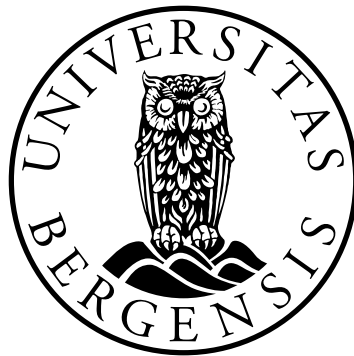


Britannia still rules the waves

Norwegian teachers' and students' attitudes to
British English and American English

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Summary in Norwegian

Denne studien undersøker norske læreres og elevers holdninger til britisk- og amerikansk engelsk, et uutforsket område i forskning på språkholdninger. Det er, så vidt meg bekjent, ingen studier som tar for seg både lærere og elevers holdninger til amerikansk og britisk i en norsk kontekst.

Britisk har tradisjonelt sett vært den varianten av engelsk som har vært mest brukt i skolesammenheng i Norge, selv om amerikansk- og britisk engelsk formelt sett er likestilte i norsk skole. På den annen side er nordmenn flest eksponert for amerikansk engelsk i dagliglivet i en større grad enn britisk engelsk. Studien er bygget rundt forskningsspørsmålet: 'Hvilke holdninger har norske lærere og elever til britisk engelsk og amerikansk engelsk?' For å besvare dette spørsmålet har studien benyttet seg av to av de mest vanlige tilnærmingene for å studere språkholdninger – direkte og indirekte.

Resultatene viser at britisk engelsk ser ut til å inneha en sterk posisjon i den norske skolen, da både lærere og elever ser ut til å foretrekke britisk engelsk fremfor amerikansk engelsk. Studien viser også at lærernes og elevenes holdninger til britisk- og amerikansk engelsk ser ut til å være svært like, men at språkpraksisen deres er ulik. Det vil si at mens begge gruppene foretrekker britisk engelsk, så tyder resultatene på at de fleste elever snakker amerikansk engelsk, mens de fleste lærere snakker britisk engelsk. I tillegg tyder studien på at britisk- og amerikansk engelsk utfyller ulike sosiale roller; britisk engelsk ser ut til å bli tillagt en formell rolle, mens amerikansk engelsk ser ut til å bli tillagt en uformell rolle. Resultatene viser også at ulike tilnærminger kan føre til ulike resultater, og det er derfor viktig å ikke kun benytte seg av én tilnærming, men at man heller forsøker å studere språkholdninger ved hjelp av flere ulike tilnærminger.

Studien representerer et bidrag til den stadig voksende kunnskapen om holdninger til det engelske språk. Samtidig kan den sees på som et viktig bidrag, ved å studere både læreres og elevers holdninger til britisk- og amerikansk engelsk fra et norsk perspektiv. Til sist kan studien sies å være til nytte for engelsklærere i Norge, da den gir hittil ukjent informasjon om læreres holdninger til engelsk.

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List of abbreviations

AE: Standard American English

BE: Standard British English

LA: Linguistic Attractiveness

MGT: Matched guise technique

SA: Social Attractiveness

VG: Verbal guise

VGT: Verbal guise technique

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim and scope

European schools and universities have traditionally taught the variety of English referred to as ‘British English’ (Trudgill & Hannah 2008:5). Indeed, most of the teachers I have had during primary and secondary school have spoken with a British accent. However, when I started speaking English I noticed that it felt more natural for me to speak with an American accent. American culture is very present in the everyday lives of Norwegians, be it music, TV, movies, the Internet or other sources. Nevertheless, the position of British English within the school system remains strong. In fact, some teachers still believe that British English is the only variety of English worth teaching (Janicki 2005:10). Why is this? Do the students of these teachers agree?

Ladegaard (1998) found that Danish students largely favored British English to American English, in addition to mainly speaking British English. The current MA thesis is inspired by the findings in Ladegaard (1998), and aims to investigate the attitudes that Norwegian teachers and students have toward British English and American English. Thus, the research question underlying the current thesis is the following: ‘*What attitudes do Norwegian teachers and students have toward British English and American English?*’. Few studies have investigated this topic in a Norwegian context. Rindal (2010; 2014) serve as examples of research that has investigated the attitudes of Norwegian students toward British English and American English. However, to the extent of my knowledge, no studies have included both teachers *and* students.

In addition to serving as a contribution to the growing body of studies investigating attitudes toward the English language, the results from the current study will hopefully be of use to Norwegian teachers of English and their students. Bradac and Giles (1991:9) suggest that people’s attitudes toward language varieties can influence the motivation to learn those varieties. Thus, it ought to be of interest to obtain information about students’ and teachers’ attitudes toward the two English varieties taught in Norwegian schools – BE and AE.

1.2 Defining the varieties

The following two sections will provide definitions of American English and British English (hereafter AE and BE) – the two varieties under investigation in this thesis. AE and BE both represent standard varieties of spoken English (see 2.2.1). Spoken language varieties are extremely challenging to define, as it is in their nature to constantly change. Researchers cannot possibly formulate one definition that successfully includes all aspects of a variety, and must therefore choose a definition based on what will be useful for *their* purpose. Thus, the definitions used in the current thesis are chosen because they are useful for *this* thesis, for my purpose. Other researchers may use completely different definitions, which would be no more correct or incorrect than the ones I use.

1.2.1 Defining Standard British English

In this thesis BE will be defined as ‘...a social accent associated with the BBC, the public schools in England, and with members of the upper-middle and upper classes’ (Trudgill & Hannah 2008:6). An important word in this definition is *associated*. The word implies that although not all members of the above mentioned groups necessarily speak BE, the accent is commonly *associated* with those groups. Moreover, speakers belonging to other social groups, such as the working class, may very well speak BE, but will not necessarily be *associated* with it. The definition was chosen partly because of this particular word. Associations have everything to do with language attitudes, as language varieties are often associated with different qualities. Moreover, this definition does not focus on specific phonological traits, which would be notoriously difficult, if not impossible, to use in a study focusing on attitudes.

1.2.2 Defining Standard American English

In this thesis AE will be defined as ‘... a combination of those linguistic forms which are most general in the speech of educated native speaker Americans. These forms are best reflected by the native speaker broadcasters of the major American television and radio networks, namely, the ABC, NBC, CBS, NPR, and CNN’ (Janicki 2005:27). The definition was chosen partly because it is comparable to the definition of BE adopted in this thesis.

1.3 Hypotheses

The hypotheses presented here are based on results from previous research done on attitudes toward BE and AE (discussed in chapter 2), and on personal observations. The hypotheses of this thesis are as follows:

1) Students perceive AE as the preferred variety.

Hypothesis 1 was motivated by previous studies done on students' attitudes toward BE and AE, as well as personal observations. The results in Söderlund & Modiano (2002) indicated that Swedish students have a preference for AE, and that they feel more exposed to AE than BE. Rindal (2010) found that a majority of the Norwegian students in her study used phonological variables typical of AE when they spoke English. Additionally, as a student enrolled in the teacher-training program, I have noticed that many students in Norwegian high schools talk with an American accent. I have also noticed that a majority of my friends speak with an American accent.

2) Teachers perceive BE as the preferred variety.

Hypothesis 2 was motivated by one previous study, which indicated that Swedish teachers largely prefer BE. In addition, the hypothesis has been inspired by the statement “[t]raditionally, schools and universities in Europe – and in many other parts of the world – have taught the variety of English which is often referred to as “British English” (Trudgill & Hannah 2008:5). Also, my personal observations contributed to the creation of this hypothesis. A majority of my own teachers have spoken BE, and I wanted to see if Norwegian teachers perceive BE to be the preferred variety today.

3) Students and teachers perceive BE to be more prestigious and linguistically attractive, while AE is perceived to be more socially attractive.

Hypothesis 3 was primarily motivated by findings in previous research (Ladegaard 1998; Hiraga 2005; Rindal 2010), but also personal observations. Previous research indicates that BE has been judged to be more prestigious and linguistically attractive than AE. BE has had a

strong position within the educational system, and most of the schoolbooks and dictionaries I have encountered during compulsory school have been BE-oriented. Previous research also indicates that AE is perceived to be more socially attractive than BE. AE is arguably the variety that dominated the world outside the school system, e.g. in popular TV shows like Friends and How I Met Your Mother etc. I wanted to see whether a similar pattern would occur in the current study.

4) Students' and teachers' attitudes toward AE and BE differ depending on the approach used to study these attitudes.

Hypothesis 4 was motivated by the results from previous research on language attitudes. This hypothesis differs from the previous three in that it does not seek to investigate teachers' and students' attitudes. Rather, this hypothesis seeks to investigate whether different approaches used to investigate the same phenomenon will lead to different results. To clarify, I am not suggesting that people's attitudes are affected, shaped or changed by different research designs. What I *am* suggesting is that different approaches may lead to different results. If so, this suggests that future research done on attitudes to language ought to use triangulation, meaning that one obtains different perspectives on a phenomenon by using a variety of approaches (see 3.2). Previous research indicates that people's attitudes toward different speech varieties may differ depending on the approach used to measure those attitudes (Bayard et al. 2001; Garrett et al. 2005; Kristiansen 2010; Loftheim 2013).

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter will present attitudes as a theoretical concept, starting with a presentation of attitudes in general (2.1), followed by attitudes to language (2.2), attitudes to English (2.3), and finally attitudes to AE and BE (2.4). When I refer to studies I will use the labels AE and BE instead of the labels used in that particular study, as all the labels aim to describe varieties similar to AE and BE. Also, the term *variety* will be used in a broad sense, and may refer to language, dialect or accent.

2.1 Attitudes

Attitudes have been referred to as being the most distinctive and indispensable concept in social psychology (Allport 1935:798; in Garrett 2010:19). Attitudes are a central part of people's lives, and every single day we experience a range of attitudes toward people, countries, food, music, languages etc. Attitudes can be positively, negatively or neutrally charged, we may be perfectly aware of them and we may be unaware of them. Attitudes affect the way we perceive other people. People's name may, for instance, affect the way we perceive them. Here, the name Ronny will serve as an example. It is widely known that many people in Norway hold negative attitudes toward this name. I asked a few of my friends to tell me what they thought when they heard the name Ronny. Some of the answers given were 'criminal', 'bully', 'he does not have higher education', and 'he will never be prime minister'. Another example comes from Gordon (1997:60), who found that women speaking with an accent typically associated with lower-class language variety was evaluated as having low intelligence, low family income, and being likely to smoke and be promiscuous. Thus, negative attitudes towards a name might affect the lives of individuals carrying it. These two examples also exemplify why research on attitudes is necessary. Even though it is common to have such attitudes, it would be misguided to draw conclusions about individuals based on them. By making people aware of the impact attitudes such as these have, people might be less inclined to judge others based on irrelevant information such as the way they speak, or their name.

2.1.1 Definitions

Most people have a good idea of what attitudes are, but they would probably experience some difficulty if they were asked to define the term. Many professionals would probably also find

this task very difficult. As with all psychological concepts, there does not exist *one* definition that is accepted by all researchers. There exists a seemingly endless number of definitions for this phenomenon, and in this section three of these definitions will be presented. These three were chosen because they highlight different aspects of attitudes. The first and second definitions can be said to be broad and general, while the last definition is more specific and detailed.

Thurstone (1931:261) formulated one of the earliest definitions of attitudes. He defines an attitude as ‘...the affect for or against a psychological object’. He goes on to explain that ‘psychological object’ can refer to a physical object, an idea, a plan of action, a form of conduct, an ideal, a moral principle, a slogan or a symbol (ibid:262). Thurstone also introduces us to the term ‘affect’, a term that often refers to feelings when we are dealing with attitudes. Thus, according to this definition an attitude is described as the feelings – positive, negative or neutral – that the individual holds toward a psychological object. This definition could be criticized for being too narrow, because it states that attitudes only consist of one component, namely, affect.

Allport (1954; in Garrett 2010:19) defined an attitude as ‘...a learned disposition to think, feel and behave toward a person (or object) in a particular way’. In this definition attitudes consist of three components: thought, feelings and behavior. By the late 1950s this tripartite model was adopted almost universally (Ajzen & Fishbein 1980:19). In addition, Allport stated that attitudes are something human beings learn, i.e. that we are not born with them. In other words, Allport proposed that the individual *learns* to think, feel and behave toward a person, or an object, in a particular way.

Lastly, Oppenheim (1982) has formulated a rather extensive definition of attitudes:

[A] construct, an abstraction which cannot be directly apprehended. It is an inner component of mental life which expresses itself, directly or indirectly, through such more obvious processes as stereotypes, beliefs, verbal statements or reactions, ideas and opinions, selective recall, anger or satisfaction or some other emotion; and in various other aspects of behavior (Oppenheim 1982:39).

First, Oppenheim stated that attitudes cannot be *directly apprehended*. In other words, attitudes cannot be directly observed, because they occur inside people’s minds. You would not be able to predict a person’s attitudes toward e.g. abortion, simply by looking at them. Second, attitudes express themselves *directly or indirectly*. This means that while some attitudes are openly displayed, others are not. You may, for instance, have very positive attitudes toward the color blue and express this openly by wearing a t-shirt with the sentence ‘I love blue’ written on it. Or you may have positive attitudes toward the color blue and express this indirectly by

wearing a lot of blue clothes. This definition also points out that while we may be consciously aware of some attitudes, we might be unaware of others. Oppenheim's definition also illustrates the difficulty of measuring attitudes, simply by illustrating their complexity.

2.1.2 Internal structure of attitudes

As seen in the previous sections, there is some agreement that attitudes consist of three components: affect, cognition and behavior. Attitudes are *affective* in the sense that they relate to people's feelings about an attitude object, they are *cognitive* in that they relate to the thoughts and beliefs people have about an attitude object, and they are *behavioral* in the sense that they predispose the individual to act in certain ways with respect to an attitude object (Garrett 2010:23, italics added). A division like this may seem excessive, and people are unlikely to be able to distinguish between the components. Nonetheless, it provides an important conceptual framework that allows researchers to express the fact that evaluation can be manifested through responses of all three components (Eagly & Chaiken 1993:14).

There is some controversy as to how these three components actually relate to attitudes. The behavioral component has arguably caused most of this controversy. The belief that if you change someone's attitudes you will change their behavior is widely held. In fact, the relationship between attitudes and behavior is where '...much of the rationale for researching attitudes stands or falls' (Perloff 1993:79; in Garrett 2010:25). Still, there exists a large body of research showing that the three components do not necessarily work in agreement with each other.

A study conducted by LaPiere (1934) has frequently been used to illustrate the difficult relationship between behavior and attitudes. In the early 1930s he conducted an experiment while travelling across the US with a Chinese couple. This was '...a time when there was considerable prejudice in the USA against people from the Far East...' (Garrett 2010:25). The couple asked for accommodation at 66 hotels, auto camps and tourist homes, and was refused only once (LaPiere 1934:232). They also visited 184 restaurants and cafes without any rejections. Six months later LaPiere sent out questionnaires to the same establishments, asking them: "Will you accept members of the Chinese race as guests in your establishment?" (ibid:233). He received 128 answers, and over 90 percent of the establishments had answered "No". Although the study has been criticized for its methods, it illustrates how our attitudes may differ from our behavior.

A theory developed by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) may help explain why our behavior may not agree with our attitudes. It is called the theory of reasoned action, and is based on the assumption that human beings are rational beings. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980:5) argue that ‘...people consider the implications of their actions before they decide to engage or not engage in a given behavior’. The owners of the establishments that LaPiere and the Chinese couple visited might state that they would not accept Chinese people into their establishments, but to do so in person is something quite different. During the 1930s, also known as the period of depression, the US suffered from bad economy. The owners of the establishments would most likely not want to, or afford to, reject paying customers. The theory of reasoned action thus points to the fact that there are completely rational reasons for why our behavior deviates from our attitudes.

There are people who question whether it is at all possible to measure attitudes in a satisfactory way. Trivers (2011:303f) argues that ‘... the greater the social content of a discipline, especially human, the greater will be the biases due to self-deception and the greater the retardation of the field compared with less social disciplines’. Trivers defines the self as the conscious mind, which means that self-deception occurs when the conscious mind is kept in the dark, when the truth is hidden from our conscious mind (ibid:9). According to Trivers, social sciences, such as social psychology, sociology etc., are more prone to self-deception than other sciences, because they largely rely on interaction between human beings. Attitudes, for instance, are often measured through verbal responses to questions, such as questionnaires or interviews. Trivers argues that it is virtually pointless to base entire sciences on information gathered from people’s self-responses, because it is impossible to trust that the information given by the respondents is true.

The current study does not share Trivers’ view and is written under the assumption that attitudes *can* be measured, and that it is important to do so. Nonetheless, no research method can ever be perfect – whether it belongs to the social sciences or not – and it is important for any researcher to be able to identify and acknowledge these flaws.

2.1.3 Origin of attitudes

As might be expected, there is no definite answer to where attitudes originate. Many researchers, such as Allport (1954), have worked under the assumption that attitudes are learnt. However, there is also evidence suggesting that attitudes may be inherited. One study found that identical twins had more similar attitudes toward the death penalty and jazz music than

fraternal twins did (Martin et al. 1986; in Aronsen et al. 2014:200). We can thus conclude that while some attitudes are learnt, there is a possibility that others may be linked to heredity. To my knowledge, no research has indicated that attitudes to language are inherited, and in this thesis I will work under the assumption that attitudes to language are learnt.

Two important sources for our attitudes are our personal experiences and our social environment (Garrett 2010:22). One way attitudes may be formed is through observational learning, where we watch other people's behavior, and notice what consequences this behavior leads to. Our parents are an important source for observational learning. Another way attitudes may be formed is through instrumental learning, where we attend to the consequences of attitudes and whether these bring rewards or punishments (ibid). The media represents a different, but also important part of our social environment, and can have influence on attitudes. Television, in particular, plays an important role in the formation of attitudes in children (Hogg & Vaughan 2011:173). The media has become increasingly present in people's lives, at least in Western societies. Most people own a TV, use the Internet, listen to music, read books etc. The media is close to omnipresent; it would be nearly impossible not to encounter some sort of media during the course of a day, because our society is filled with it.

2.1.4 Social stereotypes

A term closely related to attitudes is social stereotyping. Stereotyping may be defined as '...a functional cognitive device by means of which we systematize our social environment, creating distinct and apparently homogenous categories' (Kristiansen 2001:137). Stereotyping is a way for human beings to organize and understand the world they live in. Stereotyping originates from the process of categorization, in which people and objects are divided into large and small groups on the basis that they share certain features (Smith & Mackie 2000:160). We might, for instance, notice that several extremist groups belong to the religion Islam, thus creating a link between the labels 'Muslim' and 'extremist'. In addition, stereotyping also tends to accentuate intragroup similarity and intergroup difference (Oakes et al. 1994:37), making the members within a group appear more similar, and the differences between groups greater. In other words, social stereotyping will make it seem as if all Muslims are somewhat similar to each other, while at the same time accentuate the differences between Muslims and people belonging to other religions.

Stereotyping is a natural human process, and can make it easier for us to organize the world we live in. However, social stereotyping can also make us create generalizations about

people in an unfortunate way. It would be very wrong to make the assumption that everyone belonging to Islam is an extremist. Despite being an effective way to organize the world, stereotyping also plays ‘...a role in maintaining inequalities which advantage some and disadvantage others’ (Garrett 2010:33).

2.2 Attitudes to language

‘You like tomato /təˈmeɪdʊ/ and I like tomato /təˈmɑːto/’ Louis Armstrong sang to Ella Fitzgerald in the song *Let’s call the whole thing off* (Let’s Do It 1995, track 3). Throughout this song they highlight different pronunciations of words, and the general disagreement people may have regarding the pronunciation of different words. To me, the song perfectly demonstrates how trivial, and yet how socially significant people’s attitudes to language can be. Attitudes to language are ubiquitous in human society; they exist wherever languages exist. When human beings interact they form impressions of each other. Language can play a powerful role in this process, because language does more than just convey intended referential information, it is a powerful social force (Cargile et al. 1994:221). The use of particular language varieties can communicate a significant amount of information about speakers, such as where they come from, what ethnicity they belong to, and their social class, as well as information about the social stereotypes assigned to these particular languages or accents (Dragojevic et al. 2013:1). If you talk on the phone with someone that you have never met before, you are still able to form a clear impression of this person, such as what they look like, what kind of job they have, or if they seem like a pleasant person. Regardless of whether or not these impressions are correct, they still appear.

Since the 1960s there has been ‘... an explosion of research showing that people can express definite and consistent attitudes toward speakers who use particular styles of speaking’ (Giles & Billings 2004:188). For instance, French is a language frequently and consistently described, at least in the Western world, as a beautiful and romantic language, while German, Arabic and some East-Asian languages are commonly considered harsh and unpleasant-sounding (Giles & Niedzielski 1998:85). Likewise, many people believe that double negatives, as in *I haven’t done nothing* are illogical and wrong. In fact, double negatives are actually a natural part of many languages, such as Spanish, Russian, Hungarian and Arabic (Cheshire 1998:120). When it comes to the English language, double negatives have fallen out of use in standard varieties, but are still widely used in non-standard varieties (ibid:121). Attitudes regarding entire languages also exist, e.g. the belief that certain languages are better or superior

to others. Harlow (1998:10) notes that even though Maori now has the status of official language in New Zealand, many people believe that it is a language incapable of fulfilling the role of an official language, that Maori is inferior to English.

Seligman et al. (1972:131) examined some of the clues teachers use to form attitudes toward students. A group of student-teachers were presented with different types of stimulus material, gathered from boys in the third grade in two elementary schools, including speech samples, photographs, artwork and compositions (ibid). Ideally, one would hope that teachers would rely on relevant information (e.g. the students' compositions and art work) when evaluating students, and ignore information that is irrelevant (e.g. photographs of the students and their speech samples). However, as it turns out, the results indicated that speech samples in particular were an important cue to the teachers in their evaluation of students, even when the speech samples were combined with other stimuli it did not affect the results (ibid:141). The boys with 'good voices' were generally evaluated as more intelligent, more privileged, and as better students than the ones with 'poor voices' (ibid:135).

Kristiansen (1997) has illustrated how different dialects in Denmark can elicit different levels of co-operational behavior. The study was conducted in the only existing cinema of a town called Næstved, located near Copenhagen. The audiences were presented with one standard, one urban, and two rural dialects. All three are dialects existing in the Næstved area. Kristiansen notes that the standard dialect is associated with prestige, is frequently used by the media, and is considered the most correct dialect (ibid:293). Each audience was addressed over the loudspeaker, in varying dialects, and was asked to fill out a questionnaire. The aim was to see how many people would co-operate upon hearing the different dialects. The results showed that overall there was a significantly larger number of respondents who co-operated when presented with the standard dialect than when presented with the other dialects (ibid:296).

The way people speak may even affect how they are treated in court. Dixon et al. (2002) examined the role accents can play when it comes to the attribution of guilt. Two accents were evaluated using the matched guise technique (MGT),¹ namely, BE and the Birmingham accent, which means that the same bidialectal speaker produced both accents. BE is acknowledged as a standard accent in Britain (see 2.2.1), while the Birmingham accent is largely stigmatized. The respondents in the study were told they would listen to a recording of a policeman interrogating a British male criminal. In reality, the respondents were listening to hired actors. One group of respondents listened to the BE accent, and another to the

¹ For more information on the MGT, see section 3.1.2.

² With the conceptual stimuli, 'accent identical to your own' was rated most favorably, with BE as a close second.

Birmingham accent. The results indicated that the speaker with the stigmatized Birmingham accent was judged to be significantly more guilty than the speaker with the BE accent (ibid).

As shown in these studies, the way that people speak can be of great importance, and may affect how others treat them. In addition, studies like these indicate the importance of researching attitudes to language. It is important to make people aware of the effect that language can have on the evaluation of other people. If people were made aware, then hopefully they would be less likely to let these attitudes affect their evaluations of others.

2.2.1 Standard Language Ideology

There are many people who subscribe to the idea that there are correct and incorrect ways of speaking. These people can be said to hold prescriptive attitudes toward spoken language, meaning that they wish to impose the ‘correct’ way of speaking on other language users. All language users have beliefs regarding what language is and how it should be used (Dragojevic et al. 2013:3), beliefs that can be referred to as language ideologies. Most famous of these ideologies is perhaps the standard language ideology, defined by Lippi-Green (1997) as:

... a bias toward an *abstracted*, idealized, homogenous spoken language which is *imposed* and maintained by dominant block institutions and which names as its model the written language, but which is drawn primarily from the spoken language of the upper middle class (Lippi-Green 1997:64, italics added).

Numerous studies have repeatedly shown that standard language varieties are generally favored, as opposed to non-standard varieties (Giles 1970; Lippi-Green 1997; Preston 1998; Hiraga 2005; Coupland & Bishop 2007).

A standard variety is the codified variety of a language, the language taught in school, presented in grammar books and dictionaries. The standard is a variety that has undergone a process of standardization that other language varieties have not. This leaves the standard variety in a special and favorable position, and standard languages in general enjoy a high level of prestige. Varieties that have not undergone a standardization process are called non-standard varieties. In England, for instance, BE represents the standard variety, whereas Birmingham and Cockney are examples of non-standard varieties.

Language is a powerful social indicator, and studies have indicated that speaking a standard or non-standard variety can affect how others perceive you. For instance, it is likely that a person speaking a standard variety would be evaluated more positively with regard to e.g. school achievements than a person speaking a non-standard variety, as shown in Seligman

et al. (1972) (see 2.2). Although discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, gender or social class is not publicly acceptable, it seems that discrimination on linguistic grounds is publicly acceptable (Milroy & Milroy 2012:2).

People who follow the standard language ideology often do not distinguish between written and spoken language, which can be problematic. For instance, it would be incorrect to say *I done it* when speaking Standard English, and it would be equally wrong to use this sentence in written English, as both Standard English and written English require the sentence *I did it*. However, it would be perfectly legitimate to say *I done it* when speaking certain non-standard varieties of English. Thus, a problem occurs when people treat written and spoken language as if they are the same thing, because spoken and written languages behave very differently. Whereas written languages are relatively easily standardized, living spoken languages are never fully standardized, because spoken languages are not stable units; it is in their nature to change. As Lippi-Green (1997) points to in her definition, standard spoken varieties are an *abstraction*, meaning that they exist only as an idea, not as something that actually occurs. Standardization demands stability and uniformity, which is in direct opposition to how spoken languages behave.

Another problem related to standard language ideology is the belief that standardization is a naturally occurring phenomenon, rather than the human made process it actually is. As Lippi-Green points out, standard spoken languages are *imposed*, meaning that they are forced onto language users, and do not occur naturally. Standard languages developed alongside the development of other standardized items, such as money, weight, length etc. (Milroy 2001). Many languages have standard varieties, such as French, German and English, but standardization of language is not universal; some languages do not have standards (Milroy 2001). Linguists may actually have contributed to the misunderstanding that all languages have standards, as most research conducted on language description has been conducted on languages that have standard varieties (Milroy 2001).

There are two well-known theories that offer explanations for why certain language varieties, or languages, are preferred to others. These are called the inherent value hypothesis and imposed norm hypothesis (Giles et al. 1979). People subscribing to the Inherent Value hypothesis argue that certain varieties are better than others because of the intrinsic qualities within that language variety, e.g. that they are esthetically more beautiful, that the grammar is more complex, that the vocabulary is more extensive etc. According to the inherent value hypothesis, the standard variety is evaluated more favorably than non-standard varieties because the standard variety is linguistically superior. In contrast, subscribers to the imposed

norm hypothesis argue that certain varieties have gained their favorable position through the people who have traditionally spoken them. ‘In most cultural contexts the users of the prestigious variety of language are to a large extent the most powerful social group’ (Giles et al. 1979:590). According to the imposed norm hypothesis, the standard variety is perceived to be linguistically superior because of the people who have spoken the standard variety. Thus, the standard variety has achieved its status because the people who speak it have generally been a powerful and influential group, through the prestige of its speakers (ibid:591).

Giles et al. (1979:590) tested the inherent value and imposed norm hypotheses. The basis for their research was ‘... whether the most powerful groups in society adopted their particular speech patterns in a more or less arbitrary manner or whether they consciously (or unconsciously) selected the universally more esthetic code’. In order to test which hypothesis gained support they asked a group of respondents to evaluate a language variety they knew nothing about, a language variety they did not understand and had no, or very little, exposure to. The respondents were Welsh, and were asked to evaluate three language varieties in French Canada, of which they had no prior knowledge. One of the varieties is perceived by native speakers in French-speaking Canada to be significantly more prestigious than the other two varieties. If the Welsh respondents were successfully able to identify the most prestigious variety, this would support the inherent value hypothesis. On the contrary, the results showed that the respondents were not able to identify the most prestigious variety. Thus, the results supported the imposed norm hypothesis, indicating that the variety perceived to be most prestigious is not in fact linguistically superior to other varieties. Following the imposed norm hypothesis we can say that, although different, *I did it* and *I done it* are equal in linguistic terms, but are unequal in social terms. The former is associated with a prestigious and powerful social group, while the latter is associated with people of a lower social class.

Trudgill (1983) argues that the imposed norm hypothesis is inadequate, and offers an extension of it, which he calls the social connotation hypothesis. Trudgill explains how, in Britain, rural varieties generally tend to be judged more favorably than urban varieties, and that this cannot be fully explained by the Imposed Norm hypothesis. Rural dialects in Britain do not represent a *norm*, they are not standard varieties, and are thus not covered by the imposed norm hypothesis. Instead, Trudgill argues that this is:

‘...the result of the different social connotations rural and urban accents have for most British people. The vast majority of British people now live in towns, and many townspeople ... have a romanticized nostalgic view of the countryside and the country life. They are much more realistic, on the other hand, in their assessment of the stresses and disadvantages of town life ...’ (Trudgill 1983:219).

The social connotation hypothesis offers a more nuanced picture than the imposed norm hypothesis, and allows for people's associations with language varieties to influence their attitudes.

The respondents in Giles et al. (1979) had no knowledge of the social connotations connected to the different varieties of French Canadian, but evaluated the varieties based purely on what they heard. Thus, they did not reproduce the evaluative pattern found among French-speaking Canadians. I would contend that a majority of linguists follow the imposed norm hypothesis, and generally see all languages, all dialects, and all accents as equal in linguistic terms. However, language does not exist in a social vacuum; it is affected and changed by social forces.

2.3 Attitudes to English

Crystal (2003) argues that the English language has become, or is at least on its way to becoming, a global language. In the last half of the twentieth century, English has been commonly used as a *lingua franca*, i.e. '[a] language used to communicate between speakers who speak different languages as their mother tongues' (Schneider 2011:240). Additionally, it is frequently used in the media, in business, and in international organizations. It is not possible to say exactly how many people speak English, but it has been estimated that it might be as many as 1880 million speakers (Crystal 2003:61), divided between first-, second- and foreign-language speakers. Naturally then, many people have attitudes toward English. In the course of a day, the average Norwegian will most likely encounter the English language several times, despite the fact that English is not spoken natively in Norway, nor does it have an official status. To say it bluntly, English is unavoidable.

2.3.1 Native speakers' attitudes to English

There exists an extensive amount of research regarding attitudes to varieties of English spoken in Britain and the US. The following sections will show that certain accents in English-speaking countries are greatly stigmatized. Research also indicates that accents in Britain and the US are evaluated differently depending on whether they are standard, rural and urban varieties. Finally, attitudes toward English in non-native speaking countries will also be mentioned.

Giles (1970) has been frequently cited within the field of attitudes to language. The results from this study have been reproduced and tested many times since. Giles wanted to investigate British regional and foreign accents on three different evaluative dimensions. Accents were with regard to their ‘aesthetic’, ‘communicative’, and ‘status’ contents, and the study employed the MGT. First, respondents listened to, and rated, 13 different accents. Second, they rated 16 accents conceptually, meaning that they were only presented with labels of the accents. The results showed that BE was rated most favorably on nearly all dimensions,² both when evaluated with sound stimuli, and when evaluated conceptually. AE received varying ratings: it was rated favorably on ‘communicative’ and ‘status’ contents, whereas it was rated much more negatively with regard to ‘aesthetics’. Giles had hypothesized that urban varieties would not be rated favorably. The results support this hypothesis, as the Birmingham accent was consistently ranked the lowest, or second to lowest along each dimension. The accents of Liverpool and Cockney were also consistently rated at the lower-end of the dimensions.

A large study, often referred to as the ‘Voices’ study, was conducted by Coupland & Bishop (2007). It can be viewed as a replication of Giles’ (1970) study. Using an online survey information was gathered from over 5000 respondents, from different regions of the UK, and with a wide demographic diversity. The respondents were asked to evaluate 34 different accents of English in terms of Prestige and Social Attractiveness. The accents were primarily British, but some non-British accents were also included, such as AE and New Zealand. The accents were presented to the respondents in the form of labels, i.e. conceptually. This means that respondents did not actually hear the accents, but evaluated them based on their own assumed perceptions. The results showed that the labels ‘Standard English’ and ‘Accent identical to your own’ were very favorably evaluated on both dimensions. ‘Queen’s English’ was rated the most favorable with regard to Prestige, and moderately favorable with regard to Social Attractiveness. AE was rated favorably with regard to Prestige, and more neutrally with regard to Social Attractiveness. The urban varieties ‘Birmingham’, ‘Glasgow’ and ‘Liverpool’ were afforded low scores on both Prestige and Social Attractiveness. Even though all age groups were overall negative toward the stigmatized varieties, younger respondents were *less* negative than older respondents (Coupland & Bishop 2007:85). The respondents were also asked to state how important it was for them that people should ‘speak properly’. All age groups reported it as being important to ‘speak properly’. There proved to be a linear increase

² With the conceptual stimuli, ‘accent identical to your own’ was rated most favorably, with BE as a close second.

from the youngest to oldest response group, where the youngest group rated it as being less important (but still important) and the oldest as very important (ibid:83). These results might suggest an ongoing attitude change in younger generations.

Hiraga (2005) investigated British peoples' attitudes toward six varieties of English in the US and Britain. The varieties were divided into three groups: standard, rural and urban. The standard varieties were BE and AE; the rural varieties were West Yorkshire and Alabama; the urban varieties were Birmingham and New York City. Using the VGT, respondents were asked to evaluate the six accents on seven-point semantic scales. The accents were evaluated with regard to Status and Solidarity. In terms of Status, BE and AE were rated significantly more favorably than the other varieties: BE was rated most favorably, and AE second most favorably. In terms of Solidarity BE was rated third to last, whereas AE was again rated second most favorably. Interestingly, when the two dimensions were combined, the results show that the standard varieties were rated most favorably, the rural varieties second most favorably, and the urban varieties were rated least favorably. Hiraga argues that the favorable rating of the two standard varieties shows that the level of prestige a variety has is ultimately very important to British people (Hiraga 2005:306).

Preston (1998) investigated the tendency for some regional varieties in the US to be judged unfavorably, particularly those of the South and New York City. In a series of studies Preston has handed out blank maps of the US to respondents. He has asked respondents to identify where they believe various dialects of the US are spoken, and also to label these areas. Findings from these studies have consistently shown that people identify the South and New York City as dialect areas, and that these areas are labeled negatively. Preston notes that when respondents from Michigan and Alabama rated the states of the US in terms of Correctness the results show that the South and New York City are identified as lacking correctness. When respondents were asked to rate the states in terms of Pleasantness respondents rated their own state (Michigan or Alabama) as most pleasant, and both groups agree that New York is unpleasant (ibid:147f). Thus, it appears that the New York accent is stigmatized, at least in the US. Preston ascribes these findings to stereotypes being kept alive by US popular culture (ibid), such as in film, the Internet and music.

A variety that is largely stigmatized in the US is African-American Vernacular English (AAVE), sometimes also referred to as 'Black English', or Ebonics. AAVE refers to a language variety that is '... used by the black population of the USA, but not by all and to a varying degree; in other words, there is continuous variation according to social class, style and region' (Melchers & Shaw 2011:84). According to Lippi-Green (1997:179), the complaints

concerning AAVE tend to fall into two categories: targeted lexical items and grammatical features, and general issues of language purity and authority, such as the standard language ideology (see 2.2.1). Lippi-Green uses the *ask-aks controversy* as an example of typical complaint toward AAVE. For speakers of AE the verb *ask* would be pronounced /æsk/, whereas a speaker of AAVE is likely to pronounce it /æks/ (ibid). The latter of these pronunciations is largely stigmatized socially, whereas the former is largely accepted. Much of the criticism toward /æks/ is based on the assumption that it is the result of a lack of education of the people who use AAVE (ibid:180). Interestingly, in addition to receiving criticism from society, AAVE also experiences negative criticism from *within*, meaning that speakers of AAVE may be critical of their own language variety. This critique tends to focus on specific grammatical features of AAVE (ibid:200), such as habitual BE (e.g. she a nurse). Many speakers of AAVE are actually code switchers, and are able to speak the more socially accepted variety in situations where it would be advantageous for them to do so, a practice that further stresses the social stigmatization that people speaking AAVE are subjected to.

So far attitudes to English have been illustrated through studies where the respondents were native speakers of English responding to other people's native English. But many studies have also investigated native speaker's attitudes toward non-native speakers. A recent study conducted by Kraut & Wulff (2013) researched the attitudes that native English speakers have toward foreign-accented speech (FAS). Previous research done on FAS has indicated that a number of factors may influence the listener's ratings of the speakers, such as gender, nationality, comprehensibility etc. However, where recent studies have usually only included one of these factors, Kraut & Wulff wanted to include several factors, in order to compare them. The speakers were mainly of Asian, Hispanic or Middle-Eastern background, but a few native speakers were also included, as a control group. Kraut & Wulff (2013:260) found that Asian speakers received significantly lower ratings on all factors, and they were rated as having drastically stronger accents than speakers with Hispanic or Middle-Eastern background. The results also showed that respondents who rarely interacted with non-native English speakers found FAS significantly less comprehensible than raters who had more familiarity with non-native English speakers (ibid:259). These results indicate that attitudes toward non-native speakers of English are influenced by a combination of factors – such as gender, nationality, exposure to varieties – and that attitudes to language can be very complex. Perhaps more importantly, the study also indicates that people develop more favorable attitudes toward FAS the more they familiarize themselves with it. This information can be valuable for

virtually all users of English, e.g. teachers, who may wish to get familiarized and receive more information about the different varieties within their classrooms.

Hordnes (2013) researched how native speakers of English would evaluate the English spoken by Norwegians. This study was inspired by the fact that many Norwegians have mocked and criticized Thorbjørn Jagland, former chairman of the Nobel Committee (2009-2015), on account of his English pronunciation, which has a number of Norwegian phonological traces. Two Norwegians produced two speech samples each, one recording where they aimed at BE pronunciation, and one where they included a large number of Norwegian phonological tokens. The Norwegian speakers were then rated by native speakers of English. The results showed that speakers aiming for a BE-like accent were evaluated as being slightly more prestigious, but overall the ratings were good for all speakers. Hordnes states that ‘...the negative attitude many Norwegians have to the spoken English of people such as Thorbjørn Jagland seems unfounded’ (2013:94). Still, it cannot be ignored that Norwegian speakers might benefit in terms of prestige from having a less Norwegian-accented speech (ibid:94f). This information may be very valuable for English teachers or English learners in Norway.

2.3.2 Non-native speakers’ attitudes to English

English is an important language to many people living in countries where the language is not spoken natively, and where it does not have official status. In these countries English is often used in the media, business, international organizations, interaction with foreigners, and, perhaps most importantly, in education. In fact, ‘English is now the language most widely taught as a foreign language - in over 100 countries, such as China, Russia, Germany, Spain, Egypt and Brazil...’ (Crystal 2003:5). For the purpose of this thesis, focus will be placed on attitudes in Norway and other Nordic countries.

Kristiansen (2010:60) reports on the findings from a research project conducted in seven Nordic speech communities: Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Swedish-speaking Finland, Iceland and the Faeroe Islands. He used two different approaches to obtain data in two different studies: the direct approach and the indirect approach. The first study consisted of two parts and employed a questionnaire. The study was designed to measure conscious attitudes toward the influence of the English language. The results indicate that Denmark and Sweden have the most positive attitudes toward the influence of English, whereas Iceland and the Faeroe Islands have the most negative attitudes (ibid:72). Finland, Swedish-speaking Finland and Norway were found in the middle of the rank order (ibid), and can be described as having

somewhat neutral attitudes. Results from the second part of the questionnaire were quite similar to the mentioned above, but they differ in one respect: Finland and the Faeroe Islands change positions (ibid:76).

The second study employed the MGT, and was designed to elicit subconscious attitudes toward the influence that the English language has on the Nordic speech communities.³ Results from the MGT indicated that respondents from Denmark, Finnish-speaking Finland and Sweden displayed negative attitudes toward English. The results pertaining to the second study are thus strikingly different from the results pertaining to the first study, where Denmark and Sweden had the most positive attitudes toward English. The fact that the two approaches produce results that are so different can indicate that conscious and subconscious attitudes to language can be different, or even contradicting.

2.3.3 English in the Media

The English language holds a strong position within many fields of the media, and Crystal (2003) points to several of these. Using data from *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Crystal estimates that 57 percent of the World's newspapers are published in countries where English has a special position, and that it is not unlikely that the majority of these newspapers are written in English (ibid:92), which means that it is possible that about half of the world's newspapers are published in English.

There are other fields in the media where English is perhaps even more prevalent. The Internet has more or less revolutionized people's access to information. If you want information about the daily news, history or science all you have to do is go online and a world of information is at your feet. But in order to gain access to most of this information you need to understand English, as the English language is the chief lingua franca of the Internet (ibid:117). English also continues to dominate the music and film industry. When modern popular music developed in the middle of the twentieth century the biggest artists – Elvis Presley, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones – all came from English-speaking countries (ibid:102). The situation has not changed much during the 2000s, because even though many countries have popular singers who sing in their own language, it still seems that if they want to break through into the international arena, they have to sing in English (ibid:103). The film industry also continues to be a scene for the English language, with the US in the leading

³ Iceland and the Faeroese were not included in the results because the researchers were not able to keep respondents unaware of what was being investigated.

position. In fact, it is rare to find a blockbuster movie produced in a language other than English (ibid:99).

Medianorge.uib.no keeps records of the top ten most viewed movies in Norwegian movie theatres. Numbers from 2013 reveal that only two of these movies were produced in Norway, (including the most visited movie of that year), while the remaining eight movies were all produced in the US (Medienorge.uib.no, accessed 6 November 2014). I was unable to find satisfying numbers for TV programs, and I therefore conducted a small study myself. I counted the number of Norwegian and English-speaking TV programs sent on the four most frequently watched TV channels in Norway. According to Medianorge.uib.no these are: NRK1, TV2, TVN and TV3. The sample was collected on 14 January 2015, a date chosen at random. Almost all types of programs were counted,⁴ including news, weather forecasts, and sports. On this particular day 58.3 percent of the programs originated from either Britain or the US. It is therefore not unreasonable to assume that the language spoken in these programs was English. This means that on that particular day, English was the spoken language in more than half the programs in the four largest TV channels in Norway. A moderate 26.6 percent of the programs were produced in Norway. What is more, almost half the programs, 49.6 percent, originated from the US, while only 8.63 percent originated from Britain. This indicates that many Norwegians are exposed to large amounts of English, especially American English, every day.

Despite the massive presence of English in the media, a majority of linguists do not believe that the media influences our language to the extent that many laypeople seem to do. Chambers (1998:124) comments that sociolinguists see some evidence for the mass media playing a role in the spread of vocabulary items, but when it comes to the deeper reaches of language change – sound changes and grammatical changes – the media have no significant effect. Moreover, there exists abundant evidence that the mass media cannot provide the stimulus for language acquisition, meaning that people cannot learn language from the mass media (ibid:126). It has, for instance, been shown that children of deaf parents cannot acquire language from exposure to radio or television (ibid). Thus, research indicates that you cannot learn language through mere exposure to language, e.g. via the media. On the contrary, Trudgill (1986:40f) comments that ‘... highly salient linguistic features, such as new words and idioms, or fashionable pronunciations of individual words, may be *imitated* or *copied* from the media’. It is also important to point out that, to my knowledge, most of the research done

⁴ Only one program was omitted. TV Shop is shown on TV3 from 07:00-08:00. There is no information about the origin of this program.

on media effect has been conducted on first language speakers, whereas little focus has been directed toward the media's effect on second- and foreign language speakers.

2.4 Attitudes to British and American English

In Europe, BE is the variety that has traditionally been taught in schools (Trudgill & Hannah 2008:5). Today most countries in Europe acknowledge BE and AE as acceptable models for pronunciation. Bradac and Giles (1991:9) suggest that attitudes to language varieties may influence learners' motivation to acquire one or the other variety, and state that a favorable evaluation of a variety is likely to facilitate the learning of that variety, whereas an unfavorable evaluation is likely to inhibit learning. Thus, research on attitudes toward BE and AE may provide important information to teachers and learners of English.

2.4.1 Attitudes to BE and AE within native English speaking countries

A belief that is commonly found with British *and* American people alike is that the English language has been negatively affected by America. The English language has evolved in different directions in Britain and the US since its arrival on the American continent (Alego 1998:179). The Europeans who settled there encountered nature, animals and experiences that there were no words for in the English language, and so they had to coin new words that were incorporated into the language of the English speaking population in America. Thus, people believe that America has ruined the language partly because it has incorporated words that *should not be* (ibid:177). However, the English language has been under constant change ever since its development, long before it ever reached the American continent. Neither BE nor AE is similar to the sixteenth-century ancestral standard (ibid:179). In fact, AE is actually closer to the common original standard than present-day BE is. For example, Americans have retained the r-sound in words like *mother*, whereas the British have generally lost it (ibid). The belief that America has ruined the English language is likely to produce some negative attitudes towards AE in general, which may lead to negative evaluations of AE and the people speaking it. From this belief we can infer that many people seem to believe that the British Isles is somehow the 'rightful' owner of the English language, which is a ridiculous notion, because the English language does not belong to anyone.

Bayard et al. (2001:22) stated that based on their results, AE is well on its way to equaling, or even replacing BE as the prestige, or at least preferred, variety of English. Their

study was conducted with respondents from the US, New Zealand and Australia. The study employed the verbal guise technique (VGT), and over 400 respondents were asked to evaluate varieties in terms of Power, Status, Competence and Solidarity. The results⁵ showed that AE was evaluated most favorably overall. In particular, the AE female speaker was rated more favorably than any of the other speakers. The BE male speaker was also judged favorably, but not nearly as much as the AE female. The BE female speaker, however, was rated rather unfavorably on all dimensions. Thus, the study did not reproduce the pattern shown in much of the previous research, namely that BE has been judged most favorably. Bayard et al. suggested that the overall dominance of the US in fields such as popular music, films, TV sitcoms, fast food etc. might offer a possible explanation for the pattern that emerged in their study. Using a quote from Pennycook they also pointed to the more general influence of US culture in the world:

The greatest influence of the United States, however, has been in the post-war era and thus as more of a neocolonial than as a colonial power. More responsive to a world of global economic (inter-)dependency and large-scale development initiatives than the British, the United States consolidated its power through a vast array of institutions – political, economic, academic and cultural (Pennycook 1994:153).

Bayard et al. (2001) pointed out that although respondents might have been influenced by other variables than speech variety, they believe the results show that AE is becoming the preferred variety of English.

Garrett et al. (2005) wanted to replicate the results found in Bayard et al. (2001). They suggested that the results might be different if another method was employed. Also, they argued that AE is not necessarily replacing BE as the preferred variety, but that we might be witnessing different layers or domains of standardness, where different varieties take on subjective values in different contexts (Garrett et al. 2005:214), e.g. that BE is assigned a formal role, and AE is assigned an informal role. Instead of using the VGT, Garrett et al. conducted their research using what they call the keywords technique, which is a direct approach. Respondents from New Zealand, Australia, the US and the UK were asked to name countries where English is spoken as a native language, and were asked not to include their own variety. Next, respondents were asked to describe how they view the English spoken in those countries.

The results were analyzed in terms of a number of categories. One of the categories was called Affect, and included items that signaled an emotional reaction from the respondents.

⁵ For an easily understandable table of the results, see Garrett (2010:67).

Here, AE received a fair amount of positive remarks, but it also received the largest amount of negative comments, while BE received a moderate amount of negative comments (ibid:222). A second category was Culture, and dealt with remarks about correctness, educatedness and social status associated with the varieties (ibid:219). In accordance with much of the previous research, BE attracted the highest amount of positive comments with regard to Culture (ibid:223). AE received a moderate amount of negative comments relating to this category (ibid). The findings in this study do not show any sign of AE replacing BE as the most prestigious, or preferred variety, and are quite different from the results in Bayard et al. (2001). These two sets of results highlight the value of employing different approaches to study the same topic.

2.4.2 Attitudes to BE and AE in Europe

Several studies show that BE continues to hold its strong position in European educational sectors (Dalton-Puffer 1997; Ladegaard 1998; Rindal 2010;2014). BE is the variety used as a model for pronunciation, written in textbooks and dictionaries, and the variety that most teachers speak. In fact, some teachers still believe that BE is the only legitimate variety of English to teach in schools (Janicki 2005:10). There exists a lot of research done on students' attitudes, but significantly less on the attitudes of teachers. The research reported on in the following sections indicates that teachers still largely hold favorable attitudes toward BE, while the situation is somewhat more diverse when it comes to students.

A small study conducted in Portugal showed that when respondents were asked which variety they preferred – BE or AE – a majority of 39 percent stated that they preferred BE against the 22 percent who preferred AE (de Barros 2009:38). The respondents consisted of two groups: one group of undergraduates taking English courses, and one group of professionals composed of lawyers, managers and a university lecturer (ibid:36). De Barros points out that the students and the professionals appear to have differing preferences, as BE was strongly preferred by the former but only moderately by the latter. De Barros argued that pedagogical practices may help explain these findings, as the variety taught in Portuguese schools is still BE, and for this reason it is awarded with a favorable social status and prestige. Furthermore, when respondents were asked which variety they believe *should* represent the model for English teaching, a majority of 56 percent pointed to BE, while only 11 percent pointed to AE (ibid:38). Despite this study only being a pilot-study it does give the impression

that BE is still largely considered the favored variety of English in Portugal, at least within the educational field.

Dalton-Puffer et al. (1997) conducted a study on Austrian university students. They found that a majority of the respondents, 67.42 percent, preferred to speak BE, and 27.27 percent preferred to speak AE. A large number of the students who stated a preference for AE had been on an extended stay in the US. Thus, Dalton-Puffer et al. suggest that personal experiences (i.e. an extended stay) may be important in choosing AE as a model for pronunciation, more so than with BE (ibid:120). The respondents in this study also conducted a test using the VGT, and rated the speakers in terms of Status and Solidarity. The results show that the BE-speaker was rated noticeably more favorably than the other varieties, with regard to both dimensions.

Van der Haagen (1998:12) investigated the attitudes of Dutch learners toward AE and BE, in addition to investigating which features of AE occur in the pronunciation of Dutch learners. The results showed that the influence of AE on pronunciation is most visible in informal settings, as nearly 40 percent of all pronunciation in the free speech sample was AE influenced (ibid:49). The influence of AE decreased in more formal settings, such as when reading from a word list (ibid). With regard to attitudes, the results showed that BE was perceived to be the 'norm' (i.e. perceived to be a variety acceptable in the classroom) (ibid:56), while AE was not perceived to be the 'norm'. The two varieties received approximately the same favorable evaluation with regard to social status, while AE was evaluated more favorably than BE with regard to Affect (e.g. honest, friendly), and much more favorably with regard to Dynamism (e.g. witty, spontaneous). Van der Haagen concluded that perhaps it is time that teachers should accept a kind of English that sometimes follow the rules for BE and sometimes those of AE (ibid:105).

2.4.3 Attitudes to BE and AE in Scandinavia

Similar to many other countries, Norway has acknowledged the special position that English holds in the world. In fact, the Norwegian curriculum places English in a special position, compared to other foreign languages, and points to the importance of learning English because of its role as a global language, and its uses in a wide range of situations, such as education, travel, and the media (Utdanningsdirektoratet, accessed 10 November 2014). Since the early 1900s English has been prioritized in Norwegian schools, and BE has had a strong position in education ever since it was incorporated into the Norwegian curriculum in 1936 (Simensen

2014:2). For many years BE was in fact the only variety used as a model for English teaching, and it was not until 1987 that AE was officially accepted as a model for English teaching, equal to BE (ibid:1). Today, children learn English in schools from the first grade (at the age of six), but they have often encountered the language several years earlier, often through the media.

Higher education in Norway is greatly influenced by English. Arguably, you have to have some basic knowledge of the English language in order to study at a Norwegian university, as the reading lists often include books and articles written in English. Ljosland (2004:137) pointed out that 71 percent of all scientific publications in Norway are written in English. On average, 81 percent of all doctoral theses written by Norwegian scientists are written in English (ibid). It seems that in Norway, English has assumed the role of a scientific *lingua franca*. Although more than ten years has passed since Ljosland's study, there is no reason to believe that the amount of publications written in English have decreased.

Ladegaard (1998) tested whether Danish students evaluated AE more favorably than BE. The respondents conducted two tests: one using the VGT, and one where they completed a questionnaire. The results pertaining to the VG (verbal guise) show that BE received the most favorable ratings on all variables relating to Status and Competence, meaning that BE was rated highest in terms of intelligence, education, leadership, self-confidence and social status (Ladegaard 1998:259, table 1). BE was also awarded with the highest ratings relating to Linguistic Attractiveness, meaning that BE was deemed superior on all variables relating to language (ibid). On the other hand, with variables relating to Personal Integrity and Social Attractiveness BE was given the lowest scores on all but one variable, which was rated second to lowest. This means that speakers of BE are not considered to be especially reliable, humorous or friendly (ibid). AE, on the other hand, received high, although not the highest, scores in relation to Personal Integrity and Social Attractiveness (ibid). On dimensions dealing with Status and Competence, and Linguistic Attractiveness, AE received moderately favorable ratings (ibid). The results pertaining to the questionnaire showed that a majority of respondents stated that they found the culture of Britain and America as equally exciting, meaning that they do not have a specific preference for either one of them (ibid:259). In general, Danish students seem to perceive the British as a friendly but conservative people, their language is praised, and they are seen as having a rich historical tradition (ibid:263). American culture is generally seen as fascinating and exciting, and respondents often point to cultural differences between Denmark and the US (ibid:264). Lastly, Ladegaard also measured whether respondents used

BE or AE when *they* spoke English, and it was shown that a vast majority (91 percent) used BE (ibid:266, footnote nr. 4).

Axelsson (2002:132) conducted a study looking at the English pronunciation of Swedish university students. BE is the variety of English that has traditionally been taught in Swedish schools, although in recent decades AE has also been accepted as a model. The results show that when the students were asked which variety they speak, 44 percent stated that they speak AE, and 41 stated that they speak BE. However, when the students were asked which variety they prefer, a total of 54 percent pointed to BE, while 25 percent pointed to AE (ibid:140). This suggests that out of the 44 percent who stated they speak AE, a noticeable number of these students actually prefer BE. Some of the respondents answered that they regretfully spoke AE because it was easier, or because they had learnt this variety from watching TV and films (ibid). This indicated that some of the students would like to speak BE, but speak AE because it is perceived to be more accessible. Overall, the results from Axelsson (2002) indicated that BE is largely preferred by the students, but that a majority of the students speak AE, or at least state that they do.

Söderlund & Modiano (2002) studied students' attitudes toward AE and BE. They pointed out that although BE has generally been regarded the educational standard in Sweden, an increasing number of students have begun speaking AE, or at least with features from AE (ibid:147). In their study, Söderlund and Modiano asked Swedish students attending upper secondary school to indicate which type of English they prefer. The results showed that a majority of 61.3 percent stated that they prefer AE, while 33.3 percent stated they prefer BE (ibid:153, table 1). Additionally, the respondents were also asked to report which variety they felt most exposed to, and as many as 74.8 percent stated that they felt they were most exposed to AE (ibid:153f). This indicates that AE is perceived to be more present in Swedish society than BE is. Overall, there appeared to be a clear tendency for Swedish students to prefer AE, instead of the variety traditionally taught in schools. This is one of the very few studies that also included a small group of teachers. The overall results for the teachers indicate a preference for BE (ibid:162), which is not that surprising given the strong position this variety has had in the educational system in Europe.

Loftheim (2013) investigated Norwegians' attitudes toward six varieties of English: BE, AE, Southern USA, Cockney, Scottish English, and New York City. For the purpose of the current thesis, only answers relating to BE and AE will be included. Loftheim conducted a VG-test, which is an indirect approach, and the varieties were evaluated on three dimensions: Prestige, Social Attractiveness, and Linguistic Quality. The results showed that BE was

evaluated as the most favorable accent on all dimensions, and AE was evaluated second most favorably (ibid:47). The varieties were also evaluated with a questionnaire, which is a direct approach. The results from the questionnaire showed that AE was the most favorable variety, and BE the second most favorable variety (ibid:67). This is notable, because it appears as if the choice of approach is of great importance to the results. While BE seems to be favored in tests using the VGT, AE seems to be favored when a questionnaire is used. Loftheim argues that AE seems to be awarded positive associations, expressed in the questionnaire, as a result of the ubiquity of American culture (ibid:75). However, this does not seem to influence the private attitudes believed to be elicited with the VGT, where BE is clearly favored (ibid). Loftheim argued that the positive attitudes BE is awarded are partly due to the position BE has in Norwegian schools, and claimed that most teachers in Norway use BE rather than AE (ibid:76).

Rindal has conducted two attitudinal studies on Norwegian adolescent learners. The first study was conducted in 2010, and employed a production test, a VG-test, a questionnaire and an interview. In the production test the students were measured on the basis of four different phonological variables. The results showed that 67.2 percent of the respondents used phonological variables typical for AE, and 32.4 percent used phonological variables typical for BE (Rindal 2010:246, Table 3). The results from the VG-test showed that BE was evaluated most favorably with regard to Status and Competence, and especially with regard to Linguistic Quality, while AE was evaluated most favorably with regard to Social Attractiveness (ibid:250, Figure 1). The results from the interviews revealed that the respondents explained that many students speak AE because of the influence from the spoken media, which is largely dominated by AE. One interviewee in the study said: ‘The Norwegian school tries to teach everyone British English from the beginning, but it’s so much easier for the students to learn American, because there’s much more American TV and stuff like that’ (ibid:253). Rindal suggested that even though most linguists dismiss the idea that the media can affect the way people speak, it is difficult to completely dismiss media influences Norwegian teenagers English (ibid). Notably, the interview results also indicated that BE and AE are allocated formal and informal functions, respectively (ibid:254). This may be because BE is associated with school, being the traditional variety taught at Norwegian schools, while AE is associated with leisure time activities, such as movies, TV, and music.

Rindal also conducted another study on Norwegian adolescent learners in 2014. She employed a VG-test, a questionnaire and interviews. The results from the VG-test showed that BE was evaluated more favorably than AE on all evaluative dimensions (Rindal 2014:322,

Table 3). The results from the VG-test in the 2014 study are thus different from the results in the 2010 study, where AE was evaluated most favorably with regard to Social Attractiveness. In the questionnaire the respondents were asked to indicate which pronunciation they aim for when they speak English. 23 out of 70 respondents pointed to BE and 30 respondents pointed to AE (ibid:325, Table 5). The respondents were also asked *why* they aim for either BE or AE. The main reason for aiming for AE was because this variety was perceived to be more accessible, as AE was reported to be easier and more ‘natural’ (ibid:327). The main reason for aiming for BE was that it was perceived to be better in aesthetic terms (e.g. sounding ‘better’). The second reason for aiming for BE is that it is associated with qualities relating to status and competence, such as education, formality or class (ibid:326). Rindal argues that there is a discrepancy between the results in the VG-test and the reported accent aims, as the results from the VG-test showed that BE was evaluated more favorably than AE, whereas a majority of the respondents state that they aim for AE (ibid:329). Rindal (2014) argues that the relationship between attitudes and behavior is different in countries like Norway from countries where English is spoken natively (ibid:331).

3. METHOD

Some concepts, particularly abstract ones and those that comprise several variables and sub-concepts, are notoriously difficult to measure; attitudes is such a concept (Rasinger 2013:22). Nonetheless, attitudes *can* be measured. In this chapter we will briefly review the three most common approaches to study attitudes toward language (3.1, 3.2 and 3.3), followed by a review of the approaches used in the current study (3.4).

3.1 The direct approach

In attitude studies where the direct approach is employed the respondents are asked directly about their attitudes, meaning that they are aware of the topic under investigation (Garrett 2010:228). The strength of this approach is that it is arguably the easiest way to study attitudes, because you simply ask people about their attitudes regarding a topic, e.g. ‘Do you think people who speak BE sound more intelligent than speakers of AE?’ Also, the most common way to employ the direct approach is through questionnaires, which can easily be distributed to a large number of people, thus providing a large amount of information.

Naturally, there are some disadvantages to the direct approach. Because the respondents are aware of the topic under investigation, they are more likely to be affected by a phenomenon called the social desirability bias, which is the tendency for people to give answers that they believe are socially appropriate (ibid:44), rather than revealing their actual attitudes, which may be socially inappropriate. The social desirability bias is more likely to occur if the topic under investigation is somewhat controversial, e.g. attitudes regarding race or religion. Additionally, when the direct approach is used, especially with face-to-face interviews, the respondents are more likely to be affected by the acquiescence bias. Acquiescence bias is the tendency people have to agree with items in a questionnaire or an interview, regardless of the content of those items (ibid:45). This action may be interpreted as the respondents’ attempt to gain the researchers approval, by providing answers they believe the researcher expects to receive. Characteristics of the researcher may also affect the respondents’ answers, e.g. if the researcher speaks Scottish, and the aim is to investigate people’s attitudes toward Scottish the respondents might be reluctant to express negative attitudes toward Scottish.

3.2 The indirect approach

With the indirect approach the respondents are not aware of what is being investigated (Garrett 2010:228). This approach lowers the risk of the social desirability bias and the acquiescence bias, simply because the respondents are less likely to understand that they are providing answers that may be perceived as socially inappropriate, or may be answers differing from the ones the researcher expects. The indirect approach is usually carried out through the use of a method called the MGT, where the respondents are ‘... presented with a number of speech varieties, all of which are spoken by the same person’ (ibid:229). The speaker is typically a bilingual speaker, reading the same text using different speech varieties. As far as possible, the only difference between the different speakers should be the speech variety. The MGT can lead to interesting results, because the different varieties are often judged very differently even though the same speaker is producing them. However, a potential problem with the MGT is that it may be impossible for one person to produce several varieties in an authentic enough manner.

The authenticity problem can be solved by using a modified version of the MGT, called the VGT. Here, respondents are ‘... presented with a number of speech varieties, each of which is spoken by someone who is a natural speaker of the variety’ (ibid:229). With this technique the researcher is able to include variables such as the speaker’s age or gender. However, this also increases the chance that respondents will evaluate the speech varieties based on other variables than the ones the researcher is interested in, such as the voice quality of a person. A potential problem with the MGT and VGT is that there is always a risk for the respondents to evaluate the speakers based on *what* they are saying, rather than *how* they are saying it. Additionally, the MGT and VGT are very different from how we evaluate speakers and language varieties in real-life situations. This means that although results gathered with the MGT and VGT may provide us with an indication of how people speaking a certain accent may be evaluated, we can never be sure that these evaluations are actually reflected in real-life.

The most common way to evaluate language varieties with the MGT and VGT is to use semantic differential scales, which are scales consisting of equidistant numbers with semantically opposing labels placed at each end of the scale (e.g. friendly/unfriendly) (Garrett 2010:55). Another way to evaluate language varieties with the MGT and VGT is to use Likert scales. With Likert scales, the respondents are presented with statements that they have to think about and are asked to indicate on a scale the extent to which they agree or disagree with it (e.g. ‘I think this person sounds intelligent’). Likert scales typically take longer to fill out than

semantic differential scales, and there are some who argue that in order to get a hold of deep-seeded attitudes the respondents should provide answers relatively quickly. Cargile (2002) argues that if respondents are allowed too much time to think about their answers, they are likely to give more socially appropriate answers than the answers they would have given if they were not allowed as much time to think.

3.3 Societal treatment studies

With societal treatment studies attitudes are studied through investigating ‘...sources available in public social domains, such as the media, policy documentation, literature etc.’ (Garrett 2010:229). In the context of language attitudes, the researcher investigates how a linguistic variety is ‘treated’ by society. Because there are no respondents in this type of study, there is no risk of the social desirability bias or acquiescence bias. The main weakness of this approach is that it implies a high degree of subjectivity from the researcher. Subjectivity will arguably affect all research, but societal treatment studies require the researcher to engage with the material in a way that perhaps makes it especially vulnerable to subjectivity.

3.4 The current study

Before presenting the details of the current study it is necessary to make a distinction between approaches and methods. In the current study, an approach is to be understood as one of the main ways to study attitudes to language. Within each approach there are a number of methods. As an example, with the indirect approach the two most common methods are the MGT and VGT.

The current study employs a combination of quantitative and qualitative data. When using quantitative data we are usually interested in how *much* or how *many* there is/are of whatever we are interested in (Rasinger 2013:10), and a common way of obtaining this data is through questionnaires. Quantitative data is *quantifiable*, meaning that it can be turned into numbers, figures and graphs (ibid). This study has employed a questionnaire to gather its quantitative data. Qualitative data, on the other hand, is not quantifiable, and points to *how* something is, rather than how much, or how many times it occurs (ibid). Qualitative data can be obtained using e.g. diaries or interviews. The current study has used a semi-structured

interview, with guideline questions,⁶ to gather qualitative data. The indirect approach was used in Part One of the questionnaire, and the direct approach was used in Part Two and Part Three of the questionnaire (see Appendix 1). The direct approach was also used in the interviews. By using different approaches to gather data I hope to obtain different perspectives on the same phenomenon, through the process known as triangulation (Heigham & Croker 2009:11). This will strengthen the results of the current study, and provide a fuller picture of the attitudes displayed. Previous research on similar topics has indicated that direct and indirect approaches might provide different results (e.g. Kristiansen 2010; Loftheim 2013), and I wanted to include both approaches in my study to see if the same differences appeared in the current study.

3.4.1 Respondents

I conducted most of the study on January 19 2015, at a high school in the Bergen-area. A total of 85 respondents, divided into three groups, filled out the questionnaire. The *first* group consisted of 38 teachers, and included 9 English teachers and 29 Other Subjects' teachers. The teachers were approached at a 'divisional meeting', where the sole purpose was to participate in my research. All the teachers who attended the meeting completed the questionnaire. The *second* group consisted of 27 first-year high school students. The *third* group consisted of 20 third-year high school students. The students were approached during a normal English lecture, where 30 minutes had been set aside for my research.

In addition to the questionnaire, a total of 14 interviews were conducted, with 5 English teachers and 9 students. Interviews with teachers were conducted in the course of two weeks after my first visit to the school, as the teachers were very busy at the time of my initial visit. Two of the teachers interviewed were located at a different high school in the Bergen-area, because there were no more teachers at the first school who had time for interviews. The students were interviewed at the end of the same English lecture as the questionnaires were conducted. The students who volunteered to be interviewed joined me in a separate room where the interview was conducted. The interview lasted between five to ten minutes.

⁶ In this study, guideline questions are a list of questions that were asked at every interview. The questions are included in Appendix 2.

3.4.2 The questionnaire

The questionnaire was written in Norwegian because I wanted to lower the level of potential misunderstanding. I gave instructions in Norwegian for the same reason, and additionally, I did not want to influence the respondents with the accent I use when I speak English. I speak with an American accent and I did not want the respondents to be afraid of expressing negative attitudes toward AE. Also, Norwegians usually communicate with each other in Norwegian, and I wanted the setting to feel as relaxed and natural as possible.

I gave oral instructions to the respondents before the questionnaire was handed out, explaining how to fill out the questionnaire. I added that there were no ‘wrong’ answers, and that every answer would be valuable to me. As far as possible I gave the same instructions to all three respondent groups. I told them that I was a student from the University of Bergen, currently writing my master’s thesis in English. Beyond that I gave no information of the topic under investigation. I also told them that the questionnaire was anonymous and that participation was voluntary. The last thing I did before handing out the questionnaire was to point out that the respondents were not allowed to look at Part Two and Part Three before Part One was filled out. To my knowledge, the respondents followed my instructions. It took approximately 25 minutes to complete the entire questionnaire.

The material collected from the questionnaire was converted into numerical information, and then processed by a program called Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste (NSDstat). Information such as ‘girl’ and ‘boy’ was converted into the variables ‘1’ and ‘2’, so that 1 = girl, and 2 = boy. There were some instances where a respondent had misunderstood the task, or simply did not provide an answer to a question in the questionnaire. When this occurred, I would simply not include the missing or faulty answer in the calculations, but would include all other answers from these respondents. The program calculated the results based the commands that were given. As an example, I could give the command to reveal how many percent of the students that had stated they spoke AE, or how many of the teacher that had circled the adjective ‘smart’ with regard to Speaker 1.

The questionnaire consisted of three different parts, each of which will be discussed in the three following sections. An English version of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1.

3.4.2.1 Part One

Part One of the questionnaire employed the indirect approach, and consisted of a set of eight semantic differential scales, and one Likert scale to be filled out using the VGT (see Appendix 1). The adjectives used in the semantic differential scales were derived empirically in a pre-study. The pre-study was conducted on twelve respondents, who listened to the same recordings as the ones used in the proper study,⁷ and wrote down what they thought of the person speaking, in the form of keywords, such as ‘rich’ or ‘intelligent’. I used these keywords to create adjectives for the scales. The results from the pre-study were in accord with previous research, meaning that no ‘new’ information was revealed. Thus, it might not be necessary for future researchers to conduct this kind of pre-study.

As mentioned in section 3.4, I wanted to use triangulation in this study by employing different approaches. The VGT is the only part of the current study that represents the indirect approach. There were two main reasons for choosing the VGT. First, the VGT reduces the risk of the social desirability bias and acquiescence bias, because the respondents are not informed of the topic under investigation. Second, in order to reduce the question of authenticity I wanted the speakers to be natural speakers of the varieties.

There were six different recordings, which means that the respondents had to fill out a total of 54 scales. The recordings were played to one respondent group at a time, meaning that all the teachers listened to the recordings together, and each of the English classes listened to the recordings together. This was done in order to save time. It would simply take too much time to play the recordings to only one respondent at the time. The recordings were played from loudspeakers present in the classrooms. Each recording was approximately 1 minute and 30 seconds long. The first recording was 1 minute and 34 seconds; the second was 1 minute and 25 seconds; the third was 1 minute and 41 seconds; the fourth was 1 minute and 28 seconds; the fifth was 1 minute and 36 seconds; the sixth was 1 minute and 33 seconds.

While the respondents listened to each recording they completed nine scales belonging to that particular recording. After each recording the respondents were given some time to complete the scales, but no more than 1 minute. As mentioned in section 3.2, previous research indicates that by restricting the respondents thinking time their responses are more likely to reflect deep-seeded attitudes, and the risk of the social desirability bias is thus reduced. This is

⁷ The recordings used in the pre-study were approximately 30 seconds longer than the recordings used in the proper study.

also the reason why I chose to use semantic differential scales, rather than Likert scales, as the former is known to lend themselves to more rapid completion (Garrett 2010:55f).

In the current study the number 1 represented the least favorable alternative, and 7 represented the most favorable alternative, e.g. the word *evil* is commonly perceived to be negative, and would be placed on the outer left side, marked 1, while the word *good* is commonly perceived to be positive, and would be placed at the outer right side, marked 7. This means that the scales looked like this:

	This person seems:							
Evil	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good

Figure 3.1 Example of how the scales used in ‘Part One’ of the questionnaire looked like.

If the respondents thought the person sounded like an evil person they would circle the number 1. If they thought the person sounded like a good person, they would circle the number 7. If they did not think the person sounded evil nor good, or they had no opinion, they would circle the number 4, which represented the ‘neutral’ alternative.

In studies using semantic differential scales, the adjectives can often be divided into three categories, referred to as evaluative dimensions. In the current thesis, the first evaluative dimension is called Prestige, and includes the adjectives ‘Intelligent/Unintelligent’, ‘Highly educated/Not highly educated’, and ‘Rich/Poor’. The second dimension, called Social Attractiveness included the adjectives ‘Friendly/Unfriendly’, ‘Humorous/Boring’ and ‘Extrovert/Introvert’. The last dimension is called Linguistic Attractiveness and includes the adjectives ‘Beautiful language/Ugly language’, ‘Correct language/Incorrect language’. Additionally, the Likert scale, with the statement ‘I would like to speak like this person’ is also categorized into the dimension called Linguistic Attractiveness.

Speakers and material

Six speakers represented three different accents. This means that one female and one male speaker together represented one variety. Two of these accents were BE and AE, and the third accent was Irish English. The third accent was used only as a distractor, and will not be mentioned further in this thesis.

The speakers read the same text, called *Comma Gets A Cure*, which was created by McCullough & Sommerville (2000). It is a fairly neutral text about a veterinarian nurse who treats a goose that has been taken ill (See Appendix 3). The text uses Wells' standard lexical set words,⁸ which makes it relatively easy for the researcher to compare and analyze the recordings with regard to phonological traits. All the recordings used were collected from the International Dialects of English Archive (International Dialects of English Archive, accessed 3 December 2014). The speakers representing BE and AE were found under the tag 'Special collection', which includes a collection of speakers categorized under the labels 'Received Pronunciation' and 'General American'.

There is no information about the age of the speakers, but I perceive all of them to be middle-aged, although the BE male speaker sounds slightly older than the other speakers. In the following paragraphs the phonological traits typically found in BE and AE are presented. I listened to each individual recording to see whether the speakers followed the pattern described in the following paragraph, and, in my view, they all follow the pattern. Because of this, I did not see the need to analyze and present each individual speaker's phonological system.

BE

- Non-rhotic accent, meaning that /r/ is only pronounced in prevocalic position.
- 'Clear' /l/ most common. 'Dark' /l/ in word final position after vowels, in words such as *will, bill* etc., or after vowels before consonants, in words such as *help, sold* etc.
- /ɑ/ in the lexical set BATH, in words such as *bath, last, grass* etc.
- /ɒ/ in the lexical set LOT, in words such as *lot, not, got* etc.

AE

- Rhotic accent, meaning that /r/ is pronounced in all positions.
- 'Dark' /l/ in most positions.
- /æ/ in the lexical set BATH, in words such as *bath, last, grass* etc.
- /ɑ/ in the lexical set LOT, in words such as *lot, not, got* etc.
- r-coloring of the central vowels /ɜ/ and /ə/.
- /t/ is often realized as the voiced tap [ɾ] in intervocalic positions. (Sometimes also in other positions).

(Wells 1982; Janicki 2005).

⁸ Standard lexical sets '...refer to large groups of words that share the same vowel, and to the vowel which they share' (Wells 1982:xviii).

3.4.2.2 Part Two

Part Two of the questionnaire employed the direct approach, and was designed to gather background information about the respondents, such as age and gender (see Appendix 1). Part Two also gathered information about which variety the respondents speak when they speak English, and about which variety they would like to speak if previously learned knowledge and experience did not matter. This means that the respondents could answer any variety of English that they would like to speak, regardless of whether or not they are actually able to produce that variety. The question relating to which variety the respondents would like to speak was included to see if there was any difference in what the respondents state they speak, and what they state they would like to speak. If a respondent states that she speaks AE but would actually like to speak BE, this can provide interesting information regarding which variety is preferred, or valued the highest.

Traditionally one would expect to find background questions relating to the age, gender etc. at the beginning or end of a questionnaire. However, I have placed them in the middle of the questionnaire because I wanted there to be some time between the VGT in Part One, where the respondents listen to the varieties, and the conceptual evaluation in Part Three, where the respondents evaluated the varieties based on their own mental perceptions of the varieties. In other words, I wanted to give the respondents some time to ‘forget’ what they had heard in Part One before they started the task in Part Three.

3.4.2.3 Part Three

Part Three of the questionnaire is named ‘Conceptual evaluation’, and employed the direct approach. It consisted of a list of 16 adjectives presented in random order (see Appendix 1), and the respondents were instructed to circle adjectives that represented what they thought people speaking BE and AE sound like. These adjectives were roughly the same as the ones used in the VGT of Part One. Whenever possible I replaced the adjectives with a synonym, so that the respondents would take less notice to the fact that Part One and Part Three were very similar: both parts required the respondents to rate the varieties using adjectives. No recordings were used in this part, and because of this the respondents had to evaluate BE and AE conceptually, based on their own mental perceptions of the varieties.

The respondents were presented with the labels ‘Standard British English’ and ‘Standard American English’. To give the respondents some associations I wrote that ‘Standard British English’ resembled English like a BBC news reporter speaks, and that ‘Standard American English’ resembled the English spoken by a news reporter on CNN. I am aware that these examples do not completely agree with the definitions I have provided for BE and AE (see 1.2), but I believe that these examples made it easier for the respondents to identify which varieties I referred to.

As Part Three employed the direct approach, the respondents were more likely to be affected by the social desirability bias. The respondents are aware that I am interested in their evaluation of BE and AE, which may influence their evaluation. However, the topic under investigation is relatively ‘neutral’, as both varieties are standard varieties (see 2.2.1) and have equal official status in Norway. Nonetheless, it is still possible that some respondents have given answers that they deemed to be ‘socially correct’.

The same evaluative dimensions as those mentioned in section 3.4.2.1 were used for the adjectives in this part of the questionnaire. Here, Prestige pertained to the adjectives ‘Smart/Stupid’, ‘Well educated/Poorly educated’ and ‘Rich/Poor’. Social Attractiveness pertained to the adjectives ‘Friendly/Unfriendly’, ‘Humorous/Boring’ and ‘Extrovert/Introvert’. Linguistic attractiveness pertained to the adjectives ‘Nice language/Ugly language’ and ‘Correct language/Incorrect language’. The statement used in the Likert scale (‘I would like to speak English like this person’) could not be turned into an adjective, and was thus omitted from this part of the questionnaire.

3.4.3 The interviews

The interviews provided the qualitative data for this study. The interviews were conducted with teachers and students who volunteered to participate. Before each interview started I told the respondents that the interview would not be recorded, but that I would be taking notes. I also told them that I documented their gender, and whether they were a teacher or a student, and that no other personal information would be documented. I said these things because I wanted the respondents to relax and feel comfortable while speaking with me. Each interview lasted 5-10 minutes, and was conducted in a private room with only the respondent and myself present. I wanted the interviews to be relatively short, so that the respondents would not feel intimidated, or feel like I required too much of their time. I wanted the interviews to be perceived as a short, pleasant talk. The interviews were conducted with the help of an interview

guideline that I had written in advance (see Appendix 2). However, the conversation was allowed to move beyond the limits of the interview guideline, as long as it still revolved around the topic under investigation.

The interviews were conducted in Norwegian for several reasons. First, as I wanted the interviews to be perceived natural and relaxed, which is why Norwegian seemed the most appropriate language. Second, I wanted to lower the level of potential misunderstanding. Third, I wanted to increase the students' ability to convey their responses in a satisfactory way. As the respondents were students attending high school I was uncertain whether they would be able to talk about their attitudes toward BE and AE without the possibility of preparing their answers in advance. It might be difficult for students to talk about a complex topic for which they might not have the proper vocabulary. The teachers might also lack the proper vocabulary to speak about the current subject in English. Finally, I wanted to minimize the respondents' reactions to my presence, and the risk of the acquiescence bias. This means that I did not want them to be affected by me speaking AE. These problems are hopefully reduced when the language spoken is Norwegian, a language the respondents are fluent in, and a language that is not under investigation; it is neutral ground. Nonetheless, the risk of the acquiescence bias, social desirability bias and influence of the researcher will always be present to a certain degree.

The interviews always opened with the question 'Which variety of English do you normally speak?' followed by two questions asking the respondents why they spoke that particular variety, and why they did not speak another variety. Unsurprisingly, no respondents interviewed said that they spoke a variety other than BE or AE. The interview also included questions involving the media and school, as previous studies have indicated that these factors may influence people's attitudes toward BE and AE (e.g. Axelsson 2002; Rindal 2010; Rindal 2014).

4. RESULTS

This chapter will present the results of the current study (4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4). The results relating to the questionnaire will be presented first, followed by the results relating to the interview. Finally, the results will be reviewed in light of the hypotheses (4.5).

4.1 Results: Part One of the questionnaire

In Part One of the questionnaire the respondents were required to listen to six different speakers, and were asked to rate those speakers on semantic differential scales. The maximum score was 7.0, and is considered to be very positive. The minimum score was 1.0, and is considered very negative. A score of 4.0 is considered neutral, which means that it is neither positive nor negative.

The teachers' results will be presented first, followed by the students' results. Scores will be divided between the three evaluative dimensions Prestige, Social Attractiveness and Linguistic Attractiveness (see section 3.2.2.1). A Total Score is also given, to better illustrate the overall pattern. Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2 show the average scores for each of the four speakers the respondents listened to, for teachers and students, respectively. In Figure 4.3 and Figure 4.4 the scores for the male and female speaker have been combined, so that the results show the respondents' overall average scores of BE and AE.

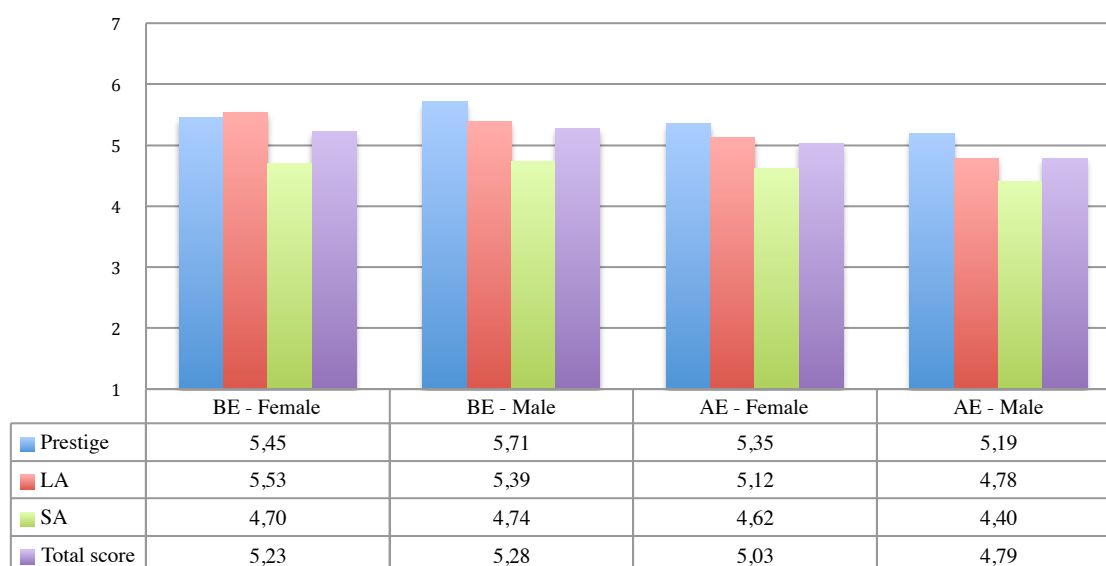


Figure 4.1 Teachers' average scores for each individual speaker.
LA = Linguistic Attractiveness, SA = Social Attractiveness.

Figure 4.1 shows the average scores for each individual speaker given by the teachers. The numbers were arrived at through using a standard method of calculation for an average score, meaning that every numerical response was summarized for all respondents, and then divided by the number of respondents. This was done automatically in NSDstat for each of the scales, but I had to calculate the numbers pertaining to the three evaluative dimensions myself, using the same method of calculation. For instance, in order to find the number pertaining to Prestige for the BE female I had to find the average score of the three adjective sets that make up that evaluative dimension. These were ‘Intelligent/Unintelligent’, ‘Highly educated/Not highly educated’, and ‘Rich/Poor’. These three adjective sets had the average scores: 5.61, 5.66, and 5.08. Summarized this equals 16.35. That number was then divided by the number of adjectives (which was 3). Thus, 16.35 divided by 3 equals 5.45.

By looking at the Total Scores we see that overall, the teachers have given the highest Total Score to the BE male (5.28). However, the BE female is rated almost as high (5.23). Of the two AE speakers, the female (5.03) is rated more positively than the male (4.79). The AE male is the only speaker given a Total score under 5.0.

The teachers are very consistent in their evaluations of the speakers; the AE male has the lowest scores, followed by the AE female, and the two BE speakers switch between having the highest and second to highest score. In other words, the teachers have consistently rated the BE speakers higher than the AE speakers, in all evaluative dimensions.

All the speakers have scores over 5.0 with regard to Prestige. The BE male has the highest score (5.71), followed by the BE female (5.45), the AE female (5.35) and lastly the AE male (5.19).

The most noticeable difference in scores is found with regard to Linguistic Attractiveness. Here, the BE female has received the highest score (5.53), followed by the BE male (5.39). The AE female has the second to lowest score (5.12), and the AE male has the lowest score (4.48).

The scores relating to Social Attractiveness are generally lower with all the speakers, no scores reaching above 5.0. Also, the scores are quite similar for all speakers. Again, the BE male has received the highest score (4.74), followed by the BE female (4.70). The AE female receives the second to lowest score (4.62), and the AE male receives the lowest score (4.40).

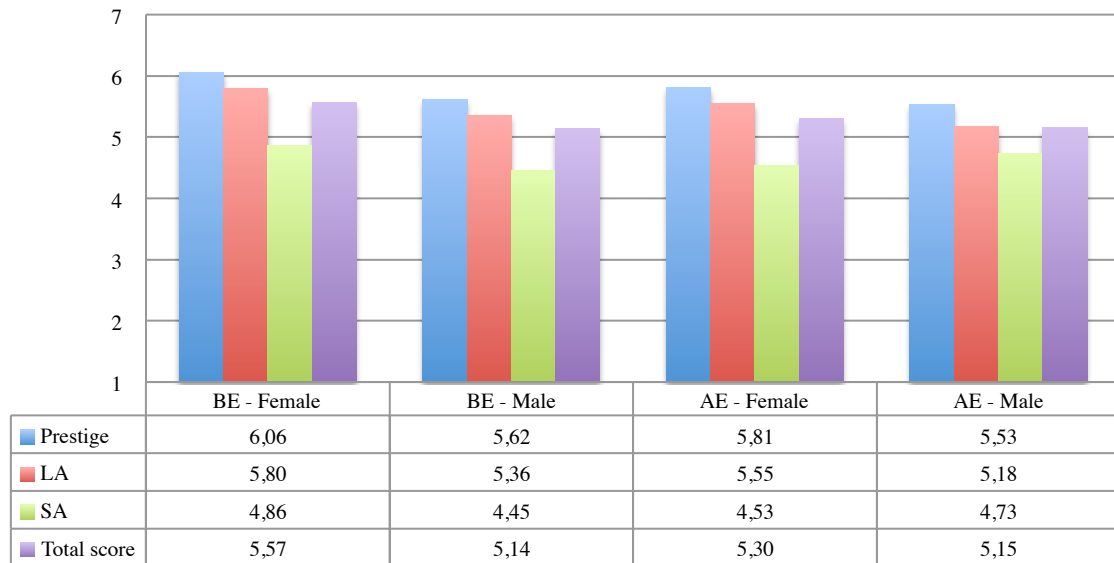


Figure 4.2 Students’ average scores for each individual speaker. LA = Linguistic Attractiveness, SA = Social Attractiveness.

Figure 4.2 shows the mean score evaluations for each individual speaker given by the students. The students have evaluated all speakers highly, as no speaker has a Total Score of less than 5.0, the lowest score being 5.14. The BE female has the highest Total Score (5.57), the AE female received the second highest score (5.30). The AE male (5.15) and the BE male (5.14) have received almost identical Total Scores.

The BE female has received a noticeably high score with regard to Prestige (6.06), which is the highest evaluative score with regard to all dimensions. The AE female also receives a very high score (5.81). The BE male (5.62) and the AE male (5.53) are rated quite similarly.

The BE female has the highest score with regard to Linguistic Attractiveness (5.80), followed by the AE female (5.55). The BE male has the second lowest score (5.36), and the AE male received the lowest score (5.18).

The scores with regard to Social Attractiveness are generally lower than with the other dimensions, as none of the scores are above 5.0. The BE female is given the highest score (4.86), followed by the AE male (4.73). The AE female has the second to lowest score (4.53), and the BE male has the lowest score (4.45).

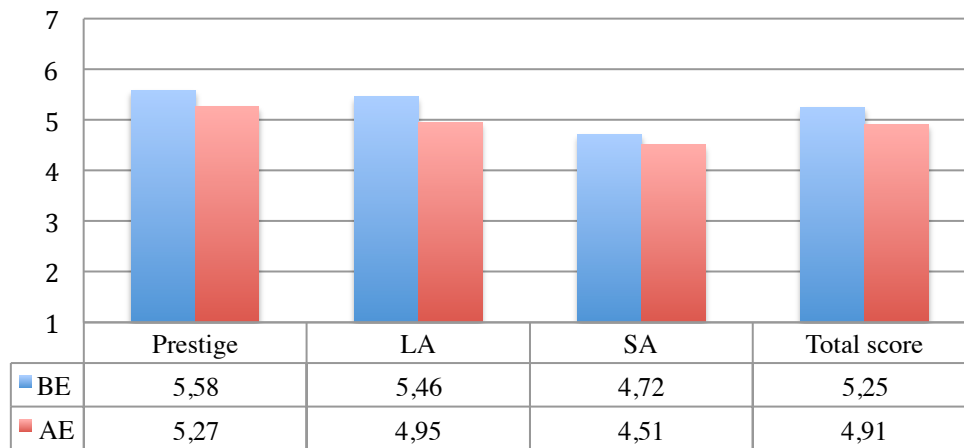


Figure 4.3 Teachers’ overall average scores of BE and AE.
 LA = Linguistic Attractiveness, SA = Social Attractiveness.

Figure 4.3 shows the overall evaluation of BE and AE given by the teachers. The teachers evaluate BE and AE favorably, as both varieties have gained a score well over 4.0 on all evaluative dimensions. Nonetheless, it appears that BE has consistently been evaluated more favorably than AE. Only with regard to Social Attractiveness does BE have a score *below* 5.0, whereas only with regard to Prestige does AE have a score *above* 5.0.

The Total Scores show that BE is given a score of 5.25, which is 0.34 higher than the score of 4.91 given to AE. With regard to Prestige both varieties have been rated rather favorably, although BE is rated more favorably with a score of 5.58 compared to the score of 5.27 given to AE. The most noticeable difference in the overall evaluations is seen with Linguistic Attractiveness. Here, BE is rated 5.46 while AE is rated 4.95, which makes is a difference of 0.51. The scores for Social Attractiveness are noticeably lower than the scores for the other evaluative dimensions, regardless of variety.

The overall evaluations of BE and AE given by teachers show that BE is evaluated a little more favorably with regard to all evaluative dimensions, but especially so with regard to Linguistic Attractiveness.

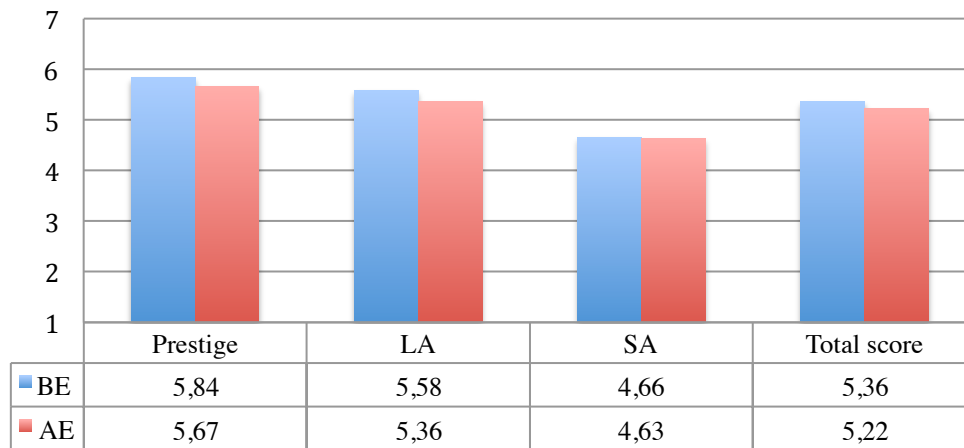


Figure 4.4 Students’ overall average scores of BE and AE
 LA = Linguistic Attractiveness, SA = Social Attractiveness.

Figure 4.4 shows the overall evaluation of BE and AE given by the students. The students’ overall evaluations of BE and AE are also generally favorable, as no scores are below 4.0. In fact, it is only with regard to Social attractiveness that scores reach below 5.0. The students have also consistently evaluated BE a little more favorably than AE. With regard to the Total Score it appears that the students evaluate BE and AE remarkably similarly, the latter gaining a mean score 0.14 lower than the former.

With regard to Prestige, BE has a score of 5.84 and AE has a score of 5.67, indicating a difference of 0.17. The scores regarding Social Attractiveness are noticeably lower than with the other two dimensions, regardless of the variety. Note also that BE and AE are given almost the exact same score with regard to Social Attractiveness, the former a score of 4.66 and the latter a score of 4.63. The largest difference in scores is seen with Linguistic Attractiveness, where BE is given a score of 5.58 and AE a score of 5.36, indicating a difference of 0.22. This is, however, a much smaller difference than the one seen in the teachers’ evaluation.

Overall, the results show that the students evaluate BE and AE very similarly. Nonetheless, BE is consistently evaluated slightly more favorably than AE.

4.1.1 Teachers’ and students’ average scores compared

The most noticeable thing about the teachers’ and students’ evaluation of BE and AE is how similar their evaluations are. If we compare the numbers in Figure 4.3 to the numbers in Figure 4.4 we can see that they mirror each other, they reveal the same pattern, namely, that BE is evaluated a little more favorably with regard to Prestige and Linguistic Attractiveness, and that

the varieties are almost equally evaluated with regard to Social Attractiveness. The main difference between the teachers' and students' evaluations is that the latter have evaluated BE and AE a little more similarly than the former.

4.2 Results: Part Two of the questionnaire

In this part of the questionnaire the respondents were asked to state which variety they speak. Additionally, they were also asked which variety they would like to speak, regardless of whether or not they were able to produce that variety (see 3.4.2.2). The answers are presented in Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.6, illustrating which variety the respondents speak, and which variety they would like to speak.

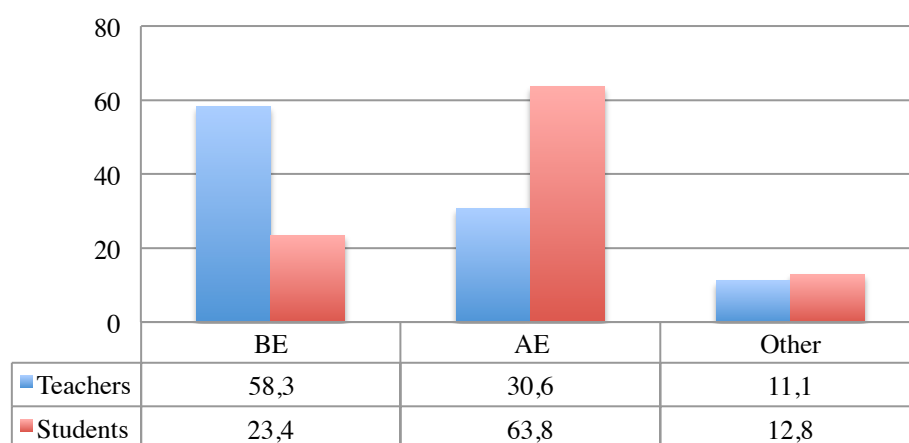


Figure 4.5 The variety teachers and students state they speak.

Figure 4.5 shows what percentage of teachers and students stated that they speak BE, AE, or some 'Other' variety of English. The results show that a majority of the teachers, 58.3 percent, state that they speak BE, and 30.6 percent of the teachers state that they speak AE. The situation was quite different with the students; 63.8 percent state that they speak AE, while only 23.4 percent state that they speak BE. A minority of people chose the category 'Other'. Most of the respondents who chose this category specified that they speak a mix of BE and AE, while some wrote that they spoke either 'Norwegian-English' or 'Bergen-English'.



Figure 4.6 The variety teachers and students state they would like to speak

Figure 4.6 shows what percentage of teachers and students stated that they would like to speak BE, AE, or some ‘Other’ variety of English. The results show that 75.7 percent of the teachers and 57.4 percent of the students state that they would like to speak BE, whereas only 18.9 percent of the teachers and 38.3 percent of the students would like to speak AE. Thus, the results indicate that a majority of teachers and students report that they would like to speak BE. The respondents who chose the category ‘Other’ have either not answered the question, or pointed to a different variety, such as ‘Scottish’ or ‘Australian’.

If we look only at the respondents who stated they speak AE, it is possible to calculate how many of these state they would like to speak BE. As many as 53.3 percent of the students who stated they spoke AE also stated they would like to speak BE.

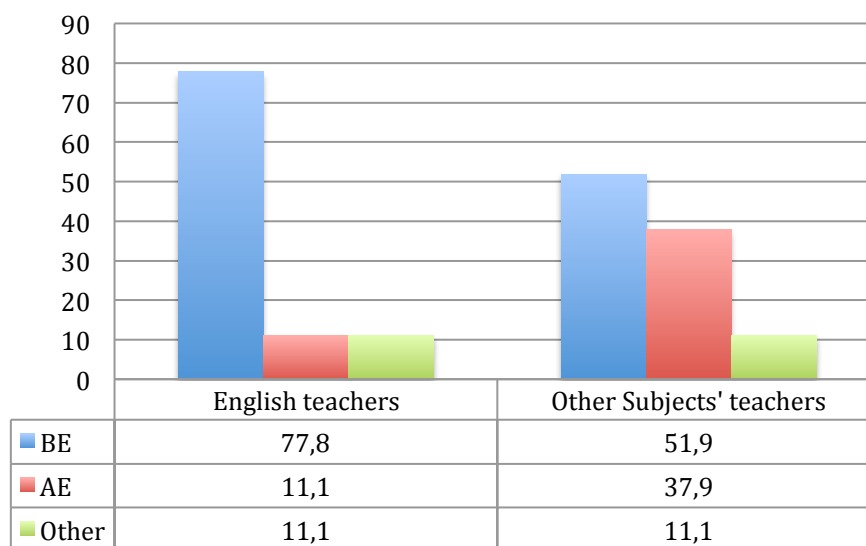


Figure 4.7 The variety English teachers and Other Subjects’ teachers state they speak.

Figure 4.7 shows what percentage of the English teachers and Other Subjects' teachers who state they speak BE, AE, or some 'Other' variety of English. The results show that both teacher groups favor BE to AE but that the favor is stronger with the English teachers.

As much as 77.8 percent of the English teachers state that they speak BE, which is a noticeably larger number than the 51.9 percent of Other Subjects' teachers who state that they speak BE.

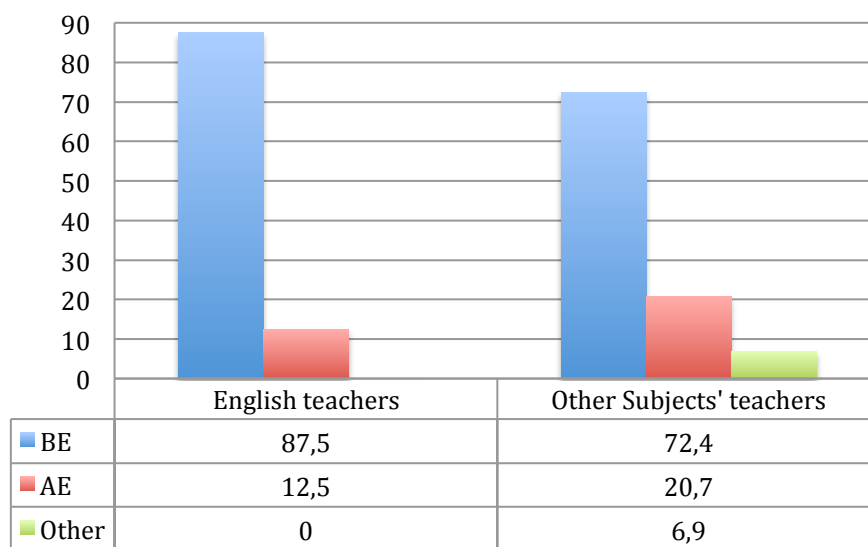


Figure 4.8 The variety English teachers and Other Subjects' teachers state they would *like* to speak.

Figure 4.8 shows what percentage of the English teachers and Other Subjects' teachers state they would like to speak BE, AE, or some 'Other' variety of English. The results show that a clear majority of English teachers and Other Subjects' teachers would like to speak BE: 87.5 percent of the English teachers, and 72.4 percent of Other Subjects' teachers.

If we compare the results of Figure 4.7 and Figure 4.8 we see that there is an agreement between what the English teachers stated they speak, and what they would like to speak. Moreover, by looking only at the results of the seven English teachers who stated they speak BE, we see that six of these state they would like to speak BE (one did not answer). There was only one English teacher who stated he/she spoke AE, and this teacher also wanted to speak AE. There were ten Other Subjects' teachers who stated they speak AE. Four of these teachers stated that they would like to speak BE.

4.3 Results: Part Three of the questionnaire

In this part of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to circle adjectives (see 3.4.2.3). They were presented with 16 adjectives in total, and were asked to circle the adjectives (as many as they wanted) that represented what they thought people speaking BE and AE sounded like. Half the adjectives were ‘positive’, which means that they are commonly perceived as being positive. The other half consisted of ‘negative’ adjectives, which means that they are commonly perceived as being negative (see appendix 1).

The results are given as percentages, and are illustrated in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2. The results are presented with regard to the same evaluative dimensions as in the test using the VGT, meaning that the adjectives have been categorized as belonging to one of the following evaluative dimensions: Prestige, Social Attractiveness or Linguistic Attractiveness (see 3.4.2.3). As a large majority of the adjectives circled by both teachers and students were ‘positive’, the results will center around those numbers, although there will be mention of ‘negative’ adjectives as well.

Table 4.1 Percentage of teachers who have circled ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ adjectives.

	BE		AE	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Prestige	50.5%	0%	21.6%	3.6%
Linguistic Attractiveness	60.9%	0%	31.3%	5.4%
Social Attractiveness	19.8%	5.4%	41.5%	6.3%
Total Score	41.6%	2.0%	31.4%	5.1%

Table 4.1 shows the percentage of ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ adjectives that the teachers have circled for BE and AE. The numbers were arrived at through using a standard method of percentage calculation. As an example, let us imagine that there were 100 teachers, and 30 of them circled ‘positive’ adjectives with regard to BE. Thus, 30 divided by 100 multiplied with 100 equals 30. NSDstat did these kinds of calculations automatically. However, in order to find

the numbers pertaining to the evaluative dimensions I had to calculate these numbers myself. This was done in the same way as mentioned in section 4.1.

‘Positive’ adjectives are displayed first, and are contrasted with ‘negative’ adjectives. As an example, the first cell pertaining to BE contains information about the percentage of the teachers that have circled ‘positive’ adjectives relating to the evaluative dimension Prestige. The cell contains the information 50.5, which means that 50 percent of the teachers circled ‘positive’ adjectives relating to Prestige, and 0 percent circled ‘negative’ adjectives relating to Prestige. The remaining 49,5 percent have not circled any adjectives relating to Prestige, and are thus not included.

In general, the teachers have circled a much larger number of ‘positive’ adjectives than ‘negative’. For both BE and AE there is a noticeably small number of ‘negative’ adjectives. The Total Score for BE shows that overall 41.6 percent of the teachers have circled ‘positive’ adjectives. The Total Score for AE shows that overall 31.4 percent of the teachers have circled ‘positive’ adjectives. Also, only 2.0 percent of the teachers have circled ‘negative’ adjectives for BE, and 5.1 percent have circled ‘negative’ adjectives for AE, which further indicates that both varieties are viewed favorably rather than unfavorably by the teachers.

With regard to Prestige 50.5 percent of the teachers circled ‘positive’ adjectives for BE, whereas only 21.6 circled ‘positive’ adjectives for AE. The largest amount of adjectives circled by teachers is found with regard to Linguistic Attractiveness, and 60.9 percent of the teachers have circled ‘positive’ adjectives for BE, and 31.3 percent circled ‘positive’ adjectives for AE. The evaluative dimension that somewhat distinguishes itself is Social Attractiveness. Here, 41.5 percent of the teachers have circled ‘positive’ adjectives for AE, whereas only 19.8 percent have circled ‘positive’ adjectives for BE.

Overall, the teachers have circled a low percentage of ‘negative’ adjectives. BE has the smallest amount of ‘negative’ adjectives. In fact, it is only with regard to Social Attractiveness that the teachers have circled ‘negative’ adjectives pertaining to BE (5.4 percent). The pattern is more diverse with regard to AE, which has a small amount of ‘negative’ adjectives with regard to all evaluative dimensions.

Overall, the results indicate that the teachers evaluate BE most favorably with regard to Prestige and Linguistic Attractiveness, whereas they evaluate AE most favorably with regard to Social Attractiveness.

Table 4.2 Percentage of students who have circled ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ adjectives.

	BE		AE	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Prestige	82.3%	2.1%	39.2%	7.1%
Linguistic Attractiveness	77.7%	3.2%	43.6%	5.4%
Social Attractiveness	35.5%	14.9%	54.6%	12.0%
Total Score	63.6%	7.2%	46.1%	8.5%

Table 4.2 shows the percentage of ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ adjectives that the students have circled for BE and AE. The Total Score for BE shows that overall 63.6 percent of the students have circled ‘positive’ adjectives, indicating that the students perceive BE very favorably. The Total Score for AE shows that overall 46.1 percent of the students have circled ‘positive’ adjectives, indicating that the student also perceive AE favorably. Only 7.2 percent of the students have circled ‘negative’ adjectives for BE, and 8.5 percent have circled ‘negative’ adjectives for AE, which further indicates that both varieties are evaluated favorably rather than unfavorably by the students.

With regard to Prestige 82.3 percent of the teachers have circled ‘positive’ adjectives for BE, and 39.2 percent have circled ‘positive’ adjectives for AE. With regard to Linguistic Attractiveness 77.7 percent of the students have circled ‘positive’ adjectives for BE, while 43.6 percent have circled ‘positive’ adjectives for AE. With regard to Social Attractiveness, AE has the highest percentage of ‘positive’ adjectives. Here, 54.6 percent of the students have circled ‘positive’ adjectives for AE, and 35.5 percent circled ‘positive’ adjectives for BE.

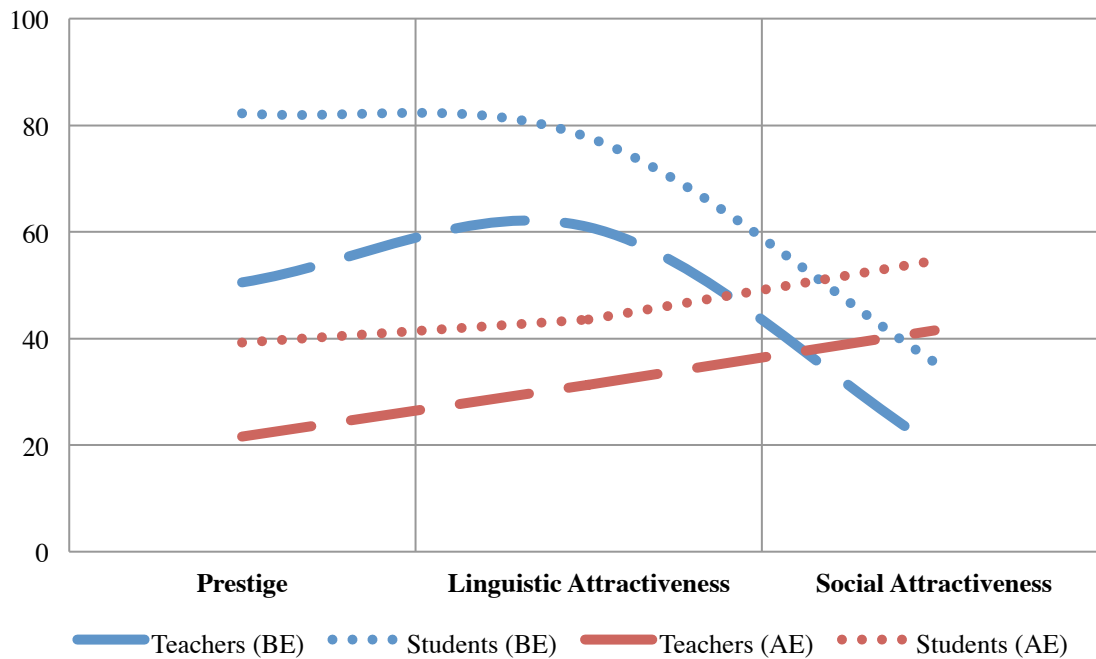


Figure 4.9 Percentage of ‘positive’ adjectives circled by teachers and students for BE and AE.

Figure 4.9 shows the percentage of ‘positive’ adjectives circled by the teachers and the students for BE and AE, and was created to illustrate the results from teachers and students compared. The blue color represents BE, and the red color represents AE; the dashed lines represent teachers, and the dotted lines represent students. When the teachers’ and students’ results are compared we see that they mirror each other; they display the same tendencies. However, the students have in general circled more ‘positive’ adjectives than teachers, resulting in overall higher percentages, which can be seen in Figure 4.9 as the blue and red dotted lines are above the blue and red dashed lines. With regard to Prestige and Linguistic Attractiveness, the teachers and students have evaluated BE noticeably more positively than AE. However, with regard to Social Attractiveness, AE is evaluated more positively than BE. Also worth mentioning is the fact that compared to the teachers the students have evaluated BE more positively than AE. This is visible in Figure 4.9, as the gap between the students’ blue and red line is larger than the distance between the teachers’ blue and red line, but overall the evaluations made by teachers and students are very similar. Also, Figure 4.9 illustrates that the evaluative dimensions Prestige and Linguistic Attractiveness have received far more ‘positive’ adjectives than Social Attractiveness.

4.4 Results: The interviews

The qualitative part of this study consists of interviews conducted with five teachers and nine students. For more information about the interviewees, see section 3.4.3. The interviews were semi-structured, meaning that although interview guidelines were used (see Appendix 2), the conversation was allowed to move beyond the guidelines as long as the information was in any way relevant. The examples featured in the following sections are translated from Norwegian, which was the language originally spoken in the interviews. I have tried to reflect the respondents' formulations as closely as possible.

The results are presented with regard to different categories, which emerged as the material was being analyzed. As there were more students than teachers interviewed, the students' results will be presented first, followed by the teachers'.

4.4.1 Spoken variety

The first question asked in the interview was: 'What variety of English do you normally speak?' followed by two questions relating to the reason for speaking this variety. Two of the students said they speak BE, three said they speak AE, and the remaining three said they speak one or the other variety depending on the situation. This means that rather than speaking one variety consistently they may speak different varieties depending on what they perceive as appropriate.

The three students who stated that they switch between BE and AE explained this in different ways. For two of the students the choice appears to be quite coincidental, indicating that the decision to speak one variety or the other is not necessarily conscious. These two students do, however, seem to believe that the geographical position can have some impact, e.g. being in England vs. being in the US (example 1 and 2). One of these students did not explicitly state which varieties he switches between, but the context of the interview makes it safe to assume that the varieties in question are BE and AE. One of the three students explained how he chose which variety to speak based on the situational setting. He said that he spoke either BE or AE depending on whether he perceived the situation to be formal or informal (example 3).

[1] *I think I vary [between varieties] when I'm at school. On holiday I think it depends on where I am.*

[2] *I speak British if I'm in England. It's a little coincidental what I speak. But mainly I speak American.*

[3] *I speak British in formal settings, like if I have to call FedEx, or it's the first time I meet someone. But I speak American in informal settings, like when I hang out with my friends, in my leisure time.*

Only one student made a comment suggesting that she speaks a mix between BE and AE, although this is only implicitly stated, as the respondent says she speaks *more* BE than AE (example 4). Another student commented that the variety he spoke has Norwegian 'coloring', meaning that he believed that he speaks English with a certain amount of Norwegian traits (example 5).

[4] *I speak more British than American.*

[5] *I speak a more American variety. There is some Norwegian coloring, but it leans toward American.*

Three of the five interviewed teachers said that they speak BE. One teacher, in particular, stressed that he made an effort to speak BE, and it seems as if it is important for him to speak BE (example 6). One teacher said that she does not speak BE or AE, but if she had to choose between the two she would choose BE (example 7). Only one of the five teachers said that she spoke AE, and she also believed that she speaks with some Norwegian 'coloring', and that she occasionally uses some words belonging to the British vocabulary (example 8). One teacher commented that he believed most of the other teachers at the school spoke a mix of BE and AE (example 9).

[6] *I try to my best ability to speak British English*

[7] *I speak Australian. I've lived there. But if I had to choose a different variety it would be British.*

[8] *I speak mostly American, with a touch Norwegian. And I probably have some British words here and there, but I mostly speak American.*

[9] *I think most of the teachers at this school speak a mix of British and American.*

Spending time in a foreign country – either on vacation or studying abroad – seems to have had an impact on which variety the respondents say they speak. Several of the students point to studying abroad in the US as a reason for them to speak AE (example 10), and two students commented that they had spent much time in either England or the US (example 11 and 12). One of the teachers also commented that she spoke Australian because she had lived there (example 7).

[10] *I've studied abroad in the US for a year, so I speak American. I think I spoke British before that.*

[11] *I've visited the US a many times. I have family there, and I learned American when I was younger.*

[12] *I primarily speak British. I've visited London several times.*

Two respondents, one student and two teachers, said that they believe teachers ought to speak what they referred to as either 'neutral English' or 'Standard English'. Based on their comments, I believe they were referring to BE or AE. The student claimed that he believed teachers should speak 'neutral English', which he believes is easy for students to understand (13). He also compares this 'neutral English' with non-standard varieties of English, which have been evaluated rather negatively in previous research (Preston 1998; Lippi-Green 1997). One of the teachers also explained that teachers *ought* to speak 'Standard English' because it is more understandable for foreign language learner than any non-standard variety (example 14).

[13] *Teachers should speak 'neutral' English. Not, for instance, 'Cockney' or 'Scouse', because it's difficult for students to understand. It [accents] must not get in the way of learning. It needs to be understandable.*

[14] *Standard British and Standard American are equally good. But they [teachers] should preferably speak a standard variety, because that would be most understandable. If there is regional coloring it can be difficult for foreign learners to understand.*

One of the teachers said that if one of her students had been an exchange student and came back with a southern accent, she would encourage that student to speak what I assume is AE (example 15).

[15] *If a student came back from the US with an accent that had Southern characteristics, I would probably try to get him/her to move further up [North] in the country, if you see what I mean.*

4.4.2 Linguistic comments

Comments belonging to this category were made regarding linguistic aspects of BE or AE. A majority of the linguistic comments focused on BE or AE being more ‘natural’, or ‘easier’ to speak than the other variety. The respondents did not specify what they meant when they said that a variety feels ‘natural’ or ‘easier’ to speak, but based on the context it is safe to assume that these are positive remarks. The two first examples are from students, and the last is from a teacher.

[16] *It's more natural for me to speak American, it's easier to speak American.*

[17] *It's easier for Norwegians to speak proper American. It feels easier and more natural to speak American. British demands more from its speakers, and very few are able to speak British properly.*

[18] *I think it's easier to speak British. When [Norwegian] people speak American it often sounds like American-Norwegian.*

One comment from a student pointed to a more specific linguistic aspect, namely, the perceived difficulty of pronouncing BE sounds, which the respondent refers to as ‘British sounds’ (example 19).

[19] *Some of the British ‘sounds’ are difficult to pronounce. They feel foreign and difficult to me.*

One teacher said that she found the /r/ in AE pronunciation difficult (example 20). She did not specify which type of /r/ this comment referred to, but quite possibly it referred to the fact that AE is a rhotic accent, and BE is a non-rhotic accent.

[20] *I think the American /r/ is difficult to pronounce.*

4.4.3 Esthetic comments

These comments deal with esthetic descriptions of BE or AE, such as a variety being described as ‘ugly’ or ‘beautiful’. Three students made esthetic comments regarding BE or AE. Two students said that BE was the more beautiful variety (example 21 and 22), and one student said that AE was the more beautiful variety (example 23). The respondents did not explain what the specific adjectives meant, but the context clarifies whether they are perceived to be positive or negative adjectives.

[21] *British is more beautiful, it sounds much nicer, a lot better. American is more ‘trashy’.*

[22] *I think British is more beautiful. American is sturdier, or ... I think it’s a coarser language. British is prettier.*

[23] *I think American is prettier. British sounds ‘stiff’. American is ‘softer’.*

Two of the five teachers also made comments relating to esthetics (example 24 and 25). Both of these teachers believed BE to be more beautiful than AE.

[24] *British is more beautiful than American. I think it’s prettier, more pleasant.*

[25] *I think British sounds nicer.*

4.4.4 Comments relating to sociability

These comments relate to how people speaking BE and AE are perceived by other people. Most of these comments were made as an explanation of why the respondents had chosen to speak one variety or the other. Two students made comments about how people speaking BE or AE are perceived by others (example 26 and 27). Both of these comments view BE in a slightly negative way, describing it as either ‘tense’ or ‘stiff’.

[26] *American is a lot more relaxed. British people are always so tense. When you speak British you might be perceived as if you are trying to be better than everyone else.*

[27] *If you speak British in informal settings it sounds stiff, and you might come across in a ‘wrong’ way.*

This is the only category where the teachers had more comments than the students. Four out of the five teachers commented on how people speaking BE or AE are perceived by others (example 28-31).

[28] *American sounds dumb, they sound like they're stupid.*

[29] *It sounds artificial when they [Norwegians] speak British. Very fake. I think it sounds less artificial when they speak American. British is more 'posh'. American is more natural.*

[30] *If you speak with a proper RP accent in England it might be frowned upon. It's more ok to speak RP in Norway.*

[31] *If you speak British you sound like you're very grand and academic, compared to people speaking American. American sounds shallow.*

4.4.5 The Media

Nearly all the respondents interviewed said that they felt more exposed to AE than BE on a daily basis. One of the questions I asked the respondents was whether they believed the media had an effect on the way they speak English. A majority of the respondents said yes to this, and I have consequently focused on comments from those respondents. One of the students commented that she had copied how a group of people in a TV show speaks (example 32). Another student pointed out that he found it difficult to maintain a BE pronunciation because of the amount of AE he is exposed to (example 33). A third student believed that the media influences you subconsciously (example 34). I did not ask what the respondent meant by this.

[32] *I think the media has definitely influenced me. I pretty much copied how people in the West Wing speak.*

[33] *I've definitely been more exposed to American in the media. Film, media, music, everything. That makes it difficult to maintain a pure British [pronunciation].*

[34] *Yes and no. I think it had an influence on you subconsciously, but you learn a language by speaking with people, not just through hearing it.*

Two of the teachers made relevant comments with regard to the media. One teacher believes that the media has a large impact on the way people speak English (example 35). The other

teacher believed that the media has a moderate effect, specifying that it has an effect when the speaker encounters a new English word (example 36).

[35] *I think the media means a lot when it comes to how people speak [English]*

[36] *I don't think it [the media] matters that much. I suppose it affects how you speak, to a certain degree. You often encounter new words, and you are influenced by how they are pronounced the first time you hear them.*

4.4.6 School and Education

The respondents were also asked whether they associated one particular variety with the school system, and what variety most of their own teachers had spoken. These comments were, however, not very fruitful and almost identical for all respondents. Almost all the nine students answered that they associated BE with the school system, and that most of their teachers had spoken BE. One student said that he associated school with the North-East of the US, and one student said that most of his teachers had spoken AE. All the five teachers said that they associated BE with school, and said that most of their teachers had spoken BE.

4.5 The results in relation to the hypotheses

This section will review the results in light of the hypotheses underlying the current study. For more information about the hypotheses, see section 1.3.

4.5.1 The results in relation to hypothesis 1

H1 - Students perceive AE as the preferred variety.

The results pertaining to Part Two of the questionnaire suggest that students perceive BE to be the preferred variety, although the results are slightly ambiguous. When the students were asked to indicate which variety they usually speak, 63.8 percent stated that they speak AE, whereas 23.4 percent stated that they speak BE (Figure 4.5, section 4.2). This means that well over half the students stated that they speak AE, which could be an indication that students perceive AE as the preferred variety. However, when the students were asked to indicate which variety they would like to speak the results are quite different, as only 38.3 percent stated that

they would like to speak AE, whereas 57.4 percent stated that they would like to speak BE (Figure 4.6, section 4.2). When looking at the results only pertaining the students who stated they speak AE the results strongly indicate a preference for BE. In fact, 53.3 percent of the students who stated they speak AE also stated they would like to speak BE. This suggests that over half the AE-speaking students would rather like to speak BE.

The Total Scores pertaining to Part One of the questionnaire, employing the VGT, suggest that students perceive BE and AE to be very similar, as the Total Score was 5.36 for BE and 5.22 for AE (Figure 4.4, section 4.1). This suggests that when students are exposed to sound stimuli, they evaluate the varieties almost equally.

The Total Scores related to Part Three of the questionnaire, where the varieties were conceptually evaluated, also indicate that the students prefer BE to AE. A total of 63.6 percent of the students have circled 'positive' adjectives for BE, while 46.1 percent of the students have circled 'positive' adjectives for AE (Table 4.1, section 4.3). This suggests that when the students evaluate the varieties based on the mental image they have of BE and AE, they evaluate BE the highest.

Overall, the results from the current study do not corroborate Hypothesis 1, as a majority of the results indicate that students do not perceive AE, but rather BE to be the preferred variety.

4.5.2 The results in relation to hypothesis 2

H2 - Teachers perceive BE as the preferred variety.

Results pertaining to Part Two of the questionnaire strongly suggest that teachers perceive BE to be the preferred variety. When the teachers were asked to indicate which variety they speak 58.3 percent pointed to BE, and 30.6 percent pointed to AE (Figure 4.5 section 4.2). Further, when asked to indicate which variety they would like to speak 75.7 percent of the teachers pointed to BE, and 18.9 percent pointed to AE (Figure 4.6 section 4.2). The results from both questions strongly indicate that the teachers perceive BE to be the preferred variety.

By comparing the results provided by English teachers with those provided by Other Subjects' teachers we see that the former seem to prefer BE to a much larger extent than the latter (Figure 4.7 and Figure 4.8, section 4.2). A clear majority of 77.8 percent of the English teachers stated they speak BE, and an even greater majority of 87.5 percent stated they would like to speak BE. There were a total of seven English teachers who stated they speak BE. Six

of these stated they would like to speak BE.⁹ Just over half, 51.9 percent, of the Other Subjects' teachers stated they speak BE, and a clear majority of 72.4 percent stated they would like to speak BE. Over a third, 37.9 percent of the Other Subjects' teachers stated that they speak AE. There were ten Other Subjects' teachers who stated they speak AE, and four of these stated they would like to speak BE. Thus, the tendency to prefer BE is strong with both groups, but visibly stronger with the English teachers.

The Total Scores pertaining to Part One of the questionnaire indicate that teachers evaluate AE and BE rather equally. AE received a Total Score of 4.91, and BE receives a Total Score of 5.25 (Figure 4.3, section 4.1). This suggests that teachers evaluate AE and BE very similarly when they are exposed to sound stimuli.

The Total Scores pertaining to Part Three of the questionnaire indicate a clear preference among the teachers for BE. In total, 41.6 percent of the teachers have circled 'positive' adjectives for BE, whereas 31.4 percent of the teachers have circled 'positive' adjectives for AE (Table 4.1, section 4.3).

The interviews seem to indicate a clear preference for BE among teachers. For instance, one teacher commented that he tried to the best of his ability to speak BE (example 6, section 4.4.1). Two teachers explained that they thought BE was more beautiful, or was 'nicer' than AE (example 24 and 25, section 4.4.3), and the same two teachers stated that they thought AE sounds less intelligent than BE (example 28 and 31, section 4.4.4). Only one of the five teachers interviewed expressed a preference for AE (example 8, section 4.4.1).

Overall, the results pertaining to the current study corroborate Hypothesis 2, as a majority of the results, particularly those pertaining to Part Two of the questionnaire, indicate that teachers perceive BE to be the preferred variety.

4.5.3 The results in relation to hypothesis 3

H3 - Students and teachers perceive BE to be the more prestigious and linguistically attractive variety, while AE is perceived as the more socially attractive variety.

The results pertaining to Part One of the questionnaire do not corroborate hypothesis 3, as the teachers and the students have evaluated BE more favorably not only with regard to Prestige

⁹ One of the teachers who stated they speak BE did give a response relating to what he/she would like to speak.

and Linguistic Attractiveness, but also with regard to Social Attractiveness (Figure 4.3 and Figure 4.4, section 4.1).

The results pertaining to Part Three of the questionnaire corroborate Hypothesis 3. Table 4.1, section 4.3 shows that the teachers have evaluated BE favorably with regard to Prestige and Linguistic Attractiveness, but that AE has been evaluated favorably with regard to Social Attractiveness. As seen in Table 4.2, the students have evaluated the varieties according to the same pattern, although their evaluation of both varieties is generally higher than with the teachers. The results suggests that when the teachers and the students evaluate BE and AE based on the mental images they have of said varieties, rather than actually listening to the varieties, they favor AE with regard to Social Attractiveness.

Material from the interviews also corroborates Hypothesis 3. A majority of the respondents, both teachers and students, commented that they associate BE with prestige. One teacher, for instance, commented that he believed people speaking BE sounded more ‘academic’ and ‘grand’ compared to speakers of AE (example 31, section 4.4.4). Several respondents also commented that they believed BE to be more beautiful than AE (example 22 and 24, section 4.4.3), which corroborates the assumption that BE is perceived to be the more linguistically attractive than AE. Furthermore, many respondents commented that they believed AE to be more ‘natural’ and ‘easier’ to speak than BE (example 16 and 18, section 4.4.2), which corroborates the assumption that AE is perceived to be more socially attractive.

Overall, the results pertaining to the current study partly corroborate hypothesis 3, as the hypothesis is not corroborated by the results pertaining to Part One of the questionnaire, but is corroborated by the results pertaining to Part Three of the questionnaire.

4.5.4 The results in relation to hypothesis 4

H4 - Students’ and teachers’ attitudes toward BE and AE differ depending on the approach used to study these attitudes.

The results pertaining to Part One indicate that BE is perceived as the most favorable variety with regard to Prestige, Linguistic Attraction and Social Attraction. Part One employed the indirect approach, with the VGT.

The results pertaining to Part Three of the questionnaire showed that BE was evaluated most favorably with regard to Prestige and Linguistic Attractiveness, but that AE was

evaluated most favorably with regard to Social Attractiveness. This part of the questionnaire employed the direct approach, and the varieties were conceptually evaluated.

Overall, the results pertaining to the current study corroborate hypothesis 4, as the results pertaining to the current study change depending on the approach used to test attitudes.

5. DISCUSSION

The current chapter aims at discussing the results viewed to be most notable by the researcher, and is primarily concerned with three main topics, which will be discussed at some length. Additionally, questions are included within the discussion of the main topics.

5.1 Similar attitudes with teachers and students

Before discussing the main topics, some attention will be drawn to the similarities between the teachers' and students' attitudes. It is noteworthy that the results pertaining to the current study show that Norwegian teachers' and students' attitudes toward BE and AE are strikingly similar. In the VG-test both respondent groups evaluated BE most favorably with regard to the evaluative dimensions Prestige and Linguistic Attractiveness, whereas BE and AE were evaluated almost equally with regard to Social Attractiveness. In the conceptual evaluations both respondent groups evaluated BE most favorably with regard to Prestige and Linguistic Attractiveness, and AE was evaluated as most favorable with regard to Social Attractiveness. The teachers' and students' results mirror each other, and they are notably similar. This suggests that teachers and students hold very similar attitudes toward BE and AE. The fact that the evaluations are this similar may also suggest that attitudes such as these are widely held by the general population of Norway.

5.2 Why do some respondents speak AE when they prefer BE?

As we have seen, several of the students appear to prefer BE, but state that they speak AE (see 4.5.1). Not only do they prefer BE, a number of the students also state that they would like to speak BE. In other words, the results suggest that several respondents speak a variety they do not perceive to be the preferred variety. This pattern is primarily seen with the students.¹⁰ Thus, there appears to be a discrepancy between the students' attitudes and their behavior. Similar results were found in Axelsson (2002) and Rindal (2014), as a majority of the students in those studies stated they speak AE, but a larger majority stated they preferred BE (see 2.4.3). The fact that a similar pattern is found in three different studies suggests that it is not uncommon for people to prefer one variety, but to speak another. Two questions emerge based on these

¹⁰ Other Subjects' teachers also display this pattern, but as there were so few of them, and as none of them were interviewed, I decided not to include Other Subjects' teachers in this part of the discussion.

results. First, why do the students speak AE when they prefer BE? Second, why do the students not speak the variety they prefer? These questions will be discussed together in the following paragraphs.

Easier access to AE than BE through the media might explain why the discrepancy between preferred variety and spoken variety occurs. In the interviews, almost all the respondents – teachers and students alike – said that they felt more exposed to AE than BE in their daily lives. If the students have been more exposed to AE than BE on an average basis, it is very likely that they will become more familiar with AE. Two of the students interviewed made comments that were especially interesting in connection with this discussion. These two students said that they thought AE was easier or more ‘natural’ to speak than BE (example 16 and 17, section 4.4.2). One of the teachers made a similar comment, saying that it seemed less artificial when Norwegian people speak AE than when they speak BE (example 29, section 4.4.4). It is reasonable that the students would find the variety they are most exposed to, to be the variety they find easiest to learn and most natural to speak.

The Norwegian population is exposed to a large amount of English, particularly AE, through the media. As presented in section 2.3.3, nearly half the programs sent on the four most frequently watched TV channels were produced in the US, and eight out of the ten most frequently watched movies in Norwegian movie theatres were produced in the US. From this, we can assume that the variety spoken in several of these programs and movies was AE. Several students thought that the media had an influence on the way they speak English. One student, in particular, illustrated how he wished to speak BE, but had difficulties speaking this variety because of the amount of AE he was exposed to (see example 33, section 4.4.5). Students in Axelsson (2002) and Rindal (2014) made similar comments, indicating that it is easier to learn AE because it is very prominent in the media.

As mentioned in section 2.3.3, most linguists agree that the media does not influence language use to the extent that laypeople often believe, and studies have shown people cannot learn a first language simply by being exposed to the language via the media (Chambers 1998). However, as this research has primarily been conducted on first-language speakers, it seems naïve to ignore the potential influence that the media may have on speakers of English as a second- or foreign language. I would argue that, based on the results pertaining to the current study, the media does seem to influence the language of speakers of English as a foreign language. I would not argue that the media influences the acquisition of the English language in Norwegian students, but it does seem to affect their choice of accent.

It is not uncommon that our attitudes deviate from our behavior, and the relationship between these two has been widely discussed (see 2.1.2). The theory of reasoned action can further help us understand why a number of the students speak AE, while preferring BE. According to the theory of reasoned action, people consider the implications of their actions before deciding to engage in a given behavior or not (Ajzen & Fishbein 1980:5). Following the theory of reasoned action, the students are actively choosing to speak AE, possibly because it is perceived to be more ‘natural’ to speak. This suggests that some people may find it unnatural to speak BE. Two of the students made comments implying that other people might perceive them in an unfavorable manner if they were speaking BE (example 26 and 27, section 4.4.4). If these students reflect the attitudes of many, this suggests that people are actively speaking AE, either because they find it more natural, or because they do not wish to be perceived in an unfavorable way by others.

Because of the limitations of this thesis, no test was conducted to investigate which variety the respondents actually spoke, and thus there is no way for me to know whether the students who stated they speak AE actually speak it. However, similar studies have conducted such tests. Rindal (2010:246) found that even though a majority of students said that they aimed for a British pronunciation, the results showed that 67.2 percent of the respondents spoke with an AE-like pronunciation. The results indicate that despite the high status BE enjoys, a majority of students speak AE. This study was conducted relatively recently (2010) in Norway, and based on this study we can assume that a majority of the students in the current study actually speak AE.

Another interesting finding is that the discrepancy between what respondents state they speak and what they would like to speak does not occur with the English teachers. The results pertaining to the current study indicated that teachers perceive BE to be the preferred variety. Additionally, the results showed that a majority of the English teachers stated they speak BE, as well as stating that they would like to speak BE. Thus, the results indicate that English teachers speak the variety of English they perceive to be the preferred variety. Or, vice versa, that English teachers perceive the variety they speak to be the preferred variety. Why, then, does the exposure to AE not seem influence the English teachers’ choice of spoken variety?

A possible explanation may lie with the level of formal education with regard to the English language that the English teachers have undergone. The English teachers are likely to have knowledge about the English language that the students do not, such as the position that BE has had, and to some extent still has in Europe. Furthermore, a majority of the seminar groups teaching English phonetics at the universities in Bergen and Oslo focus on BE. At the

University of Bergen, three out of four seminar groups focus on BE pronunciation, and only one focuses on AE pronunciation (Universitetet i Bergen, accessed 4 March 2015). In Oslo, seven out of twelve seminar groups focus on BE pronunciation, and five focuses on AE pronunciation (Universitetet i Oslo, accessed 4 March 2015). It is reasonable to assume that a majority of English teachers will prefer BE because a majority, at least at the universities in Bergen and Oslo, have been taught BE as a model of pronunciation as a part of their formal education. During the interview, one of the English teachers pointed out that he tried ‘to the best of his ability’ to speak BE (example 6, section 4.4.1). This comments suggests that the teacher has made a conscious decision to speak BE, perhaps because it is perceived to be the most professionally attractive variety. After all, the results show that BE is consistently evaluated as the more prestigious variety, and it seems fair to assume that the teachers wish to speak the variety that is most associated with prestige.

Overall, the results pertaining to the current study suggest that attitudes toward BE and AE are not necessarily decisive when it comes to the choice of spoken variety. Rather, the results indicate that other, cultural factors, seem to influence which variety the English teachers and students speak. The Norwegian population is exposed to much more AE than BE in their daily lives, particularly through the media, which might explain why the students speak AE, when they actually prefer BE. The English teachers, on the other hand, are likely to have been affected by their profession, and the education leading to that profession, which can explain why the English teachers both prefer and speak BE.

5.3 The socially attractive variety

The results pertaining to the current study indicate that BE is perceived to be the preferred variety, among both teachers and students (see 4.5.1 and 4.5.2). However, the results pertaining to Part One of the questionnaire show that BE and AE were evaluated almost equally with regard to Social Attractiveness. Moreover, the results pertaining to Part Three of the questionnaire show that while BE was perceived to be the most prestigious and linguistically attractive variety, it was not perceived to be most socially attractive variety. In fact, AE was perceived to be noticeably more socially attractive than BE (see 4.5.3). One question emerges from these results: why is the preferred variety, BE, not perceived to be the most socially attractive variety?

In order to discuss this question it is first necessary to recap how attitudes are believed to originate. As presented in section 2.1.3, the current thesis is written under the assumption

that attitudes to language are learnt, and that we mainly learn these attitudes through personal experiences and our social environment. For most Norwegians the amount of exposure to natural speakers of BE and AE is limited. For respondents who have lived in, or had a prolonged stay in the US or the UK this seems to be the most important source of information about the varieties (example 10, 11 and 12, section 4.4.1). However, the greater majority of the respondents has not lived in the UK or the US, and will arguably have to rely on information primarily from two sources: the school system and the media.

The variety that has traditionally been taught at European schools is BE (Trudgill & Hannah 2008:5). The results pertaining to the current study suggest that most English teachers in Norway today speak BE, as well as stating they want to speak BE. The interviews also corroborated this, as nearly all of the interviewed respondents said they associated the school system and/or higher education with BE, and also that most of *their* English teachers had spoken BE. Thus, it seems reasonable to assume that for many people in Norway, BE is the variety they associate with the school system. As has already been mentioned in section 5.2, the average Norwegian is likely to be exposed to AE to a much larger extent than BE, largely because of the media. Additionally, a majority of the respondents interviewed said they believe the media has had an influence on the way they speak English. One student, in particular, said that she had copied how the characters in a TV series from the US spoke (example 32, section 4.4.5).

The social connotation theory (see 2.2.1) may explain why AE is perceived to be more socially attractive, while BE is perceived to be more prestigious and linguistically attractive. Arguably, AE and BE have different social connotations connected to them. As demonstrated in the previous paragraph, it is reasonable to assume that for a majority of Norwegians BE is associated with the school system, while AE is associated with the media. Therefore, it can be assumed that BE is assigned some sort of formal quality, while AE is assigned an informal quality. Rindal (2010) also pointed to the fact that it seemed like her respondents had assigned BE with a formal role, and AE with an informal role. This assumption is corroborated by material pertaining to the interviews in the current study, as AE was evaluated most favorably with regard to AE in the conceptual evaluations (see 4.5.3). The interviews also corroborate this assumption. One student seems to have very clear thoughts about this, as he claimed to speak BE in formal settings, and AE in informal settings (example 3, section 4.4.1). Other comments, made by both teachers and students, also suggest an awareness regarding the formal qualities of BE, and the informal qualities of AE. BE is frequently referred to as being beautiful (example 21, section 4.4.3), or sounding more intelligent than AE (example 31,

section 4.4.4). AE is referred to as sounding more relaxed (example 26, section 4.4.4), while BE is referred to as sounding ‘stiff’ (example 27, section 4.4.4).

This means that upon hearing someone speak BE, or by seeing the label ‘BE’ you are more likely to be associating this with formal settings, such as educational settings. On the other hand, hearing someone speak AE, or being presented to the label ‘AE’ is likely to give associations of informal settings, such as leisure time activities (e.g. watching TV). Thus, when the respondents in the current study were asked to evaluate BE and AE in relation to adjectives such as ‘sociable’, ‘friendly’, and ‘humorous’, they are more likely to associate these words with informal settings and therefore AE. Adjectives such as ‘intelligent’, ‘highly educated’ are likely to evoke associations to formal settings and therefore BE.

Another question that emerges from the results, namely, why is AE perceived to be more socially attractive than BE when the varieties are conceptually evaluated? BE and AE were, as has already been mentioned, almost equally evaluated by the teachers and students in Part One of the questionnaire. Why then, was AE evaluated more favorably with regard to Social Attractiveness in Part Three of the questionnaire?

A possible explanation is that different levels of attitudes are elicited with different approaches. Kristiansen (2010) suggested that the direct approach and the indirect approach measure attitudes at different levels of consciousness. He argues that the direct approach captures attitudes at a conscious level while the indirect approach captures attitudes at a subconscious level. Furthermore, Kristiansen (2010:60f) argued that attitudes at the conscious level are likely to be widely held in society, and that it is more likely that respondents who are aware of the topic under investigation will provide attitudes at this level of consciousness. Respondents who are not aware of the topic under investigation are more likely to reveal subconscious attitudes, meaning attitudes that are privately held, and not necessarily widely held in society (ibid). In his study, Kristiansen demonstrated how results arrived at through the direct approach were radically different from those arrived at through the indirect approach.

Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that what Kristiansen (2010) suggested is true. This would mean that the results pertaining to Part Three of the questionnaire reflect attitudes at the conscious level, attitudes that are widely held in society. Thus, these results would imply that it is socially acceptable to perceive AE as the most socially attractive variety. As has already been demonstrated in section 2.3.3, it is reasonable to assume that AE is the variety that is most present in the media, and Norwegians are likely to be exposed to larger amounts of AE than BE via the media. Results from the interviews also corroborate this, as a majority of the respondents said they felt more exposed to AE in their daily lives. Perhaps this exposure

makes it socially acceptable to perceive AE as being more socially attractive than BE? In line with this argumentation, the results would also imply that it is socially acceptable to perceive BE as the most prestigious and linguistically attractive variety. BE has traditionally been the variety taught at schools, it is often the variety presented in learning books and dictionaries, and the results of the current study suggest that a majority of teachers still speak BE. Perhaps the presence of BE in institutions like the school system makes it more acceptable to perceive BE as prestigious and linguistically attractive? Following the same argumentation the results pertaining to Part One of the questionnaire reflect attitudes at the subconscious level, meaning more 'private' attitudes. In Part One of the questionnaire BE and AE were rather equally evaluated, albeit BE was slightly favored. Thus, the results suggest that, privately, teachers and students in Norway hold rather similar attitudes toward BE and AE, while publically, teachers and students express more favorable attitudes toward BE with regard to prestige and linguistic attractiveness, and more favorable attitudes toward AE with regard to social attractiveness.

It does seem somewhat strange that the most socially acceptable attitudes is to clearly favor BE with regard to Prestige and Linguistic Attractiveness, and to favor AE with regard to Social Attractiveness. One would think that the most socially acceptable thing to do is to evaluate BE and AE rather similarly. After all, the Norwegian curriculum regards BE and AE to be equally acceptable models for English teaching in Norway. Thus, another explanation for why this patterns occurs may be that it is simply easier for the respondents to distinguish between the two varieties when they know what is being investigated. In Part One of the questionnaire, where BE and AE were evaluated similarly, the respondents did not know what was being investigated. The answers were given based on six speakers, roughly the same age, speaking at a relatively similar pace, reading the same text. The respondents did not know that I was investigating their attitudes toward BE and AE, and thus these labels were quite possibly not present in their process of evaluation. In Part Three of the questionnaire, however, the respondents had been presented with labels, and were thus made aware of what was being investigated. When respondents are asked to evaluate a variety conceptually they have to rely on their own mental perceptions of the varieties, which is likely to consist of a range of associations and social stereotypes, meaning that BE is likely to be associated with the school system, and AE with the media.

5.4 Why is triangulation important?

An attitude is a psychological concept, and like most psychological concepts it is challenging to measure attitudes. Part of what makes attitudes difficult to measure is that they exist within the mind of each individual. Even if certain behavioral patterns would suggest certain attitudes, it has been demonstrated that there does not need to be agreement between our attitudes and our behavior (see 2.1.2). Attitudes are complex, which is why it is important to take care when attempting to measure them.

The current study used two approaches to study Norwegian teachers' and students' attitudes toward BE and AE, namely, the direct approach and the indirect approach. The results demonstrated that these two approaches yielded different results. This suggests that research within the field of language attitudes ought to employ different approaches to investigate the same problem, because a range of attitudes may be lost if only one approach is applied.

Part One of the questionnaire employed the VGT, which is an indirect approach, and the results showed that BE was evaluated a little more favorably than AE with regard to Prestige and Linguistic Attractiveness, with both teachers and students (Figure 4.3 and Figure 4.4, section 4.1). The varieties were, however, rather equally evaluated with regard to Social Attractiveness, especially with the students. Part Three of the questionnaire employed conceptual evaluation, which is a direct approach. Here, BE was clearly favored by both teachers and students with regard to Prestige and Linguistic Attractiveness, while AE was clearly favored with regard to Social Attractiveness (Table 4.1 and Table 4.2, section 4.3).

Other studies, mentioned under section 2.4, have also studied attitudes toward BE and AE using different approaches. Bayard et al. (2001) used the indirect approach with the VGT, and the results suggested that AE was on its way to replace BE as the preferred variety. Garrett et al. (2005) wanted to test whether the results of Bayard et al. (2001) would reproduce, and employed the direct approach with a method called keywords. The results pertaining to Garrett et al. (2005) did not show that AE was replacing BE, but rather that BE was still perceived to be the preferred variety.

Several of the studies reported in section 2.4 have used different approaches, and have obtained different results. Loftheim (2013) found that BE was evaluated as the most favorable variety when the indirect approach, with a VGT, was used. On the contrary, Loftheim found that AE was evaluated as the most favorable variety when the direct approach, with a written questionnaire, was used. Furthermore, Kristiansen (2010) argues that the direct approach is

more likely to elicit conscious attitudes, and indirect approach is more likely to elicit subconscious attitudes, as discussed in section 5.3.

The use of different approaches, and different methods within those approaches, also known as triangulation, is important within the field of language attitudes precisely because of studies such as the current one, or the studies mentioned in the above paragraph. It is unlikely that we will ever be able to measure people's attitudes in a complete way, but triangulation is likely to provide a fuller picture of the attitudes one aims at measuring.

6. CONCLUSIONS

This chapter provides a summary of the main trends of the study. In addition, a section reviewing the main shortcomings of the current study is also included. Finally, the current study's findings are looked at in a larger sociolinguistic context, which includes a few suggestions to future research within the field of language attitudes.

6.1 Summary of main trends

The current study has aimed at investigating Norwegian teachers' and students' attitudes toward BE and AE. The study has employed two different approaches – the direct approach and the indirect approach – and has collected data that is both qualitative and quantitative.

First, the results show that Norwegian teachers' and students' attitudes toward BE and AE are strikingly similar. This suggests that these attitudes may be widely held in Norway, not just by teachers and students but also by the general population.

The results also show that Norwegian teachers and students perceive BE to be the preferred variety. This was not especially surprising, considering that BE has traditionally been the variety taught in European schools. Nonetheless, this suggests that BE has a strong position within the educational sector in Norway, and is largely favored by both teachers and students.

Notably, the results showed that several respondents spoke a variety different from what they would like to speak. The study showed that a majority of the AE-speaking students state that they would like to speak BE. The trend did, however, not occur with the English teachers, who state that they speak and would like to speak BE. The results indicate that there are potentially very many students in Norwegian schools who speak a variety different from what they wish to speak, or, to put it differently, there are potentially many students who do not prefer the variety they speak. The large exposure to AE has been suggested as having influenced the students' choice of English variety. With the English teachers, it is suggested that their profession, and their professional education have affected their choice of English variety. This also suggests that people's attitudes appear to have little influence on which English variety they speak.

Another notable trend in the results was that BE, the preferred variety, was not perceived to be the most socially attractive variety. The varieties were very equally evaluated in the VG-test, and AE was clearly favored with regard to Social Attractiveness in the conceptual evaluation. This was a little surprising, because you would expect the preferred

variety to be preferred in all aspects. However, previous research has indicated that AE has been perceived to be the more socially attractive than BE (Ladegaard 1998; Hiraga 2005; Rindal 2010), which made this finding a little less surprising. The fact that AE is evaluated as most socially attractive, while BE has been evaluated as most prestigious and linguistically attractive, can indicate that the two fill different roles; AE is assigned an informal role, and BE a formal role.

Lastly, the study has highlighted the importance of using several approaches and methods when conducting research on language attitudes, a process known as triangulation. The study has demonstrated that different approaches aimed at investigating the same problem may lead to different results, which goes to show that in order to paint a fuller picture of attitudes to language one has to investigate it using a range of approaches and methods.

6.2 Shortcomings

Some changes to the research design could have improved the current study. However, due to the limitations of writing a master's thesis, some elements had to be left out.

First, in hindsight I see that I ought to have asked more questions during the interviews. The interviews only appear to scrape the surface of the amount of thoughts and beliefs that the respondents have about BE and AE. Had I more time I would have conducted more practice-interviews in order to develop my own interview skills.

Second, there should preferably have been more English teachers participating in the study. Only five English teachers were interviewed, and only nine English teachers completed the questionnaire. Ideally I should have conducted the study at another school as well, in order to receive responses from more English teachers, but because of the time limitations, I was not able to do so.

Third, there is always a risk that the respondents did not understand what I meant when I asked them to evaluate BE and AE. In 'Part Three' of the questionnaire the respondents were asked to evaluate the varieties based on the labels 'Standard British English' and 'Standard American English'. In order to help the respondents better understand which variety I wanted them to evaluate I pointed to how news reporters in the BBC and CNN speak, which they were hopefully acquainted with. Nevertheless, I cannot be sure that the respondents evaluated the same two varieties.

Fourth, if I had more time I would have conducted some kind of production test, where the respondents would be tested with regard to which variety of English they actually produce.

In the current study, I have to rely on which variety the respondents state they speak. The variety the respondents state that they speak and the variety they actually speak might differ.

6.3 Contribution of current study and future research

The current study can be viewed as an important contribution to the field of language attitudes. It has provided an empirically founded description of Norwegian teachers' and students' attitudes toward BE and AE. Furthermore, I have shown that attitudes are not necessarily important when it comes to the choice of spoken variety. The current study has examined relatively unexplored territory, as no studies have investigated the attitudes of both students *and* teachers in a Norwegian context. However, there is still much uncovered territory, and it would be interesting to see more research conducted in this field to see if the results would be the same as those from the current study, or if different attitudes emerge.

Very little research has been done on the attitudes of teachers of English as a foreign language, and the current thesis has only scraped the surface. The few studies that have included teachers have still mainly focused on students, and I believe more focus should be drawn to the teachers. English teachers are the ones who will interact with future students and will potentially have great influence on the students' attitudes toward different varieties of English.

Additionally, the media's influence on speakers of English as a second- or foreign language has received little attention, and more work will need to be done to see whether the media influences these speakers more than speakers of English as a first language. The current study has suggested that the media might influence Norwegians' attitudes toward AE, but I readily encourage other researcher to test this suggestion.

Finally, I believe that future studies should employ more than one approach to investigate a phenomenon. Also, little research has focused mainly on the differences between the attitudes elicited with the direct and the indirect method. Future research should therefore test whether the direct approach elicits conscious attitudes, and the indirect approach elicits subconscious attitudes, as proposed by Kristiansen (2010).

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Appendix 1: The Questionnaire (English version)¹¹

Survey – Part 1

Listen to the recordings and answer the questionnaire

Circle your answer

SPEAKER 1

This person seems:

Unintelligent 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Intelligent**

This person seems:

Unpleasant 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Pleasant**

This person seems:

Poorly educated 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Highly educated**

This person seems:

Boring 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Humorous**

¹¹ The respondents evaluated six speakers, and thus filled out six of these scale sets.

This person's language is:

Ugly 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Beautiful**

This person seems:

Unsocial 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Social**

This person's language is:

Incorrect 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Correct**

This person seems:

Poor 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Rich**

I would like to speak English like this person

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Agree**

Survey – Part 2

Fill in/Circle your answer

1) Age: _____

2) Gender: _____

3) What subjects do you teach?¹² _____

4) Which variety of English do you usually speak?

Amerikansk

Britisk

Other: _____

5) If previously learned knowledge was unimportant, what variety of English would you rather speak?

Amerikansk

Britisk

Other: _____

¹² Question nr. 3 was only included in the teachers' questionnaire.

Survey – Part 3

Circle the words you see fit.

You can circle as many words as you like.

What do you think people who speak ‘Standard American English’ sound like?

(Standard American English= like a news reporter in the US)

Smart – Boring – Friendly – Ugly language – Poorly educated – Unsocial – Rich –

Correct language – Not friendly – Social – Incorrect language – Fun – Poor – Stupid –

Nice language – Well educated

What do you think people who speak ‘Standard British English’ sound like?

(Standard British English = like a news reporter in England)

Smart – Boring – Friendly – Ugly language – Poorly educated – Unsocial – Rich –

Correct language – Not friendly – Social – Incorrect language – Fun – Poor – Stupid –

Nice language – Well educated

Appendix 2: Interview guideline (English version)

1. Which variety of English do you try to speak when you speak English?
2. Why do you use that particular variety?
3. Why do you not speak another variety?
4. Which variety do you believe you are most exposed to? Where/how do you hear it?
5. Do you think the media has influenced the way you speak English? If so, in what way?
6. Do you associate any variety of English with school? If so, which variety and in what way?
7. Which variety do you believe most teachers to speak? Which variety did your teachers speak?

Appendix 3: Comma Gets A Cure¹³

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 onto 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.~~

¹³ The part of text with strikethrough was used in the prestudy, but omitted in the proper study in order to make the recording shorter.