“No one cares whether you have an American or British accent”:

Language attitudes in relation to varieties of spoken English in Norwegian classrooms

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Summary in Norwegian

Det å kunne uttrykkje seg munnleg er beskrive som ei av fem grunnleggjande ferdigheiter i norsk skule. Dei siste åra har sett eit endrande fokus når det gjeld morsmålsnormer innan språklæring, også innan engelskfaget. Det engelske språket er i stadig vekst og har utvikla seg til å bli eit verdsspråk. Med andre ord blir det engelske språket i dag fyrst og fremst nytta til å kommunisere internasjonalt, på tvers av landegrenser og disiplinar. Denne utviklinga er også synleg i læreplanane i den norske skulen. Tidlegare læreplanar har idealisert morsmålsbrukarar av engelsk, derav britisk og amerikansk i hovudsak, medan den nyaste læreplanen ikkje spesifiserer korkje den eine eller andre varianten av engelsk når det gjeld kva uttalevariantar som skal nyttast. Samstundes er det ei oppfatning at engelsklærarar i norsk vidaregåande skule framleis føretrekkjer engelskvariantar tilhøyrande morsmålbrukarar.

Med utgangspunkt i dette tok denne masteroppgåva i sikte på å undersøkje kva haldningar engelsklærarar på norske vidaregåande skular har knytt til det engelske språk, særleg når det gjeld ulike uttalevariantar og korleis dette påverkar vurderinga av elevane si munnlege kompetanse i engelskfaget. Studiet gjev innblikk i ti lærarar sine tankar og haldningar kring, og bruk av uttalevariantar av engelsk.

Dette er eit empirisk studie som har nytta både kvantitativ og kvalitativ metode for å undersøkje det aktuelle fenomenet. Datamaterialet er innhenta gjennom ti lærarar frå ulike vidaregåande skular i Noreg, der deltakarane har svart både på ei spørjeundersøking og eit påfølgande intervju.

Resultata syner at lærarane totalt sett er svært einige i at det å kunne kommuniserer på engelsk er det viktigaste for elevane. Samstundes kjem det fram at lærarane rangerer morsmålsbrukarar av engelsk høgare enn dei som har det som andrespråk. Dette til trass for at lærarane hevdar at dei ikkje bryr seg om kva uttalevariant elevane har. Vidare kjem det også fram at alle deltakarane føretrekkjer både å lytte til og å snakke engelsk med morsmålslik uttale. Eit anna viktig funn er at lærarane ser ut til å verdsette ulike faktorar når dei skal vurdere elevane si munnlege kompetanse. Samla sett gjev resultata grobotn for å seie at lærarar framleis verdset engelskvariantar tilnærma morsmålbrukarar, og at lærarar verdset ulike faktorar i vurderingsarbeid av elevane.

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List of Abbreviations

CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

CLT – Communicative language teaching

EFL – English as a foreign language

ESL – English as a second language

GS – General studies

IDEA – International Dialects of English Archive

LK06/13 – Kunnskapsløftet 2006/2013

LK20 – Kunnskapsløftet 2020

MGT – Matched guise technique

MMR – Mixed methods research

M74 – Mønsterplan 1974

M87 – Mønsterplan 1987

NSD – Norwegian Centre for Research Data

RP – Received Pronunciation

R94 – Reform 94

VGT – Verbal guise technique

VS – Vocational studies

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The present thesis investigates language attitudes among teachers in Norwegian upper secondary schools and looks into the question whether these attitudes affect the assessment of students' oral competence. Arguably, Norwegian classrooms are continuously affected by globalization and multiculturalism, and there are naturally multiple varieties of spoken English to be found across all Norwegian classrooms in the entire country. During the last few years as a teacher program student, as well as working as a substitute teacher, I have acquired much experience in Norwegian classrooms. Consequently, I have observed and come across many different teachers at many different schools. My impression is that some teachers still rate certain varieties of English higher than others. One example that really left a mark was when a student was given a lower grade due to "Norwegian accent and intonation", despite an impressive ability to communicate fluently and correctly in terms of grammar. This made me curious and motivated to pursue further investigations. Could it be the case that students that speak with a non-native accent of English are frowned upon? If so, why?

Arguably, English has become a global language during the last century. This may largely be explained due to its use as a language for communication and business. According to a report by the British Council (2019), English is the "language of international communication" and is "dominant or very prominent" in many countries around the world. This is due in part to the historical influence of the British Empire and the economic and cultural dominance of the United States. In addition, the use of English as a medium of instruction in universities and as a requirement for employment in many industries has contributed to its global spread. Furthermore, the enormous impact of the Internet, and consequently, social media, may also be considered as one of the major drives of this phenomenon.

Kachru's circles also demonstrate the global reach of English. In his theory of World Englishes, Kachru (1990) identifies three concentric circles: the inner circle (countries where English is the first language), the outer circle (countries where English is an official or second language), and the expanding circle (countries where English is taught as a foreign language). According to Kachru (1990:4), English has become "a global resource, an international commodity, and a versatile means of communication". This is reflected in the widespread use

of English as a lingua franca in international business, academia, and diplomacy. For example, English is the official language of the European Union and the United Nations and is widely used in international trade and finance (Crystal 2003).

Naturally, the increasing status of the English language as a means of communication also impacts Norway and Norwegian students. Consequently, the acquisition of the English language is considered highly important in Norway. This is clear, as English is taught as a foreign language all the way from primary to upper secondary school. Furthermore, the last six decades or so have seen some considerable changes in the curricula. While previous curricula have emphasized how students should aim to speak with a British or American accent, the more recent curricula, as well as the present one, does not state any preferred model of pronunciation, nor does it express any extra emphasis on Britain or America. Instead, the current English subject curriculum (ENG01-04) states that pupils should "use pronunciation patterns in communication" and "express himself or herself in a nuanced and precise manner with fluency and coherence, using idiomatic expressions and varied sentence structures adapted to the purpose, receiver, and situation". This means that if teachers still advocate for and rate native varieties of English higher than others, then this must be considered beyond the official guidelines and beyond what is expected by students. For these reasons, the present thesis investigates whether language attitudes among Norwegian teachers may affect the oral assessment of students in Norwegian upper secondary schools.

1.2 Relevance

The ability to express oneself orally, i.e., speaking, is one of the five basic skills that are to be taught in the English subject in Norway. The vast expansion of the English language as a means of communication, whether it is in relation to business, personal affairs, social media, entertainment, or other contexts, has consequently created an emphasis on communicative competence for English as a foreign language (EFL) learners in Norway. At the same time, multilingualism and multiculturalism are considered as an important resource for both individuals and the society as a whole. In a world that is constantly growing smaller, the knowledge of different languages and cultures is considered essential (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2021). However, the English language teaching in Norway has traditionally been based on a native-speaker norm, meaning that students have been presented with native speakers of English as a model, and consequently they have been encouraged to acquire native-speaker-like features of English. Research still shows that the native-speaker norm continues to affect

both teachers and students (Simensen 2014), despite a shift towards communicative competence in the recent curricula. In light of this, it is highly relevant to investigate teachers' attitudes and perceptions of spoken English and the assessment of students' oral competence.

With the evident status of English as a global language, the role of the language teacher is crucial. While the native speaker norm has been a fundamental component of language teaching, it is important for teachers to avoid idealizing the native speaker and instead embrace linguistic diversity (Crystal 2003). Crystal notes that "there is no 'correct' way of using language, even for native speakers." (23). Furthermore, the idealization of the native speaker may prove problematic for language learners, as it creates an unrealistic and unattainable standard of language proficiency, leading to frustration and a lack of motivation. Instead, teachers should help learners develop their own unique voice in English, whilst still providing guidance and feedback to help them communicate effectively and appropriately (Crystal 2003). Thus, it is important that teachers avoid imposing a narrow and exclusive standard of English and instead encourage a diversity of accents, varieties, and usages.

The implementation of the new curriculum, 'The Knowledge Promotion' (LK20), also provides a substantial freedom of choice for the teachers. In previous curricula, the teachers have been given detailed instructions as to how specific elements should be taught. In stark contrast, LK20 provides no such instructions. Instead, the teachers are free to pick and choose from different methods and approaches, as long as the competence aims are covered. Such freedom further opens up for individual interpretation of competence aims and assessment criteria. As a result, a large variation in practices may occur in Norwegian classrooms. Said differences in approaches and assessment should be reflected upon and investigated. Thus, investigating teachers' language attitudes and interpretations regarding oral assessment may provide valuable insight into some potential variations in practices today.

1.3 Previous research

Related topics have been investigated many times both in the Norwegian context and internationally, though with some different perspectives than the present thesis. To the best of my knowledge, no study has attempted to provide an in-depth investigation of teachers' attitudes towards spoken English in Norwegian classrooms, and consequently, and perhaps even more interestingly, how said attitudes affect teachers' assessment of the students' oral competence in the English subject. Thus, the present study aims to expose a research gap.

The study of language attitudes is a complex field. Still, many researchers have

attempted to investigate language attitudes in a school context, both in Norway, Europe, and internationally. Section 2.2 provides an in-depth overview of previous research relevant to the present thesis. Ulrikke Rindal (2010; 2013; 2014) has made some substantial contributions to the research of language attitudes in a Norwegian context, especially with regards to the students' attitudes towards English. In short, Rindal (2010; 2013; 2014) found that British English was considered as the most prestigious variety of pronunciation amongst students. Similarly, several master theses (Tveisme 2021; Skuterud 2020; Hopland 2016; Sannes 2013) also concluded that native varieties, such as British English (BrE) and American English (AmE), still dominate as the preferred varieties of pronunciation amongst both teachers and students. Hence, research indicates that the native speaker norm still dominates in Norwegian classrooms.

1.4 Aims and research questions

As presented in the previous section, there are multiple studies relevant to the present thesis. However, I still argue that there is a research gap. While some studies have investigated teachers' and students' language attitudes (Bøhn & Hansen 2017; Skuterud 2020; Tveisme 2021; Hopland 2016; Sannes 2013), there has, to the best of my knowledge, not been any research that has investigated how teachers' language attitudes relate to the oral assessment of students in particular. Thus, the present thesis aims to expose and fill in this research gap.

As mentioned, the current study investigates whether language attitudes among Norwegian teachers in upper secondary school affect the assessment of oral competence amongst students. Furthermore, the present thesis aims to provide insight into teachers' attitudes, thoughts, and perspectives concerning different varieties of English, assessment of oral competence, and teaching methods.

The research questions that serve to guide this thesis reflect the previous research that has been conducted within related topics. In other words, this thesis attempts to investigate some of the more unfamiliar terrain of language attitudes amongst teachers in Norway. The research questions are:

RQ1: Do teachers rate native varieties such as British English (RP) higher than non-native varieties?

RQ2: Do teachers find RP as more linguistically attractive than non-native varieties?

RQ3: Are there any differences in teachers that have been teaching for a long period of time compared to those who have been teaching for a lesser period?
RQ4: Do teachers' language attitudes affect the assessment of students' oral competence?

1.5 Structure of the thesis

The present thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the topic, as well as a brief presentation of some previous research relevant to the present study. Chapter 2 presents the theoretical background and framework for the present thesis. Here, the notion of attitudes is discussed and defined. Also, the English subject curricula in Norway and the Council of Europe's influence upon them are contextualized and presented, as well as addressing other relevant and important concepts for discussing assessment of oral competence. Chapter 3 presents and discusses the methodological approaches to, and design of the present study. Also, the chapter describes the process of collecting data, and presents some considerations with regards to reliability, validity, methodology, and ethics. In Chapter 4, the results of the study are presented, analyzed, and discussed. Lastly, in Chapter 5, I give some concluding remarks and provide proposed answers to the research questions of this thesis. Also, some suggestions for further research are presented.

1.6 Clarification of relevant terms

In this section, I will briefly present and clarify some of the relevant terms for the present thesis.

1.6.1 Native speaker norm

The native speaker norm refers to the linguistic standards and conventions that are typically associated with native speakers of a language. These norms may include traits of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and even cultural knowledge. Kramsch (1998) defines the native speaker norm as "the belief that the ideal language learner is one who approximates the native speaker" (20). This definition indicates a hierarchical nature within the term and depicts how the native speaker norm is used to evaluate language proficiency amongst non-native speakers. Arguably, this is problematic, as it creates an unrealistic expectation for non-native speakers and may lead to discrimination against those who do not meet such standard.

Still, the notion of the native speaker has an important place in second language learning in the English subject in Norway. Hence, the term is referred to multiple times throughout the present thesis.

1.6.2 Pronunciation, accents, dialects, and varieties of English

The present thesis addresses aspects of pronunciation, accents, dialects, and varieties of English continuously. *Pronunciation* is defined by the Cambridge Dictionary (2023a) as "the way in which a word or language is spoken". Thus, *pronunciation* refers to sounds, stress, and intonation when producing speech (Roach 2009). Furthermore, the distinction into accents and dialects is necessary. The term *accent* primarily refers to features of pronunciation, i.e., how people in particular areas, countries, or social groups pronounce words (Cambridge Dictionary 2023b). In other words, it is reasonable to say that Norwegian EFL learners may speak English with a Norwegian accent. The term *accent* will be employed as such throughout the thesis. Moving on, the term *dialect* refers to a more all-encompassing variety of a language, including features of pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar (Trudgill 2003). In other words, one might say that an accent may be a part of a dialect. Lastly, *varieties of English* as a term is referred to multiple times in the present thesis. This paper follows Crystal's (2003) definition of the term: "varieties of English refer to the different forms of English that are spoken in different parts of the world […]. These varieties can differ in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammars, and usage" (6). I understand this as very similar to the definition of dialect, hence, both terms will be used interchangeably.

2. Theoretical background

This chapter presents the theoretical background and framework for the present study. Section 2.1 addresses attitudes as a phenomenon, and also provides insight into traditional ways of studying language attitudes. Section 2.2 provides an overview of some of the most relevant recent research conducted in the field of language attitudes in Norwegian classrooms. Moving on, section 2.3 provides insight into the current English subject curriculum, as well as an overview of previous curricula in Norway. In section 2.4, the Council of Europe and its influential work in language learning is addressed. Furthermore, section 2.5 discusses communicative competence and how communicative skills may serve as an alternative to the traditional native speaker norm. Section 2.6 addresses how Norwegians are exposed to different varieties of English, especially looking at the teacher education and the impact of media. Section 2.7 addresses and problematizes the current guidelines for assessment of oral competence, and how student motivation plays a key role in language learning. Lastly, section 2.8 provides a chapter summary.

2.1 Attitudes

Attitudes are not easy to define. Many scholars have tried to provide a comprehensible definition, though they all differ somewhat from one another. Garrett (2010) refers to multiple definitions of attitudes. One is Thurstone's (1931) definition: "attitude is an affect for or against a psychological object" (19). Thus, Thurstone connects attitudes to an emotional component. Another definition is provided by Allport (1954): "attitudes are a learned disposition to think, feel and behave towards a person or object in a particular way" (19). Interestingly, Allport not only connects attitudes to emotion, but also to cognitive and behavioral components. This also seems to be the case with Oppenheim's (1982) more elaborate definition of attitudes: "a construct, an abstraction which cannot be directly apprehended. An inner component of mental life which expresses itself, direct or indirectly, through much more obvious processes as stereotypes, beliefs, verbal statements, reaction, anger, satisfaction, or some other emotion and in various aspects of behavior" (19).

The present study is based on the following definition of attitudes: "a disposition to react favorably or unfavorably to a class of objects" (Sarnoff 1970:279). Firstly, this definition is more straightforward than those abovementioned. Secondly, Sarnoff's definition incorporates the aspect of behavior, which is what this thesis aims to investigate. The present

study aims to investigate whether teachers react favorably or unfavorably towards students speaking in different accents or varieties of English. Attitudes cannot be observed directly, thus, other methods and techniques must be used to infer them. To do so, the present study employs a speaker evaluation approach, in which respondents are asked to evaluate different traits of multiple speakers (Garrett 2010). Methodological choices are further described and explained in Chapter 3.

2.1.1 Studying language attitudes

Traditionally, there are three main approaches to studying language attitudes: 1) the direct approach, 2) the indirect approach), and 3) societal treatment studies (Garrett 2010:37). An important difference is that the direct and indirect approaches make use of data collected from respondents, while the societal treatment approach uses data from other cultural forms of expression, such as books, commercials, movies etc. As the name entails, a direct approach is used when informants are being asked directly about their own preferences and attitudes. The indirect approach studies attitudes by asking subtle questions and making respondents evaluate language without explicitly knowing what is being analyzed. Lastly, the societal treatment approach studies and observes how language and linguistics are carefully applied in different contexts, such as in advertisement, official announcements, etc. Societal treatments studies may provide valuable insight into social meanings and stereotypical association of language varieties (Garrett 2010:142).

2.1.1.1 Direct approach

In the direct approach the respondents are informed of the researcher's objective, often through the researcher asking the respondents directly about their attitudes towards and perceptions of different languages and language varieties. This approach can include surveys, interviews, or questionnaires in which participants may be asked to rate their attitude on a scale or through open-ended responses. The direct approach is the most dominant paradigm when studying language attitudes (Piller 2011:86).

When applying questionnaires within the direct approach, Likert scales or semantic scales are often implemented. Likert scales are rating scales which use numbers, normally ranging from 1 to 10. Likert scales typically consist of a series of statements about the level of agreement or disagreement, which respondents are asked to indicate (Dörnyei 2007). Respondents are then given time to consider the statement, before indicating, on a scale, to which extent they agree. This allows respondents time to think and may prevent hasty

judgements. Likert scales are widely used in survey research and are often considered to be one of the most reliable methods for measuring attitudes and perceptions. On the other hand, semantic scales are a type of rating scale that uses "equidistant numbers on a scale (e.g., 1 to 7) with semantically opposing labels applied to each end (e.g., friendly/unfriendly)." (Garrett 2010:55).

One of the advantages of the direct approach is that it allows for a clear and direct measurement of language attitudes. This approach can provide specific and detailed information about the attitudes of individuals towards different languages and language varieties. Additionally, the direct approach allows for the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, such as surveys, questionnaires, or interviews. Consequently, the direct approach may provide a more comprehensive understanding of language attitudes.

However, the direct approach also has some considerable limitations. One is that individuals may not always be aware of their own attitudes or may not be willing to express them. Respondents may be affected by external factors such as gender, age, ethnicity, cultural background, accent, social status, appearance, etc. Additionally, individuals may provide socially desirable responses, which can skew the results of the study. This is called the social desirability bias, that is "the tendency for people to give answers to questions in ways that the believe to be 'socially appropriate'" (Garrett 2010:44). In other words, respondents may not provide true feedback on the data being evaluated. Hyrkestedt and Kajala (1998, in Garret 2010:163) found that "the same person may provide different evaluations at different times, or even at different stages of the same conversation." These findings give implications of cautiousness when applying Likert scale measurements. The last limitation is that the direct approach may not always be appropriate in certain cultures or settings where discussing language attitudes may be considered taboo.

2.1.1.2 Indirect approach

In contrast to the direct approach, the indirect approach does not explicitly reveal the objectives of the researcher. "The indirect approach to studying language attitudes means using more subtle, even deceptive, techniques than simply asking straight questions about what people's attitudes are to something" (Garrett 2010:41). While there are multiple techniques applied in studies of attitudes in general, research in language attitudes is mainly comprised of two guise techniques, in which respondents are asked to evaluate a recording of a speaker. These two techniques, namely the matched-guise technique (MGT) and the verbal-guise technique (VGT), are further described below.

MGT uses audio recordings of only one speaker who reads out texts in two or more varieties or accents. By only employing a single speaker, the researcher makes sure that the voice attributes are equal in each recording. Thus, the MGT controls factors such as quality of voice, content of the passage read, and personality of the speaker. Though MGT is a clever design to investigate language attitudes, there are some drawbacks to consider. Garrett (2010:57–59) lists some important questions to address. Firstly, there is the question of saliency. Making respondents listen to the same passage of text being read multiple times may highlight language variations and make respondents more salient. The accent-authenticity question brings to focus the notion whether the authenticity of varieties is truly representative, given that features such as intonation and speech rate are often held constant to focus more on other specific variables. Another important question is the mimicking-authenticity question. Preston (1996:65) found that many inaccuracies may occur when people are asked to mimic accents.

VGT uses several different speakers reading the same passage of text to represent different accents or varieties. Arguably, the use of the VGT leads to more authenticity. However, it also enacts other factors such as quality of voice, speed, intonation etc., which may influence the answers of respondents. Additionally, the indirect nature of the technique may lead to confusion or misinterpretation of responses. Garrett (2010:57) refers to this as the question of perception. Furthermore, questions containing loaded words should be avoided. Loaded words are words that carry positive or negative connotations, such as terms like: *Nazi*, *bosses*, *healthy*, and *natural* (Oppenheim 1992:130 &137). However, loaded words must also be considered in context. For instance, some words may be slanted less by individual words, but more so in an overall content. An example could be the word 'important' in: "Do you think grammar is important when assessing students?" As a result, using loaded or slanted words may skew the results, causing the respondents to answer in a certain way (Garrett 2010:43).

At the same time, the indirect approach also has some major strengths with regard to studying language attitudes. Firstly, it is less susceptible to the social desirability bias, considering that respondents to do not realize that the questions are aimed at eliciting their private attitudes (Ryan & Giles 1982:204). Guaranteeing anonymity to respondents may also reduce the risk of providing socially desirable answers (Garrett 2010:45). Moreover, the method allows for a more authentic listening experience, as different readers speak in their native accents or dialects.

2.2 Language attitudes in Norwegian classrooms

As briefly mentioned in section 1.3, there have been many attempts to investigate language attitudes both in a Norwegian, European, and international context. The following section provides an overview of some of the most relevant previous studies with similar topics.

Bøhn and Hansen (2017) investigated EFL teachers' views of assessment of pronunciation in Norwegian upper secondary schools. They found that teachers were largely oriented towards the importance of intelligibility. At the same time, teachers disagreed on the relevance of nativeness. In other words, the results showed that teachers' attitudes differed with regards to whether a native variety of spoken English was important when assessing and grading students.

Rindal (2010; 2013; 2014) has made considerable contributions to the studies of attitudes towards spoken English among Norwegian students. While Rindal mostly focuses on student perception, her studies may provide valuable insight into the situation in Norway today. Investigating attitudes towards American and British varieties of English among young learners, Rindal (2010; 2013; 2014) found that BrE was considered to be the most prestigious variety, and that it was the preferred model of pronunciation. Rindal and Piercy (2013) found that 75% of students responded that they aimed for a native accent, with the majority aiming for an AmE variety. Interestingly, none of the respondents aimed for a Norwegian English accent. Thus, it seems clear that students consider some varieties of English to be less appropriate than other varieties. These results may paint a picture of the general perceptions of English in Norwegian classrooms. Furthemore, Rindal (2014) investigated attitudes and social evaluations of L2 pronunciation. The study employed both a verbal guise technique and a matched guise technique (see section 2.1.1 for more information). Rindal found that the same female speaker was evaluated significantly higher when speaking in a standardized English accent, compared to a Scottish English accent. Thus, the results suggests that a standardized variety of BrE is preferred.

Similarly, Ladegaard (2006) investigated 96 EFL learners in Denmark by employing a verbal guise test (see section 2.1.1.2). The aim of the study was to see whether learners rated different accents of English differently by measuring attractiveness, solidarity, and status. The results showed that the BrE speaker (Received Pronunciation, RP) was favorably rated on all dimensions, compared to the other accents.

Tveisme (2021) investigated English teachers' attitudes towards learning, teaching, and use of oral English in Norwegian lower secondary schools. The study focuses on speaker

norms and the results show that teachers report appreciation towards a communicative approach when teaching English. However, some teachers still reveal considerable support for speaker norm statements. Furthermore, the results interestingly showed that while teachers still to a large degree support speaker norms, this tendency seemed even more proficient among teachers who reported to be older and more experienced. In conclusion, Tveisme found that there still seem to be some challenges when it comes to teachers assessing students based on communicative skills, rather than on nativeness.

Skuterud (2020) studied attitudes towards non-native speakers of English among both students and teachers in Norwegian upper secondary schools. The results showed that students rated the accent most similar to their own (Swedish English) the lowest. Rather, students reported they preferred to speak with an American accent due to external influence from movies and such, while they preferred to listen to BrE as this was considered to be more prestigious. The results from the teacher survey showed that teachers mostly use AmE or BrE themselves when teaching. Also, teachers reported that they only correct their students when they hear a wrong use of words or grammatical errors, rather than upon hearing a non-native pronunciation.

Hopland (2016) investigated attitudes among both teachers and students with regards to different varieties of spoken English in upper secondary school. Results showed that both groups valued communicative skills as most important when learning the English language. However, the results also showed that the majority of students (70%) preferred native-like varieties of English, such as AmE or BrE, rather than non-native ones. Norwegian English, as well as other geographically marked accents, were considered least appropriate amongst the students. Another interesting finding was that teachers also indicated that they would like students to sound more native-like when speaking English.

Sannes (2013) investigated both students' and teachers' views and attitudes regarding different varieties of English, as well as investigating the representation of said varieties in English textbooks in English teaching. She found that, though there are more varieties of English present in the textbook materials than previously, BrE and AmE are still the dominant varieties used. Sannes also found that 47,9% of students aimed for a native accent, and that students portrayed negative reactions towards English with a strong Norwegian accent.

2.3 The English subject curricula

One of the main aims of the present thesis is to investigate whether teachers' language attitudes affect the assessment of oral competence amongst students. Thus, it is valuable to look at the relevant topic in the present and previous curricula of the English subject in Norway. The English subject curricula have seen many changes over the course of the last six decades. Arguably, a majority of those teaching English in Norwegian upper secondary schools today have been a part of this evolvement. Thus, it seems reasonable to think that they may be influenced by previous paradigms, if not as a teacher, then certainly as students themselves. Consequently, a brief historical overview of previous curricula in the English subject seems necessary. This section will provide insight into the curricula from 1974 until today, mainly emphasizing to which degree the curriculum addresses speaker norms and assessment criteria of oral skills.

2.3.1 An overview of previous curricula

Mønsterplanen of 1974 (M74) quite distinctively states that students should aim to speak with an English Standard Pronunciation (149). However, common features of American pronunciation are also mentioned as useful knowledge for students (149). Interestingly, the curriculum also states that "it is valuable that students may sometimes listen to speakers that are characteristic of countries in which English is a second language" (149, my translation). Thus, the elevation of BrE is emphasized by stating that students should only occasionally be exposed to non-native varieties. In short, BrE is clearly seen as the golden standard for pronunciation and oral skills in M74. The *Mønsterplan* of 1987 (M87) somewhat shifts its focus with regard to the English subject. Now, students are expected to learn more about "the English-speaking world". "Students should learn where English is the first language, common language, and a third language […] They should acquire knowledge of societies in which English is used, both in Norway and in the rest of the world" (207, my translation). However, the curriculum still highlights BrE and AmE, stating that "students should learn to use a normalized variety [of them]" (210, my translation). In summary, it is evident that while there seems to be a small shift in speaker norms, the emphasis on a native like way of speaking is still present.

Reform 94 (R94) introduced a major change to the system of upper secondary schools in Norway, as, for the first time, all students were given a statutory right to attend upper secondary school. The English subject curriculum also saw some considerable alterations

compared to M87. While R94 saw an increasing emphasis on communicative competence, speaker norms were arguably just as present:

> The educational aim for the students is to achieve a high degree of communicative competence. Optimal communicative competence in English as a foreign language includes being able to understand authentic English in all types of authentic communication, and being able to apply correct and idiomatic English in all types of situations. However, in Norwegian education, the goal must necessarily be set lower than optimal competence (57, my translation).

This quote illustrates an impression that Norwegian students cannot expect to express themselves in an authentic or native-like manner, in other words indicating that Norwegian English must be seen as less desirable than native varieties of English. Furthermore, R94 does not specify what is meant by "correct and idiomatic English", or by "optimal communicative competence". The most relevant competence aim with regards to oral skills states that students should be able to "acquire a clear and proper pronunciation, and enough knowledge about English rules of pronunciation to achieve it" (52, my translation). Looking at assessment criteria, the most relevant criteria state that teachers should assess "to what degree the student is able to master correct grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation (linguistic competence)" (57, my translation). Again, neither the competence aim, nor the assessment criteria, is further explained in the curriculum. Thus, it is open to interpretation as to what linguistic competence entails. Furthermore, there is a significant focus on Great Britain and USA throughout R94, whilst other English-speaking countries are not specified. This focus may also be seen as how BrE and AmE still dominated in the English subject.

In 1997, another curriculum for lower-secondary school was implemented (L97). While this thesis focuses on upper-secondary schools, some of the most important features of the English subject curriculum in L97 will be briefly mentioned. Perhaps the most important change was an increased focus on ability to detect different varieties of English. Furthermore, L97 does not mention Great Britain, nor USA. Instead, the curriculum refers to all English-speaking countries as one. Moving on, another new version of the curriculum was launched in 2006. However, given that the curriculum was revised in 2010 and 2013 accordingly, this curriculum will henceforth be referred to as LK06/13. There are some noticeably alterations made to this curriculum. Firstly, the English subject curriculum (ENG-03) was categorized into four subject areas: 1) language learning, 2) oral communication, 3) written communication, and 4) culture, society, and literature. In addition to this, five basic skills are also listed: 1) oral skills, 2) writing, 3) reading, 4) numeracy, and 5) digital skills. Neither the

description of oral communication as a subject area nor the description of oral skills as basic skills mentions any preferred model of pronunciation. Furthermore, there is only one competence aim that somewhat linguistically addresses ways of speaking: "The aims of the training are to enable the apprentice to use patterns for pronunciation, intonation, word inflection and various types of sentences in communication" (LK06/13). Again, what is meant by patterns of pronunciation and intonation remains unspecified. Lastly, and in stark contrast to the previous curricula, neither Great Britain nor USA is explicitly mentioned in the curriculum. Evidently, there seems to be a shift away from nativeness and speaker norms. Thus, LK06/13 allows for greater freedom and interpretation as to what proficient oral communication truly entails.

2.3.2 The current curriculum – LK20

The Knowledge Promotion (LK20) has just recently been fully implemented in Norwegian schools. The new English subject curriculum (ENG01-04) includes a core curriculum, three core elements, four basic skulls, and multiple specific learning aims connected to the subject. The core curriculum consists of central values and principles for primary and secondary education and is "in its entirety the foundation for the teaching and training, where the different sections are closely linked and are to be used together" (LK20). Thus, the core curriculum serves as a foundation in all subjects. Moreover, ENG01-04 consist of three core elements specific to the subject. These are: communication, language learning, and working with texts in English. What was listed as five basic skills in the preceding English curriculum has been reduced to four, namely 1) oral skills, 2) writing, 3) reading, and 4) digital skills. Oral skills are further described as follows:

> Oral skills in English refers to creating meaning through listening, talking and engaging in conversation. This means presenting information, adapting the language to the purpose, the receiver and the situation and choosing suitable strategies. Developing oral skills in English means using the spoken language gradually more accurately and with more nuances in order to communicate on different topics in formal and informal situations with a variety of receivers with varying linguistic backgrounds (ENG01-04, 4)

Remarkably, there are no mentions of or references to any preferred way of speaking. Nor is there any clear focus on Great Britain and USA. Instead, ENG01-04 enhances the English subject's focus and emphasis on communicative skills, rather than on pronunciation or speaker norms. This tendency is also evident in the subject-specific competence aims. There

is a total of seventeen competence aims in ENG01-04. However, I will only focus on those relevant to the present study. Thus, there are only four competence aims that directly address the ability to speak and communicate. ENG01-04 (12) states that students are expected to be able to:

> 1) use pronunciation patterns in communication
> 2) listen to, understand, and use academic language in working on one's own oral and written texts
> 3) express himself or herself in a nuanced and precise manner with fluency and coherence, using idiomatic expressions and varied sentence structures adapted to the purpose, receiver, and situation
> 4) explain the reasoning of others and use and follow up input from others during conversations and discussions on various topics

Though the abovementioned competence aims all address orality, none of them say anything about what this entails or how this should be developed or assessed. Such wide definitions of competence aims must be considered as a notable change compared to the preceding curricula. For instance, while LK06/13 provides specific examples of what should be taught, LK20 gives little detailed instructions for the teachers. Thus, the teachers are given a substantial freedom of choice with regards to both methods and approaches as well as teaching and assessment than before. The consequences of such freedom may be a discrepancy in practices in Norwegian classrooms, as some teachers may interpret and value certain aspects of competence, while others may interpret and value entirely different traits.

2.4 The Council of Europe

When looking at the Norwegian curricula, it is natural to also address the Council of Europe and the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR). The Council of Europe was established as an international organization in 1949 and has since initiated the CEFR in 2001. The CEFR is a guideline used to describe language proficiency levels and is applied widely across Europe and beyond. According to the Council of Europe (2022), the CEFR was developed to:

> "[…] provide a shared basis for reflection and communication among the different partners in the field, including those involved in teacher education and in the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, textbooks, examinations, etc., across the member states of the Council of Europe." (Council of Europe 2022)

Since its introduction, the CEFR has had a significant influence on language curricula in Norway and has become an important reference document for all foreign language education in Norway (Skulstad 2020; Utdanningsdirektoratet 2021). The 'Kunnskapsgrunnslag i engelsk' (The Knowledge Base in English, my translation) is a document that provides a basis and elaboration of quality criteria in a digital guide that the Directorate of Education has developed to help in the work of assessing and choosing learning materials. Throughout the document, the CEFR is referred to a numerous amount of times and is clearly one of the main pillars behind the guide.

Today, the CEFR is used to assess language proficiency and to provide a common framework for language teaching and learning. The CEFR is based on six levels of proficiency, regrouped into three levels: basic users (A1 and A2), independent users (B1 and B2), and proficient users (C1 to C2) (Council of Europe 2022). Each level is described in terms of the learner's ability to understand and use the language in various contexts. Moreover, the framework provides detailed description of language skills in terms of three main categories: 1) 'language use', 2) 'language knowledge', and 3) 'language skills and strategies' (Council of Europe 2022).

In terms of 'language use', the CEFR provides descriptions of various communicative functions of the language, including socializing, acquiring information, expressing opinions, and negotiating. Furthermore, the framework states that language use cannot be seen as knowledge of vocabulary and structure in isolation, but also encapsulated the ability to employ the language appropriately and effectively in different contexts (Council of Europe 2022). Furthermore, the framework emphasizes that 'language use' cannot be separated from 'language knowledge'. In effect, this means that speakers must be able to use their knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation in order to communicate effectively. Lastly, the term *language skills and strategies* refers to practical abilities and knowledge of how to use the language effectively. This does not only involve linguistic knowledge, but also knowledge of cultural norms and conventions (Council of Europe 2022).

In connection to the present thesis, it is interesting to look at the levels of proficiency provided by the CEFR to see whether these are reflected in the LK20. Harding (2021:16) states that the CEFR scales "have served as a basis for rating scale development". Especially interesting for the present thesis is the reference levels of 'Qualitative aspects of spoken language use' (Council of Europe 2022). These references were designed to assess spoken performances. The description of the highest level of proficiency (C2) is presented in Table 1.

Table 2.1: Qualitative aspects of spoken language use (CEFR 3.3)

	Range	**Accuracy**	**Fluency**	**Interaction**	**Coherence**
C2	Shows great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to convey finer shades of meaning precisely, to give emphasis, to differentiate and to eliminate ambiguity. Also has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms	Maintains consistent grammatical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged (e.g., in forward planning, in monitoring others' reactions).	Can express him/herself spontaneously at length with a natural colloquial flow, avoiding or backtracking around any difficulty so smoothly that the interlocutor is hardly aware of it.	Can interact with ease and skill, picking up and using non-verbal and intonational cues apparently effortlessly. Can interweave his/her contribution into the joint discourse with fully natural turntaking, referencing, allusion making etc.	Can create coherent and cohesive discourse making full and appropriate use of a variety of organisational patterns and a wide range of connectors and other cohesive devices.

The English subject curriculum addresses some of the same aspects as the proficiency level of C2 (see section 2.3.2). Arguably, communicative abilities, fluency, and interaction with others are points undoubtedly emphasized in both the description of C2, and in the ENG01-04. For instance, ENG01-04 states that students should be able to "express himself or herself in a nuanced and precise manner with fluency and coherence, using idiomatic expressions and varied sentence structures adapted to the purpose, receiver and situation" and "explain the reasoning of others and use and follow up input from others […]" (12). Similar descriptions can be found in both the description of fluency and interaction. However, while the qualitative aspects of spoken language use fail to mention anything about pronunciation, the English subject curriculum specifically states that students should use pronunciation patterns in communication. This omission of references to pronunciation in Table 2.1 may be due to the fact that the CEFR has an increased focus on intelligibility, rather than accents (e.g the native speaker norm). This shift in emphasis is clear in the CEFR Companion Volume:

> In language teaching, the phonological control of an idealised native speaker has traditionally been seen as the target, with accent being seen as a marker of poor phonological control. The focus on accent and on accuracy instead of on intelligibility has been detrimental to the development of the teaching of pronunciation. Idealised models that ignore the retention of accent lack consideration for context, sociolinguistic aspects and learners' needs. The current scale seemed to reinforce such views and for this reason, the scale was redeveloped from scratch. (Council of Europe 2018:134)

Thus, it is evident that the CEFR explicitly attempts to avoid the traditional native speaker norm in language teaching. Instead, intelligibility and communicative competence is

considered of higher importance. The same shift in emphasis is also evident in the English subject curriculum. The 'Kunnskapsgrunnlag i engelsk' (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2021) clearly states that:

> The curriculum does not provide guidelines for the students to strive for a certain standard of spoken language. Nevertheless, research shows that the native speaker norm, which prevailed for a long time in Norwegian schools, still affects both students and teachers to a certain extent (Simensen 2014). Thus, there is a need to convey to Norwegian students that it is fully acceptable to speak English with a native accent, as long as the communication works according to the purpose. (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2021:44, my translation)

The enhanced focus on communicative skills is further discussed in the following subsection.

2.5 Communicative competence

The increased focus on communicative competence is evident through the present paradigm of language teaching in Norway, namely the communicative language teaching (CLT). However, it is worth noting that the CLT approach has played a part in a Norwegian context for a long time. Skulstad (2020) states that traces of CLT can be found all the way since the national curriculum from 1987 (M87). Furthermore, communication is one of the core elements of the English subject in Norway. The Knowledge Base in English (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2021) states that the theories behind the CEFR have contributed to introducing the communicative paradigm in the approach to language learning in Norway. The following section aims to describe CLT as an approach to language teaching and to address how a communicative approach may serve as an alternative to the native speaker norm.

CLT is an approach to language teaching that emphasizes communication as the primary goal of language learning, rather than mastery of vocabulary, grammar, and linguistic competence in isolation. In relation to spoken English, CLT places emphasis on the ability to communicate successfully (Fenner 2020; Skulstad 2020). Bader & Dypedahl (2020) state that CLT is an output-based approach to language acquisition, meaning that students should learn the target language through output and collaboration with others. In other words, EFL learners must exercise the target language to learn it. In relation to this, authenticity and meaningfulness are two important terms, as both are considered important factors for promoting effective language learning (Richard & Rodgers 2014). The CLT approach argues that language learning should be meaningful and relevant to the learners' lives, and the

materials and activities used should be authentic and reflect real-world language use (Richard & Rodgers 2014).

Skulstad (2020) lists three aspects of authenticity within CLT: 1) authentic texts, 2) authentic language, and 3) authentic tasks. This entails that the use of authentic language inside the classroom should be similar to real-life language that the students may face outside of school. Thus, interaction with others through simulations, role-play, or discussions may be useful approaches to achieving authentic language in the classroom. The key is to ensure that materials and tasks used in the classroom are found relevant and engaging for the students, and that they reflect the authentic language use situations that students are likely to encounter in the real world. Thus, the CLT serves as an alternative to the traditional native speaker norm that has dominated EFL teaching previously, as it focuses on actual real-life language use rather than a 'standardized' variety.

2.6 English language varieties in Norway

Norwegians are frequently exposed to the English language on a daily basis. In relevance to the present thesis, it is valuable to address which varieties of English both teachers and students are exposed to. The following subsections present which varieties teachers meet during their teacher education and looks at the significant impact of the media.

2.6.1 Teacher education

While there are no explicit guidelines for the students to speak a certain standard of spoken English in Norway, the universities in Norway still arguably rely on the native speaker norm. For instance, The English phonetic course at the University of Bergen, which is a mandatory subject for all teacher program students of English, makes the students choose between BrE, i.e RP, or AmE. Consequently, it is reasonable to assume that most teachers educated at universities in Norway use a standard BrE variety, as RP dominates in courses related to phonetics and intonation (Sannes 2013).

Consequently, the teachers' own choices of the variety of spoken English may affect how students view different varieties of English themselves. It is no bold statement to say that being a teacher involves some authority due to his or her role, and thus, it is reasonable to assume that the teachers' choices also affect the students' choices. Hence, it is valuable to investigate teachers' language attitudes with regard to varieties of spoken English.

2.6.2 The impact of media

While students are naturally affected by the teachers they meet during their education, they are also undoubtedly affected by the vast impact of media. Norwegian students are substantially exposed to spoken English, whether it is through gaming, music, social media, television series or music. Statistics reveal that 93% of Norwegians between 9 to 79 years of age use the Internet on an average day of their lives (Statistics Norway 2022a). Moreover, statistics also show that Norwegians spend, on average, a whooping 218 minutes a day on the Internet (Statistics Norway 2021). Hence, it is clear how Norwegian students are continuously exposed to the English language on a daily basis. Furthermore, a Norwegian report on habits in language and media showed that English is by far the most common language used in video games, movies, television series, and YouTube (Barn og Medier 2020). However, there is research that suggest that such exposure to the English language affects the learning of the language.

A study by Sundqvist (2019) examined the relation between playing video games and L2 English vocabulary by comparing the range of English vocabulary of those who play video games with non-gamers' vocabulary. She found a significant correlation between playing time and test scores. In essence, it was clear that those that had been playing video games had acquired a larger vocabulary than those that had not. The results from this study suggest that the exposure to the English language outside of school also affect the language learning of students.

Considering the substantial exposure to English and the findings in the abovementioned study, it is also relevant to look at which varieties of English Norwegian students are exposed to. In her master thesis, Hopland (2016) looked at the TV guide in four of the most common TV channels in Norwegian TV. She found that there was a dominance of American English in comparison to other varieties of English. Hopland states:

> "Of all the 145 TV programmes broadcast that day, 59 were American, 56 were Norwegian, 15 were Scandinavian, 9 were British, 5 were of other native-English varieties, which in this case were 2 Australian and 3 Canadian. […] This demonstrates that native English, and especially American English, truly dominates the TV broadcasting in Norway with a total of 50 % of the TV programmes being of native English origin." (Hopland 2016:33)

In conclusion, it seems reasonable to assume that Norwegian students are constantly exposed to spoken English through a numerous amount of platforms, and that AmE largely dominates as the main variety that they are exposed to.

2.7 Assessment of oral competence

Norway's educational school system has since 2001 been based on a criterion-referenced assessment (Bøhn et al. 2018), which means that the criteria serve as a guide to what is to be assessed. Bøhn et al (2018:236). define the criteria as: "the aspects of the performance to be tested, such as 'pronunciation', 'vocabulary', and 'grammar'.". The main advantage of this is that assessment criteria may help the teachers to concretize broad competence aims. However, the core curriculum in LK20 points out that competence aims should be considered in relation to each other, not individually. Thus, it is reasonable to create assessment criteria based on a collection of competence aims (Bøhn et al. 2018). Bøhn et. al further argue that teachers must agree upon the assessment criteria which they apply when assessing students' work. In effect, this means that teachers must not only agree on which criteria to assess, but also to what degree a performance is rated as good or bad. As of today, there seems to be no clear common ground as to what features teachers should give appraisal to when it comes to assessing oral competence amongst students in Norwegian upper secondary school. Developing a shared understanding of criteria and what is to be assessed seems to be necessary in order to create just and reliable guidelines for assessment of students.

2.7.1 Student motivation in language learning

Another important aspect to consider is student motivation, as this plays a significant role in language learning (Hattie 2009; Dörnyei 2001; Dörnyei & Ushioda 2011). Research also show that teachers represent the single most decisive positive factor in the school with regard to student performance (Hattie 2009), and that the quality of instruction is a critical factor in language learning (Hattie 2009; Dörnyei & Ushioda 2011). This indicates how the teachers have a large responsibility when it comes to acquisition of EFL amongst students. Consequently, the teachers' language attitudes and whether said attitudes affect the assessment of students need to be investigated. If said attitudes result in negative feedback or assessment of students, this may prove detrimental for the students' motivation. This seems clear, as research has shown that feedback that is perceived as negative can undermine students' motivation and self-confidence (Hattie 2009; Dörnyei 2001).

2.8 Chapter summary

This chapter has aimed to provide a theoretical background and framework for the discussion of the findings presented in chapter four. Attitudes as a term has been presented, discussed,

and defined. Some relevant concepts and strategies in the research of language attitudes has also been presented and addressed. Furthermore, an overview of the present English subject curriculum, seen in the light of previous curricula, have been presented and discussed. When looking at the English subject curriculum, relevant mentions of pronunciation and oral skills have been the main focus of the section. Moreover, the influence of the Council of Europe and CEFR have been presented and discussed. Next, I have addressed some important concepts related to communicative competence, and as to how this may serve as a replacement of the traditional native speaker norm. Further, the exposure to spoken English in the teacher education, as well as through media has been addressed. Lastly, some important notions concerning assessment of oral competence and student motivation have been discussed.

3. Methodology and research design

This chapter presents the overall methodology and research design of the present study. As mentioned in the Introduction, this study aims to investigate language attitudes among teachers in Norwegian upper secondary schools, and the question whether and how these attitudes may affect the oral assessment of students. To do so, the present study applies a mixed approach, using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Section 3.1 presents and explains the methodological approaches chosen for this study. Moving on, section 3.2 covers the data collected and employed in the study. This includes information about the participants, the interviews, the VGT, the selection of speaker varieties, and the questionnaires. Furthermore, section 3.3 describes the process of collecting data material, including both the process of recruiting respondents, as well as the conduction of the interviews. Section 3.4 addresses the reliability and validity of the present study. Section 3.5 and 3.6 describes some methodological and ethical considerations accordingly. Lastly, in section 3.7, a chapter summary is provided.

3.1 Methodological approaches

This section provides an outline of methodological approaches taken to collect data in the present thesis. As this study employs both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, the following subsections give an overview of these two research types. Additionally, some of the advantages of integrating these methods will be addressed. Lastly, an explanation as to why a mixed approach was deemed advantageous is provided.

3.1.1 Quantitative and qualitative analysis: a mixed approach

Quantitative and qualitative research methods are two distinct approaches used in social sciences. According to Creswell (2018a:4) “quantitative research involves collecting and analyzing numerical data that are often expresses in tables, graphs, and charts”. Furthermore, a quantitative approach is commonly utilized to obtain numeric data from a large sample of individuals in order to make generalizations (Creswell 2012). Quantitative researchers emphasize identifying commonalities within the collected data. A vital aspect of this research method is the close relationship with statistics, as the collected data is subjected to numerous statistical analyses. Supporters of quantitative research stress that "at its best, the quantitative inquiry is systematic, rigorous, focused, and tightly controlled, involving precise

measurement and producing reliable and replicable data that is generalizable to other contexts" (Dörnyei 2007:34).

However, the use of numeric data necessitates extensive preparation and specification, as categories and values must be defined before data collection can commence to ensure a shared understanding among respondents. According to Dörnyei (2007), quantitative methods primarily deal with averages, failing to account for the individual subjective variations of respondents during data collection, and consequently, in the results, because of their tight control and focus on generalizable data. Moreover, quantitative methods are not very suitable with regards to gaining insight and understanding the reasons behind the observations, meaning that they can provide limited explanations for the findings of the research (Dörnyei 2007:25).

On the other hand, Creswell (2018a:17) explains that "qualitative research seeks to understand the meaning and experience of individuals, groups, and cultures through collection and analysis of nonnumerical data." This means that qualitative methods are more interested in an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon, often relying on smaller sample sizes. This allows the researcher to gain insight and understanding of each participant (Riazi 2016:109). Furthermore, qualitative methods also make room for adjustments and flexibility, as "no aspect of the research design is tightly prefigured and a study is kept open and fluid so that it can respond in a flexible way to new details or openings that may emerge during the process of investigation" (Dörnyei 2007:37). Thus, qualitative methods are suitable for in-depth investigations such as researching language attitudes. In general, qualitative data is analyzed by the researcher through reflection, making comparisons, and providing descriptions of what is found in the data. However, there are also some considerable drawbacks with applying qualitative methods. Since qualitative data relies on the words and subjective opinions of individuals, the outcome of the qualitative data can be considered as an interpretation of the researchers themselves. Another drawback is that since qualitative data often relies on a small participant sample, the results cannot be easily generalized to other contexts without caution (Creswell 2018a:203).

A mixed approach, also known as mixed methods research (MMR), involves combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis within a single study (Creswell & Plano Clark 2018:2). There are several reasons as to why MMR may be beneficial in research. First of all, it allows researchers to gather a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the given research topic. Thus, the researcher may gain a more complete comprehension of the research problem (Creswell & Plano Clark 2018:4). Secondly,

MMR may enhance both the validity and reliability of the research findings. The present study's validity and reliability are further discussed in section 3.4. Finally, an MMR design can help address the limitations of using only a single method. This means that quantitative data can be used to confirm or disconfirm qualitative findings, while qualitative data allows exploration of unexpected findings from a quantitative analysis.

This thesis employs a quantitative method in the form of questionnaires and the VGT. Though on a small scale, the VGT combined with a questionnaire provides quantitative data that can be compared within the sample group. Still, given the scope of this thesis and its limitations in the sample size, results from the quantitative data must still be considered as shallow. The qualitative data is collected through semi-structured interviews. This data provides a more comprehensive understanding of the research. Thus, the two types of data complement each other and provide broadened perspective of the topic at hand.

To sum up, a mixed approach can be beneficial in research as it allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the topic, enhances the validity and reliability of the findings, helps address limitation of using a single method, and allows for a flexibility while one is conducting research. Furthermore, MMR is considered the most appropriate approach in complex environments such as the classroom, because "combining several research strategies can broaden the scope of the investigation and enrich the researcher's ability to draw conclusions" (Dörnyei 2007:186). For these reasons, an MMR design was considered the best option for the present thesis.

3.2 Data material

3.2.1 The data needed to answer the research questions

This thesis aims to investigate language attitudes amongst teachers and to examine whether such attitudes may affect the oral evaluation of students. The research questions in this thesis are:

> RQ1: Do teachers rate native varieties such as British English (RP) higher than non-native varieties?
> RQ2: Do teachers find RP as more linguistically attractive than non-native varieties?
> RQ3: Are there any differences in teachers that have been teaching for a long period of time compared to those who have been teaching for a lesser period?

RQ4: Do teachers' language attitudes affect the assessment of students' oral competence?

To answers these questions, the present study employs a mixed approach. Ten teachers were recruited for digital meetings which included the VGT, questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions related to the topic. The following sections provides information about the data collected in this study.

3.2.2 Participants

As mentioned, there are ten participants in this study. All the teachers were teaching English at Norwegian upper secondary schools at the time of the interviews. Furthermore, nine of the teachers were teaching in general studies, thereof three of them teaching in both general and vocational studies. One teacher was only teaching in vocational studies. However, since there is no significant difference in the competence aims related to oral competence in the curriculum for general studies and vocational studies, this study does not distinguish between general or vocational studies. Moving on, eight of the teachers were teaching in Western Norway, while two teachers were teaching in Eastern Norway. Since the English subject curriculum is the same across all of Norway, geographical factors such as these were considered insignificant. Five teachers were male, and five were female. An overview of the general information about the teachers is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Overview of participant information

Teacher #ID	***Age***	***Years teaching English***	***GS*/VS****	***Education*****
#1	50	20	GS	Master +
#2	35	10	GS	Master +
#3	33	7	GS	Master
#4	42	13	GS/VS	Master +
#5	41	15	GS/VS	Master +
#6	30	4	VS/GS	Master +
#7	30	5	VS	Adjunkt****
#8	31	6	GS	Master +
#9	26	1	GS	Master +
#10	26	1	GS	Master +

** General studies*
*** Vocational studies*
**** Additional education is marked with +.*
***** A teacher with a four-year education at university level.*

3.2.3 The semi-structured interviews

The present study employed semi-structured interviews as a data collection method. Kvale and Brinkmann (2015:27) state that semi-structured interviews aim to understand the subject's own perspective on everyday themes. Thus, this approach was considered suitable for this study. Furthermore, this type of interview allows for a balance of structure and flexibility, enabling the possibility to explore the respondents' views and experiences regarding spoken English, communicative competence, assessment, and their own views on teaching methods. Also, pre-prepared open-ended questions encourage high response rates and allow the respondents to answer freely. The interviewer takes a passive role in the interview, allowing the respondents to share in-depth information. Moreover, the interaction between interviewer and interviewee makes it easier for the researcher to follow up on interesting leads and clarification of questions (Dörnyei 2007). For these reasons, a semi-structured interview was chosen because it allows for a balance of flexibility and structure when investigating attitudes towards different varieties of spoken English, as well as views on teaching methods and assessment of students.

An interview guide was designed in advance before the conduction of interviews (Appendix 1). The interview guide contains questions exploring four topics accordingly: 1) background information, 2) speaker preferences, 3) teaching methods, and 4) oral assessment. To give an example, within the topic of speaker preferences, the respondents were asked what variety of spoken English they use themselves, and whether they preferred students to use one

particular speaker variety. With regards to oral assessment, the respondents were asked how they assess oral competence, what they look for and why so, and how they emphasize the relationship between communication and pronunciation.

3.2.4 Verbal guise technique

The VGT was considered to be the best approach in this study for several reasons. Firstly, finding a single speaker that could provide satisfactory representation of several varieties of spoken English was considered very difficult, if not impossible. Thus, employing an MGT as an approach was discarded. Secondly, employing the VGT leads to greater authenticity in the spoken recordings, making the respondents' listening experiences as similar to everyday life in the Norwegian classroom as possible. Thirdly, the use of the VGT is less susceptible to the social desirability bias, as the respondents are unaware of the study's intentions (Ryan & Giles 1982:204). Lastly, and as a consequence of what has just been stated above, the VGT is considered a more objective measurement of language attitudes compared to other approaches (Lippi-Green 2012:33).

3.2.5 Choice of varieties

The recordings facilitated in this study were all carefully selected from the International Dialects of English Archive (IDEA, www.dialectsarchive.com). All samples consist of different speakers reading the two first paragraphs of the English text entitled "Comma Gets a Cure" (Honorof, McCullough, and Sommerville 2000). The text is available in Appendix 2. Consequently, the content of all audio samples is the same, though they differ largely in accent, pronunciation, and tempo. The duration of the recordings varies from fifty-six seconds, to one minute and twenty-five seconds. Furthermore, an attempt was made to include speakers that represent typical features in pronunciation of that of people from the same country. At the same time, recordings that were too prominently read by second language speakers were excluded from this study. In conclusion, the recordings selected in this study were considered to be the best representations of the different countries or accents, whilst still being able to communicate well and effectively.

In the process of selecting these varieties, I tried to exclude irrelevant factors such as gender and age. Thus, all speakers are female and mostly close in age. This was done to rule out any possible bias towards male speakers. The English speaker's age when recording the audio sample is not stated, but one may assume that she is somewhat older than the other speakers due to the fact that she was born considerably earlier than the others. However, as

this recording was considered the best representation of Received Pronunciation (RP), the English speaker was included. Furthermore, there are a total of four speakers from Europe, while one is from India, and the last from Iran. The speakers from Europe are from England, Norway, Poland, and Germany. All the recordings were selected to represent different minorities that are highly prevalent in the Norwegian classrooms in upper secondary schools (Statistics Norway 2022b).

3.2.5.1 England 63 (00:13-01:12)

The English speaker is a female born in 1954. The speaker was born in East Asia, but attended boarding school in Surrey, England, at age 11. Also, her father and mother were born in Cornwall, England, and Berkshire, England, accordingly. The subject herself explains that she led a fairly nomadic life until the age of 30, thus never acquiring a specific dialect of her own. She also explains that she felt compelled to record her own accent, as she felt that many of those who attempted to imitate RP often made it too 'plummy' and nasal.

England 63 is a speaker with an RP accent. The speaker has some typical features of RP. Firstly, the speaker does not pronounce the /r/ after a vowel, meaning that words such as *tower*, *bird*, and *work* are pronounced like /ˈtaʊə/, /bɜːd/, and /wɜːk/ respectively (Roach 2009, 237). Secondly, the /j/ is pronounced as a glide [j] in words such as *duke* and *yellow* (Reed & Levis 2018:276). Thirdly, the speaker pronounces the word *nearer* with a diphthong [ɪə], which is considered as a typical feature of RP speakers (Roach 2009:239). In general, this speaker was considered as representative of RP considering that the pronunciation includes some typical features of RP, and because of the overall impression of confidence that the speaker provides by reading in a firm and fluent matter.

3.2.5.2 Norway 2 (00:12-01:21)

The Norwegian speaker is a 32-year-old female born in 1979. She was born in Stavanger but moved to Oslo at the age of four. She has also spent one year in New York and had, at the time of the recording, been living in Melbourne, Australia, for three months.

Norway 2 was considered to be a representative sample of Norwegian speakers. Most prominently, the speaker uses rising intonation at the end of declarative statements throughout the entire reading (Kristoffersen 2007). Furthermore, another distinctive feature is that the speaker pronounces *vet* as /wet/, using a bilabial approximant instead of a labiodental fricative (Gimson 1980:153). In general, Norway 2 reads with confidence, though she mispronounces

and stutters occasionally. For instance, she reads *porridged* rather than *porridge*, without correcting herself. Later, the speaker does correct herself when pronouncing *except* instead of *expect*. However, said mispronunciations does not affect the overall efficiency of the speaker's communication.

3.2.5.3 Poland 9 (00:12-01:08)

The Polish speaker is a 29-year-old female born in 1984. She was born and raised in Poland and learned English for 11 years during her education. Unfortunately, IDEA provides no more background information about this speaker. The speaker was still included as it was considered the best representation of a Polish variety of English.

Poland 9 represents some distinct typical features of Polish speakers when speaking English. What stands out the most is the relatively flat intonation pattern which this speaker uses. Collin and Mees (2013:167) states that some Polish speakers have difficulties with producing rising and falling patterns of English intonation, which may make their speech sound monotone. Secondly, since the Polish language does not have the "th" sounds (/θ/ and /ð/) that are present in English, they often replace them with alveolar stops /t/ or /d/ (Wells 1982:460). This is especially evident in words such as *that* (/dat/) and *then* (/den/). However, the speaker does produce /ð/ in *there* and *this*. Thus, this phonetic feature is not especially prominent with this speaker. Thirdly, it is worth noting that this audio recording is the shortest of the six, meaning that this speaker reads and speaks quite rapidly compared to the others. Still, like the others, the speaker communicates well and was considered to be a fair representation of Polish speakers.

3.2.5.4 India 2 (00:11-01:10)

The Indian speaker is a 24-year-old female born in 1977. She was born and raised in Madras, India. She speaks Tamil with her family and relatives, but has mostly been speaking English at school and work. In kindergarten, she was forbidden to speak any other language than English. The speaker thinks that she expresses herself better in English.

India 2 represents a few typical phonetic features of Indian speakers when speaking English. Most prominently, she substitutes the English /r/ with a retroflex /r/, something that is very common amongst Indian speakers (Gargesh 2016). This feature is found in words such as *territory* and *porridge*. Gargesh also states that Indian speakers typically substitute the voiceless dental fricative /θ/ and the voiced dental fricative /ð/ with alveolar stops /t/ and /d/

respectively. Said feature is not particularly prominent with this speaker, as she mostly produces the dental fricative variants when reading. However, sometimes, especially when pronouncing the word *the*, the pronunciation leans more towards an alveolar stop /d/. In general, she reads in a high tempo, though mostly with great efficiency and fluency. However, it is worth noting that she misreads *had* as *has*, as well as mispronouncing the words *porridge* as *porridged*, and *mouth* as *mouse*. Still, the speaker communicates confidently.

3.2.5.5 Iran 10 (00:12-01:37)

The Iranian speaker is a 37-year-old female born in 1968. She was born and raised in Tehran, Iran. She is an undergraduate in graphic design, and also has a graduate degree from California State University in the United States. At the time of this recording, the subject had been living in the United States for an unspecified period of time.

The Iranian speaker is arguably the least proficient reader as heard in the recordings selected. Firstly, whilst reading, she omits to read articles, such as *a* and *the*, multiple times. She also does not read the conjunction *and* on two occasions. For instance, when reading the following line: "She ate a bowl of porridge, checked herself in the mirror and washed her face in a hurry", she instead reads: "She ate a bowl of porridge, check herself in mirror and washed her face in hurry". Secondly, the pronunciation of certain words is incorrect. Some examples are *distract* for *district*, and *suberb* for *superb*. Wells (1982:239) states that Iranian speakers often struggle with the distinction between /p/ and /b/. Another typical feature exhibited is the replacement of the voiced dental fricative /ð/ with alveolar stop /d/ (Wells 1982:111). This can be heard when pronouncing words such as *that* and *this*. In summary, the Iranian speaker was selected as she represents some typical features of Iranian English, but still communicates effectively. Lastly, it is worth noting that this recording is the longest one of all selections. This recording lasts for one minute and twenty-five seconds, while the shortest one (Poland 9) lasts fifty-six seconds.

3.2.5.6 Germany 9 (00:11-01:13)

The German speaker is a 28-year-old female born in 1978. Her father is German, and her mother is Catalan. She was born in Barcelona, Spain, and was enrolled in a German school, in which she was taught English by German natives. Later, she has lived in Brussels, Belgium; and Boston, United States for a year each, and then in Oxford, England. Her German education largely explains her German accent when speaking English.

The German speaker reads fluently and confidently, and there are few traits that give away that this is a non-native speaker. However, the pronunciation of the voiced dental fricative /ð/ is sometimes replaced by the alveolar stop /d/, especially prominent in the pronunciation of "that" and "then", which is common amongst German speakers of English (Sönning 2020). However, in words such as "there" and "the", the speaker seems to pronounce the words with /ð/. In essence, there are few features that reveal the speaker's linguistic background. This is interesting, as this recording could serve as a control in this study.

3.2.4 The questionnaires

This section describes the questionnaires used in the present study. The questionnaire template is attached in Appendix 3. Some advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaires are also addressed.

There was a total of six questionnaires, each connected to an audio recording which the respondents had listened to. The questionnaire employs a semantic differential scale, in which respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with different statements. The questionnaire consisted of a total of 11 questions, in which the first was an open-ended question where respondents were asked to guess where the speaker was from. In the second question, the respondents were asked to provide an overall assessment of the speaker, mimicking the school grade scale from 1 to 6. The last nine questions were evaluative traits in which the respondents were asked to rate the speaker on a 5-point scale. When designing questionnaires in the study of language attitudes, three evaluative categories are commonly employed (Zahn & Hopper 1985). These are superiority, attractiveness, and dynamism. With this in mind, as well as looking at other previous similar studies within language attitudes (Rindal 2014; Ladegaard 1998; Rindal 2010, van der Haagen 1998), I chose nine semantically labelled scales.

However, this questionnaire omits traits of dynamism, and rather focuses on linguistic qualities, as this was deemed more relevant for the research questions. So, the respondents were asked to evaluate three linguistic-related traits (incorrect-correct, unintelligible-intelligible, ugly-beautiful), three traits related to social attractiveness (unpleasant-pleasant, dishonest-honest, boring-humorous), and three qualities related to status/competence (poorly educated-highly educated, unintelligent-intelligent, poor-rich). The traits are presented in Table 3.2. These specific traits and adjectives were also selected by looking at previous similar studies on language attitudes (Rindal 2014; Ladegaard 1998; Rindal 2010, van der

Haagen 1998). However, since the questionnaires were translated to Norwegian, some nuances of words and translations may have been altered.

Table 3.2: Overview of evaluative categories and semantically labelled scales

Linguistic traits	Social attractiveness	Status/competence
Incorrect – correct	Unpleasant – pleasant	Poorly educated – highly educated
Unintelligible – intelligible	Dishonest – honest	Unintelligent – intelligent
Ugly – beautiful	Boring – humorous	Poor – rich

The use of questionnaires was chosen as it allows the researcher to collect a large amount of data in a short amount of time, with relatively low effort and low financial cost (Dörnyei & Taguchi 2010). The questionnaires were designed digitally with the aid of Microsoft Forms. Microsoft Forms is a simple and easy-to-use platform that enables a variety of question types, such as open-ended questions, rating scales, and more. It is also accessible from anywhere with an internet connection, making it easy to distribute and collect answers. Thus, gathering information and data through questionnaires was considered the best and most efficient method. The platform of Forms is user-friendly, intuitive, and comes with a built-in data analysis tool that allow users to view, analyze, and download results. Its integration with Microsoft Excel also made it favorable for the analysis of the data. Also, Forms uses enterprise-grade security measures to ensure that the data is safe and secure. Furthermore, Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) found that questionnaires are well fitted for measuring attitudes, whilst also being a low-effort task for respondents without researcher interference. This may potentially lead to more accurate answers.

There are also some considerable drawbacks of applying questionnaires. While questionnaires are excellent for collecting quantitative data, they are limited in their ability to explore a topic in-depth because they present the respondents with fixed questions that they must answer independently, without the opportunity to discuss or clear up any possible misunderstandings with by talking to other people (Dörnyei & Taguchi 2010). Moreover, concerns about reliability and validity also require consideration when one applies questionnaires. Responses may vary greatly among individuals, for many reasons. Firstly, they might misunderstand the questions at hand; secondly, they may intentionally or unintentionally skip questions; thirdly, they might find questions unengaging and

consequently put little effort into their answers (Dörnyei & Taguchi 2010). The present study's reliability and validity are further discussed in section 3.4.

The questionnaire primarily asked questions in which respondents were instructed to give a rating on a scale from 1 to 5. A 5-point semantic differential scale was chosen as these types of scales are considered easy to answer, they are user-friendly, they reduce response burden, and take minimal time to complete (Babbie 2010). An example from the present study is presented in Figure 1:

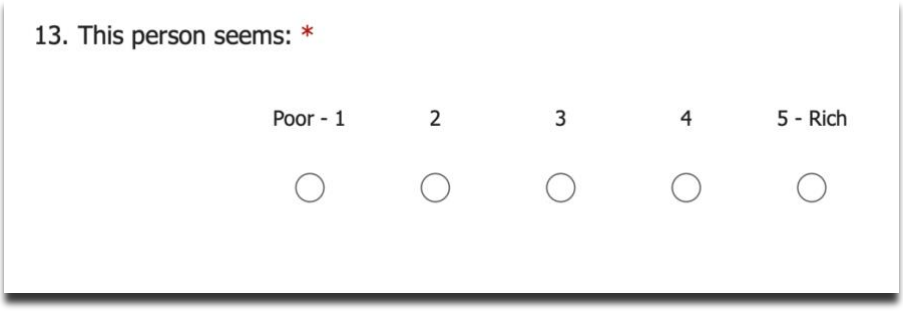


Figure 3.1: Example from the questionnaire.

The questionnaire itself was also short, minimizing the risk of respondents getting bored. Having too many points on the scale may lead to skewed results, as respondents may experience difficulty distinguishing levels of agreement (Dörnyei & Taguchi 2010). Furthermore, a middle, i.e., neutral, category, might be problematic for two reasons. Firstly, this might be seen as an easy option for respondents. Secondly, the researcher cannot know whether a neutral answer is given because the respondent holds a neither-one-way-nor-the-other attitude, or if they simply do not know (Garrett 2010:55). Both the abovementioned issues may be relevant for the question presented in Figure 1. Nevertheless, the present study chose to employ a neutral option by using a 5-point scale. By doing so, respondents were not forced to pick a side or opinion. Arguably, this may also lead to more accurate data, as when respondents are given a neutral choice, the answers they do give are generally more sincere.

Lastly, the social desirability bias may also have affected the results. While respondents were asked to give their own personal beliefs and opinions, one might still be influenced by the social desirability bias. The respondents may have understood the underlying themes of the questionnaire, causing cautiousness in providing true personal beliefs. At the same time, semantic differential scales may reduce possibilities for the social desirability bias as they tend to lend themselves more to more rapid completion than Likert scales (Garrett 2010:56).

3.3 Collection of data

3.3.1 Recruiting participants

The target group for this study are English teachers in Norwegian upper secondary schools. However, given the scope of this thesis, a selection of ten teachers was deemed suitable to provide enough data to analyze. Also, since the curriculum is the same across the country, project invitations were initially sent out to all upper secondary schools in and around Bergen. However, it quickly proved challenging to recruit teachers for interviews. While some teachers and schools never replied, others declined to participate due to an ongoing teacher strike and lack of time in general. Thus, more invitations were sent out to other selected schools in Norway. Additionally, I used my own social and professional network to get in contact with suitable participants. Eventually, ten teachers were recruited and interviewed digitally.

3.3.2 Conducting the interviews

All interviews were digitally conducted in Zoom. Zoom is a free online meeting platform that allows face-to-face interviews. Furthermore, it is a well renowned and commonly used platform that many people may be familiar with. Zoom provides high-definition audio and video quality, which allows for clear and effective communication. Also, Zoom allows for video meetings to be recorded, making it easier to transcribe the interviews in hindsight. Lastly, Zoom allows for sharing audio, which meant that I could play the audio recordings on my own computer, while the respondents listened on theirs.

The interview was divided into two parts. In the first part, the VGT and related questionnaires were answered. The second part was the semi-structured interview itself. Though I strived to mainly stick to the interview guide, some questions were skipped if the respondent had already provided a sufficient answer beforehand. The order of some questions was also altered depending on the dynamics of the discourse. At times it seemed beneficial and natural to change the pre-arranged order to keep the conversation as fluent as possible. Lastly, all interviews were conducted in Norwegian. The rationale for this decision is described in section 3.5.

As mentioned, all interviews were conducted digitally using Zoom. All meetings were scheduled through e-mails, in which the respondents were sent a video-meeting link with an associated password. The respondents were informed in advance that they would need to have a satisfactory Internet connection, and that they would need to listen to several audio

recordings. After finishing the first part of the interviews, the respondents were informed that the second part would be recorded, allowing all the interviews to be transcribed afterwards. Transcription was done immediately after all the interviews. Still, this allowed for a relaxed and communicative atmosphere during the interviews. There were few to no technical issues with conducting the interviews digitally.

3.3.3 The questionnaires

Prior to answering the questionnaires, the respondents listened to an audio recording which lasted approximately one minute. Each recording was played once. Directly after listening to an audio recording, the connected questionnaire was distributed to the respondents in the chat-function in Zoom. The respondents opened the link and answered the questionnaire as best as they could. The researcher was available to answer any questions or clarifications if the respondents needed it, though they seldom did. However, a few of the respondents did comment that some of the questions/statements were hard to answer. In that case, the researcher would encourage the respondents to answer as open-heartedly and instinctively as possible. After answering all the questions in the questionnaire, the respondents had to submit their answers before listening to the next audio recording. This process was repeated six times, until all the questionnaires had been answered. In general, there were no technical issues related to the distribution of the questionnaires, nor to the submission by the respondents.

3.4 Reliability and validity

Reliability and validity are two close-knit terms, both equally important in any research. Validity refers to "the degree to which all of the evidence points to the intended interpretation of test score for the proposed purpose" (Creswell 2012:159). In other words, it refers to the accuracy of the findings, and to whether the research examines what it intends to (Krumsvik 2014; Creswell 2018a). Consequently, the concept of validity is something that must be taken into consideration as long as the research project lasts. One must not only look at the validity of the results, but also at the different methods employed in the study. Content validity refers to the extent to which a measure accurately represents a construct (Creswell 2018a). Creswell (2018a:120) suggests many ways to ensure content validity, such as consulting experts in the field, comparing to other established measures, as well as gathering feedback from participants to determine if the measure is understandable and relevant. The questionnaire in

this study was largely based on similar previous studies within language attitudes. Furthermore, the design was compared to other established measures, whilst also leaning on the acknowledged research within the field. Lastly, the questionnaire was revised multiple times.

The present study employs both quantitative and qualitative methods. This combination of approaches, known as triangulation, enhances the overall validity of the research. The process of triangulation "involves cross-validating findings from one data source, or method, or perspective, with findings from other data sources, methods, or perspectives" (Riazi 2016:330). By studying a phenomenon through different approaches, the researcher gains a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon studied by compensating for the limitations of one method with the strengths of another (Kristiansen et al. 2005). Thus, as the present study uses both questionnaires and interviews to investigate language attitudes, this may increase the validity of the findings.

Reliability refers to whether the findings from the research are stable and consistent (Creswell 2012:159). In other words, the results should remain the same if the study was carried out again. There are some reliability issues to keep in mind in the present study. Firstly, if respondents get tired or bored, or if they misunderstand the questions at hand, this may lead to unreliable data. Secondly, one can never be certain if the respondents intentionally provide untruthful answers (Dörnyei 2007). However, this was prevented by the fact that the researcher was present while the respondents answered the questionnaire. As a result, the respondents could ask questions if something was unclear, and misunderstandings could be reduced or even prevented. Thirdly, this study employed audio recordings of English speakers similar in age and gender to avoid possible bias. However, one should consider the possibility that the inclusion of different ages or genders could have affected the results and favored different varieties. Lastly, the same goes for the respondents in this study. One cannot determine whether an older respondent group would have provided the same answers as the group in the present study. In conclusion, readers should bear in mind the limitations of this study with regards to validity and reliability.

3.5 Methodological considerations

The methods applied in the present study raise some methodological considerations. Firstly, interviews are time consuming. Therefore, due to the scope of this thesis, a limited number of respondents were recruited. Thus, the present study cannot provide generalizations among

teachers. Arguably, as this is an in-depth study seeking to investigate the beliefs and attitudes of teachers, it was necessary to limit the sample size. Conducting in-depth studies on a larger scale is beyond the scope of this thesis. Also, the process of recruiting teachers for this thesis proved more difficult than I had imagined, as it seems like many teachers are unwilling, or simply do not have the time to prioritize participation in studies as such. Thus, many of the respondents recruited for this thesis are fairly young and unexperienced. The results from this thesis might have been different if the sample was of a larger scale, or at least representative of the 'average' teacher. Still, the information collected from the respondents may prove valuable and important for further research and studies within the topic at hand.

The concept of objectivity also needs to be addressed. Objectivity is difficult to maintain, especially when it comes to interviews. The mere presence of the interviewer may influence responses given (Creswell 2018a:182). Therefore, the interviewer should strive to remain as neutral as possible. When conducting the interviews, I was well aware of my own role, trying to minimize my own influence on the respondents. To do so, I made a checklist before initiating the interviews, ensuring that the procedure for each interview was as consistent as possible. Firstly, I introduced myself and thanked the respondent for participating. Secondly, the structure and outline of the interview as a whole were presented. Lastly, I stressed that there were no right or wrong answers, and that I was sincerely interested in their own personal beliefs. During the actual interviews, I tried to stay as passive as possible, whilst still providing attentive feedback such as nodding and other gestures of acknowledgment, encouraging the interviewee to give their sincere opinions. Objectivity is also difficult to maintain in the analysis of interviews. Kvale and Brinkmann (2015:200) argue that much of the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee is lost when translating from oral to written form. Also, non-verbal communication such as the above-mentioned acknowledging gestures cannot be transcribed. Thus, transcripts should be considered as a means of interpreting and deducting meaning.

Both the questionnaires and interviews were conducted in Norwegian, as it was considered to be less constraining and more comfortable for the interviewers. This also minimized the risk of misunderstanding or misinterpretations in the questionnaires. At the same time, this also means that some nuances may have been lost in the translation from Norwegian to English.

Another limitation is that the respondents' answers may be colored by the formulation of questions in the interviews as well as in the questionnaires. Dörnyei (2007:103) states how "minor differences in how a question is formulated and framed can often produce radically

different levels of agreement or disagreement". While the present study is based on previous research, it is also to extent based on my own personal experiences and beliefs. Though I strived to keep my own attitudes as hidden as possible, readers should be aware that this may have affected the results. Furthermore, the researcher cannot know how different respondents understand words such as *rich* or *humorous*. Thus, the data collected in this study is based on the respondents' own interpretations of words.

Lastly, this study has compared a native RP speaker to several non-native speakers of English. Arguably, RP is considered by many to be the model of pronunciation in the teaching of English as a foreign language, which may have highlighted the contrasts to the other non-native varieties of English (Lippi-Green 2012:122). Still, I chose to include only one native variety, that is, RP, because I wanted to represent as many other varieties of spoken English which can be found in Norwegian classrooms as possible. Nevertheless, readers should be aware that this may affect the results of the study.

3.6 Ethical considerations

The present study requires information about individuals, meaning that government guidelines needed to be followed. Thus, prior to the execution of this study, an application to the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) needed approval. The application included an overview and outline of the structure and plan for the present study. A considerable amount of time and effort was put into planning the study, before applying to the NSD. The questionnaire, the interview guide, and information about the storing of data were subsequently approved (see Appendix 4).

Providing enough information so that participants can decide whether they wish to participate or not is essential (Riazi 2016). Therefore, before conducting any interviews, all respondents were sent a project invitation following the NSD guidelines (Appendix 5). The invitation provided general information about the study, granting anonymity, information about the handling and storing of data, and about the possibility to withdraw from the research at any time without needing to provide any reason to do so.

Moreover, ensuring anonymity was deemed paramount in this study. To ensure anonymity, any personal information about the respondents that could potentially be identifiable has been excluded from the thesis. Throughout the project, the respondents' identities were only known to me, and both video recordings and transcripts are consistently referred to in code in all written accounts. Lastly, all data has been stored in password-

protected folders on a computer needing two-factor authentication only accessible to the researcher.

3.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented the methodology and research design of the present thesis. A combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods has been applied in the form of interviews and questionnaires respectively. The combination of said methods may enhance the validity of the findings (Kristiansen et al. 2005). The data material for this study are the answers provided by ten respondents through interviews, as well as questionnaires connected to the VGT. All the respondents were working as teachers in Norwegian upper secondary schools at the time of the study's conduction. Furthermore, a description of the selected recordings for the VGT have been provided. The process of collecting data has also been described. Lastly, some issues related to validity, reliability, methodology, and ethics have been discussed.

However, the findings of this study should be considered cautiously. The present thesis aims to investigate language attitudes amongst teachers in upper secondary school, and whether said attitudes may affect the oral assessment of students. However, due to the limited sample of this study, the findings cannot be seen as representative of all Norwegian teachers. Nevertheless, the present study may hopefully provide valuable insight as a preliminary investigation of the topic at hand.

4. Results

This chapter is divided into three main sections. Section 4.1 presents and discusses the most relevant results from the questionnaires. Secondly, in Section 4.2, the results from the semi-structured interviews are presented by looking at statements and quotes in relation to the topics of the interviews. Section 4.3 is a discussion of the most relevant findings from both the questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews. This section aims to highlight how the results from the interviews correlate to the questionnaires, and also provides a comparison of the results based on the teachers' work experience.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the reader should note that since attitudes cannot be observed directly, the findings presented in this chapter must be considered as interpretations of said attitudes by the researcher himself.

4.1 Questionnaire results

In this section, the results from the questionnaires are presented (see section 3.2.4). The results are presented in the form of seven sections. Firstly, I present the data in which the respondents were asked to guess where the speaker was from. Secondly, I present the overall assessment, or grading, of the speakers' pronunciation. In the following three sections, the results are described in the form of the three semantically labeled categories employed in the questionnaires: 1) linguistic traits, 2) social attractiveness, and 3) status/competence. Next, I will investigate the third research question by comparing the results based on work experience. Lastly, I will provide an overview of the most significant and relevant findings to this thesis.

4.1.1 Identification of accents

In the first question of the questionnaire, the respondents were instructed to guess where they think the relevant speaker was from. The respondents could indicate this by naming a city, country, continent, or area. Only short answers were permitted. The following section provides an overview of the answers given to each of the six speakers. The data is mainly presented in pie charts.

4.1.1.1 Identification of England 9

The results presented in Figure 4.1 show that eight out of ten respondents guessed that the speaker was indeed from England. The last two respondents provided Europe as their answer.

The results indicate that the respondents are very familiar with the accent of the English speaker, hence feeling confident to geographically assign the speaker to England. This follows from the theory discussed in section 2.6.

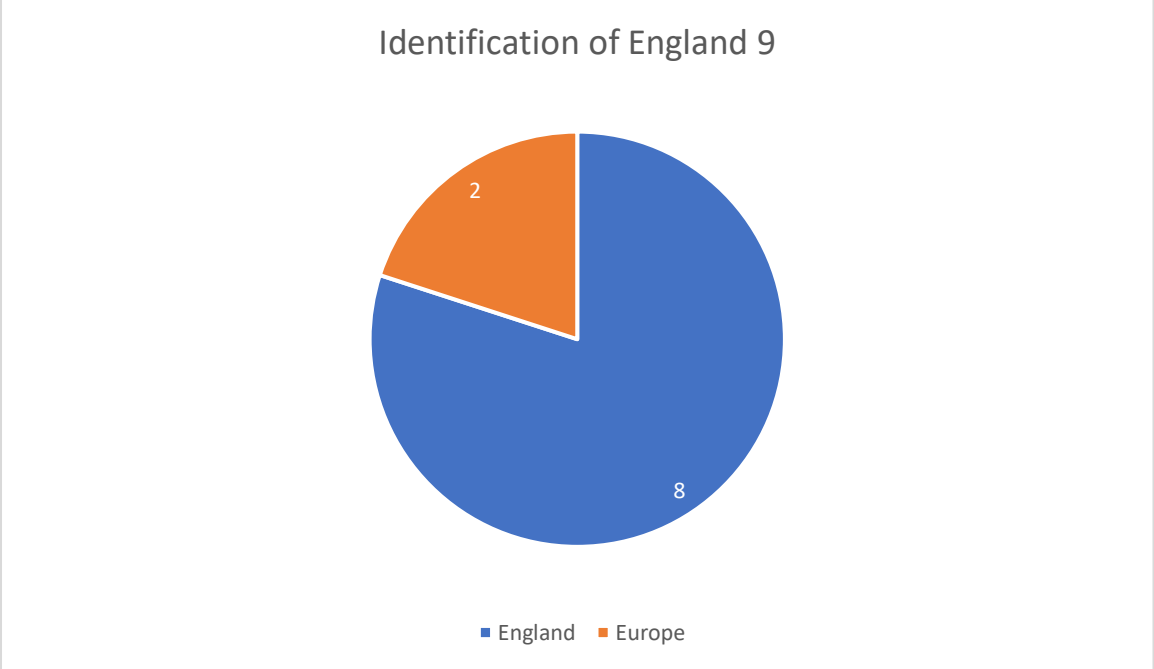


Figure 4.1: Identification of England

4.1.1.2 Identification of Norway 9

The results presented in Figure 4.2 reveal that six out of ten respondents were able to identify the Norwegian speaker correctly. However, though they are not that specific, the remaining answers may also be considered as correct, especially those that guessed that the speaker was from Scandinavia. Thus, it seems that despite the speaker having lived in both the US and Australia, the speakers' accent remains characteristic of Norwegian speakers in general. Also, it is worth noting that the respondents were more successfully specific in identifying the RP speaker compared to the Norwegian speaker. Arguably, it is reasonable to assume that the respondents, who all work as teachers, are to a large extent exposed to speakers with a Norwegian accent. Thus, it seems clear that the teachers must also be very much exposed to RP.

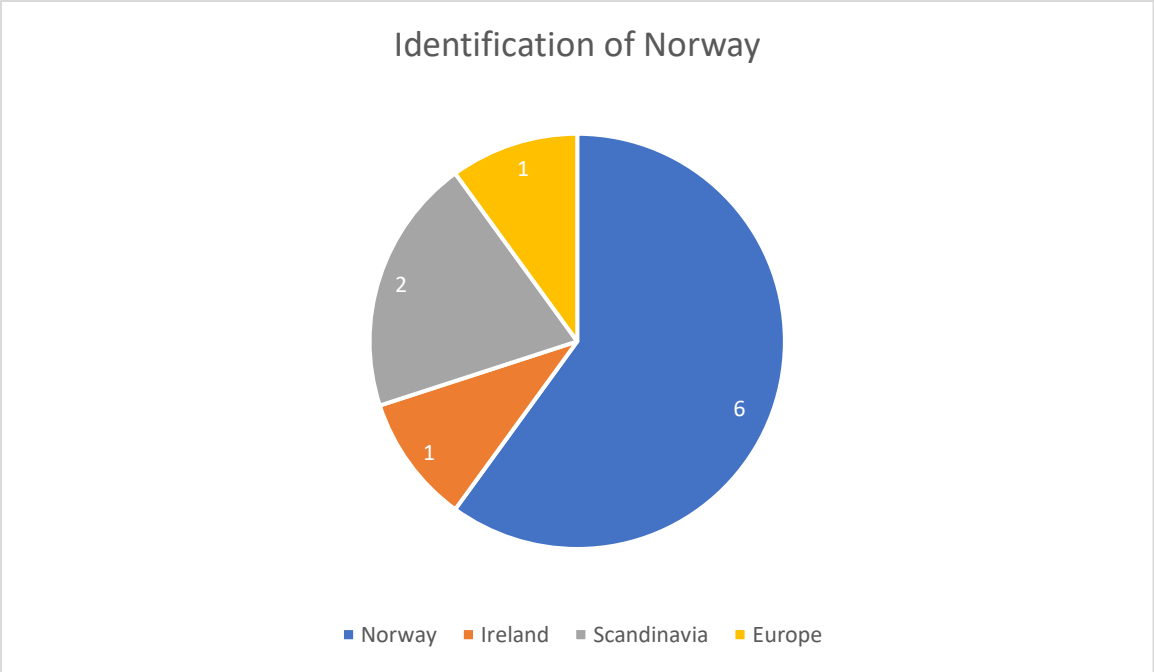


Figure 4.2: Identification of Norway

4.1.1.3 Identification of Poland 9

As to the Polish speaker, the results in Figure 4.3 show that the respondents have various ideas as to where this speaker is from. While three respondents guessed that the speaker was from Eastern Europe, only one respondent assigned their guess to Poland. It is also interesting to see that two respondents thought that the speaker was Spanish, and another two thought that she was Asian. Thus, there is a geographical spread to the answers provided, indicating that the Polish accent was hard to identify. However, as mentioned in section 3.2.5.2, IDEA provides little background information about the speaker. Hence, we cannot know for sure if there are any other factors that may have influenced the speakers' accent.

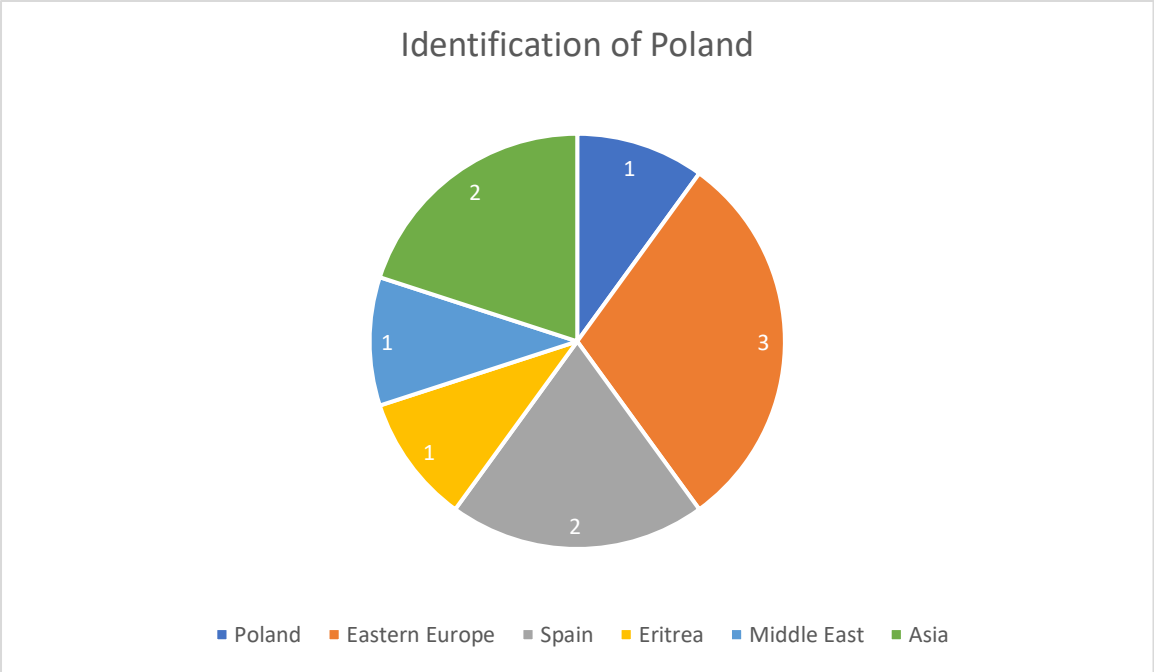


Figure 4.3: Identification of Poland

4.1.1.4 Identification of India 2

The results from the identification of the Indian speaker are interesting. Figure 4.4 shows that the majority of the respondents, i.e., four, guessed that the speaker was from Germany, despite the fact that the speaker, as far as we know, has no ties to Germany. Furthermore, three other respondents identified the speaker as Irish, British, and European. Only two respondents provided the correct answer, namely India, while one respondent answered Asia.

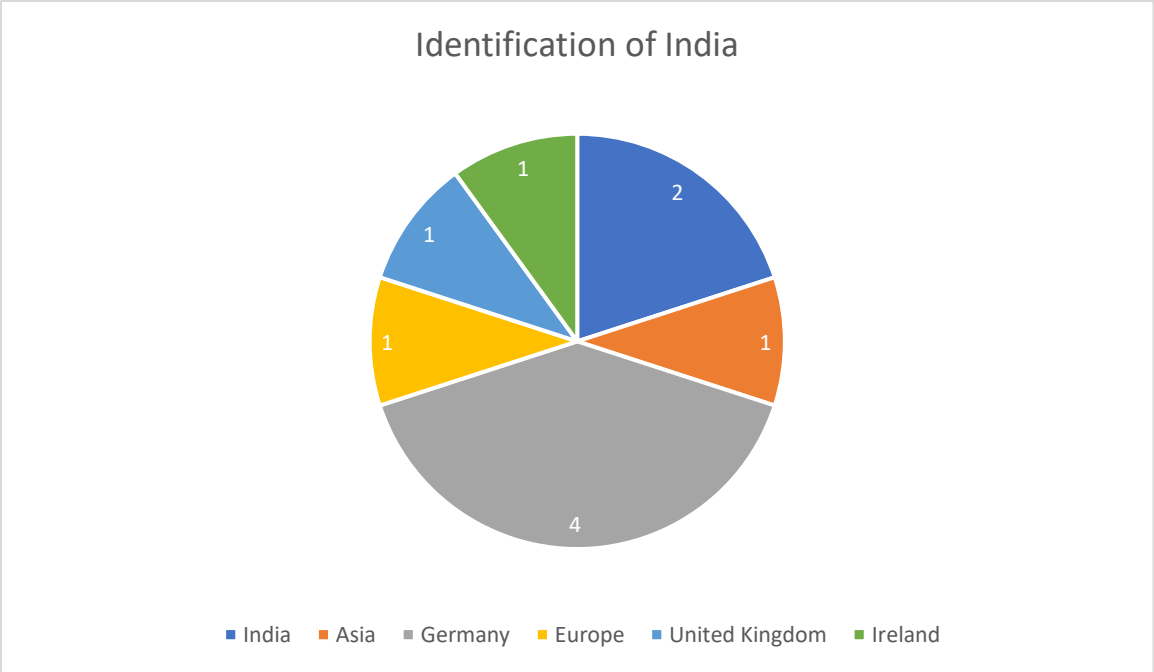


Figure 4.4: Identification of India

4.1.1.5 Identification of Iran 10

None of the respondents was able to identify the speaker's Iranian accent. However, the results presented in Figure 4.5 reveal that three of the respondents stated that the speaker was from the Middle East. Another two respondents answered Asia. Similarly, one respondent pointed to Indonesia. In comparison to the Polish speaker, there seems to be more of a rough agreement as to where this speaker's accent is geographically based, despite the speaker having lived in the US for an unspecified period of time.

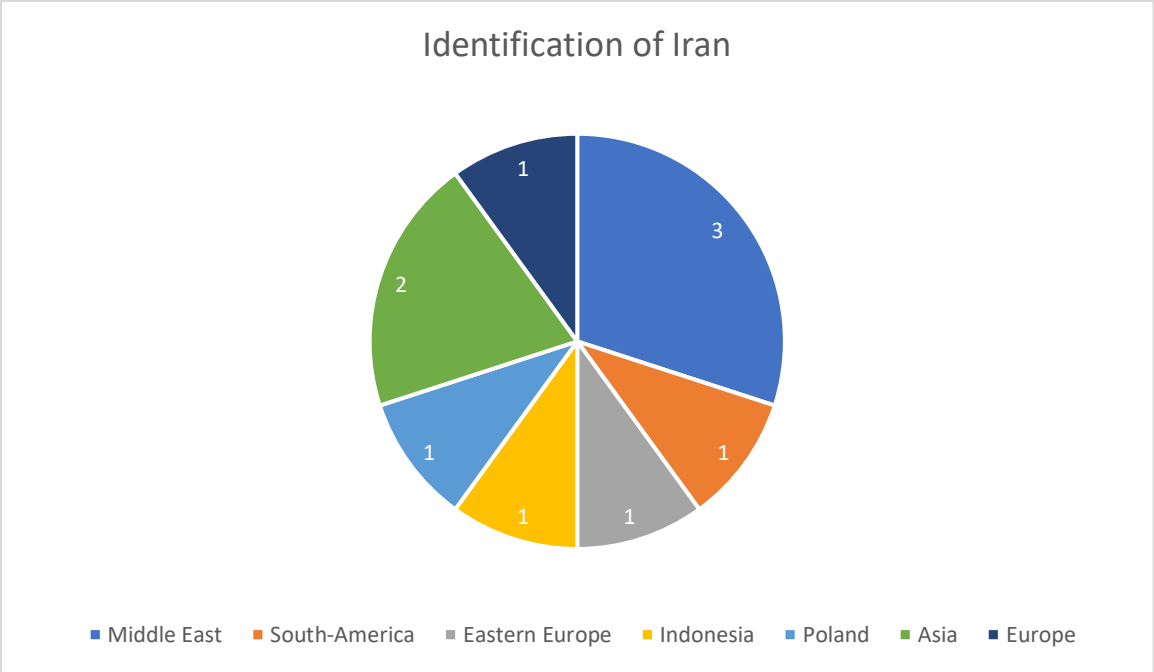


Figure 4.5: Identification of Iran

4.1.1.6 Identification of Germany 9

The German speaker was the only speaker that none of the respondents was able to identify correctly. However, as shown in Figure 4.6, some of the guesses, i.e., Denmark and Austria, are geographically close. Two respondents also guessed Western Europe, which must be considered as partially correct. However, it is interesting to note that although the speaker grew up in Barcelona, Spain, none of the respondents have provided this as an answer. The responses pointing to England and the UK may be accounted for by means of the information that the speaker having lived in Oxford, England.

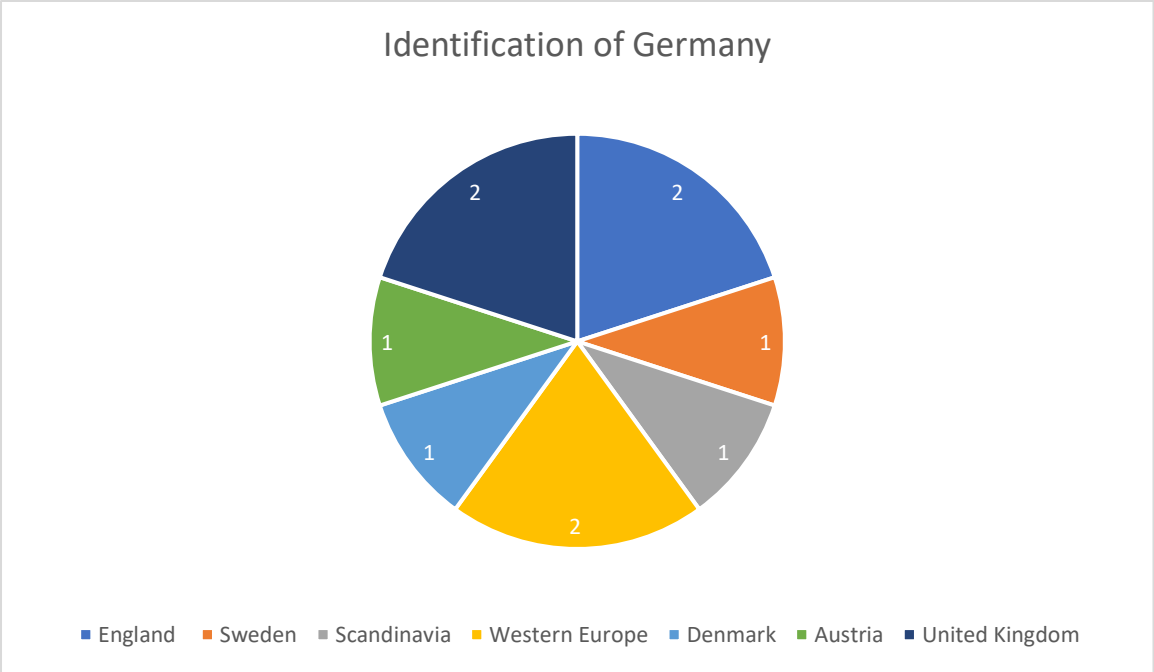


Figure 4.6: Identification of Germany

4.1.1.7 Summary of identification of accents

As the results have shown, the respondents were largely successful in identifying the English speaker, in relation to whom none of the answers was incorrect. Similarly, the Norwegian accent was also identified by most of the respondents. The responses to the Polish, Indian, Iranian, and Germanic speaker show a somewhat greater diversity in geographical placement. In conclusion, the results indicate that the respondents are most familiar with the RP and Norwegian accent, and that the other accents, which are considered as non-native accents, seem to be less familiar to the respondents.

4.1.2 Overall rating of the speakers' pronunciation

After being asked to indicate where the respondents thought the speaker was from, they were then instructed to give an overall assessment of the speakers' pronunciation (see Appendix 3). This question was included to mirror the school grade that students are given, i.e., the respondents were asked to provide a rating on a scale from 1 to 6, with the one being labeled as *bad*, while six was labeled as *good*. The results presented in Figure 4.7 show that England is rated the highest with an average of 5.8. Then follows Germany (5.2), India (4.9), Norway (4.3), Poland (4.1), and Iran (2.7) respectively. Thus, it is evident that the respondents seem to agree that the RP speaker is the best model of pronunciation. The speaker from Germany is also highly rated, which may relate to the fact that four of the respondents thought that the

German speaker was from England or the UK. Furthermore, it is worth discussing why the Iranian speaker is rated significantly lower than the others. One reason may be due to the fact that she is arguably the least proficient speaker of English amongst all the speakers appearing in the recordings (see section 3.2.5.4).

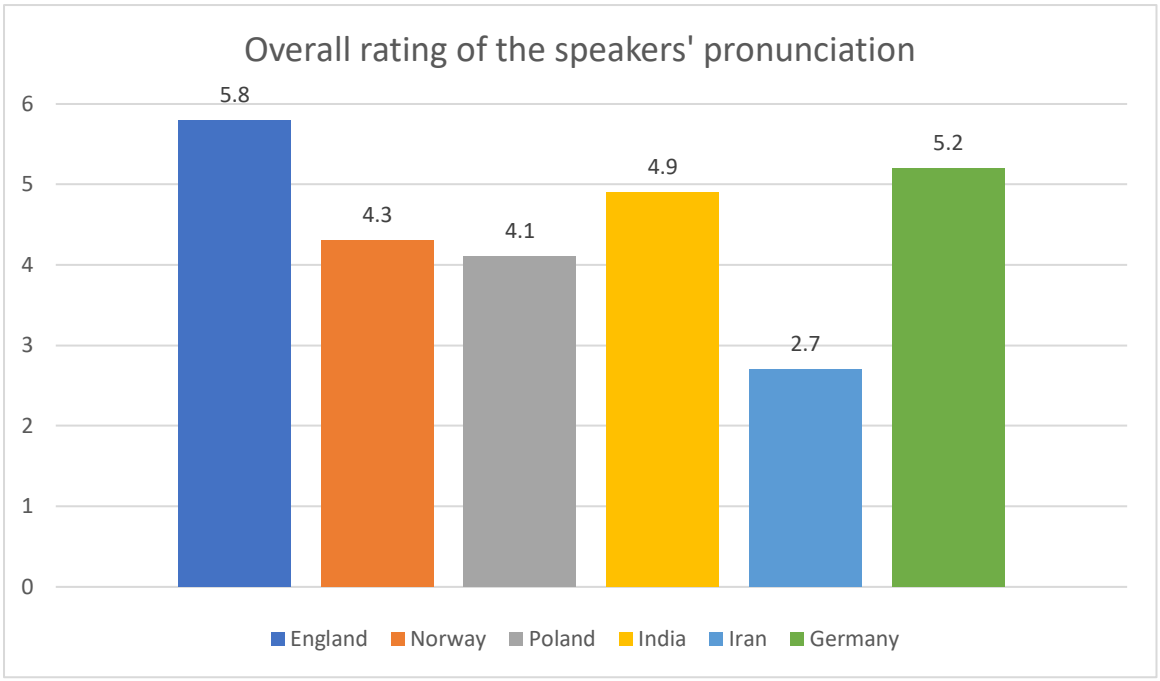


Figure 4.7: Overall rating of the speakers' pronunciation

4.1.3 Rating of linguistic traits

In the linguistic traits employed in the questionnaires, the respondents were asked to evaluate the speakers' pronunciation as *incorrect-correct*, *unintelligible-intelligible*, and *ugly-beautiful* on a 5-point scale. The average score of the three linguistic traits is presented in Figure 4.8.

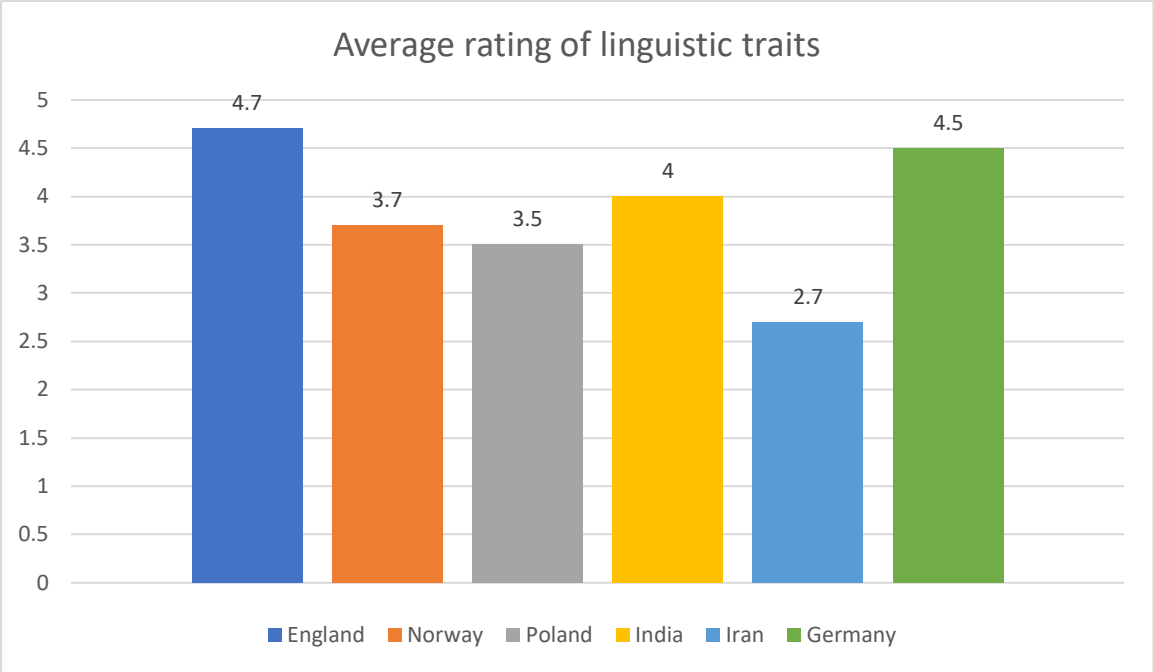


Figure 4.8: Average ratings of linguistic traits

In general, the results show that the RP speaker is rated the highest in linguistic traits, closely followed by the German speaker. Interestingly, as pointed out in section 4.1.1.6, four out of the ten respondents indicated that the German speaker was from England or the UK. This may be one of the reasons why the German speaker is rated this highly. It is also noteworthy that the Iranian speaker is rated significantly lower than the other speakers on the linguistic traits. The results presented in Figure 4.9 show that England (4.8) is rated as the one with the most correct pronunciation, with only two of the respondents not giving the highest score. Germany (4.5) has the second highest rating, followed by India (4.2), Norway (3.5) and Poland (3.4) with a noteworthy lower rating. The Iranian speaker is by far rated as the speaker with the least correct pronunciation (2.6). It is also interesting to note that England is the only speaker who is given the highest rating amongst all respondents with regard to intelligibility. Another interesting finding is evident in the last linguistic trait, where respondents were instructed to rate the speakers' pronunciation from ugly to beautiful. Almost every speaker is rated lower than they were on the two other linguistic traits, with the only exception being the Iranian speaker, who was rated scarcely lower in correctness. Thus, the ratings of *ugly-beautiful* indicate a more reluctant view towards varieties of English on an aesthetic level.

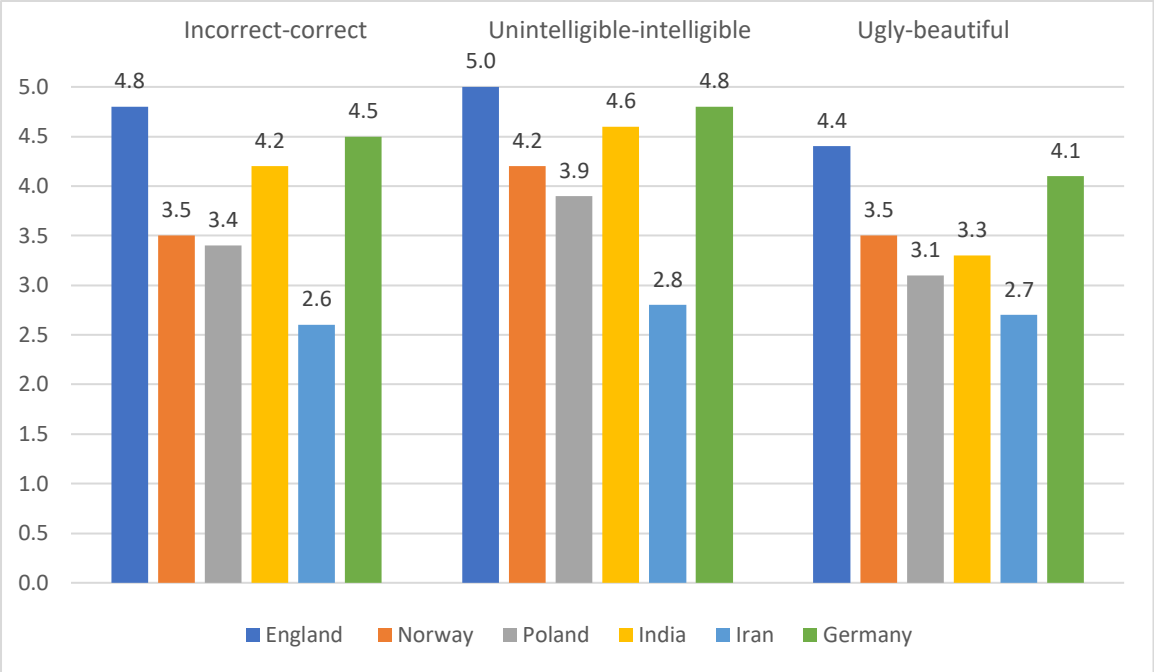


Figure 4.9: Rating of all linguistic traits - an overview

4.1.4 Rating of social attractiveness

Three of the statements in the questionnaires were related to social attractiveness. The semantic labels used were *unpleasant-pleasant, dishonest-honest,* and *boring-humorous*. The labels were used to elicit the respondents' attitudes about how socially attractive they found the speaker. It is important to note that the phrasing of these statements was different than those related to the linguistic traits. While the linguistic traits asked the respondents to rate the speakers' pronunciation, the traits related to social attractiveness aim to elicit how the respondents find the person itself. Thus, the statements are phrased as: "This person seems:". The average score of the three traits related to social attractiveness is presented in Figure 4.10. The individual scores of the three traits are presented in Figure 4.11.

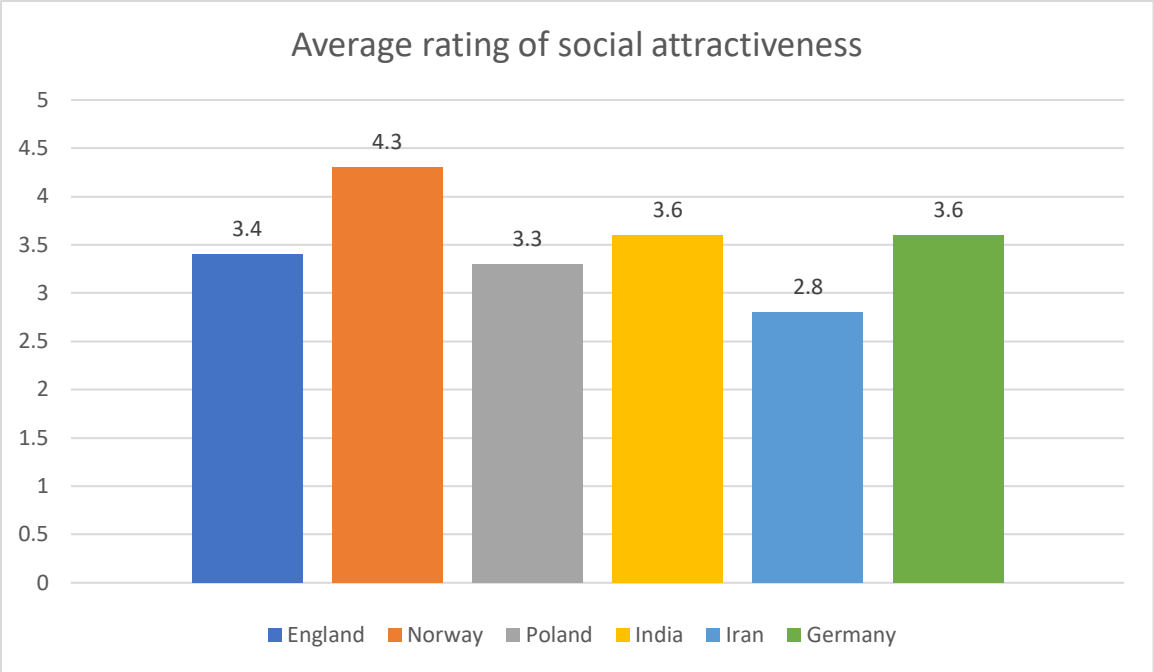


Figure 4.10: Average rating of social attractiveness

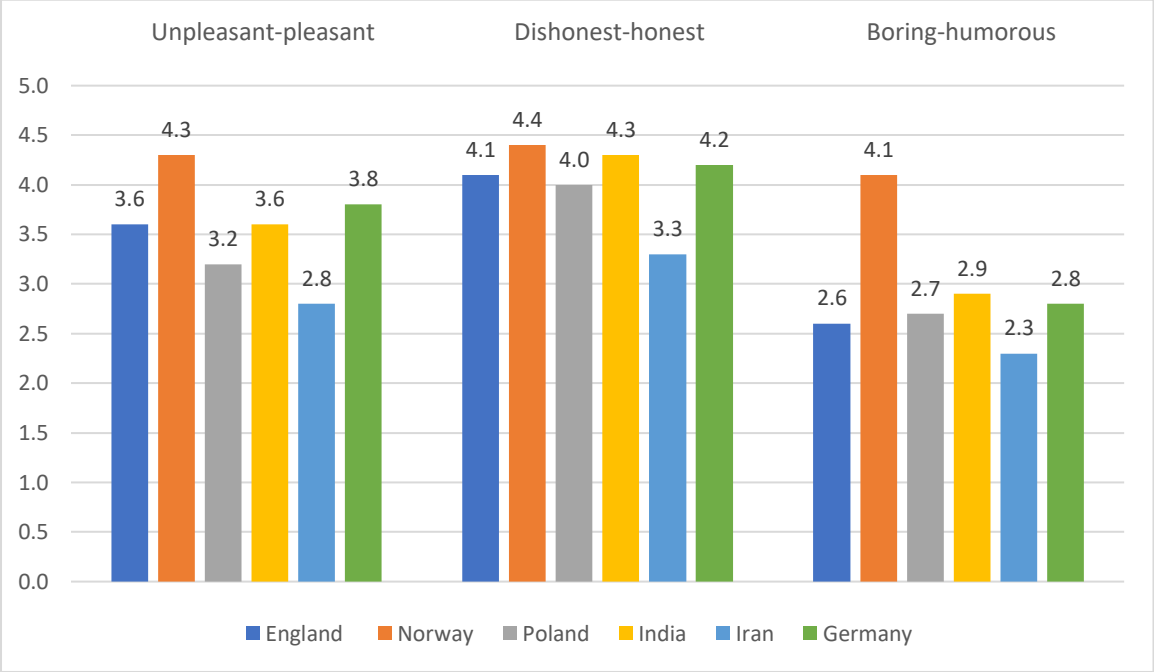


Figure 4.11: Rating of social attractiveness - an overview

The results are highly interesting, as they deviate from the findings compared to the overall assessment of pronunciation and the ratings of the linguistic traits. Firstly, England is given an average rating of 3.4, which is a substantially lower score than the previous ones (see section 4.1.2 and 4.1.3). In fact, Norway (4.3), India (3.6), and Germany (3.6) are all rated higher than England on average. It is also worth noting that the Norwegian speaker is rated highest on all

traits of social attractiveness. This indicates that even though the Norwegian speaker is rated much lower (4.3) in the overall assessment of pronunciation compared to England (5.8), the respondents still find the Norwegian accent as the most socially attractive speaker. The investigation of reasons for this is beyond the scope of this thesis, but may prove to be an interesting topic for further research.

4.1.5 Rating of status/competence

The three semantic labels related to status/competence were: *poorly educated-well educated*, *unintelligent-intelligent*, and *poor-rich*. The phrasing of the statements was identical to the phrasing used in the traits for social attractiveness. The average scores are presented in Figure 4.12, while the individual scores of the three traits related to status/competence are presented in Figure 4.13.

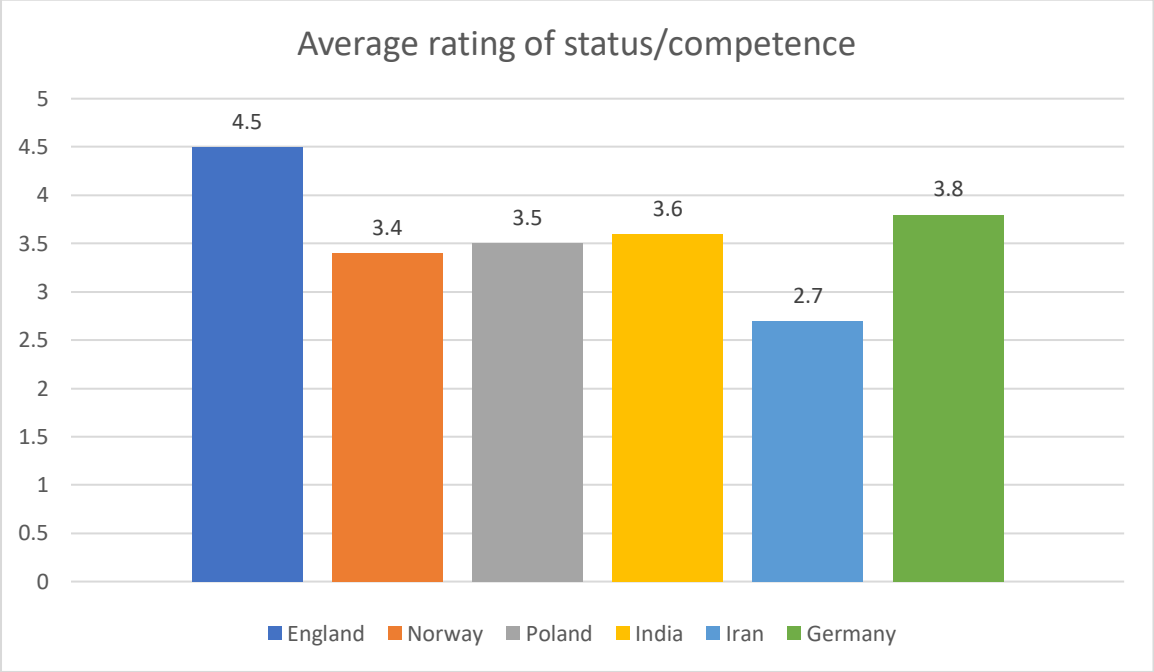


Figure 4.12 – Average rating of status/competence

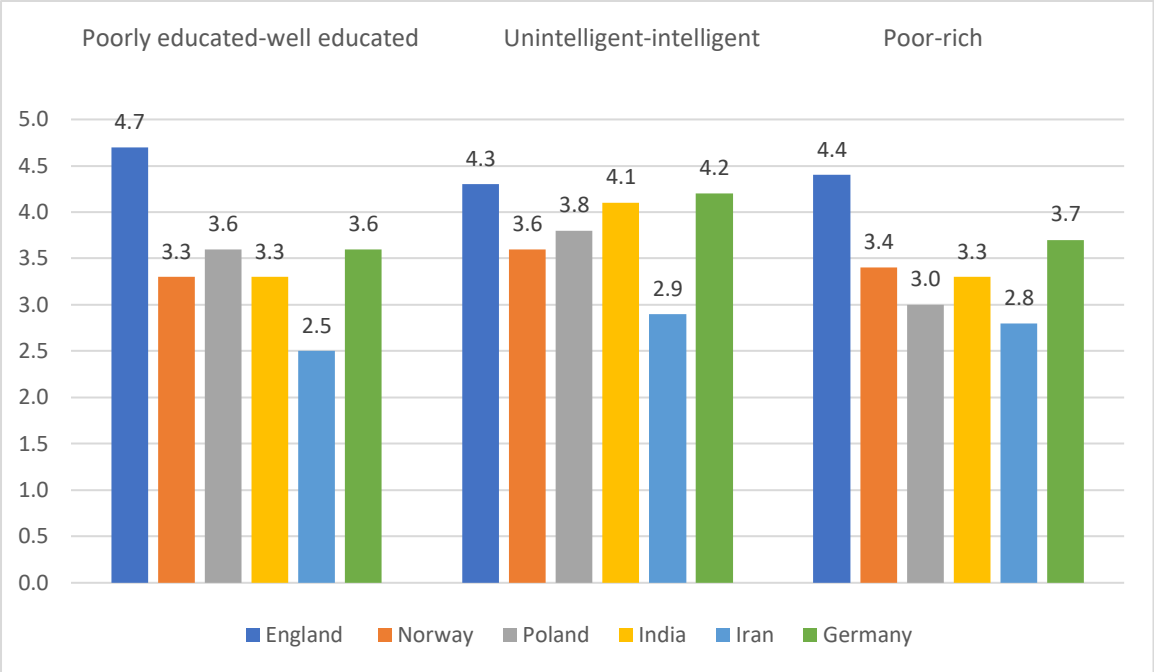


Figure 4.13: Rating of all traits of status/competence - an overview

As Figure 4.12 shows, England is by far the highest rated speaker with regard to status/competence with an average score of 4.5. Then follows Germany (3.8), India (3.6), Poland (3.5), and Norway (3.4). Lastly, the Iranian speaker is rated significantly lower than the other speakers. There are also some noteworthy findings in the individual ratings. Especially interesting are the ratings of intelligence, in which both Germany (4.2) and India (4.1) are rated almost as highly as England (4.3). Furthermore, it is also interesting to see that while the Indian speaker is rated as quite intelligent at 4.1, the respondents also gave the speaker a substantially lower rating in terms of education. Lastly, it is worth noting that England is the speaker that is by far rated as the most well-educated speaker at 4.7. This is interesting, because it indicates that the respondents associate the RP accent with a higher level of education. In stark contrast, the Iranian speaker is rated remarkably lower (2.5) than England in particular, but also in comparison to the other speakers. Thus, the results seem to reveal negative attitudes towards non-native speakers compared to the native one. The same tendency may also be seen in the ratings of *poor-rich*, where England (4.4) is rated notably higher than the other speakers.

4.1.6 Comparison of findings based on work experience

This section aims to investigate the third research question of this thesis by comparing the results from the questionnaires based on the teachers' work experience and seniority. The

third research question asks if there are "any differences in teachers that have been teaching for a long period of time compared to those who have been teaching for a lesser period of time". To answer this question, I have divided the respondents into two groups. The first group consists of four teachers that have been teaching for ten years or more. The experienced group will be referred to as Group 1 henceforth. The second group consists of six teachers that have been teaching for seven years or less and will be referred to as Group 2. An overview of the two groups is presented in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Group division of respondents based on work experience

Group 1		***Group 2***	
#ID	***Years teaching English***	***#ID***	***Years teaching English***
#1	20	#3	7
#2	10	#6	4
#4	13	#7	5
#5	15	#8	6
		#9	1
		#10	1

In the analysis of these results, I have found the average score in all questions for both groups and compared them accordingly (see Appendix 6). In general, the results show that the two groups mostly agree with each other. However, there are a few notable differences between the groups. Due to the scope of this thesis, only the most relevant findings with a difference of 1.0≥ will be presented in this section. Since there were no considerable findings in the results for Iran or Germany, they will not be addressed.

4.1.6.1 England

The English speaker is the one that reveals the most differences in the two groups' answers. The findings are presented below in Figure 4.14. Interestingly, Group 1 rated England considerably lower (1.0≥) in question four, five, and six. In question four, which asks the respondents to rate the pronunciation as *ugly-beautiful*, Group 1 gave a rating of 3.8, while Group 2 gave a rating of 4.8. This indicates that the less experienced group appreciate the RP accent more than the experienced group on an aesthetic level. Group 1 also rated England considerably lower in terms of the personal traits such as *unpleasant-pleasant* and *dishonest-honest*. In conclusion, the results indicate that Group 1 rate the RP accent lower than Group 2.

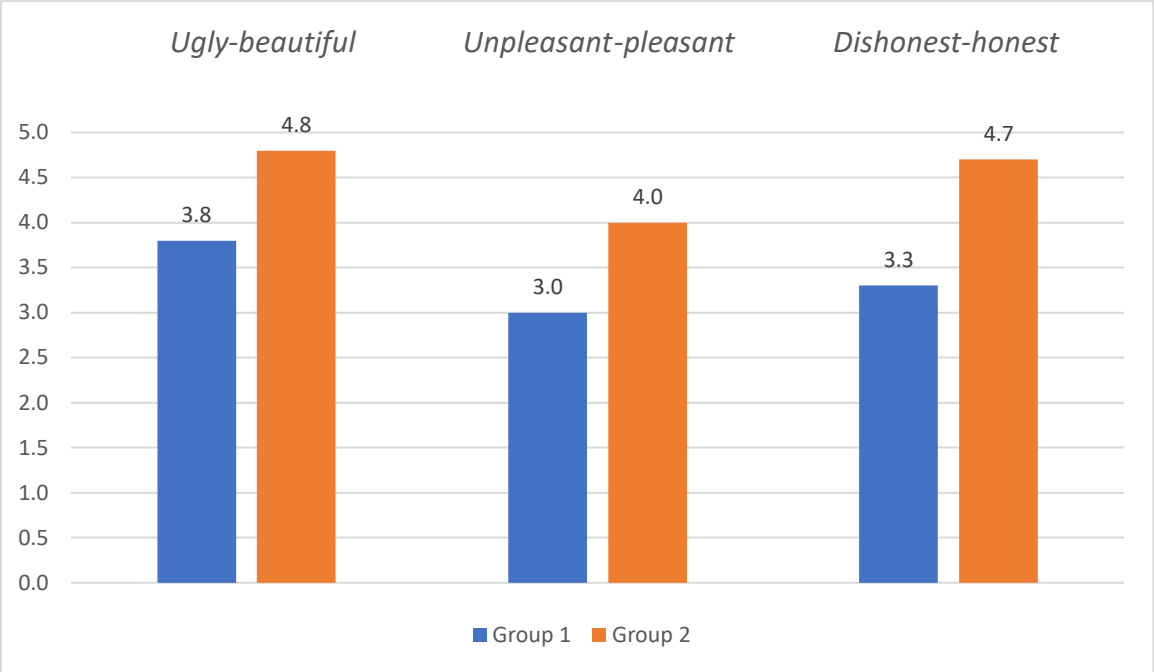


Figure 4.14: Comparison of the most considerable findings based on work experience (England)

4.1.6.2 Norway

There was only one considerable difference between the groups in the ratings of Norway. This difference can be found in question seven, in which the respondents were asked to rate the speaker as *boring-humorous*. As Figure 4.15 shows, Group 1 rated the Norwegian speaker at 3.5, while Group 2 rated the speaker at 4.5.

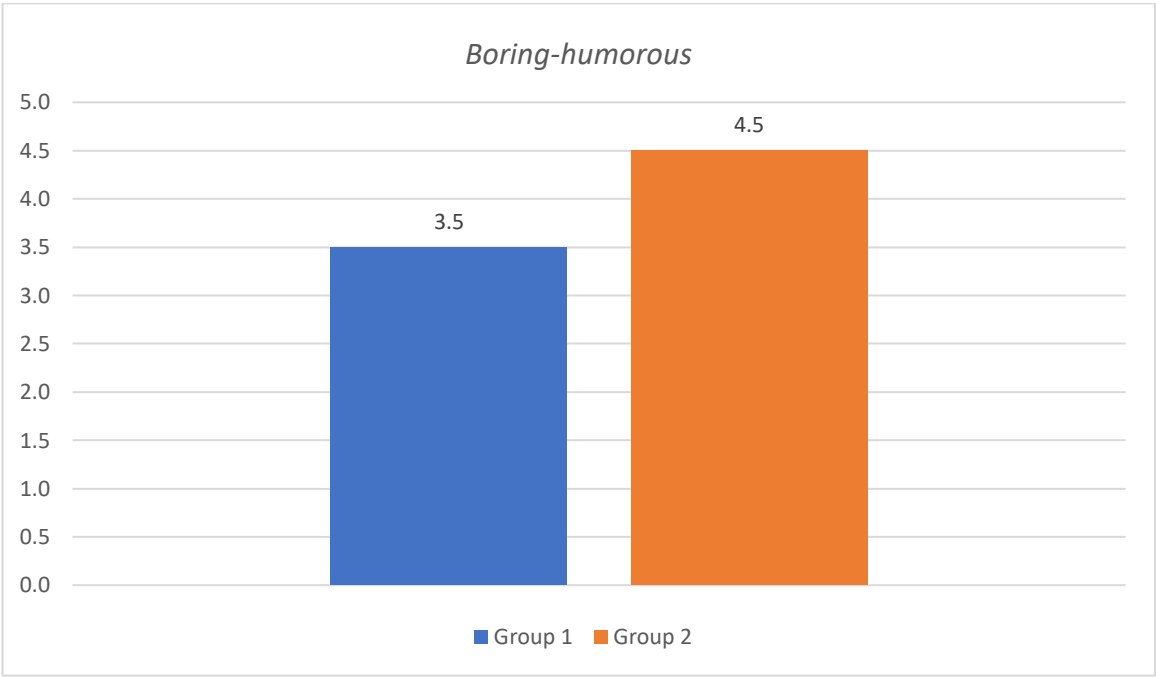


Figure 4.15: Comparison of the most considerable findings based on work experience (Norway)

4.1.6.3 Poland

The Polish speaker was the only one that revealed a considerable difference in the rating of the overall assessment of pronunciation in question one. Readers should note that this was the only question with a 6-point scale. The scale was semantically labeled with *bad-good*. The results show that Group 1 gave a rating of 3.5, while Group 2 gave a rating of 4.5. The two groups also disagreed in question eight, in which they were instructed to rate the speakers' level of education on a 5-point scale (*poorly educated-well educated*). As in question one, Group 1 gave a considerably lower rating at 3.0, compared to Group 2 at 4.0. The findings indicate that the experienced group have more negative attitudes towards a Polish accent than the less experienced group. The results are presented in Figure 4.16.

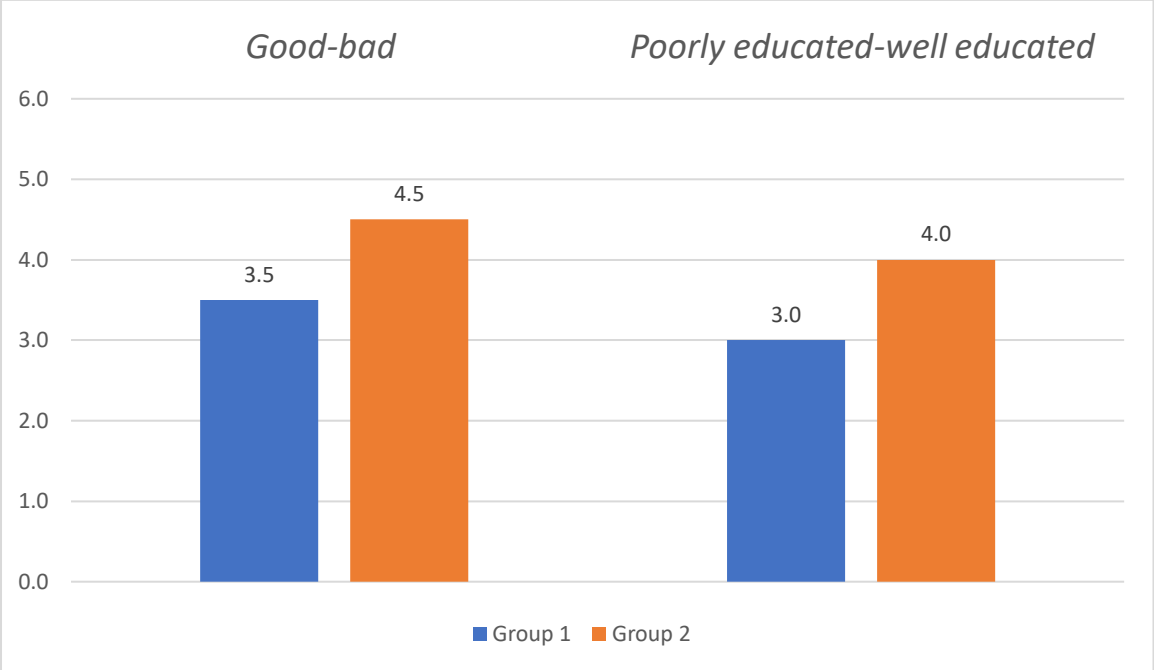


Figure 4.16: Comparison of the most considerable findings based on work experience (Poland)

4.1.6.4 India

There was one considerable difference in the groups' answers in the rating of India. This difference was found in question nine, in which the respondents were instructed to rate the speaker as *unintelligent-intelligent* on a 5-point scale. The findings presented in Figure 4.17 reveal that Group 1 rated the speaker at 3.5, while Group 2 gave a rating of 4.5.

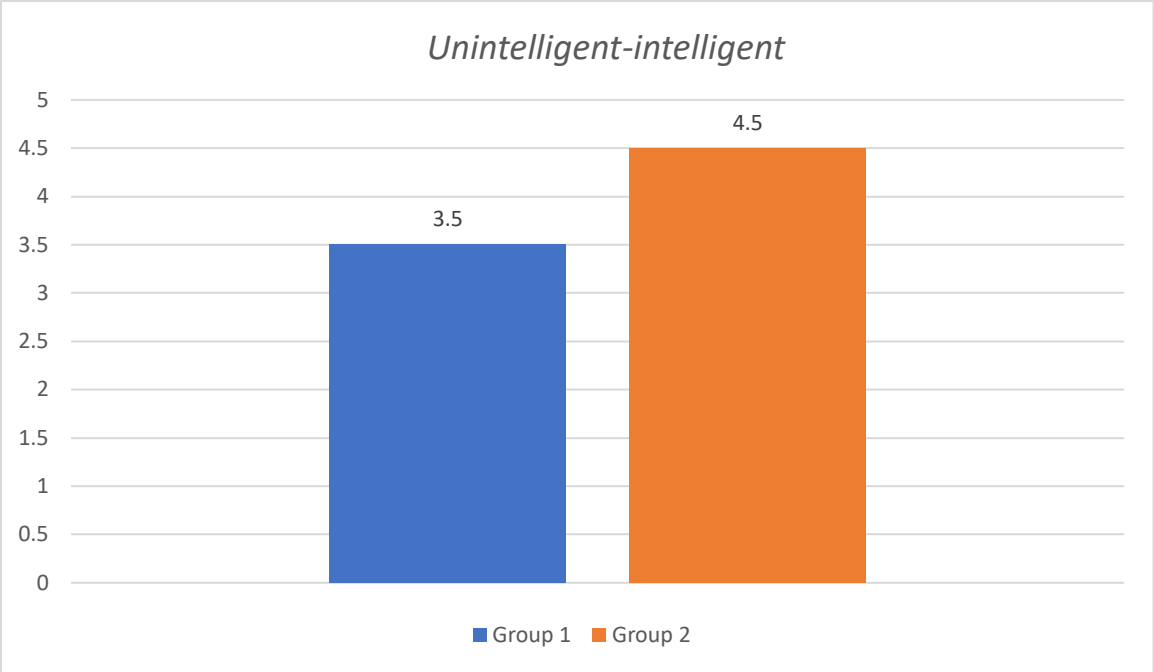


Figure 4.17: Comparison of the most considerable findings based on work experience (India)

4.1.7 Summary of findings from the questionnaires

This section aims to provide an overview of the most relevant findings from the questionnaires and will serve as a guide as to what will be further investigated in the analysis of the semi-structured interviews. Firstly, the results show that England is the highest rated speaker in all categories, except for social attractiveness. Hence, the findings indicate an answer to RQ1, namely that the teachers do indeed rate RP as more linguistically attractive than non-native varieties of English. At the same time, it is interesting to see that the Norwegian speaker is rated as the most socially attractive, despite being rated substantially lower than England in the overall assessment of pronunciation (see section 4.1.2). Furthermore, the results show that England is rated considerably higher than the non-native varieties with regard to both level of education and level of wealth.

The results also shed light on differences in attitudes among teachers in relation to work experience. In section 4.1.6, I have presented the most considerable differences among teachers with 10 years or more of work experienced, compared to teachers with work experience of 7 years or less. While there were no considerable findings for the Iranian or German speaker, the results show that the experience group (Group 1) provided lower ratings on the different questions for England, Norway, Poland, and India. This is interesting for several reasons. Firstly, this contradicts my idea that more experienced teachers rate the RP accent higher than other accents in general. Secondly, although Group 1 gave lower ratings to

England, they also gave lower ratings to Norway, Poland, and India, thus showing more indications of negative attitudes towards non-native accents than the less experienced group. However, a last point may be that Group 1 also seem to provide more neutral answers than Group 2. This may explain why Group 1 gave lower ratings than Group 2 in general, perhaps because the more experienced group strive to stay more objective. The comparison of teachers' attitudes based on work experience may serve as an interesting topic for further research.

4.2 Semi-structured interview results

The following section provides a presentation of the most relevant findings from the semi-structured interviews. The interview guide is available in Appendix 1. The findings will be presented and contextualized in the form of tables, graphs, and quotations. When providing a quote, I will refer to the teacher ID presented in Table 4.2 below. Furthermore, this section will be categorized into four subsections. These subsections correlate to the main topics of the interviews: 1) background, 2) speaker preferences, 3) teaching, and 4) assessment.

4.2.1 Background

An overview of participant information is presented in Table 4.2 below. The main objective of including questions about background information was to get an overview of the teachers' education and work experience. The teachers' work experience and how this may relate to language attitudes have been addressed in section 4.1.6 and will be further discussed in section 5.1.2.

Table 4.2: Overview of participant information

Teacher #ID	***Years teaching English***	***Education****
#1	20	Master +
#2	10	Master +
#3	7	Master
#4	13	Master +
#5	15	Master +
#6	4	Master +
#7	5	Adjunkt**
#8	6	Master +
#9	1	Master +
#10	1	Master +

**Additional education is marked with +.*
***A teacher with a four-year education at university level.*

4.2.2 Speaker preferences

There were four questions related to speaker preferences:

Q3) What kind of variety do you use yourself?
Q4) Which variety would you *like* to use?
Q5) Do you prefer students to use one particular speaker variety?
Q6) Do the students use other varieties than American or British in the classroom?

A summary of the findings related to speaker preferences is presented in Table 4.3. The following section will exemplify and discuss the respondents' answers further.

Table 4.3: Overview of speaker preferences

Teacher #ID	***Q3***	***Q4***	***Q5***	***Q6***
#1	British	British	No	African
#2	British	British	No	Indian Asian Irish
#3	British	Northern-British	No	Jamaican
#4	British	British	No	Australian
#5	British	N/A	No	Scottish Cockney
#6	American	Irish	Yes and no	Irish Middle East
#7	American/British	N/A	No	Norwegian African German
#8	American	Scottish	No	N/A
#9	American	Australian	No	Eastern Europe Middle East Asian
#10	American	N/A	No	Norwegian

It is interesting to note that the respondents are divided evenly with regard to a preferred variety of spoken English when speaking themselves (Q3). However, even more interesting are the reasons behind this. In the analysis of the interviews, I have concluded that there are three main reasons for acquiring a certain accent. Firstly, students at university level are often forced to choose between a British and American accent during their education. This finding correlates with what Sannes (2013) found in her master thesis. Teacher #1 and #2 state:

> "[I speak] British. Because it is the prettiest, and because when I had to choose between transcribing in American or British at the University, I chose British." (#1)

> "At the university, we had to choose between British and American in courses in phonetics" (#2)

Secondly, another important reason for a preferred accent is personal experiences and background. Many of the respondents state that their accent has been naturally influenced due to reasons such as family relations, exchange periods during their education, or having lived abroad and hence acquired the accent thereof. Lastly, it seems that many of the respondents cannot really provide a reason for why they have acquired the accent that they have. Instead, many explain that their acquired accent has simply developed over the course of time and thus become natural for them.

Q4 aimed to elicit if there were any favorized accents among the respondents. As Table 4.3 shows, there was a mix of different accents mentioned. However, it should be noted that all the accents mentioned are native varieties of English. It is also worth noting that Australian is the only accent mentioned outside the United Kingdom. Hence, the results may indicate that the respondents view native varieties of English, particularly British, as the most desirable.

As shown in Table 4.3, all of the respondents, except one, were very clear in saying that they do not prefer any specific accent among students (Q5). Teacher #6 said both yes and no, explaining that: "Pronunciation or accent does not matter as long as it is intelligible. However, if they do try to speak in a particular accent, then they must stick to it, so that there is no mix of British and American expressions". Interestingly, similar thoughts and opinions also seem to be prevalent among many of the other respondents:

> "I am very clear in saying that accent is not a part of the criteria. What is important is that there is fluency and that the pronunciation is there'". #8

> "No, not really, as long as it is intelligible. [I would] rather [prefer] a Norwegian accent with good pronunciation and intelligibility, than a specific pronunciation or accent [without good pronunciation or intelligibility]" #9

> "No, not at all. The most important thing is that they dare to communicate in English. And express themselves. Of course, it must be intelligible, but it does not have to be American or British. Does not matter." #2

> "No, I don't have any thoughts on that. Out in the real life, no one cares about your accent, the most important this is that you make yourself understood. No one cares whether you have an American or British accent." #7

Thus, it seems evident that the respondents do not seek to enforce a certain accent of English on their students, nor do they consider choice of accent as important for the students. Instead, the respondents agree upon other variables as more important, such as intelligibility, fluency, consistency of accent, and the ability to communicate. These results are similar to the findings of Bøhn and Hansen (2017), who reported that teachers were largely oriented towards the importance of intelligibility. However, and in stark contrast, Bøhn and Hansen reported split opinions among teachers with regards to the importance of nativeness, while the findings related to Q5 in this thesis show that teachers largely claim to disregard nativeness. Still, there is at least one interesting comment that shows attitudes supportive of the native speaker:

> "No. It is up to them, what they prefer. The most important thing in the English subject is communication. That the pronunciation does not block the communication. But I am perhaps a bit weak for those that have a clear pronunciation from certain areas in England or America" #3

As presented in the quote above, while Teacher #3 claims that the choice of accent does not matter, they also contradict themselves by saying that they do have a soft spot for clear pronunciation of native varieties such as British or American.

Moving on, in Q6, the respondents agree that most of students aim to speak with an American or British accent. However, due to reasons such as family relations or having lived abroad, some students may take on other varieties such as the ones listed in Table 4.3. Nevertheless, there is a clear agreement among the respondents that the American or British accents are the most common ones. These findings support previous research, such as Rindal and Piercy (2013), who found that 75% of students aimed for a native accent when speaking English, with the majority aiming for an American English variety. Similar results were also found in Hopland (2016) and Sannes (2013).

4.2.3 Teaching

There were two questions related to teaching in the semi-structured interviews. The questions were asked to gain insight into how teachers work and plan their lessons, and consequently, what this might say about their language attitudes and views of oral competence. The questions were stated as:

Q7) How do you work with developing oral competence?
Q8) Do you actively use the curriculum in your teaching?

The respondents provided longer and more substantial answers to Q7 than compared to the previous questions. Thus, this section will highlight the most relevant findings and recurring topics brought up by the respondents. Firstly, what stands out the most is that the respondents stress that the main objective is to make the students actually speak. Consequently, many report that oral activities need to be light, cheerful, motivating, and relevant to the students:

> "In first grade, it is mostly about making them speak. Expressing themselves more than in short answers. Being able to express their opinions and give reasons for them." #2

> "The oral [activities] are supposed to be fun and largely about expressing themselves spontaneously and authentically. I try to facilitate for activities about their own opinions, so that there is no correct answer." #3

> "It might be by having them discuss what they have been doing for the weekend and such. Just to get the conversation going." #5

> "Getting them into a dialogue is the most important. They have to speak to develop oral competence." #6

> "First and foremost, I try to get them to speak, because they have such a hard time speaking. [I] place them in groups and have them discuss relevant things going on." #8

> "When we are working orally, I am quite adamant that there should be a nice and safe environment, so that everyone dares to speak. I feel like this is a problem in the English subject, that many find it scary to speak in class and such." #10

While only one teacher explicitly states that it can be difficult to engage students orally (#10), these findings indicate that many of the other respondents also experience the same. Thus, the main priority in developing oral competence is merely to facilitate activities that allow the students to feel comfortable with speaking out loud. There are many approaches mentioned to do so. One is to engage the students in conversations in pairs or groups, in which they are given a topic or question that is relevant to them. This may be relevant current topics from society in general, something from their personal life, or questions for discussion that have no clear or correct answers. Another frequently mentioned topic in the findings is to have the students talk to their peers in pairs or groups before possibly sharing with the rest of the class:

> "I often use pairs. It is IGP [individual-group-plenary], right, but I skip the plenary part unless we have built enough trust and safety when it comes to speaking in front of others […]. #3

> "In terms of working methods, it [oral activities] is first and foremost in pairs or in groups." #2

> "We have this partner-system. There are set partners and groups which rotate once a month. I set it up so that things first happen in the groups, and then there is a summary in plenary of some sort. But there are many that do not want to speak in plenary unless I make them, but if we do it in groups, I have the possibility to ensure that they are orally active, and I get to listen to them speak". #5

> "Conversations between the student, conversations with me, presentations, and different activities that facilitate for conversation. Discussions and questions about things we have read. If it is a 'silent class' that does not want to speak with each other, I use short questions that are easy to answer, and then I just go around to each table and listen to their answers. But, if the class is more comfortable, I try to facilitate for discussions in groups before sharing in plenary." #7

> "We do a lot of group work, in pairs, in plenary. Mostly in pairs, and that they are pronouncing things to each other." #9.

To sum up, the findings related to Q7 show that the teachers' primary goal is to make the students feel comfortable with speaking English in the classroom, often by facilitating conversations in pairs or groups.

Q8 asks whether the teachers use the English subject curriculum actively in their teaching. As discussed in section 2.3.2, the current curriculum leaves ample freedom for their teachers in their interpretation of the competence aims and the assessment criteria. Also, the English subject curriculum has undergone considerable changes over the last decades. Especially, the curriculum has shifted from a focus on the native-speaker norm to more emphasis on communicative competence (see section 2.5). For these reasons, it is interesting to see whether teachers actively lean on and follow the guidelines provided by the subject curriculum.

The results related to Q8 are mixed. While some of the respondents are clear in saying that they *do* use the curriculum actively, others are more diffuse and provide no clear answer. Still, all of the respondents claim to use, or know, the curriculum, at least to some degree. Some of the findings are presented in the quotations below:

> "Yes. [Because I] have had so many complaints that I have learned to use the curriculum. It is quite easy [because] in our communication platform, I can use competence aims and connect them to each teaching lesson." #1

> "Can I be honest? Jokes aside, everything is based on the curriculum and the competence aims. Eventually you get a good overview of what can be justified against the curriculum." #3

> "Honestly, no. Yes, partly. It starts quite well in the beginning of the year, but then eventually I have a developed a good overview of the curriculum, so I… Yes and no. Fifty-fifty, I'd say. I probably could have been better." #4
>
> "Yes. I base my topics on the textbooks, because they follow the curriculum. Then I make plans and adjust from there." #6
>
> "Not very actively, no. I know which [competence] aims they have to achieve, and if we are starting on a new large topic I find basis in the curriculum, but not on a daily basis." #7
>
> "Maybe not as actively as I should? Not daily, no. Periodically, yes." #9.

Hence, the results indicate that there are large individual differences amongst the teachers as to how much and how actively they use and rely on the English subject curriculum. Arguably, these differences may also indicate differences in teaching methods and approaches, and also, more relevant to this thesis, assessment of the students. While the teachers all claim to be familiar with and find basis in the curriculum, one might argue that there should be some sort of measurement taken to ensure that all teachers actively rely on the guidelines provided by the authorities. As a consequence, this might also lead to a more just and reliable evaluation and assessment of the students' competence.

4.2.4 Assessment

The last subsection of the semi-structured interviews was related to assessment of oral competence. The section included four questions. The most relevant results from said questions will be presented and discussed one by one below.

4.2.4.1 Assessement situations

> Q9) How do you assess oral competence in the English subject?

When it comes to types of assessment of oral competence, the respondents report a variety of approaches and methods. This variety of assessment types is not an unexpected finding, as the curriculum provides freedom to use whatever type of assessment the teacher seems fit. The results presented in Figure 4.18 below indicate the frequency of mentions of different types of assessment.

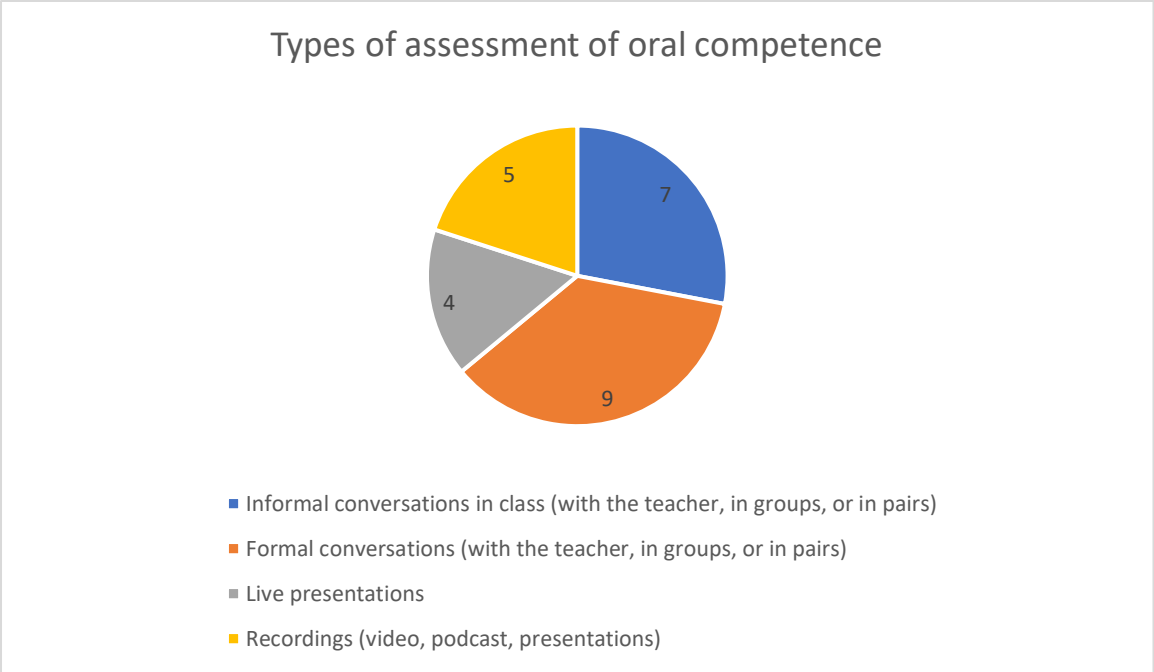


Figure 4.18: How do teachers assess oral competence? An overview.

The results show that the teachers are moving away from traditional types of assessment such as presentations of a given topic in front of class. Instead, the results indicate that the teachers are more interested in seeing and hearing the students speak in conversations, be it in informal situations in the classroom or in more formal settings. It is also worth noting that seven of the respondents highlight the importance of assessing informal conversations in class. The results from Q7 indicated that the teachers struggle to make the students speak, thus making it important to facilitate for low-threshold activities, which also provides as a foundation for assessing oral competence. The importance of assessing informal conversations can be found in several of the respondents' answers:

> "I tell them [the students] that when we are done here, I need to have a general assessment of how good their English are, and I cannot have that by assessing one to three situations of [formal] assessment yearly, but I also need to do it in the classroom." #7

> "Of course, the oral competence they show in classroom situations. That is included in the assessment, but more in cases of tipping the scale." #6

> "The new regulations for assessment open up for more informal assessment in classroom situations. We work a lot in groups, then I can walk around and talk to them. Then, afterwards, once a week, or immediately after the lesson, I write it down. Not grades or anything, but one, two, or three stars. So that I get an overview [of the

students' competence]. To cover as many competence aims as possible you need to assess what is done in the lessons. The students get this." #2

"I would rather have the presentation through a conversation […]. The last year I have focused more on the conversation, that they are able to follow up on others, and that they are able to reflect further on something they say, whether it is from a question from me or from something that someone else says." #3

4.2.4.2 What do teachers look for when assessing oral competence?

Q10) What do you look for when assessing the oral competence among students?

With regard to the overall aim and objective of the present thesis, the findings related to Q10 are arguably the most relevant, as the question directly asks what the teachers value when assessing oral competence. The results in Figure 4.19 present the recurring traits that the respondents gave. Afterwards, I will contextualize the results presented by providing quotations from the respondents' answers.

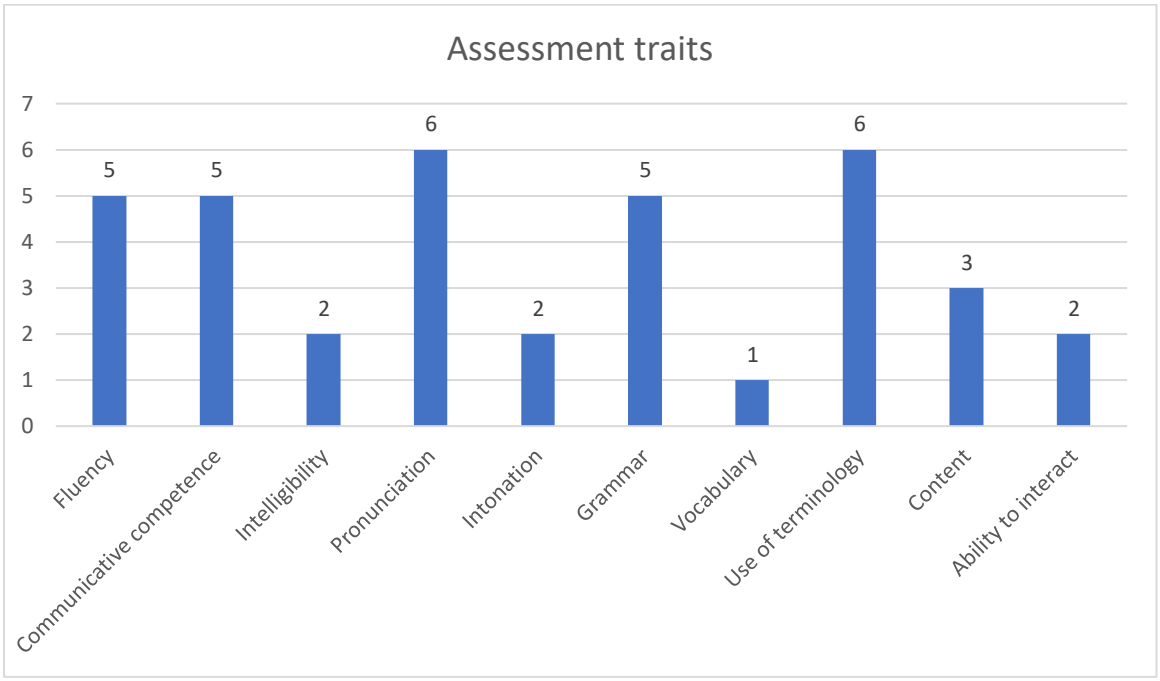


Figure 4.19: What do teachers look for when assessing oral skills? An overview of assessment traits.

As Figure 4.19 shows, pronunciation (6) and use of terminology (6) are the most frequently mentioned traits when it comes to assessing oral competence. However, while many of the respondents mention pronunciation as important, they also stress that pronunciation is only important to the extent that it should not interfere with the intelligibility of what is being said. The quotation below exemplifies a general thought among many of the respondents:

> "First of all, it is content [that is the most important]. What kind of ability do they have to discuss and reflect. In terms of language, I assess whether I can follow what they are saying, if they are making themselves understood, if they are able to stick to English or if they need to use words in Norwegian. When I see those that need to use Norwegian words, they drop down on my scale [of assessment]. [For example] if there are so many mistakes in pronunciation or grammar that it becomes disturbing, so that I cannot ignore it." #8

Furthermore, and as can be seen in the quote above, many of the traits are intertwined and affect each other. This is also something that the respondents stress in their answers. While fluency, communicative competence, and grammar were all mentioned five times, they are often mentioned as something that cannot be separated entirely:

> "[I look for] communication, that the pronunciation does not get in the way for what is being said. It is hard to separate grammatically incorrect language from the content. Often, they belong together. If you have a hard time expressing yourself, you might have trouble making your point." #4

In other words, while the frequency of the mentioned traits as presented in Figure 4.19 does give an indication of what the teachers value, readers should note that these traits cannot be entirely separated, and that they all seem to affect each other. Moving on, it is also worth noticing that intelligibility and the ability to interact are only mentioned twice by the respondents. This seems to contradict the findings of Bøhn and Hansen (2017), who found that teachers were largely oriented towards intelligibility in their assessment of pronunciation in the English subject. However, taking a closer look, I will argue that the results from the present thesis still do reveal similar orientations. While only two of the respondents mention intelligibility as a term, many others touch upon the same ideas, namely that the most important thing is to make oneself understood. Arguably, intelligibility may also be considered as a vital part of the ability to communicate. The quotes below highlight this:

> "To be independent and be able to communicate clearly, in-depth, is important." #5

> "I assess whether the meaning of what is being said is communicated, primarily." #9

To sum up, there are multiple traits that teachers look for when assessing oral competence in the English subject. In this thesis, I have found ten different traits mentioned among the respondents. At the same time, many of the traits seem to affect each other and cannot be

considered or assessed by themselves. These ideas correlate with the core curriculum in LK20, which points out that competence aims should be considered in relation to each other, not individually. Still, as Bøhn et. al (2018) pointed out, there seem to be no clear guidelines present as to which features or traits of oral competence should be given appraisal when assessing oral among students. The findings related to Q10 in the present thesis supports this.

4.2.4.3 Correcting mistakes in pronunciation

Q11) Do you correct mistakes in pronunciation among students?

Table 4.4: Responses to Q11

Teacher	**Yes / no**
#1	Yes
#2	No
#3	Yes and no
#4	No
#5	Yes and no
#6	Yes and no
#7	Yes and no
#8	No
#9	Yes
#10	Yes and no

As presented in Table 4.4, the respondents are divided in their answers to whether or not they correct mistakes in pronunciation. However, the most recurring topic is that the teachers assess each situation and make a decision from there. Such responses are listed as *yes and no*. Many of the respondents state that it all depends on both the situation and the student itself. The quotations below exemplify this:

> "It depends on the situation. When we speak in class, I am most concerned with increasing their confidence, that it is not supposed to be scary to speak. If I corrected every time, eventually no one would dare to speak up." #10

> "It depends entirely on the student, if it looks at me, if it looks at the other students, how is the mood in classroom. I will often give corrections if the student stops speaking, but if it just continues, then I see no room for correction, but I might step in afterwards and provide feedback." #7

> "If I consider correcting them, I try to do it by sneaking in the correct pronunciation in a follow-up question. But, it depends on the student." #3

However, similar thoughts are also present among the other teachers. For instance, Teacher #8 and Teacher #4 state:

> "In the aftermath, I might. Especially if there are recurring mistakes […] But I never stop them to correct them unless they ask." #8

> "No, not in a situation of assessment. Not in the classroom in front of the students. But if there are words that many struggle to pronounce, I might bring it up in plenary. Or, I might give feedback on different sounds that they need to work with, like the th-sound and v/w-sound. [I] never [correct them] there and then." #4

This shows that while the teacher does not correct the students on the spot, they might still correct them later on an individual level. Thus, the results indicate that the teachers are cautious in correcting the students, especially in front of others. As shown in the quote above from Teacher #10, correcting the students in plenary might scare them from feeling comfortable in speaking in class.

4.2.4.4 Emphasis of the relationship between communication and pronunciation

Q12: How do you emphasize the relationship between communication and pronunciation?

The results from Q12 will be presented in quotations. Readers should note that many of the respondents reported that it was hard to answer this question. A different phrasing of the question may have proven beneficial. The main objective for asking this question was to investigate whether the teachers valued one of the traits more than the other. In hindsight, and as found in the results related to Q10, the two traits may be hard to separate entirely, as they both seem to affect each other. The idea that the terms affect each other is evident in many of the respondents' answers:

> "Intelligibility and communication are the most important to me. Of course, if there are many mistakes, that will count in a negative way too. If I cannot understand what is being said, then it is not going to be a good grade." #10

> "For me, communication is more important. I look at pronunciation as a part of communication, rather than one or the other. I stress that an important part of good communication is good pronunciation." #6

> "If you can understand it as the recipient, then the pronunciation is good enough […] But it is a little difficult to answer. These are the kinds of assessments you make on the

> spot, did I understand what you are saying, kind of. So, the pronunciation must be good enough to make the meaning clear." #9
>
> "To me, communication is much more important. As long as I can follow what is being said, and that I understand what the student wants, then that is the most important" #8
>
> "[You must have] some [quality] of pronunciation to communicate. But I think we, as teachers, are quite good at understanding the students." #2

As the quotes show, the respondents are reluctant to separate one from the other. Instead, they consider the two traits to be important parts of each other. Still, communication seems to be the more important factor of the two. In fact, none of the respondents said that pronunciation is more important than communication. In conclusion, the results indicate that teachers value communication higher than pronunciation, whilst at the same time acknowledging that pronunciation is an important part of communication.

4.3 Comparison of findings from the questionnaires and the interviews

In this section I will compare the results from the questionnaires to the semi-structured interviews and highlight any contradicting findings.

In the semi-structured interviews, all the respondents, except one, claim that the students' choice of accent or variety does not matter (see section 4.2.2). However, in the questionnaires, it is interesting to note that the English speaker is rated considerably higher than the other speakers in the overall rating of pronunciation (see section 4.1.2). Thus, there seems to be a contradiction in the teachers' answers when comparing the results from the questionnaire to those from the interviews. Tveisme (2020) found that the "speaker norms continue to factor into the beliefs and recorded practices of the teachers." (87). The results from the interviews also reveal that the teachers find native varieties of English as preferrable, both when it comes to the choice of their own accent (Q3) and when they were asked to pick a preferred accent (Q4). These findings are aligned with the results from the questionnaires.

4.3.1 Comparison of responses based on work experience

As discussed in section 2.3, the English subject curricula have undergone considerable changes over the course of the last six decades. Because the alterations made to the curricula are so substantial, it is reasonable to believe that the teachers today may be influenced by previous paradigms, if not as a teacher, then at least as students themselves. Thus, this section

will highlight some of the attitudinal differences between more experienced teachers to less experienced ones. The section draws on the results from the questionnaires presented in section 4.1.6 and will naturally be employing the same division of groups. For simplicity and practical reasons, the group divisions are presented again in Table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1: Group division of respondents based on work experience

Group 1		***Group 2***	
#ID	***Years teaching English***	***#ID***	***Years teaching English***
#1	20	#3	7
#2	10	#6	4
#4	13	#7	5
#5	15	#8	6
		#9	1
		#10	1

Only the most relevant and considerable findings from the semi-structured interviews will be presented in this section. As already presented in section 4.1.6, Group 1 provided considerably lower ratings on different questions for England, Norway, Poland, and India. This indicates that the more experienced group provide more neutral answers than Group 2. This impression is strengthened by looking the findings from the interviews. While the two groups largely agree on questions related to teaching, there are large differences in relation to assessment within both groups. For example, in relation to Q10, the results show that the teachers assess multiple traits of oral competence simultaneously. Also, these traits are often mentioned as something that cannot be separated from one another. There are no clear differences within the two groups in terms of what they value when assessing students. Instead, there are large individual preferences as to what they consider most important.

It is also worth noting that all the teachers in Group 1 state that they aim for a British accent when speaking English, while all the teachers in Group 2, except Teacher #4, aimed for an American accent. Thus, there is a clear division among the two groups in terms of choice of accent. This finding may find basis in the previous subject curricula, going all the way back to M74. Similar results were also found by Skuterud (2020).

A last note worth mentioning was an interesting remark by one of the respondents. Teacher #10, who had only been working for a year at the time, stated unprompted that I should have talked to some of their colleges, as this would have given me substantially

different results. Issues related to the sample of participants have been addressed in section 3.5 and should be kept in mind when evaluating the results of the present thesis.

5. Conclusions

This last chapter provides a summary of the main results and conclusions in relation the research questions of the present thesis. Firstly, a short summary of the study is given. Secondly, I will provide answers to the four research questions based on the findings presented in the previous chapter. Thirdly, some practical implications are outlined and presented. Lastly, I will provide suggestions for further research on the topic discussed in the thesis.

5.1 Summary and conclusions

The present thesis' objective was to investigate language attitudes among English teachers in Norwegian upper secondary schools, and to examine whether said attitudes may affect the teachers' assessment of the students' oral competence. As presented and discussed in Chapter 3, a mixed method research design was employed to gain an overview of the teachers' reported attitudes and to enhance the validity of the findings. A total of ten teachers from Norwegian upper secondary schools spread across the country were recruited to answer a questionnaire and a follow-up semi-structured interview. The present study aimed to investigate the teachers' language attitudes in order to answer four research questions:

> RQ1: Do teachers rate native varieties such as British English (RP) higher than non-native varieties?
> RQ2: Do teachers find RP as more linguistically attractive than non-native varieties?
> RQ3: Are there any differences in teachers that have been teaching for a long period of time compared to those who have been teaching for a lesser period?
> RQ4: Do teachers' language attitudes affect the assessment of students' oral competence?

The following subsections will summarize and present how the findings from the present thesis provide answers to the research questions.

5.1.1 RQ1 + RQ2:

The results from both the questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews supports findings from previous research (see section 2.2), as it shows that the teachers do in fact rate native varieties such as RP higher than non-native ones (RQ1). These attitudes are especially clear in

the results from the questionnaires, in which the British speaker is rated higher than the other speakers in all categories, except for the traits related to social attractiveness. Hence, the results from the questionnaire indicate that while the teachers do not necessarily consider the British speakers as very pleasant, honest, or humorous, they still consider RP as the best overall variety of pronunciation. This is also clear with regard to linguistic attractiveness (RQ2). Though it should be noted that the German speaker is also rated quite highly, this is reflected when looking at the results from the identification of the German speaker. None of the respondents was able to correctly identify the speaker, and four of the answers were pointed at England and the UK. It should also be noted that the German *had* been living in England for an unspecified period of time.

In the interviews, the teachers claim that they do not rate any particular accent of English higher than others. At the same time, all of the teachers report that they aim for a native accent of English, such as British or American, when speaking. This finding is further supported by the results from Q4, in which the teachers reported that if they could speak in any accent they wanted to, no non-native variety of English is mentioned, hence indicating a preference of native varieties of English. This favoritism of nativeness is highlighted in the following quote:

> "The most important thing in the English subject is communication […] but I am perhaps a bit weak for those that have a clear pronunciation from certain areas in England or America" #3

In conclusion, the findings from the thesis indicate that teachers continue to display attitudes supportive of the native-speaker norm.

5.1.2 RQ3:

The results from the questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews indicate a few considerable differences between teachers who have been teaching for a longer period of time compared to those who have been teaching for a lesser period. The results from the questionnaires reveal that the more experienced teachers provided lower ratings to different questions in different traits, both for the English speaker as well as non-native speakers. Hence, the results indicate that the more experienced group are more likely to provide neutral answers when assessing different varieties of spoken English than the less experienced group. The reasons for this are not investigated further in this study, but may be an interesting topic for further research.

The results from this study also show that the more experienced teachers aim for a British accent when speaking English, while the less experienced teachers are more likely to aim for an American accent. Lastly, there seems to be little distinct differences between the two groups in terms of teaching and assessment.

5.1.3 RQ4:

The combined results from the questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews serve as a foundation to believe that teachers' language attitudes *do* affect the assessment of students' oral competence. While the results from the interviews show that the teachers claim that the students' choice of accent when speaking English is irrelevant, the results from the questionnaires somewhat contradict this, as they show that the teachers largely favorize the native English speaker in comparison to the other non-native speakers. This indicates that the native speaker norm is still a persistent factor in the English subject today and gives reason to believe that teachers also rate students with a native-like accent higher than those with non-native accents. Also, this study shows that there are large individual differences among the teachers when it comes assessing the students' oral competence, meaning that while some teachers consider certain traits as more important, others value entirely different traits the most.

5.2 Implications for teaching and assessment

The findings of this thesis serve as implications for the teaching of the English subject in Norwegian classrooms. First and foremost, the results from this study indicate large individual differences among teachers in terms of how they understand and interpret the curriculum and which traits that should be given more appraisal when assessing the students' oral skills. As noted in section 2.3.2, the English subject curriculum provides no clear guidelines as to what the specific competence aims entail, or how they should be developed or assessed. Thus, the wide definitions of the competence aims provide a considerable freedom for interpretation, and, consequently, allow the individual teacher to choose freely between any teaching method or approach, or situation of assessment. This room for interpretation seems to create a discrepancy in practices among the teachers (see section 4.2). Furthermore, while pronunciation is only mentioned once in the competence aims, it appears as if pronunciation is still considered as one of the most important traits when assessing oral competence (see section 4.2.4.2). For these reasons, the findings of this study provide

implications for future curricula, which should provide clearer guidelines for assessment of oral skills. The development of a shared understanding of criteria and what is to be assessed seem necessary in order to create just and and reliable guidelines for assessment of students.

Lastly, an important reflection to make is that of the role of the teacher education programs in Norway. Naturally, the educational institutions play an important part in shaping and developing teachers' beliefs and practices. Similar to Sannes' (2013) findings, the present study also found how universities and other institutions influence the teachers' choice of accent and views on different varieties of English (see section 4.2.1). Hence, the findings indicate how teacher education programs may contribute to developing a greater awareness among Norwegian teachers of English about what should be considered and valued in terms of spoken English. As Teacher #7 states: "Out in the real life, no one cares about your accent, the most important this is that you make yourself understood. No one cares whether you have an American or British accent." Still, it appears that the universities still emphasize standard varieties of English such as BrE and AmE.

5.3 Suggestions for further research

While the aim of the present thesis was to investigate reported attitudes among a sample of teachers, this study cannot determine what these attitudes affect in the teacher's work. Borg (2003) notes that any research on teacher cognition should also include investigation of the teachers' actual practices. Given the limitations and size of this study, this thesis provides only a small insight into teachers' reported attitudes and practices. Thus, further research should aim to investigate the actual practices of teachers in Norwegian classrooms and seek to see whether the reported attitudes are truly reflected in their daily practice.

The present thesis has made a comparison of teachers' reported attitudes based on work experience. However, the sample of this study is very small, and the findings must be considered with caution. Still, based on the findings from this study, as well as some of the comments made by the respondents, it appears valuable to further investigate any discrepancies between both attitudes and practices of teachers based on work experience on a larger scale. Conducting research on similar topics in a larger scale may provide different results and would make it easier to compare teacher groups more thoroughly.

An interesting finding in this thesis was that the Norwegian speaker was rated as the most socially attractive one. It is also interesting to note that the English speaker was rated the highest in all traits except for the ones related to social attractiveness. The investigation of

reasons for this is beyond the scope of this thesis but may prove to be an interesting topic for further research.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Interview guide

Background:

- What is your education?

- For how long have you been working as a teacher?
    a. As an English teacher?

Speaker preferences:

- What kind of variety do you use yourself?
    a. Why?

- Which variety would you *like* to use?

- Do you prefer students to use one particular speaker variety?
    a. Why?

- Do the students use other varieties than American or British in the classroom?
    a. What do you think of these?

Teaching:

- How do you work with developing oral competence?

- Do you actively use the curriculum in your teaching?

Assessment:

- How do you assess oral competence in the English subject?
    a. Types of assessment

- What do you look for when assessing the oral competence among the students?
    a. Why?

- Do you correct «mistakes» in pronunciation among students?
    a. Examples?

- How do you emphasize the relationship between communication and pronunciation?

Appendix 2 – Comma Gets A Cure

COMMA GETS A CURE

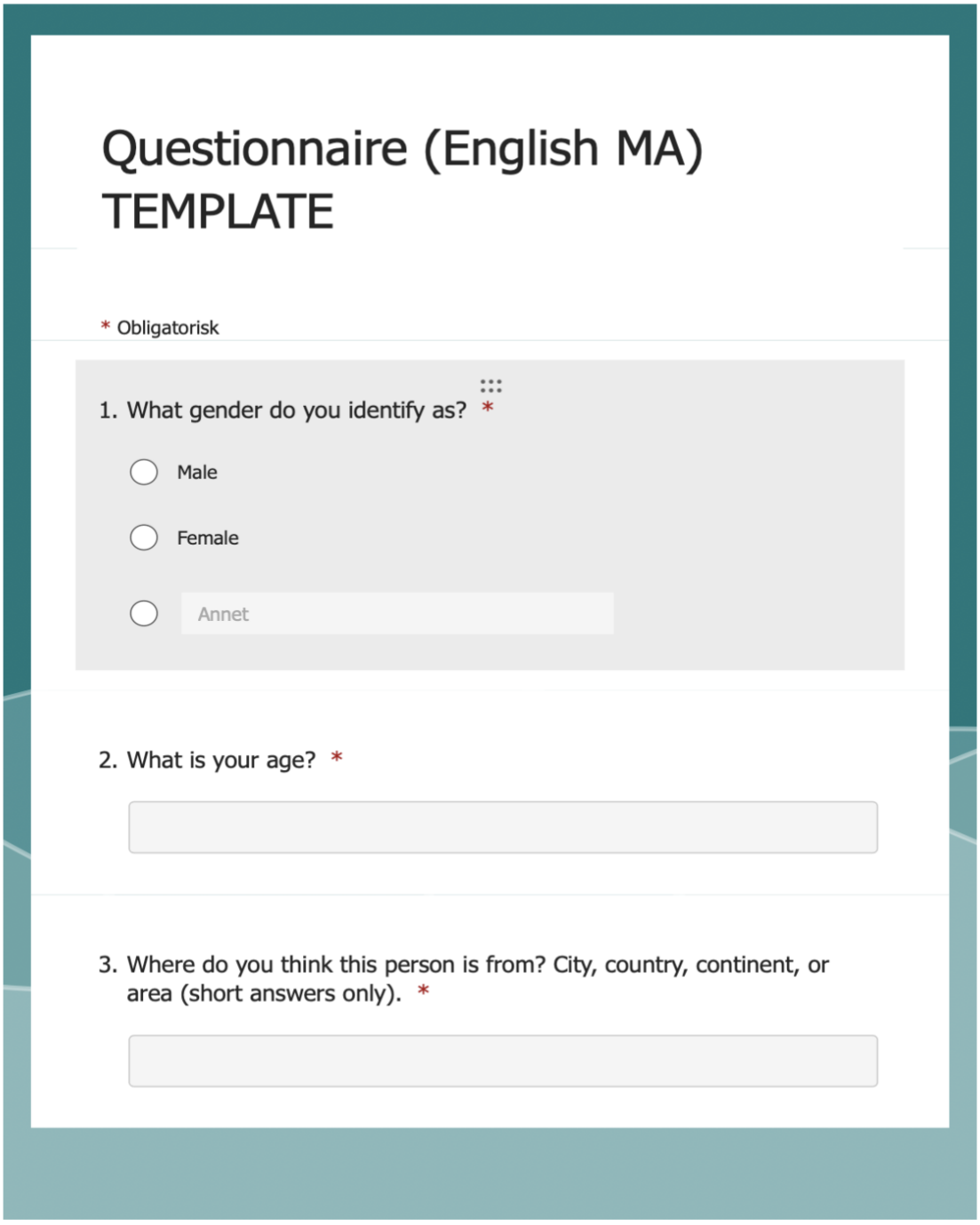
Well, here's a story for you: Sarah Perry was a veterinary nurse who had been working daily at an old zoo in a deserted district of the territory, so she was very happy to start a new job at a superb private practice in North Square near the Duke Street Tower. That area was much nearer for her and more to her liking. Even so, on her first morning, she felt stressed. She ate a bowl of porridge, checked herself in the mirror and washed her face in a hurry. Then she put on a plain yellow dress and a fleece jacket, picked up her kit and headed for work.

When she got there, there was a woman with a goose waiting for her. The woman gave Sarah an official letter from the vet. The letter implied that the animal could be suffering from a rare form of foot and mouth disease, which was surprising, because normally you would only expect to see it in a dog or a goat. Sarah was sentimental, so this made her feel sorry for the beautiful bird.

Before long, that itchy goose began to strut around the office like a lunatic, which made an unsanitary mess. The goose's owner, Mary Harrison, kept calling, "Comma, Comma," which Sarah thought was an odd choice for a name. Comma was strong and huge, so it would take some force to trap her, but Sarah had a different idea. First she tried gently stroking the goose's lower back with her palm, then singing a tune to her. Finally, she administered ether. Her efforts were not futile. In no time, the goose began to tire, so Sarah was able to hold on to Comma and give her a relaxing bath.

Once Sarah had managed to bathe the goose, she wiped her off with a cloth and laid her on her right side. Then Sarah confirmed the vet’s diagnosis. Almost immediately, she remembered an effective treatment that required her to measure out a lot of medicine. Sarah warned that this course of treatment might be expensive – either five or six times the cost of penicillin. I can’t imagine paying so much, but Mrs. Harrison – a millionaire lawyer – thought it was a fair price for a cure.

Appendix 3 – Questionnaire template



Questionnaire (English MA) TEMPLATE

* Obligatorisk

1. What gender do you identify as? *

- Male
- Female
- Annet

2. What is your age? *

3. Where do you think this person is from? City, country, continent, or area (short answers only). *

4. What is your overall assessment of this person's way of speaking? *

	Bad - 1	2	3	4	5	6 - Good
	○	○	○	○	○	○

5. This person's pronunciation appears: *

	Incorrect - 1	2	3	4	5 - Correct
	○	○	○	○	○

6. This person's pronunciation appears:: *

	Unintelligible - 1	2	3	4	5 - Intelligible
	○	○	○	○	○

7. This person's pronunciation appears: *

	Ugly - 1	2	3	4	5 - Beautiful
	○	○	○	○	○

8. This person seems: *

	Unpleasant - 1	2	3	4	5 - Pleasant
	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

9. This person seems: *

	Dishonest - 1	2	3	4	5 - Honest
	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

10. This person seems: *

	Boring - 1	2	3	4	5 - Humorous
	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

11. This person seems: *

	Poorly educated - 1	2	3	4	5 - Highly educated
	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

12. This person seems: *

	Unintelligent - 1	2	3	4	5 - Intelligent
	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

13. This person seems: *

	Poor - 1	2	3	4	5 - Rich
	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Appendix 4 – Approval from NSD

Sikt

Notification form / Masteroppgave i engelsk / Assessment

Assessment of processing of personal data

Reference number
585270

Assessment type
Standard

Date
24.10.2022

Project title
Masteroppgave i engelsk

Data controller (institution responsible for the project)
Universitetet i Bergen / Det humanistiske fakultet / Institutt for fremmedspråk

Project leader
Jerzy Norbert Nykiel

Student
Jonas Heggestad Hestetun

Project period
01.09.2022 - 15.07.2023

Categories of personal data
General

Legal basis
Consent (General Data Protection Regulation art. 6 nr. 1 a)

The processing of personal data is lawful, so long as it is carried out as stated in the notification form. The legal basis is valid until 15.07.2023.

Notification Form

Comment
OM VURDERINGEN
Personverntjenester har en avtale med institusjonen du forsker eller studerer ved. Denne avtalen innebærer at vi skal gi deg råd slik at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet ditt er lovlig etter personvernregelverket.

Personverntjenester har nå vurdert den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at behandlingen er lovlig, hvis den gjennomføres slik den er beskrevet i meldeskjemaet med dialog og vedlegg.

VIKTIG INFORMASJON TIL DEG
Du må lagre, sende og sikre dataene i tråd med retningslinjene til din institusjon. Dette betyr at du må bruke leverandører for spørreskjema, skylagring, videosamtale o.l. som institusjonen din har avtale med. Vi gir generelle råd rundt dette, men det er institusjonens egne retningslinjer for informasjonssikkerhet som gjelder.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET
Prosjektet vil behandle alminnelige kategorier av personopplysninger frem til den datoen som er oppgitt i meldeskjemaet.

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG
Prosjektet vil innhente samtykke fra de registrerte til behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at prosjektet legger opp til et samtykke i samsvar med kravene i art. 4 og 7, ved at det er en frivillig, spesifikk, informert og utvetydig bekreftelse som kan dokumenteres, og som den registrerte kan trekke tilbake.

Lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen vil dermed være den registrertes samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a.

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER

Personverntjenester vurderer at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger vil følge prinsippene i personvernforordningen om:

- lovlighet, rettferdighet og åpenhet (art. 5.1 a), ved at de registrerte får tilfredsstillende informasjon om og samtykker til behandlingen
- formålsbegrensning (art. 5.1 b), ved at personopplysninger samles inn for spesifikke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål, og ikke behandles til nye, uforenlige formål
- dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysninger som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med prosjektet
- lagringsbegrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle formålet

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER
Så lenge de registrerte kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter: innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18), og dataportabilitet (art. 20).

Personverntjenester vurderer at informasjonen om behandlingen som de registrerte vil motta oppfyller lovens krav til form og innhold, jf. art. 12.1 og art. 13.

Vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har behandlingsansvarlig institusjon plikt til å svare innen en måned.

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER
Personverntjenester legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidensialitet (art. 5.1. f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).

Ved bruk av databehandler (spørreskjemaleverandør, skylagring eller videosamtale) må behandlingen oppfylle kravene til bruk av databehandler, jf. art 28 og 29. Bruk leverandører som din institusjon har avtale med.

For å forsikre dere om at kravene oppfylles, må dere følge interne retningslinjer og/eller rådføre dere med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon.

MELD VESENTLIGE ENDRINGER
Dersom det skjer vesentlige endringer i behandlingen av personopplysninger, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til oss ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. Før du melder inn en endring, oppfordrer vi deg til å lese om hvilke type endringer det er nødvendig å melde: https://www.nsd.no/personverntjenester/fylle-ut-meldeskjema-for-personopplysninger/melde-endringer-i-meldeskjema

Du må vente på svar fra oss før endringen gjennomføres.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET
Personverntjenester vil følge opp ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Appendix 5 – NSD project invitation

Hei!

Takk for at du vil delta i mitt masterprosjekt!

Formål:
Formålet med prosjektet er å undersøke korleis lærarar møter og vurderer eit stort elevmangfald i klasserommet på ulike vidaregåande skular i Noreg.

Leiar for forskingsprosjektet:
Mitt namn er Jonas Heggestad Hestetun og er student ved Universitetet i Bergen. Institutt for framandspråk ved Universitetet i Bergen er ansvarleg for behandling av alle opplysningar innhenta i dette forskingsprosjektet.

Metode og gjennomføring:
I prosjektet blir du bedt om å delta i eit personleg intervju, der du vil bli bedt om å lytte til ulike engelsktalande lydfiler, samt å svare på eit kort digitalt spørjeskjema knytt til desse lydklippa. I etterkant vil du bli stilt spørsmål knytt til emnet. Intervjuet gjennomførast digitalt og vil bli tatt opp. Intervjuet vil anslagsvis vare i totalt 60 minutt. Du vil bli bedt om å oppgje kjønn, alder, utdanning, og år som yrkesaktiv.

Det er frivillig å delta:
Deltaking i prosjektet er frivillig og du kan når som helst rekke deg så lenge studien pågår utan å måtte oppgje grunn.

Personvern:
Underteikna vil, saman med rettleiar Jerzy Norbert Nykiel ved UiB, ha tilgang til alle opplysningar henta inn i prosjektet. Din informasjon vil ikkje bli delt med andre. Me passer på at din informasjon ikkje kan sporast tilbake til deg sjølv. Til dømes vil me nytte eit anna namn når me skriv om deg. Me følger elles loven om personvern. Tidspunkt for planlagt prosjektslutt er juli 2023. Alle personopplysningar blir då sletta.

Dine rettigheiter:
Du har rett til innsyn i informasjonen me samlar inn om deg. Du kan be om at informasjonen blir sletta. Dersom du ser informasjon som er feil, kan du seie ifrå og be forskaren om å rette dei. Du kan også spørje om ein kopi av informasjonen av oss. Du kan og klage til Datatilsynet dersom du meiner opplysningane har blitt behandla på ein uforsiktig eller uriktig måte.

Spørsmål:
Dersom du lurer på noko om studiet kan du ta kontakt med:
Institutt ved framandspråk ved Jerzy Norbert Nykiel. E-post: jerzy.nykiel@uib.no

Dersom du har spørsmål knytt til Personverntjenester si vurdering av prosjektet kan du ta kontakt med:
Personverntjenester, på e-post (personverntjenester@sikt.no) eller på telefon: 53 21 15 00.

Med beste helsing Jonas Heggestad Hestetun.

_____

SAMTYKKEERKLÆRING:

Eg har motteke og forstått informasjon om prosjektet og har fått høve til å stille spørsmål. Eg samtykker til:

å delta i personleg intervju og å svare på spørjeskjema

Eg samtykker til at opplysingane mine kan behandlast fram til prosjektet er avslutta.

(Signert av prosjektdeltakar, dato)

Appendix 6 – Comparison of average answers in relation to work experience among

Spørsmål	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9	10	10
ENGLAND 9	5,8	5,8	4,8	4,8	5,0	5,0	3,8	4,8	3,0	4,0	3,3	4,7	2,8	2,5	4,8	4,7	3,8	4,7	4,5	4,3
NORWAY 2	4,3	4,3	3,5	3,5	4,0	4,3	3,3	3,7	3,0	4,5	4,3	4,5	3,5	4,5	3,3	3,3	3,3	3,8	3,3	3,5
POLAND 9	3,5	4,5	3,0	3,7	3,8	4,0	2,8	3,3	3,0	3,3	3,3	4,5	3,0	2,5	3,3	4,0	3,3	4,2	3,0	3,0
INDIA 2	4,8	5,0	4,0	4,3	4,5	4,7	3,3	3,3	3,5	3,7	3,8	4,7	3,0	2,8	3,3	3,3	3,3	4,5	3,0	3,5
IRAN 10	2,8	2,7	2,5	2,7	2,5	3,0	2,8	2,7	2,3	3,2	2,8	3,7	2,0	2,5	2,5	2,5	2,8	3,0	2,8	2,8
GERMANY 9	5,3	5,2	4,5	4,5	5,0	4,7	4,5	3,8	4,3	3,5	4,3	4,2	3,0	2,7	3,5	3,7	4,3	3,7	3,5	3,8

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