

# *Spoken English in the Classroom*

A Study of Attitudes and Experiences of Spoken  
Varieties of English in English Teaching in Norway



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## Abstract in Norwegian

Å kunne utrykke seg munnleg er ein av dei fem grunnleggande ferdigheitene som er nødvendige føresetnadar for læring og utvikling i skule, arbeid og samfunnsliv. Dette fortentar derfor merksemd. Det engelske språket har utvikla seg frå hovudsakleg å vere eit morsmål til å vere eit verdsspråk. Språkbrukarar av engelsk i dag brukar språket fyrst og fremst for å kommunisere internasjonalt. Med denne utviklinga har også *the native speaker norm* (som er læretradisjonen der ein ser til morsmålbrukarane av britisk amerikansk som dei ideelle modellane og måla for engelsk uttale) blitt diskutert av mange akademikarar. Dette er eit aktuelt tema då den noverande læreplanen, *Kunnskapsløftet*, sidan 2006 har hatt eit tydeleg fokus på interkulturell kompetanse og global engelsk.

Denne masteroppgåva tek utgangspunkt i bruk og haldningar til den munnlege engelsken som oppstår i klasserommet. Det er ei studie som har som mål å gi eit innblikk i lærarar og elevar sine haldningar og bruk av ulike uttalevariantar av engelsk som oppstår i klasserommet, *the native speaker norm*, andre framlagde teoriar og tilnærmingar, og korleis lærarane og elevane sine syn og haldningar samsvarar med kvarandre.

Det er ein empirisk studie som nærmar seg fenomenet ved å ta i bruk både kvalitative og kvantitative metodar. Det empiriske datamaterialet er henta inn frå fire vidaregåande skular innan same region. Datamaterialet består av fire intervju av engelsklærarar som underviser innan studieprogrammet Internasjonal Engelsk på trinn 2 i den vidaregåande skulen. I tillegg har dei 62 elevane som høyrer til klassene til dei fire lærarane svara på ei elektronisk spørjeundersøking som omhandlar haldningar, tankar og erfaringar kring ulike uttalevariantar av engelsk og bruken i klasserommet.

Resultata viser at elevane meiner kommunikasjon og det å gjere seg forstått på engelsk er dei viktigaste måla i språkopplæringa. Likevel ser det ut til at elevane favoriserer engelske variantar som stammar frå land med engelsk som offisielt språk med klar dominans av britisk og amerikansk. Norsk-engelsk er beskriven av elevane som pinleg og ikkje god nok engelsk, sjølv om ingen ser ut til å meine at denne uttalevarianten er vanskeleg å forstå. Det er verkar også til at elevane trur lærarane forventar at dei skal snakke engelsk med britisk eller amerikansk uttale i klasserommet og at dei blir vurderte ut i frå dette. Denne påstanden blir avvist av lærarane sjølv om dei oppmuntrar elevar som ynskjer det til å strekke seg etter ein britisk eller amerikansk engelskuttale. Det viser seg også at britisk og amerikansk blir brukt som referansar for engelskuttale i klasserommet, men ikkje som ein norm i undervisinga.

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## List of Abbreviations

- CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment
- EIL – English as an International Language
- ELF – English as a Lingua Franca
- L1 – mother tongue
- L2 – target language
- L60 – Læreplan for forsook med 9-årig skole. Forsøk og reform i skolen. Curriculum of 1960.
- L97 – Læreplanverket for den 10-årige grunnskolen. The curriculum of 1997 (1-10)
- LK06 – National Curriculum of Knowledge Promotion. The curriculum of 2006
- LK06S – English – Programme Subject in Programmes for Specialization in General Studies.
- M74 – Mønsterplan for grunnskolen. The curriculum of 1974.
- M87 – Mønsterplan for grunnskolen. The curriculum of 1987.
- R94 – Læreplan for videregående opplæring. Engelsk. Felles allment fag for alle studieretninger. The curriculum of 1994. (Upper secondary education)
- VG2 – the second year of upper secondary education.

## Transcription key for Interview Transcripts

Table 1 Transcription key for interview transcripts

<b>Speakers</b>	
Interviewer	I
Respondent	R
Turn start	:
<b>Transitional Continuity</b>	
Final	.
Continuing	,
Appeal	?
<b>Pauses</b>	
Short/Medium	..
Medium/Long	...
<b>Vocal Sounds</b>	
Laughter	@
<b>Quality</b>	
Emphatic	<i>Cursive</i>
<b>Lengthening</b>	
Booster	!
<b>Transcriber's perspective</b>	
Researcher's comments/Non-linguistic action	(( ))
Inaudible/Uncertain hearing	XXX

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Introduction

Through many years as a student at school, conversations with friends and co-workers, and as a teacher of English, the friends, students, and co-workers along the way have expressed their attitudes and commented on the variation of spoken English language. They have commented on the linguistic performance of English as either unsatisfactory or acceptable, with utterances such as:

- “My English has gotten much better since I started working with him (a native speaker of American English). Now I sound more American, and I am so happy about it! This is something that we have talked about. He also says that it is very easy to hear if people come from Scandinavia because they speak Scandinavian English.”
- “I understand better those who speak English with a bad accent, like I do, than those who speak good and proper English like British or American English.”
- “It sounds so stupid when people talk English with a Norwegian accent, it is like they do not even try and do not bother to give it any effort.”
- “Do you practice spoken English in your education? I mean, you are educating yourself to become a teacher of English. Don’t they have to ‘test you’ or control that you speak proper and good native-like English before sending you out to work and teach the language?”

They have also commented on different varieties of English of which their attitudes were revealed. For example, British English was described as “pompous, geeky, posh, old, and tea party like” while American English was described as “more socially accepted, easier to speak, and more daily like”. At the same time, students have commented that their teacher prefer that they speak British English or American English, and that they are being more positively assessed by their teacher if they have a British or American pronunciation. Some students have also said that they do not speak confidently in class, or that they avoid speaking at all, because they feel insecure about their English accent and do not want to pronounce anything that would be regarded as unacceptable by others. For a soon to be teacher, this raised some questions concerning the acceptance of variations of spoken English. Is spoken English that is native-like more accepted than other varieties in the English teaching classroom? Are teachers compared against the native-speaker norm by their students? To what degree do students avoid speaking in class because they worry about their own and others’ thoughts about their

pronunciation? Are people regarded as better in English by speaking with the pronunciation and intonation of a native speaker? How should we really sound when speaking English? These are complex questions that will be discussed in the current study.

Before continuing, some terms need to be clarified. English as a foreign language is defined in Collins English Dictionary as “the practice and theory of learning and teaching English for use in countries where it is not an official medium”. A second language is defined as “a language other than the mother tongue that a person or community uses for public communication, esp in trade, higher education, and administration”, and might also have status as the official language or one of the official languages (Collins English Dictionary). In Norway, language teaching other than Norwegian are considered *foreign* language teaching. English cannot be considered a *second* language in Norway because it is not regarded as an official language of the society (Simensen, 2007). However, English as a second language and English as a foreign language are used interchangeably in the present study. This is because a lot of research and theories on second language learning are highly relevant for the thesis. The term L2 or target language will be used concerning both second and foreign language teaching and learning unless otherwise specified. Likewise, L1 will be used in reference to the student’s mother tongue.

In second language learning, the teaching of pronunciation plays a crucial role and is an integral part of almost any language course. The traditions on how to teach English has undergone several changes in order to meet the needs and demands of a transforming society. Today, the teaching of English as a foreign language is firmly anchored in the Norwegian school system where all pupils start to learn English at primary level at the age of six. By the time they have finished lower secondary school, the pupils will typically have had ten years of formal instruction in English. Lately, with the latest reforms in Norwegian schools and the national curriculum, the notion of intercultural learning has become central in the subject of English. Aspects such as intercultural competence (see section 2.2.3), International English, and English as a global language (see section 2.1) have contributed to dissolving the native speaker norm as governing the teaching of spoken English language.

Speaking is one of the main skills in language teaching and deserves attention. The issue that is raised regarding teaching and learning spoken English language relates to what kind of communicative skills should be prompted. The globalisation has increased the status of English as a global language and an international lingua franca. English as a lingua franca (ELF) can be defined as “a “contact language” between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign

language of communication” (Firth 1996:240 in Seidlhofer 2006:41). The ownership of English does no longer belong only to the native-speaker countries; it has stretched beyond these borders. First and foremost, English is now used as a tool for international interpersonal communication between non-native speakers, and not for communication between non-native and native speakers as before (Crystal, 2003). Because of this, the native language focuses from earlier curricula, which was mainly aimed at the UK and the USA, is now reduced and replaced with Global English and all its varieties from different places of the world (Hansen, 2011).

Today, English is widely accepted as the primary international language and English acquisition is increasingly required of every student in all education systems. The debate now concerns whether and to what degree an English variation should be taught, what criteria should be used and how it should be assessed. Today, English is taught as a foreign language, or used as a lingua franca, all over the world. In order for English to fully function as a global language for connecting people and spreading information, it is important to teach English as a tool for communication.

## **1.2 Relevance**

Oral communication, thus oral language skills, is one of the main subject areas that foreign language teaching aims to develop. The spread of English as a world has created an emphasis on communicative competence (see 2.2.3.1) and global English in the *National Curriculum of Knowledge Promotion* (hereafter LK06). The great majority of people will need to be able to speak English and understand others who speak the language. This is “particularly important today given the high (and constantly growing) degree of internationalization in almost all walks of life; more people than ever will have to communicate in English from time to time.” (Nilsen & Rugesæter, 2008:149). As intercultural and communicative competence has been in the curriculum for the last decades, it is relevant to the teachers’ and students’ interpretations and attitudes of spoken English variations and speaker norms.

Traditionally, the English language teaching in Norway has been dependent upon the native-speaker norm, where the students have been encouraged to look to the native speakers of the language in order to to acquire correct spoken language. The notion of correctness in language teaching “overshadowed the importance of communicative competence, but today it is generally accepted that the most important thing is to be able to make oneself understood and that speaking with a foreign accent is not such a liability.” (Nilsen & Rugesæter, 2008:150). Today, a foreign accent only reflects that the speaker is not a native speaker of

English and not that the speaker has failed at acquiring spoken English language, which is also something that should be reflected in the language teaching.

The present situation of English as a global language, with all its regional varieties, requires people to be familiar with several varieties of English. Therefore, it is important that teachers “prepare their students for a world of staggering linguistic diversity. Somehow, they need to expose them to as many varieties of English as possible, especially those which they are most likely to encounter in their own locale.” (Crystal, 2001:60). Crystal (2001) also emphasizes that in order to develop a flexible attitude towards the principles of usage of different English varieties, it is important that the teachers do so themselves. The native speaker norm, which is so widespread with its absolutist concept of ‘proper’ or ‘correct’ English, “needs to be replaced by relativistic models in which literary and educated norms are seen to maintain their place alongside other norms, some of which depart radically from what was once recognized as ‘correct’” (Crystal, 2001:60). Crystal proposes an exposition of as many spoken English varieties as possible and that different norms and models can coexist in the English teaching classroom. The present thesis aims to investigate if this is the case in the English teaching classroom at Norwegian schools, and if or to which degree the traditional norms still prevail regarding spoken English language.

The teacher plays an important part in the language teaching classroom, and might also influence the students’ choice of English accents concerning which accent they choose to aim at when they are speaking. Nilsen and Rugesæter (2008) emphasize the importance that the teacher represents a form of consistency, and “use a sound system that is recognisable as an accent that can be imitated” (8). It would therefore be interesting to compare teachers’ and students’ attitudes of English varieties and their choices, in order to see if there are any differences and/or similarities. According to Nilsen and Rugesæter (2008) it is also important “to have a form of authentic reference to measure yourself against” (9) because the extent that students are exposed to English today will make them “react to a teacher having a strong Norwegian accent when speaking English in the classroom” (9). Therefore, what the teacher expect from their students, what the students expect from the teacher, and what the students think that their teacher expects from them are taken into consideration in the present study. This is because it would be interesting to see if the teachers’ and students’ expectations and beliefs about what is being expected correspond.

In the Norwegian national curriculum, the criteria for English pronunciation are accent-neutral (see section 2.4.1.2). This means that the teachers may offer a mix of models and practices of English pronunciation among themselves, which might make the criteria and



assessment for spoken language a problematic area for both students and teachers. It is stated in the current national curriculum that the subject should enable the students to adjust their language to purpose and situation. However, there are no clear competence aims for spoken language in the national curriculum related to linguistic performance measured against a speaker norm. As a result, the interpretation of competence aims for spoken language regarding performance and proficiency is decided on a local level by the teachers and not on a national level. Because of this, it would be interesting to look into what the criteria for spoken English are in different schools, and also what criteria they use for assessment. Research in four neighbouring upper secondary schools, which covers all the upper secondary schools in the region, and comparing the teachers' and students' thoughts and attitudes, may thus illustrate if there are common or different features amongst the teachers and the students regarding varieties of English and to what degree a potential speaker norm is present in the language teaching classroom.

### **1.3 Previous research**

Ulrikke Rindal has studied English pronunciation among Norwegian learners as well as their attitudes and choices when it comes to British and American English (2010; 2014; Rindal & Piercy, 2013). In her studies, Rindal has investigated the Norwegian learners' attitudes and choices of spoken English through the use of auditory analyses and matched-guide tests. She concludes that the learners make their choices based on different factors and that American English is the most accessible and most preferred variety of English amongst the learners, while British English is seen as the most prestigious and formal variety (2010; 2013; 2014). The studies also show that some of the learners are aiming at a "neutral" English, and try to avoid the standard varieties as L2 targets (2014; Rindal & Piercy, 2013). Her findings also indicate that the learners' choice of English pronunciation relied on how they want to present themselves to others (2010).

Thomas Hansen's (2011) master thesis examines the extent to which the intercultural-speaker teaching model is acknowledged by teachers of English in Norway. Hansen suggests that there may be little theoretical understanding in Norway of the speaker-model debate in relation to an intercultural-speaker model in Norway, as "the issue of speaker models is treated quite coincidentally from one district to another" (2011, 53). Hansen concludes that the results show a tendency that the intercultural-speaker is acknowledged as a model for the cultural competence teaching of the English subject, and that when modeling the students'

spoken language, the native-speaker model was preferred as model of acquisition. Additionally, the study indicates that the teachers' assessment of the students was positively affected by native-like pronunciation.

Maria Tengs Sannes (2013) investigated the representation of different varieties of English in textbooks used in English teaching, and students' and teachers' experiences, views and attitudes regarding the presence of varieties of English and the native speaker norm. Thus, Sannes' thesis functions as a supplement to Hansen's thesis in that she additionally takes the material available and students' attitudes into account. Sannes' (2013) study gives an insight into first grade in upper secondary teachers' and students' experience, attitudes towards English varieties and the teaching material that are available to them. She concludes that the English varieties in textbook materials are more varied than earlier, but they are limited to countries with English as an official language, and are still dominated by British and American English examples. Also, the results indicate that even though the native speaker norm stands strong, with 47,9% aiming at a native accent where 33,3% aimed towards British English and 29,8% towards American English, there is an understanding that an English speaker does not have to sound like a native speaker of English in order to make oneself understood. The study also shows that British English is regarded as intelligent, polite and successful, while American English is regarded as easily understandable, normal and more appealing. She found that both students and teachers see communication and making oneself understood as the main purpose for language learning. However, the study also shows that the students had strongly negative reactions to English with a strong Norwegian accent, and that English with a lighter Norwegian accent was viewed as easily understood, normal and acceptable.

#### **1.4 Research questions**

The current study investigates how English as an international language (EIL) is practiced regarding spoken English language in the language teaching classroom. The present thesis aims to give an insight into teachers' and their students' thoughts, experiences and attitudes concerning spoken varieties of English, the native speaker norm, and alternatives to this norm, such as the intercultural speaker. It will also give an insight into whether or not these teaching models or theories are reflected in the current English teaching practice in Norway today, and if they correspond with the views of the parties involved, namely the students and teachers. Through analysis of the teacher interviews and the student questionnaire, this thesis

should be able to provide insight to Norwegian upper secondary teachers' and students' experience and attitudes towards spoken varieties of English. It will also give an insight into how international English is present in the classroom, and to which extent the current teaching practice reflects the native speaker norm. The teacher interviews and student questionnaire will provide an overview of the criteria that are used for spoken English, and comparisons of the teacher and student results will provide information on whether or not, or to which extent, the native speaker norm is present in assessment and in general in the classroom.

The present thesis aims to investigate teachers' experience and attitudes towards spoken English varieties in the classroom. It also looks into the teachers' educational background and the criteria they use for assessment of spoken English in order to get an insight into what degree the native speaker norm has been or still is present in their English teaching classroom. The research questions to answer this are as follows:

1. What are the teachers' attitudes towards English varieties?
2. What are their beliefs about the native speaker norm and the current situation?
3. What methods or theories are reflected in their teaching?

The thesis also aims to investigate the students' thoughts and attitudes towards spoken English varieties, what influences their spoken English, their earlier experiences of spoken English varieties, their reasons for learning English, and what criteria they believe are important to be a successful English speaker. By comparing the students' thoughts and attitudes with their teachers', an overview of corresponding/non-corresponding views and beliefs will be presented. Regarding students' thoughts and attitudes, the thesis aims to answer these questions:

1. What are the students' beliefs about what it takes to be a competent English speaker?
2. What influences the students' spoken English?
3. What are the students' experiences of and attitudes towards English varieties?
4. To what extent do they speak confidently in class?

## **1.5 The structure of the thesis**

This thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter 1 is an introductory chapter, which introduces the background of the study, research questions and context of the current study. Chapter 2 presents the theoretical background on second language learning, the native speaker norm, alternative approaches to the native speaker norm, and an overview of some important

historical and cultural changes and influences related to the English teaching in Norway. The research material and methodology that provide the base of the present study are presented in chapter 3. The results of the analyses are presented in chapter 4. These findings are further discussed in relation to the research questions and theory in chapter 5. Finally, the thesis is brought to a conclusion in chapter 6, summarising and explaining the results in relation to the research questions, and suggesting further research.

## **2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

In this chapter, the main contextual background motives for the present study will be outlined. First, the chapter looks at the historical aspect of the English language, from the spread of English to the position of English as a global language. The chapter will then give an introduction of the teaching methods and models that have followed the English language's change of position, introducing the native speaker norm and the following ways of teaching and learning that reflect EIL. It will then take a look at the European context regarding influences and changes in the teaching of the English subject before looking at English in the Norwegian context, which concerns how the history and outer influences have affected the teaching and learning of English in the national curricula, and the situation and exposure of English in Norway today.

### **2.1 English in the World**

#### **2.1.1 The Spread of English**

Kachru described as early as in 1985 the *Concentric Circles of English*, which describes the spread of English as a global language in terms of three circles, the inner, the outer and the expanding circle. The terms are based on the speakers' acquisition of English. In this respect, the 'inner circle' comprises native speakers of English and the traditional native-speaker countries. A native speaker can be defined as "someone who learned a language in a natural setting from childhood as a first or sole language" (Kachru & Nelson, 2001:15). The 'outer circle' consists of the countries with speakers of English who acquires it as a second language, many of which used to be British colonies. And the 'expanding circle' includes the countries and speakers of English that acknowledge the importance of English for international purposes and learn it as a foreign language. In this regard, Norway belongs in the expanding circle because English has no official status but is used in community for the purpose of, for example, international communication, in industry and in teaching.

Across the globe, English has become the most popular choice as a lingua franca. The present state of affairs is a result of several development stages of the spread of English, mostly concerning military, political and economic power. There are some major historical factors that led to the distribution and dominance of English as a global language. Crystal (2003) points out that English has served as a lingua franca since the colonization of the outer

circle countries started in the late sixteenth century, with the expansion and colonization of America, where English was established later on as a national language. Also, the British colonization took place in Africa and Asia. When the earlier colonies started to become independent states, many of them introduced English as their official language. Later, with the rise of the USA with its technical, economic and political power, the spread and need of the English language developed further around the world. New innovations, media, entertainment industry, international administration and technology also increased the need and spread of English.

The relationship between the inner, outer and expanding circle is more complicated than before. The speaking features of the circles are further characterized by Kachru (1985) as norm-providing, norm-developing and norm-dependent. By this, he means that the inner circle is seen as norm-providing varieties, for obvious reasons. The outer circle is seen as having norm-developing varieties, which suggests that the regions have developed or are developing their own varieties of English regarding spoken language. The expanding circle is seen as norm-dependent, which means that the varieties that are used here are dependent on norms from external spoken language varieties from the inner circle, where usually British English or American English have been preferred. However, these characteristics seem to be more complicated than before, as the expanding circle countries are becoming more and more like the outer circle countries when it comes to speech norms. Simensen (2007) emphasises that especially the notion of the expanding circle as norm-dependent regarding pronunciation is misleading. She also says that one of the main reasons for this is that the earlier use of EFL of communication between non-native speakers and native speakers has completely changed. Now, the “non-native speakers of English communicate more with other non-native speakers than they do with native speakers” (Simensen, 2007:75). Therefore, it is questionable to what degree the native speaker norm (see section 2.2.1) with, for example, British English and American English is really necessary concerning the acquisition of spoken English.

### **2.1.2 English as a Global Language**

Today, there is little doubt that English has the status of a global language. According to Crystal (2003), a global language is a language that has achieved a genuinely global status after it has developed a special role that is recognized in several countries. In order for a language to gain such a status, it must be taken up by other countries around the world and it must be given a special place within their communities, even though the communities may

have few (or no) mother-tongue speakers of the language (Crystal, 2003). This could be done through making the language the official language in a country, where it is used as a medium of communication in government, media and educational systems, or making the language a priority in the country's foreign language teaching, even though it has no official status in the country (Crystal, 2003).

The great majority of English language learners are learning English in order to communicate with other non-native speakers of English. Today, there are more people speaking English as a second or foreign language than there are of people speaking English as a native language. Now, the non-native speakers of English outnumber the native speakers in a ratio at least four to one (Crystal, 2003; 2012). Therefore, the English dominance of international communication in the world is a result of the number of speakers of English as a second or foreign language. This is the reason that English is also talked about both as a global language or as an international 'contact language' (Nilsen & Rugesæter, 2008). The current wide spread of speakers of English as a first language, second language and/or as a language to communicate internationally, concepts such as EIL and ELF have been introduced when describing variants of the language (Nilsen & Rugesæter, 2008).

The distinctions between 'native speaker', 'second language speaker', and 'foreign language speaker' have become blurred because of global English. Prodromou (2006) claims that the globalization pulls English in two different directions. One direction where the English language has splintered into countless regional varieties, and one direction where there is "a need for an international lingua franca which will be comprehensible in a wide variety of settings, involving linguistically, ethnically and culturally heterogeneous speakers" (Prodromou, 2006:51). Regarding English language learning, McKay (2006) argues that current changes in the nature of English and English language learners require changes of the view that "the goal of English learning is native-speaker competence, and that native-speaker culture should inform instructional materials and teaching methods" (114). She argues that because of the view of EIL, the English language can no longer be linked exclusively to the native-speakers and their culture. Therefore, there is no need to base the teaching materials, methodology or the ideal teacher on native speaker models (McKay, 2006). Both Prodromu's and McKay's claims support the suggestion that English language teaching should relate and reflect today's nature of English and the characteristics of the language learners. This suggests that the notion of native English varieties as the correct form of English has become outdated, as the use of English today mostly reflects International English. The need of communication

between speakers without a common native language has increased the importance of international communication skills and intercultural awareness in language teaching.

## **2.2 Traditions and models in English language teaching**

There are numerous ways in which English is taught and learned around the world. However, some traditions and tendencies have arisen. Kirkpatrick (2006) points out that the choice of the model of English that should be used in the classroom is often based on political and ideological grounds rather than educational ones, and therefore it is a choice filled with conflicts of different ideologies and interests. The dominant method for the last decades has been the practice of learning English as a foreign language, but it seems like the notion of global English has opened up for practices that are more suited for the present realities of the situation in the world. These changes have led to teaching and learning for acquiring communicative competence and intercultural competence, and also the introduction of the intercultural speaker.

### **2.2.1 The Native Speaker Norm**

Some spoken varieties of a language have a special position in that they are regarded as standard. A standard is defined in Collins English Dictionary as “an accepted or approved example of something against which others are judged or measured”. Concerning spoken English language, it is Received Pronunciation (hereafter referred to as British English) that has the status of a standard in England, and in the United States it is the range of accents known as General American (hereafter referred to as American English) (Wells, 1982). A standard accent is generally considered the correct one, of which “it is held up as a model of how one ought to speak, it is encouraged in the classroom, it is widely regarded as the most desirable accent for a person in a high-status profession to have” (Wells, 1982:34). Also, it is “regarded a standard or (norm) not because of any intrinsic qualities it may possess, but because of an arbitrary attitude adopted towards it by society” (Wells, 1982:34). On the contrary, non-standard accents tend to have associations of lower status. This indicates that the status of a standard accent is an agreed upon social convention that might colour, for example, teachers’ and students’ attitudes towards different varieties of English.

The native speaker norm tends to emphasize learning about the culture and society of the native speakers. The tradition stresses the importance of methodology as a central part of the language learning, and modelling native speaker language behaviour (Graddol, 2006).



Regarding native speakers of English, they would speak a variety from one of the countries that belong in Kachru's inner circle, such as British English or American English (see section 2.2.1). The notion of the native speaker has an important place in second language proficiency. The traditional view of language teaching and learning takes the native speaker criterion, which is often the native speaker standards, as a measure of success in learning, as well as a role model for language teaching. The notion of the native speaker as a norm can be traced back to the Chomskyan idea of the native speaker as the ideal and the ultimate authority concerning language use and competence (Angelovska & Hahn, 2009).

There are several reasons why the native speaker norm has been popular and been viewed as a safe option for language learning. Kirkpatrick (2006) proposes some explanations why the native speaker model has been popular and sought-after in English language teaching and learning, as choosing this model is often seen as the safe and easy option. One of the arguments is that the native speaker models have been codified, which means that there are dictionaries and grammars that teachers and students can refer to and that there are norms of which the English' learners can be evaluated and tested. Another reason is that there has been written a prestigious corpus of literature in these varieties. These codifications make them regarded as standard varieties of English. In addition to those two reasons, the native speaker models represent power and have historical authority, which are used to argue over their claimed inherent superiority as English models over other varieties of English. All these explanations lead to a final argument, which is that the native-speaker model is often seen as the easy or safe option for the people who have to make the decision when choosing which model to use (Kirkpatrick, 2006).

## **2.2.2 Issues regarding the Native Speaker Norm**

### **2.2.2.1 English as an International Language**

The spread of English as an international language and the situation of the English language has called into question and redefined the terms 'native speaker' and 'non-native speaker'. As emphasised by Crystal (2003), the ownership of English somewhat problematic because of English being the most widespread language around the world. There has never been a language spoken by so many people. With the change of ownership of English, the English native speaker as a norm for language acquisition is also being problematized.

EIL has increased the number of bilingual speakers, with the result that many people will be using English alongside other languages that they speak. This means that their English language use may be more specific and limited than the monolingual speakers' use of English (McKay, 2003). Therefore, Cook (1999) argues that it is important to recognize the strengths of bilingual speakers of English, who have the ability to serve their communication needs through a rich linguistic repertoire, rather than comparing the bilingual speakers of English to the native speakers. However, in addition to the growing number of bilingual speakers of English, another important characteristic of EIL is the relationship that exists between the international language and the local culture. Smith (2015) emphasises that in international language acquisition, learners do not need to become more like the native speakers of the language or to learn their cultural norms. The international language becomes denationalized and belongs to everyone. The aim for language learning is for the learners to be able to communicate their thoughts, ideas and cultures to others. Also Kachru (1992) argues that English should be dissociated from the colonial past and westernisation. EIL should be denationalized and have a change in the native speaker ownership, thus also move away from the native speaker standard of English.

The spread of English has led to the change in ownership of English. It does not belong exclusively to its native speakers any more. Crystal (2012) points out that during the 1990s, the English language achieved a genuine world presence and received a special status in the educational systems and usage of every country as a result of the globalization. Books and journals increasingly used terms as 'world language' or 'global language' to describe English, which soon became universal terms. English is now seen as a language that symbolises globalisation. Therefore, English must be "perceived as a truly international language, increasingly expressive of many and differing cultures, literatures and lifestyles, not necessarily congruent with the Anglo-American worldview" (Dürmüller, 2008:251).

Today, the English language is being used as a tool for international communication. Alptekin (2002) claims that "communicative competence, with its standardized native speaker norms, fails to reflect the lingua franca status of English: Social and economic globalization has necessitated the use of an international means of communication in the world" (60). If English is to be used for international communication, the relevance of teaching and learning conventions of British politeness or American informality, or culturally-laden discourse samples such as British railway timetables should be questioned because much of the communication in English today involves interaction between non-native speakers (Alptekin, 2002). The status of the English language in the world today fails to be reflected through the

use of teaching and learning standardized native speaker norms. The language teaching curricula should be set aside from the native standards, and rather set standards as an international language with its many varieties and cultural and ideological features in order to fully function as an international language. The extent to which this is the case in the Norwegian curricula is discussed in section 2.4.1.2.

### **2.2.2.2 Positioning the Language Learner as an Outsider and as Inadequate**

To define the native speaker is a matter of discussion in second language acquisition research. Kachru and Nelson (2001) argue that the casual labelling of the *native speaker*, “someone who learned a language in a natural setting from childhood as a first or sole language” (15), must be called into serious question because the attitudes towards English and the input the learners receive may vary greatly from place to place. Additionally, Cook (1999) argues it is quite peculiar how people through various regional dialects and variations consciously or unconsciously “proclaim their membership in particular groups through the language they use. However, L2 learners are not supposed to reveal which part of the world they come from; they are considered failures if they have foreign accents” (195).

With the native speaker norm’s stress on native-speaker-like pronunciation, a position is created of the language learner as an outsider and with lack of success. The learner becomes one who constantly struggles to achieve ‘perfect pronunciation’ and attain acceptance by the target community. The target language “is always someone else’s mother tongue. The learner is constructed as a linguistic tourist – allowed to visit, but without rights of residence and required always to respect the superior authority of native speakers”(Graddol, 2006:83). In assessment of the language learners’ production, “grammar that differs from native speakers’, pronunciation that betrays where L2 users come from, and vocabulary that differs from native usage are treated as signs of L2 users’ failure to become native speakers” (Cook, 1999:194-195). Nilsen and Rugesæter (2008) argue that to communicate effectively requires a level of pronunciation that is not found too difficult to understand by other people, that very few speakers need to be able to sound like a native speaker, and that very few language learners manage to acquire native-like pronunciation anyway because it will be unachievable for most of them. When few language learners will be able to achieve a pronunciation that is seen as perfect when measured against a native speaker standard, it seems unfair to create a target of native-like pronunciation and fluency for the language learners to reach.

Additionally, there is no such thing as an accent of English that is inherently better than any other. Nilsen & Rugesæter (2008) points out that as a teacher, it is important to accept that, for example, many pupils will have a speech variety that will have traces of both British English and American English, or even regional varieties, as a result of English exposure and influence through such as media. They also emphasise that today, children travel more and more with their families to other parts of the world, including English speaking countries, and that the time they spend abroad can easily lead to children picking up some of the features of the regional accent they are surrounded by. The conclusion is once again that the most important factor is to be able to make oneself understood without attracting too much awareness to *how* things are being said (Nilsen & Rugesæter, 2008). Considering the fact that spoken language norms are constantly changing, the safest and most consistent aim within language teaching and learning might be the principle of being able to make oneself understood. A few years back, the aim of correctness in language was overshadowing the importance of communicative competence. It is, however, generally accepted today that the primary goal is to make oneself understood and that it is not regarded a liability to speak with a foreign accent (Nilsen & Rugesæter, 2008).

Language and identity are closely connected in that identity is reflected through the language use. Kachru and Nelson (2001) emphasize that language is a significant part of a person's identity in the way that it functions as a badge or a symbol of the speaker's identity and origin, both public and private. Also, the language associations that people have are an important part of themselves and their images of themselves. Crystal (2012) points out that as countries adopt the English language, they also adapt it to reflect different circumstances and needs they have in their lives. As the language becomes a part of the society, there is a local identity articulated in the way that the language is used within their society, additional to other languages that may be available. From this point of view, a non-native speaker's spoken variety of English that reflects the speaker's origin and belonging should not be labelled as language errors or unsuccessful in achieving English pronunciation, but as a variety that originates from a society and culture other than those from the inner circle.

### **2.2.2.3 Issues for the Language Teacher**

When it comes to spoken English, Nilsen and Rugesæter (2008) emphasize that as a teacher, it is important to represent a form of consistency and to use a recognizable accent that can be imitated. However, they also say that the high amount of English that students are exposed to

today may lead to them having reactions towards a teacher who speaks with a strong Norwegian accent in the classroom. They encourage teachers to aim higher in their spoken English than just to make themselves understood and to continuously work with improving their English in a way that will give respect with the students in order to inspire confidence in the teacher as a professional. For this reason they recommend to have a sort of authentic reference to measure their spoken English against.

### **2.2.3 Alternatives to the Native Speaker Model**

The position of English has gradually developed into a global language. This has led to a gradual development of the teaching and learning of English, where there has been a move away from the native speaker norm towards ways of teaching and learning that are more suitable and better reflects EIL.

#### **2.2.3.1 Communicative Competence**

The founder of the concept of communicative competence, the American anthropologist and sociologist Dell Hymes, defined it as knowledge of “when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner” (Hymes, 1972:277). The notion that ‘We all speak English’ makes it confusing but still true that the rules of speaking change with time and place. The consideration of appropriateness in all aspects of language, which includes rate of speech and level of vocabulary, is the key element of communicative competence. What is appropriate in one culture may not be so in another, which is easily understood. Still, it is important to recognise the various situations that exist across cultures are unique, while they might be similar to situations in other cultures in terms of kind and function (Kachru & Nelson, 2001). Hymes introduced communicative competence as a critique to Chomsky’s theories. Chomsky (1965) defined linguistic competence in terms of *competence*, which concerned intuitive knowledge of language and the ability to understand and formulate grammatically correct sentences, and *performance*, which concerned language use in concrete situations. Hymes (1972) claimed that language use was also determined by social circumstances and therefore incorporated his components for linguistic competence. However, Chomsky’s and Hymes’ discussion of competence was never intended for foreign language teaching but concerned the native speaker.

The notion of communicative competence in foreign language teaching is rather an outcome of the work of the Council of Europe and the influence of Canale and Swain's and van Ek's frameworks. The framework of van Ek, of comprehensive foreign language learning objectives, concerns personal and social development of the learner as an individual and therefore includes social competence, the promotion of autonomy and the development of social responsibility (Byram, 1997). The framework developed by Canale and Swain for teaching of communicative language in foreign language has had the most influence on foreign language teaching in Europe, including Norway. Canale and Swain interpret communication as "a form of social interaction, involving a high degree of unpredictability and creativity, taking place in discourse and in sociocultural contexts, always having a purpose, involving authentic language, and being judged as successful or not on the basis of actual outcomes" (Simensen, 2007:105). It also included four *competences*, or components of 'knowledge', which is defined as what the language user knows, and 'skills', which is how well the language user performs this knowledge. The components were grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. These competences have been used as categories of the research and work by the Council of Europe during the last decades, including CEFR (see 2.3.1) (Simensen, 2007).

### **2.2.3.2 Intercultural Communicative Competence and the Intercultural Speaker**

The concept of intercultural competence came as a response to the idea of communicative competence. Byram (1997) claims the definition of communicative competence is limited in the manner that it lacks contextual reference to the use of a world language, which stretches beyond that of a native speaker. The aim of adapting into the context and behaviour of a native speaker has earlier been discussed as needless and less appropriate for learning an international language (see 2.2.2.1 and 2.2.2.2). Byram (1997) emphasises that descriptions of intercultural communication must consider the social context in which it takes place. In intercultural communication and the function as an intercultural speaker, the non-verbal dimensions of communication also have to be accounted for. The interlocutors bring their own experience and knowledge of the world to the situation of interaction. This could include substantial or minimal information about the people, culture or country in question. It also includes the maybe more subconscious knowledge of the language user's own culture and country, of which they might not be aware of the significance to the interaction with their interlocutor.

The interaction of two individuals is determined by the mutual perception of the social identities of the interlocutors (Byram, 1997). They may be sharing knowledge or social identities, such as their professional identities, or they might be completely unknown to each other, which would affect the situation of interaction. The success of the interaction is dependent of two factors. One of them is knowledge, which is the exchange of information. The other is the establishing and maintenance of human relationships. This depends on attitudinal factors, such as willingness and ability of expecting problems in communication, accepting criticism of one's own social group and values, and accepting being perceived as a representative of a country with its values and its political actions (Byram, 1997). Thus, the factors of knowledge and attitude are predictions that are brought into the situation of interaction as communication skills in an intercultural context. With this, knowledge, attitudes and skills, which could be split into skills of interpreting and relating, and skills of discovery and interaction, form the elements for Byram's model of the intercultural speaker and of intercultural communicative competence. Byram's model can be viewed as free of content where he suggests different uses depending on the situations, which is a result of foreign language teaching varying from one situation to another.

The approach focuses on teaching the language learners to see universal features of communication to use to communicate effectively. This ability is based on their own personal background in the face of 'the other' (Byram, 1997; Hansen, 2011). This also correlates to Kramsch's (1998) definition of a competent language user, which is to be able to select the correct forms of accuracy and appropriateness that are called for in a given social context of use (27). She further emphasizes that this competence is the same for the intercultural speaker, which is to be "operating at the border between several languages or language varieties, manoeuvring his/her way through the troubled waters of cross-cultural misunderstandings" (Kramsch, 1998:27). The intention for intercultural communicative competence and the intercultural speaker is for the interlocutors, which in this study will be the language learners, to develop tolerance, respect and cultural awareness through the ability of reflecting on their own and others' cultural identity.

### **2.2.3.3 A World Language with Global Intelligibility and Local Variation**

A world language can be defined as "an additionally acquired language system which serves as a common means of communication for speakers of different first languages" (Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey, 2011:283). The definition suggests that also the native speakers need to

acquire the additional language, which in this case is International English. This makes it a great definition because learning a world language is not the same as learning a native language. As seen in section 2.2.2.1 regarding the current situation in the world today, that non-native speakers of English communicate more with non-native speakers than with native speakers, there is no need for a requirement of non-native speaker of English to achieve native-like pronunciation. Seidlhofer (2006) points out that ELF should not be regarded as a monolithic variety because it is reasonable to think that it would vary and change over time in the same way as all natural languages do. If ELF is continued to be collected and codified, and the linguistic features from the various speakers are made available, it can be considered if English as a world language should be regarded as having different varieties in the same way as native English varieties do.

For a fully functional lingua franca of English, mutual intelligibility and a relaxed attitude towards non-native varieties and forms that does not cause communication problems are required (Simensen, 2007). Intelligibility, which can be defined as the extent to which a speaker's message is understood by a listener (Kennedy, 2009), is a central element of a learner's language proficiency. Nilsen and Rugesæter (2008) say that 'comfortable intelligibility' is the level many non-native speakers of English should try to reach. They conclude that as long as a foreign accent does not lead to a breakdown in communication, it only indicates that the speaker is not a native speaker of English. However, if intelligibility is regarded as the only criterion for spoken English language, some challenges may arise. Crystal (2001) points out that if this was the case, similar languages like Norwegian, Swedish and Danish would be defined as one single language with several regional varieties, which might be called 'Scandinavian'. In the context of teaching, Nilsen and Rugesæter (2008) recommend teachers to not become too lenient in their pronunciation. In order to avoid misunderstandings it is important that the pupils' pronunciation must be clear and consistent. Even though they do not sound like a native speaker of British or American English, successful communication is reliant on making oneself understood, which can be prevented by, for example, wrong intonation patterns that might send out unwanted signals. Therefore, good pronunciation is important in the matter of intonation, speech sounds, stress and rhythm.

Some are concerned that the language variation will induce various new and mutual unintelligible varieties. Jenkins (2000; 2006) argues for global intelligibility and local diversity for teaching ELF. She also rejects the native speaker norm as the target aim for the language learners of English (Rudby & Saraceni, 2006). Through Jenkins's theory, the notion of pronunciation mistakes is measured on the degree to which they prevent intelligibility in



communication. Jenkins (2000; 2006) distinguishes between core and non-core aspects of variation. The lingua franca core features of EIL are the aspects of pronunciation that are found to be essential for mutual intelligibility, and are presented and described as:

1. Consonant sounds except for substitutions of ‘th’ and of dark /l/
2. Aspiration after word-initial /p/, /t/ and /k/
3. Avoidance of consonant deletion (as opposed to epenthesis) in consonant clusters
4. Vowel length distinctions
5. Nuclear (Tonic) stress production and placement within word groups (tone units)  
(Jenkins, 2006:37; 2000:159)

Jenkins (2000) argues that these areas are found as having the potential of pronunciation errors of EIL and require pedagogic focus for production in the English learning classroom. Additionally, the core feature defines phonological errors in relation to the effect on intelligibility and accounts for what is teachable and learnable in the classroom. Other than these areas, the variations should be regarded as regional accent variations. The features which are found as not essential to mutual intelligibility are labelled non-core features, and are presented and described as:

1. Certain consonants (see Lingua Franca Core no.1)
2. Vowel quality
3. Weak forms
4. Features of connected speech such as elision and assimilation
5. Word stress
6. Pitch movement on the nuclear syllable (tone)
7. Stress-timed rhythm

(Jenkins, 2006:37).

By the core and non-core features, Jenkins (2000; 2006) claims that the assumption that a native speaker is the most intelligible and that the native speaker norm would result in greatest intelligibility is flawed. She explains this by saying that native speakers are not more intelligible than non-native speakers, except maybe to other native speakers. Additionally, there is no justification for referring to an item as an error if the majority of the non-native speakers of English in the world produce and understand it. However, Jenkins (2000) emphasises that it is not a desire to patronize those language learners who wish to sound native-like in pronunciation by telling them that they need/should not go to such lengths. They should, nevertheless, learn the features of the lingua franca core to equip themselves for communicating internationally.

## **2.3 European Changes and Influences in Language Education**

The language teaching subject will always be affected by society and politics. With the increasing globalisation, and the related features such as migration, it is “not surprising that common European documents concerning education include regulations and visions concerning a plurilingually competent and culturally rich and diverse population” (Björklund, 2008:29). English language teaching evolves to meet the new political, social and economic expectations that have derived from the increasing globalisation. As a result, there have been several developments in the practice of English language teaching in order to take it from the monolingual as standard and norm and bring it in new directions. The Council of Europe’s work and developments of framework has influenced the developments of curricula all over Europe.

### **2.3.1 The European Framework of References**

English language teaching, and spoken English, has been taught in many European countries for decades. The Council of Europe has provided policies for a new focus for foreign language learning. The Council of Europe and the Common European Framework suggests improving “citizens’ awareness of the multilingual nature of Europe, to encourage a positive attitude towards linguistic diversity, and to promote the learning of several languages” (Graddol, 2006:92). The work of the Council of Europe regarding foreign language teaching has resulted the document *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (2001, hereafter CEFR). Through CEFR it is noticeable that the European Council has moved away from the focus on teaching and learning methods and to rather move towards a focus on objectives and content in the education. The shift is done because “there is at present no sufficiently strong research-based consensus on how learners should learn for the Framework to base itself on any one learning theory” (CEFR, 2001:139). This is why there are no directions given on which teaching model to use in language teaching, but that instead, competence aims are given which the learners are to achieve through language acquisition.

Regarding the pronunciation of English, there has been a move away from the native speaker norm. The European focus has moved away from the native standard to a focus on the learners’ attainment levels instead of aspects of failure (Graddol, 2006). This corresponds with the focus of achieved competence. By doing this, the language learner is no longer

placed or acknowledged as an outsider and as inadequate based on the learners' abilities of achieving or not achieving native-like pronunciation (see section 2.2.2.2). This is reflected in common recommendations and documents for language teaching, such as CEFR. CEFR attempts to provide an equal approach to levels of language acquisition across all languages and employs the concept of 'can do' statements rather than focusing on the aspects of failure (Graddol, 2006). This emphasizes that the learners individual development of competence is important and also that different situations demand different kinds of competences. CEFR operates with six levels stretching from the highest level of competence being C2 downwards to, C1, B2, B1, A2, to the lowest level of A1. CEFR offers illustrative scales regarding learners' achieved oral production (speaking), such as the can-do characteristics for speaking skills of 'overall oral production' and 'addressing audiences' of which two outlines are presented below.

Table 2.1 CEFR's scale on overall oral production

	<b>OVERALL ORAL PRODUCTION</b>
<b>C2</b>	Can produce clear, smoothly flowing well-structured speech with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
<b>A1</b>	Can produce simple mainly isolated phrases about people and places.

(CEFR, 2001:58)

Table 2.2 CEFR's scale on addressing audiences

	<b>ADDRESSING AUDIENCES</b>
<b>C2</b>	Can present a complex topic confidently and articulately to an audience unfamiliar with it, structuring and adapting the talk flexibly to meet the audience's needs. Can handle difficult and even hostile questioning.
<b>A1</b>	Can read a very short, rehearsed statement – e.g. to introduce a speaker, propose a toast.

(CEFR, 2001:60)

As presented, the illustrative scales reflect that there is a need for different competences for different situations. It is also noteworthy that there is no mentioning of speaking models, but rather descriptive statements on what the learner should be able to produce and present through speaking. Therefore, there is no recommendation in CEFR of any spoken English variety to be used as a model for the learners to achieve. The framework represents a

European basis for the development of curricula and assessment criteria in order to promote an equal international recognition of language competence.

CEFR also emphasizes the importance of cultural competence as a part of language teaching and learning. Through language teaching it is assumed that the language learner is becoming a language user.

The learner of a second or foreign language and culture does not cease to be competent in his or her mother tongue and the associated culture. Nor is the new competence kept entirely separate from the old. The learner does not simply acquire two distinct, unrelated ways of acting and communicating. The language learner becomes *plurilingual* and develops *interculturality*. The linguistic and cultural competences in respect of each language are modified by knowledge of the other and contribute to intercultural awareness, skills and know-how. They enable the individual to develop an enriched, more complex personality and an enhanced capacity for further language learning and greater openness to new cultural experiences. Learners are also enabled to mediate through interpretation and translation, between speakers of the two languages concerned who cannot communicate directly.

(CEFR, 2001:43)

The reason for including culture in language teaching is because there is a close connection between language and culture. There are a lot of cultural aspects that can be presented and understood through language. The close connection is emphasized by Jiang (2000) when she says that “a language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture” (328). For the last years, research in language education has given the relation between culture and language more attention and it seems to be agreed upon that culture is an inseparable part of language teaching and communicative competence (e.g. Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1998). Björklund (2008) argues that it is a dynamic phenomenon that operates in and through discourse because of the obstacles in the practical implementation of cultural aspects in language learning. She also says that culture is difficult to implement as such because culture needs to be immersed on a deeper and more existential level, “which means that cultural issues and processes cannot be regarded as the concern of SL/FL education only, but rather as process-related objectives of mainstream education at large” (Björklund, 2008:30). In other words, culture should be seen as an integral part of the curricula. It is agreed upon that cultural competence is necessary for today’s students because it is important that they are to “gain tolerance, knowledge about and understanding and empathy for other ethnic groups, cultures and religions, in order to cope within multicultural

societies” (Björklund, 2008:30). The notion of tolerance, knowledge and understanding is also an important aspect when it is linked to language teaching and spoken language concerning attitudes and experiences of spoken English varieties.

## **2.4 English in Norway**

In Norway, English is considered a foreign language, which places Norway in the expanding circle (see section 2.1.1). English is used as an international means of communication in business, travelling and international relations. Since the 1970’s there has been discussed to what degree the native speaker norm should be emphasised in teaching and assessment. In recent years the debate has taken a new turn. Recognising that the students are substantially exposed of varieties of English that originates from societies outside the ones belonging to the inner circle through media is central. The changing circumstances have been reflected in the outer influences and development of the Norwegian curricula, which will be presented here.

### **2.4.1 The Teaching Tradition in Norway**

As earlier mentioned, English has the status as a foreign language in Norway, which has placed Norway in the expanding circle of Kachru’s concentric circles (see section 2.1.1). The native speaker tradition can be traced back to the introduction of English as a school subject in Norway. In the very beginning of English as a subject in Norwegian schools, there was a strong presence of the native speaker norm (see section 2.4.1.2). However, due to the outer influences and changes regarding English in the world there have also been changes in the way English has been taught in Norway. The later developments in the Norwegian school reforms have opened up for a wider range of varieties where the focus of a native speaker standard has been washed out. In the following sections these changes and the outer influences will be outlined and discussed. Today, there is no explicit English model given by the authorities.

#### **2.4.1.1 The History of the English Subject and the Native Speaker Norm in Norway**

The history of English and the British relations to Norway can be viewed as the explanation for the tradition of the native speaker norm in Norway. It was first and foremost through the

shipping industry and trade that Norway established close relations to the English speaking world. From the early beginning, it was for trading purposes that English was introduced as a subject in school. As a result, the English subject was only offered along the coast of the southern parts of the country, thus the subject was restricted to the areas of shipping industry and trade and can therefore be viewed as partly geographically secluded (Hansen 2011). As Simensen (2011) points out, the country's close relations to the English speaking world have to do with the fact that Norway has been, and still is, a seafaring nation. Further development has to be seen in combination with internationalisation of working life, education, travelling, science and services. The construction of language learning in schools and the English subject's role in the curricula has also been influenced by these close relations. The degree of availability of the English subject differed considerably between regions and schools. It was not until the education act of 1969, which was *Lov om grunnskolen av 13. Juni 1969*, that English was made a compulsory subject and became available for all the pupils in elementary school (Simensen, 2011). It will therefore be a natural starting point to look at influences and the English norms and varieties in the Norwegian teaching tradition from this point and forward, as English training from this point on included all the Norwegian schools.

The British Council has had a major influence on the teaching of English in Norway. The British Council was established in 1934 and developed into an institution with great academic ambitions and good resources within English teaching. The Council contributed to establishing *Anglophone Societies* within the Scandinavian countries and offering a British Council-representative. Norway was early on interested in getting assistance from the council and received its own representative in 1946. Regarding teaching methods, much of the Council's work concerned grammar and vocabulary in English training and functioned as a further development of the direct method (Simensen, 2011). Up until about 1960, the British Council was leading in providing assistance from the outside in the English language training in Norway. This included qualifications of teachers, scientists and students, promoting studies and research in Britain, assisting the forming and carrying out of English exams, and provided assistance in procuring experts for the Norwegian educational system concerning the development of curricula, teaching methods, textbooks etc. (Simensen, 2011).

After this period, the English subject was exposed to considerable influence by new, or at least adjusted, theories about foreign language teaching from the USA. The reason for a reduced influence from the British academic environments at this time is explained with the neglect of the research within the area and the further prioritizing of more practical tasks in language training, such as production of teaching aids, during the inter war period (Simensen,

2011). The new theories from the USA were enshrined in the audio-lingual method, which was more concerned with the structural aspect of the language training. The audio-lingual method influenced the teaching of English in Norway and this was reflected in the national curricula of 1974. It seems that the American offensive within English teaching as a foreign language created problems for the British Council, and that the Council did not exert much influence on the introduction of these new theories (Gundem, 1989, in Simensen 2011).

From about mid-twentieth century, the Council of Europe has gradually taken over as the main influence. Compared to the British Council, the Council of Europe has a variety of languages and cultures within their field of responsibility. European integration has been their goal from the start, with common institutions and achieving mutual understanding. The Council of Europe has many important tasks. Among others, teaching and research with the aim of stimulating teaching of foreign languages has been of significance. In this regard, they have had several important contributions of research, experiments, developmental work and dissemination work on their agenda. A few examples of the Council of Europe's influence on the teaching of English in Norway are worth mentioning. Their recommendations resulted in a gradual lowering of the pupils' starting time of learning English from sixth to first grade in Norway. The development of the Threshold level model with its levels of language acquirement influenced the Norwegian development of curricula. The latest important document affecting the curricula development is CEFR from 2001.

#### **2.4.1.2 Influence and Presence of Standards in Earlier National Curricula in Norway**

The current curriculum at the time when English became a compulsory subject in Norway was the one of 1960, which was *Læreplan for Forsøk med 9-årig skole* (L60). Here, the language is mentioned as 'English' without any further definitions. In the cultural aspect of the subject, it is specified that the students should be given an introduction to the daily life, history and geography, and the literature for youth in the English speaking countries England and the United States. The new orientation on the cultural aspect is also reflected in the curriculum, where it is stated that American contents, with British English orthography, should be represented with about 25 pages (L60). Despite this, there is no doubt that when speaking of the English language it is referred to British English (Simensen, 2014). It is therefore relatively safe to say that the British Council's influence on the Norwegian teaching of English is strong. Thus, the native speaker norm is highly represented in the national EFL

subject curriculum, and even though it is referred to both British and American contents there is no doubt that British English is regarded as the standard.

The next curriculum is *Mønsterplan for grunnskolen* from 1974 (M74). This curriculum reflects the audio-lingual method (see section 2.4.1.1). It has also lowered the start of the English subject from sixth grade to the fourth grade. The notion of English as a language of communication is brought to a new level in that it is put in a wider context than the traditional English speaking countries. It is stated that the students should gain knowledge of the past and present situation in Britain and USA, and also the role of the English language as a tool for communication elsewhere in the world. Regardless of the learning of English in order to communicate, it is still stated that the model of pronunciation should be of *English Standard Pronunciation* (M74). However, as Simensen (2014) points out, a step is taken towards equality of British and American pronunciation in that it is stated that the students who have learned American pronunciation should not be forced to use British pronunciation, orthography and vocabulary.

In the following version, which is *Mønsterplan for grunnskolen* from 1987 (M87), pronunciation with an American accent is more accepted. It is also stated that the students should be exposed to various English pronunciation varieties and learn to respect different varieties of pronunciation as equal. However, it is also stated that the students should learn a normalized variety of either British or American English (M87). This indicates that there has been an equalisation of the two traditional varieties of English pronunciation, namely British and American. In addition, the aim of accepting different pronunciation varieties might only concern native speaker dialects, but may also concern varieties of pronunciation around the world (Simensen, 2014). M87 is also the first Norwegian curriculum to use the concept of EIL. Kachru's concentric circles has been an inspiration when stating that the students should get to know about societies where English is a national language, a common language and a minority language (Simensen, 2014). The *Threshold level* by the Council of Europe was also represented for the first time in Norway with this curriculum, with a small selection of language functions in forms of themes and sub-topics.

The adjustment and publishing of *Threshold Level 1990* from 1991 was soon to be used in the Norwegian curriculum. *Reform 94* (R94) describes the aim of English language learning as a high level of communicative competence, where as many as six components<sup>1</sup> of the concept was specified as criteria of assessment for exams (R94). It is somewhat surprising

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<sup>1</sup> The components were linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence, socio-cultural competence, and social competence (R94, 8).



that this is not the case for the part of 1997 concerning primary and lower secondary school (L97), which compared to R94 contains very general descriptions of the aims of the study regarding both skills and the view of the language as a tool for communication (Simensen, 2011). However, even though R94 states that the aim of the subject is to acquire a high degree of communicative competence, it also explains that it is necessary to lower the expectations regarding degree of achievement of optimal competence in Norwegian educational context. Optimal communicative competence in EFL is described as to understand authentic English in all types of authentic communication and to use correct and idiomatic English in all types of situations (R94, 8). This indicates that as non-native speakers of English, Norwegian students were considered incapable of acquiring ‘optimal communicative competence’. The aim of communicative competence is in other words measured against the ideal competence of a native speaker. Also, competence aim 5 in R94, which concerns ‘the English speaking world’, states that the student should have overview knowledge of the English speaking world and of EIL. However, the main focus is knowledge about history, geographical and societal relations, education, work and business life in USA and Britain (R94). This indicates that English is viewed as a language belonging to the native speaker countries. Therefore, the competence aims focus on knowledge about these nations, namely USA and Britain. It is therefore possible to say that the native speaker norm is present in R94 in that competence and knowledge are centred on the native speaker countries and its speakers.

Under the influence of the Council of Europe, the starting point of the English subject is lowered to the first grade in *Læreplanverket for den 10-årige grunnskolen* from 1997 (L97). Also, the ambitions for English language learning are raised. The students are not only going to be exposed to varieties of English, but they should be able to distinguish varieties of English languages (Simensen, 2014). There is an agreement within English didactics in Norway that even though the English language is mentioned as a world language in L97, the use of EIL should have been taken into account, which it was not (Simensen, 2014).

### **2.4.1.3 Outer Influence and Increased Focus on English as an International Language**

The latest curriculum in Norway is the *Knowledge Promotion* from 2006 (LK06), which was last revised in 2013. In this curriculum it is stated from the very beginning of the purpose section that English is a universal language used for international communication (LK06). The section also states that the subject “shall contribute to providing insight into the way people live and different cultures where English is the primary or the official language”

(LK06, 2013:2). This corresponds to Kachru's definitions of the 'inner' and 'outer' circle (see 2.1.1). In addition, it is presented that the subject "shall provide insight into how English is used as an international means of communication" (LK06, 2013:2). Kachru's description of the 'expanding' circle is therefore also included in the curriculum. With this, the representation of all the three concentric circles in the curriculum indicates that the focus is moved away from the earlier native speaker standard concerning English language learning.

Common European recommendations and CEFR have also influenced the latest national framework and curricula for language teaching in Norway. In LK06, there are specified competence aims for primary and secondary education and training, where the achievement level of the competence aims are distributed to year 2, 4, 7, 10 and VG1 (year 11), and for four main subject areas, which are 'language learning', 'oral communication', 'written communication', and 'culture, society, and literature'. The concepts of 'can do' statements were present in the Norwegian framework for language acquisition in the version of 2010. In the version of 2013 there is also used a similar phrasing to CEFR concerning the competence aims. In all levels of and for all the main areas, it is phrased as "The aims of the studies are to enable pupils to..." (LK06).

LK06 (2013) is accent-neutral, which means that no "correct" variety of English concerning pronunciation is offered. However, it is clearly emphasised in the basic skills section that the pupil shall be "able to understand variations in spoken English from different parts of the world" (LK06, 5). This competence aim is specified on the different levels. For 10<sup>th</sup> grade, after finishing lower secondary school, the aims of the studies are to enable pupils to "listen to and understand variations of English from different authentic situations" (LK06, 9). After VG1 at upper secondary level, which is the highest level of English as a common core subject in LK06, the aim is defined as "listen to and understand social and geographic variations of English from authentic situations" (LK06, 10). It can therefore be concluded that the curriculum opens up for the inclusion of spoken varieties of English from all three of Kachru's concentric circles (Hansen, 2011; Simensen, 2014).

The tradition of communicative competence, which has been a matter of importance since M87, is continued with LK06. Furthermore, there is an increased focus on intercultural competence in LK06, which was introduced but not labelled as such in R94 and R97 (Hansen, 2011; Simensen, 2014). Even though LK06 is accent-neutral, many parts of language use are regarded as important for communication. In the main subject area, the area of communication is split into two parts, namely oral communication and written communication. The main subject area of oral communication deals with understanding and

using the English language by listening, speaking, conversing and applying suitable communication strategies in different situations where oral communications is required. The area also involves developing a linguistic repertoire and adapting the language to the recipient and situation (LK06).

As mentioned in CEFR (see 2.3.1), culture is regarded as an important part in language teaching and learning even though it may be seen as problematic. In LK06, one of the main subject areas is ‘Culture, society and literature’, which focuses on cultural understanding in a broad sense. The area involves “developing knowledge about English as a world language with many areas of use” and developing “knowledge about, understanding of and respect for the lives and cultures of other people” (LK06, 3). Sannes (2013) points out that the English language as a world language and its many areas of use is important, but that a specification of what is meant by the English speaking world and of which cultures and language varieties to include is missing. This makes the definition of the English speaking world unclear because the status of English as a global language makes it possible to argue that the whole world is in fact the English speaking world.

The accent-neutral view and the lack of a standard in the curriculum do not make it surprising that the interpretation of the competence aim can vary greatly from place to place within the Norwegian context. Hansen (2011) compared the oral assessment criteria from two upper secondary schools in Østfold and Oslo. His study took basis from the 2010 version of LK06, but it is also relevant for the version of 2013. The results of his study illustrates that in Østfold, it was mentioned that the students should have a “very clear pronunciation and consistent intonation”, while it was mentioned in Oslo that the students should have a “near-native-speaker level” (Hansen, 2011:4). However, the criteria for assessment are not very specific, and it is difficult to interpret what the two criteria really refer to. Additionally, the native speaker model is the one model that has been standardized, which might make it easy for teachers to relate to and rely on this model in assessment of students’ oral production of English.

## **2.4.2 Exposure of language varieties in Norway**

### **2.4.2.1 Teacher Education**

Even though no explicit pronunciation norm is given for the English subject in Norway, Received Pronunciation dominates the phonetic and intonation courses at the universities.

This suggests that the majority of the English teachers with an educational background from the university are likely to learn and use a standard British English speech variety. Norway's largest teacher-education institution, the University of Oslo, offers Received Pronunciation in six of their seven courses of English, and only on in General American (Rindal, 2010). The English phonetic course at the University of Bergen, which is a subject for the teacher education program and the upcoming teachers of English, covers both British and American pronunciation. Received Pronunciation and General American are offered in different seminar groups. The English teacher students are not recommended any particular choice of speech variety and attend the same lectures and choose which seminar and variety they prefer, which is the same for all the other students studying English at the university (Sannes, 2013).

#### **2.4.2.2 Exposure of English outside of school**

Norwegians have substantial exposure to spoken English outside of school, such as exposure of music, television series, films and computer games. Statistics show that on an average day in 2014, Norwegians spend approximately nine and a half hour on various media (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2015). Considering the time teenagers spend on spare time activities and English through various media, it seems possible that this should have some kind of influence on their English language learning. It can, however, be discussed to what degree it is possible to learn language through media.

As referred to in Bohannon and Bonvillian (2013), Sachs and colleagues reported in their case study from 1981 on a family with deaf parents and two hearing children that were exposed to spoken English through watching television. This was done in attempt to stress spoken speech with their children instead of signing to them. At the age of 4, the oldest child had little productive speech, severe articulation problems and no syntax. This suggests that exposure through media such as television alone does not lead to language acquisition (Bohannon & Bonvillian, 2013).

Studies indicate that students' spare time activities influence students' language learning. Ibsen (2004) summarises in the report from European studies of English about attitudes and English skills at the end of compulsory primary education that Norwegian pupils believe they achieve 34% of their English acquisition through media, where the test results show a more positive correlation between media use in the spare time than in the teaching context. This implies that Norwegian pupils are influenced by English through media. Sundqvist (2009) defines typical spare time activities in English as "listening to music,

watching English-speaking TV programs or films, playing video games, surfing English sites on the Internet, and reading books, newspapers, or magazines in English” (Sundqvist, 2009:63). In her study, she found that on average, the Swedish teenagers in her study spent about 18 hours a week on these spare time activities, and that there was a relation between the time spent on these activities and their learning outcomes in school. Further, she concludes that students’ vocabulary and oral proficiency were in general positively affected by spending time on spare time activities in English. This correlates with Sundqvist and Wikström (2015) findings in their study on how digital gameplay as a spare time activity influences English learners at school. Their results indicate that there is a positive relation between gameplay and L2 acquisition. Both these studies present an increase in English vocabulary, which has an impact on spoken language proficiency.

#### **2.4.2.2.1 American English Dominance in Norwegian Media**

In Norway, English is widely represented in media such as television. Imported TV-programmes or films are not dubbed but subtitled and the titles are rarely translated into Norwegian anymore. Concerning the American global cultural hegemony (Crystal 2003), the most frequently heard variety through the media would most likely be American English, much due to the US media industry and Hollywood. Simensen (2007) says that students are heavily exposed and accordingly influenced by different English varieties in the media from early age. Studies also show that the Norwegian students believe that they learn a high amount of English *outside* of school, and that today, students will familiarize themselves with the world and meet different varieties of English largely through the exposure of English through various media and digital technology (Simensen, 2007). Also Rindal (2010) emphasizes that due to the limited access to American English from elsewhere than by media, it is difficult to avoid the impression that students’ pronunciation are influenced by the language in spoken media. After looking through the TV guide from an ordinary weekday, the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2016, of the general four main TV channels in Norway, which are NRK1, TV2, TV Norge, and TV3, it becomes clear that American English is truly dominating on Norwegian television. Of all the 145 TV programmes broadcast that day 59 were American, 56 were Norwegian, 15 were Scandinavian, 9 were British, 5 were of other native-English varieties, which in this case were 2 Australian and 3 Canadian, and 1 program was defined as ‘other’ as it was a non-audible program of Norwegian Sign Language. This demonstrates that native English, and especially American English, truly dominates the TV broadcasting in

Norway with a total of 50 % of the TV programmes being of native English origin. To conclude, Norwegian students are more likely to watch American TV programs than TV programs from any other nation. Therefore, there is a great possibility that Norwegian students are more influenced by American English than by any other variety of English because it is, most likely, the variety that they hear most frequently. Today, people are also spending more and more time watching series and films online provided by streaming media such as, for example, Netflix and HBO. A quick overview of the spoken varieties of English represented on Netflix's 'popular' list from 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2016, which shows what are the most watched films and series at the time, indicates that American English probably is the variety that is most frequently heard also here.

### **2.4.2.3 The Norwegian L1 Variation**

As earlier mentioned, the English language syllabus does not offer any 'correct' English variety for the learners. This also relates to the Norwegian situation of L1 use. The lack of an explicit standard is similar to the general socio-political discourse on language in Norway. In Norway, there are two written standards of which people can choose freely, namely *bokmål* and *nynorsk*, which are given an equal official status by the government.

The language situation of Norway is a somewhat special case, at least in the European context. Arne Torp (2006) points out that the use of dialects have an unusual strong status in Norway compared to most of the other European countries, where they generally use a standardised language variant, including neighbouring countries such as Denmark. The use of dialect is an identity marker for Norwegians. They take pride in that the use of dialects shows where they come from and that it also reflects traditions and roots (Torp, 2006). Sandøy (2011) says that the use of dialects in Norway is generally accepted and even preferred by Norwegians and that they are used to dialectal variations through public arenas. The schools in Norway are obliged by law to let the pupil use their local spoken Norwegian varieties and they also have to adjust to these (Education Act, 1998:§2-5; Røyneland, 2009). In her study, Røyneland (2009) points out that Norway remains different from the rest of Europe when it comes to "the overall positive attitudes towards dialects [...], the amount of dialect diversity, the lack of a strong national spoken standard and the bewildering variation within the written standards" (28).

The Norwegian L1 situation might lead to "a strong public sense of language variation and the social meanings of variation" (Rindal, 2014:314). Therefore, it is possible to say that

Norwegians generally are quite language aware because the situation with the use of dialects and two written standards challenges the notion of one self-evident standard. This might lead the Norwegians views of the L1 variation to affect their views of variation within a foreign language, which in this case concerns English variations. Also Simensen (2014) emphasizes the strong position of Norwegian dialects. She believes that the major exposure of Norwegian dialects both in and outside of school should promote understanding of different English variations regarding pronunciation. The great variation within Norwegian dialects leads to a necessity of qualities such as openness and adjustment in communication in order for people to understand each other when communicating. In addition, this might suggest that Norwegians more freely could do the same in a foreign language context.

### 3 Methods and Materials

This chapter presents and discusses the methodological approaches and research design best suited to examine the research question of this study, namely teachers' and students' views and attitudes towards English accent varieties, the native speaker norm and communicative competence. A mixed method approach is proposed in order to answer the research questions of the present study. This chapter includes theoretical background of qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. An overview of the current study then follows, beginning with an outline of the chosen methods, namely, teacher interviews and a student questionnaire. Given the importance of design and validity in the choice of research instruments, justification of each method is provided. In addition, methodological and ethical concerns regarding this study are clarified.

#### 3.1 Methods

“In the most profound sense ‘research’ simply means trying to find answers to questions” (Dörnyei, 2007:15). Keith Punch underlines the principle that “*how* we do something in research depends on *what* we are trying to find out” (2009:6). In this way, different methods function as different tools to find the answer to research questions. This suggests that different methods are appropriate for different situations, which means that designing a study appropriate for a specific situation is largely determined by the aim of the research, the questions that are investigated, and the available sources of empirical data. The present study aims to investigate conditions of society and the distribution of certain attitudes and values within groups of that society. It investigates views in school through the teachers' and students' views and attitudes towards spoken varieties of English. It can thus be described as an empirical study because it obtains information from the world (Punch, 2009). In order to strengthen the design of the study, a mixed methods approach was applied in order to include both qualitative and quantitative data due to the complex classroom reality and the limitations to each of the research methods. The reason for the choice of a mixed methods approach will be elaborated later in this chapter.



### 3.1.1 Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods

The main issue associated with approaching a mixed method strategy is the integration of quantitative and qualitative research. A quantitative approach is generally used to make generalizations through collecting numeric data from a large number of people (Creswell, 2012), which proves the quantitative researchers' emphasis on finding the common features of the data material studied. An essential feature of the quantitative research method is the close link to statistics, in that the collected data can be analyzed statistically in a number of different ways. Proponents of quantitative research usually emphasize that "at its best the quantitative inquiry is systematic, rigorous, focused and tightly controlled, involving precise measurement and producing reliable and replicable data that is generalizable to other contexts" (Dörnyei, 2007:34). The use of numeric data makes the preparation of the data collecting time-consuming and involves a lot of work because it requires that categories and values are specified before the data collecting can be carried out. Good preparation and specification is important in order to avoid misunderstandings and make sure that the respondents give their answers based on the same understanding. However, as seen in Dörnyei (2007), the quantitative methods deal with the concept of average. This means that the methods do not give justice to the respondents' individual subjective variation in the data collecting or results because they are so tightly controlled and aim for generalizable data. He further underlines that the methods are "generally not very sensitive in uncovering the reasons for particular observations or the dynamics underlying the examined situation or phenomenon" (Dörnyei, 2007:25), which means that the general exploratory capacity for the observations and results is very limited.

Conversely, the central goal of the qualitative approach is to study people, things and events in their natural settings (Punch, 2009). This makes the qualitative methods more interested in individuals and in-depth understanding than in the common features of groups of people. Dörnyei highlights the emergent nature of qualitative research as a characteristic feature, which means that "no aspect of the research design is tightly prefigured and a study is kept open and fluid so that it can respond in a flexible way to new details or openings that may emerge during the process of investigation" and that even the research question "may evolve, change or be refined during the study" (2007:37). This opens up for unexpected turns and points of view in the data collection in that it leaves the respondent without major restrictions for their answers and leaves the researcher with the opportunity to elaborate on interesting findings. It also underlines the importance of open-ended questions in order for the

respondent to answer and speak as freely as possible. The opportunity for emerging details or openings makes it a suitable approach for in-depth investigations, for example in research considering views and attitudes, where the researcher cannot know the respondent's thoughts and answers beforehand. This provides the researcher with the opportunity to elaborate and investigate in-depth in order to give justice to the respondents' individual subjective variation.

As a contrast to quantitative methods, data collecting in qualitative methods are based on words from a small number of individuals. Because of this, their views are obtained and data analysis is based on words, which are analysed for descriptions and themes by analysing and interpreting the larger meaning of the findings (Creswell, 2012). Dörnyei (2007) emphasizes that “qualitative research is concerned with subjective opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals and thus the explicit goal of research is to explore the participants' views of the situation being studied” (38). As a result of this, the subjective individuality of the respondent is obtained. However, even though qualitative methods strive to view a social phenomenon from the individuals' perspective, the outcome of the data collection is ultimately a result of the subjective perspective of the researchers' interpretations of it. Another weakness is that qualitative methods are time-consuming, which makes it necessary to make the number of participants a lot smaller than what is possible with quantitative methods. The result of the small participant sample may be viewed as too narrow and subjective to be valid for making generalizations. However, they might give valuable insight into the research of a phenomenon,

A mixed method approach can be described as a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods within the same research project. As both of the methods have advantages and disadvantages, it is believed that by combining the two, they could supplement each other so that each method's weaknesses may be limited and their strengths may be increased. Furthermore, the combination of numeric trends and in-depth details may contribute to better understanding of the investigated phenomenon and by this “produce evidence for the validity of research outcomes through the convergence and corroboration of the findings” (Dörnyei, 2007:45). Also, corresponding evidence can “increase the generalizability – that is, external validity – of the results” (Dörnyei, 2007:46). Therefore, both qualitative and quantitative methods are included in the present study. The information from the teacher interviews and student questionnaire can be compared and the results can complement each other. As a result, the combination of methods increases the validity of the research outcomes and corroboration of the findings. Further elaboration on the selection of a mixed method approach is presented in the following section on the choice of methods.

### **3.2 Choice of Methods**

In order to answer the research questions of the present thesis, it was a necessary to apply mixed methods and include both qualitative and quantitative data. A reason for this is that research in classrooms can be understood as an operation of a highly complex environment. The operation of complex environments “lends itself to mixed methods research because combining several research strategies can broaden the scope of the investigation and enrich the researcher’s ability to draw conclusions” (Dörnyei, 2007:186). The classroom is complex in that the classroom environment includes an instructional context, “which concerns the influences of teacher, students, curriculum, learning tasks, and teaching method, amongst other things” (Dörnyei, 2007:186), and a social context, “which is related to the fact that the classroom is also the main social arena for students, offering deeply intensive personal experiences” (Dörnyei, 2007:186). In the present study, both the instructional and the social context are included in the research, in that both the teachers’ and students’ beliefs and influences of spoken English as well as the students’ beliefs and attitudes towards one another’s spoken English are taken into consideration. Therefore, a combination of methods was chosen in order to broaden the scope of the study and enrich the opportunity of drawing conclusions that best reflect the respondents’ views and attitudes.

The qualitative data in the present study are collected through semi-structured interviews. This data will provide the research with in-depth information and understanding. Due to the in-depth quality of the data, the number of participants is limited. Because of the limited number of respondents and limitations of geographical spread, the results might not be used for generalizations. The quantitative data are collected through student questionnaires using an online survey. This method collects a substantial amount of data from a larger and more diverse group of participants. However, due to the large number of participants and the requirement of easily understandable questions and straightforward matter of answers, the collected information is quite superficial. This is because of the limitations to the questionnaire on what questions that can be included and what aspects that can be investigated. The researcher loses the chance to clarify, elaborate and follow up on the respondents answers due to limitations to the quantitative nature of the questionnaire. However, some open ended questions were included in the present study, which offered the students the opportunity to elaborate on their answers and gave more in-depth information concerning their choices. These were included in hopes of bringing more in-depth information from the students to the research. The choice of questions will be elaborated later under the

discussion of the questionnaire (see section 3.2.2.3). Despite the larger number of participants, the restricted geographical area limits the extent to which the results can be regarded as representative for generalisation.

The choice of a mixed method approach was made for the above-mentioned reasons in an attempt to increase the strengths and limit the weaknesses of each method. The qualitative method is limited by a small number of participants. The quantitative methods' results are restricted by their lack of in-depth quality and flexibility due to the limited information that is possible to collect through the questionnaire. However, the qualitative and quantitative data will complement each other and give the research extended breadth, different aspects of the investigated phenomenon and also provide information that would be unattainable with the exclusion of either one of the methods. The choice of methods is further described and elaborated in the following sections.

### **3.2.1 Teacher Interviews**

#### **3.2.1.1 Material**

In this study, the data collection of the teachers' views and experiences was done by the use of semi-structured interviews. This type of interview attempts to "understand themes of the lived everyday world from the subjects' own perspectives" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009:27), which corresponds with the investigation in the present study of the subjects' views and experiences regarding spoken English. In a semi-structured interview, there is a set of open-ended pre-prepared guiding questions where the interviewee is encouraged to elaborate on the issues raised. The interviewer provides guidance and direction and is able to follow up on interesting leads (Dörnyei, 2007). The use of open ended-questions has an advantage of high response rate in interviews. The flexibility provided by open-ended questions gives the interviewee freedom to "best voice their experiences unconstrained by any perspectives of the researcher or past research findings" (Creswell, 2012:218). This is because they offer the respondent the opportunity to answer freely, which can make it easier for them to open up and share in-depth information because the conversation is built on the information provided by the respondent and not the other way around. The semi-structured interview was chosen because of its ability to combine flexibility and structure in order to cover the investigated phenomena of the study, namely views and attitudes towards spoken English, communicative competence and the native speaker norm.

The close interaction in interviews is valuable in that the interviewer is able to communicate with the interviewee, clarify questions and clear up misunderstandings alongside following up on interesting developments. Research interviews are professional conversations seen as an “inter-view, where knowledge is constructed in the inter-action between the interviewer and the interviewee” (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009:2). From this point of view, the interview can be seen as a conversation where one exchanges views and knowledge about a topic of mutual interest, which in this case are views and attitudes towards spoken English. The use of interviews also allowed access to unlimited amounts of in depth information and knowledge through verbal report, which is only possible through one-to-one conversations.

### **3.2.1.2 Participants**

The interviews were conducted with four teachers of the subject International English in the second year of upper secondary school (VG2). The principals at four neighbouring schools, which were located within the same region at the west coast of Norway and which all offered International English subject, were contacted with information about the research. The principals gave me contact information to the teachers of International English at their schools, who all wanted to participate, after informing them about the study. The sample of in-depth interviews has limited use to generalize as a result of the small amount of participants whose views might not be applicable for others. However, the data from four participants were seen as sufficient to provide deep insight and material for the in-depth study, and they also provide information on International English teachers’ views and attitudes in this region. Since they are teachers at the (in all) four upper secondary schools located in the region, they are seen as sufficient informants regarding what the schools and teachers offer the students in the specific region concerning experiences, views and attitudes of spoken English. It also gives the opportunity to compare the answers of the different teachers to see if there are some distinct features or differences within the region. The teachers are referred to as Teacher A, B, C and D to ensure the anonymity of the interviews.

#### **3.2.1.2.1 Teacher A**

Teacher A has been teaching for about ten years and has been teaching classes both in vocational programs and in general studies. The teacher’s qualification for teaching English is

an English major in a cand.mag degree, which consisted of 90 study points in English. At first, Teacher A has always been very fond of English and chose to study the subject because of this in order to work in the travel industry. However, after substituting in schools Teacher A took Practical Teacher Training (PPU in Norwegian) and started working as a teacher in upper secondary school. When Teacher A went to school, they regarded British English as the best accent to acquire, American English was regarded more inferior, and they had not really heard about International English. Because of this, they were supposed to try to practice either a British English or an American English accent in order to be considered proficient in oral or spoken English.

#### **3.2.1.2.2 Teacher B**

Teacher B has been teaching English for about 11 years. The teacher's qualification for teaching English is an English master's degree. It is of the old type with a major in English. Through the studies, Teacher B has also lived in England as a visiting student in Reading and took parts of the masters at the University of York. Teacher B had two goals, namely, to become a fluent speaker of English and then become an English teacher. Therefore, Teacher B saw becoming an English teacher as the one goal in life. Through the education from young age, Teacher B has had excellent models in terms of teachers who have lived abroad for years and have had, according to Teacher B, excellent pronunciation. They were also encouraged to listen to and learn English, and to go abroad to learn. However, Teacher B does not see the goal of learning to pronounce things properly and speaking with a native-like accent as a result of what happened in school because it was a personal goal.

#### **3.2.1.2.3 Teacher C**

Teacher C has been teaching for about 20 years. The teacher's qualification for teaching English is an unfinished English major, which Teacher C is considering completing. The reason for choosing English is because Teacher C has always liked English. Through education at an early age, the teacher learnt English from about the age of ten and had a teacher speaking British English. However, Teacher C has never tried to copy any British or American accent, and believes that most of the teacher's English acquisition is achieved through travelling and working with people.

#### **3.2.1.2.4 Teacher D**

Teacher D has been teaching for about fifteen years. The teacher's qualification for teaching English is a Finnish master's degree with English as the main subject. Teacher D never planned to become an English teacher, but wanted to study languages and was pretty certain to end up as a translator. However, Teacher D was offered a job at the university to plan courses for the teaching training program while studying and ended up taking the teachers qualifications. It was the teacher education that convinced Teacher D to work as a teacher. In the education from early age, in the late 80's and early 90's, Teacher D was taught English in the very traditional style with a lot of focus on grammar, learning words by heart and pronunciation. Compared to what Teacher D sees in Norway, they did not learn as much about Britain or the US, but would rather compare it to the kind of syllabus used in the teaching of other foreign languages in Norway.

#### **3.2.1.3 Conducting the interviews**

An interview guide was designed for the semi-structured interviews that consisted of loosely structured questions and stated which topics to be addressed (see Appendix F). The topics of the interview concerned the following:

- The teacher's background regarding qualifications for teaching and how they were taught English, their experiences of teaching spoken English
- Their attitudes and experiences of communicative competence and the native speaker norm
- Their views of both their own and their students' pronunciation
- Their acceptance of English accents as well as their thoughts of their students' choices.

They were asked questions they could answer freely based on their own thoughts and experiences, for example 'In your opinion, what does it involve to be able to speak English?'. The intention was to let the interviewee speak freely and keep talking without interruption, except when additional information and further explanation were needed.

The interview could be viewed as having two parts. The first part consisted of background information about the teachers' own experiences on how they were taught spoken English, their educational background, and why they became teachers of English. The second

part concerned their own personal thoughts and views about teaching spoken English, communicative competence, the native speaker norm, English pronunciation and their students' choice of English accents. The questions were organized in an order that was considered to be from the most open, easiest and least threatening question to answer, to questions that can be regarded as more difficult and threatening to answer in that the presented ideas could be seen as potentially challenging. This was done to make the interviewees comfortable in the situation of the interview by answering easy questions and gradually move on to questions with a higher level of critical thinking.

The interviews were conducted one-on-one at the teachers' respective schools. They were conducted in English in agreement with the participants, and took place in a private room at their work places with little background noise and interruptions. All of the interviews were audiotaped using a voice recorder, stored electronically and transcribed shortly after the interviews were carried out. This opened up for a more relaxed and communicative setting and left the interviewer free to ask follow-up questions where necessary or desirable during the interview.

#### **3.2.1.4 Transcribing and analysing the interviews**

The audiotaped interviews were transcribed using the Express Scribe Translation Software, which enabled the transcriber to reduce the speed. This made it possible to get a more accurate transcription of the dialogue in the interviews. The full transcribed interviews are available in Appendix G.

Transcriptions are translations of oral material to written discourse and there is no standard answer to how this should be done, according to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009). The transcription of the audio material was done in a written style rather than a verbatim one, as the coherence was seen as more important than the linguistic accuracy and the material was to be used in a thesis where quotes were to be included. The transcription key is presented in table 1 (p. xii)

#### **3.2.2 Student Questionnaire**

As the present study also aims to investigate students' views and attitudes, it was desirable to collect a substantial amount of data from a large group of students. This was seen as necessary in order to reflect reality as closely as possible, and to find the common features of the



students' attitudes towards spoken English in the classroom, communicative competence and the native speaker norm. It was also desirable to be able to compare the results from teacher interviews with the students' answers from the questionnaire to see how the teachers' and students' views and attitudes corresponded with each other. For example, the teachers were asked in the interview what, in their view, it involves to be able to speak English and what accents they allow their students to choose, while the students were asked what they see as important in order to be a competent speaker of English, what accent their teacher uses and whether or not they believe they are allowed to choose any English accent they want. By the inclusion of the language learners' opinions in the study, the ability to elicit patterns and tendencies of common features from the research results increased as a result of the significant number of informants. Questionnaires make it possible to collect a huge amount of information in a short amount of time (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010), which is why it was chosen to gather information from the considerably large group of students participating in the study. The questionnaire is available in Appendix D.

### **3.2.2.1 Material and participants**

The questionnaire was made online at Enalyzer ([enalyzer.com](http://enalyzer.com)). The students were invited to respond to the questionnaire by providing them a direct link to the questionnaire. An online questionnaire was considered the best way to collect data because this makes it easily available to the students. Through the use of a direct link, the students can easily respond to the questionnaire by using their computers or smart phones. It also makes the students able to give the answers that best reflect their views in privacy. Additionally, it is easy to collect the data since the participants' answers are submitted online when they have completed the questionnaire.

The questionnaire participants were 62 language learners of English in upper secondary school that studied the subject International English at VG2 and were the students of the teachers who participated in the interviews. The students were automatically chosen as participants when their teachers agreed to participate in the interviews and accepted that their students could participate in the study. However, the students' participation was voluntary and they could choose to withdraw at any time from the study. The students were given information that they agreed to participate by responding to the questionnaire and submitting their answers.

There are two main reasons that the teachers and students of the subject International English have been chosen as participants in the present study of teachers' and students'

attitudes towards English accents. The first reason is connected to the English subject's competence aims. The competence aims for English as a general study ends after VG1, which means that the students at VG2 will have completed VG1, be familiar with the aims of the study, and would have acquired the competences required by the curriculum. Also, for VG2 in LK06 *English – Programme Subject in Programmes for Specialization in General Studies* (LK06S) it is stated that the students would be able to “give examples of other varieties of English than those that are used in the Anglo-American core area, and reflect on their distinctive character”, “employ a nuanced, well-developed vocabulary – for both general and specialized use”, and “use language appropriate to the situation in social, professional and intercultural contexts” (LK06S, 5). This indicates that the students will have discussed and possess some knowledge on varieties of English accents, communicative competence in that they will have discussed the importance of communication in social and intercultural contexts, which also relates to the intercultural speaker. Therefore, this implies that the students might be more conscious about their own views and attitudes concerning spoken English as they will have talked about the subject and have some knowledge from the lessons, and by this be capable to participate in the study. The second is that the students have chosen to study English instead of being obliged to do so, as International English is not an obligatory subject, which means that the students have an interest in studying English.

### **3.2.2.2 Designing the questionnaire**

Factual, behavioural and attitudinal questions are the three main types of questions that are used in questionnaires (Dörnyei, 2007):

*Factual questions* are used to find out certain facts about the respondents (Dörnyei, 2007). In this study these questions comprise background information such as if the students have lived abroad, if they have lived in an English speaking environment and if they have family living abroad or in an English speaking environment. These questions were asked in order to map the students' English background, and their answers are seen as interesting to compare to their views and attitudes towards English accents.

*Behavioural questions* concern actions and habits, and intend to find out what the respondents are doing or have done in the past (Dörnyei, 2007). In the present study, these questions concerns whether or not the students aim for a particular accent of English when they speak.

*Attitudinal questions* are used to find out what the respondents think and what their attitudes and opinions are (Dörnyei, 2007). In the present study, this type of questions makes up the majority of the questionnaire, which can be exemplified by their preference of English accent, why they prefer it, why they do/do not aim at an accent, how they think their spoken English is affected by different factors, whether or not they find it acceptable to use different accents of English, whether or not they believe different varieties of English are acceptable in class and to what degree they find different criteria to be important in order to be a successful speaker of English.

The questionnaire consisted of 13 closed-ended questions and seven open-ended questions. In closed-ended questions, the respondents answer questions that are provided with ready-made response options to choose from. This is normally done by ticking the box for the option that is most appropriate (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). The closed-ended questions in the questionnaire are questions 1 – 7, 9 - 12, 17 and 19. However, question 2 – 7 and 19 have an alternative ‘other’ option where the students are asked to specify their answer by filling in the blank space. The data collected from closed-ended questions has the advantage that their coding and tabulation is straightforward and can easily be entered into a computer database.

In open-ended questions, the respondents are not asked to choose an option but rather to fill in their answers in some blank space, which permits greater freedom of expression and can provide greater richness to the quantitative data (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). The open-ended questions in the questionnaire are question 8, 13 – 16, 18 and 20, where the students are asked about their personal opinions. The data collected from open-ended questions are more difficult to enter into a computer database, but is possible if the data first is analyzed and categorized. In the present research, the categories were developed through arranging the students’ answers by the meaning of their answers.

Likert scales, which is the most commonly used scaling technique and consists of a series of statements that the respondents are asked to indicate to which extent they agree or disagree with by ticking the response that best reflects their view (Dörnyei, 2007), were used the most in the questionnaire. In the present study, there were some additional questions where they were asked to indicate to what extent they are affected by different factors and to what extent different criteria are important in order to be a successful speaker of English. Likert scale was used for question 9 – 12, 17 and 19. The response options to these types of questions differed between four or five alternatives, where the respondents should mark one of the responses by marking the response that best reflect their opinion (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). The four response option questions, question 9 – 12, were ranged ‘I strongly disagree’,

‘I disagree’, ‘I agree’, and ‘I strongly agree’ or, as in question 19, ‘Not important’, ‘Less important’, ‘Important’ and ‘Very important’. These response options were applied to the statements in order for the respondents to be encouraged to reflect over their answers by pushing them to make a choice rather than to allow them the possibility of making a neutral middle option. However, to not include a neutral alternative or an ‘I do not know’ option relies on the belief that the students will understand and know what is being asked. This causes the students to be unable to choose the “undecided” category or take a neutral stand to the presented statements (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010).

There were also two five response options. Question 12 and 17 in the questionnaire ranged from ‘I strongly disagree’, ‘I disagree’, ‘neither agree, nor disagree’, ‘I agree’ and ‘I strongly agree’. Here, a neutral option was added of ‘neither agree, nor disagree’. These five response options were added to statements that asked if an accent was suitable or not for a Norwegian to speak, or that indicated some sort of comparison of different varieties of English accents. The five response option was added to allow a neutral option because the statements indicates that the accents can be viewed as equal by ticking the neutral box and therefore not favour one accent over another. Therefore, it is required that the students should have the alternative of a neutral answer. This will also bring valuable information to the research results on the students’ attitudes of different English accents and whether or not they find some accents more attractive than one of the others. However, there is the danger that the respondents see the neutral option as an “undecided” category and an easy way out (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010), and choose the option without giving it any thought in order to continue to the next question.

Additional to Likert scales, there were some multiple-choice items among the close-ended questions. The respondents were asked to mark one or more options, depending on the question and what they found suitable (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). The item type was used for questions 5 and 6 where the students’ were asked about their experience of the English varieties preferred and used in school and by their teachers. It was necessary to use multiple-choice items because their present and previous schools and teachers may have used different English accents.

Open-ended questions were also used in order to clarify the students’ responses. In order to avoid that the respondents did not find a suitable answer and at the same time force them to make a conscious decision, an “I do not know” and an “Other” category, which was followed by an open-ended clarification question asking the respondents to “Please specify”, were applied to questions 2 – 8. The clarification question of “Please specify” was applied in

order to permit the respondents greater freedom for the questions of for example favourite English accent. It also provides greater richness to the study in that the researcher could not know the range of possible answers the respondents would find suitable and satisfying. In question 8 there was also applied a clarification question for the respondents target aim of English accent, where they were asked to reason why they do not aim at an accent or why they aim at the accent they do. Even though this option was added in order to give the respondents greater freedom to answer, there is a chance that this opportunity might be misused by writing nonsense in the blank space.

The questionnaire also consisted of five open-ended questions. Five sentence completion items, questions 13 – 16 and 18, were applied. Here, the students are supposed to complete the sentence that is already written, by writing what they find suitable in the blank space. They were used for questions where it was seen as most rewarding to not include ready-made options for the respondents to choose from, but to rather allow the respondents to answer freely in order to open up for the range of possible answers and “elicit a more meaningful answer than a simple question” (Dörnyei, 2007:107). The topic of the sentences to complete in questions 13 – 16 were personal opinions of various English accents, derived from their semantic interpretations and not from auditory analyses. The reason for allowing them to write for themselves is to seek their immediate reaction. This choice was made in order to bring richness to the study through unexpected answers. However, it can turn out both ways and the outcome can be useful or give limited information due to lack of response. For question 18 they are supposed to state their reasons for becoming a competent speaker of English. These five questions concern the respondents’ personal opinions and therefore sentence completion was seen as an appropriate method to use. It is hoped that the respondents would find the personal questions easier and more rewarding to answer and see that their personal opinions were valued. It also opened up for a range of possible unknown and unexpected answers, which would bring richness to the study.

The last question in the questionnaire was a short-answer question. These questions are worded in such a way that it is possible to give a short answer that is usually defined to be longer than a phrase and shorter than a paragraph (Dörnyei, 2007). They require the opportunity to answer more freely, which opens up for the unknown and the unexpected. They are also recommended to be used at the end of a questionnaire, as it can be a good way to leave respondents with the impression that their personal opinions or experiences are valued (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). Question 20 asked for views about advantages or disadvantages of speaking with a native-like accent, and by the choice of making it a short-

answer question, it is hoped to open up for the possibility of unknown and unexpected answers in order to bring richness to the study.

In the questionnaire it was important that the students were given terms they were familiar with, in order to increase the chance of the students to understand what was asked of them. Since the main theme of the questionnaire should be easily understandable for the students, the term ‘English accents’ were used for varieties of English in order to emphasize that they should reflect over spoken English varieties and not written varieties. In questions where the students were asked about aiming towards English accents, they were asked to choose between ‘British English’, ‘American English’, ‘Norwegian English’, ‘Neutral International English (accent that cannot be linked to a specific country)’, ‘Marked English (accent that is clearly marked by geographical origin)’ and ‘Other’ where the students could write varieties that did not fit into any of the mentioned alternatives. This was done because it was important for the students to be familiar with the terms. ‘British English’ is often referred to as RP and ‘American English’ GenAm, whereas ‘Norwegian English’ is often used in the media, in the public and in school to refer to English with an influence from Norwegian L1.

### **3.2.2.3 Conducting the questionnaire**

The questionnaire was conducted in the classroom with both the teacher and the researcher present. The data collection was carried out during a lesson to increase the probability of the students’ participation. The students were given a brief description of what the study was about, and they were told to take their time, read the questions properly and to ask if they had any questions or something was unclear, which was possible because of the presence of the researcher. It was emphasized that there were no right or wrong answers because the study is after their personal opinions. They were also told that they had to answer all questions in order to continue to the next, and that they had to answer individually. The students entered the questionnaire through the link that the teacher had received and posted on their learning platform. After responding to the questionnaire, the students submitted their answers online.

### **3.2.2.4 Analyzing the questionnaire data**

The data analysis methods used in the present study were determined by the research questions. A simple frequency analysis was used for many of the questions, as they only were to find out the distribution of answers to the individual questions. The findings were presented

in bar charts or pie charts, which makes it easy to define and compare the typical answers and tendencies.

The open ended questions were first sorted after category and then it was counted how many respondents who had provided answers that fitted into the given category. After doing this, the categories can be coded and presented in, for example, tables, and could therefore be presented in statistical analysis as the answers to the close-ended questions were presented.

### **3.3 Methodological Concerns**

The benefits of the chosen methods for this study have been accounted for. However, the methods also have certain limitations.

Interviews for data collection are time-expensive and therefore also limit the sample size of the study in that it limits the number of participants. Because of the small number of participants, the present study cannot prove generalizable tendencies among teachers from the results (see section 3.2 and 3.5). However, since the study aims to investigate in-depth knowledge of the teachers' views and attitudes, it was necessary to limit the sample size in order to gain sufficient information. And because it is an in-depth study, the respondents and their answers are still valuable and important for the research.

As for interviews, subjectivity is seen as a difficulty. In the interview sessions, the interviewer should remain as neutral as possible in order to avoid colouring of the interviewee's answers through both verbal and non-verbal expressions. It could, however, be necessary to encourage the respondent to continue and keep talking through affirmative expressions, such as smiling or nodding. In the analysis phase of interviews, subjectivity is viewed as an obstacle considering that a lot of what is present during the personal interaction in the course of the interview disappear in the translation from oral to written form. Therefore, transcripts from interviews should only be seen as a tool used to interpret and understand the interview (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The conversation in the interview session contains several non-recordable elements. Therefore, there are elements that *cannot* be presented in the recording and transcripts. For example, non-verbal behaviour cannot be registered from the recordings, and intonation amongst other verbal elements will not be recognised in the transcripts.

Another limitation is that the interviews were conducted in English. Considerations were made before starting the process of the interviews. Interviews conducted in Norwegian might lose nuances in translation and transcripts. It would also be time consuming to translate

and paraphrase the interviews into English. However, conducting the interviews in Norwegian would make the informants less constrained and more open for longer discussions and narratives. Nevertheless, the interviews were conducted in English, which might have led to an awkward tension at the beginning of the interview. This was, however, thought of beforehand, and was the main reason why the first part of the interview concerned personal questions which were considered to be the most open and least threatening to answer (see section 3.2.1.3). Eventually, the tension improved as the interviewees got more comfortable.

There is a possibility that the respondents' answers may be coloured through the formulation of the questions and encouragement during the interviews and the questionnaire. The assessment of "non-factual matters such as the respondents' attitudes, beliefs and other personal or mental variables (...) [is crucial because] minor differences in how a question is formulated and framed can often produce radically different levels of agreement or disagreement" (Dörnyei, 2007:103). The questions were formulated so as to be as open and as clear as possible. Still, there is a possibility that the researcher's questions were found unclear and difficult to interpret by the respondents. Also, the questionnaire was provided in English due to the students' expected language competence at this level. There could, however, be disadvantages of doing this. An issue could be that their proficiency of EFL may be varied. It is difficult to know if the students fully understand the questions and/or their reactions to them (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). This could be unfortunate because ideally the students should be able to respond to the questions with the same base and understanding. It could also lead to misleading answers because the students have misinterpreted or did not understand the question. Therefore, in order to minimise the risk of misunderstanding, the questionnaire was carried out with the researcher present in the classroom so that the students had the opportunity to ask for help and clarification if needed. However, it is difficult to know if all the students took advantage of this opportunity.

Some of the students experienced difficulties with the questionnaire survey. The problems with the survey made the students unable to hand in their answer or the survey were not able to register the respondents. The Analyzer support group were not familiar with the problem or the error message the students were given, and therefore could not help. However, it was decided that the students should retry to participate in the questionnaire, where they were given a new direct link to the questionnaire. The decision was made from the conclusion that the students' answers would not affect the results and deviate much from when they tried to reply the first time, as the questions were after their personal opinions and not after their



skills or knowledge as they would in a drill or a test. Their answers were successfully submitted the second time around.

The geographical location of the participating schools could ideally have been more spread. The participants were gathered through the convenience sampling strategy, where the “members of a target population are selected for the purpose of the study if they meet certain criteria, such as geographical proximity, availability at a certain time, easy accessibility, or the willingness to volunteer” (Dörnyei, 2007:98-99). Ideally, the study would be represented with teachers and students equally distributed from all parts of Norway. The results from the study have limited use for generalizations as a result of the representation involves only one restricted area. However, four teachers from the same geographical area agreed to participate with their classes, and they were all available at the time the study was to be carried out. This also made the participants easily accessible for the researcher and made it easier to conduct the study, regarding time and financial constraints which made it difficult to include a larger number of participants and for the researcher to be present during the data collection. All four schools within a region reflect and represent the local teachers’ and students’ attitudes, views and experiences. Therefore, since this study contains both quantitative and qualitative data and is an in-depth study, the information from the results is still important and gives valuable insight to views and attitudes towards spoken English accents, the native speaker norm and communicative competence.

### **3.4 Ethical Concerns**

The research gathers information about individuals, which means that it has to be conducted within guidelines from the government. Because of this, the research plan had to be approved by the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD), which serves as the Privacy Ombudsman for Research. The documents that were submitted and approved by NSD were the information sheets to the teachers and students, the interview guide and the student questionnaire.

The participation in the study was voluntary and the respondents could withdraw from the research at any time without any further explanation. The identities of the interviewees are only known by the researcher and they are only referred to in code in all written accounts. They were also informed about the purpose of the project and about the security of their anonymity.

The participants of the questionnaire, the students, were informed of the purpose of the research and about their anonymity by written information given to them by the first page of the online survey. The students were told that they were participating and informed of the purpose of the study, which Creswell (2012) emphasises as important to gain support from the participants (231). The disclosure of the purpose of the research can be addressed “by presenting general information about the study rather than specific details” (Creswell, 2012:231). By the information sheet provided to them before the conducting of the questionnaire, the students were made aware that they agreed to participate by responding to the questionnaire and submitting their answers. The anonymity of the questionnaire participants were secured by the data processor Enalyzer. Access to the IP-addresses of the participants was not revealed to the researcher or anyone else. The participants are students in second grade of upper secondary school and are expected to be 17 years or older. Because there were no questions that provided sensitive information about the students, the students could agree to participate in the study without the necessity of the researcher to ask for parental approval.

### **3.5 Reliability and Validity**

Reliability and validity are closely tied together in multiple ways. They sometimes overlap and other times are mutually exclusive. Reliability means that “scores from an instrument are stable and consistent”, while validity is “the degree to which all of the evidence points to the intended interpretation of test scores for the proposed purpose” (Creswell, 2012:159).

The present study is based on four teachers’ responses to a qualitative interview and 62 students’ responses to a quantitative questionnaire. Thus, the inadequate number of respondents in the study does not qualify to make it a fully representative study. As earlier mentioned in this chapter, this implies that the results may be generalizable only to a limited extent. However, the study makes a small contribution towards a wider insight into teachers’ and students’ attitudes towards English varieties at a second grade Upper Secondary level of the language teaching classroom, in addition to representing the attitudes of all students and teachers within a region, which makes the study important.

The validity of interviews is explained by Kvale and Brinkman (2009) as the truthfulness, correctness and strength of a statement, and must be a continual process throughout the interview stages from thematising to validation and reporting stages. In qualitative research, member checking, triangulation, and auditing are validation procedures that can be carried

out. Creswell (2012) states the intention of the qualitative researcher is that the accuracy and information are validated by the respondents, external reviewers or the data sources themselves. The data in the current study is partly validated through triangulation, as questions in the teacher interviews and the student questionnaire overlap in certain areas. The interviews are also transcribed in full, which shows all the statements and utterances the teachers informants made during the interviews.

Also, one can never be fully reliant on the informants' responses to questionnaires. There are chances that the respondents might misunderstand the questions, they may forget something or they might even deviate from the truth intentionally (Dörnyei, 2007). A factor that can result in unreliable data is that the "participants are fatigued, are nervous, misinterpret questions or guess on tests" (Creswell, 2012:159). The mixed methods approach might contribute to an increased validity, as the questions overlap in certain areas. Dörnyei (2007) claims that a "mixed methods research has a unique potential to produce validity of research outcomes through the convergence and corroboration of the findings" (44). The combination of quantitative and qualitative data may supplement each other, because "corresponding evidence obtained through multiple methods can also increase the generalizability – that is, external validity – of the results" (Dörnyei, 2007:45). In addition, to increase the reliability of the data, the researcher was present when the respondents answered the questionnaire to answer questions the respondents might have in order to avoid, for example, misunderstandings.

## **4 RESULTS**

In this chapter, the results from the qualitative data of the interviews and quantitative data of the questionnaires will be presented. The basis of the data is four teacher interviews and 62 student responses to a questionnaire. Only relevant data for the current study are presented, which are significant patterns and observations. The qualitative results are presented mostly by citations and explanatory comments. Full transcriptions of the interviews are available in Appendix F. The quantitative results are mainly presented in diagrams and tables. A few citations from the students' responses to the open-answered questions are also included. The responses to open-ended questions are analysed and presented in tables. Each presentation is provided with brief comments and explanations.

### **4.1 The Teacher Interviews**

In this section, the results of the teacher interviews are presented (see section 3.2.1). They are given under the main topics of: teachers' views on teaching spoken English - beliefs and use of communicative competence and the intercultural speaker - views of the native speaker norm - views and assessment of English pronunciation - beliefs about students' choices of English accents.

#### **4.1.1 Teachers' Views on Teaching Spoken English**

##### **4.1.1.1 Teacher A**

Teacher A considers the ability to speak English as to know words, construct sentences, and have 'some sort of' English pronunciation and native-like intonation. This is explained as being able to rephrase and substitute missing words, construct functional sentence structures, pronounce the words correctly, and to speak continuously without having to stop.

[1] "And also, it is nice if you have a sentence intonation which sounds a bit English, in a way, and at least not a Norwegian. Of course you can have an accent. But, if you sound very Norwegian you should practice, I think, to try to speak with a bit more English/American/British-like sentence intonation."

The acquisition of spoken English is described very vaguely as sounding ‘a bit English’, which makes it hard to define to which degree the pronunciation should sound native-like.

Teacher A does not explicitly teach spoken English as a topic, but teaches it implicitly by way of having the students practice spoken English through various oral activities in the classroom, such as group conversations, games, competitions, and discussions. Students are encouraged to speak as much English as possible during class, even though the pupils would like to speak Norwegian instead. If they do speak Norwegian, Teacher A encourages them to speak English by asking them to try again in English, and to regard their lessons as an opportunity to practice their English speaking skills.

Teacher A has the impression that studying, travelling, and being able to communicate are the main motivations for students to learn English today. Also, the increasing use of English for studies and work has made students regard English as a necessity and useful a tool.

#### **4.1.1.2 Teacher B**

Teacher B sees having a vocabulary and basic skills, being able to communicate, being able to send, receive and understand a message, and speaking spontaneously as necessary to speak English. As long as the speakers are able to speak and to make themselves understood, they can speak English. Specific accents are not mentioned.

Regarding teaching spoken English, Teacher B encourages the students to listen to native speakers wherever they can and to speak with the accent they have.

[2] “I encourage them to not think about whether or not they sound silly when they speak. So, just let everything go and just go for it. Use these skills that you have and speak English.”

This indicates that there is no preference or necessity to aim at a native speaker variety.

Teacher B thinks that these days, students are very good at speaking English, that most are quite fluent and have got extensive vocabularies, and that their strength is talking about everyday matters. The teacher says they talk a lot in class. The high amount of talking during classes might indicate a higher focus on spontaneity and creativity when speaking, which the teacher sees as important.

Teacher B finds the students’ personal motivations for learning to speak English to be for future purposes, such as travelling, studies, and jobs, and regarding it as a necessity and a useful tool for information and communication.

#### **4.1.1.3 Teacher C**

Teacher C believes to be able to speak English is to make oneself understood. There is no requirement for a native-like pronunciation when speaking in class and the teacher wants the students to speak International English, ‘in a way’, because it is not seen as important to speak British English or American English. Teacher C emphasises that getting the students to speak at all is more important than *how* they speak English, as long as it is understandable. The students are encouraged to speak English continuously during class, even though they tend to slip into Norwegian

Teacher C believes students’ desire to travel is the most important motivation for the students to learn spoken English.

#### **4.1.1.4 Teacher D**

Teacher D sees to be able to speak English as to have a vocabulary and a pronunciation that communicates. It is not necessary to have a native-like pronunciation. However, the teacher encourages the students who desire a native-like accent to go for it. Spoken English is taught through oral activities, such as discussing a new text and its vocabulary, and general communication in English during class. Going through new words and looking at differences is done to emphasise that there are variations within accents of English.

[3] “Of course, so far I have never met a student who has strived for an Australian accent, or a New Zealand accent, or an Indian accent, or South-African accent. They all strive for either a British or American accent.”

Teacher D tends to go through both the British and American pronunciation and spelling because they are the two options Teacher D sees most often as students’ preferences of accents to aim for.

Teacher D believes the most important motivation for students to learn English is that they will need it no matter what they want to do later in life. The teacher says students seem to have acknowledged English as a world language and that it appears like the students regard learning English as more useful than learning other foreign languages like, for example, German, because they do not see how speaking German would be valuable for them in the future.

## 4.1.2 The Teachers on Communicative Competence and the Intercultural Speaker

### 4.1.2.1 Teacher A

Teacher A says guiding on students' spoken English depends on the activities and situation. The teacher gives corrections, which are not given in front of the whole class, and feedback on mistakes that hinder communication. This could concern pronunciation mistakes, and sentence structure and intonation that might be difficult to understand. Combining words in a way that reflects strong Norwegian influence tends to be commented on by the teacher, who then asks the students to think about how 'an English person' or 'English speaking person' would say it. In class, the teacher tries to let the students speak as much in English as possible and to not correct them because they will realise elements of improvement on their own through speaking and listening to others.

Teacher A understands the concept 'communicative competence' as:

[4] "It's about, of course your language, but of course you need to be aware of the setting, the context, cultural differences and so on, and that we learn about that. So, we study that and try to think about and reflect on how we might miscommunicate in a situation because of, for example, cultural differences. [...] I haven't used the concept communicative competence with the students, but they are aware that communication involves more than just words and sentences."

[5] "I think of it as very important. To try to make the students aware that you can't say things the way you would in Norway wherever you are in the rest of the world. You have to reflect on who are you communicating with and what's the purpose of this communication. What's the level of formality, for example [...]?"

In the examples above, Teacher A sees communicative competence as knowledge about how to communicate successfully and how to avoid miscommunication.

In class, communicative competence is taught by reading about it in texts, which illustrates the importance of communicative competence, and discuss them afterwards, and studying it as a part of the curriculum as subject matter. They read texts and afterwards discuss, for example, the suitable approach for different situations, writing in different genres, and how people can get offended. Teacher A considers communicative competences the students need is to be able to acquire and use vocabulary and linguistic structures in functional ways, and other aspects, such as body language and cultural knowledge.

Teacher A describes an intercultural speaker as a person who is able to communicate with people from all over the world in different settings.

[6] “Yeah, intercultural communication. So an intercultural speaker.. Well, that’s what we all are, isn’t it? It is based on whether you’re speaking to people of various/different cultures, using your language with all kinds of cultures/people with all kinds of backgrounds from all kinds of countries, and in different settings. Like, in business settings, in lecture settings, yeah.. A person who can manage that, I guess, would be an intercultural speaker.”

#### **4.1.2.2 Teacher B**

Teacher B sees teaching students’ spoken English as similar to how children are taught to speak and guides them on their spoken English on the basis of this.

[7] “I try to correct them without correcting them. So, if they use a word, and quite a few students say “areea” for area, and then I try to use the term area in a sentence without saying “no, you shouldn’t say that, you should say..”. [...] But I try to guide them without saying that “what you say is wrong..”, and I’m not sure if that is good or bad. Because sometimes you want, you need someone to point out “ok, you shouldn’t do this, you should do that”. But I suppose I try not to say “that’s wrong”, I try to say “do *this!*”.

The teacher explains in example [7] that the students are usually corrected indirectly by the utterances being repeated correctly in a sentence. The idea is that the students themselves will notice the correction without the teacher pointing out and telling them the improvement. The teacher tries to function as a role model and guide the students on their spoken English by illustrating how it should be. Teacher B does not claim this is the correct method because there are positive and negative sides to doing this, and points to the occasional need of having mistakes pointed out in order to notice and improve them.

Teacher B understands the concept communicative competence as the ability to communicate with others.

[8] “I understand communicative competence as including oral skills, written skills, sort of reading and writing, so the basic skills. And yeah.. Being able to, again, send messages and receive messages.. Yeah.. I mean sort of processing.”

The ability to send and receive messages includes a coding and decoding of what is communicated. Coding and decoding a message depends on a number of factors and can have



disturbing elements like, for example, social setting. Knowledge of aspects concerning the context of interaction is therefore included in this description of communicative competence.

Teacher B sees it as important to communicate in a way that is internationally understandable. Communicative competence is taught by Teacher B through working with different genres and actively interacting through various activities. The teacher mentions that they do role plays. They recently did one on a comedy show in order to illustrate language differences in level of formality and choice of words from, for example, presenting a formal document about climate changes.

[9] “I’m not sure if that’s how they *perceive* it though, that’s a different matter altogether.”

This indicates an indirect approach to developing communicative competence by a variation of activities and genres where students learn, for example, different levels of language use and formality.

The ‘intercultural speaker’ is described as underlying everything and the essence of the English subject.

[10] “Because, that’s, in a sense, what it’s all about. We are trying to teach and learn about other cultures in order to understand them and ourselves. [...] English at this level is very much about learning about various societies, traditions, cultures, and so on, in order to understand why things happen. Yeah.. It’s a bit like history. You need to know a bit of history to understand what happens. It’s society.[...] I think it’s important for the students to be aware of the fact that [...] we view the world through our goggles. We’ve talked a lot about [...] various international media, and how various people through various media view for instance, the conflict in Syria, for instance the terror attacks in Paris, and what have you. So I try to make them aware of it”.

Teacher B sees cultural and intercultural knowledge as important (if not the most important) acquisition in order to be aware of and understand both ourselves and others, and to see things from different perspectives to understand how the world is viewed and why things happen.

#### **4.1.2.3 Teacher C**

Teacher C says the students are not guided very much on their spoken English, due to the English language level of the students today.

[11] “Because, they are much better than they used to be. [...] Or maybe not, I.. They’re much better to understanding because they listen to English all the time and they understand it. [...] But of course, it’s a problem to make them try to speak in a big class like that, it’s.. Yeah.. ...

I: But, do you guide them a certain way, when they make mistakes or? ((interrupted))

R: Yeah, sometimes. If they stop.. [...] Normally I don’t make them read aloud, because I think that’s a bad way of building English, just [...] If I make them speak at all, it’s good enough. And in other classes, maybe I can say, if they pronounce a word wrong I can correct them, but not in this class. Because, then they would not say anything”.

As seen in example [11], Teacher C’s class is very quiet and hardly ever speak, which does not give much spoken English to be guided on and makes the teacher worried about scaring the students if they are corrected. Teacher C has become satisfied with the students trying to speak at all and to not correct them. In another class, that was more talkative, it would perhaps be a possibility to do so.

Teacher C understands communicative competence as being able to speak to other people, to make oneself understood, and to speak in the speaker’s own way. It is emphasised that it is about communicating and not speaking “correct English”. This view is supported by an example from when Teacher C assessed a Russian student for the English exam.

[12] “I thought “oh my God, ten minutes listen to this Russian English”. The first sentences, because it was not like very good English, but what she said.. That was remarkable. She was *very*, very good. So, even if she spoke Russian English, she had the best mark. Because when she was finished with the presentations, she could answer all the questions in a *very* good way and, yeah.. In her own way of pronouncing words..”

The example above illustrates that Teacher C does not assess spoken English based on native-like pronunciation, but on what is communicated. Teacher C says the students should also be able to understand other speakers who speak English in their own way.

Regarding communicative competence, it appears like Teacher C believes the students share the same opinions of trying to speak and making oneself understood as most important.

[13] “Some of them.. Could.. I think.. Some of these girls are very.. They try to speak correct. [...] Correct English-English and they.. [...] Yeah, British English..”

As seen in example [13], however, it is mentioned that there are some students who seem to be striving for a native accent. This might indicate that some students may believe having a native-like accent is regarded as speaking more correctly and giving a higher level of communicative competence.

To enable students to use language adapted to the situation in social, professional and intercultural contexts, Teacher C understands as being able to communicate, to speak freely, and to adapt to different audiences. This is, however, not taught specifically or orally in this English class because they are unusually quiet. The students also told the teacher they did not want to have presentations in the beginning of the school year. Still, they have had a formal group conversation (fagsamtale) where the students were responsible for talking about given topics.

#### **4.1.2.4 Teacher D**

Teacher D explains that the students' spoken English is never corrected in front of the others in bigger classes. In smaller groups, the teacher might indirectly correct them by repeating what has been said. This is a conscious choice of not wanting the students to feel awkward. When evaluating students, the teacher points out what they can improve in writing or an oral talk afterwards. Teacher D points to some features that are usually commented on:

[14] “a lot of the Norwegian students will say “I mean that..” or [...] ‘butt’ instead of ‘but’, I don’t know where that’s from but it seems to be a common mistake. So I will point that out to them in a written evaluation or in an oral talk afterwards. [...] When I hear, for example, that some of my students say ‘ting’ and ‘tink’ instead of ‘thing’ and ‘think’, then we perhaps all of us will find, for example, a YouTube clip with focus on this part of pronunciation and we will all do it together, and then might tell the students afterwards that I think you should practice a bit extra.”

Sentence structures that are influenced by the L1, pronunciation mistakes that can provide confusion in meaning, and some features of articulation are regarded by the teacher as elements for improvement.

Teacher D understands ‘communicative competence’ as to understand, to be understood, and having ‘strategic competence’, which is described as being able to rephrase. Teacher D sees communication as the most essential part of language learning.

Teacher D believes the students are aware of communication being the key of English language learning. Sometimes to the point of seeming to neglect the knowledge part of the curriculum because they think it is enough to know how to speak and write in English.

Regarding the competence aim of enabling the students to use language appropriate to the situation in social, professional and intercultural context, Teacher D says the students use very informal language, which is referred to in class as TV language, and tries to teach them to use more formal language. The teacher sees students' English acquisition outside of school as very positive but also sees some less positive sides to it.

[15] "Some students will surprisingly enough use the F-word without blinking. So, I think that because they have learned so much of their English outside the classroom, they are very informal and they don't realise that not everybody in the world speaks English that way, and how rude they will be conceived by, for example, the British or the Americans if they talk like that to everyone.."

[16] "I say thank God for all the English that they meet outside the classroom. So it's a huge advantage, in many ways. It's just about training them to see how they can use language appropriately.

Teacher D mentions benefits, such as acquiring a huge vocabulary (at least a passive one), understanding a lot of English, exposure of different accents, and lowering the students' own threshold to speak. The challenges relate to informal language use and teaching students to use appropriate language so they will not be conceived as rude.

Teacher D considers their English class as fortunate because they are several people in the classroom who are not Norwegian and can use this to their benefit. The teacher points to the different aspects they can bring to discussions about what it means to talk to people from different cultures and how important it is to know what is appropriate and not in the culture they meet. The importance is for the students to realise that much of communication is based on body language and cultural background, and that they might be a bit ethnocentric. These are also the main ideas for Teacher D's perception of the 'intercultural speaker'.

Appropriate language for professional, social and intercultural context is taught through using material in the textbook, making word banks, playing the board game 'Alias', talking/discussing, working in groups, having presentations and other activities, such as quizzes. Teacher D believes students need the communicative competences of basic language skills, using appropriate language, social and intercultural competence, and to read and communicate in different situations and cultures. They need communicative and cultural

competence to function in a globalised world. Teacher D also sees it as valuable and as one of the main goals of English language teaching to make the students tolerant of diversity.

[17] “If I can make my students more tolerant then I have achieved something because that is important. Recognizing that we’re different, *accepting* that we’re different, I think that is a value that is so important for them to learn.”

### **4.1.3 Teachers’ Views on the Native Speaker Norm**

The teachers were asked about their personal views on the native speaker norm, what they think their students’ views on the concept are, their views on the native speaker norm when teaching, and if they believe the native speaker norm should be part of the criteria measuring oral competence in the English language.

#### **4.1.3.1 Teacher A**

Teacher A believes Norwegian schools are less preoccupied with the native speaker norm than they used to be. We have opened up for more varieties of English and International English. The teacher argues it would be easier for the students to model on American English in order to sound a bit professional or fluent due to the massive exposure of American English through various media and that students are surrounded by it at all times. However, Teacher A emphasises that the students are free to choose to model on an accent or not, which accent they prefer, and does not advise the students to model on any varieties. The only criterion is that the students’ spoken varieties are understandable for other people. Students do not have to sound native-like as long as they do not sound too Norwegian.

Teacher A thinks the students believe they should speak British or American English.

[18] “Not because I’ve told them so this year, but it is kind of a Norwegian tradition that we should model on either British or American.”

The tradition to model on British English or American English is explained by the teacher as regarding the accents to be the perfect Englishes. The teacher argues that students may think it is the tradition too, and therefore believe they should model their speech by this, and reflects on some of the comments and feedback that have been given to the students.

[19] “I have a couple of students who have a very lovely American accent and I have said that “you have a very nice American accent, have you lived there?”. So of course they might think that.. The other students might think that it’s a goal for them to also have an American accent. I don’t know, really. It’s not a discussion we’ve had in the classroom. Maybe we should have”.

The example shows that some of the comments made by the teacher on very Norwegian English having to sound more English, and American English being a lovely accent, might have led the students to believe they should model on American English.

#### **4.1.3.2 Teacher B**

Teacher B believes to be confident and able to communicate freely is most important. At the same time, the teacher says it is important to learn an acceptable level of pronunciation.

[20] “But I don’t think that students *must* sound either British, or American, or Australian, or Canadian, in order to be good speakers of English, no.. Because you could still be fluent”.

Teacher B believes it is possible to be fluent and have an acceptable accent without having a native accent. To illustrate the point, the following experience was given as an example:

[21] “I travelled to the United States some years ago, and I remember travelling with someone who I believed would speak a kind of Norwegian-like English [...]. When I talked to people in say, Starbucks, they would just look at me and “what?”. Whereas my friends would, with their English, would be understood perfectly.

It should be noted that Teacher B speaks with an accent that is close to British English (see 4.1.4.2), thus it is native-like.

Regarding students’ views about the native speaker norm, Teacher B says the students think about it and that the topic was brought up by the students when they first met.

[22] “they would ask me questions like “do I have to speak British English?”, “do I have to speak American English?”. And I was like “what? No!”. And “will you grade me up or down because of this?”. And I was like “no, no, no, no..”. And “why do you speak like this? Why have you chosen this?”<sup>2</sup>.”

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<sup>2</sup> Questions asked by the students to the teacher

In the example above, the teacher clearly states to the students that they do not have to speak with a native accent in class, and that they will not be graded by their level of native-like pronunciation. The teacher does, however, try to be consistent and use some kind of reference norm. Teacher B tries to keep an open mind about spoken varieties in the classroom because it is all about communication.

Teacher B seems to be uncertain about the necessity of the native speaker norm.

[23] “That’s a *very* difficult question. Yeah.. I’d like to say no. But.. Yeah.. Is it possible to say, “no, but”? Yeah, it’s kind of a no, but.”

The teacher would like to answer ‘no, the native speaker norm is not needed’. However, while reflecting over the question, there is something making the teacher answer ‘no, but’. This indicates that the native speaker norm is not necessarily needed, but that the thought of not having a native speaker norm is not ideal either.

[24] “If you teach English, I think it’s perhaps an asset to at least be consistent, so that you have some kind of norm that you try to teach. So, I would not encourage people to mix British and American English, for instance.”

As seen in example [24], Teacher B believes it is best for both teachers and students if the teacher uses some kind of a consistency that is teachable and learnable. Teacher B emphasises that encouraging teachers to be consistent does not mean they need a native accent or to speak this way or that way, as long as what is presented is within a kind of an International English norm (see chapter 2.2).

#### **4.1.3.3 Teacher C**

The native speaker norm is not practiced by Teacher C. The teacher believes it is somewhat practiced in elementary school, by correcting the pupils speech.

[25] “You shouldn’t force the students to speak American or British English. To me it’s very difficult because I don’t speak British English. [...] it’s better to have your own way”.

Teacher C believes the students should be able to speak the way they want and also finds it difficult to teach in terms of the native speaker norm because the teacher speaks International English and not native-like English (see 4.1.4.3). Teacher C believes that the teacher and students share the idea about the native speaker norm.

When asked about if the native speaker norm is needed, Teacher C first answers no. Afterwards, the teacher somewhat disagrees with the given answer.

[26] “I mean.. In one way, we do, of course. Because we.. It should not be like.. Globish[...] This true American and British English, I think they should be the basic, in a way. [...] So that’s a very difficult question. In a way I don’t agree with myself. Because I understand that you have to have this ba.. In a way have to have it.. Yeah..”

Teacher C argues that the native speaker norm is needed to some degree and that British and American are seen as the best accents to use as a basic standard.

[27] “Because.. Cause Indian English, they lose.. In a way they lose something.”

[28] “Because we don’t want to speak Pakistani English, it’s.. But..

I: But say, if your students wanted to learn Pakistani English?

R: No, I wouldn’t teach them.. No.. And I don’t think Norwegians, they speak.. International.. I think they speak international English, in oral Norwegian English, or whatever you call it. Most of us do, I think.. “

Example [27] and [28] describe Indian English and Pakistani English as less favourable accents to teach in the classroom. Teacher C argues that this is because they are accents of English which are not that common for Norwegians to speak.

#### **4.1.3.4 Teacher D**

Teacher D uses British English and American English as reference points to teach and compare spoken English to because that is what the teacher has been trained to do.

[29] “Yeah.. Because, of course, that’s also what I’ve been trained to do, so it would be very awkward for me to suddenly use, let’s say Indian English, as a standard. [...] students often make fun of these kinds of accents, and I try to make them realise that these accents are recognized on a world basis as well. [...] British English is by now a rather small accent worldwide. [...] I try to make them more tolerant. But it is tricky.”

The students are made aware of the fact that there are far more non-native speakers of English today than there are of native speakers. This indicates that the teacher uses the native accents as reference points for the students’ spoken English but not necessarily as a goal.



For a long time, Teacher D had teachers with British English accents and believed this to be the norm for teachers. However, after having a professor who spoke with an interesting mix of Finnish and Swedish English accent, this view changed.

[30] “the first time we had her in class, we doomed her. We taught that ‘ugh’, what is this, really? But she was the best of them all. We had her in linguistics and she was brilliant. And that taught me something about paying too much attention to pronunciation and fluency. In the sense that people, English teachers, and professors can be excellent even if their pronunciation or choice of words is not necessarily always very fluent. So, I think.. But of course, I mean.. Instantly, if you listen to somebody with.. With a fabulous English you’re going to be inspired by it, as well.”

Teacher D does not believe it is necessary to speak native-like. However, example [30] and [31] indicate that there is an aesthetic factor to native speaker varieties, as they are found nice to listen to and can make a speaker be regarded more excellent and inspirational. Also, Teacher D describes British English as sounding more charming than American English, and therefore prefers listening to this accent and believes the students think so as well. The teacher believes Norwegian students find it attractive to be native-like in pronunciation and are used to being good speakers of English.

[31] “I see that some of my students would really like to be mistaken for a native speaker. And I don’t think there’s anything wrong with that. They can aspire to it, but it is not a demand, in any sense.”

In the classroom, the native speaker norm is not used in the sense that students should strive for speaking native-like unless they desire it themselves. The teacher believes that the more the students use the language, the more fluent they are going to become. Teacher D enjoys listening to the students in the class that have a native-like fluency and also thinks the other students think it is fun to be able to listen to it.

When asked if the native speaker norm is necessary, Teacher D would not say so.

[32] “For teachers I think that if they can have a neutral international accent. That is also enough. But, I know that there are a lot of people who would not agree with me on that. I realise that. But, since the curriculum never tells us that students should have either a British or an American accent, why should the teachers have to have that?”

Teacher D argues by referring to the accent neutral Norwegian curriculum that it is not necessary to aim at a native-like accent. However, the teacher also indicates there are beliefs that teachers should have native speaker accents.

#### **4.1.4 Views and Assessment of English Pronunciation**

The teachers were asked to describe their own English pronunciation, how they were taught pronunciation, how they teach pronunciation, how they assess pronunciation and what criteria they use when assessing, what accents of English their students use, and what speech varieties are accepted and not accepted. Their answers are presented in short below.

##### **4.1.4.1 Teachers' Descriptions of Their Pronunciation**

Teacher A used to model on British English and now has a mixture. The teacher describes it as becoming 'messed up' and more of a mixture of American English and International English when talking to the students, and British English when talking to, for example, relatives in England.

Teacher B describes it as being coloured by personal experiences, which is presented in section 3.2.1.2.1.2. The teacher's pronunciation was picked up in the south of England, so if it is in any way native-like it would be influenced by the years spent in Reading. It is also coloured by being Norwegian and talking to peers, which are people in their twenties. Because of this, the teacher would not be described as having a very posh accent.

Teacher C's pronunciation is described as the teacher's own way of speaking and not very good, which is defined as not British or American English. The teacher says it is an International English accent and not a native English accent, but that it is maybe closer to American English than British English.

Teacher D describes it as having a mix. The teacher was taught British English from the beginning, but was inspired and influenced of American English with the arrival of satellite TV at the age of thirteen. The present way of speaking is described as more influenced by American English than British English.

#### **4.1.4.2 How the Teachers Were Taught Pronunciation**

Teacher A was taught English pronunciation through practicing at school. They read aloud during class, and read the homework aloud while trying to practice a perfect British accent. The teacher used the dictionary to find the correct pronunciation of words.

Teacher B was taught English pronunciation the traditional way by trying to speak native-like and had teachers who had lived abroad for years and had excellent English pronunciation. The teacher was also encouraged to dig into it and use and listen to English. To achieve a native-like pronunciation was personally very important for Teacher B.

Teacher C learned English from about the age of ten. The teacher never tried to speak British English or American English, despite having a teacher who spoke British English. Teacher C has picked up the pronunciation through travelling and working with people.

Teacher D was taught English with the native speaker norm as a model and British English as the target aim. They were taught pronunciation through listening to recordings of texts and the teacher pronouncing words. From secondary school, they had a teacher who had a strong British accent, and they were not really informed about the American pronunciation.

#### **4.1.4.3 How the Teachers Teach Pronunciation**

Teacher A is not sure if pronunciation is taught enough in the class. The reason is that the students can be sensitive to criticism, which makes the teacher a bit afraid to comment on pronunciation. The fear that students will stay silent if criticised on pronunciation has led to greater focus on opening up for the students to speak and not be afraid, and to rather let them work on their pronunciation themselves. They also listen to texts from all over the world.

Teacher B teaches pronunciation by trying to be a model. Regarding vocabulary, for example, learning new words and pronunciation, the teacher tries to be up to scratch on pronunciation by phonetic writing, transcriptions, sound files and sound material online. The teacher encourages students to listen to texts and to care about pronunciation. Also, Teacher B tries to create a climate where everyone feels comfortable to speak in order for students to actually rehearse their English skills.

Teacher C does not have any methods for teaching pronunciation. If there is a word the students wonder about how is pronounced, the teacher tells them. Also, teacher C teaches students to use the dictionary in order to find out how words are pronounced.

Teacher D teaches pronunciation through informing students about the differences between accents of English. This is mainly because the students are not really informed about this or what kind of pronunciation they are closer to themselves earlier on. The teacher also guides students to online dictionaries to listen to how words are supposed to be pronounced.

#### **4.1.4.4 How the Teachers Assess Pronunciation and What Criteria They Use**

Teacher A assesses pronunciation through giving feedback on presentations, group conversations and formal group conversations. This is done by commenting and correcting mistakes on the word level and sentence structure level. Sometimes, the teacher has to explain, for example, that past tense –ed endings should not be pronounced. Teacher A does not have many criteria for pronunciation alone but lists, for example, pronunciation of words, under an evaluation point called ‘language’. Pronunciation does not play a major part in the evaluation of students because there are other aspects to consider like, for instance, content.

Teacher B assesses oral work such as presentations. The teacher makes notes on, for example, mispronounced words and tells them to check the correct pronunciation. Other than that, Teacher B does not really correct pupils. Normally, the teacher uses ready-made charts that have various slots for pronunciation, structure, language, grammar, etc.

Teacher C has a set of criteria that are used at school for presentations, but there are no specific criteria regarding pronunciation. The teacher is generally satisfied as long as the students want to speak.

Teacher D has some specific points to focus on, which are the th-sound, making them aware of typical Norwegian pronunciation of words, such as ‘that’, ‘sit up’ and ‘gun’, and at the higher level also focuses more on intonation and words. Teacher D remarks pronunciation that will be a problem internationally, such as putting the emphasis wrong and the articulation of the ‘th’-sound and ‘w’-sound. Teacher D says the students are not corrected on their pronunciation while speaking unless they stop and ask themselves. Instead, they get a comment afterwards.

#### **4.1.4.5 What Accents are Used and Accepted/Not Accepted in Class**

The teachers’ responses on what accents the students use and which are accepted and not accepted in class are briefly presented in table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 What accents are used and accepted/not accepted in class

	<b>Teacher A</b>	<b>Teacher B</b>	<b>Teacher C</b>	<b>Teacher D</b>
Accents used by students	A few speaking American English, mostly neutral English, and no one speaking British English.	Most lean towards American English, some with an excellent RP.	International English, maybe leaning towards American English.	Most try for an American English accent, but are mixed with British.
Accepted accents	Accept all as long as they are understandable	Accept all. Do not encourage them to use any specific.	Accept all. Not encouraging any specific accent in this class, because they rarely speak.	Tells them to be confident with their accent. Chose whichever they want.
Not accepted accents	Cannot accept the Norwegian English accent.	Thinks it is unacceptable to not accept an accent.	Would not teach Indian or Pakistani English.	No

Most of the students lean, according to their teachers, towards American English. Teacher A is proven to be critical to Norwegian English accents, and Teacher C would not teach and seemed sceptical for learning Indian English or Pakistani English.

While answering the questions, some interesting comments came to the surface. Teacher B said that the students are not encouraged to use any specific accents.

[33] “But I think, again, they perceive me as encouraging British English because that’s where they place *me*.”

This might indicate that students believe the teacher encourages or expects them to speak the same way as the teacher does. So if the teacher speaks British English, so should they.

Teacher D says there are no specific accents the students are encouraged to use. The teacher mentions that the students are horrified by the Norwegian English of, for example, Jens Stoltenberg and Erna Solberg, and that all the students have better accents in the sense that they are more confident and sound more native-like. This was elaborated on:

[34] “I think they’re a bit embarrassed by it, basically. I think that they realise that the younger generation, they’re much more fluent in oral English than their parents’ generation, for example. Most of them tell me that if they go abroad with their family, then they’re the ones talking and their parents are perhaps a bit embarrassed by talking in front of their children as well. So I think it’s just something that they associate with older generations and that they kind of.. Think that they’ve moved on. They’re better now.”

Teacher D believes students are embarrassed by Norwegian English as a result of the view being inherited from older generations such as their parents.

#### **4.1.5 Teachers on Students' Choice of English Accents**

The teachers were asked about their beliefs about factors influencing students on their choice of English accent, to what extent the students speak confidently in class, if non-native varieties of English are an option for the teachers and their students, and whether or not the students believe they can choose and use whichever variety they want.

##### **4.1.5.1 Teacher A**

Teacher A does not believe all the students have made a choice regarding English accent, and that some of them might be influenced by family abroad and speakers in other countries. It appears that many of the students struggle just to be brave enough to speak. The teacher believes the students put so much work into finding the words and building enough courage to speak that they have not really considered their accent, and that this applies for most students.

Regarding speaking confidently in class, Teacher A estimates that the group is divided about fifty-fifty on who are afraid to say something aloud in class and who are not. It is also emphasised that of the half of the students that seem shy to speak, a few of them come across as shy or quiet people in general. The teacher's overall impression of the reason is that students who are afraid to speak are afraid of embarrassing themselves by making mistakes, such as saying something in the wrong way or getting the answer wrong.

Teacher A claims students are influenced by exposure and that situations where the students who have not lived abroad choose a variety of English other than, for example, British English or American English, is very hypothetical.

[35] "Because, they are not exposed, here in our school or in our local environment, they're not exposed to Australian English, Indian English, South-African English or whatever. They are exposed to American and maybe a little bit of British English."

The teacher sees it as unnatural for the students to suddenly decide to try to perfect a variety of English which they never hear. However, Teacher A says the students are both familiar with and have seen that people can manage just fine with a Norwegian accent. Despite this, the teacher claims the students do not see it as an accent which they would prefer to use.

[36] “I haven’t heard any of them telling me that “No, we should be allowed to speak with a strong Norwegian accent!” Because, I still think they think it’s strange to listen to.”

Teacher A further emphasises that they have not discussed this issue but that the students seem to be embarrassed when they listen to a speaker with a Norwegian English accent.

[37] “They cringe a bit if, for example, while listening to Heyerdahl and.. So, we haven’t really discussed that, and as I say, I can accept many accents, but really, not as much the Norwegian one. Or at least the Norwegian sentence structure”.

The example shows that Teacher A does not fully accept the Norwegian English accent. Still, Teacher A emphasises that the students are not evaluated negatively by having a Norwegian English accent as long as the rest is good and that we must accept that people come from different countries and are affected by their background.

#### **4.1.5.2 Teacher B**

Teacher B believes that interests, friends, and the degree to which an accent is regarded as ‘cool’ are the major factors to influence the students’ choice of variety of English pronunciation. To illustrate the importance of interests, Teacher B mentions a student who has been drawn to British English because of the interest of literature, and other students who have been drawn to American English because of their interest to rap music and Eminem.

[38] “So I think it varies, it depends on who they are, what their interests are, yeah.. And coolness, I think. Cool is quite important for some of them, at least the boys, I think.”

Regarding the extent of acceptability of non-native varieties, Teacher B states that the students are aware of the differences and that there are different Englishes. They are told to use the English they have but that the teacher would not be able to teach it to them. This is argued with the difficulty to teach an accent that one does not speak, and that Teacher B speaks somewhat British English. Teacher B has met several students that have different and interesting accents, which all have been accepted.

[39] “I think they know, by now, that they *can* choose. But I also think that some of them still believe that some varieties are better than others. Yeah..I do think so. I do think that they perceive British English as their norm and perhaps American English kind of a runner up second. Yeah.. But I’m not sure, obviously. But that’s my impression.”

The example above illustrates that Teacher B has the impression that the native varieties of British English and American English are regarded as better than other accents.

In Teacher B's class, there are large contrasts between the students who speak confidently, who are estimated to be half or a third of the group, and the students who do not.

[40] "I think there are huge differences between the ones who kind of hog the floor, they are constantly talking, they always have a comment, they always something to say, they ask questions, they kind of want the attention. And then you have the ones who *don't*. They just want to kind of disappear somewhere, yeah.. So not everyone is confident at all, in a situation like that, no.. And that's very sad."

Teacher B appears to think the insecurity has both to do with the students' expectations of themselves, and that they worry a lot about what the other students might think of them

#### **4.1.5.3 Teacher C**

Teacher C thinks the students' spoken English is mostly influenced by media, thus they are mostly influenced by American English. The students have not shown any signs of not accepting any varieties of English.

The teacher claims the students do not speak confident at all in class. Teacher C thinks it is because they worry about their fellow students' thoughts of them. It is, however, emphasised that the class were just as quiet the first year and there is no explanation for it.

[41] "They know that they can. Some of them said to me "I know I can, but it's.. I don't feel comfortable in this class"."

Teacher C encourages them to try to speak, and tells them it is better to try a few times than not to. Still, there are students whom the teacher has never heard say anything in class.

#### **4.1.5.4 Teacher D**

Teacher D believes the students' spoken English is influenced by which is easiest and closest to their own pronunciation, the internet, games, the entertainment they watch, and the music they listen to. This has, according to the teacher, made American English the dominant accent. However, the teacher emphasises that most of the student have taken it passively on and not made a deliberate choice to strive for speaking American English.



[42] “I think that even if they don’t make a deliberate choice, we’re seeing a shift in Norway where we go from traditionally having had more.. much more British English as the idea. Now we see the American English.”

[43] “And of course, they realise that American English has taken over as a world standard, if we have a world standard. It is at least much more influential worldwide now than British English is. So I think that is really what’s happening.”

In the examples above, the teacher argues there has been a shift in the world standard of English, to the extent that there exist one, from British English to American English.

Regarding non-native varieties of English in the classroom, Teacher D accepts whichever variety the students are serious about as long as it is not a stereotyped variety, which is described as varieties that are prone to being caricatured and exemplified with the Indian English used in many comedy shows such as the Big Bang Theory. It is argued that the students normally will go for the mainstream accent in the classroom as a result of peer pressure. The teacher believes it takes guts to go against the main idea.

According to Teacher D, the degree to which the students speak confidently in class mostly depends on the size of the group. Students are rather confident of their English in smaller groups but they have, for some reason, decided that their English is not good enough, which becomes problematic in larger groups. Teacher D thinks students are more concerned about what the other students think of their English than what the teacher thinks of it.

## **4.2 The Student Questionnaire**

In this section, the results from the student questionnaire will be presented. The student questionnaire was entered online by 63 students. Even though a default-setting was applied prompting the respondents to provide an answer for each of the questions, only 60 of the respondents completed and three did not finish. One of the three respondents who did not finish only entered the questionnaire without answering any of the questions. It was decided to exclude this respondent from the data analysis, thus operating with the responses from the 62 remaining students that provided their answers.

The open answered questions were analysed, grouped and put into suitable categories. The students’ answers that are referred to and cited in this section are presented as they were written by the students, with no corrections. As mentioned earlier, the purpose of the open

answered questions was the potential of bringing other ideas to the surface and avoiding to guide the students in their responses.

### 4.2.1 Students’ English Relations and Experiences

The students were asked about their English background in order to see what relations the students have to the English language and English speaking countries. Figure 4.1 below illustrates the results of the students’ relation where the number indicates number of students.

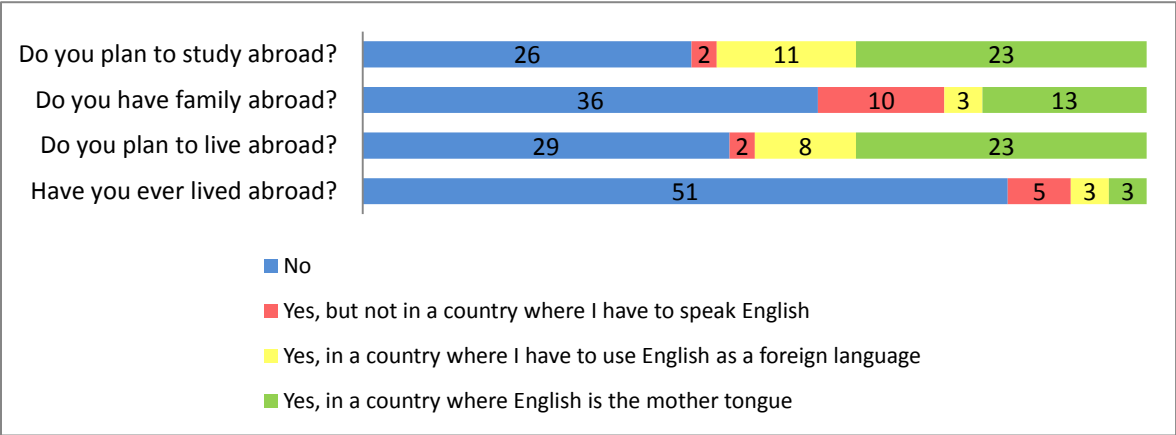


Figure 4.1 Respondents’ English background

The matching numbers of students who plan to study abroad and who plan to live abroad might indicate that the students who plan to live abroad plan to do so due to studying.

In order to find out what experiences the students have with their teachers’ use of English accents, they were asked to describe both their present and teachers’ spoken English and what accent they believe the teacher prefers the students to use. The results of their present teachers’ spoken English are presented below in percentage.

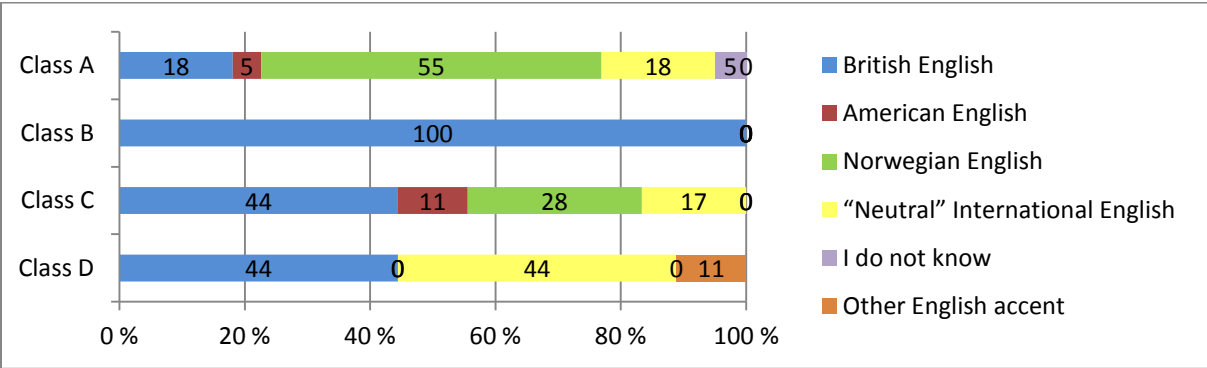


Figure 4.2 Students’ belief of their present teachers’ spoken English

What is interesting in the figure above is that Class B seems to be the only class where the students do not disagree on their teacher’s accent. This might indicate that students find it hard to distinguish different varieties of English. The “Other English accent” answer in class D was specified by a mix between British and American English.

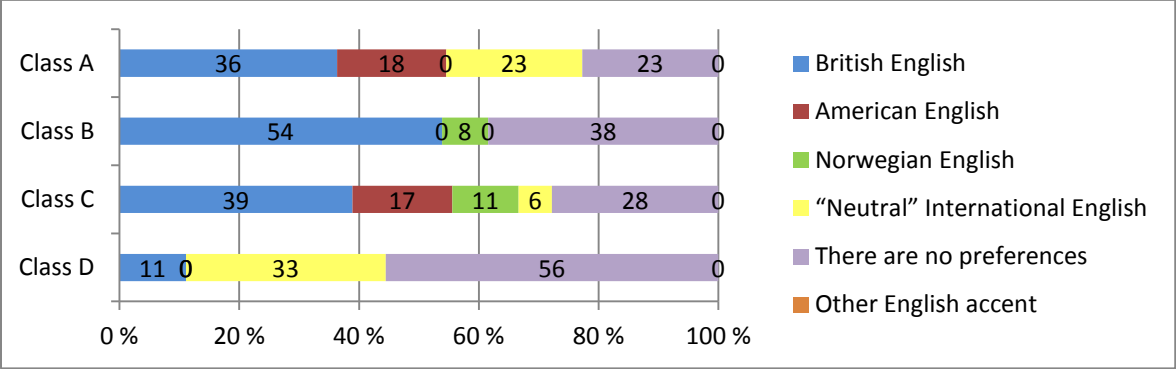


Figure 4.3 Students’ belief of their present teachers’ preferred accent for students to use

The figure above shows that the students do not agree on their beliefs of their teacher’s preference regarding students’ use of English accents. What is interesting is that the majority seem to believe that there either are no preferences or that the teacher prefers British English.

The students were also asked about previous teachers’ spoken English and what they preferred the students to use. The figure indicates the number of students who has answered each alternative. This was a multi-choice option because they may have had more than one teacher. As a result, the number of answers is higher than the number of respondents.

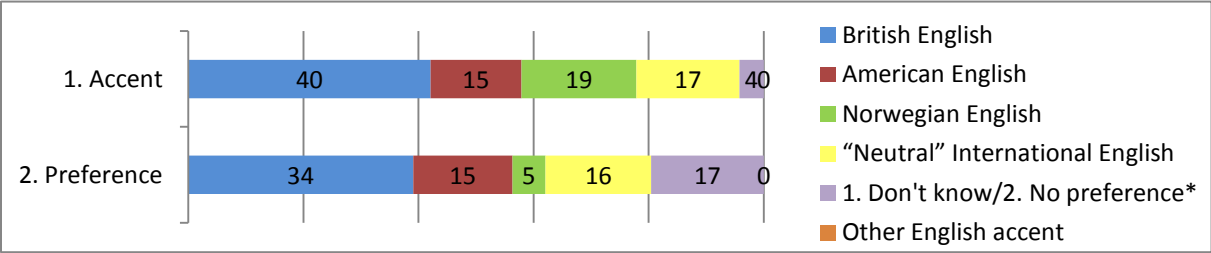


Figure 4.4 Students’ beliefs of previous teachers’ accents and preferred accent for students.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 4.4 illustrates that the majority of the students found their previous teachers to have a British English accent. The majority also believe that their previous teachers preferred that their students used a British English accent.

<sup>3</sup> \* The purple results (fifth alternative) show the answer “1. Don’t know” for the first bar “1. Accent” and “2. No preference” for the second bar “2. Preference”.

### 4.2.2 Students' English Accent

The students were asked about their favourite English accent, what variety of English they aim at and why they aim at this particular accent, and what influences their spoken English language. The results are presented in figure 4.5 below.

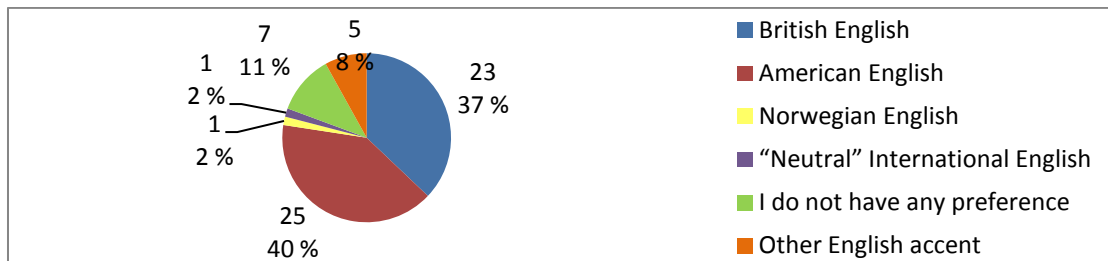


Figure 4.5 Distribution of students' favourite varieties of English

The figure clearly illustrates that native English accents are preferred. The majority prefers American English, closely followed by British English. Five of the students answered that they had other English accents as their favourite. This option also asked the students to specify which accent. These five students' responses are listed below in their entirety:

Student 1: American, Irish and Australian

Student 2: Australian

Student 3: Scottish English

Student 4: I do not really have any preference, however my accent is mostly towards American. But I do fancy Other accents like British and Indian

Student 5: Irish, sounds hot

This gives a total of 52 students stating they have a native English accent as their favourite.

The students were also asked what variety of English they aim at when speaking English. The results are presented in figure 4.6 below.

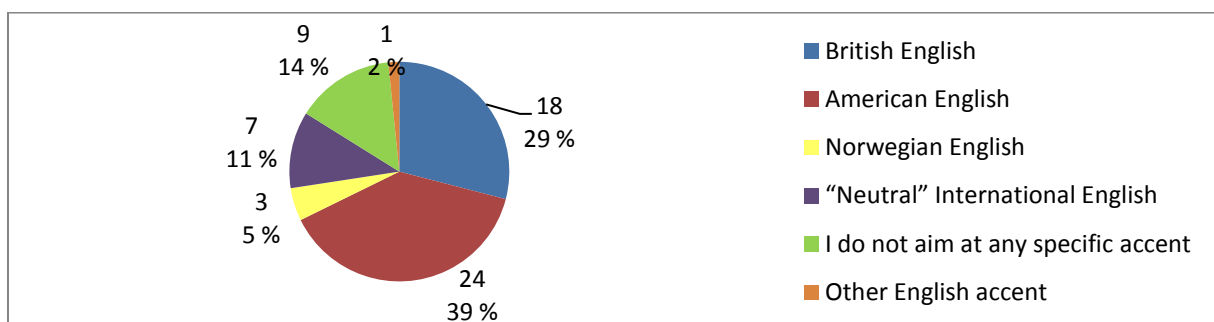


Figure 4.6 Distribution of students' target aims of English varieties

The majority of the students aim at native English accents. The most popular is American English followed by British English. The student aiming at ‘Other English accent’ specified the answer with aiming at Australian English.

As a follow up question, the students were asked why they aim at this accent or why they do not aim at an accent. The responses were analysed, grouped in suitable categories and registered after which accent they aim at. The results are presented in table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Reasons for aiming at a variety

	British	American	Norwegian	Neutral	Other	Do not aim
Desire to learn this accent, a goal	1			1		
Desire to be regarded as a native speaker, to fit in		2				1
Planning to study/live abroad	1	3				
For/through travelling	1	4				1
Exposure through media	3	5				1
The most wide spread English variety		4				
Easier to learn, speak, copy, understand	1	7	2	3		
Comes most natural		6	1	1		1
Likes it, finds it having an attractive quality	10	7			1(Aus)	
Better than other accents	6	3				
Have family and friends who live, originates	2	2				
More casual, informal		4				
More formal, polite	2					
The accent that is taught in school	1			1		
Mix						3
Do not know, not important, don't care	1	1	1	2		5

The table illustrates how often a word or word group was brought up by the students to explain why they chose to aim or not aim at the particular variety.

Figure 4.7 below shows to what extent various factors influence their spoken English. The students were given the statement “My spoken English is greatly influenced by...” and were asked to rate certain factors to what degree they found the statement to be true. They could choose from four alternatives rating from “I strongly disagree” to “I strongly agree”.

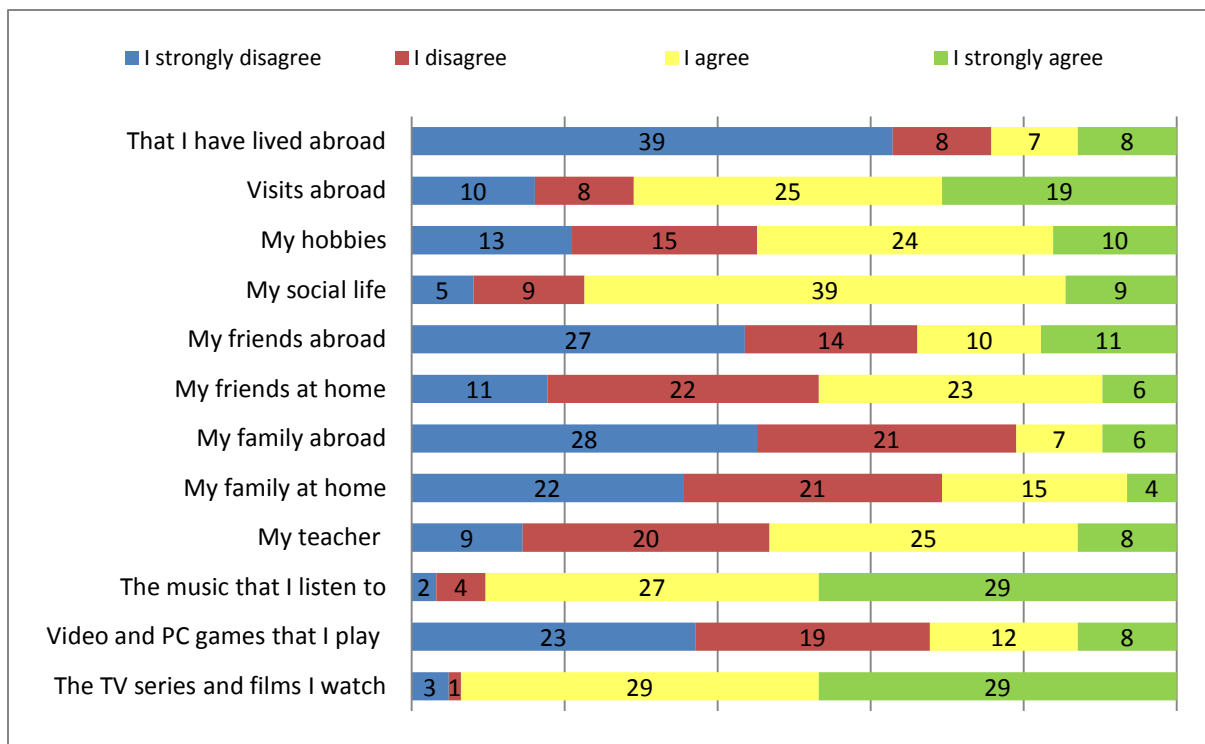


Figure 4.7 Influences on students' spoken English

The table shows that the absolute majority believe that their spoken English is influenced by the TV series and films they watch, and the music they listen to. They are also much influenced by visits abroad and their social life.

#### 4.2.3 Students' Views about Varieties of English in Class

To find out to what extent the students speak English in class, their thoughts of their English assessment of English accents, to what extent they think about how they speak, to what degree they speak confidently in class, and what factors they might worry about when speaking, the students were asked to rate to what extent they agree with a set of statements. The results are presented in table 4.8 and 4.9 below.

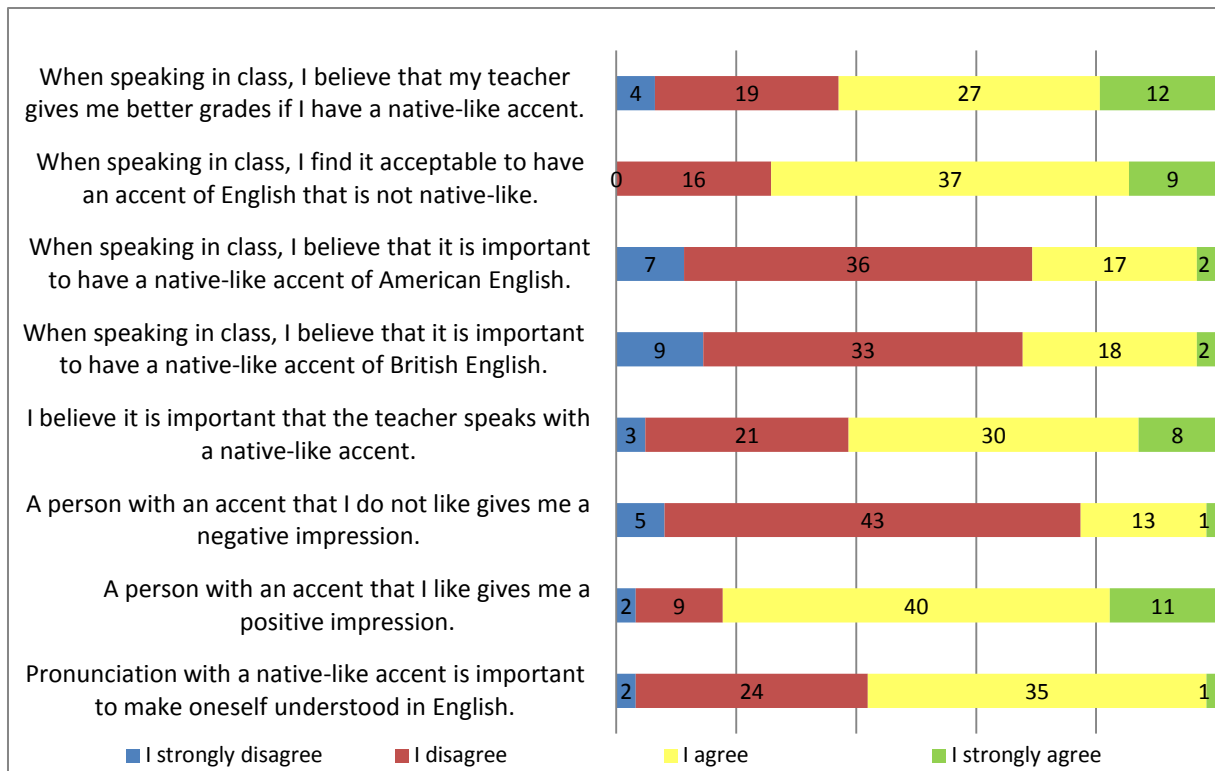


Figure 4.8 Attitudes towards English accents

The majority of the students believe the teacher will give them better grades if they speak with a native-like accent. The majority of the students also find it acceptable to have an accent of English that is not native-like, and that it is not necessary to speak native-like. However, most of the students believe the teacher should speak with a native-like accent. Most of the students get a positive impression of a person speaking with an English accent that they like, but they do not get a negative impression if it is an accent they do not like. Also, most of the students find a native-like pronunciation important to make oneself understood in English.



Figure 4.9 Attitudes towards English accents continued

The figure shows that most of the students claim they speak mostly English during class. The majority believes they speak English fluently. The great majority feel confident when speaking English in class.

#### 4.2.4 Students' Views about Varieties of English in General

In the questionnaire, a “marked” English accent was explained to the students and defined as “an accent that is clearly marked by geographical origin, e.g. Norwegian English, Russian English, etc.” The explanation has been omitted here due to space limitations in the figure.



The students were given the statement “I think it is appropriate for Norwegians to use the accent of...” where they should rate to what extent they agree with the statement of appropriate accent by rating it from “I strongly disagree” to “I strongly agree”.

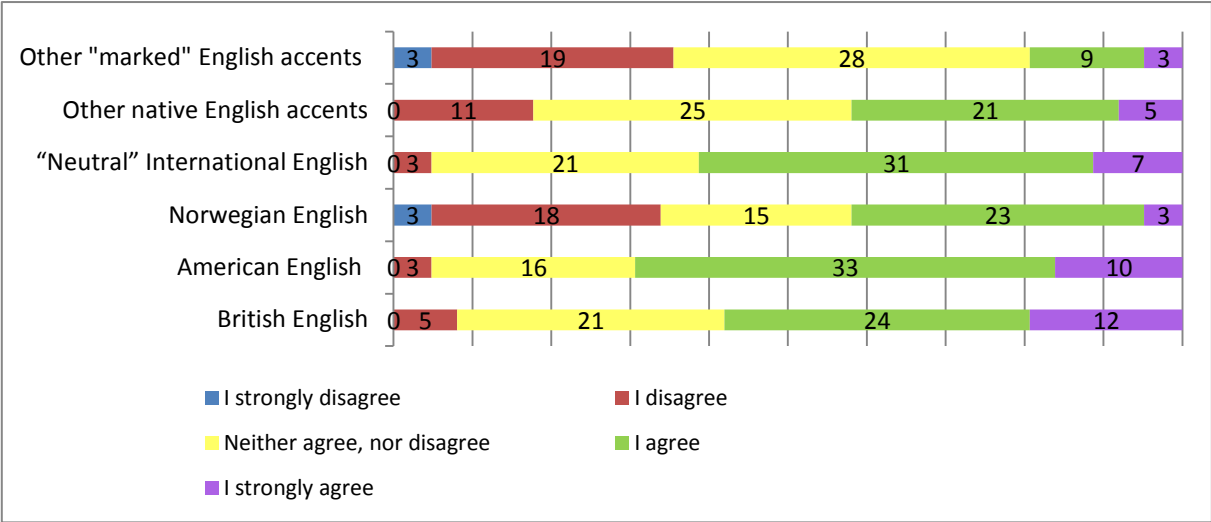


Figure 4.10 Appropriate English accents for Norwegians to use

The students appear to find American English, British English and International English the most appropriate English varieties for Norwegians to use.

Figure 4.11, below, shows the students’ responses to different statements where they were asked to confirm to what extent they agreed to the statement of one accent of English being better than another accent of English. The results show that the great majority of the students either disagree with the accents regarded as better than another or that they chose the neutral alternative and neither agree or disagree with the statements.

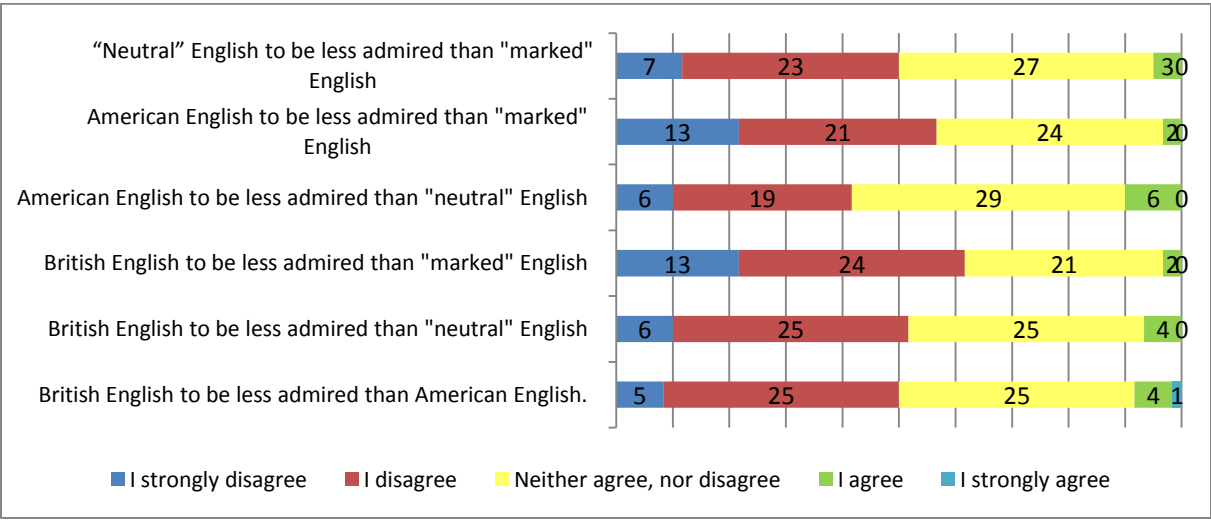


Figure 4.11 Comparison of different varieties of English

The table below shows the students descriptions of different varieties of English and illustrates how frequently a word or word group was brought up by the respondents. It should, however, be noted that the descriptions are not based on reactions to auditory examples but given by the students based on their own interpretations of the different varieties.

Table 4.3 Students' description of English varieties

	British English	American English	Norwegian English	Neutral International English
Polite	40	6		1
Formal, proper	24	2		2
Informal, laid back, unprofessional, slang	2	12	10	3
Less formal		2*		
Neutral				4
Relaxed		2		
Rude			1	
Ok		1	4**	18
Funny	6	7	17	2
Nice, fine, pretty, good	10	14		16
Beautiful, great	2			3
Cool, awesome	4	15	2	
Old	1			
Modern		2		
Normal, common, casual, freely		13	1	9
Classy, fancy	4			
Bad, ugly, not nice, stupid		1	24	4
Intelligent, sophisticated, smart, highly regarded	2	1		1
Understandable, easy	1	5	2	4
Weird, awkward, clumsy, strange	2	2	28	4
Wrong, not good enough			6	
Embarrassing, annoying, shameful			7	
Fun	1	3		
Posh, snobby, upper class, better than the rest, royal	8	1		
Useful		1		
Interesting		2		1
Boring		2		1
Mixed		1		
Stereotypical		1		
Entertaining			1	
Uncomfortable			1	
Different				1
Calm				1
Nothing, I do not know				1

\* One respondent specified less formal than British English

\*\* One respondent specified Norwegian English as 'ok' if the speaker is old.

#### 4.2.5 Students' Motivations for Becoming Competent Speakers of English

The students were asked what their most important purposes of learning English are. The results are presented in table 4.4 below and illustrate how many students mentioned the different categories as important purposes to learn English. The most important purpose appears to be able to communicate internationally.

Respondents mentioning ELF, learning English to understand and being understood, or to speak to or get to know other people has been registered as becoming competent for international communication. Some of the students mentioned that they wanted to become competent speakers of English because they both wanted to study and work abroad, while other students only mentioned for studies and work. The registration was therefore done in the way that responses mentioning both 'studying and/or working' and 'abroad' were registered in both the category of 'education and work' and 'plans to live/study abroad' because they specifically mentioned it in a context of doing this abroad. The responses that only mentioned being competent in English for 'studies and/or work' were only registered in 'education and work' because it might have been both abroad or at home.

Table 4.4 Reasons for being competent speakers of English

International communication	46
Travelling	17
Education and work	21
Plans to live/study abroad	12
Family and friends	3
Globalization, will be necessary in the future	13
Sounds better, gives a better impression, more professional	6
Enjoys the English language	8

#### 4.2.6 Students' Views of Criteria for and Importance of Being a Competent Speaker

The students were asked to rate certain criteria for being a competent speaker of English by importance, with options rating from “not important” to “very important”. The figure below presents the distribution of the students’ answers.

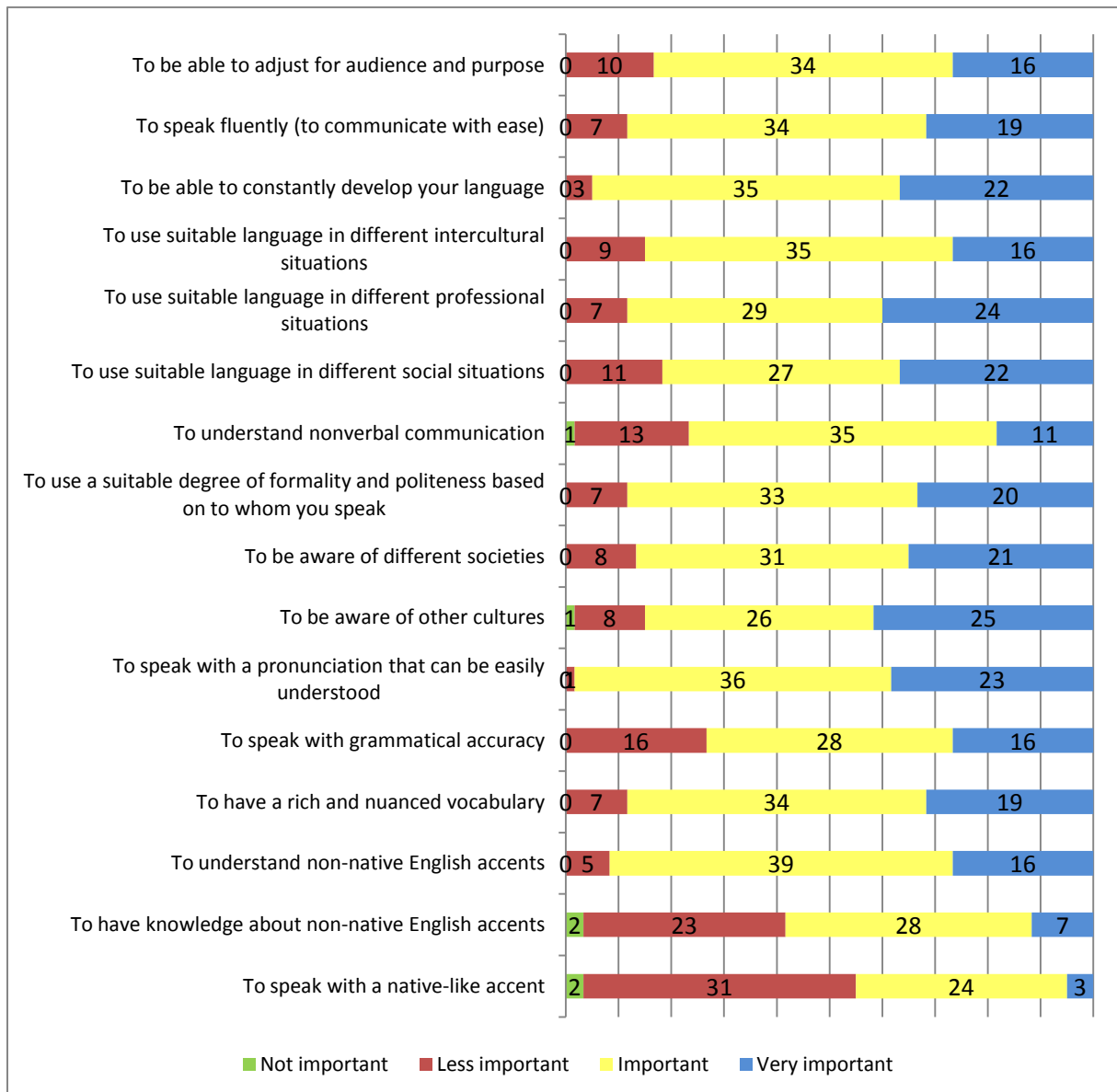


Figure 4.12 Criteria students find important to be a competent speaker of English

The students find ‘to speak with a pronunciation that can easily be understood’ as the most important criterion, where all but one student have rated it as ‘important’ or ‘very important’. The criterion most students appears to find less important is ‘to speak with a native-like accent’, even though 27 students have rated it as important.

#### 4.2.7 Advantages and Disadvantages of Speaking with a Native Accent

Finally, the students were asked if they could see any advantages or disadvantages of speaking with a native accent in an open ended question. Their answers were sorted into suitable categories. Table 4.5 below presents the number of students believing the certain category to be an advantage of speaking with a native accent.

Table 4.5 Advantages with speaking with a native-like accent

Better/easier understood	24
Regarded a better/competent/professional English speaker, will be taken more seriously, give a positive impression	17
Blend in more easily	3
More uniform English pronunciation	1
Preservation of original language	1
I do not see any	3
I do not know, not sure	8

The majority, who sees speaking with a native accent as an advantage, appear to find it better in quality and easier to understand. Also, a large proportion of the students believe a native accent will make the speaker regarded as a more professional English speaker.

The disadvantages of speaking with a native accent are presented in table 4.6 below, which presents the number of students believing the certain category to be a disadvantage of speaking with a native accent.

Table 4.6 Disadvantages with speaking with a native-like accent

More difficult to understand for non-natives (advanced vocabulary etc.)	10
Regarded as snobby, old fashioned	2
More difficult to learn	1
I do not see any	5
I do not know, not sure	8

The majority, who see speaking with a native accent as a disadvantage, find it more difficult to understand for non-native speakers when it comes to, for example, advanced vocabulary.

Three responses to the question could not be included. It was not clear if the answers were given as advantages or disadvantages of speaking with a native accent. The three responses are presented below in their entirety:

Student 1: Understandings and comprasation an dcommunication

Student 2: Understandings

Student 3: People will judge you

However, they do correspond with the rest of the responses in the way they relate to making oneself better/less understood and the speaker being regarded positively/negatively by the spoken language.

### **4.3 Short Summary of Salient Findings**

The teachers and students seem to emphasise the importance of communication and speaking English that is fluent and intelligible and do not see it as a requirement to be native-like. The teachers argue that content and communication is more important than how they say things. However, British English and American English are used and regarded as basic standards for references when teaching in the classroom, which the students should look to concerning pronunciation and intonation. The teachers also use modifying adjectives when describing the different varieties of English, such as sounding ‘somewhat Norwegian’ and ‘a bit English’, which makes it difficult to estimate the degree of native-like or non native-like pronunciation the teachers are encouraging the students to use or not to use.

The teachers do not have any preferred accent for the students to use. However, the results show that the teachers encourage the students who desire a native accent to strive for it. Also, both the teachers and students are found to attribute attractive aesthetic qualities to British English and American English, which seem to be the preferred accents to aim at among the students. The students see more advantages than disadvantages of speaking with a native-like English accent. Having a native-like pronunciation is regarded by the students as being a more competent English speaker, and they also believe they will achieve better grades by speaking native-like English. Non-native English accents, such as Norwegian English, Pakistani English and Indian English, are found to be less attractive English varieties. However, no accents have been stated as unacceptable. Also, neither the teachers nor the students seem to be affected negatively by English speakers with a non-native accent, but they do seem to be affected positively by English speakers with a native accent.

The students’ spoken English seem to be influenced to a major degree by the varieties they are exposed to through media. The most influential appears to be American English, which is also the variety of English which the majority of the students state to be aiming towards when speaking English. There also seems to be an agreement among the teachers that English exposure in media has led most students to lean towards American English.

The major motivations for students to learn English appear to be for international communication, travelling and living abroad, and for studies and work.

## **5 DISCUSSION**

In this chapter, the results and findings of the current study are analysed and discussed with reference to the research questions. The results of the study are also discussed in relation to previous research and in light of theory. The first section (5.1) discusses the students and teachers' opinions on what it takes to be a competent speaker of English. The following section, 5.2, will account for the students and teachers' beliefs on what influences the students spoken English. Section 5.3 will discuss to what degree any of the methods from chapter 2 is reflected in the classroom. In the last section, 5.4, emerging attitudes to varieties of English will be discussed.

The present thesis does not consider that the one or the other idea or teaching practice is better than another alternative. The results are discussed in light of the English language moving from a native language towards an international language and how this is reflected in the participants' teaching practice and beliefs. It also considers the views about using English for international communication and how the students are prepared for this.

### **5.1 What it Means to Be a Competent Speaker of English**

One of the research questions aimed to investigate the teachers' and students' views about criteria for and importance of being a competent speaker of English. The respondents were also asked about their beliefs of the students' motivations for learning English today. Chapter 2 discusses communication as a crucial element of intercultural competence, which again is the focus of the English subject curriculum in Norway. Today, English acquisition concerns to be able to communicate internationally. This is a major step away from the original native speaker traditions of learning English as a means of communication with the native countries primarily for contact and trade.

As a number of the results in the current study points to, the most important purpose of the learning of English is still communication today. The difference is that the aim of communication has shifted from communicating with the native countries to communicating with the whole world. The participants in the study regard specifically intelligibility highly. As seen in Figure 4.12, the students see 'speaking with a pronunciation that can be easily understood' the most important criterion for being a competent speaker of English. Also, each of the four teachers described to be able to speak English as to be able to communicate and make oneself understood. This correlates to the discussion in chapter 2 of intelligibility, which

in Kennedy's (2009) definition is regarded the most important factor and the safest and most consistent principle within learning spoken language (Jenkins, 2000; 2006; Nilsen & Rugesæter, 2008; Simensen, 2007). Thus, there is an agreement among the teachers, students, and theorists that communication and making oneself understood are key components regarding second language proficiency. The results appear to be similar to the results in Maria Sannes (2013) research. Sannes (2013) found the students to regard communication and intelligibility highly. However, they did not seem to have considered the possibility of valuing L1 transfer and local features as long as what is said is still intelligible. This also relates to the current study. Norwegian English is, for example, described by the students as bad, wrong, not nice and embarrassing. Presumably, these adjectives would not be used as descriptions for an accent they liked and embraced. However, none of the respondents describe Norwegian English as difficult to understand. This indicates that there actually is a focus on *how* things are being said among the students.

Communication is also regarded by all the respondents as the students' main situation where English will be viewed as useful and their primary motivation for becoming a competent speaker of English. As seen in Table 4.4, the students' main motivation for learning English is undoubtedly international communication. Speaking English is seen as necessary for travelling and for future needs. For the future, they see English as useful for education and work. It is interesting to see that a larger number of students mention becoming competent speakers of English for education and work than the amount of students planning to study or live abroad. This indicates that the students see English as a useful tool not only for use in other countries, but that they also see it as useful concerning studies and work in Norway. Many of the students also commented on the use of English as a global language as a reason for learning English. This is interesting to compare to, for example, Teacher A's statement in section 4.1.1.1 of students wanting to see the world and speak with the people they meet, because it appears like the respondents share a common understanding of not intending to use their English skills primarily to communicate with native speakers of English. This suggests that also students see the advantages and use of ELF in a world that is continuously getting smaller as a result of easier availability of travelling and international communication, which has also resulted in a greater amount of non-native speakers of English communicating with other non-native speakers than with native speakers (section 2.1; Crystal, 2003; Seidlhofer, 2006; Simensen, 2007). The results suggest that EIL language motivates the students to learn English. Today, media and digital sources are the dominant sources of information, which is often in English. Students are aware of the usefulness of knowing



English as they find themselves dependent on their English skills in the increasingly digitalised world, where they are using the internet to look for information, communicating, and gaming online. Also, the results imply that the students are motivated to learn English for planning their future in the manner of studies and work. People are moving and travelling more often and over longer distances than ever before, the number of students who spend a term abroad as a voluntary or obligatory part of their education is increasing, and business such as for international cooperation has made fluency in English become a requirement for a number of employees in companies and other workplaces.

## **5.2 Influence on Students' Spoken English**

The study also aimed to investigate what the students' spoken English is influenced by. The students were asked to rate to which degree a set of factors influence their spoken language. The teachers were also asked about their beliefs about what influences their students' spoken English. Additionally, their spoken English were considered to be influenced by their motivations for learning English. Section 2.4 discusses the situation of English in Norway and to what extent Norwegians have been influenced and exposed to English through various channels.

Exposure seems to be the key element regarding influence. It appears to be little doubt that the major exposure of English through media influence spoken English. Crystal (2003) argues that the massive exposure of American English is a result of the American hegemony and film industry, which might explain the heavy exposure of American English in Norwegian television. The American dominance in the TV program from 25.01.16 indicates that American English is the variety of English that is most available in Norway. Simensen (2007) argues that students are heavily exposed and accordingly influenced by varieties of English from early age. Additionally, Norwegians spend approximately nine hours a day on media today (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2015). This constitutes a large part of the day for an average person who sleeps eight hours a night, which leaves only seven hours to spend on other activities. It is therefore reasonable to believe that the exposure of English and amount of time spent on media has an influence on Norwegian students' spoken English. The majority of the participants of the study view media as influencing the students' spoken English to a great extent. As seen in figure 4.7, students view their spoken English as greatly influenced by the TV series and films they watch and the music they listen to. American exposure and influence through media is also reflected in the teachers' beliefs of influence on students'

spoken English. Teacher A and D argue that the massive exposure has led many students to lean towards an American English accent. An interesting element is that also the teachers' spoken English are influenced by exposure. The spoken English of Teacher D was explained to have changed from being influenced by British English to American English with the arrival of satellite TV (see section 4.1.4.1). As Rindal (2010) argues, the connection between that students' spoken English leans towards American English and that it is a result of exposure of the variety through media could be explained by the limited access of American English elsewhere than in media.

The influence of English through media has also proven to be beneficial regarding students' English acquisition. Ibsen's (2004), Sundqvist's (2009), and Sundqvist and Wikström's (2015) studies all suggest that there is a relation between the exposure of English in students' spare time activities and increased English language acquisition concerning such as vocabulary, which has an impact on spoken language proficiency (see 2.4.2.2). Such benefits of influence were also emphasised by Teacher D, who says the exposure and influence outside of school is a blessing because the students gain an extensive vocabulary. However, the teacher underlines that it also has resulted in some challenges regarding the formality of the language of the students because they tend to speak very informally (see section 4.1.2.4). This means that not only is exposure of English viewed as influencing the students' spoken English, it is also regarded as a powerful element in the manner of students' English output by both scholars and teachers.

The results from the study indicate that also school influences spoken English. As seen in figure 4.6, many of the students regard the teacher as influencing their spoken English. Regarding the students' beliefs of what variety of English the teachers speak and prefer, which is presented in figure 4.3 and 4.4, the influence by the teachers will indicate an influence of native varieties of English. The results also present that many of them see their social life as influential, but friends and family as not influencing their spoken English to a major extent. Therefore, their social life will have to be regarded as social interaction with people other than those regarded as family and friends. To regard the members of the students' social life with the exclusion of their family and friends is a diffuse definition of whom it might include. However, it might be regarded as including school, such as both their teachers and fellow students. This would mean that both the students' teachers and their social life at school are influential regarding their spoken English, which is not unthinkable due to the communication and socialisation the students meet in a language classroom. It is also interesting to notice that Teacher A and Teacher B state that their spoken English is

influenced by talking to their students. This indicates that English exposure in the classroom influence the spoken English of all the participants, which includes both the students and the teachers, and that they are influenced both ways by each others' Englishes.

### **5.3 Attitudes towards Varieties of English**

The present study aims to investigate teachers' and students' attitudes towards varieties of English. The results regarding the topic will be discussed in two sections. The first section will consider the participants' attitudes towards varieties of spoken English that appear in the classroom and teaching context. The last section will discuss the teachers' and students' views about English varieties which emerge in other situations that are not directly related to the teaching context. The sections are divided this way in order to see if there are any differences in the participants' views about spoken English in the classroom and spoken English in a more general context.

#### **5.3.1 Attitudes in Class**

The teachers and students were asked about what accents of English the students aim at. The students were also asked about why they aim/do not aim at an accent, and about their favourite English accent. The respondents were also asked about what accents that are accepted and not accepted in the classroom. The teachers and students say that all accents of English are accepted as long as they are understandable. It appears, however, that some accents are more preferred than other accents. The teachers' beliefs correlate with the students' answers about their favourite and target accent, where the majority both favour and aim at American English (see section 4.2.2). However, the teachers do not think it is a conscious choice made by the students to lean towards American English as much as an indirect result of the massive exposure (e.g. section 4.1.5.1; 4.1.5.4). This does not correspond with the students answers. Only nine of the students say they do not aim at any specific English accent, while the remaining 53 say they aim towards a variety of English. This indicates that the majority of the students consciously aim towards a variety of English. Rindal's (2010) results suggest that the language learners' choice of spoken English relied on how they wanted to present themselves to others. This might also be the suggested for the present thesis because many of the students' reasons for aiming at a variety relates to their own preference and opinions about the variety, how easy it is to understand and how they

might be perceived by others (see figure 4.2). Also, it is interesting to compare the results of the students' favourite accents, with their descriptions of various English accents (table 4.3). The most preferred accents are also the accents that have been given the most positive descriptions. Many of the descriptions concern how the speakers might be regarded, such as being polite and formal, speaking with a nice accent, being casual etc. On the other hand, Norwegian English is often described negatively in terms of how one might be regarded, such as having a weird and awkward accent that seem to be found embarrassing, and that it sounds bad and is not regarded 'good enough' English (see 5.3.2). Only three students say they aim at a Norwegian English accent, and it is also regarded the least preferred English accent. Comparing these results might suggest that how they want to present themselves colours their choice of what accent they aim at, which is determined about their opinions of different accents. This indicates that there is an acceptance of every variety of English among the students, but that every accent is not necessarily regarded as desirable.

The teachers' and students' results regarding their beliefs about the degree to which students speak confidently in class do not correlate. The teachers believe many of the students are concerned by what their fellow students think of their spoken English, and many of the teachers claim to have students who do not speak confidently in class (see section 4.1.5). They also think this has mostly to do with the students worrying about what other students may think about their spoken English. As seen in figure 4.9, the students themselves believe that they speak fluently and confidently in class. What is surprising is that of the students who claim to be nervous about speaking in class, most of them worry about the teachers' expectations and the expectations they have about themselves regarding their spoken English. Also, fewer students seem to worry about their fellow students' expectations. This might indicate an understanding among the students that any variety is acceptable for the students' spoken English. Two possible reasons might be implied by the study results. On the one hand, because the students appear to accept English accents that are not native like, it might indicate that the students themselves think about how they sound when they speak (i.e. in the manner of having high expectations of themselves) and how they want to present themselves to others. This can be related to the previous paragraph's discussion and reference to Rindal (2010) and her findings concerning how students want to present themselves. On the other hand, it might have to do with the students' beliefs about what the teacher expects. The students also believed that their teacher prefers the students to speak with a native-like English accent (figure 4.3) and that it would give them better grades (figure 4.8). They also state that they (the students) find it acceptable to speak with an accent that is not native-like.

Comparing the results might imply that the students are nervous about their teacher's expectations because they believe that the teachers assess them on the basis of speaking native-like, which could be found unpleasant and demotivating for the language learners (see section 2.2). Two of the teachers mentioned that the students regard it as a Norwegian tradition to teach British English (see sections 4.1.3.1; 4.1.5.4; 5.4; 2.4.1). Additionally, as seen in 4.1.3.4, Teacher D believed for many years after having teachers and educators who spoke native-like English that British English was the norm to speak for English teachers. It is not unthinkable that students today may have the same beliefs if they have had teachers who speak native-like English themselves. If the students believe there is a tradition of speaking British English, it would be natural for them to think that the teacher should speak and teach the native accent. Therefore, it might be indicated that the students' beliefs about teachers expecting the students' spoken English to be native-like make the students nervous to speak in class.

Regarding attitudes towards English language teaching, it appears like the students see communication as the key. Teacher D says the students view to be able to speak and write in English is seen as the most important features. Sometimes to the point they seem to neglect the knowledge part of the curriculum (see 4.1.2.4). The teacher emphasises the importance of acquiring the knowledge part in the curriculum as well as learning the language part, which is also widely argued for by scholars and documents from education authorities (see chapter 2). Considering that the students see the English subject as having two parts of different importance, namely the 'language and communication part' as more important than the 'knowledge part', may indicate that they do not necessarily see the combination of language, communication and knowledge as necessary for learning English. As discussed in section 2.1 and 2.2, the acquisition of being able to adapt to the situation and being aware of both oneself and others in order to communicate is important. Therefore, it is unfortunate if the students neglect the knowledge part because the different parts are so intertwined. The importance is also emphasised by the teachers in the study. For example, Teacher B emphasises to make the students aware that we view the world through our goggles, and that we have to be aware of other societies to see how the world truly functions (section 4.1.2.2). This indicates that the teachers' practices have a focus on intercultural communication and International English, rather than the native speaker norm.

The most interesting observation was that the students and teachers had many assumptions regarding each others' attitudes about different varieties of English without actually having discussed this with one another. The teachers had many assumptions as to the

students' attitudes towards variants of English, such as their beliefs of the students not consciously aiming towards a variety of English when the majority of the students claim they do. The majority of the students both believe that their teacher preferred British English or American English for the students to use and that their teacher would give them better grades if they talked with a native-like pronunciation, which according to the teachers themselves is not the case. Although, this particular dilemma was brought up and refuted by Teacher B in Class B (see section 4.1.3.2, example [24]). As seen in figure 4.8, the students find it acceptable to have a non-native variety of English. They also emphasise this by disagreeing that it is important to speak with a native-like accent of British English or American English when speaking in class. However, the figure also shows that the majority of the students believe that their teacher gives them better grades if they speak with a native-like English accent. A kind of a paradox is that the majority of the students also find it important that the teacher speaks with a native-like accent. With the accent neutral curriculum (LK06) and the fact that students should be allowed to choose and use the variety of English they want, why should not this also be applicable for the teachers? The topic is also referred to by the teachers. Even though the teachers do not express the necessity of retaining the native speaker norm, the results indicate that they obviously think that other teachers retain this norm (section 4.1.3). For example, as previously mentioned, Teacher D earlier believed there was a norm for teachers to speak British English and later found out this was not the case (section 4.1.3.2). Teacher D believes teachers are allowed to use a neutral international accent of English and refers to the accent neutral curriculum. However, Teacher D also believes that many people would disagree with this (section 4.1.3.4, example [32]). It may seem like the students are experiencing the same and having the same assumptions as Teacher D, which might have been cleared or avoided if this had been talked about in class.

### **5.3.2 Attitudes in General**

The students' descriptions of the varieties 'British English', 'American English', 'Norwegian English', and 'Neutral International English' are presented in table 4.3. When describing the accents, the students were provided a number of suggested adjectives. However, it is important to keep in mind that regardless of them finding their own words or using the ones given as examples, the students were free to choose and use whichever description they found suitable for each variety. This does not mean the characteristics that are only used for one or two varieties cannot be identified in the other varieties by the students. It only suggests that in

this context, they were/were not found most noteworthy for describing the variety. Another thing to keep in mind is that the students were not provided with any auditory samples of the varieties presented. As a result, their responses are only based on the students own perceptions of the different varieties.

The results presented in Table 4.3 show that British English is regarded the most prestigious accent of English. It is most often described by the students as polite, formal, pretty, upper class, posh, funny and fancy. American English is most often described as cool, nice, casual, common and informal. International English is regarded as ok, nice, fine, good, normal, and common. Norwegian English is most often described by the students as weird, clumsy, bad, funny and informal. They also define it as embarrassing, wrong and not good enough. Therefore, this might indicate that there is a tendency among Norwegian students to think of the standard native-varieties of British English and American English as more attractive and accepted varieties of English to speak. The students appear to have very positive attitudes towards native English varieties, whereas Norwegian English seem to be regarded as a variety of spoken English which is not adequate. It seems like British English is regarded quite prestigious by the students, and that it is a variety linked to politeness, higher education, and the upper class. This might be due to the high status that British English have had historically and the presentations that is often reflected in media of being of high status. The close relation to higher education can probably be related to the view of being the traditionally taught variety, which is discussed in section 2.4.1 and 5.4. It is interesting to see that the results from the current study, where the native varieties have been rated more positively and attractive than the non-native variety which has been rated more as an ok but less attractive variety, relates to the descriptions of different varieties given by the students in Sannes' (2013) and Rindals' (2014) studies. It is also interesting to see that the students regards Norwegian English as bad, wrong, not nice and embarrassing. Also, Norwegian sentence intonation and Norwegian English in general were also described as not really acceptable and 'not good' by some of the teachers (section 4.1), which correlate with the findings of the studies of Sannes (2013) and Hansen (2011).

Regarding the teachers' views, Teacher A cannot personally really accept a very Norwegian English accent. These findings are also interesting to compare to the results presented in figure 4.10 concerning varieties of English the students find appropriate to use. The students find American English the most appropriate accent for Norwegians to use, closely followed by neutral International English and British English. The students claim Norwegian English and other 'marked' English accents, which is defined as accents that are

clearly marked by their geographical origin, as the least accepted for Norwegians to use of the mentioned varieties of English. However, none of the respondents describe Norwegian English as difficult to understand, and it is therefore surprisingly it is regarded a less appropriate alternative even though it would be easy for others to understand (see section 5.1). This indicates that there actually is a focus on *how* things are being said both among teachers and students, and that speaking with an English accent that is influenced by their L1 is not *really* approved of. On the other hand, the current study does not investigate at what stage or the degree to which influence by the L1 in spoken English is accepted or found a liability. Therefore, it is hard to say if Norwegian English is disapproved by students or teachers only when hindering intelligibility, which is proven to be highly important, or altogether.

When comparing accents up against each other, the great majority of the students either disagrees or takes the neutral stand of comparing one accent more or less admired than another accent (figure 4.11). This indicates that the students do not find a variety more or less admired than other varieties of English. Even so, the students seem to be influenced by aesthetic factors of the language. The majority of the students admit to getting a positive impression of a person speaking with an accent that they like. However, most of the students also disagrees that they get a negative impression by a speaker with an accent they do not like. This suggests that what is regarded as a nicer accent by the students will reflect their thoughts about an English speaker in a positive direction, which most likely will concern native accents of English based on their preferences of English accents, which are presented in figure 4.5, whereas they also seem to be tolerant and respect speakers with other variations of English.

A slight majority of the students also believe that it is important to have a native-like pronunciation in order be intelligible (figure 4.12). The students believe that speaking with a native accent will make the speaker more easily understood and regarded as a more competent speaker of English. However, at the same time it is regarded a disadvantage because it is more difficult to understand for non-native speakers due to difficult vocabulary and advanced language (table 4.6). Scholars have discussed that non-native English accent can in fact be easier to understand for other non-native speakers, and that the native speaker is not necessarily the most intelligible (Jenkins, 2000; 2006). The students' responses might indicate that the students regard Norwegians as better English speakers compared to other non-native speakers of English. Also Sannes' (2013) found that students regard Norwegian English as less appropriate for Norwegians to use, and concluded that it might have something to do with the fact that students do not want to settle down with an imperfect accent when regarding the native speakers of the language as having an expert level. This relates to the views of three of



the teachers in the present study. The teachers commented on Norwegian English being an accent for the older generations, and something the younger generations feels embarrassed about and have no desire to aim for (section 4.1.2.3; 4.1.4.5; 4.1.5.1). As seen in table 4.2, some of the students state in the questionnaire that they would like to be mistaken for a native speaker, which indicates a personal desire to avoid non-native varieties. In conclusion, it seems like students and some of the teachers think it is better to (or have a desire to) model directly on the source of native variants of English and avoid non-native varieties, even though it is possibly to manage with a perfectly understandable non-native variety of English.

#### **5.4 Approaches Reflected in the Teachers' and Students' Views and in the Classroom**

The third research question aimed to investigate what approaches to language teaching are reflected in the teachers' views and teaching. As seen in section 2.2, there are different approaches for English language teaching depending on the view of the English language, for example, English belonging to the native speakers or as an international language. As the study aims to see if some of the views and approaches from chapter 2 are reflected in the participants' attitudes or practice, the teachers' and students' responses are compared and discussed together in order to see if their views correlate and how this is reflected in the classroom.

In chapter 2, the different approaches have contrasting views regarding learning English as a foreign language. On the one hand, the native speaker norm regards the native speaker varieties, such as British English and American English, as the standards varieties which are encouraged to learn. The language learner is striving towards native speaker language behaviour and learning about the native culture and society (Wells, 1982; Graddol, 2006). On the other hand, EIL emphasises the significance of not comparing non-native speakers of English to the native speakers. It is important to rather appreciate the strengths and uniqueness of the bilingual speaker, recognize that communication in English today involves interaction between non-native speakers of English to a major degree, and that the aim of language learning is to communicate (Aleptkin, 2002; Kirkpatrick, 2006; Smith; 2015). With a globalized world and the status of EIL, native speaker models are outdated because they no longer reflect today's situation and needs regarding communication. Therefore, it should not be necessary for non-native speakers to model after the native speaker or to have their spoken English compared to what degree they have accomplished native-like fluency as long as they are competent speakers of English. As discussed in section 2.2 and 5.1,

intelligibility is considered a crucial element regarding communication and competence in English. Also, other aspects, such as intonation, speech sounds, stress, and rhythm are also important regarding good pronunciation (section 2.2.2.2 and 2.2.3.3; Jenkins, 2006). However, no clear definition has been agreed upon on what makes pronunciation intelligible. A question can be raised on to what degree a non-native accent can be influenced by the L1 without creating problems, such as understanding or defining whether or not it can still be regarded a variety of English or a variety of the L1.

The use of native speaker varieties as aim or reference, seem to be present in the classrooms. There appears to be a theory among some of the teachers that there is a Norwegian tradition to aim for British English, and that this has now moved towards a focus on American English. Teacher A also believes the students feel this way, which might be true (see section 5.3.1). As seen in figure 4.4, the majority of the students believe their teachers prefer them to use native-like varieties of English. Although the theory of having a Norwegian tradition of aiming towards the native varieties matches what has been discussed as earlier tendencies in section 2.4.1, there are no documents or theories that indicate that this should be the tradition in English teaching in Norway today. A reason for this view might be that apparently, all the teachers have been taught English in the traditional way of learning native English with a lot of reading aloud in class and focus on grammar, and also having had teachers who spoke British English (see section 4.1.4.2). It seems like all the teachers have moved away from this approach in their own teaching practice. However, their teaching practice is probably coloured by their own teaching experiences. They all emphasise the focus on communication in their own teaching and on oral activities and communicating as much as possible in the classroom, and do not seem to have any specific methods for teaching spoken English other than this (see section 4.1.4). The teachers do, however, comment on the native speaker varieties as needed in terms of having a reference point for learning the English language (see section 4.1.3). Teacher B emphasises that it might be an asset for teachers to be consistent and have some kind of norm that you try to teach (see section 4.1.3.2.) This is also argued by Nilsen and Rugesæter (2008) and discussed in section 2.2.2.3. The teachers' thoughts of British English or American English as a reference point for teaching and learning might be due to the lack of a universally defined and agreed upon International English standard (see section 2.1 and 2.2). Without a universal standard, it might be seen as a safe and easy option to choose the native model, which matches one of Kirkpatrick's (2006) main arguments for choosing the native models.

It is interesting to notice that the teachers use moderating adjectives when describing how accents sound ‘somewhat Norwegian’, ‘too Norwegian’ or should sound ‘a bit more English’. For example, when asked directly, all the teachers claim to accept all varieties of English that emerges in the classroom. However, Teacher A cannot really accept Norwegian English accents. The students who sound Norwegian are encouraged to sound ‘a bit more like an English speaker person’, whilst students speaking American English have been complimented for their beautiful accent (see section 4.1.5.1). The assumption on modelling on native speaker varieties does not match the theories of International English and relates more closely to the placement of the language learner as an outsider of the target language (see section 2.2). Teacher A seems to strive towards a native speaker norm in class, yet the expectations are modified according to feasibility. American English is argued to be the easiest variety to model on due to the massive exposure through media (see section 5.2). The teacher does not, however, advise the students to aim at this accent. Teacher A says it is unnatural that the students should try to perfect an English accent which they are never exposed to (see section 4.1.5.1). Teacher C indicates that native English accents are regarded as better accents than, for example, Indian English and Pakistani English, which is described as ‘losing something’. Because the teacher thinks these are varieties of English which the students are not exposed to, Teacher C would not teach these accents in class (see section 4.1.3.3). The teacher’s own description of English pronunciation is also defined as ‘not good’ because it does not sound British English or American English. It is interesting to see that the modifying adjectives are used as some sort of protection for the teachers’ opinions, as if they are afraid to say anything wrong. The vague expressions make it very hard to define the degree to which the mentioned varieties of English are regarded acceptable or not. However, the curriculum is also very vague concerning spoken language acquisition. It is stated that the main subject of oral communication “involves developing a vocabulary and using idiomatic structures and grammatical patterns when speaking and conversing. It also covers learning to speak clearly and to use the correct intonation” (LK06 2013:3). The vague expressions in the curriculum might be a reason for why the teachers are being so vague in their descriptions because it is up to them to interpret the wide and diffuse descriptions. It is, however, interesting to note that the teachers emphasises teaching the students the English varieties they are exposed to because they find it the easiest option for the students. This might indicate that the teachers use native English varieties of British English and/or American English or neutral international English varieties as reference points or to form some sort of consistency for pronunciation and spoken English instead of dealing with the vague descriptions given by

LK06 without using them as a target aim or norm. It might therefore be viewed as easier for the students and as a safe option to base the references on English varieties that students are familiar with through heavy exposure, than to base them on non-native varieties which the students are less exposed to, such as Norwegian English, Indian English or Pakistani English.

As discussed in section 5.1, the participants in the study regard intelligibility highly concerning spoken English. Regarding learning English and becoming a competent speaker, students also consider constantly developing your language, considering aspects of formality and politeness, and adapting to the situation and to whom you speak important elements. These elements are also reflected in the Norwegian national curriculum and CEFR, which proves there is a correlation between the views of important features in documents from education authorities and the participating students. In addition, the curriculum (LK06) is accent neutral, indicating that an accent or intonation should not take too much focus regarding English pronunciation. The curriculum focuses on fluency rather than accuracy and native-like English, which emphasises the possibility of being fluent in English without a native-like pronunciation as long as the meaning of what is being communicated is not interfered. This means that in extended speech, non-native speakers of English can be as understandable as native speakers even though there are differences at a word level. With this in mind, combined with that there are no criteria that specifies what is regarded as correct or incorrect pronunciation due to the accent neutral curriculum, it would be possible to avoid assessment on the word level and to rather evaluate students on sufficiency, content, appropriate language to the situation, and on whether or not they are able to communicate their message. In the present study, this appears to be the case with the teachers' way of evaluating the students on their spoken English. It is also reflected in the teachers' practice. The teachers say they do not have any specific criteria regarding pronunciation as long as the students communicate, and that only mistakes that hinder communication are corrected, such as stress or sound qualities that changes or hinder meaning. For example, Teacher D seems to view the cultural aspects of oral English as more important than phonetic or syntactical variation (see section 4.1.2.4). Teacher B comments that the minimum expectation of students' oral proficiency at this level (VG2) is to be able to communicate in a way that the message should be understood no matter where the recipient originates from (see section 4.1.2.2), which relates to the definitions of an intercultural speaker and intercultural competence from section 2.2.3. Overall, the assessment of spoken English considers how the students communicate and may be viewed as a move away from the native speaker norm towards teaching in the means of International English.

## **6 Conclusion**

### **6.1 Summary**

The current study has aimed to investigate, compare and give an overview of teachers' and students' thoughts, experiences, and attitudes concerning spoken varieties of English, the native speaker norm, and alternatives to this norm, such as the intercultural speaker. In this chapter, the main findings and discussion of the current study are summarised with reference to the research questions given in section 1.4.

#### **6.1.1 Views about What it Means to Be a Competent Speaker of English**

The study has shown that the students and teachers find communication to be the central element of English language training, and that intelligibility is the most important feature regarding spoken English. The students' main purposes for becoming competent speakers are for international communication, travelling, studies and work. However, even though native speaker proficiency is not viewed as necessary to be regarded competent, students tend to aim for native English accents.

#### **6.1.2 Influences on Students Spoken English**

The students' spoken English seem to be the most influenced by spare time activities and media. They are also most exposed to American English due to the dominance in media, such as TV series, music etc. According to the teachers, this has caused students to lean towards an American English accent, which confirms with the majority of the students claiming to aim for American English.

The students also seem to be influenced by their teacher, which appears to be the most influential person they are in social contact with on a regular basis. The teachers also claim to be influenced by their students' spoken English, in the manner that they are influenced through talking with them. Therefore, it is possible to say that the spoken English that occurs in the classroom influence the people in it. This again supports the theories that exposure of varieties are influential and that the more you are exposed to a variety, the more you get used to it.

### **6.1.3 The Students Experiences of English Varieties in School**

Most of the students state to have had teachers who spoke native English accents, such as British English, American English, or a mix of the two. Most of the students also seem to believe that their teacher prefers them to speak with a native English accent, although this goes against the theories of International English. The teachers show signs of encouraging native speaker varieties, and it might be this encouragement that has caused the students to believe they prefer native English speech. Even though the teachers appear to believe that many of their students are nervous about speaking in class due to their own expectations of their spoken English skills and what their fellow students might think of them, the students themselves claim to speak confidently in class. The students are found to be more nervous about their beliefs of their teacher's expectations of them than they are about their own expectations or those of their fellow students. The nervousness towards the teacher might be connected to the students' belief that their teacher will grade them better if they speak native-like and/or that they believe their teacher prefers them to speak with a native English accent. The beliefs might cause the students to be anxious because they do not fulfil or meet their teachers' anticipated expectations and preferences.

### **6.1.4 Views and Attitudes towards Varieties of English**

The students seem to have generally positive attitudes towards British English and American English. They also find the accents the most appropriate for Norwegian language users, even though they seem to be aware that people can manage perfectly with speaking non-native varieties of English. Surprisingly, Norwegian English was among the less appropriate accents for Norwegians to use with only other marked accents (accents which are clearly marked by geographical origin, e.g. Russian English, Indian English etc.) being the least appropriate. 55 of the 62 students claim to have a favourite English accent, and the great majority (85%) have native English accents as their favourites. Other than British English and American English, Irish, Australian and Scottish English were mentioned. None of the respondents listed varieties of English from countries belonging to Kachru's outer or expanding circles. Also, 53 students say they aim for an English accent when they speak. The great majority (70%) aim towards native varieties of English. There seem to be an agreement among the teachers to accept all varieties of English that emerge in class and they encourage the students who desire a native accent to do so. Still, some of the teachers indicate that they would like the students

to sound ‘more English’ than various non-native accents. The results also show that the students’ beliefs about the teachers’ expectations of their spoken English does not correlate with what the teachers themselves report. This indicates that the teachers and students would benefit from actually talking about what is expected by the students concerning their spoken English skills.

### **6.1.5 Approaches Reflected in the Teachers Practice**

The teaching practices represented in the study are in line with the perspectives in chapter 2 of EIL and to be able to speak fluently in order to communicate with other speakers of English. The language learner should not be seen as adequate or having poor competence for having a lack of a native-speaker accent. However, as seen in the results and discussed in 2.4.1.2 and 5.4, the lack of standard or target model of English pronunciation has made it the teachers’ responsibility to introduce and discuss the status and variations of English with the students. It also seems like the teachers use the native varieties of British English and American English as references for spoken English in the classroom, but not, however, as a target aim or norm.

## **6.2 Further Research**

Since there is little research done on the target group, it would be interesting to take a closer look into the students’ opinions and preferences. The students seem to have a lot of opinions on the field on desirable accents and what they would like to avoid. Also, the current study is limited by its geographical proximity, which makes it interesting to extend the study to other parts of the country. It would be interesting to see if the students’ opinions about preferences and target aims correlate with their linguistic behaviour and get insight into their knowledge and abilities to distinguish between the varying features concerning varieties of English.

The present study shows that Norwegian English is not found desirable among the students, even though none of them find the accent difficult to understand. The view also appears among some of the teachers. It would therefore be interesting to see at what stage/the degree of which L1 influence on spoken English language is regarded intelligible/unintelligible and acceptable/not acceptable among students and teachers. Additionally, Norway is, as discussed 2.4.2.3, a special case regarding the use of dialects. Since Norwegian students are used to hearing various dialects in the Norwegian society, it

would be interesting to investigate if their acceptance towards various Norwegian dialects has an effect on their acceptance of different varieties of English.

As the current study shows, there are misconceptions of what the students believe the teacher expects from them and vice versa. Many students believe it is important that English teachers speak with a native English accent, and that their teachers give them better grades if they speak with an English accent. The teachers, on the other hand, say that this is not the case. It would have been interesting investigate what kind of different assumptions teachers and student have about each other in the language teaching classroom, and why they have such different assumptions. Therefore, it would be interesting to see whether or not teachers and students discuss these things with each other in class. In the current study, very few of the teachers and students had actually discussed these topics or assumptions in class. It is curious that they have all these assumption about the others' attitudes, without actually having asked them.

### **6.3 Concluding Remarks**

To my knowledge there has been little research considering the focus on International English is understood and carried out in the classroom, especially considering the preferences, attitudes and opinions of the students, who is the target group. This study has provided important insight to the situation of English as an International language is dealt with and understood in the classroom by teachers and students. The students find communication and intelligibility to be the key components of language learning. However, the students find native English varieties the most appropriate to use, the most preferred accents, the accents given the most positive characteristics, and the accents that are chosen as target aims by the students. A non-native variety of English such as Norwegian English with certain non-native features and pronunciation mistakes is regarded awkward and not sufficient. The students also indicate that they have beliefs about the teacher expecting them to speak native-like English which indicates a belief of a native English teaching norm in class. The teachers in the interview reject this claim, although suggesting encouraging native-like fluency for the students who desire it and using native varieties of English as a reference but not as a norm in their teaching. More research on views, interpretations and practice of the subject of English is needed. The contribution of this thesis is therefore to shed light on important aspects of English language teaching and spoken English varieties, using the national curriculum and other relevant theory, and can be seen as a valuable contribution to the field.



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# APPENDICIES

## Appendix A – Approval from NSD

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS  
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES



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Vår dato: 25.11.2015

Vår ref: 45259 / 3 / LB

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

### TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 20.10.2015. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

45259	<i>Teachers' and students' thoughts, attitudes and choices regarding varieties of English and spoken English in the classroom</i>
Behandlingsansvarlig	Universitetet i Bergen, ved institusjonens øverste leder
Daglig ansvarlig	Torill Irene Hestetraet
Student	Amalie Alsaker Hopland

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html>. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 31.12.2016, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Katrine Utaaker Segadal

Lene Christine M. Brandt

Kontaktperson: Lene Christine M. Brandt tlf: 55 58 89 26

*Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.*

*Avdelingskontorene / District Offices*

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TROMSØ: NSD, SVF, Universitetet i Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø. Tel: +47-77 64 43 36. [nsdmsa@svt.uib.no](mailto:nsdmsa@svt.uib.no)



Det fremgår av meldingen at prosjektet allerede er påbegynt ved at utvalget er kontaktet. Personvernombudet finner dette beklagelig og gjør oppmerksom på at prosjekter som omfattes av meldeplikten skal meldes senest 30 dager før oppstart.

Utvalget informeres skriftlig og muntlig om prosjektet og samtykker til deltakelse. Informasjonsskrivene er godt utformet, såfremt siste del av følgende setning i introduksjonen til selve spørreundersøkelsen: "The questions in the questionnaire are about your own opinions and experiences, and your answers will be anonymous" tas bort, da det jo behandles personopplysninger i forbindelse med undersøkelsen. Det betyr at delsetningen (...), "and your answers will be anonymous" slettes, slik at setningen bare lyder "The questions in the questionnaire are about your own opinions and experiences". Videre gjør vi oppmerksom på at årstallet for prosjektslutt må korrigeres til utgangen av 2016 i informasjonsskrivet til lærerne.

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at forsker etterfølger Universitetet i Bergen sine interne rutiner for datasikkerhet. Dersom personopplysninger skal lagres på privat pc/mobile enheter, bør opplysningene krypteres tilstrekkelig.

Analyzer Software Norge AS er databehandler for prosjektet. Universitetet i Bergen skal inngå skriftlig avtale med Analyzer Software Norge AS om hvordan personopplysninger skal behandles, jf. personopplysningsloven § 15. For råd om hva databehandleravtalen bør inneholde, se Datatilsynets veileder: <http://www.datatilsynet.no/Sikkerhet-internkontroll/Databehandleravtale/>.

Forventet prosjektslutt er 31.12.2016. Ifølge prosjektmeldingen skal innsamlede opplysninger da anonymiseres. Anonymisering innebærer å bearbeide datamaterialet slik at ingen enkeltpersoner kan gjenkjennes. Det gjøres ved å:

- slette direkte personopplysninger (som navn/koblingsnøkkel)
- slette/omskrive indirekte personopplysninger (identifiserende sammenstilling av bakgrunnsopplysninger som f.eks. bosted/arbeidssted, alder og kjønn)
- slette digitale lydopptak

Vi gjør oppmerksom på at også databehandler (Analyzer Software Norge AS) må slette personopplysninger tilknyttet prosjektet i sine systemer. Dette inkluderer eventuelle logger og koblinger mellom IP-/epostadresser og besvarelser.



## Appendix B – Written Information to the Principals

### Førespurnad om å delta i undersøkingar i høve masteroppgåve

Hei,

Eg er student ved Integreert lektorutdanning med master i engelsk ved Universitet i Bergen og held for tida på med den avsluttande masteroppgåva mi. I høve masteroppgåva har eg behov for gjennomføring av ei studie og vil gjerne gjennomføre denne hos dykk. Oppgåva handlar om engelsk bruk i klasserommet ved VGS i Noreg. Eg er interessert i å finne ut om elevane sitt forhold til engelskuttale i klasserommet gjennom ei spørjeundersøking. I tillegg til dette vil eg gjennomføre eit kort intervju med lærar om tema. Målgruppa for studien er elevar som følgjer engelsk undervisning ved VGS, VG2 Internasjonal Engelsk.

Eg har lagt opp undersøkinga og intervju til at dei ikkje treng eller krev forstyrringar, brot eller endringar i undervisninga. Spørjeundersøkinga tenkast å ville ta ca 15-30 minutt og kan gjennomførast både i og utanfor klasserommet og vil dermed ikkje ha noko krav om gjennomføring i felles undervisning, sjølv om det frå mi side kunne vere ønskeleg med tanke på å sikre at flest mulig av elevane tar seg tida til å svare på denne. Intervjuet vil bli gjort i samtykke med lærar og kan takast utanom undervisningstid.

Prosjektet er godkjent av NSD (Personvernombudet), og alle innsamla data vil vere anonyme i sjølve oppgåva. Eg vil gjerne prøve å få gjennomført studien i løpet av hausten 2015, men om dette ikkje skulle la seg gjere kan eg også strekke meg til gjennomføring i januar - tidleg februar 2016.

Håpar på positivt svar og ser fram til eit hyggeleg samarbeid.

Med vennleg helsing  
Amalie Alsaker Hopland

Mobil: 913 42 218  
E-post: [Amalie.Hopland@student.uib.no](mailto:Amalie.Hopland@student.uib.no)

## Appendix C - Written Information to the Questionnaire Participants

### Førespurnad om å delta i elevundersøking i forbindelse med masteroppgåve

Eg er student ved Integreert lektorutdanning med master i engelsk ved Universitet i Bergen og held for tida på med den avsluttande masteroppgåva mi. Oppgåva handlar om munnleg engelsk i klasserommet ved VGS i Noreg.

Eg er interessert i å finne ut om elevane sitt forhold til engelske variasjonar og uttale i klasserommet gjennom ei elektronisk spørjeundersøking. Målgruppa i undersøkinga er elever som følgjer engelsk undervisning ved VG2 Internasjonal engelsk.

Sjølv om undersøkinga gjennomførast når klassa er samla svarar elevane på undersøkinga enkeltvis, og skal ikkje måtte dele svara sine med resten av klassa. Undersøkinga tar ei stad mellom 15-30 minutt å gjennomføre. Håpar dykk har anledning til å svare på undersøkinga snarast mulig, helst innan utgangen av februar 2016.

Det er frivillig å delta og opplysningane som hentast inn behandlast konfidensielt. Ved å gjennomføre samtykker elevane til deltaking i undersøkinga. Den tekniske gjennomføringa av spørjeskjemaet blir gjort av Analyzer, og forskar får utlevert data frå Analyzer utan tilknytning til e-post/IP-adresse. Opplysningane anonymiserast når prosjektet er ferdigstilt, innan utgangen av 2016.

Om det skulle vere spørsmål kring undersøkinga kan eg kontaktast på 913 42 218, eller sende ein e-post til [Amalie.Hopland@student.uib.no](mailto:Amalie.Hopland@student.uib.no). Du kan også kontakte vegledaren min Sigrid Ørevik ved institutt for framandspråk på tlf 55 58 23 62, eller sende e-post til [Sigrid.Orevik@uib.no](mailto:Sigrid.Orevik@uib.no)

Studia er meld til Personvernombundet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitskapelig datatjeneste (NSD).

Vennleg helsing

Amalie Alsaker Hopland

## Appendix D – Questionnaire

Student Questionnaire

Powered by Enalyzer

### Spoken English in the language teaching classroom

Dear student,

The topic of this questionnaire is spoken English in the language learning classroom, and consists of questions concerning both yourself and your teacher.

In the questionnaire, 'English accent' will be used as a term to describe the spoken English accent that a person has, irrespective of the country that person is born in or come from.

The questionnaire should take between 10 - 15 minutes to complete. Filling in the questionnaire is voluntary, but your contribution would be highly appreciated. The questions in the questionnaire are about your own opinions and experiences, and your answers will be anonymous. The collected data will be processed confidentially and will be completely anonymised in publications.

Thank you very much for taking the time to answer this questionnaire.

#### 1. These questions concern your English background.

	No	Yes, but not in a country where I have to speak English	Yes, in a country where I have to use English as a lingua franca (fremmedspråk)	Yes, in a country where English is the mother tongue
Have you ever lived abroad?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you plan to live abroad?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have family abroad?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you plan to study abroad?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**The following statements have to do with your preference and experiences of English accents. Please complete the sentences by ticking the option that best reflects your view.**

**2. My favourite accent of English is...**

- British English
  - American English
  - Norwegian English, English that reveals that you are from Norway
  - “Neutral” International English (accent that cannot be linked to a specific country)
  - I do not have any preference
  - Other English accent (e.g. Australian English, Scottish English, Indian English, Russian English, etc.). Please specify which accent(s).
- 

**3. My present English teacher speaks the following accent...**

- British English
- American English
- Norwegian English, English that reveals that you are from Norway
- “Neutral” International English (accent that cannot be linked to a specific country)
- I do not know
- Other English accent (e.g. Australian English, Scottish English,, Indian English, Russian English, etc.). Please specify which accent(s).

**4. In my experience, my present teacher prefers that I use the accent of...**

- British English
  - American English
  - Norwegian English, English that reveals that you are from Norway
  - “Neutral” International English (accent that cannot be linked to a specific country)
  - There are no preferences, as they are all seen as equal
  - Other English accent (e.g. Australian English, Scottish English, Indian English, Russian English, etc.). Please specify which accent(s).
- 

**5. My previous teacher(s) of English used the accent(s) of... (You may choose several alternatives)**

- British English
  - American English
  - Norwegian English
  - “Neutral” International English (accent that cannot be linked to a specific country)
  - I do not know
  - Other English accent (e.g. Australian English, Scottish English, Indian English, Russian English, etc.). Please specify which accent(s).
-

**6. In my experience, my previous teachers preferred that I used the accent(s) of...  
(You may choose several alternatives)**

- British English
- American English
- Norwegian English, English that reveals that you are from Norway
- “Neutral” International English (accent that cannot be linked to a specific country)
- There were no preferences, as they were all seen as equal
- Other English accent (e.g. Australian English, Scottish English, Indian English, Russian English, etc.). Please specify which accent(s).

-----

**7. What English accent do you aim at speaking?**

- British English
- American English
- Norwegian English, English that reveals that you are from Norway
- “Neutral” International English (accent that cannot be linked to a specific country)
- I do not aim at any specific accent
- Other English accent (e.g. Australian English, Scottish English, Indian English, Russian English, etc.). Please specify which accent(s).

-----

**8. Depending on your previous answer:  
Why do you aim at this accent? / Why do you not aim at an accent?**

-----

**Finish the statements below by ticking the one option that best reflects your view for each alternative.**

**9. My English accent is greatly influenced by...**

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I agree	I strongly agree
1 The TV series and films I watch	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 The video and computer games that I play	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 The music that I listen to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 My teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 My family at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 My family abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 My friends at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 My friends abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 My social life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 My hobbies (e.g. sports, music, theatre, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11 Visits abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 That I have lived abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**10. Below are a number of statements regarding your opinion of English accents. Please tick the one option that best reflects your view for each statement.**

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I agree	I strongly agree
Pronunciation with a native-like accent is important to make oneself understood in English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A person with an accent that I like gives me a positive impression.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A person with an accent that I do not like gives me a negative impression.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I believe it is important that the teacher speaks with a native-like accent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When speaking in class, I believe that it is important to have a native-like accent of British English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When speaking in class, I believe that it is important to have a native-like accent of American English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When speaking in class, I find it acceptable to have an accent of English that is not native-like.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When speaking in class (e.g. answering questions, discussing, presenting, etc.), I believe that my teacher gives me better grades if I have a native-like accent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**11. Below are a number of statements regarding your opinion of English accents. Please tick the one option that best reflects your view for each statement.**

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	I agree	I strongly agree
I feel confident when speaking English in class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking English in class makes me nervous because of my own thoughts of not speaking English well enough.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking English in class makes me nervous because I worry about how other students may react to and think of my English accent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking English in class makes me nervous because I worry about my teacher's expectations of my English accent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is awkward to talk to my classmates in English during class because I would rather talk to them in Norwegian.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I speak more freely if I speak English without a native-like accent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I speak more freely if I speak English with a native-like accent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think about grammar when speaking English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I believe I speak English fluently.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I consistently speak English during class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I speak more English than Norwegian during class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I speak more Norwegian than English during class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Finish the statement below by ticking the one option that best reflects your view for each alternative.**

**12. I think it is appropriate for Norwegian speakers of English to use the accent of...**

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	Neither agree, nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree
British English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
American English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Norwegian English, English that reveals that you are from Norway.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“Neutral” International English, accent that cannot be linked to a specific country	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other native English accents (e.g. Australian English, Scottish English etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other "marked" English accents (accent that is clearly marked by geographical origin, e.g. Russian English, Indian English, French English etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Complete the following statements by giving a short description of how you would describe each of the English accents using your own adjectives (e.g. polite, nice, informal, bad, funny, weird, awesome, etc.).**

**13. British English appears to me as...**

-----

**14. American English appears to me as ...**

-----

**15. Norwegian English appears to me as...**

-----

**16. Neutral International English appears to me as...**

-----

**English accents: Below are a number of statements. Please finish the sentence by ticking the one option that best reflects your view for each statement.**

**17. I find...**

	I strongly disagree	I disagree	Neither agree, nor disagree	I agree	I strongly agree
British English to be less admired than American English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
British English to be less admired than "neutral" English (accent that cannot be located geographically).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
British English to be less admired than "marked" English (accent that is clearly marked by geographical origin, e.g. Norwegian English, Russian English, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
American English to be less admired than "neutral" English (accent that cannot be located geographically).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
American English to be less admired than "marked" English (accent that is clearly marked by geographical origin, e.g. Norwegian English, Russian English, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“Neutral” English (accent that cannot be located geographically) to be less admired than "marked" English (accent that is clearly marked by geographical origin, e.g. Norwegian English, Russian English, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**The following questions deal with your personal motivation for and opinions of English learning. Please complete the sentences and answer the questions as best you can.**

**18. The reason(s) that I want to be a competent speaker of English is...**

-----  
 -----

**19. In your opinion, how important are the following criteria in order to be a competent speaker of English? Please tick the box that best reflects your view.**

	Not important	Less important	Important	Very important
To speak with a native-like accent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To understand non-native English accents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To have a rich and nuanced vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To speak with grammatical accuracy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To speak with a pronunciation that can be easily understood	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To be aware of and understand other cultures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To use a suitable degree of formality and politeness based on to whom you speak	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To understand nonverbal communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To use suitable language in different social situations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To use suitable language in different professional situations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To use suitable language in different intercultural situations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To be able to constantly develop your language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To speak fluently (to communicate with ease)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
To be able to adjust for audience and purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any other important criteria that you believe are missing? -----

**20. What advantages and/or disadvantages do you see with speaking with a native-like pronunciation?**

-----  
 -----

## **Appendix E – Written Information to the Interviewees**

### **Førespurnad om å delta i intervju i forbindelse med masteroppgåve**

Eg er student ved Integreert lektorutdanning med master i engelsk ved Universitetet i Bergen og held for tida på med den avsluttande masteroppgåva mi. Oppgåva handlar om engelske variasjonar og uttalevariantar av engelsk i engelskundervisinga ved VG2 Internasjonal Engelsk i Noreg. Eg er interessert i å finne ut om kva tankar engelsklærarar har om dette temaet gjennom intervju. Intervjua vil vare om lag ein time, og spørsmåla omhandlar egne erfaringar frå: utdanning og arbeidskvardag, haldningar til ulike uttalevariantar av engelsk i undervising og vurdering, elevar etc.

Opplysingane vil bli behandla konfidensielt, og ingen enkeltpersonar vil kunne gjenkjennast i den ferdige oppgåva. Opplysingane anonymiserast og opptaka frå intervjuet vil bli sletta når oppgåva er ferdig, innan utgangen av 2016.

Det er frivillig å vere med og du vil ha muligheita til å trekke deg kva tid som helst undervegs, utan å gi nokon grunn for dette. Dersom du trekk deg, vil alle opplysningar om deg bli anonymisert.

Dersom du kunne tenke deg å vere med på eit intervju, er det fint om du skriv under på den vedlagte samtykkeerklæringa og sender den til meg.

Om det skulle vere spørsmål kring undersøkinga kan eg kontaktast på 913 42 218, eller sende ein e-post til [Amalie.Hopland@student.uib.no](mailto:Amalie.Hopland@student.uib.no). Du kan også kontakte vegledaren min Torill Irene Hestetreet ved institutt for framandspråk på telefonnummer 55 58 23 83, eller sende e-post til [Torill.Hestetreet@uib.no](mailto:Torill.Hestetreet@uib.no).

Studia er meld til Personvernombundet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitskapelig datatjeneste (NSD).

Vennleg helsing

Amalie Alsaker Hopland

## **Samtykke til deltaking i undersøkinga**

Eg har motteke informasjon om studia, og er villig til å delta.

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(Signert av prosjektdeltakar, dato)

## **Appendix F – Interview Guide**

### **Interview Guide**

#### ***Background***

1. For how long have you been teaching English?
2. What are your qualifications in teaching English?
3. Why did you become an English teacher?
4. How were you taught spoken English?

#### ***Teaching***

1. In your opinion, what does it involve to be able to speak English?
2. How do you teach spoken English?
3. In your opinion, what are the students' personal motivations for learning to speak English in school today?

#### ***Communicative competence***

1. How do you guide the students on their spoken English?
2. How do you understand the concept “communicative competence”?
  - What are your thoughts around this concept?
  - What do you think are your students' thoughts around this concept?
3. The students should be able to “use language appropriate to the situation in social, professional and intercultural context” (LK06)
  - How do you understand this?
  - How do you teach this?
4. What are your views on the concept “the intercultural speaker”?  
*(explanation: To be aware of one's own and other cultures in order to communicate successfully.)*
5. What types of communicative competence do your students need, in your view?

### ***The native speaker norm***

*(Explanation: the tradition of modelling our speech on native speaker varieties)*

1. What are your views about the “native speaker norm”?
  - What do you think are your students’ views about this?
2. What are your views on the “native speaker norm” when teaching?
3. Do we need the “native speaker norm”?

### ***Pronunciation***

1. How would you describe your own English pronunciation?
2. How were you taught pronunciation?
3. How do you teach English pronunciation?
4. How do you assess pronunciation?
5. What criteria do you use when assessing?
6. What accents of English do your students use?
7. What varieties of English do you encourage your students to use?
  - What speech variety/varieties do you accept/not accept?

### ***Students’ choice of English accents***

1. What factors do you think influence your students in their choice of variety of English pronunciation?
  - What do you think they are most influenced by?
2. Are speech norms such as a non native variety an option for you and your students?
3. To what extent do you think the students believe that they can choose and use whichever variety of English in class?
4. To what extent do your pupils speak confidently in class?

*(Notes: Thoughts of their own expectations, their fellow students’ expectations, teacher’s expectations)*



## Appendix G – Transcribed Interviews

### Interview Teacher A

I: First I would like to ask you some questions about your educational background. For how long have you been teaching English?

R: I've been teaching English for about ten years now. Before that, I substituted a little bit in elementary school, but that doesn't really count, I think, in this context. So here, I've been teaching English for about ten years. I started off in the vocational programs, yrkesfag, and then I have taught first year of studiespes. And now, this is my first year teaching International English.

I: So what are your qualifications in teaching English?

R: I have the old degree called cand.mag., where I had ninety study points, which they're called now, in English. So the old fashioned "mellomfag".

I: And why did you become a teacher? And then, an English teacher?

R: Well, I chose to study English because I've always liked English very much. It was one of my in depth subjects when I went to school here, upper secondary school. First I was going to work in the travelling industry, hotel/travel agent, something like that. Then I moved back to ((place name)) in 2002, and I started substituting a little bit in the schools, and I decided that working as a teacher was kind of nice. But, I wanted to.. I'm not qualified as an elementary school teacher, so I wanted to get a job either in the lower secondary, ungdomskulen, or upper secondary.. So I did PPU, now the XXX, yeah.. To become a teacher, PED, praktisk pedagogisk pedagogikk.. And, yeah, then I started off here, substituting in the start and then gradually having more and more lessons, and after a couple of years I was hired permanently. And, yeah.. So, that's my background. I didn't have a set objective to become an English teacher @. But I've always been very fond of English, and I always read a lot of literature in English in my spare time and so on.. So, since I had ninety points in English, it was natural to become an English teacher. Yeah..

I: And how were you taught spoken English, when you went to school yourself?

R: When I went to school, we regarded British English as the best thing, or the best accent to have. That was regarded most highly. American was a bit inferior. When I went to school, we hadn't really heard about International English. You were supposed to try to practice either British or an American accent.. To get a good.. Or to be considered proficient in oral or spoken English. So, we considered British best, and then American as an alternative, and tried to avoid speaking with a Norwegian accent. We wanted to speak either with a British or an American accent when I went to school, yeah.

I: And so to the teaching part.. In your opinion, what does it involve to be able to speak English?

R: Well, I guess, first of all you need to know some words, you need to be able to find the words you need. And if you are not able to find one word, you have to.. If you are going to speak English you have to find *other* words you can substitute the word you are looking for with.. And of course you have to put them together in some kind of functional sentence structure, and preferably an English sentence structure and not a Norwegian sentence structure. And I think you should be able to pronounce the words correctly. And also, it is nice if you have a sentence intonation which sounds a bit English, in a way, and at least not a Norwegian. Of course you can have an accent. But, if you sound very Norwegian you should practice, I think, to try to speak with a bit more English/American/British-like sentence intonation, if you understand what I mean? If you're able to continue speaking, if you don't have to stop, if you're not completely stopped, then you're able speaking English, I think, yeah.. That is kind of what I expect from my students and myself @

I: So how do you teach spoken English to students?

R: Well, I haven't really taught explicitly how, or something about, spoken English. But, I try to get the students involved in many kinds of activities where they have to speak in groups or in the classroom in general. So, we do games, competitions, we discuss tasks from the textbook or discuss texts, and so on, in groups, smaller groups, in the classroom. And I try to make them answer me in English, try to make them use English all the time in English classes, even though they feel a bit awkward. And they would like to ask me in Norwegian, but I try to say "can you please try in English first, if you are able to? Because I know you feel awkward, but if you are going to be a fluent speaker, you have to try. So this is the opportunity you have. We have five lessons a week, so try!" But of course, sometimes they slip into Norwegian. And sometimes I slip into Norwegian as well when answering. When I hear something, and answers, and then I look at them and "ups, I spoke Norwegian" @. But, activities, discussion, competitions, activities, and encouraging them to try to use English.. And explaining why, because this is the chance they have to practice, so.. Yeah..

I: In your opinion, what are the students' personal motivations for learning to speak English in school today?

R: I think they want to travel. They want to be able to speak with people they meet. And they want to study, and they have realised that in all kinds of subjects today, in higher education, they will need English. Maybe that's more reading, but it's.. Yeah.. They want to see the world, they want to go abroad, some of them want to study abroad, so they.. That is why I think.. Their main reason why they want to learn to speak English.

(Short break trying to fix a door that was making noise because of the wind)

I: So they want to learn English for education and travelling?

R: I think so. Yeah, I think they want to, much more than my generation, they want to travel, and go abroad, see the world. Either if it's in their holiday or half year, just travelling or studies abroad. They know they have to speak English in their future.

I: And about communicative competence, is that a term that you're familiar with?

R: Yes.

I: How do you guide your students in their spoken English?

R: Hmm, good question. Well, first of all I try to, at least in the beginning of a new school year, I just want them to speak as much as possible.. If I walk from group to group and I hear them using the word very mistakenly or in a very wrong way, I just repeat the word the way that it's supposed to be said. Or if I hear that they're stuck in a sentence, I try to help them along. And then of course we have presentations, and there are situations where they are evaluated, and then they get feedback on what was positive and what was negative. I try to note down some of the words they maybe say in a wrong way or try to comment on their sentence structure or intonation, for example. And I try to tell them that "you do combine your words in a very Norwegian way, can you try to.. Can you read through and think about how an English person or English speaking person would say this? Be aware that you have a tendency to use, for example, Norwegian sentence structures", so things like that.. Yeah, we don't read out loud in the classroom, I don't correct them or teach explicitly how to speak in English. In.. Whenever, but it is there in the classroom. I don't do that.. I think it is just.. Just need to use it. They will hear themselves if they make mistakes or not, I think.. Yeah.. So, it is just.. I try to just give them as many chances as possible to speak in English.. Yeah.. That's.. Yeah..

I: And how do you understand the concept 'communicative competence'?

R: Well, it is.. It's about, of course your language, but of course you need to be aware of the setting, the context, cultural differences and so on, and that we learn about that. So, we study that and try to think about and reflect on how we might miscommunicate in a situation because of, for example, cultural differences. So that's something they study in International English. Little bit, maybe, in the first year and the obligatory English as well. But that's a large part of the curriculum in International English. So, I haven't used the concept communicative competence with the students, but they are aware that communication involves more than just words and sentences.. And yeah, the way you pronounce them, yeah. They are aware that there's something else involved, yeah.

I: About your personal thoughts about the concept, do you think of it as important?

R: Yeah, I think of it as very important. To try to make the students aware that you can't say things the way you would in Norway wherever you are in the rest of the world. You have to reflect on who are you communicating with and what's the purpose of this communication. What's the level of formality, for example, is this a formal situation or is

this the friendly lecturer situation?.. Things like that.. I think communicative competence is very important, yeah..

- I: I looked into the competence aims, and I found that the students should be able to “use language appropriate to the situation in social, professional and intercultural contexts”. How do you understand this?
- R: Mmm.. Well.. Much as I’ve said, really. That they have to be aware that you have different situations, different contexts.. Your chat-language is different from your essay language, or your job application language, yeah.. And speaking to a.. Somebody older than you.. In an Asian country it’s different speaking to your peers than in Norway, for instance. I interpret that’s objective like that.
- I: And how do you teach this in the classroom?
- R: It’s mainly reading about it, factual texts, and short stories, for example, that illustrate the point. We haven’t done.. We haven’t acted out any situations or anything like that, but it’s studying the subject as part of the curriculum as subject matter. Reading about it and trying to understand why it’s like this and.. Try to look at examples of how you can offend people, for example. And look at examples of, or discuss, what would be the suitable approach in this situation, and writing in different genres, things like that..
- I: What are your views on the concept ‘intercultural speaker’, are you familiar with this?
- R: Yeah, intercultural communication. So an intercultural speaker.. Well, that’s what we all are, isn’t it? It is based on whether you’re speaking to people of various/different cultures, using your language with all kinds of cultures/people with all kinds of backgrounds from all kinds of countries, and in different settings. Like, in business settings, in lecture settings, yeah.. A person who can manage that, I guess, would be an intercultural speaker @.
- I: Yeah, it would @. So, what types of communicative competence do your students need, in your view?
- R: Well, they need basic skills, of course. If they don’t have the basic skills like finding words, having a vocabulary, or having the ability to combine the words into a sentence, which is understandable, they will be stuck, so it’s basic skills. But, as I said, they need to know that communication is also body language, culture, and all kinds of things which I’ve already mentioned. So they need those skills.
- I: Yeah, of course, they do. The ‘native speaker norm’, do you understand what I mean by this?
- R: Native speaker norm?
- I: Yeah, the tradition of modelling our speech to native speaker varieties, as British and American, for example. What are your views about the native speaker norm, this aiming towards native variations?

R: Within my students, you think? Or?

I: Yeah, your students and in general, basically..

R: You mean if I teach them to model..? Or?

I: Yeah, for example, and about your personal views about the native speaker norm.

R: Yeah, I'm not sure if I quite understand what you mean, but..

I: It's about this tradition of aiming towards, for example, British and American, Australian, Canadian.. In order to be as native-like as possible.

R: Yeah, okay.. I don't think that's.. I don't think, in Norwegian schools, we are as preoccupied with that as we used to be. I think we are opened up to more varieties of English. I think we accept more, for example, if we had someone from the Caribbean or South Africa, we wouldn't demand of that student to model his spoken English on British, for example. I think we've opened up for other variants, for the concept of International English varieties more than twenty years ago, for example. So, I wouldn't.. But of course, the easiest way for my students to speak in a way which make them sound a bit professional or fluent in English is to model on American, I would guess. Because, they are influenced by American English through TV, films, things like that. But I don't have a set objective for my class this year that they should all speak, for example, British English or American English. They must find.. Somebody has lived a year abroad in, for example, India.. I think I must accept that he or she has a bit of an Indian accent, for example, without deducting any points or things from the close of that, but.. It is important that it's.. The rest of the students are also able to understand the person. Ehm.. So, speaking like a complete Pidgin English, which would be difficult to accept because the rest of the class wouldn't understand anything and maybe *I* wouldn't understand everything as well, so.. But, my view is that we are not as strict anymore upon, or, when it comes to that students *have* to model their language from either British or American English, like it was twenty years ago. I think we are more open.. Is that the answer you wanted or..? @

I: I'm not looking for anything@.

R: Is that answering your question? @

I: Yes @ it is.

R: Okay @

I: And how do you think your student views are around this concept?

R: I think maybe my students believe that they should speak British or American English. Not because I've told them so this year, but it is kind of a Norwegian tradition that we should model on either British or American. But I don't say that to them when I give them feedback. But I say that if they sound too Norwegian, I comment on it. If they use a

Norwegian sentence structure, for example, or a very Norwegian intonation. So, if they basically speak Norwegian with English words, I comment on that. But I haven't commented.. Well, I have a couple of students who have a very lovely American accent and I have said that "you have a very nice American accent, have you lived there?". So of course they might think that.. The other students might think that it's a goal for them to also have an American accent. I don't know, really. It's not a discussion we've had in the classroom. Maybe we should have @. But, we haven't discussed it yet.. But I think because the Norwegian tradition *is* to consider British or American, that's the perfect Englishes, the students maybe think so too.. But the most important thing is that they make themselves understood and that they don't sound completely Norwegian. I think that's the most important thing, for me, when evaluating them.

I: So do you think we need the native speaker norm, to a major or minor degree?

R: Well, I guess if everything got out of hand, it could be, in the end, very difficult to understand each other. But, I do think, like, our textbook and literature, and studies say that you have this international variety with this anonymous straight forward English which everybody can achieve. I think maybe that's the norm today, really. I don't think that people, for example, in business are afraid to speak just because they can't speak with a British or an American English. I think maybe us academics are more preoccupied with the accent than people in business, for example. So, yeah.. I don't really know@. But I think the more neutral international English is gradually taking over.

I: And then towards pronunciation. How would you describe your own English pronunciation?

R: Well, it used to be.. I used to model mine on British English, but now I.. It's more a mixture and I can hear American accent as well when I speak. I don't know, it's become 'messed up'@. Because for many years I didn't speak very much English, and I didn't teach very much in English in the beginning, or I taught elementary school or the vocational courses where I couldn't say very much in English. I had to.. I noticed that I had to adjust my vocabulary, for example, if I speak to a class where I know the students have little or no competence in English. I kind of used a very basic language, which I wouldn't necessarily use if I spoke to a native English speaker. So my English has become influenced by that. So now, it's a strange mix of international, British and I don't really have.. But, I have some relatives in England, and when I speak to them I can hear that my accent changes into more of a British accent. But with the students I think it's more like an American/international mixture, really @. And sometimes you've been talking all day in Norwegian, teaching classes, and then when you suddenly switch you can hear yourself speaking terribly @. You know, blah.. The words become muddled and, yeah @. Yeah.. So yeah, it has changed over time.

I: You mentioned that you were taught pronunciation towards a British accent, were there any specific methods you remember from..?

- R: When I went to school, we practiced. Those of us, who were very interested in English, when we read our homework, we often read it out loud to ourselves and we copied a British accent.. We tried to.. And I know I have looked up words in the dictionary to find out *how* are you supposed to pronounce this, and yeah.. We read much more out loud in the classroom as well. So when we had homework, a text we were going to read, we tried to perfect a British accent, or at least *I* did, and some of my friends @.
- I: How do you teach pronunciation yourself?
- R: I'm not quite sure if I teach it enough. Students are very sensitive, today.. Students are sensitive to criticism, so I think I'm a bit afraid to criticise pronunciation, and especially because more varieties of English has become, or have become, acceptable. It's difficult to criticise pronunciation. But, I do correct pronunciation on the word level, because otherwise people won't understand them if they pronounce words in the wrong way. And as I've said, if it sounds very Norwegian I try to also point that out, but I feel it's hard to teach explicitly pronunciation. Of course, we listen to texts from all over the world, and they read them with different accents, but I can't really say that I teach pronunciation in my classes. It's more important opening up for them to speak, to not be afraid to speak. I just want them to speak English and then I think pronunciation must come later, or they must work on it themselves, really.. I'm afraid they're going to stay silent if I criticise pronunciation. Yeah..
- I: So how do you assess pronunciation?
- R: It's mostly.. If there are mistakes on the word level and sentence structure level, where that got anything to do with pronunciation, really. But yeah, the same as I've said, on the word level and on the Norwegian sentence intonation level, really. That's why I usually comment on, and not very much else, really. Sometimes I have to explain to students that verbs in the past tense, for example, some students consistently say the -ed ending, you can hear the -ed. I 'work-ed', for example. Yeah but, some students need to.. You need to explain to them that you are not supposed to say the -ed in those kinds of words. But, mostly students have read or have learnt, for example, the 'th'-sound, and things like that earlier on.. So, yeah..
- I: Is it mainly through presentations or group conversations, or..?
- R: My assessment? Yeah.. Presentations, Power Point presentations, or shorter mini/miniature presentations, more spontaneously organised.. And group conversations in class where I just walk around and try to listen to as many as possible. And now a more formal group conversation ((fagsamtale)), where I'm going to mainly observe and listen to what they say and try to form an opinion on their spoken English, yeah..
- I: And they're going to do the talking?
- R: Yeah. They're going to do most of the talking. My plan is to only help them along if they're stuck. Yeah.. Of course, asking the class also questions, when they are all together

and try to make sure that as many as possible of them answer the questions. Just the standard, old fashioned things like that, really @.

I: So, what types of criteria do you use when assessing pronunciation?

R: Well I don't have many criteria for pronunciation *alone*. I usually have a.. Maybe a point which I've called something like language, and under 'language' I list, for example, pronunciation of words. And then also sentence structures and intonation. So, I don't really evaluate pronunciation alone, very much. It's more of the.. The overall impression of their communicative skills, so.. If I point something out, it's mostly words which are pronounced in the wrong way. And sometime, for example, the -ed ending, or if I hear a student consistently saying something in the wrong way, and yeah.. But it.. Pronunciation itself does not play a huge part when I evaluate them. No.. Because there are many other things to, you also have to consider also what they are talking about, if they show some knowledge of that, if they have learnt something.

I: What type of English accents would you say that your students use?

R: I have a few students with a clear American accent. I don't have any with a very British accent. Most of them have a sort of a neutral, or a mixed accent, rally.. Maybe it's little bit more of an American swung @ in-between and then, yeah.. Neutral, mostly. And some of them do still have a little bit Norwegian sounding accent. So yeah..

I: Are there any accents that you do not accept?

R: No, not really. Yeah, of course, there was one student with a bit of a foreign accent ((European country)), I accept that, it is just that we need to understand the words.. The.. it doesn't bother me that it's obvious that the person comes from another country, India, for example, but.. I think it's part of the communicative competence that *that* student realises that the other students would have to understand what you're talking about. So, but I wouldn't deduct a lot of points or marks for a specific accent. Especially not in the international English course, but.. The rest of us must be able to understand what the person says, what the student says. That's kind of very important. That has to do also with.. How fast the student speaks and things like that.. But as long as the words are pronounced correctly, and you combine the words in a way the English language want you to do @. And if you speak, not slowly, but at a pace where the rest of the students can understand you, I think that's fine.. Yeah..

I: And I have a few more questions on your students' choice of English accents. So what factors do you think influence your students in their choice of variety of English accents?

R: I think some of them have family abroad, and have spoken a lot of English, and been influenced by native speakers in another country.. And there are, I think many of them have not made conscious choices about which accent to use, many of them struggle to just be brave enough to speak. So, they haven't really considered their accent, I think. They just need to.. They have to work on just finding words and being brave enough to let it out and some of them are a bit reluctant because maybe they think themselves that it



sounds funny. It's uncomfortable because it's not Norwegian. Our German class and Spanish class will also be like that.. Some of them are very comfortable, and some of them are not.. Then maybe those who are not afraid to speak, they maybe have a conscious choice, they want to sound like Americans, for example. I think the majority , they just focus on being brave enough to say something @.

I: That leads to what extent your students speak confidently in class. Do you think that they worry about their own expectations of themselves, or do you think they worry about their fellow students' thoughts about their English, or do you think they might worry about your expectations of them?

R: I'm sure they worry about all those things. I think many of them just feel very awkward, and many of them are a little bit shy or they are afraid to be looked at, really, that the other students should look at them if they say something wrong. They are afraid of making mistakes in class, many of them. Some of them, a *few* of them, are also very quiet when they speak Norwegian. So, some of them are just very shy or very quiet persons, really. And they are also uncomfortable with speaking English.. But, I think the majority, or at least fifty percent of this group, they are not afraid to say something, really. But sometimes it's just easier to let the clever students answer in the whole group. But, when they work in smaller groups, they all take part, and they are less afraid to say something when they work in smaller groups. Yeah.. So that's good.. But, yeah.. But I think it's the shyness factor or the "I'm afraid to embarrass myself" regardless of which language it is in, which makes them reluctant to speak, some of them. Some of them are just a bit.. It's the age. Some of them are just afraid of making a mistake in general, whether it's close to what you say or the content, or the way you say it, your accent or whatever.. But they do speak when they are in smaller groups, they do, everybody tries to take part then, and that's excellent I think.. So yeah..

I: Such as, speech norms of non-native varieties, do you think that it is an option both for you and your students to use these non-native speech varieties? Do you think that your students believe they can choose and use whichever variety they want to?

R: I'm not quite sure, and then.. I can't really see a situation where one of my students, who have not lived abroad, would suddenly decide to speak with an Australian or South-African accent, for example. Because, they are not exposed, here in our school or in our local environment, they're not exposed to Australian English, Indian English, South-African English or whatever. They are exposed to American and maybe a little bit of British English. And.. But, say.. Students who have not lived abroad.. Or.. I don't think they have any conscious thoughts about this, and I don't see how it would be natural for them, at all, to suddenly decide to try to perfect an accent from a variety of English which they never hear. You have 'Home & Away' on the television, but it's not enough @. I don't think it's enough for them to be influenced.. So it's a very hypothetical situation.

I: Yeah.. But such as, choosing a very Norwegian accent, for example, do you think that it's viewed as acceptable?

R: Okay.. Yeah, well. I'm sure some of them have parents working in business, speaking with a Norwegian accent. I'm sure that they've seen that people can manage and get along fine with their Norwegian accent, but I haven't heard any of them telling me that "No, we should be allowed to speak with a strong Norwegian accent!" Because, I still think they think it's strange to listen to. And if they have, for example, parents or if they listen to politicians and so, who speak with a strong Norwegian accent, I think they do feel a bit embarrassed. They cringe a bit if, for example, while listening to Heyerdahl and.. So, we haven't really discussed that, and as I say, I can accept many accents, but really, not as much the Norwegian one @. Or at least the Norwegian sentence structure, so.. But, I don't deduct very many points for a Norwegian accent, but if the rest is very good.. Because we must accept that we come from different countries.. But I don't think that my students really have a conscious, or have conscious thoughts about this. I think they just try to do their best, and.. Yeah.. I think they try to aim for, like, neutral/American, like they hear on television.. Yeah.. so.. Yeah.. @

I: That's all I had!

R: OK @

I: Thank you for your time @

R: @ You're welcome @

## Interview Teacher B

I: First I would ask some questions about your background. For how long have you been teaching English?

R: Oh, I don't want to tell you! Since 2004, actually. So about 11 years.

I: And what are your qualifications in teaching English?

R: My qualifications.. I've got this seminar, when it comes to pedagogical issues. And I got a master in English, and yeah, that's about it. So, I've studied.. I've only studied English and German. So I've got.. My degree is the old type "hovudfag", so that were seven years of studies worth, and five of them, then, would be English. So, I've lived abroad, I was a visiting student in Reading, England, for a year. And then I took parts of my masters in York, at the University of York.

I: Mhm, interesting. Why did you become an English teacher?

R: That's an excellent question. And I suppose, like you, I was one of the few who actually *wanted* to become a teacher. That was one of my, I don't know why, it was my *one* goal in life. I had two goals. Become fluent, when it came to sort of speaking English, and then I wanted to become a teacher. I have *no* idea why, but I have had excellent English teachers at school, so maybe that's why. So that's what I wanted.

I: How were you taught spoken English?

R: I suppose I picked up things, no, but I mean.. I've.. Are you thinking then about traditional education and..?

I: Yeah, traditional education.

R: Yeah, language labs, I've done a lot of phonetics, and I've loved phonetics, so I've learnt pronunciation both through technical theory, through Bente Hannisdal, and the hard way@, and by listening to radio, I mean.. Yeah, you're thinking about education and school.. I've had excellent models in terms of teachers with excellent pronunciation who lived abroad for years, both in secondary school, both in lower and upper secondary school and, of course, at University. And I've had crap teachers too, but.. @ Yeah..

I: And of the traditional way, speaking native-like?

R: Definitely, yes! Definitely.. And also I've been encouraged to dig into it, sort of listening.. Yeah, we were encouraged to use English a lot, listen.. And of course, to go abroad and so on.. But I think, for me, it was really important for *me*. And I don't think.. I wouldn't really associate that with my education because that was something in *me*. I really wanted, that was my goal as I said, I wanted to become fluent and I wanted to learn to pronounce things properly and I wanted kind of a native-like accent, as it was. So that was my *goal*, in a sense. Regardless of what happened at school. Yeah..

I: And so about teaching. In your opinion, what does it involve to be able to speak English?

R: Yeah, very difficult question to answer. I think fluency.. But if I think about teaching, you have to be able to be spontaneous, you have to be able to talk about things without preparing, so there is.. You need a certain vocabulary.. Of course, you need the basics but then you need the extra kind of touch. Yeah.. Too.. So, yeah. I think you need to be able to be spontaneous and.. Yeah.. Creative.. I've said that twice now@. Very spontaneous, very creative.. Can you repeat your question, please?

I: In your opinion, what does it involve to be able to speak English?

R: Yeah... To communicate, of course you need to be able to send a message and receive a message and somehow understand something. Yeah.. So, I was thinking more about for me.. Yeah, so I think that if you are able to understand others who think they speak English, and you think you speak English, and you can communicate, than that's what it takes. Yeah.

I: And how do you teach spoken English?

R: How do I teach spoken English?... That's a difficult question too. You got *so* difficult questions@. I encourage students to use English to listen to native speakers, wherever they are, television, films, radio, podcasts, what have you.. And I encourage them to not think about whether or not they sound silly when they speak. So, just let everything go and just go for it. Use these skills that you have and speak English. Yeah.. I have not used language labs a lot, but I think we talk quite a lot in our classes. And I've seen, or, my impression is that students these days.. That's what they are really good at, that is talking. Most of them are quite fluent. I think if you talk to them in class, you'll find out that they're quite fluent and they've got extensive vocabularies and they're very good at talking about sort of, everyday matters.. Yeah.. When it comes to writing, or talking about grammar, or talking about literature, it's very different, but talking about everyday stuff they're excellent at. Yeah..

I: And, in your opinion, what are the students' personal motivations for learning to speak English in school today?

R: Some of them would like to use it later. They would like to use their oral skills in terms of finding a job. Many of them would like to travel, some of them have travelled quite a lot, so they would like English, or their English skills primarily for travelling, studies and so on.. Quite a few of them are relatively clever, so they think of English as a useful tool, really on their way in life.. That's my impression, I think..

I: And about communicative competence, is that a term you are familiar with?

R: It is.

I: Yeah. How do you guide your students on their spoken English?

R. How do I guide them?

- I: Do you correct them during class? Do you correct them in a certain way? Do you guide them in a certain way?
- R: Yeah.. I try to think.. It's a bit like teaching children how to talk in a sense. So I try to correct them without correcting them. So, if they use a word, and quite a few students say "areea" for area, and then I try to use the term area in a sentence without saying "no, you shouldn't say that, you should say..". Yeah.. So I try to repeat things the correct way, but today I did something I rarely do.. And that is, I sat down with a group of students, so they would be working in pairs. They would be reading a text, and then we sat down. Two teachers sat down with one group and we read first out loud, and they would read out loud, and then I would go in and I would tell them "ok, this is how you should pronounce that word". And I try to guide them in the sense that I go through vocabulary. For instance, if there is a list of new words, I go through them orally so I pronounce them in English, and I ask them to read the Norwegian translation, for instance. But I try to guide them without saying that "what you say is wrong..", and I'm not sure if that is good@ or bad@. Because sometimes you want, you need someone to point out "ok, you shouldn't do this, you should do that". But I suppose I try not to say "that's wrong", I try to say "do *this!*".
- I: How do you understand the concept 'communicative competence'?
- R: How do I understand.. Sort of, ability to communicate with others, obviously. I understand communicative competence as including oral skills, written skills, sort of reading and writing, so the basic skills. And yeah.. Being able to, again, send messages and receive messages.. Yeah.. I mean sort of processing.. Yeah..
- I: What are your thoughts, your own opinion around the concept, importance, for example?
- R: Yeah.. I think today, in this dying age @. That's what matters, really. So if students.. That's what we look for when marking texts, and that's what we look for when students present work in class. Does this communicate well? Does this not communicate at all? Are there sort of mistakes that *hinder* communication, as it were? So I think that is very important. I think that's *very* important. At the same time, when I teach International English, I consider the level so, or relatively high, so it's not enough to communicate. Even though I understand the sentence, and I'm sort of a speaker of Norwegian and therefore I understand it, that's not good enough, in a sense. Yeah.. So.. But that would be the lowest level, simply being able to communicate, and that's of course better than *not* being able to communicate. So it's very important, yeah..
- I: And what do you think are your student's thoughts around this?
- R: I'm not sure if they are aware of it because sometimes, they tend to say things like "you know what I mean, you see my point". And I say "yes, I see your point". But then again, at this level you should be able to present things in a better way. It's not enough, simply, to pass on a message. You also have to wrap it in some kind of packaging that is understandable. Yeah.. So I think some students are aware of the concept and others are

not. But, in my.. In this International English group, I suppose most people would be aware of it.. The notion, somehow. I'm hoping. Yeah..

I: I've looked into the competence aims, and "the students should be able to use language appropriate to the situation in social, professional and intercultural contexts". How do you understand this?

R: Yeah.. I understand it.. In a way, like, if for instance.. If I take a group of students to see someone else, to see a native speaker, for instance at their jobs, say visiting a professor at the university. I want my students to be able to use slightly more formal language than they would use amongst each other. You know, cut the swearing, cut the 'wanna' and 'gonna'. Yeah.. So I think it's important for them to understand that knowing English in one situation is not the same as knowing English in a completely different situation. So they *should* be aware of various contexts and levels of formality and so on. And some of them *are*, but some of them are not. And I perhaps have students who would use the same type of language regardless of genre or regardless of context. And, of course, you can't really mark them 'up there', because they don't fulfil the requirements.

I: And how do you teach this?

R: Hmm.. Of course we work with different genres. Both when it comes to writing English and when it comes to oral skills. We try to work with role plays. For instance, some weeks ago, we performed a comedy TV-show, you know the show.. What is it called? 'Would I Lie to You'? It's a BBC show. I personally like it, myself. So then I try to tell them that using English in this setting is *very* different from, say, presenting a formal document about climate changes to a group of scientists or whatever. Yeah.. So we try to use various genres and various types of activities to show that there are differences in level of formality, choice of words, and.. Yeah.. Language, really.. Yeah.. I'm not sure if that's how they *perceive* it though, that's a different matter altogether.

I: What are your views on the concept of 'the intercultural speaker'? Have you heard about it?

R: What are my views on the concept of 'the intercultural speaker'?

I: Yeah, have you heard about the intercultural speaker before?

R: I'm not sure..

I: It is about.. A short explanation is to be aware of one's own and other cultures in order to communicate successfully.

R: Yeah.. I suppose that's the essence, really, of the subject of English. Because, that's, in a sense, what it's all about. We are trying to teach and learn about other cultures in order to understand them and ourselves. Yeah.. So I think that is underlying everything. It is in a sense the essence because English at this level is very much about learning about various societies, traditions, cultures, and so on, in order to understand why things happen. Yeah..

It's a bit like history. You need to know a bit of history to understand what happens. It's society. Yeah.. What was the question again?

I: What are your views on the concept 'the intercultural speaker'?

R: What are my views, yeah.. I think it's important for the students to be aware of the fact that everyone, or, that we view the world through our goggles. We've talked a lot about that because we talk now about various international media, and how various people through various media view for instance, the conflict in Syria, for instance the terror attacks in Paris, and what have you. So I try to make them aware of it but the intercultural speaker as such, is not a term that I have used in class, no..

I: And what types of communicative concepts do your students need, in your view?

R: In my view.. I think they need a variety of tools of ways of communicating. They need to be aware of the fact that it's not okay for them to use this kind of basic, everyday, vernacular in all situations. And you, you know you find.. When you read online you can find bloopers, you know translations that really went terribly wrong, or you see emails where companies, CEOs, they kind of, answer emails, just.. They're so *out* there, because they don't really understand and what they write is not really a response to what they read, and so on. And yeah.. So I try to. I think I try to make them aware of the variety, yeah..

I: And moving on the 'native speaker norm'. Do you know what I'm talking about? You've heard the term?

R: Yeah..

I: What are your views on the native speaker norm?

R: So, kind of aiming at becoming native-like in pronunciation? Yeah.. What are my views.. Oo.. I think, personally, I think it's very important for students to be confident and be able to communicate freely. So, for me, that's the most important thing. At the same time, I think it's important to learn kind of an acceptable level of pronunciation. But I don't think that students *must* sound either British, or American, or Australian, or Canadian, in order to be good speakers of English, no.. Because you could still be fluent, yeah.. And for instance, it's not always the case that native-like accents are more understandable to people abroad. Say, I travelled to the United States some years ago, and I remember travelling with someone who I believed would speak a kind of Norwegian-like English, and that person.. Or.. When I talked to people in say, Starbucks@, they would just look at me and "what?". Whereas my friends would, with their English, would be understood perfectly. So, yeah.. So I don't think it's like essential to strive for a native-like accent. I think it's important to be fluent and confident, to be able to use the skills that you actually have. Yah..

I: And what do you think are your students' views about this?

R: Actually, some of the students mentioned this at the beginning of the term. Because they were all new to me, and they would ask me questions like “do I have to speak British English?”, “do I have to speak American English?”. And I was like “what? No!”. And “will you grade me up or down because of this?”. And I was like “no, no, no, no..”. And “why do you speak like this? Why have you chosen this?” So I think they think about it, yeah.. And it means something to them, yeah.. But I.. I try to be kind of open minded about it. It’s all about communication, really. I’m not sort of grading them on accents, but if you say ‘areea’, that matters! Because it’s not ‘areea’ and I don’t think.. Hardly any accents would use that pronunciation, ‘areea’.. Yeah.. And try to be consistent rather than.. Yeah. Yeah.. Does that answer your question? I’m not sure..

I: Yes, it does.. It does.. So do you think we need the native speaker norm?

R: My personal opinion is that I think the.. If you teach English, I think it’s perhaps an asset to at least be consistent, so that you have some kind of norm that you try to teach. So, I would not encourage people to mix British and American English, for instance. Yeah.. So I would encourage teachers of English to try to be consistent, but if you.. Yeah.. But you don’t have to sound this way or that way as long as what you present is within kind of international English norm. That’s a *very* difficult question. Yeah.. I’d like to say no. But.. Yeah.. Is it possible to say, “no, but”? Yeah, it’s kind of a no, but.

I: So when it comes to pronunciation, how would you describe your own English pronunciation?

R: I don’t really want to@.. But I mean.. Of course, my English is coloured by *my* experience. I’m Norwegian, obviously, of course that colours things without me.. I don’t really want it to, but of course it does. And I’ve lived in the south of England, and that’s where I picked up my pronunciation. So if I were to say that if my.. That my accent was in any way native-like I would think that it was coloured by my years in Reading. Yeah.. and me talking to peers, so people in their twenties. Yeah.. So I think I wouldn’t want to talk to the Queen for instance, no.. I’m not very posh.

I: And how do you teach English pronunciation?

R: I try to be a model myself, obviously. So, when it comes to vocabulary, for instance, learning new words and how to pronounce them, I try to be up to scratch on pronunciation, I look up words if I meet new words. And of course, I do check them for pronunciation, I use phonetic writing, transcriptions, and sound files, I use sound material online, obviously.. So I try to be updated in terms of pronunciation myself.. And, I try to encourage them to listen when we listen to texts, and so on. I try to make them care about pronunciation. Quite a few students don’t, and you try to encourage them through not correcting them, but you know, repeating, and they still say, whatever.. They still say ‘areea’.. Yeah.. When what else do we do? Of course we work a lot with various oral activities, role plays, games, so on.. Yeah.. So I try to, I suppose, one of the important things, I think.. Is that I try to create a climate where everyone feels it’s okay to say



something. So they can actually rehearse their English skills. And I'll say that's very difficult.. Yeah..

I: How do you assess pronunciation?

R: I assess it.. So.. Oral work, when they present things, for instance, I always try to make notes to myself and I try to point out for instance, 'areea', and I write.. We use this skolearena module, you've used that too, and now, all our evaluations have to go into that model. So for instance, now I was thinking about a certain presentation that we had some weeks ago, and the student who said 'areea' I would write in my comment "please note that you ought to look up the pronunciation of area, because it's not 'areea'", for instance. Yeah.. So I do try to point it out for instance, when it comes to evaluation situations that should be evaluated, but in class.. I don't really correct people, I don't.. No.. So then it's.. They have to be kind of being a model, modelling.. Modelling, I do a lot of modelling.. Yeah..

I: What criteria do you use when assessing?

R: Normally I use charts, you know, ready-made charts where it says.. Where you have various slots for pronunciation, structure, language, grammar, what have you. So I would use kind of, yeah, ready-made charts for evaluation, and then I would of course look at pronunciation. Yeah..

I: And what accents of English do your students use?

R: That's yeah.. I think the influence nowadays is American. So, yeah.. You will hear a lot of American, in like, accents. Some would be kind of in-between, either or, or a mix for instance in rhoticity, if you think about saying 'car' or 'ca' I think you would have more students saying 'car' than 'ca'. So I would say that I.. My guess is that most of the students would lean towards American English. But there's always someone with an excellent kind of RP, with stiff upper lip, excellent pronunciation, and I've got students like that in my group this year too. And I remember from older groups that I've had, there's always someone with the stiff upper lip. And I think, in a sense, students perceive British English as the norm. And they think that that's what I want. Yeah.. That's my impression. I don't know why..

I: So what types of varieties do you encourage your students to use?

R: I'm.. Orally?.. I don't really encourage them to use any specific variety. For written English, I say choose one, and use sort of the spell check for that one. But I don't really, no.. I don't really encourage them to use anything. But I think, again, they perceive me as encouraging British English because that's where they place *me*. Yeah.. But.. Both, I mean, all the sort of different courses that we teach here. First year, I think what.. Not international English, but the course for the first year students. It's kind of a survey course, so they would learn about varieties of English used in, all over the world, so in the Caribbean, Pakistan, India, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, The United States, Northern

Ireland, what have you. So they.. I encourage them to listen to all the varieties but I don't think I encourage them to *use* any. No..

I: Are there any varieties that you do not accept the students to use?

R: No, I've never commented on that, no. No, no, not, no. And we have people from all over the world now, the world has come to ((place name)) @. No, really. So I've got Dutch people in class, Afghanis, Somalians, and Sudanese people, so of course they would bring their native languages and their accents and their English is influenced by that, so I would, no I would *never* comment on that. I think that is unacceptable, yeah.

I: Then I just have a few more questions about your experience of your students' choice English pronunciation. So, what factors do you think influence your students in their choice of variety of English pronunciation?

R: Coolness, or cool, yeah.. Friends, what their friends think. And what they are into. Now I'm thinking about one girl in class who's really into literature, and for some reason that has drawn her to kind of a British pronunciation. And *some* would be more into, say, Eminem, I've got boys who's really into Eminem and rap music, and they would definitely be drawn towards American English, yeah.. So I think it varies, it depends on who they are, what their interests are, yeah.. And coolness, I think. Cool is quite important for some of them, at least the boys, I think.

I: Would you think that coolness is the *most* important influence?

R: I would, yes @. I'm not sure if it's fortunate, but yeah..

I: Are speech norms such as a non-native variety an option for you and your students?

R: As for myself, I wouldn't be able to use it, orally@, would I? But, for.. Some of the clever ones are, of course, very good at doing impressions. So, there is one guy in our group who does Russian English and all kinds of like, Nigerian English, Scottish English.. That's of course not the same thing, though.. But I mean, you would do various accents, yeah.. So I think for some. They do it for fun, but I don't think they would do it kind of on the oral exam. No.. But it's definitely something that they are aware of, yeah. It's definitely part of the kind of existence, and a group of vocational students that I teach now, they've come up with this funny sounding@ accent that they actually created themselves. And I'm like "Where does this come from? Where did you get this?". And they haven't really explained it to me, but it's definitely something that they've created because it's not any kind of English. It's their own. And, in a sense, I really love it, and I normally say to students that "my favourite is Bergen English, because it sounds so cool" ((said with an intonation that is typical for the dialect of Bergen in Norway)). And I think that's, no but I think it's kind of essential to show them that that's also English. If that's your English, *use* it. But I wouldn't *teach it to you*, because I couldn't. But if that's you want to use, then fine. Yeah.. And I think they are aware of the differences and the fact that there are different Englishes. There's more than one English, yeah..

- I: So that leads me to the next question, on to what extent you think the students believe that they can choose and use whichever variety they want in class?
- R: Yeah.. Oh.. @ I think they know, by now, that they *can* choose. But I also think that some of them still believe that some varieties are better than others. Yeah..I do think so. I do think that they perceive British English as their norm and perhaps American English kind of a runner up second. Yeah.. But I'm not sure, obviously. But that's my impression. Yeah..
- I: And to what extent does your pupil speak confidently in class, when it comes to thoughts of their own experiences, expectations, their fellow students' expectations of their own accent, and of *your* expectations of them?
- R: Yeah.. To what extent do they speak freely..
- I: And confident..
- R: Yeah.. I would say that half of them, or maybe one third of my lot, would speak confidently about anything because that's their nature. They are confident and they know that they can do things, and they feel ok about themselves. And the others.. Not at all. I think there are huge differences between the ones who kind of hog the floor, they are constantly talking, they always have a comment, they always something to say, they ask questions, they kind of want the attention. And then you have the ones who *don't*. They just want to kind of disappear somewhere, yeah.. So not everyone is confident at all, in a situation like that, no.. And that's very sad.
- I: Do you think that has to do with their expectations of themselves or is it because they worry about what others might think?
- R: Both, I think. But some of them worry *a lot* about others. And some worry very little about others, yeah. So maybe that's kind of.. most important thing. But I *also* think that some of them worry about.. Yeah, I'm not.. Sort of picturing them. Because I.. Yes, there are definitely students who think about their own expectations, and I've talked to some of them and I've said "You never put your hand up, does that mean that I should not ask you, or does that mean that you don't want me to look@ at you?", and then some students say "it means that I *know* the answer, and you *can* ask me, but I won't kind of say "yes, pick me!"". So, is that confident? I'm not sure.. But they *should* have the confidence, yeah.. But I think that's an issue, definitely. And I constantly struggle, I have to say, when it comes to including everyone and making everyone feel comfortable.. Because there's always a division, there are always students who talk *more* and students who talk little or too little, even. Yeah.. And now, this time of year, of course I'm thinking a lot about evaluation. I'm going through my charts and do I have kind of, grades for you and for you and for you, and then I.. There is always someone where I have to just sit back and think about what have you really *done*? What have I really heard you say apart from presentations where you kind of *have* to say something, and even *then* some students opt for the easiest option and they say like *this* much ((illustrates amount with fingers by

holding them close together with a small gap between them)), and others have got long lists of things, yeah.. So there's always. It's always difficult. Including and making everyone feel comfortable. Yah..

I: That's it.

R: That's it.

I: Thank you for participating.

R: No worries, thank *you*.

## Interview Teacher C

I: First I would like to ask you some questions about your background. For how long have you been teaching English?

R: ... Twenty years, maybe@. I don't know.

I: About twenty?

R: Yeah.

I: Yeah, and what are your qualifications in teaching English?

R: I've studied English.. I didn't finish my major@, or hovudfag. I didn't finish it. I started, and went one year, and I had a child, and then I stopped@. So that's.. Yeah.. Maybe I could finish it, next year, or the year after@, I don't know. Yeah, that's.. Yeah..

I: And why did you become an English teacher?

R: Because I've always liked English. Yeah..

I: And about teaching. In your opinion, what does it involve to be able to speak English?

R: When I teach, you mean?

I: Yeah.. Like, for students, for yourself, or..

R: I think it's very important that you speak English when you teach English, in class. We didn't do that today, and I think it's the first lesson I didn't start in English, because I normally do that. Also in.. yrkesfag? yeah.. It's very important that when I teach vocational studies, I speak very, very simple English and, yeah.. And I also here, because I want all to understand. I think it's the.. Well, what was the question again@?

I: What does it involve to be able to speak English?

R: .. What do you mean?

I: Is it to make oneself understood or is it to speak, like, very good English or..?  
(interrupted)

R: Oh no.. I don't think.. I think.. I don't think that's very important at all.. When I talk with my students.. I talk my way, I tell them to speak their way. I think that's much more important. At least this course, International English it's.. Yeah. They have to speak.. I want them to speak international English, in a way, yeah.. Much.. I don't say "you have to speak British English or American English" or.. No..

I: So, as long as you can understand it's okay?

- R: Yeah, I think that's the most.. The.. That they try to speak. That's what I.. As I told you.. ((Referring to conversation where the class was referred to as very quiet and hardly ever spoke)). Yeah..
- I: How do you teach spoken English?
- R: I teach.. I speak English in class and when they discuss, they normally go back to Norwegian and then.. Try in English, and sometimes they answer in Norwegian. I try to help them to speak English, yeah.
- I: And in your opinion, what are the students personal motivations for learning to speak English in school today?
- R: Because they want to travel, I think. Some, maybe I think they.. No, I think travelling is the most important motivation, yeah..
- I: How do you guide the students on their spoken English?
- R: Not very much, I think. No.. Because, they are much better than they used to be. In.. Or maybe not, I.. They're much better to understanding because they listen to English all the time and they understand it. But.. So.. But of course, it's a problem to make them try to speak in a big class like that, it's.. Yeah.. ...
- I: But, do you guide them a certain way, when they make mistakes or? ((interrupted))
- R: Yeah, sometimes. If they stop.. If they.. Normally I don't make them read aloud, because I think that's a bad way of building English, just read.. Read aloud in class. I don't like that.. It depends on the class, I think. Sometimes if it's.. Like this class.. You.. If I make them speak at all, it's good enough. And in other classes, maybe I can say, if they pronounce a word wrong I can correct them, but not in this class. Because, then they would not say anything@. It's.. I think it depends on who I talk to.. Yeah..
- I: How do you understand the concept 'communicative competence'?
- R: That they can speak to.. In *their* way, speak to other people and.. They.. make themselves understood. Yeah.. I.. Yeah... And.. Yeah.. They.. Yeah..
- I: What are your personal thoughts around the concept?
- R: I think it's much more important that you try to speak and try to understand, and try to.. Than it is to be corrected and things like that. I don't.. Yeah.. I think it's..
- I: So to be able to communicate is more important than? ((Interrupted))
- R: Yeah, I think so.. I think. Because, when you go around in the world you meet so many people and you meet students from Poland, you meet students from Egypt, and they speak English in their way. I think when they go around, when they get a little older, they will understand that it's about communicating and not speaking correct English, I think. I think that's.. Yeah..

- I: And what do you think are your students' thoughts around this?
- R: I don't know.. I was.. I.. We talked about this, in this class of course, because it's called International English. And we talked about.. And we tried to discuss... So I think maybe they have this, the same opinion, that they should try to speak and that's the most important, I think. Some of them.. Could.. I think.. Some of these girls are very.. They try to speak correct. But when they.. What should I say.. I just try to think who they are.. I think they want to.
- I: And by 'correct' you mean?
- R: Yeah, like it's.. Try to speak.. Correct English-English and they..
- I: British English?
- R: Yeah, British English.. I think there's one either, I don't remember.. Yeah.. And I don't know where she learnt this, or if she.. She's been abroad. But I think there's one person who's been.. Who lived in the United States, but he never says anything. Yeah.. So I don't know how he's.. No..@
- I: @Yeah.. Ehm.. I've looked into the curriculum, and it says that the students should be able to use language appropriate to situations in social, professional and intercultural context. How do you understand this?
- R: Like I've said before. You should be able to, of course you should be able to communicate. If you.. Some of them might go to England, and these students.. But.. At some time.. I think they'll learn.. I think they are.. What should I say... I think it's.. I think about all these students, they.. When they don't speak English, they.. Read again this..
- I: The students should be able to use language appropriate to the situation in social, professional and intercultural context. How do you understand this?
- R: Okay.. They should be able to communicate. We had.. If they have a formal situation, maybe they use another kind of language. I try to say to them, if they have this.. You should not read from paper, you should not.. That's not.. I try to say this is spoken English and this is written English. Sometimes they use very difficult words, and I don't.. When.. This very clever girls, they read from paper, and it's written English, they try to make it.. Oral English, but it's.. When they have presentations, it's not. It's not good. So sometimes I've said that they have to be able to communicate themselves, not from a paper. That's.. But of course, sometimes you have to.. It's more difficult things, perhaps, to explain. So then they need the vocabulary to explain difficult things, so yeah. We had this tentamen, before. Yeah. They had short presentation, just seven minutes, I think. And then some of them did this very good. I think they thought it was very good, but it was written, and they tried to speak it.. Yeah.. Then afterwards we had this conversation about the theme, and they just couldn't say anything. So that's yeah.. Yeah... But some of them are better, and they don't have to.. Yeah..

- I: And also this about adapting to different audiences..
- R: Yeah, I think that's important too.. But they have the same audience all the time@. But I'll think they manage when they go around the world. I think these girls, who went travelling, they probably have spoken a lot of English there, I think.. Yeah..
- I: How do you teach this in the classroom? Like, speaking for different audiences? Is it something you?
- R: Well, they.. They didn't.. They said in the beginning of the year "we don't like have this presentation in front of the whole class", because they're.. Yeah, as I told you they're very quiet and they don't like it. So I said that, ok, yeah.. So we tried.. We didn't do that, this half year. We.. We have this group conversation, where we evaluated them. They had this theme, and they sat.. We were two teachers and tried not to interrupt them when they had this conversation about the theme. They liked that. Yeah, that was very good.
- I: Yeah, I love that.
- R: Yeah, *that* was very good. We.. And then we had individual for afterwards.. For fulfilment. But this group conversation, that was.. I think they liked that. And they said.. It's a little bit different to evaluate because they had the theme the day before, I think, or some hours before.. I can't remember.. Yeah, I think it was the day before and then some of them just prepared like a, and wrote down like a play@..
- I: Oh, so they wrote a script@?
- R: Yeah.. Yeah.. So, yeah.. But it was ok, yeah.. I think that's, it was a bit.. We.. I talked to them in class and they said it was a better way than being in front of the whole class, they don't like that. I think it's.. Yeah.. But maybe they do it, I don't know.. It takes a lot of time, you can't do that when they are so many people in class.
- I: What are your views on the concept 'the intercultural speaker'? Have you heard about that?
- R: Yeah. The intercultural speaker, it means that you have to try to understand people from all over the world because they speak in very many different ways.. I remember a.. Kva sensor er? Ja, sensor..It's ok. A sensor, in (place name), this Russian girl, and she talked like Russian English. And I was going to listen to listen to ten minutes with presentation, and I thought "oh my God, ten minutes listen to this Russian English". The first sentences, because it was not like very good English, but what she said.. That was remarkable. She was *very*, very good. So, even if she spoke Russian English@, she had the best mark. Because when she was finished with the presentations, she could answer all the questions in a *very* good way and, yeah.. In her own way of pronouncing words.. Yeah
- I: Yeah, in her own accent?
- R: Yeah.. So, yeah..



- I: So what are your views on the concept?
- R: I think you should.. Views on the concept.. I think.. Like I've said before. I think the most important, like I said before, is to dare to speak and to.. Yeah..
- I: Speak with the voice and the accent you have?
- R: Yeah, I think.. At least what these people.. Yeah.. In other classes. You didn't study that, but in vocational studies, sometimes *very* difficult to make them speak in class. They say "I don't know, I never speak English", they say.. Ok, what do you do then?@ So they don't..
- I: So in your view, if you had to name some, what types of communicative competence do your students need?
- R: International competence, they need to be able to speak to everyone in the world, I think. Yeah..
- I: The native speaker norm, have you heard about that before?
- R: No..
- I: The tradition of modelling your speech into native speaker varieties like, for example, British English..
- R: Yeah, ok.. I understand the concept, yeah.
- I: Yeah, what are your views about the native speaker norm?
- R: To me it's very.. I cannot speak British English, I cannot speak American English. Maybe if I lived there, I've never lived there. You kind of learn it after some time. I don't think there is a.. You shouldn't force the students to speak American or British English. To me it's very difficult because I don't speak @British English. So.. No, I think that's.. I don't know in, when they are in like sixth grade, maybe some teachers there try to correct them.. I think, or I have an idea, that this small in barneskulen ((elementary school)), I don't know.. I think.. Some girls, yeah.. They learned this way to speak. It's good, but Probably, yeah..
- I: And what do you think are your students' views about the concept, or this way of modelling your speech?
- R: Well, I don't think they try to model *my* speech@.
- I: @
- R: I keep say "you try", and I never correct them, like, no.. I think that's.. This course is called International English, but I think it's in the word.. You should speak international English instead of trying to speak American or British. I think maybe that's.. They have the same idea, I don't know.. Yeah..

I: In your view, do we need the native speaker norm in any way?

R: No, I don't think so..

I: No?

R: No

I: No

R: Yeah, I mean.. In one way, we do, of course. Because we.. It should not be like.. Globish@? Maybe you've heard this, yeah.. We need the words and we need the, yeah.. But.. Of course, this is.. It's.. This true American and British English, I think they should be the basic, in a way. Because.. Cause Indian English, they lose.. In a way they lose something. So that's a very difficult question. In a way I don't agree with myself. Because I understand that you have to have this ba.. In a way have to have it.. Yeah..

I: Yeah, you need to have the basics?

R: Yeah.. So, yeah.. Then, yeah..

I: So in a way, but not?

R: Yeah, yeah, yeah.. Because we don't want to speak Pakistani English, it's.. But..

I: But say, if your students wanted to learn Pakistani English?

R: No, I wouldn't teach them.. No.. And I don't think Norwegians, they speak.. International.. I think they speak international English, in oral Norwegian English, or whatever you call it. Most of us do, I think.. Yeah... Yeah...

I: Would you say that your views are the same when you teach English, about the native speaker norm, that you have it as a basic but not as a goal?

R: Yeah.. Of course, if you pronounce a word very wrong, I correct them. I normally do, but not all the time. But if they read and they stop, and.. Yeah.. I can understand that this is wrong.. You have to say how you pronounce this word.. The accent isn't XXX.. It's difficult to make them change their accent in a way, yeah.. Like this girl I told you about from ((place name)), Russian accent, she talked with Russian, but the content was so good.

I: Yeah, it's very characteristic.

R: Yeah, it is. But what she said and the presentation, I understood that this was brilliant. Yeah.. But I have not students like that@.

I: @

R: Not this year.. No..

- I: Then moving on to pronunciation. How would you describe your own English pronunciation?
- R: Not very good@
- I: @
- R: No, I don't.. I'm not very.. I'm.. My own?.. No, it's international English, I think. Yeah.. It's not British and not American, maybe a little bit more American, but as I mean XXX American.. But, yeah..
- I: You said that it wasn't good, so ((interrupted))
- R: No, I.. Yeah.. I wouldn't.. It's not British or American, yeah. That's what I mean, yeah.
- I: And how were you taught pronunciation in school?
- R: That's a long time ago@. Maybe.. The teachers.. I didn't learn English from first.. I learned English when I was.. Twelve, I think. I think we started about.. Yeah, I don't know.. Ten, maybe.. Forth.. Yeah. I think we had this British English teacher. I remember her. But I liked grammar the most@. So that was. But she.. But I remember how she spoke, that's funny.. Yeah. So maybe I.. But I don't think I tried to do like she did. I didn't, but..
- I: You didn't try to copy her?
- R: No.. I don't know why@. But I've been.. I never tried to speak British or American. I never. I remember this teacher, she spoke British English, where she learnt it I don't know. Maybe she.. But I never tried to copy her, no. No.. I've been so much around in the world after this. So many years.. I speak maybe more Pakistani then@ yeah, I don't know.
- I: So you've maybe learnt more through travelling?
- R: Yeah, or working with people and yeah..
- I: And how do you teach English pronunciation? Are there any methods, or?
- R: No. No methods@. No, as I've said before. If you.. If there's a word and the students asks "how do you pronounce it?". I try to. And sometimes I have to look up in the dictionaries, because, yeah.. And also teach the students to read the dictionary. Pronunciation, how to pronounce things. I think that's, yeah.. Yeah..
- I: And how do you assess pronunciation? Are there any specific criteria you use?
- R: No.. As long as I make them speak@. No, of course, if it's okay it's.. I think it. That's good enough. Pronunciation... No..
- I: You don't assess their pronunciation, is that what? ((interrupted))

R: In one way. Some a little bit.. It's just, you should see this.. They have this criteria and this individual mock exam. You can have a look at the criteria we gave out. But not much about pronunciation, which is what.. Yeah, you could have a look at that afterwards.. Yeah.

I: Mhm, yeah. And what accents of English do your students use? Is there any specific?

R: It's different from person to person, I think. More.. I would call it, I think, I saw this alternatives you had ((referring to the student questionnaire)). I think international English is maybe the most correct. Not that.. They don't speak Norwegian English like some people from Oslo do. They.. Yeah. I think that's. They don't speak English that way, no. We don't do that here, around. So international English, yeah. And maybe more, *maybe* more to American. But maybe because of all the movies and music and.. Yes. I..

I: What varieties do you encourage your students to use? Are there any you accept or do not accept?

R: No, I.. Not in this class. You have to accept anything here, because.. Some of these students have very.. Yeah. They're.. If they dare to put up their hand, one time. It's good. It's very good. Yeah.. And that's.. Yeah.. You should have been in a class, let's say, and see. Because this.. You won't believe. It's one student who's talking all the time, and the rest is just..

I: Awfully quiet?

R: Yeah. Yes. A few times they're more than one, but.. He's very good. Yeah. He's active. He speaks all the time. Maybe that's.. I've talked to.. *Everyone* of them and said "you should try to speak more in class". And you should not try to be like this one who's speaking all the time, that's not the point.

I: But to try every once in a while?

R: Yeah. Yeah, I think that's important that they don't.. @ So that's why it was good with these two.. Discussions. We had one discussion and one, yeah..

I: And so to the last theme, your students' choice of English. What factors do you think influence your students the most in their choice of variety of English? Or, in pronunciation?

R: Let's see, music and movies, I think. XXX.. That's..

I: So it's mostly media?

R: Yeah, I would say so.

I: Do you think that would be more American or British?

R: More American, yes.

I: To what extent do you think that students believe that they can choose and use whichever variety of English that they want?

R: They can use or they are aimed to, is that what you mean?

I: No, to use.. What they are allowed to use, kind of. And what is accepted to use.

R: Okay. I think.. I accept most varieties, here. Yeah..

I: And among them, the students themselves, do you think that..

R: I think.. I think they are quite. If they use their own way of speaking I think that people would think that it's ok. I haven't seen or I haven't.. No. I think it's, yeah..

I: And so to the final question. To what extent does your pupil speak confidently in class?

R: @

I: @

R: @Not at all. There's *one* person who does that, and he was not there today, so it's, yeah.. And he's the only one, it's.. I've.. I did tell this.. Pupils, the first class. So no way that they'll say anything. They were the same in the first year. Their teacher said that they were never.. They're very quiet. And I don't know why. I should.. I think that the.. Kids are encouraged to speak more now than we, or at least I. But, this is not the case. My daughter she's fourteen. Or she's thirteen, and she came home the first week in ungdomskulen ((lower secondary)). And she said "there's one thing that's so strange. The teachers.. Or the teacher in English class, he doesn't speak English".

I: Oh..

R: Yeah.. And that's..

I: At all?

R: No..

I: Huh..

R: @ And she said that. Because that was not, she was confused there from the first school ((elementary school)). And I thought.. That's strange.

I: Yeah, it is@.

R: So I don't know if this is only him or.. She's just.. @That was.. "They speak Norwegian!", she said. So that's.. I've... Nyeah.

I: So you think that might be the same to your class, that they came from lower secondary and then to..?

R: No, I don't know. No, I haven't.. I wouldn't think that's typical. I don't think so. But, it's, she was very.. Yeah..

I: Yeah, I can see that@.

R: Yeah@. Because she, from first class they've always tried to speak, I think they do.. But they did in the school she went on before. I think they tried to speak English. But suddenly they speak Norwegian in their English class, and that was.. So.. Yeah..

I: And so to your students. Do you think that they do not speak confidently because of their own thoughts of their own expectations or their fellow students' expectations or *your* expectations?

R: Yeah, maybe. No, I think.. Mostly their fellow students. I think they.. They know that they can. Some of them said to me "I know I can, but it's.. I don't feel comfortable in this class". I don't know.. It's..

I: So they worry about the others?

R: Yeah.. I've said to them "you should try" and sometimes.. Up with their hand and.. Then they just read the answer from the.. I've said that it's better to try a few times instead of.. Some of them *never*, I've *never* heard them say anything in class. Read, they can read, yeah. But..

I: But not anything related to free speech?

R: No, nothing that they.. I don't know, yeah..

I: Anything you'd like to add, to?

R: No.. Nei..

I: No. Thank you for participating.

## Interview Teacher D

- I: First I would like to ask some questions about your background. For how long have you been teaching English?
- R: Let me see. I started teaching in the year 2001. So I've been teaching since then, had maternity leave twice, so you do the maths@.
- I: @Yeah, about fifteen years, then?
- R: About fifteen years, yeah.
- I: And what are your qualifications in teaching English?
- R: I have a Finnish master's degree in English. So I've studied for five/six years, English, in Finland and had that as my main subject.
- I: And why did you become an English teacher?
- R: I never planned it. I just wanted to study languages. That was the idea. First, I was pretty certain that I was going to work as a translator. But then, while I was studying, I got a job at the University as well, planning for the education for teachers.
- I: So, the teaching training program?
- R: Yeah. And that meant that I suddenly.. It was very awkward that I was planning these courses without having a teacher's qualification myself. And at the same time I had met a Norwegian man, so I decided to give it a chance, go to Norway and went to Sogndal and took my teachers qualification there. And decided that, ok, I want to try to actually work as a teacher as well. Before I came to Norway I wasn't convinced, but teachers' education in Sogndal convinced me.
- I: And how were you taught English yourself?
- R: Very traditional style. Very textbook based. A lot of focus on grammar. A lot of focus on learning words, learning them by heart. And not so much focus on pronunciation. And also, we did not learn as much about Britain or the US as I can see that we do in Norway. So we had more.. I would actually compare it more to the kind of text that you meet in Norway in other foreign languages. We *never* ever talked about Shakespeare, that's for certain @, only at University.
- I: About what time did you learn English in that manner?
- R: I was, let's see. In 1992 I was done with my upper secondary.
- I: So about in the 80's then?
- R: Yeah, 80's early 90's.
- I: Yeah. And in your opinion, what does it involve to be able to speak English?

R: Well, first of all you of course need the words. So learning vocabulary is very important. You also, of course.. The English pronunciation is tricky. With all the varieties that we have today it.. You have to have.. This is also what I tell my students, you have to have a pronunciation that communicates. You don't have to have a British, you don't have to have an American pronunciation, but you need kind of a general.. international pronunciation.

I: Yeah. So you would say that you focus more about.. In that they are being understood?

R: Yeah. I do tell them that if they have a preference, and quite a few of them do, then of course strive for it. And, for example, when we are about to work with a new text, we go through the glossary. I often pronounce the words first to the students, and then I try to give them both the American and the British pronunciation of the words. Just to let them know that there is a difference with some of the words. Of course, so far I have never met a student who has strived for an Australian accent, or a New Zealand accent, or an Indian accent, or South-African accent. They all strive for either a British or American accent.

I: Yeah. They traditionally do.

(Small break to move the recording device closer to the respondent:

I: I just want to move this a little bit further..

R: I know I've been told before that I don't speak very@..

I: Oh, I think it's ok. I just want to *make sure* that it's ok.)

I: Yeah. Okay, so in your opinion, what are the students' personal motivations for learning to speak English today at school?

R: The funny thing about it is that I also teach German, and in my German classes I often have to motivate students that you actually need another foreign language, and knowing German will help you later on in life. They don't see it, necessarily. I never have to have that debate with my English students, today. They realise it. English is a world language, they cannot escape it, no matter what they're planning to do in their future they realise that they are going to need English. So, not all of them like doing English, but none of them will fight me on the necessity of actually speaking English.

I: So, how do you guide you students in their spoken English?

R: I try to.. Are we talking now about the second year students, or in general?

I: In general.

R: In general. In a class of thirty students, I will never correct students in front of the others. If they have an oral presentation, if they present something to me orally or in discussion with me, I will in the evaluation point out if they, for example, a lot of the Norwegian students will say "I mean that.." or a lot of them will say 'butt' instead of 'but', I don't know where that's from but it seems to be a common mistake. So I will point that out to them in a written evaluation or in an oral talk afterwards. In a smaller group, for example,



in international English, if I hear them say something wrong I might just repeat what they say and just correct it when I repeat it.

I: Yeah, by repeating, so not directly.

R: Yeah. I try avoiding.. I don't want to make them feel awkward. Because, of course, the main thing is that they talk and that they are able to communicate. So that's the way I prefer it. When I hear, for example, that some of my students say 'ting' and 'tink' instead of 'thing' and 'think', then we perhaps all of us will find, for example, a YouTube clip with focus on this part of pronunciation and we will all do it together, and then might tell the students afterwards that I think you should practice a bit extra.

I: So you would maybe say that you have British/American as a standard that you compare to?

R: Yeah.. Because, of course, that's also what I've been trained to do, so it would be very awkward for me to suddenly use, let's say Indian English, as a standard. But I also try.. Because, students often make fun of these kinds of accents, and I try to make them realise that these accents are recognized on a world basis as well. And.. For example, British English is by now a rather small accent worldwide. So that they.. I try to make them more tolerant@. But it is tricky.

I: And how do you understand the concept 'communicative competence'?

R: With communicative competence, that is also all about communicating, about being able to be understood, being able to understand what others are telling you. And also in that, I also put the strategic competence. If in the process you're lacking the word that you can try to rephrase it. So, that is why I think that, for example, my students now were a bit lost when they were going to say what kind of English I have. Because they know that I don't generally prefer one above the other, and I don't strive for perfect English or perfect American. But I've so far never met students who are not able to understand me. So, that sounds.. Neutral, international pronunciation. Being able to find words and rephrase yourself if you're lost for words.

I: And what are your own thoughts around the concept?

R: I'm not certain I.. Can you help me out a bit? What you're looking for?

I: Like, what do you think of communicative competence versus (interrupted)

R: How important it is?

I: Yeah.

R: In that sense I think that *that* is really what it's all about. *Yes*, of course, we are supposed to learn about, for example, in International English we are supposed to learn about global challenges and we're supposed to have a lot of knowledge. But really, language is about communication. So with that part being neglected, then what are we doing? So to

me that is the most essential part and I do like it better with the second and third year English, where you actually have a grade for oral communication or oral English, and one for written English. Because I think that in the first year group it is easier to perhaps *not* put as much effort into oral communication because it is just the one grade. And there are so many things that you want to do, and often so many students in comparison to second or third year English.

I: And what do you think are your students' thoughts around the concept? Are they aware of? ((Interrupted))

R: I think they are aware of communication being the key. Sometimes to.. So much to the point that they're not really putting an effort into learning the knowledge part of the curriculum because they feel that they're talking English, they're writing English, and that should be good enough@. So of course, parts of me agree with that, but on the other hand of course the knowledge part is something we have to test them on as well. They're supposed to learn about this. But they do know that I put a lot of, or I *hope* they know that I put a lot of emphasis on communication. For example, what we often do with each chapter in the second year English book is that I prepare a word bank for them of key words that are relevant for that chapter so that they have that. And every now and then we go to that word bank and look at it, how far are we now, what words do you recognise and what do they mean? And I also favour playing this game, Alias, with those words, so that we then.. I deliberately train them to try to rephrase because they have, for example, 'migrant' as a word, and then they have to describe it without using that word. Some of them will always take the easy way out of trying to say what it sounds like, or what it rhymes with, or something like that, but they also put in the effort in using their knowledge.

I: I've looked into the curriculum and found the competence aim that says that the subject should enable students to use language appropriate to the situation in social, professional and intercultural context. How do you understand this?

R: Can I have a look at it just so that@ I remember all the parts of it?

I: Yeah, point three there.

R: There we are. Well, the social aspect and the professional aspect. I try to teach students not to use the informal TV language as I refer to it a lot. They are very informal. They will.. Some students will surprisingly enough use the F-word without blinking. So, I think that because they have learned so much of their English outside the classroom, they are very informal and they don't realise that not everybody in the world speaks English that way, and how rude they will be conceived by, for example, the British or the Americans if they talk like that to everyone. But I think it is the TV-shows and the videogames/computer games that they play that kind of mislead them. So, the social and professional aspect is really about learning the appropriate language for different situations. The intercultural context, I'm fortunate enough to have, for example, in my second year English, if I include myself, there are four of us who are not Norwegian. So

we use that quite a lot in our discussion about what it means to talk to people from different cultures, and how you actually need to know what is ok and what isn't in the culture that you're meeting. And I think that is probably the part of second year English that I like the best. Because it is.. Students realising how much of our communication is based on body language, and how much depends on your cultural background, and for them to realise that perhaps they are a bit ethnocentric. And realising *that* is important.

I: You talked about students learning English outside of school. What's your opinion about that, is that something you see as positive or is it?

R: When we talk about oral English, I think it is very positive, on the one hand, because you.. They do.. They have a rather huge vocabulary, at least a passive vocabulary. That is, that they understand a lot of different words, they're used to hearing different accents, and the threshold for themselves to speak I think is much lower because of how they're basically drowned in English everywhere they go. I tell them that they can't escape English unless they go to the mountain to the cabin, leave their mobile phone at home, and do not turn on even the radio. That's how they can escape English, otherwise they can't. So it's always there for them. But like I said, the negative part is that they think that they'll.. The type of English that they hear is the one that they can use everywhere. So it's really about, I mean, comparing to, for example, a German way.. Where you.. Where students basically only meet German in the classroom, I say thank God for all the English that they meet outside the classroom. So it's a huge advantage, in many ways. It's just about training them to see how they can use language appropriately.

I: So the disadvantage is the vocabulary and informality?

R: Yeah, informality, yeah. That's.. That's basically the problem.

I: Yeah, ok, so back to the competence aim. How do you teach the professional, social and intercultural context, and the appropriate language? Are there any specific ways you use..

R: Of course we use the material in the textbook. I prefer finding short clips to illustrate the points, we've also had, for example, a quiz about.. Where they just had to guess, basically yes or no, what is acceptable in what country, and they met different.. Eh.. Different statements. And they were a bit frustrated because they got a lot of it wrong. And they told me afterwards that "we have not learned about this". And I said "well, that's the point of the task. I wanted you to show.. I wanted to show you that you cannot know beforehand unless you find out about the culture". And there was.. I had, for example, a group work about descendents in another English speaking country of their choice. They could not choose Britain, nor the US, but another one. So they presented that to the other students, and I think that is something that they thought was very interesting to learn about. And also with.. With the appropriate social context, I give them feedback on presentations and their rightness, well I tell them "this is informal". So I try to teach them, make them notice, as such.

I: Then I wonder if you are familiar with the concept of 'the intercultural speaker'?

- R: Intercultural speaker. I'm not certain that I've heard that precise concept..
- I: It is to be aware of one's own and others' cultures in order to communicate.
- R: Yeah, so it's basically what we also refer to as cultural relativism.
- I: Yeah.
- R: Yeah, and that is something that we especially talk about in second year English. It's tricky and it's very interesting because students are very aware of a lot of the multicultural aspects of modern society. And they find it rather interesting. You can have debates with them about what is acceptable and what is not. And being tolerant, what does that mean? Does that mean accepting, for example, that women are discriminated in Saudi-Arabia? So.. It is rather interesting working with them on that topic. And in my second year English we now have ten girls and one boy, and we have rather interesting discussions where we sometimes just have to remember to try to get the male perspective as well@.
- I: @ Yeah.. So, your views around the intercultural speaker in the classroom. Would say that it is important in you teaching?
- R: I think so, yeah. I think that as a teacher, one of the.. If I can make my students more tolerant then I have achieved something because that is important. Recognizing that we're different, *accepting* that we're different, I think that is a value that is so important for them to learn.
- I: So, all together, what types of communicative competences do you believe that your students need?
- R: They need the social competence, certainly, so that they're using appropriate language. They need the intercultural competence, so that not only do they have the language skills that they need, but also the ability read a situation and read another culture, and communicate. Because, of course, they're not studying English because they're going to live in Norway for the rest of their lives, necessarily, but because they're going to go abroad, they're going to meet people in a globalised world all the time. So achieving that ability of reading other cultures and being able to respect that, is very important. So I think those are the two that, at least for cultural competence, are the most important to me.
- I: Then I wonder about your views about the native speaker norm. Are you familiar with the concept?
- R: Native speaker norm in the sense that they should try to achieve a native fluency?
- I: Yeah, mhm.
- R: Mhm. I think that is very attractive for students in Norway. Norwegians are used to being good speakers of Norwegian.. No, sorry, of English, of course@. And I see that some of

my students would really like to be mistaken for a native speaker. And I don't think there's anything wrong with that. They can aspire to it, but it is not a demand, in any sense. Of course, the more they use the language, the more fluent they are going to become. Some of them aspire to go to, for example, Britain, study for a year, and during that stay they will probably achieve a very close native pronunciation, and much bigger vocabulary. In my third year students group I have two students who've been to the US for a year.. and they have a fabulous American accent. And also, kind of an American laidback-style@ while they're talking, as well. I enjoy it. I enjoy listening to them. I think it's fun for the other students as well to be able to listen to it. But it is not a goal that has to be achieved in secondary education.

I: So you don't see it as a necessity?

R: No, I don't.

I: What are your views about the native speaker norm in teaching? In general..

R: In general. Well, growing up and studying English in the 80's and early 90's, myself, I only basically had teachers with a British Accent. Very strong British accent.. So, up until that point, I thought that that was the norm for teachers. Then, when I started studying at University myself, I also had quite a lot of British lecturers and professors, but we also had a few.. I remember particularly one professor that I had who.. She had Finnish as mother tongue, but she had then lived in Sweden and studied English there, So she kind of had an interesting mix of Finnish and Swedish accent in her English. And I remember us students, the first time we had her in class, we doomed her. We taught that 'ugh', what is this, really? But she was the best of them all. We had her in linguistics and she was brilliant. And that taught me something about paying too much attention to pronunciation and fluency. In the sense that people, English teachers, and professors can be excellent even if their pronunciation or choice of words is not necessarily always very fluent. So, I think.. But of course, I mean.. Instantly, if you listen to somebody with.. With a fabulous English you're going to be inspired by it, as well.

I: Yeah, you'll be kind of amazed?

R: Yeah.

I: So, do you think that we need the native speaker norm in any way?

R: For teachers I think that if they can have a neutral international accent. That is also enough. But, I know that there are a lot of people who would not agree with me on that@. I realise that. But, since the curriculum never tells us that students should have either a British or an American accent, why should the teachers have to have that? It's also natural because of a lot of the teachers have been to the US or the UK for quite some time, and they achieved it. But a necessity? I wouldn't say so, no. Of course, we've had at our school as well, we've had native speakers among.. Among the staff, and that is amazing. And it's a huge advantage having somebody with that.. So that you can go and

ask questions if there are things that you wonder about. But you can find the answers elsewhere too@.

I: Yeah@, you can. Yeah.. Then I would like to move on to pronunciation. How would you describe your own English pronunciation?

R: I think that I have a mix. Yeah. Because, as I said, I was taught the British pronunciation but when I was I think.. Twelve/thirteen or something like that, we got satellite TV. A huge@ development in my English career. So that meant that I was very inspired by and influenced by American TV as well. So I think that I'm.. A teacher of my age is probably more influenced by American English than British English. If you ask which one I prefer listening to, I fall into the same category as many of my students. They prefer listening to the British English. I don't really know why. It's not that I think it's more Posh, as many of my students think that.. And therefore.. And I think that is also the case of some of Americans. They feel that British English sounds more educated than American English. It's.. I don't think it's.. It's just as charming. And of course it is the kind of, for example, the kind of TV series, the literature that I associate with British English, compared to the mainstream Hollywood TV films that we hear a lot of American English from. So it's not that it sounds Posh or more educated, but more charming. Yeah, I think.. Mhm.

I: And how were you taught pronunciation yourself? You said that it was a lot of grammar?

R: Mhm. And then we listened to the recordings of the texts, and we also had the teacher pronouncing words to us. And she was.. Especially, I'm now thinking of my teacher from secondary school and also upper secondary school, very strong British accents. So we were not really informed about the American pronunciation.

I: So you would say that it was the native speaker norm that was the model?

R: Yeah.

I: Yeah, and then British English?

R: And then British English, yes.

I: And how do you teach English pronunciation?

R: As I said earlier, I try to inform students about the differences. We work a quite a lot with that during the first year of upper secondary school and at that point I realise that students are not really informed about it. They have not learned about the differences, they are not aware of what kind of pronunciation they're closer to themselves, and a lot of them have not made a deliberate choice, which of course they don't have to. Once we've started with that, after that I've always.. When we go through glossaries to words, which I tend to do before we listen to texts because if I ask the students, some will tell me no, but the ones who want me to may not dare to say yes, so I tend to think that even those who are native-like in their pronunciation.. They do not suffer from repeating a few words. So that point I try to give them both the British and American pronunciation. I also guide them

towards dictionaries online where you can listen to both pronunciations, for example, Cambridge dictionary online. They can choose whether not to listen to the British or the American. And sometimes we just check to see that often there's no difference, so that they listen to both.

I: So you would say that you use British and American as a reference, but not as a standard?

R: Yeah.

I: And how do you assess pronunciation?

R: I focus on a few of the difficult sounds like, for example, the th-sound that I talked about earlier. I try to make them aware of the typical Norwegian pronunciation of words like 'that', 'sit up' and so on. 'Gun', I don't know where that sound is coming from, nobody has been able to tell me yet@. So, I try to make them aware of that. And, of course, also as we move up in grades in the third year English, for example, it's natural also to talk more about.. more about intonation and more the emphasis on words. When I hear them, for example, if I ask them to read out loud, I will not comment on pronunciation unless they stop and ask. But if I have them reading in pairs, then I will correct their pronunciation when they're reading. But I will wait for them to finish a sentence or paragraph and then tell them that, for example, "you did very well most of the part, just remember that these and these words are pronounced differently".

I: So what are your criteria when assessing?

R: I try to, again, comment on the pronunciation that I think would be a bit of a problem internationally. So if they put the emphasis wrongly and it is difficult following, then I will comment on that. Comment on, for example, the pronunciation of.. of.. th-sound, which is often a problem, the 'w'-sound that they often do not emphasize enough. So I pick out.. sounds..

I: Yeah, articulation?

R: Articulation and sounds.. And then *try* to make them aware of intonation as well.

I: And what accents of English do your students use?

R: Most of them will use an American accent.. or try to use an American accent. But I do see that they have the same issues as I do, that they are influenced by both. I have not had students who have been influenced by.. other accents than the British or American, so far. And of course, they have the Norwegian accent at times, but it's not very strong these days because they are rather fluent in oral English. But a lot of them have the kind of mix.

I: Mhm, like native versus English?

R: Native versus English, yeah. And.. And I have students, now, with German as mother tongue, with Dutch as mother tongue. And then it's of course interesting because you hear different accents in their oral English, which sets them apart from Norwegian

students. .That's ok. They communicate with their Dutch accents as well@. They do. It's more difficult for me to guide them if I.. Because it's.. I've told one of my students that at times her accent is perhaps a bit strong, but I'm not really able to.. pin-point it yet. I haven't had her as a student for a very long time, so.. so I'm trying to figure out why I say that@.

I: Yeah, you haven't found the characteristics yet?

R: Yeah. It takes a bit of time, it's not my.. I realize that.. That, of course, as English teachers we have different strengths and my strength is not identifying accents@. I have accepted that. @But.. I'm trying to figure it out.

I: So, what varieties of English do you encourage your students to use?

R: I tell them that.. They should feel confident with their own accents. It is ok even if they go abroad and somebody will recognise them as Norwegian. But, of course, they themselves are horrified, for example, by Jens Stoltenberg and Erna Solberg's type of English. And non.. All my students have better accents@, in the sense that they're more confident, they sound more native like. But, apart from that, I tell them that if you prefer an American accent, if that is something that you strongly wish, go for it. Then I tell them to always pay attention to how this word is pronounced in American, train themselves to become more aware of the differences. I also tell them that if you go for an oral American accent, you should also always choose American spelling on spell check or the same is for British. And, of course, I realise that I can help them out a bit with British and American. If they want Australian which would be perfect as well, then sure, go for that but I might not be able to help as much. Because I often have to sit down and think, ok, what would that sound like in Australian English. So.. I think they are free to choose what they want.

I: Yeah, there is not anything that you *don't* accept?

R: No.

I: You mentioned that your students are horrified by like Petter Solberg. What do you believe they think about this.. this Norwegian accent?

R: I think they're a bit embarrassed by it, basically. I think that they realise that the younger generation, they're much more fluent in oral English than their parents' generation, for example. Most of them tell me that if they go abroad with their family, then they're the ones talking and their parents are perhaps a bit embarrassed by talking in front of their children as well. So I think it's just something that they associate with older generations and that they kind of.. Think that they've moved on. They're better now.

I: So it's more an inherited quality than something they've made themselves?

R: Yeah.



- I: Yeah.. And then I want to ask you about your students' choice of an English accent. What factors do you think influence your students in their choice of English?
- R: I think that they will choose the one that they find the easiest to pull off. So once they've become aware of differences, if they decide to go, choose for one or.. go for one or the other, then they will pay more attention to it and realise where they're closer themselves. And then pick the one that is easiest. I've had one student who became very fascinated by the differences in first year of English at our school. And she realised that her English was closer to an American, but she *decided* she was going to strive for a British accent. I watched her struggle with it, but she *did* change it. So she proved that it's really possible to decide that "ok, I know that I'm very much influenced by American English, but I *want* the British English accent and that is what I'm going to work for". So that was rather interesting, watching her deciding to do so. But, of course, I also realise that most of my students do not make a deliberate choice. They do not.. They just..
- I: So you think they're passively taking it on?
- R: Yes, I think so. And they're very much influenced by the internet, by the games they play, and the kind of entertainment they watch, and the music they listen to. And I think most of them are dominated by the American accent.
- I: Yeah, that's the dominant one in the media, so yeah..
- R: So I think that even if they don't make a deliberate choice, we're seeing a shift in Norway where we go from traditionally having had more.. much more British English as the idea. Now we see the American English.
- I: Yeah, would you see that we see it from British to American, or as American as natives, or more as American because it dominates and as a world language?
- R: I think because it dominates and as a world language. I don't think that a lot of students strive for sounding like native speakers of American. It's just that in their pronunciation they're so influenced by what they've heard. So that.. And of course, they realise that American English has taken over as a world standard, if we have a world standard. It is at least much more influential worldwide now than British English is. So I think that is really what's happening.
- I: Yeah.. Are speech norms such as a non-native variety an option@ for you and your students? Like, if a student wanted to strive for an Indian accent. Is that possible, you think?
- R: It is. I think it's possible as long as they're serious about it, and as long as they realise that there's more to Indian English than what they, for example, see in Big Bang Theory. Which.. Because I think that character, that I can't remember the name of..
- I: Rajesh, I think@.

- R. Yeah, okay. I think that he's the kind of person that they will associate Indian English with, and of course, this is a comedy and they will exaggerate and they will make fun of it.
- I: Yeah, very stereotyped.
- R: Very stereotyped. But I think that to achieve an Indian English accent, they would actually have to go to India and cope with English there.
- I: Is it an option for your students in your classroom to. ((Interrupted))
- R: There was a discussion the other day about where they would be willing to study. There was one student who mentioned that she thought it would be interesting to go to India and study there. But I could tell that the others were quite perplexed by that. So it doesn't seem like a natural option. I think that most of them, if they picture themselves going abroad/studying abroad, they would probably prefer Britain because it's closer, so it's cheaper going there, or the US, or perhaps another European country.. And not forgetting, Australia. Australia is very attractive, too. So I think that very few of them imagined that they would go, for example, to Caribbean, to Africa, to India, to study and learn English.
- I: And to what extent do you think that your students believe they are allowed to choose and use whichever variety they want, in class?
- R: I think that they realise that they are completely free. But also, I think that they're influenced by peer pressure. So.. So that they will go for the mainstream idea or concept of it in the classroom. In my first year group, that I don't teach anymore, but that I had before Christmas, I had particularly one student who was very fond of the Scottish accent. So he would continuously use that. And.. At first, I could see that some of the others were a bit surprised by it, but we got used to him and that was perfectly okay. It was a bit funny that we could hear something else as well. But it takes a bit of guts, going against the mainstream or idea.
- I: It sure does.. Yeah, you mentioned peer pressure. How.. To what extent do you believe that your students speak confidently in class? And then I think about thoughts they think of themselves, others and the teacher.
- R. I think that they are *more* concerned about what the other students think of their English than what the teachers think. I think that is, especially in the first year groups, where we often have students.. Thirty students in one, the same classroom. You have a few that are very confident, and that will signal that from day *one*. And that will kind of set the standard of the group. When you talk to the ones who are silent in class, and you talk to them in a smaller group.. ((Coughs)) In a smaller group or just with the teacher, they're rather confident in their English. But for some reason, they've decided that their English is not good enough. So I try to encourage them not necessarily to jump into discussions if they're feeling not quite confident about their English, but to at least make certain that they raise their hand when we go through a text and we answer questions relating to text understanding. Basically all our students understand the text that we read, so that they

will have the answer and also making certain that nobody laughs at anybody in the classroom. But it is tricky, especially in a larger group. In a smaller group, like we have now in second year English, I had a couple who were very silent to begin with. But they could.. In the beginning of the term they could sit where they wanted to, which meant that the most talkative students always worked together and the silent students worked together. So I decided to move them around, and break those.. those pairs, and I see that that has actually helped a bit. Some of them are not confident because they think that they don't know the answers, but working together with somebody who's a bit stronger than them will give them confidence that "yes, I knew the answer too". And also sitting next to somebody who's very active, I think rubs off.

I: Yeah, so now you would say that it is more content based/knowledge based than the pronunciation part?

R: Yeah, I think so, at least among the students who have continued with English. I just think that there's a natural selection going on here. If you don't like talking English, you're *not* necessarily going to continue when you don't have to. So in the second and third year English, it's more about understanding, and reflecting, and analysing, and trusting yourself with your answers.

I: Yeah. That's all I had. Thank you for participating.

R: Thank you@.