ta ficando velha você não pode fazer isso comigo mais não”
21. E ela falou “Eu sabia que você ia ficar assim”
22. Todo mundo sabia né
23. Até minhas outras filhas porque elas ajudaram a Pati né
24. E esconderam tudo de mim
25. Mas eu fiquei muito feliz
36. E espero que ela possa vir da próxima vez né

English Version

1. I'm gonna talk about something that happened to me last mother's day
2. It was very touchy for me, yeah
3. Umm...I have three daughters. One of them live in the South of Brazil
4. it's kind of far way from here ..and she didn't come to celebrate mother's day with me you know I was very sad because of that
5. So my my family from Visconde do Rio Branco, my parents, came here to celebrate the day with me and of course n' my mom
6. and I was in the kitchen cooking, yeah?, our lunch
7. then the door bell rang and...the girls there, my other daughters , told me: "Mom it's for you"
8. (falei): "For me at this time?"
9. So when I opened the door I saw a guy...with a bunch of beautiful roses yeah and saying that it was for me
10. falei: "But who sent me that?"
11. I looked at my husband's face... no it was not him
12. falei: "Wow"
13. Then I asked the guy: "Do you know who sent me that?"
14. He told me: "Well, there's a card"
15. When I read the card and I saw it was from her, yeah?
16. I cried a lot aaah
17. I was soo soo sooo moved and I couldn't stop and the guy didn't understand a thing
18. falei "Oh my...it's my daughter it's my daughter!"
19. So I ran away to tell my mom
20. falei: "Mom you won't believe it ..it's from Patricia mom! She sent me a bunch flowers"
21. And it was really nice so..
- Luciana: that's sweet
22. yeah ohh aaaa the way I cried it was something really good yeah because I was happy yeah
23. of course I felt sad she was not with us but I felt she was there in some way
24. then I I took the phone immediately and called her to thank her to say how ...how happy I was
25. but I made her promise not to do that again because I almost had a heart attack
26. falei: "Mom is getting old, uh? you cannot do this again it's your mom"
27. Falou: "I knew you were gonna be like that"
28. Everybody knew..., even the other daughters because they arranged everything yeah for the surprise
29. but yeah I was really happy at the end yeah and I'm proud of her
- Luciana: That's great...That's a very good story...Thank you
30. I hope next time she can come yeah

Fluent English Speaker 5

BP Version

1. Bom, eu sempre gostei muito de inglês ..desde de pequena eu fiz eh cursos ..particulares de inglês

2. E faz dez anos que eu faço curso de inglês e... foi aí que eu optei por fazer a faculdade de letras,
3. E quando eu tava na faculdade eu percebi a importância da gente ter uma experiência no exterior...né?
4. Não só pra saber um pouco mais sobre a língua, mas também sobre a cultura
5. E aí-- eu-- tentei uma bolsa pra estudar nos Estados Unidos e consegui a bolsa e fui estudar em Gadsden... no Gadsden State Community College...
6. E..essa experiência foi super importante pra minha vida profissional e pessoal...
7. Eu aprendi muito ...né com o inglês e o inglês e vi o quanto eu ainda preciso aprender..
8. Aprendi também muito sobre eh..aaaaa... a cultura norte-americana...
9. E também pessoalmente foi importante porque eu fiz muito amigos...pessoas super especiais que fazem parte da minha vida ate hoje,
10. Aprendi muito também com essas pessoas.
11. Quando eu voltei pro Brasil é muitas portas se abriram pra mim,
12. Porque aqui no Brasil é muito valorizado ...a experiência no exterior
13. Então eu tive a chance de de escolher né entre as varias oportunidades que eu tive...
14. É e acredito que a experiência no exterior é super importante pros professores de línguas porque eu vejo até hoje que eu uso sempre nas minha aulas o que aprendi ... né no exterior.
15. E é isso.

English Version

1. So, as you know I always liked English and
2. Um I always wanted to go to the US to to study English and study American culture and
3. Um [?] I've been studying English for ten years and when I got into the university I had the chance to get a scholarship to go to the US and I just applied for it
4. and I had to take a lot of tests and etc. and
5. when I when [sigh] when I took the the
6. no I had the interview first and then I passed and then I had to take the Toefl test I passed
7. and then I got the scholarship and I went to the US
8. I went to Gadsden to study at the Gadsden State Community College
9. And it was something really important for me because now I'm a teacher and I really need to know about American culture and about American customs and etc
10. And uh that's good 'cause I can teach my students um that culture and etc
11. And um I made a lot of um friends that are still part of my life
12. And I'll never forget that time
13. And I wish I could go back but things are kind of different now so I can't
14. And what else can I say?
15. Do I have to go on?
- It's up to you [laughs]
16. And that's it
17. I think it was a very um um how can I say
18. Something that uh changed my life because
19. Uh in Brazil that's very important when you get the chance to go to the US
20. When you go back, when you come back I mean eh things change because you can get better jobs and better um

-mhm

21. And I think that's it.

Fluent English Speaker 6

BP Version

1. Oi, meu nome é Natalia Hickman
2. eu sou do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
3. Eu to morando aqui ha quatro anos e meio.
4. Eu vou falar sobre meu casamento que foi muito bonito.
5. Eu me casei no dia 29 de junho de 2008 em Miami beach
6. na cerimonia eu convidei 20 pessoas, eu tive 20 convidados, nós nos casamos no Ritz Carlton South beach,
7. um hotel muito bonito
8. infelizmente ninguem da minha familia pode comparecer
9. mas.. eu convidei alguns amigos e a familia do John
10. e-- foi uma festa linda eu me senti uma Cinderella
11. e-- logo após eu me mudei para Tuscaloosa
12. porque eu e o John nos conhecemos em Miami
13. depois claro depois da cerimonia eu tive que me mudar pra ca
14. e nao tem sido facil me adaptar a cidade
15. mas eu gosto da vida de casada
16. e foi na verdade um sonho realizado
17. E é isso que eu tenho pra dizer pra você.

English Version

1. My name is Natalia Hickman
2. I am from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and I've been living here for four and a half years
3. I'm gonna tell you about my wedding
4. It was a very special day of my life
5. I got married on June 29th 2008 in Miami Beach
6. um I had 20 guests at the Ritz Carlton South Beach
7. it's a beautiful hotel
8. and we had a beautiful ceremony
9. unfortunately none of/nobody from my family was able to come here
10. but.. I had some friends and John's family over the wedding
11. and it was beautiful
12. I felt like a Cinderella to tell you the truth
13. John and I met in Miami
14. and after one year dating we decided to get married
15. and of course I had to move to Tuscaloosa after that
16. and it's not been easy
17. it hasn't been easy to get adapted here/ but I like
18. I like to be married/ I like to take care of the house/
19. and it's actually a dream come true

20. and that's it
21. that's all I have to say about it.

Fluent English Speaker 7

BP Version

1. Eu vou contar para a história para a minha vida mudou ...há pouco tempo atrás
2. Estava eu em Viçosa no final da minha carreira só esperando o tempo para eu me aposentar
3. De repente surgiu uma oportunidade de fazer uma entrevista pra em Belo Horizonte pra/?/
4. Vim..fiz a entrevista e qual não foi a minha surpresa após quinze dias fui chamada para trabalhar para no Instituto Metodista Isabella Hendrix em Belo Horizonte pra ser a coordenadora do bilinguismo [*sic*]
5. A escola começou a ser bilingüe no ano pa...em 2008
6. E eu vim saí da minha pequena cidade Viçosa e vim morar na capital em Belo Horizonte mudando a minha vida completamente ...pra assumir uma carreira nova
7. Pensei que minha carreira profissional estava no final e muito pelo contrário ela estava começando
8. Ao chegar pra comecei a trabalhar com os professores
9. Preparando /os/ para trabalhar na escola bilíngüe
10. Passei a trabalhar por um momento com relações internacionais no Instituto Metodista Isabella Hendrix
11. E...além de tudo fui /?/ a entrar no mestrado
12. Então quando a gente pensa que ... a nossa carreira profissional está no final
13. A gente não pode saber de quantas coisas ainda tem por vir
14. E eu estou para agora enfrentando novos desafios ..fazendo mestrado..estudando muito../crescendo/ muito
15. Conhecendo novas amizades ..tendo uma nova vida e uma nova oportunidade de trabalho que eu pensei qu--não teria mais
16. Pensei que eu estaria esperando chegar a 2010 só para me aposentar e agora 2010 é um desafio,
17. Onde vou implantar o bilinguismo no colégio inteiro e--fazer o diferencial dessa escola e outras escolas de Minas Gerais
18. E vou cumprir o meu mestrado com a ajuda de Deus e dos meus amigos.
19. Essa é minha história para dizer que a gente nunca para desistir,
20. A gente nunca deve achar que a nossa carreira acabou.
21. Uma história para gente ver que--a gente tá sempre aprendendo independente da idade independente dos momentos
22. Deus sempre tem novos desafios para nós.

English Version

1. I'm gonna tell a story about how my life changed this past year
2. I used to live in Viçosa, a small university town in the interior of Minas Gerais State
3. Well, two years ago my sister asked me if I didn't wanna do an interview here in Belo Horizonte the capital of the state

4. So I came did the interview and what was my surprise that after 15 days I was invited to work as the coordinator of the bilingual school which is going to be implemented in the Methodist Institute Isabella Hendrix
5. This is a very traditional school here in Minas Gerais as many other Methodist schools around the world
6. So we are going to start the bilingualism with the small kids and then continue up to high school
7. So I changed my life I moved from the city in the interior came to live in this big metropolis which is the capital of the state, Belo Horizonte,
8. which is a metropolitan city you know
9. and the town where I used to live was way smaller
10. and there are just all kinds of things that you can do in BH
11. And started a new life
12. I was about to retire when this happened so I was just waiting of the time to complete the the time for me to retire
13. Then it started a whole new life for me
14. I have new challenges every day of my life
15. The first the biggest one was moving from a small town to this big city
17. The second was to work with different people and and coming already from another town as the coordinator
18. But I just really really like it because I was well accepted and everybody helped me to do a good job
19. Besides that, I was also invited to represent the international relations of this institution which I did during a year and a half
20. And and then I was also challenged to enter a master's degree course which I'm doing
21. So when you think that your career is almost at the end there's always something you can /learn/ then like happened to me
22. It was a great surprise
23. I'm here now starting a new career a new master's course a new /challenge/ in my life
24. So when you think you have nothing else to learn that your career is over..that's not really true
25. There's always a new career there's always new challenges there's always something to learn especially us teachers we always have something to learn
26. Because... when we teach we also learn
27. And what most amazes me is that I had the courage to come and 2010 was going to be my deadline to retire
28. and this year 2010 is my big year because I have the challenge of turning the whole school bilingual
29. I have the challenge of teaching English /?/ and the challenge of completing my master's degree
30. And I'm about to turn 50 and when I thought my career was gonna end I'm starting a brand new one
31. With the help of God and a little help from my friends I know I'm gonna make it.
32. And I chose this story because it's my most recent story
33. I have many many funny stories sad stories
34. But this is a victorious story a story of victory

35. A story of starting over when you think you are at the end rope you are at the end of your career
36. And I'm really thankful to God for this opportunity
37. Coming to BH and accepting this new challenge and... being successful as I have been
38. I know I got this because of His grace.

APPENDIX E
StoryCorps “About us” Information

From: (<http://www.storycorps.org/about>)

StoryCorps is an independent nonprofit project whose mission is to honor and celebrate one another's lives through listening. By recording the stories of our lives with the people we care about, we experience our history, hopes, and humanity. Since 2003, tens of thousands of everyday people have interviewed family and friends through StoryCorps. Each conversation is recorded on a free CD to take home and share, and is archived for generations to come at the Library of Congress. Millions listen to our award-winning broadcasts on public radio and the Internet. StoryCorps is one of the largest oral history projects of its kind, creating a growing portrait of who we really are as Americans.

Listening is an act of love. The heart of StoryCorps is the conversation between two people who are important to each other: a son asking his mother about her childhood, an immigrant telling his friend about coming to America, or a couple reminiscing on their 50th wedding anniversary. By helping people to connect, and to talk about the questions that matter, the StoryCorps experience is powerful and sometimes even life-changing. Our goal is to make that experience accessible to all, and find new ways to inspire people to record and preserve the stories of someone important to them. Everybody's story matters and every life counts. Just as powerful is the experience of listening. Whenever people listen to these stories, they hear the courage, the humor, the trials and triumphs of an incredible range of voices.

By listening closely to one another, we can help illuminate the true character of this nation reminding us all just how precious each day can be and how truly great it is to be alive.

-Dave Isay, Founder, StoryCorps