

## Appendix III Transcriptions of the interviews with the students.

### 1. Chara (S1)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain of studies: Political sciences, international relation, diplomacy and conflict resolution.

Year of studies: 1st year of MA degree

Mother tongue: Greek

Languages spoken when attending classes: English and French, the proportion of classes in each language depends because I have courses that I choose, so in the optional courses I prefer English. but my obligatory classes are in French this semester.

How long have you been studying in English? Many years, I started around 9 years old learning English at school.

Is it the first time you attend the whole program in English? Yes, it is the first time I do the language full time. Before it was just English in language schools.

How often do you use English at your academic life? Every day, every day I have classes in English.

Do you have any certificates in English? Yes, it is C1 proficiency in English. C2 I guess.

How important is English for you? In your life in general and for your studies in particular?

English is important, since I moved to Belgium I use it all the time. I like it a lot. It's very international. For the university also. You have to know English to be an Erasmus student.

Otherwise is very difficult because you have to face all the situations in English.

So, what do you think is your level of proficiency regardless the paper, or regardless the fact that you have an assesses paper? It's very good, I can speak very easily, I can write very easily, I don't have problems using English generally.

How do you rate it yourself? As I said, I can speak and write in English. And my pronunciation is not very heavy. But of course it isn't British. I don't face many problems.

And I like it a lot.

Did you have to include your proficiency in English paper when you enrolled for the program here? I had to take the Erasmus assessment of proficiency before I come here. And I was C1.

For French also. But for French was a requirement to have a paper from before, when I applied for the master. So, are you generally comfortable attending classes in English? Yea, generally yes.

And is it easy for you to follow? It depends. on the professor actually. When the professor has a good accent and a good way to speak it is easy, but when not, when he doesn't have, he or she, it is quite hard to follow. But mostly yea.

How would you develop your proficiency? Maybe watch more movies without subtitles, read only news in English, travel more, push myself to speak in english, and force me and read articles.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies.

Would you say you are anxious or motivated when it comes to English? I used to be more anxious at the beginning of the master, not so much anymore. I try to be better and better, so I guess I'm motivated enough. Of course there are points where I get so anxious because it is not my mother language and also my mind gets stuck often. But I want to know better English and use it more correct. Because it is the tool to be able to communicate with everyone. In the university too, it's the same. It is always difficult and I want to get better and better.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use in the university? [ HAD TO EXPLAIN THE TERMS ENL, ESL, ELF ].

I guess it depends. I use English. I try to be more formal when I have to write an assignment and when I speak with my professors. Or when I have to speak in front of the class. Then everyday with my friends or out I can just speak the way I like. And when I take notes too, whatever comes out fast. I like speaking English with anyone and I feel generally comfortable. Of course when I have to speak with a native speaker I am more careful to be correct. I don't want him to laugh at me haha. I pay a lot of attention when I have to speak with a native speaker and when I have to write a formal report at the uni. In the rest of the situations, I just communicate. It is important to understand the others too, so it's important to have a good basis in English. Even if you make some mistakes sometimes.

4th topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to? Wow, I don't know. I would say to British and American people. But I know that for example in Australia and India they also speak English all the time. It is their official language. And people in Greece speak it sometimes, and here we study in English too. So, I think everyone. It is an international language. So everyone. Of course people in England know how to use it better but okay. That's how it is supposed to be.

How do you feel when you have to speak with native speakers then? Then I'm anxious haha. So stressed. Because usually I don't understand them. And they never slow down. It's like another language. It's not the grammar, is how fast they speak and the pronunciation. With all the international students maybe we do the same mistakes and we all speak like idiots but we understand each other haha. It's crazy. But I admire native speakers a lot. It's so nice to sound like them but it is hard.

Do you consider yourself bilingual? Haha not at all! I am so confused sometimes, and again when I have to speak with a native person it's hard. So I'm not bilingual nope. I only practise it as a second language. Just half a year. I can't consider myself bilingual. Because until my 22 year, I was speaking in greek. Ofc I was speaking English in trips, and listening to music and attending classes but no.

Do you try to keep individual characteristics (accent) or you try to be and sound native or native like? With my friends I keep my characteristics, or with ppl I know. When I start speaking I try to sound more native but then by time is just me. The professors here and the uni in general accept you as you are because they are not native speakers themselves. We are not in a British university. Even the professors make mistakes.

## 2. Aizhan (S2)

### Proficiency

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain of studies: Political science

Mother language: Russian and Kazak

Year of studies: 1st year of MA

Languages you have classes: French and English.

How long have you been studying in English? 7 years, final years of school and BA.

So, what do you think is your level of proficiency regardless the paper? I think I know good English, still much to work on though, generally it is fine, language is not a problem.

Did you show certificates? I remember clearly I had to hand in DELF for French and IELTS for English but they also accepted my diploma from BA university because it was stated all classes were given in English.

Level of proficiency as you rate it? High enough I think C1, on my way to C2 I think.

How often do you use English at your academic life? Every day.

How important is English for you? Oh God, I'm so blessed I know English. With English I was able to study abroad all these years. I love English and the opportunities this language gives you to acquire an international profile as a human being. Also, it is very important for my domain of studies. Being able to speak in English when you study political science is so important.

How would you develop your proficiency? I definitely want to read more and more in English. Sometimes my head gets so confused between French and English but I guess this is a good sign haha. And also I would like to move to a country where they speak English as an official language. I would like to stay in London for a couple of years.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies.

How about your anxiety level? About English classes I am not anxious. Though I should be because sometimes I am too much self-confident and I just rely on my level of English and then it's all a mess haha.

So, since you are so self-confident are you also a grammar freak? You want everything to be correct absolutely? Really motivated too? Yes, I am perfectionist in that sense.

So, are you generally comfortable studying in English? Yea, generally very much yes.

And is it easy for you to follow? Generally I'm comfortable attending classes, except when the professors have a strong French accent or when they say phrases I don't understand.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use in the university?

At the university I think I just try to be very correct and precise on the way I use English. I know I have to write correct English with nice words and phrases not to get lower grades.

And of course the content should be very precise too. It is important to be able to be as close to a scientific paper as possible. Mistakes are not permitted. University is very strict. The first 2 years of my BA I was struggling to read academic papers, it was so difficult to understand. But with practise it gets better and better. It is important to practise a lot. And to know if you use correct language or not so that you can always become better. Also in our field, all the political correspondents should be very precise with the language. The more formal the better.

4th topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to? I am certain it belongs to the native speakers of English. And that all the rest we try to imitate them and make their language ours. This is so so difficult and stupid though. But it happens. We are usually not in the mood to get better, to study more, to know better English. Just because we can speak some words we think we know the language. I'm not sure this is fair to them who know it since they are born. So, I like to speak with English speakers. The British accent is lovely. So classy haha.

How do you feel when you have to speak with native speakers then? I'm terrified haha! Not because I do not know the language but mostly because I don't want to sound funny. I think my grammar and vocabulary are high enough and I can communicate very good with native speakers. But the problem is the accent.

Do you consider yourself bilingual? I use English since I was 18 every day of my life. So I could say yes. I'm not perfect but I'm working towards it. I think if I manage to go to London

for some time then I will be 100% able to think that I am a bilingual.

Do you try to keep individual characteristics (accent) or you try to be and sound native or native like? Hmm, I just hope my accent is as British as it can. I don't know. I cannot pretend a lot. So I just have my accent at the end of the day and I try to be as correct as possible.

### 3. Alessio (S3)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain of studies: political science

Year: 2nd of MA

Mother language: Italian

Classes: In English and French

How long have you been studying in English: From school in general, I started reading the subjects 3 years now, but this is the 1st year which I do everything in English because I came here.

Do you feel comfortable using English at school then? I feel quite comfortable yes, more yes than no.

How about certificates? In my application I added it the B2 certificate and now I got a partial C1 certificate.

So, what do you think is your level of proficiency regardless the paper? How do you rate it?

I think my English is okay. I can say that in general I understand and I can communicate, I use English and I like it. I am a European citizen and I live in an other country than Italy, I have to use English to live here. My English is okay when I speak with people, when I use it in the university I have to be a bit more careful. Because I make mistakes, my grammar is not so good.

How often do you use English at your academic life? I have classes 3 times per week but I study everyday so I use it every day.

Are you generally comfortable studying in English? I try to be. It is difficult sometimes but it is a challenge so I am glad when after some time I see the progress in myself. I always try to be more and more and more comfortable.

How important is English for you? It is really important. English helps me think better, have more open opinions, know myself better. It is very important to use your brain in more than one language, you become smarter and more curious. And it also maybe will give me the opportunity to work here in Belgium or in an other country.

How would you develop your proficiency? I have to learn more grammar and more vocabulary. I always learn new words when I study everyday but these are words I learn for political science. I want to know more general vocabulary. And also I would speak with more native people. Why native? Because if I am able to speak and be understood by a native person I will be able to communicate with others too. It is the hardest.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies. Anxiety? I used to be anxious but no more. How did the anxiety go down? Because at the beginning I wanted to be the best in everything, but then in my personal growth I lost this ambition so I am not that anxious. I know I have a good way to study, I just do that every time.

Motivation? I am motivated in becoming better in English, it helps me with the rest of the

subjects I take. And I like English a lot because I want to escape from the Italian culture haha. It's not only Italy in the world and I can only know it if I know good English.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use in the university?

My grammar is not that good, I know I make mistakes, I always do. I know I have to use correct and nice English at the university, for example when I write a paper or when I will write my master thesis, but this is also very difficult for me. It takes so much time for me to write all the papers and be sure they are correct. I always tell a friend who knows better English to check them haha.

Because I don't want to be false. Like the Latins used to say "Scripta Manent" so they have to be correct haha. So most of the time I want to be able to communicate in a good way and of course when I write too but this is more difficult. So I also write simple because that is what I can and if it is correct then this is the best and I'm happy.

4th topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to?

If I think it more generally I would say that English is for English people. But if I see my situation and the situation of all the people here I have to say that English is for us. Is for everyone. I don't say I am perfect or that I compare myself to a person from Britain but I use English every day in the university and all my international friends, so it is a language I feel too. I don't use it only because I have to. I use it because I know it now, and I like it more and more. And with it I can think in a different way than before.

Do you consider yourself bilingual?

No, I just try to be better and better all the time.

Do you try to keep individual characteristics (accent) or you try to be and sound native or native like?

I love the differences among people so I always try to speak correctly in order to be understandable, but I don't want to lose my accent, I don't know why. For me it's strange when I hear a Spanish guy speaking with Cambridge accent, I respect them because maybe they know better English than me but I'm not English, so I have to be correct but my accent is my special characteristic.

4. Cha (S4)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain: political sciences faculty, international relations master

Year: 1st year of MA

Mother language: it's always a tricky question because both of my parents are from Burundi in origin so I hear a lot of Kurundi at home, but I use more French because of the school system as well, so I am in between Kurundi and French. sometimes one is over the other, this period for example is French. I have classes both in English and in French.

How many classes do you have in English?

During the first semester I had 4 in English and 1 in French, during this semester we have less classes in English, I think just my seminar. In general, studying in English? I started in high school, my third year of high school, I was in the bilingual programme, I had classes in Dutch and 6 hours of English per week during the 3 years of high school and then I went for 1 year in the USA and did a remake of my last year, and when I came back I did my BA in law in

Brussels in 3 languages, French, Dutch and English, so as you can see I was really exposed to the language.

Certificates?

I didn't get one certificate from school for English but when I came back from the US I was given a certificate for the year abroad, as an exchange student. But I didn't get any certificates for the language. When I was in the US I tried to apply to some unis there and I met with some of the school counselors and they told us that I didn't have to have a certificate even there because I was proficient enough and I could communicate well, so they could see I can make it. So, because of that I never tried to get any certificates.

I think in the uni here they took into consideration the fact that I studied in the USA and that my BA was in English, and to be in the BA program we had to take an exam in English and show we were sufficient enough.

How often do you use English in your everyday life at the university?

I use it every day, because it's not only the classes which we don't have every day, but also I read books and articles in English for these classes and for myself.

Are you comfortable?

I feel fine, probably because the vocab used during the classes isn't far from what we are used to in real life, in a normal conversation sometimes the vocab we have to use is very close to what we use to describe political phenomena, so it's not that hard to get into the language and get into the concept. How important is English for you?

I study political science and I can only observe and know what happens in the world only through English. It is the language of the world nowadays, so it plays an important role to really know the language. For example, when I went to the USA it was the only way I could communicate with the people and get into the culture. I think it is really important to be good at it because everybody speaks it. So you have to speak it too.

How would you develop your proficiency?

I should write more, always better to have a synthetic way there, plus I should listen to news and music more.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies.

Anxiety? I'm not really anxious, when you speak if you do mistakes you can change the way you phrase and make it correct. Of course the fear of failure is there but it shouldn't affect you totally. Motivation? I am becoming more and more motivated because I like to see the good change in myself.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use in the university?

I always try to be as correct as possible. I try not to sound like someone who doesn't know English. When I write something important too. I don't want to be uncorrect. I know I make so many mistakes though. When I speak with my friends it is different. I let myself just speak what I want to speak, just to communicate.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to?

English belongs to the people. The people is important. Is like you ask me who do you think Belgium belongs to? I would say to Belgian people, but I am not 100% Belgian so it's not a clear thing to say. It is my home. But I'm not 100% Belgian. It's the same with English.

English is for the people who want to speak English.

Do you consider yourself bilingual?

I'm not bilingual bc I haven't mastered that yet, but I'm at ease with understanding people, I see it as a tool to reach people, so that's my goal.

Do you try to keep individual characteristics (accent) or you try to be and sound native or native like? Actually it depends. At the beginning I used more effort, I was mimicing, now I choose words that are more characteristic to myself. I think when you get more comfortable you accept your self and the way you speak.

#### 5. Maha (S5)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain: international relations, political sciences, 1st year of MA, Arabic and French  
Language of classes: Classes 80% in English

How long have you been studying in English? I can say 3 years full of English.

Comfortable? Now I can say for the MA it's better but still is much more complicated than French. If i have to write for example a paper it will take me more time let's say than in French but to follow the classes is fine.

Certificates? No, it's supposed to be a french degree. I only did the Erasmus assessment of English. Self- rated level? I don't have a proof of it, but since I can manage the exams I think I am good haha.

How often do you use English? I use it all the time, every day I have to do something in English. How important is it for you?

It is very important to get the meaning to the other person. It is the most important.

Sometimes it is difficult for me to understand something fully, so because I know that difficulty that I have I try to communicate my meaning to the other person.

How would you develop your proficiency? For me the difficult is the grammar. I need to study more grammar to write correct English. So maybe I read a grammar book this summer. All these rules are so confusing.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies.  
Anxiety?

I'm not that anxious, I think I can manage the stress. I just take some more time to do something. But that's okay.

Motivation? I just need to pass the exams haha, so that's my motivation. If I have to be better in English I will learn good English. All for the exams.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use in the university?

Just because I know I cannot use grammar correct I have to communicate correct at least. In case I have to deliver a paper, this is difficult. I spend so much time when I have to write and it is so difficult. When I speak then it is okay to be casual, even if I speak with the professors. Most of them are not native speakers of English so I don't care if I do mistakes.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers. Who do you think English belongs to?

If a person from England sees the way I write then he will laugh forever. I respect those people so much. And I feel so bad when I don't use their language correct. But I am still learning it. So it takes time. I think it is the same if they speak French. I would laugh too but

this is not right. And I never had the chance to speak with a native person I think so it's not easy to know.

Do you consider yourself bilingual?

I'm not bilingual, no.

Do you try to keep individual characteristics (accent) or you try to be and sound native or native like?

I hope I don't have a strong accent but I can't be sure. I am just myself. Plus if I would try to speak like a native I would sound so stupid.

## 6. Carmen (S6)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain: Engineering

Year: 2nd of MA

Mother language: Spanish

Classes: English

How long: studying English? Since 5 at school, studying in English just this year.

Generally comfortable? I am comfortable enough, I feel fine.

Certificate: I took the IELTS and showed that to my application yes.

How often do you use English? All my classes are in English and I don't speak French, so all the time.

How important is it for you? For the job I am making it is super important. All the engineers work in English. I think everywhere in the world.

How would you develop your proficiency?

I would like to become better at everything. In grammar and in writing and in speaking. I don't feel so good but at the same time maybe I don't need to be better. Because It is engineering and it's very practical. So no need to worry about it.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies.

Are you anxious? I am obsessive with things. Does it mean really motivated or really stressed? This means that I stop doing things because I have to read. I stop living. I am so focused I stop doing other stuff. I am calm and obsessive.

Are you motivated? It's always the same feeling. I don't know if you can call it motivation or stress, I am just obsessed.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use in the university? I use English to communicate. I don't have to know perfect English. And I don't care if I do. Of course It is extra but the domain is very independent. Plus I hate grammar. So I just communicate.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to?

For me English is the American or the British English. I love them. And it is their language. People like me just use it for practical reasons. Because we use it at our work.

Do you consider yourself bilingual?

No, I think bilingual is high level. I'm close to it maybe, I can manage myself with English but bilingual is something more, is Jen (a friend who lived in England), she is bilingual, she doesn't have any doubts when she speaks.

Individual characteristics or native like?

As you can see, I have a really strong accent, but it depends. If I am in a professional environment I am as accurate as possible, really try to speak very well, if I am with friends I just speak. In a professional environment you have to be really correct, you have to show something. It's not always easy.

7. Matteo (S7)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain: civil engineering, double degree.

Second year of MA

Mother language: Italian

Classes: In French and English

How long: first year of English in Uni, but from 6 in general.

Comfortable: it's a bit weird to speak in English but yea its okay, from everything the most difficult is to speak, maybe easier to speak it with other Italians, but if you speak English with Belgian guys the accent is different so maybe we don't understand each other. Certificates? No, only the Erasmus test.

How often do you use English? I use it every day more or less, because I have to read and go to the classes.

How important is it for you? It is important to know English. It helps a lot if you want to work abroad as an engineer.

How would you develop your proficiency?

I watch tv series, and I would like to read more books (not grammar books).

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies.

Are you anxious?

Yes, I am stressed because I don't know how to speak good English. And also my grammar is the worst.

Motivated? I want to get better yes, but it is difficult and it takes so much time. I want good grades in the exams so I have to read all the vocabulary in English.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

I use really simple English haha. To speak with people and to write reports. And they are really simple. That's good because I am an engineer so I don't care a lot. I don't have to write too much. Only terminology and math types.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to?

To the people who live in America haha. I think I violate it when I use it wrong, but on the other hand it is okay because I promote it. I read in English and I will work in English so it is very okay to make mistakes and not to speak it very well. It is not my language after all. They should try to learn Italian and see it is very difficult too.

How do you feel when you speak with native speakers? When I was in London to visit a friend I couldn't understand them. I was asking them eeh, eeh all the time.

Do you consider yourself bilingual?

This means if I have 2 mother languages? Not at all. English is difficult.

Individual characteristics or native like?

Yes, I would like to remove my accent, maybe they see you like a stranger and it's not good, and also when you are native like you feel more important.

#### 8. Diogo (S8)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain: Engineering, 1st year of MA, Mother language: Portuguese.

All classes are in English, studying officially only this semester, before just English at school and ECE which is advanced English.

Did you show qualification? They asked me to have TOEFL or ECE.

Are you confident? Yes I think so, the main problem usually is the professors sometimes, the accent is too strong, and sometimes some words are not understandable, but when it's written it's easy. It is more individual work I try to see just movies in English and when I was more confident I removed even the subtitles. It's always scary when you begin your mobility programme and you have to present in English because you have an audience, you are talking in a language you are not really comfortable, so speaking is more stressing, but in writing when you have to be by yourself and try it's more easy and clear, it's okay. Sometimes communicating through talking is more difficult. How often do you use English? I use English every day because I have to read everything in English and go to the classes.

How important is it for you?

It is very important, I think new horizons open if you know English. And I like to know I use it okay for my future job too.

How would you develop your proficiency? Living abroad is a good experience, especially if I live in an English speaking country, even in pronunciation, but still here it is good because I can practise.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies.

Are you anxious?

With English? Not very much. I think I can communicate and be understood. That is the important for me. I use English all the time so it feels okay. Only at the beginning speaking was more stressing.

Are you motivated? Yes, I try to learn new words and read in English. You use English all the time if you are an engineer.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use?

Maybe because I don't know very good English, or because I am still learning it and also because the thing I study is very difficult I like to know that people understand me and that I understand them too. I want to communicate in a nice way. I don't like very complex sentences and words. Sometimes I improvise a lot and I think I make my own new words but that is fun.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to?

I will say it's the language of the British people. I like it when I hear it from them. Also it is an international language but most of us use it because we don't know the language of the country we study. Also I study engineering, so everything I read is in English. I would say it is a more practical language.

Do you consider yourself bilingual?

Yea, I would say so, English is a language that I feel confident with.

Native like? When I was younger I tried to simulate a British accent but its very difficult, and its' always fake, I think now I'm losing it, I don't have an accent or smt, and I read an article, our personality changes when we speak another language, but perhaps I'm more formal when I speak in English, because it's mostly at school or college situations and perhaps I speak less quickly to make myself understandable. There are so many different accents in English, and usually some people have a very difficult accent to understand, so I would advice them to speak slower. For example I know that Spanish people have a strong accent so they should try to reduce it a little sound more native like to be more understandable, but for others whose accent is not so strong like Portuguese or Brazilian people can keep their personal way of speaking.

9. Francisco (S9)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain: electrical engineering, 1st year of MA. Mother language: Portuguese

I did English just at school, in BA just Portuguese. Now all the classes are in English.

Certificate: only asked if I knew English, I have the B2 and ECE, but I also took the Erasmus test which showed I am B2.

Comfortable? I am more comfortable when interacting and talking. The hardest is writing reports, because of the language.

Develop your proficiency? I can improve, when I go back to Portugal I will do the proficiency test. How often do you use English? I use English almost every day when I go to the classes. How important is it for you? It is interesting to work in an international company when I graduate, so I think I will work in English. So it is very important for my job. I feel good when I know I understand people who speak English and when they can understand me. I have to improve more and more though.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies.

Are you anxious?

Usually before the exams Im very very nervous, I feel if the answers were in Portuguese would be easier. It doesn't come so easy in English you know.

Motivated? Haha yes I am, but I should do it more. I sometimes think that the subject is too complicated and I may fail because of English and then I get discouraged, so I should be more yea yea you can do it Francisco!

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use?

I try to communicate good with people most of the times. Of course I also try to write good when I have a report but this is more difficult. And we use a lot of terminology and math types so if I use the English I know now then it is okay.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to?

It belongs to native people. I cannot say that it is my language, it is just the first time I use it

because I have classes in English and I don't live in my country. So I just use it now. And I don't have to use it if I go back. Only if I work in an international company that they work with English. Do you consider yourself bilingual?

No, no because my Portuguese dominate. There is more space to be better.

Do you want to sound like a native speaker or you try to keep your personal characteristics?

I think if I try to speak with accent I think that I am stupid, because it's not natural. In my head it's stupid. I try to speak not English in a Portuguese way but in a normal way.

Of course I think it's always better to speak like British because it is the correct way, although for me it sounds forced if I try to do it.

#### 10. Husnain (S10)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain? engineering, Master 2nd year

Mother language? Urdu

Study all the courses in English.

How long have you been studying in English? I am studying in English from level 1 at school, from the age of 5 and I am comfortable yes because all education was in English, both school and college. Actually I don't feel any uncomfortable, sometimes though you encounter a word you don't know, you look up the dictionary and it's fine.

How often do you use English? I use English every day. Most of the days of my life.

How important is it for you? It's not a matter of importance. It's like you ask me how important Urdu is for me. It is my second language and I see it as such.

How would you develop your proficiency? Maybe I should read more but sometimes when I'm reading an article in the newspaper I find a couple of words maybe I don't know, so reading could help me develop my vocabulary more.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies.

Are you anxious? Yes sometimes you get anxious, I think I'm more productive then, and motivated too, if not I can't manage anything.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use?

I just use very formal English because of what I study, all the articles are in good English and all the reports I have to write should be correct also. Okay when I speak with my friends it is simpler, but the vocabulary is more casual. So, when I use English at school I use good English.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to?

Because I did all my education in English and I'm not English I would maybe say that English is international. I think it is partly, but the rest part belongs to the native people. So I became like them because of my education.

So are you bilingual?

Yes, because of my education I could say I am bilingual.

I don't try to sound native but maybe bc I also watch movies when those accents get into my head and sometimes it happens I think. I don't do it deliberately but it happens naturally.

#### 11. Gema (S11)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain: Law, 1st year of MA

Mother language? Spanish

Classes in English and French.

Since when have you been studying in English? In school just the language and in BA some classes. Diplomas? No, I only had the Erasmus exam. And my level is B2.

Are you comfortable? I am not very comfortable, it is difficult understanding other people.

How often do you use English? I use English every day. How important is it for you? It is very good to know English, not so many from my friends in Spain can speak. I like it very much. But is very difficulty.

How important is it for you?

It is nice to see that I get better all the time. I want to be better and better all the time. I try that. And I want to work out of Spain, so it is very important.

How would you develop your proficiency?

I read some books in English, and watch series. Now I can see the difference, I couldn't speak so well before, I am also working with international people so in 6 months I've become better.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies.

Are you anxious? Yes of course. I am very stressed all the time when I have to do something in English. I feel better only when I am with my friends and ok when I write something.

Because I have time to think and check everything two times.

Motivated? I was more at the beginning, I think I see that I can speak with people and I leave it like that now. I feel very tired.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use?

I just know one kind of English. I am not so good, so I use the English I know until now. It takes a long time to do more and more with English, but in 6 months I will be happier with the change maybe.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to?

To England and America. And Australia. It is their language. I try to learn their language. Are you bilingual?

Hahaa no, Im not good at English. Google translate is my best friend haha.

#### 12. Ediola (S12)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain: Law, last year of MA

Mother language: Albanian.

Classes in just English.

Started English in high school and then just in English.

Comfortable? It is really easy, no problems.

Certificates: I have no certificates but my level of proficiency is high, I took the test before I came here as an international student and it was C1 level.

How often do you use English? Here I speak in English every day and all my assignments are in English.

How important is it for you? For people like me who want to study and work abroad is so significant to have a good command in English. Your status as a lawyer is higher if you can speak an international language like English. For French it is the same for me, but I take classes now to make it better.

How would you develop your proficiency?

I would like to read articles and more books to make my vocabulary richer. Both in my domain and in everyday life.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies. Are you anxious? No.

Motivated? I wouldn't say that being no anxious means being motivated. Being not anxious means

that you are calm but motivated means more than that. I am motivated because I want to achieve what I dream and I believe that dreams are realities that wait for us so that's why I'm motivated. Never give up till you make it.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use?

I try to be correct and use correct English too. I want to be specific in what I say and clear in what I write. Maybe this is because I study law, I want things to be clear and nice. And I am a grammar freak too, I really like English and I want to use it the best way.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to?

I like British english, they are so perfect. So it is these people's language which I cannot make it mine but in a way I can make it mine. If I try a lot and if I live there I can make it mine actually. Are you bilingual?

Well not yet, no bilingual, but achieving it is in my plans.

Native like speech? I wish haha! No, for myself I would sound much more formal than I already am. I am natural I think. But I like their accent a lot.

13. Philippe (S13)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain: Law, 2nd year of MA.

Mother language: German.

Classes in English and French.

I have been studying English since 10 years old from school, in law I had some classes in English e.g. Law and Language.

Are you comfortable? I would say yes because I know already the specific words we use in law, for example in Tax Law and here we have European Tax Law so it's basically the same.

Level of proficiency: I had to do this Erasmus test and it was C1.

How often do you use English? Everyday at the university.

How important is it for you?

English is important for all of us who study in an international university. I want to reach a higher level and maybe work in an international law firm where English is mostly used so I want it to be the best.

How would you develop your proficiency?

In my case always vocabulary should be enriched, I have to read a lot more vocabulary to feel that I own the field.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies.

Are you anxious?

I am a bit anxious when I have to write reports because this is also difficult and I think I don't do it correct. In the past years I gave more emphasis in becoming better at vocabulary- of course it is never enough- , but I am still stressed when I have to write a paper. I know how to do it but it's stressing.

Motivated? Yes, of course I am. I really like English.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use?

In my field of studies I have to be very formal. I should be perfect in my English because we are always competing each other. When I'm home I don't really pay attention to what I say, but at the university I want to control what comes out of my mouth.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to?

It belongs to everyone. everyone speaks English. Of course english people have created the language but nowadays we are all speaking in English. So it is for everyone from everyone to everyone.

Are you bilingual?

I had the C1 thing, so I don't know, maybe I am. Should I have the C2?

Native like, or individual characteristics? I try to sound more native, ofc I have some characteristics of myself. I hate the strong german accent. My high school was partly in English and Spanish so I really had classes in English then.

14. Theresa (S14)

Domain? Law

Year of studies? 2nd year of MA.

Mother language? German.

All my classes are in English

How long have you been studying? I have been studying from secondary school in Austria. I also had Business English in the bachelor. But real English start here.

What you think about your proficiency? It's really easy for me to talk in English and have conversations, but all these legal terms are a bit hard, so I think I need some time to get into it. So I'm googling a lot but I hope and think it's getting better, sometimes I have to read it twice but yea. Where do you feel more comfortable: I think the speaking part, I don't have the fear any more, it flows naturally.

How often do you use English? I use it everyday all the time. Except when I meet some

German friends that we speak in German.

How important is it for you? It is important enough and I'm afraid I don't do it very right with English haha.

How would you develop your proficiency?

I think I should develop in all the aspects of the language. I don't really like grammar so I avoid to sit down and really develop. Also vocabulary in this field is very difficult and you have to remember so many things. It's a matter of focusing on a goal and achieving it. I really want to improve my vocabulary, still a long way

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies.

Are you anxious?

No thank God, sometimes I'm too relaxed or I don't care or I should put more effort haha.

Motivated? It's not that I'm not motivated, it's a matter of distraction, I get easily distracted, or I am too enthusiastic to be here so I always have to focus again.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use?

I am so bored of being too formal sometimes and generally a lazy person, so I want clear words and clear meanings. German is a very structured and organized language, so I think now I am too tired of this characteristic. So I try to relax and just speak in English. I like to communicate a lot with the rest of the international people, this place is like an Erasmus hub. It's awesome. So, I don't really like it when I have to struggle with all this grammar and vocabulary because it gets so tiring. Maybe I am tired of studying law. This is my last year of studies so soon done with it.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to?

I have many American friends and love their accent and how easily they speak so thumbs up for those people. It's definitely their language.

Are you bilingual?

No, I'm not that good to consider myself bilingual.

Native like or individual characteristics? I think I don't really try to but I think it comes through time, these 3 months I see my improvement, and it took away all my fear and I kinda created an accent, I have a friend who lived in the US so I try to be careful and I have a lot of contact with him. I think if you speak and you don't have the strong german accent isn't bad, it's always good to be more natural.

15. Jen (S15)

Domain: law, 1st year of MA.

Mother language: Portuguese and Tetum, I have two different languages cause my family is from one place and then I lived in Portugal for a while and English because I live in the UK since secondary school.

Are you comfortable? This is an interesting question because for me learning English was weird. I was very diligent with my learning because I didn't know a lot, it was like in pieces and I couldn't communicate properly, but from primary school and onwards my teacher was really helpful, he was the one who helped me and taught me to express myself in English and told me phrases and vocabulary and everyday I had to learn to speak and communicate with people. Now, I don't feel

scared about the language, maybe when you speak about law language it maybe overwhelming, but in general it's not that difficult for me.

How often do you use English? I use it everyday of my life, and I'm so impressed that everyone here knows really good English. I think people in the UK take language for granted and cannot really relate themselves with other nationalities or people because they don't really learn a second language. Ok maybe some Spanish at school but not in such a high level where you really have to use it academically. I'm impressed.

How important is it for you? It's like my mother language. Actually I know it better than my mother language, because Tetum I never spoke after a certain age. So you can imagine.

How would you develop your proficiency?

Growing up with the language and everyone around me talking in English, I have northern Irish accent. To read more, especially novels and fiction and even watching movies helps.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies. Are you anxious?

Yea studying law can be weird haha, definitely having this level in English helps me get along with

many things, especially here that I do everything in English and I can see the struggle of Belgian people and then I can relate myself to them in terms of French.

Motivated? Being put in a place that I didn't know in the UK at a young age, I had to forget about my emotions and get along with the language, even now when I hear a new word I like it, I'm still motivated to learn.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use?

I think I mostly use everyday English, of course grammar and vocabulary in that certain level help a lot, but for example it is difficult to write a research paper in English for me too. I don't know if I have the right to complain and compare myself with the people who study here and have different mother languages but it is difficult. Maybe it depends on the field too, and law is particularly difficult. So, yes I struggle with writing in English.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to?

That's a difficult question. Considering my background and the way I was raised and the languages that I have inside my head I strongly believe that English belongs to the one who will have it in his heart and will always try to acquire it. It's like in every language. A native person may have a certain easiness at facing situations and dealing with his language but never knows the 100% of it. There must be a word or a phrase you don't know it's meaning, or there may be a grammatical structure that you don't use correctly either.

16. Sophie (S16)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain? Germanic languages, linguistics and literature, 1st year of MA. Mother language: French. Classes in French and English.

Studied since 14, BA was in English.

Do you feel comfortable with English? Well, the more I speak it the more I feel I can't speak

it, sometimes I feel really comfortable but others I start with thinking everything and then it gets more difficult to speak but really depends on the situation. I know the people at our field are expected to be more accurate and precise.

Showed certificate? I had IELTS yes.

How often do you use English? I use English all the time.

How important is it for you? It is the language of my future job - I hope- since I want to be a teacher. It plays a really important role if you know the language good enough yourself because then when you will teach it to some kids you have to really own it. And that is a huge responsibility. How would you develop your proficiency? Well, I like to read, or ideally I would like to live abroad or in the US because in our field of studies we focus on specific patterns and register and language and we don't really practise the language of our everyday environment. What really helped me with that so far was watching series, it's really everyday language and vocabulary and idioms and the flow of it, and you have even good times, you hear what you read, I strongly recommend it.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies. Are you anxious?

I am definitely anxious yes. I get so blocked sometimes I really use non correct English. I think because I have to use it all the time and in that high level myself reacts and does all the mistakes of the world.

Are you motivated? Since I am so afraid of making mistakes I am motivated to get over that fear and finally feel like this language is a part of me. Of course I love it but you can never totally master it.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use?

Well, I try to be as accurate as possible. I try to use all the correct grammar I know in nicely structured sentences and phrases with nice content. I read a lot, so terminology also helps if you want to sound more serious and professional. But I wish all this was much more simpler because the real meanings can always come across with simpler structures. It is a really dominant language but since the most of us who use it don't really live in the UK everything could be simpler. I don't know. Some people enjoy the fuzz all this grammar learning creates, while others are just tired of it. Maybe I speak from a safer point of view, I mean because I am more into the language -I mean because I really study its structure and syntax and everything- maybe I am tired of it and need some casual way of using it. Maybe someone else who struggles wishes to know more correct grammar. It depends on the situation you find yourself in.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to?

It definitely belongs to everyone who use it. But as a future English teacher I should say that all of use should use it carefully by knowing our strengths and weaknesses and depending on our goals to become better. Myself, I love grammar and I wouldn't see how I would use English without its correct grammar, but I understand that not everyone are in this position because simply maybe they study something different or their focus is in something else.

Are you bilingual? No, not really, I think I can speak English and Dutch but my language is French

and my everyday life is in French. I don't know, if I live for a while in the US or England, I maybe consider myself bilingual.

Native like? I think I try to sound like my self but without the big French accent, I try to fo-

cus on it more or less, I know my voice is different when I speak in English than French hahaha. I know that it's terrible to have the strong French accent, sometimes having a good accent make it complicated because maybe your English is poor, and I know my brother who is a pilot told me that when his accent was too good he wasn't even understood, he had to speak English with the stupid French accent, can you believe it?!

17. Leticia (S17)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain: Dutch and English Linguistics, 1st year of MA, French is mother tongue and classes are in Dutch and English.

How long have you been studying? I study for ever kinda because my father is an English teacher, I definitely understood more than I could speak so it took me some more time. My BA wan in English and Dutch.

Certificates? Most of the classes in my BA were in English so that proof was enough for the university here.

How would you rate your proficiency?

I wouldn't say that it's very high because of my exposure, but because of the receptive skills like reading and listening, I mean for the productive skills, when I have writing and speaking It's a bit difficult, it has always been more difficult.

How often do you use English? I use English every day at the university yes.

How important is it for you? I have always been studying English and dad always speaks English and corrects me so he is very inspiring. I feel the inner responsibility to be good at it and become more and more proficient.

How would you develop? I saw a big difference through the years, I am more comfortable with the language, I should say I don't really watch all these series and stuff, I know its weird but I won't get that exposure. Many of my friends read in English and watch, I don't do it, I think it would defo help me more. Everything I know or I feel I know in terms of exposure are because of my dad who is a teacher. Now on Erasmus, I talk with my friends on Fb and practise in English, but I can't say that I'm the person who is that devoted to developing myself. My vocabulary is still basic I think, I

have to read more, you have the simple word and then 3 more which are more complex, and I can't say I know these more complex words. I just meet them now that I do linguistics and I'm more interested in them.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies.

Anxious? I think for instance when I have a presentation if I know my subject well, then I will

speak better, when I know what I will say, I know the content so I can focus on the language and the form. Speaking publicly doesn't really scare me.

Motivated? Yes I am!!

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use?

Even if I study English in a more advanced level and I have to read really scientific articles on very difficult subjects I feel I don't use so much difficult or pro language. I feel I am stuck to a certain level. This doesn't mean that I write incorrect English or I don't try, but it's like I feel there is much to get better and I am overwhelmed.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers. Who do you think English belongs to?

I study English and I don't want to exclude myself. So English belongs to everyone who use it every day, to the students who learn it and want to be proficient in the long term. Or for the ones who have a friend abroad and want to speak with him on Skype.

Are you bilingual?

No, really not. I don't think I'm there. There are many many words in English which I don't know and I think I have to learn it for my whole life.

Native like? Well, when I speak I always try to sound English, I think it places a wall, the accent. I shouldn't say it but I think it's important, you have someone who doesn't really pay attention to his accent then you unconsciously say his accent is not that good, and then you have someone with really good accent but bad english but your first impression is that wow his English is good. So the accent plays a role and I try to have a pronunciation which is good.

18. Diana (S18)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain? English linguistics, 2nd year of MA

Mother tongue? Bulgarian and classes in English and French.

How long have you been studying in English? 8 years of English.

Are you confident? Yes, I think so. Except that I find difficult I guess public language.

Certificates? My BA was in English too and I also have the IELTS test.

How would you rate your proficiency? I guess it is pretty high, I don't really face any problems. I don't think I am perfect but I know I like this language.

Why I'm confident? It happened with experience really, it was the 2nd year of my BA and I had no other option but just speak in English. A program cannot really teach you that, you learn a lot when you start working, the problem was that I worked with small children, but when you do English in uni its very academic oriented, its not real language, everyday language. So that was the vocab I didn't know, I didn't know simple things, you don't learn simple everyday language in the program. How often do you use English? I'm constantly using it.

How important is it for you? At the moment I have to use it everyday because I have classes and papers to prepare, so I'm gonna be done with them soon. In the summer I think I will find some time to read some classic novels so that's the part I enjoy the most. I really like reading fiction in English.

How would you develop?

I think personally it happens if you live and you are immersed in the culture. There's so much to learn when you live there. It's not just the accent, it's also all these small regional things, like we speak our native language, how we talk in our language.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies. Anxious? Sometimes I do yes. When I have to speak out loud or when I have to speak with a native speaker. Even if I am supposed or expected to be super good in English, almost like in Bulgarian, I

am not. I know this is like a burden in most of us who do English for studies. And everyone expects us to be great at it.

Motivated? Nah, I don't really pay attention anymore. I know I am good enough to get along with situations and that is okay for me. I don't try to prove that I'm not an elephant. Of course I want to learn more but I'm not obsessed to show I'm British.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use?

I use the English that I have to use. I mean, when I speak with my friends I just speak as I want, when I speak with a professor I have to be careful with my language. And when I read I try to see the context and the words which create it. It is very important to be aware of the way you speak and write and express yourself because this knowledge you promote and that self of yours is seen.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to?

I am very impressed by how native speakers use the language and how this can be an amazing tool for them. But I also love hearing people from Spain or Italy who have this cute accent and try to incorporate their true self in another language. And that's incredible to witness.

Are you bilingual?

If you define bilingual haha!! I guess I would stick with growing up with 2 languages and you have a native like level at the same time for both. Of course it's possible to achieve it in a later stage but I wouldn't define myself as a bilingual. Of course I am fluent but not really bilingual. Native/native-like or keep individual characteristics?

I wish I could sound like native but I'm really bad with pronunciation, so I cannot really sound native. I just like how it sounds, I really like it. For me the most important thing though is that they can understand me and they are not distracted but what I want to communicate. It was something I was really nervous about when I started working, I am really conscious about my accent, but you know ppl there were nice and cooperative and I had no problems. They found it cute to speak with foreigners. Is it a stereotype then? I think it matters to people who are not into linguistics because to me the most important thing is that I understand a person and not the accent. But for the rest of the

people it matters because it's the first and the only thing to perceive and give emphasis to prove their knowledge. Even regional accents. So yes it's more of stereotypes but outside people who work in that field, prestige and status connected.

19. Claudia (S19)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency.

Domain? English linguistics, 2nd year of MA

Mother tongue? Romanian.

Classes in English

How long have you been studying in English?

English

Comfortable? I feel comfortable but I still I cannot say that I am that good as a native speaker, because sometimes the pronunciation is not good enough or sometimes I still have troubles finding the right word.

Certificates? Yes, I sat for IELTS last year before I started the degree.

How often do you use English? All the time. I speak English most of the time here, except for the times that I want to practise my French.

How important is it for you? It is indeed important. With a long history. I think it is important to everyone who is here and who does a relevant degree.

How would you develop?

I have to be careful of the collocations and the words which suit with other words. For me this is the worst part and there I feel the need to develop myself. I try to really check up the collocational environment of the word I am not sure how to use. This has become my purpose. It doesn't always succeed because I am lazy too or too hasty to write as fast as possible sometimes, but I'm conscious about it.

Also, I have tones of books at home. I think my first step would be to read these books, because now at our level its not about doing vocabulary. It's about an in depth study of the language itself that when you start studying them you are overwhelmed. But when you keep doing that you see that I have read that before and you make connections and its not that big, so it's doable.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies.

For 14 years, my BA was half Romanian half

Anxious? I am anxious when I'm talking about something I don't know. Because that can happen.

When someone asks you a direct question about something and u don't know what it is about of course you get anxious.

Motivated? you want to develop your language? Well, yea, I mean exposure is the trick. But also if you use it in school you use one type of saying and its different when you use it in the workplace I think. It depends on the workplace, you are casual and you don't feel the pressure that you can't make mistakes but then you have to be more efficient and its another kind of difficulty. You have to be careful what you are saying and using the language so if you have a job where communication is really important maybe with foreigners its also a statement about your proficiency too, its the impression you make on the people just by using the language.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.

What kind of English do you use?

My English is mostly formal I think, English appropriate for writing. But I still cannot figure out all the phrases and the phrasal verbs and the collocations. I try also to develop my

colloquial style and not sound very formal. But that's all we learn in that school. I lived in the US for 1 year so that helped a lot back then. I don't try to pass for set I am not. It's a bad idea. If you are good just keep it, otherwise drop it.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.

Who do you think English belongs to?

English is an international language these days. Everybody uses English for different purposes.

Are you bilingual?

I think I can say I'm kinda bilingual because I am using it more even here. I always use

English now.

Native like? I never tried to use a British accent because it seemed fake and you sound so posh if

you use it without native speakers. It's like an effort to sound British so either you do it perfectly or drop it man! I'm not sure about my accent haha, because when I say i should try harder to use British accent I say what do I try to prove with that? And then I think what kind of accent I have? Is it American? No? Do I sound like a Romanian too? And am I identified as an Eastern European? Maybe it's a mix. I'm far from having a native accent, I don't want to have it I think, sometimes I

found myself in a company of British ppl or ppl who had an accent that I mimic or imitate them. It's like a reflex I can't stop it. I even do it home with Romanian so if I speak to ppl who have a strong accent from another region I cannot stop but imitate them. It's weird that I do it.

20. Priscilla (S20)

1st topic: Overview of place of English in the life of the international students and the perception of their proficiency

Domain? Linguistics- LAMUSO. It is the 1st year of MA

Mother language? Portuguese, classes in English.

Started English at school, maybe 12 years, at school I didn't learn much and started private classes. Certificate? TOEFL test yes.

Comfortable? In general yes. The most difficult is presentations, Sometimes I get dyslexic, sometimes there are some words I can't pronounce. I am too nervous and if it's long words I lose my sense of the world, so it's really hard for presentations. Mostly because of anxiety. And because you don't have time to correct the mistake. While if you write, you can read it again, you have time to correct anything. With writing the problem is grammar. I always have someone reading what I write.

How often do you use English? For the past 2.5 months I only use portuguese when I speak with my mom.

How important is it for you? If I wouldn't know English I know that I wouldn't be studying here and we wouldn't speak together now. It is very important to speak the language and be able to fly away from your country and just live somewhere where you can only speak in an other language. It's so weird, right?

How would you develop?

I think the right way is to see your level from an objective viewpoint and try to develop in everything that you are not good at. If your grammar is bad, read grammar books and do exercises, if your level of understanding is low just read and read and read. If your vocabulary is poor also read and try to speak with a native person to get over the fear you maybe have. Spot the problems, and make them okay.

2nd topic: Motivation and anxiety when learning and using English in general and in studies.  
Anxious?

I am anxious because of the language, in my home country I wasn't so nervous when I had to present something, and then I thought oh yes, it was in my language, maybe that's the reason. I am always a bit nervous, even in Portuguese, but in my language is like natural anxiety, not because of the language, after the 1st minute you get used to it and talk and talk. But in English you have to think about the subject you are talking and then the language, you have to remind you constantly not to make mistakes and to structure the language plus the subject. So it's 2 things at the same time. And when for example, the teacher points out your mistake in front of everyone it is hard, because it is hard to be exposed, it's not my 1st language and if you are interrupted while you are talking you lose your thought. It's hard to be exposed and the language exposes you too. The problem with English is that non-native speakers cannot make mistakes, are not allowed to make mistakes. When you are in front of people speaking in an other language you are exposed. Even though I love english and I feel it as my second language (because even if I studied other languages before English this is the one which I feel like my second language) I find difficulties.

Motivation: Yes, definitely you have to be motivated. People say well, I just finished studying English. The thing is that you never finish. Never. You will not lose the language because since you are in that level you cannot lose it, maybe you forget some things, but the language changes too. There is always something new to know. For example I didn't take the syntax class but I borrowed my friend's book to check on it and I was thinking. Well, I don't know that and I don't know that yet, everyday there is something else to know about the language. There is always a reason behind the motivation, maybe it's studies itself, maybe a professional reason, maybe an individual reason, you can improve everyday.

3rd topic: Types of English used in the university and the focus of learning.  
What kind of English do you use?

I like grammar. Sticking to grammar or vocabulary would be good, would make us learn things, because I want to learn the language I don't come here to socialize. I want to be serious and correct. Or else you make fun of yourself first and foremost. I know some people don't like grammar. They try to masquerade grammar because they usually assume that people hate grammar and they don't pay attention.

4rd topic: Ownership of English and interaction with native/non-native speakers.  
Who do you think English belongs to?

As you can understand, I like language which is correct or at least not funny. I cannot accept that some people still cannot understand that they sound like kids if they don't know the language. And they don't put the effort to develop themselves. English and every language is for the people who are strong enough to sit down and study even for themselves, who watch series and read the newspaper and don't just never care.

Are you bilingual?

It depends on what you call bilingual. For me, I have a strict mind on this, bilinguals is when

you have 2 mother languages, especially here in Belgium or Switzerland, when you are born with 2 languages. For me that is bilingual. If you consider that, I am not bilingual in English. I don't have the emotional connection with the language, that's for me the most important. But if you consider bilingual from a professional level Okay. I can say that. But normally not, because I really don't believe it. It depends on the context. I don't have 2 native languages, I have 1 native language, so from that perspective no. But from the perspective that I can speak more than 1 language that I can communicate sufficiently then I would say yes.

Do you try to keep your individual characteristics when speaking in English or try to be native? When I think about it I say I don't have to be native, but I think it is unconscious. You try to get there, you try to reach that level. You try to prove it to yourself. I think this happens because we are told so, it's a common thought and a common goal sound like a native. if you don't sound like a native then hmmm. It's a stereotype, we grow up with this thought, the need to sound like native or native-like, it's the best level you can reach. And then in jobs that's what is accepted, especially because you want to give the good impression, so you try to sound native. The deal is not to sound like a foreigner. Not to have an accent at all.

Rationally is so stupid, but socially it's there. What matters is to remind yourself that you don't have to get there, not to be nervous. Plus, I think it is culturally specific. For example, it happens with French too. But if you try to speak with an American or a British person they are very open and feel proud that someone else speaks their language. Usually English speaking people are open with learners of English.

Topic 5: Problems and strategies in context.

1. Chara (S1)

Which are the academic situations that you feel more comfortable with?

Of course when I speak with my classmates in English I am pretty confident, when I am attending classes, especially classes that have Power-points, with notes, I feel comfortable and also because I like to see what the professor is telling. When I am writing in English I don't have problems generally, when I am reading articles and studying I don't experience problems. My only problem is when the professor doesn't speak really well, and I had such situations.

So, if you have to put in a continuum the level of difficulty between attending classes or having a presentation you have to speak in, or to write an essay, which is the easiest?

Attending the class. And which is the most difficult? Doing a presentation I think. Why is that? Because you already have the stress plus you have to speak quickly and you have to have the right accent and because people have to see you I am not so comfortable, so I'm like, just very very nervous and stressed. So, both in English and French, in French is even worse for me, my accent is not good at all. Also, when I speak with a professor during classes my accent is not very good, and even though I can speak, when I talk in class my mind is blocked and I can't use the right words, the right expressions. When I try to explain a thing in class I'm stuck, I know the thing I want to say but I can't say it, it's like my mind is blocked. And French is even worse. Because I have to translate from Greek to English and then to French, so it's like all in my mind.

So, do you translate sometimes from Greek to French to English? Yes, yes, yes, it's so difficult.

But you still do it? Is it helpful? Yes, of course I do it, it's helpful, but stupid also.

Why you think you do it? Because I'm not, it's my first year here, so I'm not so used to think in English, of course not in French. In English, I think now it's a bit better, I think in English more. But yes, still I have a lot to do.

In case you have to prepare an essay or a report what do you think you are good and what you don't like? I don't know, I think I'm good in organizing the whole essay. I am good at

planning the essay. And grouping the information I will use. You know to say this is the first part, this is the second part, something like that, then about the voc. Of course I use dictionaries online finding words, and then I think I am good at connecting the essays with connecting words. I don't know what else. Maybe because I read articles or books, I have the idea in my mind and then just rephrasing the

ideas, I don't think it's so difficult for me to do it. Of course I use Google translate or dictionaries online. Usually about synonyms, because I can't use the same word 10 times, so yea I have to find something else.

And what about grammar? Well, my grammar is pretty good I think, because we studied it from the beginning, it was all about grammar, so I know how to use everything I think. I never experienced problems with grammar.

So, where do you experience the more problems? Which is the worst part when you have to write? Sometimes it's vocabulary, when I have to look for words, and the connecting words, I always check new words. Connecting words I try to remember, like hence, however, and when I don't remember any I just Google them. And maybe sometimes to know that my text is okay. If it is 10 pages it is difficult to deal with 10 pages and sound logical in the end. And also because I am pretty lazy sometimes it takes more time than I thought. So when I have 2 days let's say, I say I have to do it, I've written 10 pages in 4 days so yea, I'm comfortable with writing. I collect the main ideas and organize them and write the points.

In case you have to prepare for a presentation, then how do you feel about it?

Writing the ppt, the main points, it is not so difficult. The most difficult part is speaking in front of the class. The difficult part is to memorize things, which I can't do, mostly because I'm stressed, so when I try to speak my mind is blocked. So I just read the ppt. The result then isn't very natural but I cannot do it otherwise. Even then I do a lot of Eeeeeehs and Aaaaahs and sometimes I have to pause to organise my mind and maybe remember a word or use a synonym, or paraphrase to get my meaning along. If I had 15 seconds more I know I can have the word. But I have to speak now, to be spontaneous, then my mind is blocked and I say the most stupid words, like I don't know English haha, and I'm so embarrassed. Of course I know that if I give more time to it, it will get better. I also usually try to make rehearsals at home because I know my weaknesses. I know that I have to speak correctly in front of everyone so I rehearse at home and usually I have someone to listen to my presentation and check my grammar and my pronunciation. I try not to do what I don't like and that is when the professors or the students I work together are difficult to be understood in English. That's my biggest issue when I attend classes. To understand the professor if he has a French accent. So it's me trying to understand him, then understand the ideas, and then take notes. Does it happen often that you have a professor who is difficult to understand? Not so often but I have some examples. It's not that they can't speak, but their accent is tiring.

So, what you do to understand them better? Normally in Greece I used to ask anything I wanted during the classes, anything that I couldn't understand. But now here I think it is rude if you ask the

professors to repeat what he just said because you can't understand them. It is weird. So no, no I don't ask. Why not? Because I will find the information I need online. Plus I have a good background in the field even though my BA was not in English. I know a lot of stuff. So, it's like translating in my mind the thing I know from Greek to English. And then do you think that being taught in english (just bc the class is in English and not in French) you become

better too? Yes, yes. I can see the difference between English and French. it's my second language. For the students who are not proficient in English is the opposite. they can't do it.

In cases of reading articles or books how do you feel? I don't always understand all the words. I'm not British. So, what you do when you don't understand? I just translate them, mostly Google translate. Which is the worst but at least you have the general meaning. So, is the general meaning enough? Yes, it is. Or even I put the whole sentence but then maybe it's something weird in the translation but you get the meaning so it's okay haha. Sometimes I guess from the context and rely on the context. Usually I know everything, is just one word. But to be honest, when I am in a hurry I just copy and paste the whole paragraph in google translate and read it in Greek. When I'm tired and I don't want to read in english. Or I'm just grabbing the main words. If you use a normal dictionary more... (interruption—>) Come on, I never use a normal dictionary, only google translate, it takes so long to check on dictionaries.

Plus to get better and know more vocabulary I am also reading the news in English, so it's like I read stuff for my field too. You know, it's political sciences so what is on news I have to know, it is connected to my studies.

In case of group works in university, what is your feeling?

I think it is generally easy but in particular difficult to connect what each person proposes, because they are different things, to agree what we will write in the final assignment. When it's part of an English class it's not a problem, because students who have classes in English usually can speak good, mostly because they are elective courses. In the previous semester that we had compulsory classes in English, there were students who couldn't speak but had to speak. So it was pretty difficult. Actually it was the worst thing in the world bc the other students didn't speak good English so I had to do the work for her. I had to correct things, to connect them. That is the problem, when they cannot speak good. If everyone can speak maybe conversation is difficult too because everyone speaks together and you are interrupted and you have to stop and say what you wanted to say again.

## 2. Aizhan (S2)

When you have to prepare for an essay, how do you feel? How do you deal with it?

I think it is vocabulary, because when you read a particular topic you have to know very well the vocabulary, and then in order not to bush around and say important, crucial, you have to be precise and use the terminology and definitions and terms, so yes sometimes the voc is difficult. Of course still because it's not my LANGUE MATERNELLE (mother language: translation from French), so yea I think I find vocabulary difficult. And grammar sometimes too, I struggle but now I struggle because I have this mix of languages in my head, and sometimes I find it difficult to orient myself. What you do to solve these problems?

I consult the dictionaries, I check online the structures because as I said before I am a grammar freak so I have to be very correct, I ask my friends who are natives and talk about it, and I keep on reading and listening. Also in general I watch the tv shows in English.

In case of PPT presentation, what are your thoughts about it? In English is difficult to speak only with research, only if the presentation has to be together with a paper. Otherwise it is okay. I say the ideas in my words, I try to say everything at home once before I do the presentation and then during it I paraphrase and come to the point I want to show, but in general I am not anxious either. Usually I summarize the important points and I take notes and I reach my argument to a natural result.

In class? During attendance?

During the classes attendance is very easy, usually boring haha. The professor usually does the whole lecture and we listen to him and take notes. Only sometimes we have to be organized in groups and talk to each other about something. We had a few classes where the professors didn't really speak good English, but in general I cannot complain. In that case if something is not clear yes, I feel quite comfortable asking questions to them so no problem. When you have to read a book or an article how do you find it?

Most of the times I go through it very fast to see the basic ideas in the titles and then I read to understand. If I have to know what this text talks about for next class I organize and summarize the important points. If I don't understand something I read it again and I check the words I don't know online. In case I am lazy or tired, I rely on the context and maybe I go back again later. Sometimes I rely on my sixth sense, because still you need the whole idea. So I rely on the context. If it's not so important I can skip it yea. Also through reading I think I am more fluent now and my vocabulary enlarged, of course there is a progress.

In case of group projects?

Usually in group projects I am with my classmates, so things are very relaxed. We just speak casually and the most responsible from us make most of the work haha. Sometimes some peoples' pronunciation is not easy to understand but we can ask questions to each other, so it's okay.

Which is the more difficult part for you in English? From everything? I think punctuation still, I still get confused, we have different styles and rules in each language and if you write something scientific papers I have to consult all the time how punctuation works. Right now I struggle with that because I get confused all the time. I have to check everything online about how correct grammar goes with correct words and this is so tiring. And in this semester we don't have any classes that help your writing. Before we had academic English which I took in English in BA.

If you had this semester would you think it would be helpful?

Yes of course, because I need some supervision on scientific research and writing, there are many styles and rules in order to perform better.

In my level I just have to keep up with the proficiency, we are all obliged to read and write in English, so if you are already C1 level, after that you just have to keep up, buy reading by listening and then becomes natural.

### 3. Alessio (S3)

In the university, in which context do you feel more comfortable? Always I feel good, but when I wrote my first notes they were not correct and I saw them again at my home and I corrected it, I was wondering "I cannot take perfect notes?". The most difficult for me is to understand the concept and to tell it to your teacher, it is difficult to express it, to communicate the idea in English. Writing: For me writing is difficult. It's easier to organize the reading because I have a specific way to do it, it is easy to find the books but it is not easy to analyze the different sources and write something. The most difficult part is to put together all these sources, to try to link between the different subjects. And for me even reading is difficult because all the sentences in political sciences are long and the ideas are very complex. For me grammar is also hard because my level is not high. So then the problem is general. It starts from reading something and then is general. It is in vocabulary and grammar and the ideas.

So what do you do to solve this confusion? Firstly, mostly I try to find a nice place to read

where I feel relaxed and I know how to calm myself. Then I google everything I don't know or I try to ask my professors. But usually I don't want to be annoying so I have a small study group with my friend. So we read together and talk about these ideas.

With grammar I don't feel very comfortable, because I feel it's the part that I have more problems, I never learnt it very good. And with vocabulary when I have problems I put the Italian word in a website and it's automatically translated. I mark all the sentences and words I have to know and I check them when I finish reading.

I have to learn little by little the new words.

When you have presentation how do you feel? I don't feel bad when I speak in English, is more a problem to know well the concept and try to say it in public. I have to communicate specific material. I get stressed in front of my professor and my classmates but I try to organize the ideas before and plan what I will say from home. Before the presentation I tell myself to relax and I go. Of course I use easy words, I write a document from home and I learn it. And I learn the definition too. I remember the first times I was so afraid I forgot everything. So I tried to find other words and I always use my gestures. I have no other way. In classes, attending? It's not difficult to understand the class, maybe it's difficult to put all the ideas correctly on the paper, maybe the sentence I write is not correct. I have to read my notes again during the weekend.

How is it when reading articles and books? I don't always understand everything, maybe I have to read twice or 3 times, from the 1st time I can speak about the concept but not in a scientific way. I meet with this friend and we talk about it.

In project groups? Sometimes I find difficulties when I don't know one word but I have a different link with my classmates and different link with my professors. Everyone speaks in English so its fine. I just find the words I am looking for. And if there are more Italians on the project I can speak in Italian.

From all the situations which is your favourite and your worst? When I have to check my notes and I have to make it clear, because I can understand then that I am improving my language. Worst/difficult: When I have to read a scientific article and I don't know all the terms and even i have problems with grammar structure. It takes so much time. Also I always make myself translate from English to Italian to French and vice versa because it's the only way to keep the language alive. My first goal here as an international student is that I want to be more comfortable with languages. When I hear a sentence in one language I always translate it and say, oh yes that is the way I would say that in English.

#### 4. Cha (S4)

Which is the more difficult? Wait a second, it depends! I would say that I don't like writing, but I don't like it in general, but at the same time, when I take the time to write I don't really have a problem , I just don't like it.

Prepare for essay? How do you feel?

First of all I do researches, I apply the same way I read in French, the language I am using in the essay is inspired by the language I see in the articles or books, so I think that way I also improve my language skills. I need to be able to feel the material, and then I say yeah I own it, I can write about it and from there I create a plan where I put different ideas that I read from different articles and then just write.

More comfortable with grammar or voc.?

I like words, because I like to be able to express myself correctly, to make ppl understand me correctly too so I go for voc. But at the same time I like to have a good grammar too, I notice when others don't have it, so I try to do it myself too. I put vocabulary first but grammar is still very important. From books I read, or movies or songs. Everything that are channeling the information and the words I try to pick up and whenever I have time I open the dictionary because it's the 3rd time I here the word and I have to know it.

When I can't disambiguate from the context I go for the dictionary. I check the oxford version online, (google doesn't always help) and yes usually I find it there.

Sometimes I don't want the translation, I just want to see what this word means and how is described in the same language, because I think every language has that word and a specific meaning, usually not sufficient in the translation.

How do you feel when you prepare a presentation?

I like speaking in public, maybe not the first minutes but then I enjoy it. Maybe having to choose the right words to conduct the right ideas, its a difficult process. So, I create a ppt and write the main points, and then I have a ready text from before. I keep just reading it and can't take my eyes off it, and then people think that my presentation is boring and I'm like , I know. But I just wanted to have the perfect vocabulary. Of course you don't have to have the perfect voc, you just have to say the things the way you felt them and that's way more effective. So, when I feel okay to skip this text I just try to find other words, or find an example of what I wanted to say, maybe I'm a bit slow haha.

Is it easy to attend classes?

Yea, here in Belgium is easy, you just have to listen what the professor says. We are just recipients of the information. Usually no-one speaks in the lectures. And it has been smooth so far, I

understand the professors. I remember during my BA degree we had a teacher who came from the US and his English was impeccable and he wanted us to have at least a dissent English, (a dissent English for him is perfect for everyone else) which meant that he was stressing out the fact that we had to express ourselves clearly especially, if u study law, because in law, words count. And also some teachers here, bc they are not native speakers, I hear them translating directly from French to English but I feel that then you don't naturalize the language, and I'm like uh I wouldn't say that like that. I translate too but I try not to translate because you try to match something that is not matchable, a language means a specific word, so you cannot make it very different. So it's not efficient to translate for me anymore.

How is it when you have to read all these books and articles? If I have to read an article for next class then I read very fast one time to have the idea of it and then I go back and mark all the important ideas that I have to remember. Then I either write a small summary or if I'm too busy or if I'm bored I just write the ideas in the side of the text. Like that I can remember them. To be honest I don't give a lot of attention to grammar when I read, I mostly pay attention to grammar when I write because I have to write correct language. So when I read something and there are some unknown important words I try to use it for 1 week, I put it in a sentence consciously to know it in the end.

How is it in the group projects? I feel it easy and I don't get stressed. I take it slowly because I know people have different languages and help them find a balance between ppl of both levels. I try to create a secure place and make them speak more. I know this is very important. In the USA it happened to me too. My first host mother helped me a lot, she mumbled, and then talked fast and explained many many words and she was very patient with me. So if we

don't understand each other I paraphrase and explain easily to them and explain them that they shouldn't translate. For me Ted talks help too and also I listen to music in English a lot.

#### 5. Maha (S4)

Which situation is the worst for you?

The presentation because I can't get to the point sometimes in English, but it's always a challenge, the same about writing, its more difficult because it's not my mother language. So combining all the ideas and structures in English and have correct grammar and good vocabulary and fill up 5 or 10 pages every time is difficult.

So how is it when you have to write an essay? I would say synthesizing the idea is easy but organizing it in the paper is still difficult, and connect it to references and research too. I have

problems in writing correct English, that's why I have to auto-corrector in English always on. It really helps, it makes the words you don't write correct red, so it is helpful. Otherwise I think all my text would be wrong. Regarding the ideas, I try to group the most important things and structure in my head how I want to write it. And actually I hate grammar in every language, the thing is that for example English I learnt it by speaking to people and listening to music but in every language I hate grammar, because I think it makes the language more complicated, of course it's important if you want to work professionally with the language but some people ask me grammar questions and I don't want to explain the rule, I can just speak guys. So in the end when I write something I ask my friend to read it for mistakes.

How do you like reading then?

I think I can understand the words but then it's like there is always something missing, like I didn't understand the context well or something, like I don't get to be connected with the author, I translate in French and see if I can get it but then it get even worse, if I don't understand it in French then in English I say well okay, if it's theoretical staff I prefer to translate not to lose the sense of the text, how do you do it? sometimes I just find the article in French, the French version and read it. I also try to find words in dictionaries, it depends on the synonym and the context because I know in French people write the wrong word in the wrong context and then is just not correct, maybe I do the same mistake in English.

How is it with the presentations in English?

The easy part is doing the presentation the hard part is doing it in English because I cannot get my idea directly, it's like I hit a wall. It's not like when I speak French where if I know the idea then I can talk about it. need more time and more practise. So I practise a lot before the presentation, and also I pay some attention to my accent. It has to be really okay to be understood. I don't like it when people comment on my pronunciation or when they don't understand what I say. Usually I have a ready text from home which I know by heart, but then I forget about it and just paraphrase and say it in other words. Or I just look at people and wish they understand but other times I just say it in French, I say French words in the middle of the presentation, not so kind from me haha.

How do you feel when you attend classes? When I am in class it is easy to follow and I take notes. I try to know the content of what the professor will talk about from before so that I don't have too many problems in understanding and because I know I lose my attention easily I try to push myself to wake up and listen to the professor.

And last, how is it with group works? Group projects are very funny because everyone wants to speak and have the best idea. So it is tiring sometimes. If someone doesn't speak in a way that I can

understand then I ask what he meant, even if it is about ideas or for example pronunciation. Some people are so difficult to understand.

## 6. Carmen (S6)

In which situation do you feel more and less comfortable?

The writing part is easy enough because I can search online anything if I have doubts, and the speaking part is the most difficult. Because it's real time, I have to be accurate when I'm speaking so maybe it's the most challenging.

How is it when you write an essay?

It's a little complex sometimes because it's too technical to write the reports we write but google has the answer for everything, or I have Jen (an English friend), so I manage to write. Checking stuff online is a must and asking Jen to read what I write is also very helpful. She usually corrects all my grammar mistakes and she writes better words for me. I always use the same words, so she finds a better synonym and she helps me a lot. Also I study a lot with an other friend that we study the same so it is helpful I think. Because we have to write the same tests so we give feedback to each other.

Do you check a dictionary?

I have google translate if it's easy stuff or when I have to check something more complex I check LINGUI or word reference. I check mostly English- Spanish and Spanish- English, not so much from English to English. Structuring the paper everyone says that is the worst, but I am successful I think, I can do it.

How do you feel when you have to prepare a presentation?

The easy part is to make the presentation in the PPT and the difficult part is what to say in English. The problem is that the people I speak with about this matter know more than me and I have to be specific and accurate. It's difficult not to make a mistake so the difficult part is to try not to make a mistake in technical things. And also it's real time so all my mistakes in grammar come forward and I feel embarrassed when I cannot use the tenses or the endings in words correctly. So it is speaking in front of people and memorizing the technical things because they are the way they are. And let's say I am stuck , I say eeeemmm and uuuh and I try to find the word, it happened the other day when I had an interview, I was stuck and I had the word in Spanish but I couldn't remember it in English and I found a way just to explain it with other words. Speaking it's the most challenging.

How is it to attend classes? The problem sometimes is that some professors have a really really strong French accent when speaking so if you are not used to it, it's kind of tricky, but when you are used to it time by time it's okay. If you have any problems who do you ask? I ask my friend first and if she got it okay, if not then I have to speak with the teacher because it's more technical so I have to understand.

How do you feel when you read books and articles? There is always something you don't understand, maybe a word or something, you have to look it on the internet or you can try to understand it into the context. Depending on how tired I am, or if it's something really important that I have to know I also check it in the dictionary and then I try to put down those

words in a paper and read them because I think always reading is good to improve your vocabulary in English and grammatical structures and know how to express yourself. But usually I'm super busy and lazy to read them after. If I don't understand an idea then I mark everything and ask my professor.

How do you feel in the group works? Sometimes is difficult because you understand it, in your head is clear, but when you try to to explain in to the other person is more difficult, because you try however you can to explain. Most of the times, it's difficult at the beginning but then is fine. For example, I had 2 Chinese guys and 2 Portuguese in my group, so really many accents. So I repeat and repeat and repeat everything and say everything my words, because if I use the terminology they will not understand anyway.

Where do you think you have the biggest mistakes? In grammar. I hate grammar. When you have to study grammar with subjects and adjectives and that kind of stuff, omg I hate them, at some point is useful to know it but I think you always forget about that. Because in your day life you don't think ok subject blah blah , is just the way you speak. The important thing is to understand me. This is not how it happens in writing because then I have to think ok subject verb and so on because I have to write correct. That's why writing takes so much time for me so usually I write whatever I want and then my friend reads everything and corrects it. It's so difficult. But I think practise makes perfect!

#### 7. Matteo (S7)

How do you feel with writing in English?

It's okay to write in English. Grammar also, I don't have problems because I don't use difficult sentences, maybe I do mistakes in vocabulary but I correct them, I check google translate all the time. I don't write in difficult sentences, I don't use present continuous and difficult stuff haha. How is the presentation? It's not so difficult, you just practise before and learn what you will say. This is what I do.

How do you feel about attending classes in English?

It is easy to understand English from professors too. Only one professor had a german accent haha. How do you feel when you read books and articles?

I try to understand from context what I don't know or put the text in google translate. Do you feel you progress in English after studying in English? I feel I get better mostly in vocabulary, but if I don't speak with a British man then is always something missing. Everyone speak their way. If I want to learn good English I have to go to England.

memorize/take notes of words: I usually remember

How is it with the project works? The class was taught in English but everyone spoke in French in the study groups. They see you like a different one and they speak in French and they don't pay attention to you because you speak in English and then you have to put some order, they understand English but don't want to speak, and they make you feel not important. Most of them have bad pronunciation too. What I try to do is to speak slowly and help everyone understand me. I know my grammar is no good and my accent bad, but I try in English, I don't change in Italian.

#### 8. Diogo (S8)

Writing? I think I am doing synthesizing, I do it short but I do it clear, I don't like to make sentences very complex or large, I try not to be monotonous but rather make it easy and attractive to read, and I see if that happens, I'm attentive to see if everything is coming the

way I want to. When I write I try not to use the same words, some times I check dictionaries and I do a lot of external reading in English. Right now I read Tolstoy in English, it's a really difficult book, with large vocabulary, sometimes I have to check the dictionary but some times they just sink in. Also with grammar sometimes I do mistakes, I know I do them, with the past tense mostly and the irregular verbs. Currently I am working a lot in groups, so we are constantly trying to give feedback to each other and try to improve our English, we correct each other even in small spelling mistakes haha.

How do you feel about presentations? I'm not the best example of that because I like to improvise a lot in presentations, but I understand that most of people are not really comfortable. Speaking is indeed very difficult and I know many people who prepare extensively, I just like to have the bullet points and I know to make the link more natural, because when you are stuck I know you start repeating yourself and you get nervous, for me coming naturally is much more obvious and easy. I usually do one or two rehearsals at home but not so much. If I am stuck I just look at the bullet points, remember what I wanted to say and find the words for it. Maybe not the words I planned but some others. Sometimes I also do memorizing because some terms you cannot express them in an other way. The root of the word is always there, I deal with romance languages, the words are very very similar, of course there are differences for ex. centimeters are expressed differently in BR english so I have to adapt to their language, so then I memorize yes.

When I think in Portuguese and translate in English I know I become much slower, much more confusing and then the structure of the sentence doesn't make any sense. I try to control it and put my mindset in english

How is it when you attend the classes?

There are some professors who don't really speak clear, but it's not such a huge problem, then I see the ppt and I take notes and if I have a doubt I ask the professor myself. I try to be independent. How about reading articles and books?

They all have very complex vocabulary which is overwhelming and I have to be slow and check dictionary, google translator, also a paper dictionary, and also I just rely on the context. So I try to understand and I read and reread and reread. I underline first the important ideas and then I take notes. All the contact with the language help you dominate it, especially when you don't like the topic, for ex. transportation policy, omg its so boring but of course it helps me become better. I also check what tenses the person who writes the book use and if he use difficult grammar.

How are project works for you where you have to speak with your classmates? It's not so easy, especially with people whose English are bad for example the Belgian people. If I have problems in understanding, then I just repeat or rephrase what I say. I try to correct myself too, not change the ideas but change the forms, some people are more advanced in language but others in content so the combination is important.

Which is the worst situation for you?

I don't know how to deal with grammar. When I had my ECE exam the use of English was the worst, the tiny details are the worst because I have to pay attention. For example the plural forms and the tenses are difficult. And all these forms of the verbs and everything. It's so difficult. I know

they are important but knowing all or memorizing all them is hard. Living abroad is a good exercise, especially if I could live in a English speaking country, even in pronunciation, but still here I practise.

#### 9. Fransisco (S9)

How do you feel when you have to write an essay? I think its more difficult about the Grammar, the vocabulary you can always find the words and translate them. In grammar you cannot find it if you don't know it. The structure or organizing is easy because I think its universal, when I think in English I just think in English, writing is difficult just because of grammar. So I try to check the grammar all the time. I google things and I also have a grammar book. A good idea is to ask my friend to help me. It's difficult because I have to put more effort, I have to do 50 sentences and all getting together, grammar, voc, everything. How do you find doing a presentation? Yesterday I had to do a presentation in English so it's fresh, I am used to do presentations, I am not nervous I think, I only hesitate when I don't remember a word, in English is more difficult. I try to find an other word to describe what I want to say. I put the bullet points, I underlined the main points and did the presentation to myself without looking to what I wrote. So did it in my mind. When I was younger I would translate it in Portuguese and ask someone to say it in English, but now I try to describe it in English in other words. Of course if I prepare the presentation it kinda flows but yea I find it easier to do it in Portuguese.

What are your feelings about following the seminars? I think it's easy but some times it's not because some teachers have the French accent in their English, so it's more difficult to understand if they said one thing or another, you are not sure, it gets ambiguous. If one point is less clear if I trust my colleagues I ask them but usually I ask the teacher, I am older now, not so shy haha.

Readings? Sometimes it's difficult because scientific articles are dense and the language is formal, I have to read it twice or a third time. I underline. I summarize, and take notes of the most important ideas, the keywords in post it, and the difficult words well, I should go to dictionary, but in 70% of the cases I just rely on context, I would like to do it more often though. I translate from English to Portuguese to be more clear, but sometimes google translate too. Also reading books get me better for vocabulary, grammar too, because if you see a word you can memorize the structure of the phrases, the beginning and the conclusion.

How is it with the project works? If you talk to a colleague who isn't sure of his English you try to speak in elementary and slow English. I try to help him. I just don't develop my English, I help the other person. But in our case, we use a lot of math, so we don't have to develop English that much.

Speaking is like opening a shelf and I speak in English, I also avoid to translate to Portuguese. Most of the time I try to explain the idea in words in English. Because if I try to translate in Portuguese it's useless because the structure is different and confusing. I think when I speak in English I think in English. I just hope I speak with correct grammar and not sound stupid because I know my grammar is not good. Knowing all these rules is so difficult and all these forms are hard.

#### 10. Husnain (S10)

Which is the easiest activity for you in English? I think all my levels are same, of course speaking is the one that is the most inferior because I never spoke it really, it wasn't really powerful even at school, I started speaking it when I got in the uni so if I have to say where I feel less powerful is speaking. maybe a level lower than then rest.

How is it when you have to prepare essays? I think I can handle grammar better because they are just rules you have to follow, but yea voc is the thing you develop with the passing of time and you can write same things in different ways, the only thing I can think about it is that I have to express the idea concisely and correctly, for example you have to write in 3 pages the whole story so it has to be specific. This is the challenge, to sum up all my ideas really concisely. I need to have a planning and then I write what I think I should write and go over and over again and then cut it on and cut it on and change the structure, I go over and over again. About vocabulary I don't really check dictionaries. I google a lot.

How is it in the presentation? I do bullet points and speak, speaking publicly I do almost 10 years, at that time I felt difficulty and at the beginning I just read the slides and I was really anxious, and practised and practised, now I just write the points and can express my ideas okay. I try to structure my presentation, I do it at my head, I don't really rehearse but I have the structure of every slide in my head. You became better and better if you practice in English and if you know more vocabulary to express yourself in different ways if you are stuck for example.

What are your difficulties in the seminars? Not real problems, I think you can adapt easily even if the professors speak with an accent in French.

Which is the difficult part when you read books and articles? I try to read fast to get all the ideas and then I read carefully and I mark the important points. If I don't know some words I check the context and try to check words too. It's a mixture of both. If you have to know the structure of the language and then the context come. If a word doesn't make sense I check on dictionary. You develop from time to time because of exposure in a language, of course you have to read different

subjects too, because if you just read about your studies and your domain your vocabulary is still limited, you have to read books from different subjects in English.

How is it with the project works? It depends on the people, usually they are very cooperative, rephrasing and restructuring is a part of the project work because maybe there are misunderstandings. Everyone can speak English and everyone has a different accent so sometimes it's difficult to get the accent, you have to deal with that, for example ppl from India, Pakistan and ppl from China speak differently, and even from UK there are different accents.

#### 11. Gema (S11)

Attend classes? It is okay but if he has accent it's difficult. And I don't ask questions. When go home I look at the ppt, I don't take notes because it's very difficult to do both at the same time. Writing? the voc is the most difficult for writing, my voc is very little, I check google translate.

Spanish to English. My grammar and what I write is still basic but I have to fight with this grammar. (Can you repeat?). And I need help of other person to see my mistakes, my friends for example.

In the ppt preparation I can read my part, I don't have to know it by heart.

Books and articles? When I have to read my voc is becoming better, especially for my field, because it's very specific, so I have to be always with the dictionary, and I know that google translate is bad, I use ISA OXFORD (Spanish- English), I mark the word I don't know, I put them in a paper, as a list, and the translation and then I memorize them. Usually they are the same words in different articles.

Project works? In the project works with my classmates we use basic vocabulary. But to understand and speak is most difficult, ppl have to speak slow yea, the biggest problem for me is that I always translate in Spanish.

12. Ediola (S12)

Which is the situation you find the easiest? I think all of them because I did all the subjects in

English so it's easy.

More difficult? The most difficult part is speaking, I don't know how to say it, difficult to see which

word goes with the other.

How do you feel during writing? I plan it, I structure it, I summarize some ideas from my research,

then I start writing it, of course I keep notes about the sources and everything. Grammar is a bit

difficult because I have to use correct English but I check the structures I need online, and vocabulary because sometimes I have to know the etymology, I find it in online dictionary.

Presentation? I never prepare my speaking because I don't like speaking to myself, just prepare the points and just improvise that moment. I just practice in English a lot.

I prefer to be natural, I do not rehearse, what happens when I cant find that one word? I just have to paraphrase.

Attend classes: I have problems in understanding the teachers' accents so I prefer to ask them to repeat and disambiguate.

Read articles and books? It's not difficult to read scientific papers, maybe some words but they are not crucial for my understanding, I understand from context, when I don't know the words I just check them, I write them down and I memorize them, if not I have to check them again.

Project work? It's easy to express myself and usually I work with international students with some experience from abroad so that definitely works. When you interact with people whose English is not their mother language either it's not a problem, I think if there are problems you can always solve them with dialogue. And I think here everyone is independent. I think independent learning is the most important because nobody remembers everything from uni books but each of us remembers what we like. I always say you have to find what keeps you up at night and continue studying and learning.

13. Philippe (S13)

Which situation is the easiest for you? I usually prefer to have the book and read you know, I don't

really like speaking or doing group works.

How do you feel with the academic essay part? It's easy to organize my ideas, all I have to write are

in English , I guess translating to German would be more difficult.  
I think I developed myself in writing papers through years because now I know the vocabulary.

How do you feel when you have to make a presentation? Speaking is okay, I had one presentation and they were connected to my MA thesis so it was okay, I'm not anxious. I just read the bullet- points from the powerpoint and give comments on them. Maybe I change the structure of the sentence to better express the idea at that point but in general I usually learn them by heart. That way it feels easier.

Attending a class? I wouldn't say I have any problems. If I don't get something I ask the teacher.

Project groups? Mostly all the project works are with international students so I guess we understand each other. I have more difficulties with Belgian people in pronunciations but we repeat and repeat and it is okay in the end.

Reading? The hard thing in reading are the difficult words. If I realize it's a difficult word and I don't get it from context I use dictionaries, mostly from English to German.

14. Theresa (S14)

How do you feel when you have to write an essay? I guess the difficult part is grammar, vocabulary

is more easy because you can always google, but for me tenses are hard, for vocabulary I just google, or use dicos online, I translate German to English and is okay. But grammar is very hard, and all these structures. So I just practise more and more with grammar, I have a grammar book with exercises. I don't have time to use it haha but I have it home. Also my mum is a teacher so she checks on it, she doesn't really know law but it helps in structuring and grammar and vocabulary. How about the presentations? I'm not the biggest fan of doing presentations. I feel stuck some times with words and with phrases and plus is the stress but like since we are all exchange students we all make mistakes and that's okay. I had to do this presentation and I had some German friends in class so what I did was to say it in German and waited them to tell me the word in English but if I have to do it in an other class where no-one speaks German I think I have to rephrase so that we understand each other haha. I usually read my notes but then I feel bad because I feel someone will judge me for reading from the points. So I ignore what is written and try to do it myself, and then voila, I can't express myself in English, it doesn't come naturally.

Problems in class? I don't really like the strong French accent and they speak fast, now I get used to

them more, it took me some time. I ask my colleagues if I don't understand, not really my professors, and I record the lectures. Also I have summaries from previous students of the lectures. Also to make notes and read them asap is a must because you understand the idea fast and you correct your mistakes.

What about readings? I had to read an article in Tax Law and I didn't understand anything, so I

didn't read it at all haha, I just overread it, if I don't care I just rely on context, of course reading more and more in English helps to get better. I should really write the words I don't know down and study them, I just have them in my papers now, I have to go back to all the papers, I have to make them more organized in a list maybe.

How do you feel with the group work? It is easy to communicate with my classmates, it went smooth all the times. And if I don't understand something then I ask questions to others or I rephrase me to be understood. And sometimes I translate from German to English in my head.

15. Jen (S15)

How is it when you have to write an essay? I took the learning upon myself, I watched tv a lot

which was helpful I think because when I was in primary school I didn't really understand but receiving the language I guess was helpful, I like reading also so it helped a lot and then learning everyday new vocabulary no matter how hard it was I was going to primary school and because I didn't know what my classmates knew I was giving myself a deadline to learn new words, and to communicate so this deadlines always helped me and I did a good job. It was a matter of esteem to carry myself to my new life. It worked out, it was hard but it worked. So in writing, I maybe was given a task and writing lessons and I was encouraged to start writing and practise practise practise and repeat even if it feels annoying. When it comes to law language I have to memorize things, google what I don't get and write down everything. I think also it depends if you like to learn grammar, for example grammar conjugations and everything so practise is the key plus to memorize. When I find difficult words I check on thesauruses mostly, or even dictionary to find maybe synonyms, mostly monolingual dictionaries to know this word better.

How about the presentations? It was nerveracking, it always is, when I don't know the word and try to find it I try to change the sentence and remember, to memorize and pretend I say it out loud home, I feel incredibly nervous so I won't be able to speak ahah.

In secondary school I had difficulty expressing myself, I said the word in Portuguese, because I really couldn't remember.

Which it the worst for you? Maybe grammar I guess, when it comes to writing essays I want it to be perfect, I have to make sure that's it's right, it's my own personal struggle, and I always have to be better and I have to make the mistakes correct. When it comes to ppl who are non natives they think they are good because of their lower level definitely, but me I can't change it I have to be perfect and I know I make mistakes still.

16. Sophie (S16)

Which is the worst skill for you? I would definitely say writing and speaking also, the active part of the language.

What are the difficulties you meet when you have to write an assignment? The use of connectives is really difficult because now I'm more aware of the fact that maybe I used them in the wrong way, and then instinctively I say "Oh, I should go back and check it again, make sure it's that" through dictionaries or online. Also the vocabulary in general is hard, because I'm starting to realize all the nuances and the shades. I cannot find the right word, and because of the classes I take I realize that I tend to use certain words in wrong situations when we are expected to be more accurate and precise. So I'm not a good example of learner. I try to plan and structure and pay attention in Grammar. Ideally I take it step by step, I have a plan

and use keywords and match the keyword with the concept and be sure that it happens in English, don't translate from your language, check the words and build from them, not from your language. That's important. Also collocations are tricky. When I write too quickly I tend to transfer words or phrases from my mother tongue, I simply translate it, and most of the times it doesn't work that way, and I say I know this word in English but do I use it with the right next words? Not always haha.

How do you feel when doing a presentation? Once I get in front of the audience it gets tricky and

stressful but I never prepare a text, if I start reading it, or if I read what I write in a different way, it all goes wrong. I have my slides and key words and then I try to improvise really. I should use more simple grammar and not very complicating tenses because even for me it's hard to talk in front of people. Sometimes I translate from French but I know this is not the right thing to do because I translate things which don't sound okay in English. So if I use simpler language with some important terminology then it is okay. Sometimes the first step I take which is totally wrong is when I try to speak directly in English and I get confused and and I speak it in French instead. And then I try to restructure in English. It's so time consuming and not helpful at all.

Attending classes is the easiest part, I actually had more difficulties with other students than

teachers, for example this morning in the EAP class some of the other students had unexpected accents, not standard accents at all, so that was difficult. The teachers usually try to present a standard accent. So these students can develop their pronunciation by listening. It's the key, it really helped me, because sometimes I read a word that doesn't really correspond to the sound, for example if its 2 syllables maybe it's tricky, and then I try not to think how it's written and yes listening in English helps. Maybe the news or even watching movies which is even funnier.

What are the difficult parts in reading academic articles? Most of the time I find words that I don't know so is mostly google, and if I can find enough info I don't go further but sometimes I need to use more specific tools. I use the tool they showed us in the EAP class or Oxford dictionary. I think

the first thing is to learn to find keywords, and if it's a keyword you have to check it but I don't think that students should check every single word because it may take forever. It's enough to understand the article unless of course if you have to speak about it or answer certain questions where you should give it a second reading and more focus.

What are the difficulties in the project works? It's becoming easier now, I think is just practising, I feel the difference with Dutch for ex, I also study Dutch, when I have a conversation it's hell because I don't understand what people tell me first of all. But with English is different, once we start, we start speaking it, we tend to try and speak English even though our ideas aren't there yet. But the important is that I understand my classmates. For me if you receive some input and you listen to things, movies, songs, whatever just in English, then you understand it. So it's fun, we are more comfortable in English, Dutch is still struggling.

17. Leticia (S17)

Which is the most difficult skill you have to use English? I would say academic writing is the most

difficult and then speaking and then listening and then reading of course is the easiest.

What are the problems you encounter in writing an academic essay? I think grammar is difficult so I try to be very precise when I use it and check all the rules. And then the most difficult for me is to find the words that go together, collocations and the connecting words, I see that, I don't know a word and I go to the dictionary and then the problem is that I don't know which word to use to that specific context, I know that people do certain mistakes because of that, they select the first one they see and they use that, so what I always do I check on a corpus or I check online on google and try to see if the 2 words go together and then try to understand the context too. I think the dictionary is the first step, you check on the translations, and then on google or google books where the language accuracy is better and then still if I don't know what to write I go on the BNC and again I check. This is what I do. Sometimes I even go to LINGUI, I know it's not very good, it can sometimes give you some ideas but not always. And then in the difficulties with vocabulary I go on dictionaries. The Collins dictionary and I check English to English. And then I also have the Longman learner dictionary (monolingual English). Of course I write all the time, and re-write again and again until I know what I write makes sense. Because I really like English and I do linguistics so I am expected to be like native. And also, a last thing, writing classes, I think it helps, its very interesting , I got a lot from it, not only how to use the language itself but how to write the text, how to structure it, and things like this. You need this, courses for specific purposes, for

English its very useful, because the English you use everyday it's not the English you use at work. And I don't know if people realize that but its really important. Academic English is really specific kind of English which has nothing to do with what we use every day, so people need to be aware that you need these classes, even if you speak English. Everyone speaks English and they say I don't need this course and blah blah blah but then see you need it, but actually they don't know the words or the way they should talk.

What about the steps you take to make a presentation? At first it was really difficult, now I don't

really have much time to prepare everything, but at first what I did I had to prepare everything that I would say and write everything down, my speech you know, but not anymore. Usually I improvise having in mind the ideas I read or okay sometimes I write down some words which help me remember them. Of course when you speak you don't use exactly the same words you wrote so I always find 1 or 2 synonyms for the main ideas. And the more you practise the better so it's better like this and this. The key is practising, is rehearsing beforehand. During the presentations I rely on improvisation. The same is about a word that doesn't come out. I think I try to say it in another way, to explain it.

Do you think it is easy to attend classes, any problems there? I think it's the easiest part because I

just take the information from the professor, there is always a ppt and so it's easy to follow. I try to pay attention and not to get lazy and then I try to interpret what the professor says. But I think this happens implicitly. Also it is easier to understand what is going on during the class if you have read the articles you will analyze into class from before or during the semester I

think it is easier because you can remember what you did before. Again with the vocabulary, at first I used to go to dictionaries, now mostly I rely on context but of course the best way is the dictionaries.

Do you find difficulties in doing group work? I worked with international people so it was not difficult. Maybe the pronunciation of some people was difficult to understand but then you can always ask them what they mean and they repeat.

Any comments? I am following the teaching program but I'm not sure if I can be a teacher because I don't feel I can do it, I think I'm too young for a classroom, I will try to work in a company, I think I would face problems in English because my English I don't have it related to business or specific context, I think if you work in a company you have to have a very specific vocabulary, I don't have it, I don't think I am that ready, I have to overcome that, my English won't be that good.

18. Diana (S18)

What are the steps you take when you write an essay and what problems you find? I start with collecting the data and then follow the same structure and decide on the framework and analyze it. When I start writing the paper I have notes, and when I work on the theoretical background I just start from the beginning, I kinda have the plan in my head, so starting with introduction and moving on and going back and just continue if I get stuck. Planning is important, writing down keywords is important because you are going to use them later and I really do it formally, it's more or less on my head and I put in on a paper. And it takes the final form when I just sit down and write. The difficult part is grammar but, well, I think there is a conscious process, since I do linguistics, it's obviously something that I can work on in my writing for example, I always consult grammar books or corpora when I write, it could be the smallest thing that I check, you know, a word or collocations, or phrases, or synonyms and then for voc I do look up some new words or write down something, it's an interactive process with myself. It's alive, it's not a linear process, it's also like with communication with native speakers, I had a roommate when I was in the US I usually talk them about language, about the way I have to speak, about their dialects, I like to practise.

Do you have any problems in oral presentations? Yea, because of the anxiety or the stage fear I get stuck with the language too, so I become too self-conscious of the language, like something happening in my head, and make actually more mistakes than but I try to paraphrase and rephrase and take a deep breath. For the preparation part, I prepare about that from before, which step is after something and what I want to say, yea definitely there is a lot of preparation there. Although I think I don't stick to that because when I have something prepared it also feels like it's in the way and I feel I have to say what I already planned but that's not the case, I don't really have to, it's just in my head. If it's a topic I'm comfortable with, I prefer to improvise.

When it comes to group works I don't get distracted with accents, I understand this feature. I just ask for clarification if I don't understand. Again I work on the vocabulary I will talk about and I try to be grammatically correct, even if I don't have to since it is just speaking with the rest of my classmates.

How is it when you have to read books or articles? Usually I don't have problems, I start with scanning the text and then I skim for information. Of course guessing from the context is the 60 % of what I read, but I also try to check the unknown words and understand the word families. Knowing the cognates sometimes works a lot more than having a list of words as

you start with one word and then you suddenly know 10 of them which are of the same family. And that's how you can build a good command in English.

19. Claudia (S19)

Which situation you find yourself most difficulty in? Definitely writing academic papers, I don't have problem talking in English in public or attending classes, maybe a bit the voc when I read scientific articles, because I cannot say that I don't find new words almost every time I never heard before and writing the academic papers I feel that I don't master the voc at this level, like being able to structure the paper like native people would, or as fast as them. So what do you do to make it the best? Well, before I didn't even realize that I have this problem, the problem is that I never wrote so many academic papers and when I started writing them I felt they were fine, but then I realized that no, they were still a lot of problems with it. And what helped was reading more and more of these academic papers so that I can figure out how they should be structured, what is the intro, how you should move towards the end, so I think reading a lot helps you realize which way they should be structured and then I started checking myself more. By reading 2, 3 times what I wrote and thinking does this sound academic enough, should I use more scientific terms so that it sounds better. And then I check the grammar, I try to use all these structures in English which you have to know of course. They don't come out naturally like in Romanian. For me I think the biggest problem is the connectors, like first of all, however, we keep on talking about their importance, and I now realize how important they are because for us in the uni there was not specific class about academic writing so we didn't really think that much about how to structure a phrase or what connectors to use or what I write really means or word lists and see how they should be used. So this is the 1st problem I notice here when we started talking about them. I just read and re-read my arguments and my paragraphs to make sure they are cohesive and that what I write matches is a good combination of grammar, lexis, collocations. I would like to just have a real class in EAP, not the stuff we do, but real teach you how to write academic papers and insist on the grammar and the structure. When it comes to vocabulary, I don't really check the words on dictionaries or even online, I always say to myself I should do it more, maybe yes when I write I find difficulties in finding this one word which sounds right and then you check some and you get frustrated and you stop writing and its hard to move on and write, so that's when I look on the internet. But its hard, bc if you don't know the word it's hard to find it and you have to find it anyway so here again the best help is to read as much as you can so that you build the voc in English and in your domain before, instead of struggling later. I mostly check the words from English to Romanian because I feel I get better connected with the context, I can feel the word. But

I know this is not correct if you want to know this specific one word which matches the specific context. I rarely check English to English and its terrible to say I rarely use dictionaries. I sometimes just google you know. Also I check phrasal verbs a lot. They are simply incomprehensible in understanding without learning them by heart.

How do you prepare your presentation? Before I used to prepare beforehand maybe rehearse home once or twice or make a short summary so that I don't have problems like forgetting my ideas, but now I'm not so stressed about it anymore even if when I have to talk for a long time maybe the phrase structure isn't the best. This is maybe because I lived abroad for many years and used English because I had to in all situations for a long time, so I'm used to it, it's almost like a second language, I'm not saying I'm a native speaker but its become like my mother tongue. I can't use Romanian so I have to use English everywhere. So having to use it for a long time, even more than your mother language you are used to it, I also think in English

more than I think in Romanian. What I do to be honest is to make a list of the most important ideas or words I will use in the presentation so I try to use these keywords. Or I even make acronyms. I write the first letters of an important phrase I have to remember and then I do really remember it. It is more doable to remember those than writing a page or two with all the argument you will use later. Also what I try during the presentations is to have a decent pronunciation. And I think I do because I had really good teachers so it was not the case of “Oh maybe I know better English than this teacher”, it was always the other way, I felt I had to learn a lot from them and I wanted to get to their level. So at least I know I have an okay accent, I don't say I'm native but it's not too heavy. I know after all that living abroad is the most important thing, to live away from home and to practise continuously the language. Speaking with native people is the ideal haha.

Do you find any difficulties in reading books and articles in English? Sometimes I rely on the context, and then when I keep encountering the term and I really don't know it I check it up, and then reading all these help and I really saw a difference on myself. The good thing is that when I will check on them I will know them after all. I have a notebook I use and have all the translations of these terms or even more correctly I try to have also some synonyms because like that you can really learn an other language. And the funny part is that you are asked to do these presentations or do these papers with theoretical background and references and you have to do all this paraphrasing even though I hate it, it's the think that works the best. Because it's the thing that makes you synthesize and be critical and understand what you are asked and then express everything in your own words, instead of just reading. So reading and then using what you read yes.

How do you feel in the project works? Maybe I have some problems in communication, sometimes it's true when I express some ideas I have one thing at my mind but then I use some words that don't really express what I need to say. Just make some paraphrasing and hopefully people will understand. Just make a bit more effort to understand and make yourself understandable. Helping to monitor the communication is the most important.

#### 20. Priscilla (S20)

What ways you find yourself employing when making mistakes in oral skills? Try to correct them right away, because I feel stupid, for example with long words, I try to pronounce them slowly slowly, syllable by syllable. It's one thing I try, not pretty easy.

If you have a written assignment? Synthesizing the ideas is always hard, you have to realize the genre, if it's academic you have to write academic, I really need to know which words I can use in English in academic discourse because it's gonna be different from Portuguese academic, in French too the structure is totally different, so I try to think first of the structure, and then the words I have to use to make this paper a serious paper and not an email to a friend, so the vocabulary is important. I think I get easily blocked, when I write in English is different than in my native language. If I write in my native language I can sit there and write what is in my mind and I don't need a filter, but then in English is easy for me to get stuck, not because I don't have the idea but because I kinda feel there is a problem going through the language. In Portuguese I would just sit there and write, and then in English is easier if I think first of what I want to say and then I write, it makes it easier. it has to be simpler. For me working with a real paper I make sure that I read a lot, before I start writing and I try to take notes on the structures I find are the least clear, so that I can go back and check them. Sometimes I take notes of the words that are the most interesting and I use them as keywords and then check for synonyms, and I use them to reproduce the idea, to reproduce them in a

nice way. I know for example that it is academic genre, I see what words the author uses, I see the structure, and I try to imitate. It's not imitate haha, but in a way it is. Especially chunks in texts, not paragraphs but sequences of 3,4 words that are really clear in this context and I save them for later. it helps me.

When attending the seminar? That's really hard sometimes, because when they have that strong French accent is really hard to understand. Most of my professors have a really good accent normally but when they have it I know its very hard, so I try to ask the teacher "what did you mean by that? or can you just repeat?" or ask my colleagues. It's hard to understand all the accents. Or

for example, I am more used with the American accent rather than the British accent so sometimes I don't catch the whole thing, because here most of the teachers have the British accent as their reference.

When you read something academic? Sometimes if I don't want to stop to check everything I make notes of what I need to check, like in this paragraph I didn't understand the context because of this and this and this word and I just note down all the difficult parts. So when I finish the text I check it. Because I hate to stop every time. My reading in English is much slower than reading in my native language. If I don't know a word and I can make sense of the whole sentence then I won't stop, but if I don't really know that word I will check it. A lot of times it's not that I don't know the words, is just because my brain is slower when reading the whole sentence, because it is more complex, structures, vocabulary, everything, maybe I have to read 3 or 4 times the same sentence, or read it out loud, and if it's really bad, I try to translate it in my language. It's my last resort. If you really don't understand then yes it's ok. I take a deep breath and go slowly and try to understand it. how would this be in my language? A lot of people have the tendency to translate in their language, yes I understand this methodology, otherwise you are going to be stuck for ever, so when you don't find an easy way, the best way is to go for translation. It's so time consuming and tiring though, that's why it should be the last resource. It usually happens when you are very tired or when you don't really understand the sentence, just I do it in my head.

How do you feel in the oral presentations? I try just to think of the things I need to say, but some times I get nervous just thinking of these things I have to say and then I don't say half of it and yea its worse because you overthink. I think rehearsing doesnt help at all in the end. So its better to go there and know what you want to talk about, be confident and then just talk. If you already did your work seriously and you know what you are talking about then its good. Memorizing lines for example is bad, it makes it more difficult, then improvisation is better, you have to go up there and you have to know everything. Memorizing chunks thinking that you will perform better is bad. Because you get so nervous, you forget the lines and then you get more nervous because you forgot the lines, so instead of this, just concentrate and talk about it, because you read the paper, you know what it is about, and if you pretend like you are talking to your friends is easier. I will tell you something, I went to acting school and I was so scared of improvisation, but then after a while, after doing it actually repeatedly, I realized that improvisation is a lot easier because you are not attached to something, to the format, to the lines, you can just go there and do it and part of the process you can skip it and you don't have to worry about it. Allow yourself to do something different than what was in your mind, so then its less but more effective work, and its easier. Most of people probably

think that it is easier to memorize but no. I still do it sometimes, I know it doesnt really work always but its the sense of being safe. Of course when the word doesn't come out I try to paraphrase it. I think that is the advantage when you have certain level of a language , for

example if you are intermediate is one thing or when you are advanced its another thing, when you are intermediate it doesn't come so fast , the synonyms don't come fast, but when you are advanced normally it comes easy, even if you won't know the word you know the way to say it. I think there are 2 things, you have to allow yourself to take your time and to take a deep breath and not run, you can just go like aaaaahhh, and take some time to find the word , and you can also allow yourself not to be a native, they know you are not a native , I don't know how to say that in English but I mean this and this. Yes people put you in pressure to be a native, but nobody from the class is a native, you can be really fluent but you never gonna be a native, just you need to accept that and people put so much pressure on that, but please accept that you are not a native. Its okay to say, I cannot say that in English.

Also something difficult I would say is grammar. There are so many things I still do not know about grammar, and I feel like I don't have a basis, and then if I compare it with my native language is a big deal, you cant do it. When I write I know I write with mistakes because grammar in both languages is completely different. And also I would say pronunciation because it is already something I am working on. I could however improve it more if I lived in a country where English is the language of communication. For example here, almost anyone speaks English. I can say to people that my level is C1, but if I had to live or work in a country where English is spoken for long time, then I think I would eventually be C2 because of the exposure.