

# **Norwegian Attitudes to English Varieties**

a sociolinguistic study

**Ida Beate Areklett**



Master's Thesis in English Linguistics

Department of Foreign Languages

University of Bergen

November 2017



## Abstract in Norwegian

Denne masteroppgåva undersøker kva haldningar nordmenn har til seks ulike variantar av engelsk: standard britisk engelsk, standard amerikansk engelsk, irsk engelsk, australsk engelsk, sørstats-amerikansk engelsk og indisk engelsk. I tillegg utforskar den om desse haldningane er relatert til klassiske stereotypiar av ulike folkegrupper. Oppgåva er eit sociolingvistisk haldningsstudie som inkluderer bruk av indirekte og direkte metodar der respondentane lyttar til lydklipp og vurderer desse, i tillegg til at dei svarer på direkte spørsmål i eit spørjeundersøkingsskjema. Respondentane er ungdommar i alderen 17 til 20 og vaksne i alderen 40 til 60. Oppgåva ser på kva moglege årsaker det kan vere til at respondentane har nettopp desse haldningane og ser etter samanheng mellom anna i bruk av engelsk dagleg og reiser til engelsk-språklege land. I tillegg utforskar den om media har noko rolle i kva for haldningar nordmenn har. Engelsk er eit dominerande språk innan film og internett, og svært mange seriar og tv-program på norske tv-kanalar er på engelsk. Dette bidreg til kunnskap og kjennskap av engelsk blant nordmenn, i tillegg til ein familiaritet til munnleg engelsk.

Oppgåva er inspirert av tidlegare haldningsstudiar som bruker respondentar utan engelsk som morsmål. Likevel er den unik i og med at det er den første som tek med indisk engelsk. Resultata frå denne undersøkinga viser seg å vere svært like resultata til studiar i Skandinavia, Storbritannia og USA. Dette gir grunnlag for å tru at dei haldningane som finst er relativt like uansett kva nasjonalitet informantane har. I tillegg er også dei stereotypiske skildringane frå dei norske respondentane svært like skildringane som både britar og amerikanarar gir.

Målet med denne oppgåva er å kartlegge norske haldningar til ulike variantar av engelsk og samanlikne dei med tidlegare funne haldningar. Den er og meint å vere eit bidrag i ei lita samling data av slike haldningar i håp om å kunne inspirere andre til å foreta nye undersøkingar innan feltet slik at grunnlaget for samanlikning vil vakse seg større.

## **Acknowledgements**

As my master thesis finally comes to an end, I am grateful that the process soon is over, but most importantly there are several people I need to thank. First and foremost, I am very grateful for all the help and support my family has given me, especially my mother and father, without whose help I would not have been able to finish my project. A special thank you goes to my son, who understandably grew tired of his mother's constant reading and writing, your patience and love is ever so appreciated. A very grateful thank you to my daughter, who decided not to be born before I finished my writing. To my love – thank you for always bugging me.

Secondly, I am ever so thankful for all the guidance, advices and support from my supervisor Bente R. Hannisdal. From the very beginning when I first asked if my project was feasible, to the final editing of every chapter. I apologise for every concord error you have had to suffer through. However, all the feedback, constructive remarks and positive conversations have been very helpful during this long and challenging process. Thank you.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all my respondents, and those who helped me find them. Finally, I would like to thank my friends, you know who you are, for always supporting me and encouraging me to keep working. I look forward to having conversations without the main topic being my master's thesis – thank you for never complaining.

# Contents

<b>Abstract in Norwegian</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>List of figures</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>List of tables</b> .....	<b>viii</b>
<b>List of abbreviations</b> .....	<b>ix</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Aim and scope of the thesis .....	1
1.2 Research questions and hypotheses .....	2
1.3 Structure of the thesis .....	4
<b>2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND</b> .....	<b>5</b>
2.1 Attitudes .....	5
2.2 Attitudes to language .....	6
2.3 Attitudes to English .....	8
2.4 Attitudes to varieties of English .....	11
2.5 Stereotypes .....	12
2.6 English as a global language .....	14
2.7 The media .....	16
2.8 Previous studies .....	18
<b>3. METHODOLOGY</b> .....	<b>22</b>
3.1 The study and measurement of language attitudes .....	22
3.1.1 The direct approach .....	22
3.1.2 The indirect approach .....	24
3.1.2.1 The verbal guise technique .....	25
3.1.3 Questionnaire design .....	26
3.2 The present study .....	28
3.2.1 The linguistic varieties .....	28
3.2.1.1 Received Pronunciation and General American .....	29
3.2.1.2 Irish English .....	30
3.2.1.3 Australian English .....	30
3.2.1.4 Southern American English .....	31
3.2.1.5 Indian English .....	32
3.2.1.6 The speakers and the passage they read .....	32
3.2.2 The respondents .....	35
3.2.3 The questionnaire .....	37

<b>4. RESULTS.....</b>	<b>40</b>
4.1 Results: Part 1 of the questionnaire.....	40
4.1.1 Results by gender.....	46
4.1.2 Results by age.....	48
4.1.3 The amount of media exposure.....	51
4.1.4 Visits to English-speaking countries.....	52
4.1.5 The amount of English usage daily.....	54
4.2 Results: Part 2 of the questionnaire.....	55
4.2.1 Evaluations of the varieties.....	55
4.2.2 Evaluations of the peoples.....	61
4.2.2.1 People from England.....	61
4.2.2.2 People from the USA.....	62
4.2.2.3 People from Ireland.....	64
4.2.2.4 People from Australia.....	65
4.2.2.5 People from the southern parts of the USA.....	66
4.2.2.6 People from India.....	68
4.3 Summary of results and comparison to previous studies.....	69
<b>5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>72</b>
5.1 Summary.....	72
5.2 Results and research questions.....	72
5.2.1 Research question 1.....	72
5.2.2 Research question 2.....	76
5.2.3 Research question 3.....	76
5.2.4 Research question 4.....	79
5.2.5 Research question 5.....	81
5.2.6 Research question 6.....	82
5.3 Critique and future research.....	83
<b>Appendix 1.....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>Appendix 2.....</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>Appendix 3.....</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Appendix 4.....</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>91</b>

## List of figures

Figure 4.1 Overall average scores, all respondents.....	41
Figure 4.2 Average scores by dimensions, all respondents.....	44
Figure 4.3 Average scores by gender.....	46
Figure 4.4 Average scores by age.....	49
Figure 4.5 Average scores, exposure of media.....	51
Figure 4.6 Average scores, visits to English-speaking countries.....	53
Figure 4.7 Average scores, use of English daily.....	54
Figure 4.8 Summation of positive and negative adjectives.....	59

## List of tables

Table 3.1 Respondents.....	36
Table 4.1 Overall average scores and average score by dimensions, all respondents.....	42
Table 4.2 Average scores by dimensions, both genders.....	48
Table 4.3 Average scores by dimensions, both age groups.....	50
Table 4.4 Overall evaluations of the varieties.....	58



## **List of abbreviations**

RP: Received Pronunciation

GA: General American

IrEng: Irish English

AusEng: Australian English

SAmEng: Southern American English

InEng: Indian English

SA: Social Attractiveness

LQ: Linguistic Quality

IDEA: International Dialects of English Archive

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Aim and scope of the thesis

The motivation for this study comes from a fascination with how every human defines and judge other humans based on exterior features, such as clothes, manner of appearance, voice quality, which social group they are in, which religion they belong to, where they come from, and not least their pronunciation. The fact that one can utter “She sounds so posh!”, or “The minute he started talking, I knew I could not trust him” about persons one does not know, only hears, is quite interesting. It is impossible to define a person’s qualities simply by listening to them speak. Or is it? Perhaps humans are predestined to have certain qualities, which they express through appearance and manner of speech. There are some similarities between humans, but there are also differences. All have ideas or images of how most things are or function, be it languages, corporations, a group of people, a certain type of music, or any other part of our existence in the world. These ideas and images are related to what attitudes people possess.

Attitudes are often linked to stereotypes (both of which will be discussed in Chapter 2), and stereotypes are entrenched within for instance a specific country, society or social group. Most Norwegians have heard the jokes about the Norwegian, the Swedish and the Danish, and instantly know that in Norway these jokes will portray the Norwegians positively, while in Sweden they will portray the Swedish positively, and of course, in Denmark they will portray the Danish positively, making the other nationalities look dumb or bad. One could say that they are based on stereotypes. These jokes are typical in all three countries and quite old, just as stereotypes are very old and a ‘normal’ part of society. Stereotyping is a normal process for humans to make sense of society. The main aim of this thesis is to explore what attitudes Norwegians have towards different varieties of English. A secondary aim is to see if the respondents’ evaluations of the speakers reflect popular stereotypes. An additional aim is to find out what knowledge Norwegians have of these varieties, whether they are able to recognise and place them correctly within their geographical area.

This study is within sociolinguistics and is a language attitudinal study. It seeks to explore Norwegian attitudes towards six varieties of English. Well established methods are used in the research and the thesis found inspiration in previous studies, especially those by Ladegaard (1998) and Loftheim (2013), which are outlined in Chapter 2. However, it is

unique in the way it looks at a broad spectre of varieties and non-native speakers' attitudes towards these, thus it will contribute with new knowledge in the area of attitude studies. Varieties from both the inner and outer circle (see 2.6) are included: Received Pronunciation (RP), General American (GA), Irish English (IrEng), Australian English (AusEng), Southern American English (SAmEng) and Indian English (InEng). The research is based on a survey among two groups of informants, one younger (17-20) and one older (40-60) group of females and males. The data have been collected both indirectly, using a verbal guise test, and directly using a written questionnaire (see chapter 3). The data will be used to measure Norwegians' evaluations of the six accents, to compare informant groups, and to investigate the effects of variables such as TV habits and exposure to English.

## **1.2 Research questions and hypotheses**

For the present study six specific research questions are in focus. They are indirectly incorporated into the survey and the aim is to find answers to them by analysing the results of the survey. These research questions will be returned to in Chapter 5, and are as follows:

1. What attitudes do Norwegians have towards different varieties of English?
2. Are these attitudes in accordance with other attitudinal studies?
3. Do Norwegians' attitudes of the people and countries the accents represent, reflect popular stereotypes?
4. Are Norwegians competent to distinguish between the accents and name them?
5. Is there any difference in attitude between the age groups, and between male and female respondents?
6. Do factors such as TV habits and use of English affect the attitudes of the respondents?

There are several hypotheses related to these six research questions. The background for these hypotheses relates to the massive exposure to English-speaking media in Norway, especially American films and TV series. It also relates to the extensive use of global media, such as the internet, which is available for most people all the time through for instance laptops and smartphones. English is a part of a typical Norwegian day, either through work and school or the internet and TV. A Norwegian person is very likely to encounter some sort of spoken or written English during a typical day. The varieties which are most common on Norwegian TV are RP and GA, but AusEng, InEng and SAmEng are also represented. IrEng is not that

common and is likely to be confused with Scottish English by laymen. RP and GA are firmly established and most likely highly regarded for Norwegians, as these varieties are taught at school and connected to status. AusEng and SAmEng are perhaps less known because there is less focus on these, so they may be more neutral for people. InEng is often represented through characters with high intellectual skills within e.g. IT and business on TV, but with low social skills. These characters are often made fun of, or portrayed in a humoristic way so that InEng is also perceived of as a humoristic accent, or an accent that is not taken seriously.

I expect to elicit opinions of the six varieties, as every person has certain attitudes towards various languages and varieties. I also, to a certain degree, expect to find stereotypical views of peoples and countries among these Norwegian respondents since all have ideas or pictures of what other people are, or how they behave, based on for instance personal experience or cultural background. These attitudes and stereotypes will appear in the minds of the respondents when listening to given varieties, and as such the stereotypes may be transferred to the speaker in question. Moreover, there is the anticipation of different evaluations of the varieties among the respondents, when divided into groups by variables and factors. Finally, the informants are expected to show some differences when it comes to recognition of the varieties. It is uncertain whether the respondents are able to recognise and geographically place the varieties, but there is no expectancy that all respondents will recognise all varieties. The hypotheses are as follows:

1. The age and gender groups will be equally positive of GA in their evaluations.
2. The evaluations of RP are expected to vary more where the younger group will be less positive than the older group, because the younger group may be more exposed to GA than RP.
3. The female respondents will overall evaluate accents more positively than the male respondents.
4. The respondents will be more or less neutral to AusEng, SAmEng and IrEng. However, InEng is expected to be seen as less positive, and not be taken as seriously, due to how Indians are portrayed in the media.
5. High exposure to English through films etc. leads to more positive evaluations of the varieties. This especially applies to GA as there is a very high number of films, series etc from the US.
6. Extensive usage of English on a daily basis by the respondents is also expected to give more positive evaluations of the varieties.

7. Those respondents who have visited English-speaking countries are expected to be more positive in general to the varieties.
8. Most respondents are expected to recognise RP and GA since they are highly represented in the media.
9. Many respondents are expected to recognise InEng because it is quite distinct, and due to an increase of the use of InEng in the media in recent years.
10. AusEng, SAmEng and IrEng are more likely to be unknown or confused with other varieties. IrEng may very well be confused with Scottish English.

### **1.3 Structure of the thesis**

The thesis consists of five chapters, each representing different aspects of the study. Chapter 1 introduces the thesis with its aim and research questions, along with some hypotheses. Chapter 2 is an outline of the theoretical background, and a presentation of previous studies within the field. The third chapter discusses the different methods and approaches relevant to the present study. This chapter also gives an outline of the six chosen varieties and the speakers representing these, the respondents and the questionnaire. In Chapter 4, the results of the research are presented, discussed and compared to previous studies. Finally, Chapter 5 summarises the findings and discusses them in relation to the research questions and hypotheses. It concludes the thesis, looks at some weaknesses and shortcomings, and it makes suggestions for future research.

## **2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

This chapter gives an overview of the theoretical background for the present thesis. It will first present what attitudes are, before looking at attitudes in relevance to language, English and varieties of English. Further it will give information of how English is a global language and its role in the world. Finally, this chapter will look at some previous studies within the field.

### **2.1 Attitudes**

People tend to use the word ‘attitude’ without knowing the essence of it. While the layman would perhaps say it is the opinions and thoughts people have of for example other people, theoreticians say that attitudes are used to explain human behaviour (Baker 1995:10-11). Attitudes cannot be observed directly, but one can observe manifestations of attitudes, for instance in the form of behaviour. People’s thoughts and feelings are not visible, behaviour in comparison is visible and can be evaluated and observed. Attitudes can be a good way to explain patterns of behaviour and summarise and predict behaviour. Attitudes can also be observed by having people report their thoughts and feelings in e.g. interviews or questionnaires.

There are several different definitions of attitudes, which typically refer to feelings (affect), thoughts (cognition), and behaviour. One definition is that of Thurstone (1931), who defined attitude as an ‘affect for or against a psychological object’ (in Garrett 2010:19). Another is that of Oppenheim who sees it as a psychological construct which is not easily observed (1982:39), and focuses on how attitudes only exist inside people’s minds. It is difficult to say where attitudes come from, but there is an idea, which some agree upon, that attitudes are something people learn, not something innate (Garrett 2010:22). The idea is that the social environment a person grows up in and the personal experiences she gains can be seen as the foundation for her attitudes. This is related to Allport’s (1954) definition which claims that attitudes are ‘a learned disposition to think, feel and behave toward a person (or object) in a particular way’ (in Garrett 2010:19). Thurstone focused solely on the positive and negative emotions attitudes creates, Oppenheim saw it related to the psychological aspect, whereas Allport found it to be connected to affect and thought as well as behaviour. All of

these three definitions include components of an attitude which provides explanations of what an attitude is and how it works.

As for most fields of research there are numerous definitions and seldom agreement among the researchers. It seems to be a basic agreement that an attitude is a construct and that it is difficult to observe. To have a broader perspective of an attitude and how it relates to different aspects, a definition such as Sarnoff's (1970) is a good starting point: an attitude is 'a disposition to react favourably or unfavourably to a class of objects' (in Garrett 2010:20). This way an attitude is seen as an evaluative orientation toward a social object (a person, a language, a society, a group of people etc.) which creates a stability that helps an attitude to be identified and thus observable and measurable.

To summarise what an attitude is, Garrett has described an attitude structure as consisting of the three components cognition, affect and behaviour (2010:23). It is cognitive because it includes people's beliefs and thoughts about the relationship between given social objects, and general or common ideas about the world. It is affective in the way it contains people's feelings about the given attitude object. This helps the measurability of an attitude because it connects to the positive or negative emotions, and the degree of positivity or negativity, a person has towards the attitude object. Finally, it is behavioural because it provides the person with a disposition to act in certain ways when facing a given social object, whether it be a language, a person or a society. The behavioural aspect can also be seen to predispose the person to act in consistency with her cognitive and affective reasonings.

## **2.2 Attitudes to language**

Attitudes are present in every human, whether one is aware of them or not. Attitudes to language are part of everyday life as people hear, use and process language each day (Garrett 2010:1-2). Most do not consider what attitudes they possess until they are made aware of these attitudes in one way or the other. When a character in a film has a non-pleasing way of speaking, attitudes are expressed through for example an irritated statement, or one might favour one pronunciation over the other and give reasons for this. Such examples are quite common in daily conversations and show how usual it is to have attitudes towards an object, and when the attitudes are negative they are usually easier to notice. It is not only pronunciation or intonation people have attitudes to. There are attitudes to all levels of language such as words, speech rate, grammar, dialects, accents and languages (ibid.). Words

are said to be a powerful weapon because they contain a lot of meaning, either positively or negatively. Words can be used to hurt, punish, praise, sell, provoke, etc. The choice of words can be crucial in several situations, one does not speak in a rude manner when addressing authoritative persons, and one tries to use favourable words in commercials, the business market and politics. The way in which one chooses to use words, and especially which words one uses, will affect the outcome of what one tries to achieve or avoid happening.

There are negative attitudes not only to smaller parts of a language, complete languages can also be seen negatively (Garrett 2010:10-11). Depending on the status of the language and partly the status of its speakers, the attitudes towards the language may be more positive or more negative. Minorities, both languages and peoples, are often perceived negatively and are more stigmatised than languages and peoples that seem to have taken, or been given, a leading or superior role. Stereotypes of people are related to attitudes towards languages. It seems to be the case that the way in which a person speaks decides which personality traits this person has (ibid.:6). How kind, intelligent, extrovert, helpful, honest etc., a person evaluates the speaker to be is highly guided by the way in which the speaker expresses her- or himself. History plays a crucial role in these stereotypes and ranking of languages. Standardisation of language helps reinforce a language's role and position and will increase its status along with its speakers (ibid.:7). The standardisation of a language will influence the attitudes towards it and affect both standard and non-standard varieties of the language since it involves ideas about correctness within the language.

This stereotyping, or judgement, of various groups of people based on how they speak, or pronounce words, is also important for life opportunities such as educational and job-related matters (Garrett 2010:12-15). Thus, the accent or variety a person speaks can impact whether or not she can receive a specific profession. If this person happens to have an accent which is stigmatised or seen as negative, the chances of achieving certain types of career opportunities is slim. Unless one tries to erase or reduce characteristics of the accent, aiming for a pronunciation more similar to a standard variety, one is more likely to be eliminated from a specific job market. This can also be problematic in other areas of life such as school admittance, social activities and acceptance or entrance to certain places or areas of a city, state or country. Positive or negative attitudes can thus decide the outcome for several areas of life, groups of people and societies. There is an agreement that attitudes can be both input and output when it comes to social action, an agreement explained through educational research (Baker 1995:12, Garrett 2010:21-22). Positive attitudes towards an area of learning, such as



biology or economics, may reinforce biology and economics as a whole. Negative attitudes on the other hand, may weaken the learning area.

Regarding studying language attitudes, there are three main approaches (Garrett 2010:37ff.). Firstly, there is a *direct approach* where respondents are simply asked direct questions. Secondly, there is an *indirect approach* where respondents are asked to give their opinion without using direct questions about the matter. The indirect approach involves using techniques such as the matched or verbal guise techniques. Finally, the last approach is *the societal treatment study*, which is based on analysis of public material (ibid.:51). These approaches will be explained further in Chapter 3 (see 3.1). Typically, when conducting language attitude research, one uses evaluative scales and rates the linguistic varieties on different evaluative dimensions. The most common dimensions are 'status', 'social attractiveness' (SA), and 'linguistic quality' (LQ). Each of these dimensions incorporates traits and qualities which are measured using evaluative scales. Typical factors incorporated in the status dimension are education, income, intelligence and ambition. Social attractiveness includes traits such as friendliness, likability and honesty, while linguistic quality refers to how beautiful, pleasant or intelligible a variety is.

### **2.3. Attitudes to English**

The history of language attitude studies is a rather short one. The field of such studies started in the 1970s, with Howard Giles as a major contributor. Most studies have been carried out in Britain, but in recent years the field has spread also to other countries. It is still a field in development in need of a larger body of data, with several areas to research and elaborate on. However, what studies have shown is that the evaluations of English accents seem to be very similar and consistent across studies. Typically, the standard varieties (such as RP) are ranked best, at least when it comes to 'status', Scottish English/Irish English and regional varieties are ranked second, typically with high scores on 'social attractiveness' and urban non-standard varieties (such as Cockney or Birmingham) are usually ranked at the bottom with the least positive scores. A similar type of ranking is found in studies carried out in the US. This shared manner of evaluation and ranking of various varieties may be related to stereotypes and stigmatisation, which will be elaborated on below. Lindemann claims that people seem to prefer varieties that are spoken by powerful groups of people, and that non-native speakers generally receive negative evaluations (2003:348). If the same values and attitudes apply to

Norwegians as well, one might conclude that language attitudes and stereotypes are internationally similar (cf. Scandinavian studies outlined in 2.8, and results from the present study in Chapter 4).

As mentioned in 2.2, standardisation of a language will influence the attitudes towards the language. Correctness is highly important for the standard language as it is supposed to be the norm to follow, both in dictionaries, grammar books and the spread via education (Garrett 2010:7, 34). This standard language ideology is also connected to the status of the language and which variety is seen as suitable to be the standard one, a title that gives authority and prestige. At the same time as standardisation creates prestige for some varieties it gives stigma to other, non-standard, varieties, which can be seen as less valuable. English is a language with many varieties of various status often linked to which social class it is used within. Standard British English/Received Pronunciation and Standard American English/General American is perhaps the most known varieties, although the layman would probably say British or American English. These are the forms one finds in dictionaries and which are taught at school, both within the countries and abroad.

Attitudes to English has often been researched in terms of standard and non-standard varieties where the researchers have included both the standard and non-standard varieties to see if the attitudes differ. Levin et al. (1994) did some studies of spoken and written forms to see if e.g. lexical formality affected the attitudes of the respondents. They looked at the various origins of English and how formality is often displayed through the use of Latinate forms, whereas Germanic forms show a more colloquial style, and these are more frequently used (ibid.:265). Their research showed that people tend to vary their use between Latinate and Germanic forms in day-to-day speech, but speakers who use more Latinate forms are negatively perceived by some as bookish, while others evaluate them to have a high competence. The results from the audio research that Levin et al. did showed that the Latinate passage was judged as more formal, trying to impress listeners, while the Germanic passage was seen to be more colloquial and use simpler grammar, trying to be friendly (ibid.:267). Thus, there is a difference in the speakers being judged as competent or trustworthy depending on their way of speaking, a judgement which is in accordance with the way British speakers of regional dialects vs Standard English are judged. Because the evaluations of the written forms were close to identical to the evaluations of the spoken ones, Levin et al. concluded that the use of a majority of either Latinate forms or Germanic forms is a substantial foundation for social judgement (ibid.:268).

A common finding is, as discussed above, that standard varieties often are judged more positively on status and competence than on social attractiveness. Levin et al. found similar patterns in their research where the more formal Latinate speakers were rated easier to listen to, more understandable, but less flexible and not as likely to help you as the less formal, Germanic speakers (1994:270-271). They found that speakers of RP were judged to be more formal, intelligent and ambitious than those who spoke with a non-standard variety. Speaking with a standard variety does not seem to be merely positive, at least not when friendliness, sociability and helpful skills are evaluated. This division between standard and non-standard varieties has been quite common in research results of several studies of English. It is regarded as a general pattern (Garrett 2010:64). Studies show that there is a typical threefold division where the standard variety is rated high in status and competence, but receive low ratings in social attractiveness. Furthermore, regional varieties are evaluated more negatively than standard ones, but urban varieties are rated the most negative. This is prominent in for instance Giles (1970), Ball (1983), Coupland and Bishop (2007), and Hiraga (2005).

Another finding that has been quite common is that RP generally receives better evaluations than GA. Even among Americans this seems to be true, cf. the study by Stewart, Ryan and Giles (1985). RP was evaluated higher in status than GA, however, it received lower evaluations for social attractiveness (Garrett 2010:63-64). Since both varieties are regarded as standard one might expect them to be more similarly judged and perhaps more or less equal. Yet, many studies show that RP is assigned a higher status than GA, which in a historical view makes sense. The dominance of the British Empire has provided a very high status for both the British language and the British people, perhaps mostly the higher social classes in Britain. This high status has remained even after the fall of the Empire, which may be one reason why the standard British English accent is evaluated higher than the standard American English accent. Nonetheless, in recent years, there has been a discussion of an ongoing, or expected change where American English surpasses British English in popularity, status and prestige. The change is explained in reference to globalisation and the US' increasing role in the world when it comes to e.g. media, politics, war and business (Garrett 2010:66).

As the US is approaching world dominance in several areas, American English has spread globally, which again is visible in results of recent research, such as McKenzie (2008) who showed that American English was rated higher in status than RP (in Garrett 2010:74).

This study was done in Japan, where Japanese people evaluated US and UK English, in addition to Japanese accented English. Similar results were found in a study among students in New Zealand, Australia and the US by Bayard et al. (2001). The results of Bayard's earlier studies already suggested that the prestige model of RP is being replaced or at least supplemented by American English (Bayard et al. 2001:24). Also in this study, the results show that the American voices were evaluated more highly than the British ones, which were rated surprisingly low (ibid.:40). The Australian voices were judged quite neutrally, but the New Zealand voices were evaluated the most negatively. Bayard et al. concludes that the dominance of RP has been replaced by the dominance of American English, at least in New Zealand media, due to the very high influence of American culture, food, music and films (2001:41). They see a similar situation in Australia. In light of these results, Bayard et al. predict that the globalisation of world media based on American models will make American English superior and the major global form of English, reflected in attitudes, lexicon and idiom (2001:44). However, as discussed below, this prediction may not be as clear as expected.

#### **2.4 Attitudes to varieties of English**

Several historical events are part of the reason why there today exist so many different varieties of English around the world, something which will be outlined below (cf. 2.6 English as a global language). There are several varieties of English in the obvious places such as the UK, the US and Australia, but there are also many varieties within Africa and Asia for instance. The expansion of the British Empire is of course a major reason for the spread of English globally, but as already mentioned, in present times perhaps the dominance and the spread of American culture are the main reasons why English continuously spreads around the world and keeps its global status.

As outlined above, the typical hierarchical ranking of varieties within English is that the standard varieties are rated higher than the regional ones, and the urban varieties are rated the most negative. Even so, both RP and GA are seen as standard varieties of English, but are not ranked or evaluated similarly. The typical pattern is an evaluation where RP has better evaluations than GA when it comes to status and competence, but not social attractiveness. Some newer studies showed results where GA was rated higher than RP giving the expectation that American English would take the position which British English possess.

However, a recent study of attitudes among British people towards varieties in Britain and the US performed by Hiraga (2005) showed similar results as older studies, e.g. Giles (1970). Hiraga's results show that RP is ranked first, followed by Network American (standard American English), West Yorkshire third and Alabama fourth, whereas the New York City accent was ranked fifth and finally at the bottom and sixth place comes Birmingham (2005:299). Here we can see that RP still ranks highest and standard American English second, which can indicate that the expected change in status between these two varieties has not yet taken place. Coupland and Bishop (2007) have similar results regarding ranking and evaluations of standard, regional and urban varieties. They used material from the BBC's *Voices* (a large online survey in connection to language variation within Britain) and researched attitudes towards 34 different accents evaluated by 5010 respondents of various ages.

In addition to this, Hiraga's results showed that British people divide varieties in the same threefold manner as outlined above. They rank standard varieties highest, followed by rural or regional varieties and at the bottom there are urban varieties of English (2005:299). Hiraga assumes that the reason why British people evaluate American varieties in the same manner as British ones, is because they still, even if the British society is becoming less class bound, are very connected to the social connotations related to the different varieties (ibid.:300-306). The question of how prestigious a variety is, seems to be very important for the British people. In addition, it seems that Hiraga's respondents have judged the urban American variety based on the criteria they already used for the urban British variety, that is, the variety of the stigmatised working-class. Because of this, both urban varieties in this study received the lowest ranking. The respondents used the same method when evaluating the rural varieties since people living in a British city often have a romanticised view of the countryside. In the US, the southern parts are stigmatised within the country, and there are no similar romantic ideas connected to the South. Thus, the Americans would probably not evaluate the variety as positively as the British people.

## **2.5 Stereotypes**

The social categorisation where people are divided into social groups is called stereotyping (Garrett 2010:32). This division is based on a classification of individuals which are believed to have some similar qualities so that they belong to the same social group. The attitudes

which can be found are quite likely to be influenced by stereotypes that exist within the respondent's country or culture. People can be divided into different groups based on various factors. There can be stereotypes of people who work in supermarkets, people who go to university, people with a low income, people from a certain country or city, people with a particular religion or ethnicity and so on. Stereotyping can be based on various qualities such as appearance, language style, how efficient, popular or educated individuals seem to be. Garrett points out that stereotypes may be positive or negative and that social groups can be admired or disliked (2010:32).

Stereotypes are relevant for attitudinal studies because attitudes are linked to stereotypes which exist within a social group or a culture. This social categorisation is a method one uses to systematise and make sense of the surrounding social environment, it is how people are able to understand it (Kristiansen 2001:136-138). A possible explanation of stereotypes is to define them as a set of beliefs and disbeliefs about a given group of people. Usually, it is a social construct shared by many, but it can also be affected by individual experience. Stereotypes are often old, well-entrenched and difficult to change (Garrett 2010:33). Because stereotypes are a normal part of society and something learnt, it is not a great surprise why most are not aware of having them. This is also a reason why most do not reflect on why they have attitudes to people according to how they speak – they just have them. The way people speak and the accent they use can trigger stereotypes connected to the social or ethnic group the speaker belongs to (ibid.:33). Stereotypes are upheld by beliefs about other groups of people, countries etc and gives a satisfactory reason why people should be judged or treated a certain way. Inequalities between groups of people can be maintained through stereotypes, which again can keep a division between groups of people or individuals. This is all linked to ideology – the idea that a particular thing or thought, rather than another, is ideal. When stereotypes keep these beliefs and inequalities alive, ideology seems to be accurate. Social stereotypes are strongly included in the language attitudes field (ibid.:4). This should not come as a surprise, when social stereotyping is referred to as the idea of accents being able to evoke attitudes connected to their users (Kristiansen 2001:130).

Stereotyping is often expressed through certain words. These words are meant to describe how people perceive of things, and often these words are commonly used by most people. As discussed above (cf. 2.2), words can have a massive effect depending on how they are used. Garrett et al. (2005) refer to these words as *keywords* and use these in a study concerning attitudes and stereotypes. Keywords are all about immediate reactions from

respondents regarding how they feel about certain things (such as linguistic varieties and groups of people) comprised into words. Stereotypes of people seem to guide these words as many use the same words when describing groups of people for instance. In their study, Garrett et al. present the term ‘keyword technique’ and see this as valuable when researching attitudes towards varieties of English (2005:37). The results of this study will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. Existing stereotypes are often associated with certain ‘keywords’ used to describe groups of people. The social stereotypes of a British person can be connected to words such as *uptight*, *posh* or *stiff*, and for an Australian the words could be *laidback*, *outgoing* or *relaxed*. Often, what people think and the words they use are related to how these groups of people are portrayed in the media (see 2.7). Most people have not travelled the world and met all groups of people first-hand, yet most seem to have opinions of and attitudes towards any group of people. Hence, stereotypes expressed through certain words (i.e. *keywords*), are related to indirect experience via for instance news and films.

## **2.6 English as a global language**

English has become a global language in recent times, known first for its dialects of England and Ireland until the 16<sup>th</sup> century (McArthur 2012:447), before spreading as mother tongue, official language, or second language, and the foreign language children learn at school in many countries of the world. English was a famous language, but has achieved dominance all over the world through changes and a wide dispersion (ibid:446). Due to historic events, English as a language spread beyond the borders of the British Isles and kept spreading so that today most of the world’s inhabitants speak, understand, or know of the English language. English is not simply English any longer, it can be mixed with features of other languages into new varieties, for instance Indian English, and thus the terminology has changed so that one speaks of *the English languages*, *the Englishes* or *world Englishes* (McArthur 2012:447-448). From the 1970-1980s countries beyond Britain, Ireland, North America and Australia developed their own varieties of the English language, which is one reason why the terminology had to change.

According to Crystal, a language achieves a global status when it has a special role which every country recognizes (2003:3-4). This role can either be that it is the mother tongue of the country or that the country gives the language a special place in its societies. McArthur explains globalization as a process of interest in both linguistic, social and cultural matters in

a world-wide perspective (2012:457-458). English has become a primary language in the world, not only as a socio-cultural language, but the language of media and communication, and international trade and business. Where English is not an official language, as in European countries such as Switzerland, the Netherlands, Norway and Denmark, it still has a high status and is used as a lingua franca in business, academic teaching and publishing, and is thus just as often in use together with other languages as it is used as a singular language (McArthur 2012:464). When a language spreads it creates language change (Crystal 2012:489-490). When English sets root within new communities it eventually achieves a central place, and is used in normal communication, such as expression of needs. It is increasingly used to express local identity alongside other available languages. It cannot be said to take over, but is influenced by the already existing language(s). The form of English is therefore different for every country because it is based on different pronunciations and grammatical patterns – thus, there arise many different varieties of English.

The two major varieties are the Englishes spoken in the UK and the US. Even if the popularity of US English seems to make it the dominant of the two, UK English still maintained a high status in the late 1990s. A suggestion here is that US English has gained popularity through a massive production of popular culture, such as Hollywood movies and popular music, which has been exported to most parts of the world and affected younger generations (McArthur 2012:465-470). The spread of English around the world was helped by the US industry of popular culture, but also due to the development of NATO and the fact that this organisation uses English as a communication language. McArthur further claims that the reason why English became so strong and achieved titles such as a global language and a lingua franca in the twentieth century, was “a combination of war, economics, politics, and pragmatism” (2012:470). The cultural, social and educational sides have also been an influence, but in this manner only a minor one. Crystal also agrees that the power of a language’s people is the reason why a language becomes global, and especially the power they possess within military and politics (2003:9).

Another factor to consider is the growth in contact between countries across the globe, which creates a need for a communication language. It has in recent years become much easier to travel, or keep contact across borders both physically and electronically (Crystal 2003:13-14). This is due to how technology impacts a language, something it has done throughout history, from the invention of ink to the radio, telephone and tv, and up to the invention of mobile phones and the internet with all its possibilities (Crystal 2012: 497-498).



The internet in particular has changed how we perceive of a language and its use, it is not simply a matter of spoken or written language any longer. The various ways in which a language can be used on the internet and via various communication areas has expanded greatly. It is now allowed to blend spoken and written language when typing, to divide, cut and paste, and shorten as needed, not to mention the graphic language available. This moves a language forward and strengthens its position because the use and the number of users expands continuously.

Today, English is used all over the world, not only as a first language. To systematise all the different varieties there is a division among global Englishes, usually presented by Kachru's Three Circle Model (cf. Galloway & Rose 2015; Melchers & Shaw 2011). Kachru classifies World Englishes into three circles, the 'inner circle', the 'outer circle', and the 'expanding circle'. This classification is based on the speakers of English and the usage of the language. So, the 'inner circle' contains those who have English as a first language, which are primarily the people of the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The 'outer circle' are those who use English as a second language (in law, politics, education and business within the country) which include people in Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Ghana, Singapore and Malaysia among others. The 'expanding circle' are those who use English as a language of communication, a lingua franca, when it comes to for instance education, business and politics outside the country, which include many European, Asian and African countries. Although the model has been criticised and seen as not giving the whole picture of the English language's situation today, it is highly useful to get an overall understanding and impression of the global role and functions of English.

## **2.7 The media**

As discussed in 2.3, it is expected that American English will achieve a higher status because of globalisation and an increasing global role of the US. It was mentioned that media had a part in this since the US has a very high proportion of global media today. Most films, series, and TV shows available on TV and streaming services are of American origin. In addition, the Americans invented popular internet services and mobile applications, such as Google, Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram. The media may affect both knowledge, attitudes and behaviour, either positively or negatively. It can be seen as a highly significant social phenomenon of our time (Stuart-Smith 2007:140). Television can offer contact with

languages, or varieties of a language which is difficult to achieve otherwise. This contact can potentially impact language change, pronunciation or the way one speaks (ibid.:140-142). However, not all linguists agree whether television can have such a major influence on language. Some say it can increase awareness of varieties of language, but it is less likely to create change. Nevertheless, among the younger generations there are seen changes that spreads very rapidly which are difficult to explain without considering the impact of media.

The possible impact the media can have on language should not be dismissed altogether. The media has played an important role in spreading and fortifying the English language, giving it a high and strong status, for example through newspapers, journals, magazines and academic publications (Crystal 2003:90-93). The English language has through these established a high profile and maintained it. Within politics, the clever way of using the language, playing with words and phrases, has a major impact on the outcome, and the media is used to campaign politicians and political parties, with huge success. The use of English is also seen in the world of advertising. Not only on TV, but in magazines, on the internet, at the bus-stop, at the doctor's office, everywhere you go there is an advertisement where language has been used to achieve something. This business often uses English in advertisements not only in the UK or the US, but globally, manifesting the importance of the English language worldwide (ibid.:93-95). It should come as no surprise that it is American English which is the leading variety in this area.

Radio and television was developed and first produced in the US and the UK with, of course, the English language (Crystal 2003:95ff.). Broadcasting was meant to be entertainment, but it was also seen as a way of informing and educating the people, and so broadcasting in English spread to other countries. The popularity of radio and television spread rapidly all over the world, however, the US was in the lead with most people owning receivers, a change that also promoted English and at the same time empowered English globally. Also, when the film industry was born, America was quick to take over and be the dominant producer, thus English also dominated in this area from the 1920s (ibid.:99ff.). English is still the dominant language in the film industry, and English productions far outranks productions in other languages. The USA was estimated to control approximately 85 per cent of this industry in the 1990s with Hollywood films shown in most countries. There is no reason to believe that this dominance has regressed over the last decade. Crystal goes on listing the dominance of English in popular music, international travel and safety, education, and communications (ibid.:100ff.).

The English language thus has a unique role in very many countries across the world. Considering this, in addition to the role of media in today's society where people more or less believe what they hear on the radio, see on TV, read in newspapers and on the internet, buy what they have seen advertisements for, and look up to stars and celebrities, it is difficult to claim that the media has no impact whatsoever on language and attitudes to language. Exposure to linguistic varieties through broadcast media may be a contributing factor in the spreading of certain features (cf. Stuart-Smith 2007), and the systematic correlations between accents and character traits in films (attested in e.g. Lippi-Green 2012) are likely to affect attitudes towards those accents.

## **2.8 Previous studies**

Most studies of language attitudes towards English are done by using native speakers as respondents. The present study uses non-native speakers, which is not that common within the field. However, there are some previous studies that also focus on non-native speakers' attitudes towards English which are comparable to the present one. Ladegaard performed a study among Danish people where he researched the attitudes they had of three British varieties (RP, Cockney and Scottish), American English and Australian English (1998:253-254). He included respondents of two groups, one with expectancy of basic cultural knowledge, and one with expectancy of advanced cultural knowledge. His study was divided into three: a verbal guise experiment (see 3.1.3) with five speakers; a questionnaire with some open and some closed questions regarding British and American culture; and a language performance test. The respondents were to evaluate the varieties based on questions about status and competence, personal integrity and social attractiveness, and linguistic quality (ibid.: 258). Ladegaard's results from the verbal guise experiment suggest that the attitudes of Danish people are the same as those found in British studies. The variety which is evaluated most favourably in terms of prestige is RP. The evaluations of the other accents also clearly indicate similar attitudes in Denmark as in English-speaking countries, following the same social stereotypes (Ladegaard 1998:259ff.). The RP speaker was evaluated most negatively with regards to personal integrity and social attractiveness. The Scottish speaker was evaluated the most positively when it comes to friendliness and helpfulness, the Australian speaker was judged to be the most reliable, whereas the speaker of standard American was seen as the most humorous. The Danish respondents were not completely able to identify all the varieties, they had most success in identifying the American variety followed by RP, but

the other three varieties were all difficult to identify. Surprisingly, Ladegaard found that advanced knowledge of the culture had no significant difference in the outcome of identification, as both groups had similar results. American culture seems to be slightly more favoured than British, however, the respondents' language preference is clearly RP (Ladegaard 1998:262-266). As Ladegaard points out, there may be an expectation that the American variety would be the preferred one due to media and globalisation, but this is not so. RP still has its status of prestige and competence linked to it, and it is evaluated to be the model for pronunciation, at least for Ladegaard's respondents. The same attitudes and evaluations were found in the results of the written questionnaire, which again confirms that the attitudes of Danish people are similar to those found in the UK and the US.

Another study of non-natives evaluating English performed in Denmark by Jarvella et al., researched how advanced Danish students of English evaluated and identified eight speakers (two from each country), respectively from Ireland (Dublin and the Irish Midlands), Scotland (both Dumfries, but lives in Glasgow), England (Wigan and Birmingham) and the USA (Milwaukee and Los Angeles) (2001:39-41). They used two speakers from each area to include both colloquial and formal speech, but avoided the use of RP and GA since they lack localization. These respondents were highly able to correctly identify the speakers, they identified them correctly in 74% of all cases (ibid.:42). The most recognised speakers were those from England followed by the Americans, with respectively 91% and 81% correct identification. The speakers from Scotland were identified correctly in 70% of the cases, whereas the Irish speakers were most difficult to identify with 54% correct cases. There was some confusion between the Scottish and Irish speakers, which explains why these had less correct identification ratio. When it comes to evaluating the speakers, the respondents rated the English speakers most favourably, the Scottish speakers secondly, then the Irish speakers and finally, as the least favoured speakers comes the American voices (ibid.:45-50). This study shows that the varieties spoken in England (Wigan and Birmingham) far exceeds the varieties spoken in America (Milwaukee and Los Angeles) when it comes to pleasantness, which is the opposite of what was expected considering the change discussed above. It should be noted, however, that this change discussed RP and GA. Nonetheless, it is interesting to see results which are that far from this hypothesis, where English speakers are still highest ranked, but American speakers are not equal or second at all in this study. On the contrary, they are ranked last.

A third study among non-native speakers is that of Loftheim (2013). He researched the attitudes among Norwegian students and adults towards three British (RP, Scottish and Cockney) and three American (GA, Southern and New York City) varieties of English. He performed his research by using a verbal guise experiment and a written questionnaire. His results were similar to those of Ladegaard, showing that perhaps Scandinavians evaluate English varieties in the same manner when they only hear them. The respondents in this study ranked RP as the most favoured accent, followed by GA as second most favoured, and Scottish with a more neutral evaluation. The variety spoken in New York City was rated more negatively, however, the Cockney and Southern varieties were evaluated as the least favourable (Loftheim 2013:47-49). These results indicate that the attitudes of Norwegians are similar to those found in the UK and the US where standard varieties are rated more positively than regional and urban ones. Loftheim finds that for the British varieties they follow the ranking of standard, regional and urban, but this is not the same for the American varieties. Here the Norwegians rank the urban variety of New York above the regional variety of the South, which Loftheim suggests can be due to what knowledge the respondents have when identifying the varieties.

Another interesting finding of Loftheim is how the standard varieties overall are rated more positively than the other varieties, when they usually are rated lower on social attractiveness (2013:51-52). In addition, GA is usually more positively rated on social attractiveness than RP, but not in this study. RP receives the best evaluations in all dimensions. Both RP and GA are seen as models for pronunciation, but none of the other varieties are, which may be related to what is taught in school and which varieties are used in the media. In the written questionnaire, GA did better than RP, showing again similarity to Ladegaard's results (*ibid.*:54ff.). Both Loftheim and Ladegaard got results that placed RP first in the verbal guise experiment, but GA first in the written questionnaire.

Loftheim also collected information about the respondents' age, gender, visits to the UK and the US, amount of exposure to English-speaking films and TV, and usage of English on a daily basis. The results show that age had no significant effect on the evaluations, neither did gender. Visits to English-speaking countries also had no significant effect, except the small tendency that those who had travelled little seemed to downgrade the varieties slightly more (*ibid.*:61ff.). The question regarding the amount of exposure to films and tv had the outcome that those respondents who watch a lot of films and TV were generally more positive to the various accents. It also seems that those respondents who claimed to use English on a

daily basis were more positive towards the different varieties than those who did not use English as often. The results from the verbal guise experiment and the written questionnaire is quite similar, but Loftheim states that many of his respondents were not able to identify correctly the speaker of GA in the verbal guise experiment (2013:68). Loftheim concludes that his results are very similar to the results found among native speakers in both the UK and the US, and also to the attitudes found among Danish people in Ladegaard's study.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This chapter is devoted to the different methods and approaches relevant to the present study and how these have been used in my study. First, the chapter will outline how there are three main approaches to studying language attitudes, as mentioned in Chapter 2 (see 2.2). Further, it will look at questionnaire design. Finally, the details concerning the study, such as the respondents and the questionnaire, will be presented at the end of the chapter.

#### **3.1 The study and measurement of language attitudes**

To research and measure attitudes is a difficult, yet feasible task because attitudes cannot be directly observed. There are several issues causing measurement problems, which is something one must take into consideration when studying attitudes (Baker 1995:17-19). Garrett names three main approaches to studying language attitudes: *the direct approach*, *the indirect approach* and *the societal treatment studies approach* (2010:17-51). The societal treatment approach involves studying societal attitudes using public material such as films and newspapers, in order to gain access to what social meanings and which stereotypical associations there are of languages and language varieties in societies (Garrett 2010:51). The methods relevant for the present study are the direct and indirect approach.

##### **3.1.1 The direct approach**

The direct approach is a research method where one asks the respondents direct questions about their opinions of the topic at hand (Garrett 2010:39). They may be asked in an interview or in a questionnaire and the questions will be directly about which preferences, attitudes or opinions they have of languages, varieties of a language or other phenomena related to language. According to Garrett this approach may seem to be a good way of getting to know the attitudes of people because you simply ask them their opinion, but this very point may also be the reason why this approach is problematic.

The field of language attitude studies received critique in the 1960s mostly because attitudes are related to human behaviour (see 2.1) and as behaviour is not a static entity, it changes (Baker 1995:13-17). The critique from the 1960s ensured a renewal within the field

of attitude studies making it again regarded as valuable. However, it is dependent on satisfactory measurement devices to ensure its reliability (Baker 1995:17). The reason why the direct approach can be rather problematic to use is because the respondents may not wish to tell the whole truth, they may perhaps want to appear better than what they are, and they may wish to be politically correct. They could also be affected by the researcher and how they perceive the meaning of the research, they might wish to give the researcher the answer they assume the researcher wants, or they may not be aware of all their attitudes (Garrett 2010:42-44; Baker 1995:17-19). This implies that the direct approach is not without challenges because the researcher can never know if the answers are reliable and valid.

This tendency of the respondents to not always being absolutely honest is referred to as a "social desirability bias" and an "acquiescence bias" (Garrett 2010:44-45). What the social desirability bias means is that the respondents provide answers according to what they assume should be the attitude towards the given variable, i.e. what they feel society wants them to think and not what they really think, causing validity problems with the results. Likewise, the acquiescence bias can cause problems for the results' validity because the respondents will provide whatever answer they believe the researcher wants, in order to be approved. In other words, they will agree with what they think the researcher wants them to, even if they do not agree (ibid.:45). In addition, the characteristics of the researcher and the language, pronunciation or speech style of the researcher may have an impact on the respondents' answers and thus the research results (Garrett 2010:45-46). Other challenges are that people may simply wish to keep some of their attitudes private, or it may be that they are not aware that they have certain attitudes because they have several sets of attitudes - evoked by different factors (ibid.:42-43). Thus, asking direct questions may not lead to exact or truthful answers, and the researcher must always be aware of these impediments.

One main advantage of the direct method is that it is quite straightforward and easy to carry out (Garrett 2010:37-39). It can also be very efficient, as the researcher can reach a large number of informants if for example the data is gathered online. However, the respondents are presented with labels in the direct method (e.g. *American English, Scottish*), which are often very broad and can be interpreted differently by different respondents. Providing labels for the respondents may impact the results, but it is a weakness difficult to avoid. There is no perfect solution when it comes to choosing and using labels, because all terms have various connotations. When it comes to the inherent weaknesses of the direct method, there are ways to minimise the effects of these. The researcher can secure the respondents' anonymity so that



they feel safe to provide their opinions. Further, the researcher should avoid asking slanted questions with ‘loaded’ words to stay clear of affecting the answer of the respondents. Ensuring the respondents that there are no right or wrong answers is also a way the researcher can minimise the effects, in addition to dressing and behaving neutrally (Garrett 2010:43-46).

### **3.1.2 The indirect approach**

The indirect approach is a research method which can compensate for some of the weaknesses of the direct approach when it comes to measuring attitudes, as it is a subtler method of asking people what they think and feel (Garrett 2010:41). It involves gaining access to people’s attitudes in a more indirect way where the respondents listen to recordings of linguistic varieties without being told which varieties they are, and then asked to evaluate the people in the recordings. Within this method there are two techniques which are used, *the matched guise technique* and *the verbal guise technique*. The most common is the matched guise technique which involves the respondents listening to recordings of a given text read by the same speaker, who changes the accent for each reading of the text (ibid.:41). However, the respondents are informed that there are as many speakers as there are recordings, even if there is only one, and they are asked to evaluate the speakers on a number of different traits. Ideally, the respondents will then judge the accents, not the speakers.

The idea behind this technique is to have every reading as similar as possible: the same voice, speech rate etc., so that the respondents will not judge anything but the various accents - factors such as different voice quality, speech rate, intonation, and pauses may affect the respondents’ attitude toward an accent, the respondents might focus more on the fact that the speaker spoke slowly or took many pauses than the accent itself (Garrett 2010:41). When we say that this technique can be seen as deceiving it means that the respondents are aware of it being an attitude rating, but they are not fully aware of what they are rating since they throughout the survey are listening, judging and filling out questionnaires believing there are several speakers, they are not told that it is only one speaker until the survey is finished (ibid.:41).

Advantages of the matched guise technique are for example that it is a good method of gaining access to people’s private attitudes and one can more easily avoid the social desirability bias (Garrett 2010:57). The technique has been an inspiration for several studies internationally, which has provided many interesting findings, in addition to a greater

foundation of research within studies of sociolinguistics. One important advantage that this technique has contributed to the field is how it has given researchers a possibility “... to establish the main dimensions of language evaluation (prestige, social attractiveness and dynamism) ...”, and thus providing a foundation to how one can understand language variation in a sociolinguistic manner (ibid.:57).

Even if the matched guise technique is the commonly preferred technique it is quite difficult to find a person who is able to speak as many accents as needed when doing a study of a multitude of accents. Moreover, when the range of accents is as wide as in the present study, it is near impossible to find a person who can speak all six varieties as a native speaker. One major weakness of the matched guise technique is then the question of authenticity (Garrett 2010:58-59). Is it possible for one person to pronounce the different varieties as a native speaker would? It can be questioned if this is authentic enough, and the respondents may find the pronunciation odd if they are familiar with the variety. Also, the authenticity of the style is a factor to consider, as the speaker would read the text and not speak spontaneously, which could add a certain ‘stiffness’ to the recording. Another weakness is how the respondents may believe that a variety is from a different geographical area than what it actually is – the question of what the respondent is judging is then of importance (Garrett 2010:57-58). The respondents should therefore be asked where they think the speaker is from (ibid.:58). Weaknesses such as these can be minimised by using the related verbal guise technique.

### **3.1.2.1 The verbal guise technique**

The verbal guise technique is a modified version of the matched guise technique. It involves one speaker of each accent reading the same text instead of just one speaker altogether as in the matched guise technique. The importance of finding speakers with similar speech rates for instance, is therefore quite high (Garrett 2010:41-42). It uses the same procedure as the matched guise technique where the respondents are told at the beginning of the survey that they are to listen to recordings of different speakers and after each recording they are to fill out a questionnaire evaluating each speaker as well as their personal traits (ibid.). Filling out the questionnaires typically means to evaluate the speaker by various adjectives and placing them on a scale of some sort where one end is negative and the other positive.

Advantages of using the verbal guise technique are for example that one avoids the authenticity problem of the matched guise technique. As the speakers are native speakers of the variety they provide authentic pronunciations, which is better than a non-authentic reading from a non-native speaker as in the matched guise technique. However, different speakers may have different voice quality, speech rate, clarity and intonation, which may affect the answers of the respondents and thus the results. Using speakers of the same gender and with approximately the same speech rate could minimise this weakness.

### **3.1.3 Questionnaire design**

The questionnaire used in the present study was based on various criteria which one must remember and take into consideration when conducting a survey of some sort. When it comes to studies within language attitude it is important to be careful when making the questionnaire, simply because people's opinions can be a delicate area and one wants the respondents to feel comfortable enough to answer truthfully. The questionnaire should thus be designed as neutrally as possible. In order to do so one must select words, questions and terms carefully. To be able to collect responses that will help answer the research questions and compare the results one needs to have a research design (Oppenheim 1992:6). Research design is the plan of how the researcher can ask questions, what to ask, what variables to use, which groups to ask, and what comparisons to be included – the researcher wants to make the survey in such a way that the results are reliable and comparable with other studies.

Having respondents relate to words and labels is inherently problematic. This has to do with the fact that each person carries different meanings and connotations to words. Because everyone has different experiences in life, everyone also has different connotations to words. Garrett writes about how important and risky it is to choose words, and how companies spend much money on finding “perfect” words for their brands to make sure it will be positive and sell their product (2010:2-3). The same applies to surveys. It is crucial to use as neutral terms and words as possible when making questionnaires so one avoids offending or creating negative connotations in the respondents' minds. Unfortunately, it is near impossible to avoid this with every respondent when the number of respondents is high, because there are limitations of how many different words one can use to signify the same thing.

There are several important issues to consider when making the questionnaire. How to build it up, how to formulate the questions and in which order the questions should appear in the questionnaire. It is important to have the questions regarding personal data about the respondents at the very end of the questionnaire because these questions can be sensitive for the respondents to answer (Oppenheim 1992:108-109). In addition, these questions are not what the respondents expect when invited to be part of a study about language or society for instance, thus it is best to start with the questions that are related to the research topic. One should be careful when making the questions because the type of question, or the words one chooses to use in the questions can impact the respondents in a negative way, which again may give negative results for the study. It is important to think about which order the questions are arranged in the questionnaire to make it more likely that the respondents will be positive towards answering them.

The type of question can also be of importance for the results. Most surveys have a mixture of open and closed questions, which have both advantages and disadvantages (Oppenheim 1992:115). Open questions provide the respondents with an opportunity to give their personal meaning, while closed questions are easy to process and may be more quickly answered. However, open questions are more time-consuming and depends on the respondents' effort. Closed questions give no room for spontaneity and can create annoyance with the respondents. Questions one should try to avoid are hypothetical questions because these are difficult to answer since people do not know for certain what they would do in a hypothetical situation (Garrett 2010:43-44). One should also avoid multiple questions because one can never know which part of the question the respondents answer. In addition, one should avoid asking questions where the use of 'strong' or 'loaded' words are used to avoid leading the respondents in any way or offending them. Nonetheless, the researcher must choose either way and maintain an awareness of the inherent weaknesses of the method.

The 'strong' or 'loaded' words are best to steer clear of because they may offend, irritate, hurt or upset the respondents. Oppenheim gives some examples of words that are best not used: "black, free, healthy, natural, regular, unfaithful," and "Nazi, bosses, interference, motherly, starvation" (1992: 130 and 137). Every person has her or his own experience in life and different connotations to words, pictures, places, peoples, languages etc. The researcher should always try to formulate the questions in such a way that one may avoid biases and misunderstandings, but there will always be differences between the respondents, and these differences may influence the results (ibid.:121-122). The questions should make the

respondents co-operate and stay positive to the survey in order for them to give answers which will give valid results. Thus, the focus and content of the questions must be correct, the words used must be suitable, and the context and the response categories must aid the respondents, not lead or affect the answers. One should also avoid using terminology in the questions that the respondents may not be familiar with.

### **3.2 The present study**

In the present study, I use a combination of direct and indirect methods. The respondents are presented with a verbal guise test as well as a questionnaire with direct questions about their attitudes towards linguistic varieties. This research is inspired by previous studies and aims to be quite similar to these, so that my results can be compared with previous results. This study is however unique in that it includes a wider range of varieties of English, including varieties from the outer circle (see 2.6). Moreover, most previous research involves native speakers of English evaluating English dialects or accents. Only a few studies involve non-native speakers evaluating varieties of English, which is the case for the present study.

#### **3.2.1 The linguistic varieties**

For this study, I have included six different varieties of English: Received Pronunciation (RP), General American (GA), Irish English, Australian English, Southern American English and Indian English. This selection was made based on which varieties the typical Norwegian could be exposed to and would be likely to hear in the media. The expectation was that they would have knowledge of RP and GA, because these are highly represented in Norway in several areas, such as popular music, films and TV. InEng was expected to be recognized because of an increase of representation in films and series in recent years, such as *The Big Bang Theory*, in addition to an increased awareness of Bollywood. AusEng was considered to be known by respondents in both age groups due to a popular series called *Home and Away* and the *Crocodile Dundee* films. IrEng and SAmEng was not expected to be as well-known or recognized, because they are not that commonly used. Both are however represented in the media, *Nashville* for example is a popular series where SAmEng is used, and the host of *The Graham Norton Show* is from Ireland.

### 3.2.1.1 Received Pronunciation and General American

RP is the accent associated with England and high prestige, it is also referred to as ‘Standard English’, ‘BBC English’, or ‘Queen’s English’, or as the speech of someone without an accent (Wells 1982:117). It is traditionally the accent of the British upper class, but with some recent social changes in England, RP may be lowered from its high social status. RP is most common within the educated population in Southern Britain, and typically used in national newscasts. However, speakers of RP only make up about 10 per cent of England’s population (ibid.:117-118), and it should be mentioned that there is variation within RP, it is not a static variety.

As with RP, GA is also seen as a kind of ‘standard’ pronunciation of American English. It applies to those Americans who do not have an accent which can be geographically recognized, as opposed to accents such as the New York accent or the Southern accent (Wells 1982:118). In addition, GA is the pronunciation which foreign learners of American English are taught. However, GA is not without variation as it is spoken by two-thirds of the population from Ohio in the east to the Pacific Coast in the west, and the name ‘General American’ can thus be seen as suspicious (Wells 1982:118; Kretzschmar 2008:42). Even so, it is well known outside the US borders, as it is popularly used in media. The main features of RP and GA are outlined in e.g. Wells (1982:117-168), Cruttenden (2014), Nilsen (2010:192-198) and Kretzschmar (2008). The most important differences between the two accents are as follows:

- Most vowels are similar for RP and GA, but the pronunciation of the lexical sets CLOTH, LOT and BATH differs between them. RP has /ɒ/ in LOT and CLOTH, a phonetic symbol non-existing in GA, and /ɑ:/ in BATH. GA has /ɑ:/ in LOT, /ɔ:/ in CLOTH, and /æ/ in BATH.
- RP has the diphthong /əʊ/ in the lexical set GOAT, while GA has /oo/.
- RP has in addition three diphthongs that do not exist in GA, namely the centring diphthongs /ɪe/, /eə/, and /ʊə/ used in words of the sets NEAR, SQUARE, and CURE, respectively.
- RP is a non-rhotic accent where /r/ is only pronounced prevocally, whereas GA is a rhotic accent where /r/ is pronounced in all positions.
- There is a difference in the distribution of /j/. RP adds a /j/ between /t, d, n, θ, z/ and /u:/ in words such as *tune*, *due*, *new*, *enthusiast* and *presume*. GA typically has no /j/ in these cases.

- The realisation of /l/ is also different where RP has two allophones of /l/ - [l], clear /l/, is used before vowels (such as *love* and *silly*) and [ɫ], dark /l/, is used in all other positions (such as *hall* and *cold*). GA use a relatively dark, or velarized, /l/ in all positions.
- When it comes to the realisation of /t/, RP typically has [t] in all positions, while GA has a voiced tap, [ɾ] in words such as *city*, *better*, *bottle*, and *party*.

### 3.2.1.2 Irish English

Irish English is the variety spoken in the Republic of Ireland, which has some of its roots from the English ‘planters’ in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Wells 1982:418). Of course, the indigenous Irish language (Gaelic) has had a phonetic influence as well (Wells 1982:417; Hickey 2008:72-74). The main characteristics of Irish English are described in Wells (1982:417-450) and Hickey (2008) and are as follows:

- IrEng is a rhotic accent, /r/ is pronounced in all positions.
- The lateral /l/ is typically clear in all contexts.
- Intervocalic and final /t/ is realised with an incomplete closure which is called t-opening or t-frication.
- The dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ are often not used in IrEng. There is a TH-stopping, where TH becomes the dental plosives /t/ and /d/.
- The vowel of LOT and THOUGHT is often pronounced as the unrounded /ɑ(:)/.
- IrEng uses monophthongs /e:/ and /o:/ in the lexical sets FACE and GOAT.
- The vowel in the lexical sets BATH, PALM and START is an open front /a:/.

### 3.2.1.3 Australian English

Australian English is the accent which most Australians across the country speak with almost no regional differences at all despite the vast territory (Wells 1982:593). Differences in accent are mostly connected to social and stylistic characteristics. The only geographical difference seems to be between urban and rural accents where a speaker of the rural accent would use a broader and slower speech (ibid.:593). The phonological characteristics of Australian English are outlined in e.g. Wells (1982:592-604) and Horvath (2008) and are as follows:

- In the lexical sets BATH, PALM and START AusEng use the open front vowel /a:/.

- There is a raising of the vowels in DRESS and TRAP. AusEng uses the close mid [e] in DRESS where RP uses [ɛ], and the open-mid [ɛ] in TRAP where RP uses [æ].
- AusEng has a diphthong shift in the sets FLEECE where the diphthongised [əɪ] is used, GOOSE where the diphthongised [əʊ] is used, FACE where [æɪ] with a more open starting point is used, PRICE where [aɪ] with a more back starting point is used, GOAT where [ʌʊ] with a more open starting point is used, and MOUTH where [əʊ] with a more close starting point is used, all compared to RP pronunciation.
- The Australian English accent is non-rhotic.
- The realisation of /l/ is typically dark, or velarized, [ɫ], in all contexts.
- Intervocalic /t/ is often realised as a voiced tap, [ɾ].

### 3.2.1.4 Southern American English

Southern American English is the name for the accents spoken in the southern states Virginia, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas (Wells 1982:527; Nilsen 2010:221). Even though there are some differences in pronunciation between states, they have similarities enough to be grouped together under one name (Wells 1982:527-528). There was a migration from the North to the South after World War Two, which had an impact on the sound system dividing the rural areas, with more Southern speech, from the urban areas (Nilsen 2010:221-222). The linguistic characteristics of Southern American English are outlined in e.g. Tillery and Bailey (2008:115-128), and are as follows:

- There is allophonic variation in the pronunciation of the vowel in words of the set PRICE where the front-closing diphthong [aɪ] is used before fortis consonants, such as *white* and *rice*, and the long open front monophthong [a:] is used in all other contexts, such as *time*, *rise*, and *pie*.
- The vowel of the lexical set STRUT is a mid central [ɜ].
- In certain contexts, the vowel of the sets BATH and TRAP is diphthongised to the front-closing diphthong [æɪ]. Examples are *bag*, *dance*, *calve*, *grass*, *half*, and *path*.
- There is diphthongisation of the vowel in THOUGHT and CLOTH to [aʊ].
- There is a raising of the vowel in the set of DRESS before nasals where /e/ becomes a close-mid front [ɪ] such as in *Henry* [hɪnri] and *pen* [pɪn].
- SAmEng often has breaking in words of the sets KIT, DRESS and TRAP. The vowels /ɪ, e, æ/ becomes diphthongised to [ɪə, eə, æə] in for example *kid*, *step* and *pad*.



### 3.2.1.5 Indian English

Indian English is the variety of English spoken in India, although it is popularly believed to be the term for countries around India and those who for instance speak with an Indian accent in Britain, which is not correct (Wells 1982:624). There are regional linguistic differences of the accent, but there are enough similarities to refer to a phonology of Indian English (Gargesh 2008:231). The typical phonetic characteristics of Indian English are as follows:

- InEng is variably rhotic and /r/ is often a tap or trill.
- The fortis plosives /p, t, k/ are often unaspirated.
- /v/ and /w/ are often mixed, or both are realised as the labiodental approximant [ʋ].
- InEng has a retroflex pronunciation of the consonants /t/ and /d/: [ɖ, ɗ].
- The dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ are usually not used in InEng, but replaced by the dental plosives /t/ and /d/.
- In the sets of FACE and GOAT, InEng has the monophthongs /e:/ and /o:/.
- The vowel in the sets of BATH, PALM and START is the open front /a:/.
- The vowel in words in the set of STRUT is pronounced with the mid central [ə].

### 3.2.1.6 The speakers and the passage they read

For each of the six varieties chosen for the study there had to be a representative speaker in order to perform the verbal guise experiment. I found all the six speakers at ‘The International Dialects of English Archive’ (<http://www.dialectsarchive.com/>). This archive is a large collection of English accents and dialects from all over the world. All speakers read the same text (see below) in approximately the same tempo, everyone around 2 minutes. I chose to use these speakers in the verbal guise experiment because they can be seen as representative of the six accents investigated – they have most of the characteristic features of the accents as outlined above. They are all men, i.e. of the same gender, but they are of different ages and they have different voice quality, speech rate, and intonation. I am aware that these weaknesses may affect the results as the respondents may judge the speaker based on how quickly or slowly he reads or how clear his voice is etc. However, the respondents will hear that the speakers differ in pronunciation and will presumably also include this in their judgement. Moreover, the labels used for the varieties can affect the evaluations, the researcher must choose to use previous labels or find new ones (Garrett 2010:56-57). I gave this choice a lot of thought before making a decision, how to choose the least ‘wrong’ label

for the variety at the same time as most respondents would understand what variety it is. Everyone has their own connotations which the researcher knows nothing of, and one can never know what the respondents feel or think, thus choosing ‘wrong’ labels may affect the results, but this is a weakness no researcher can avoid.

Speaker 1 represents RP and is a Caucasian man born and raised in Britain, but lives in the US. He is a professor within the field of dialects and speech, and is also a dialect coach (<http://www.dialectsarchive.com/received-pronunciation-3>). The pronunciation of this speaker is non-rhotic, he adds a /j/ between /t, d, n, θ/ and /u:/, and has an allophonic variation between clear and dark /l/. When he speaks /t/ is typically realised as a voiceless alveolar plosive in all positions. The speaker uses an open back /ɑ:/ in BATH, an open back rounded /ɒ/ in LOT and CLOTH, and he uses the centring diphthongs /ɪə, eə, ʊə/ in NEAR, SQUARE, CURE.

Speaker 2 represents GA and is a Caucasian man born in Iowa, but has lived in several places in the US. He is a university teacher of voice and speech and is educated within theatre (<http://www.dialectsarchive.com/general-american-8>). This speaker has a rhotic pronunciation and does not add a /j/ between /t, d, n, θ/ and /u:/. His pronunciation of /l/ is dark (velarised) in all contexts and /t/ is realised as a voiced alveolar tap intervocally. The speaker uses an open-raised front /æ/ in BATH, an open back unrounded /ɑ:/ in LOT, an open-mid back /ɔ:/ in CLOTH, and he does not use centring diphthongs.

Speaker 3 represents IrEng and is a Caucasian man from County Cork who has recently moved to Australia, but travels to Ireland every year. He works as a gardener (<http://www.dialectsarchive.com/ireland-9>). This speaker’s pronunciation is rhotic where /r/ is typically realised as a postalveolar retroflex approximant, and the speaker has TH-stopping where he uses dental plosives for dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/. This feature is not used on every single occasion, but can be heard in e.g. *north*, *mouth*, and *cloth*. The speaker also has T-opening, an incomplete closure (frication) of /t/ word-finally, which can be heard in e.g. *put*, *jacket*, *kit*, *vet*, *foot*, and *goat*. When he speaks he uses an open front vowel /a:/ in BATH, PALM and START, which can be heard in e.g. *start*, *palm*, *bath*, and *can’t*. He also uses monophthongs in FACE and GOAT: close-mid front /e:/ and close-mid back /o:/. This can be heard in e.g. *daily*, *ate*, *made*, *so*, *owner*, and *diagnosis*. Speaker 3 varies in the use of the open back unrounded vowel /ɑ:/ in LOT and THOUGHT, sometimes the vowel is rounded, but the unrounded quality can be heard in e.g. *comma*, *porridge*, and *almost*.

Speaker 4 represents AusEng and is a Caucasian man from Melbourne, but has recently moved to the US because of studies. He has an undergraduate degree (<http://www.dialectsarchive.com/australia-27>). This speaker has a non-rhotic pronunciation and /l/ is typically dark (velarised) in all contexts. The velarized pronunciation of /l/ can be heard in e.g. *liking, fleece, letter, like, and lunatic* (/l/ is here before a vowel and would be clear in RP). /t/ is tapped intervocalically, which can be heard in e.g. *deserted, waiting, and letter*. The speaker has a raising of the vowel in DRESS to close-mid [e], a feature that can be heard in e.g. *stressed, then, sentimental, and expensive*. He varies when it comes to the use of an open front vowel in BATH, PALM, START, where he sometimes has a back quality. But the front vowel can be heard in *palm* and *can't*. The speaker of AusEng has a diphthong shift in FLEECE [əi], FACE [æɪ], PRICE [aɪ], CHOICE [oɪ], GOAT [ʌʊ], MOUTH [æʊ], which can be heard in e.g. *tower, ate, face, waiting, gave, implied, disease, surprising, only, goat, choice, finally, time, able, bathe, wiped, side, required, and out*.

Speaker 5 represents SAmEng and is a Caucasian man born in Madison, Tennessee, but has lived in other regions as well (<http://www.dialectsarchive.com/tennessee-6>). The speaker has PRICE monophthonging where the vowel in PRICE is realised as a long open front monophthong [a:] in all contexts except before fortis consonants. This can be heard in *implied, surprising, tried, finally, time, tire, side, and five*. He also has STRUT raising, where the vowel in STRUT is realised as a mid central monophthong [ɜ], which can be heard in *suffering* and *strut*. The speaker has breaking, which involves diphthonging (or [ə]-offglide) of the vowel in KIT, DRESS and TRAP, resulting in [ɪə], [eə], [æə]. This breaking can be heard to varying degrees in *stressed, kit, vet, mess, and trap*. He also has a varying degree of DRESS raising before nasals, where the DRESS vowel /e/ is realised as [ɪ] (same vowel as KIT) before nasals, which can be heard in *expensive*. The speaker has diphthongisation of the vowel in CLOTH, and sometimes in LOT, to [ɑʊ]. This is part of a phenomenon often called the Southern Drawl. This feature can be heard used by the speaker in *dog, on, office, off, and cloth*.

Speaker 6 represents InEng and is an Indian man born in Tamil Nadu in India, but has lived in different places in India. He is a student, and when the recording was made he lived in Kansas in the US due to studies (<http://www.dialectsarchive.com/india-3>). This speaker has a variably rhotic pronunciation where /r/ is often realised as a tap. His pronunciation of /p, t, k/ is typically unaspirated, and can be heard in e.g. *Perry, private, practice, tower, porridge, plain, picked, kit, kept, and calling*. The speaker often has no distinction between /v/ and /w/,

both being pronounced as a labiodental approximant [v], which can be heard in *veterinary*, *working* and *vet*. The consonants /t/ and /d/ are realised as retroflex plosives [ɮ, ɽ] by this speaker, which can be heard in e.g. *tower*, *territory*, *headed*, *goat*, *unsanitary*, *take*, *idea*, *futile*, *time*, *tire*, and *lot*. The dental fricatives /θ, ð/ are realised as plosives /t, d/, which can be heard in the speaker's pronunciation of e.g. *there*, *mouth*, *thought*, *bath*, *bathe*, *then*, and *thought*. The speaker uses an open front vowel [a:] in BATH, PALM, START, which can be heard in *start*, *palm*, *bath*, and *can't*. He also uses monophthongs /e:, o:/ in FACE and GOAT, but the speaker's usage varies here, sometimes he has diphthongs. Monophthongs can be heard in *ate*, *bowl*, *take*, *stroking*, *no*, and *hold*.

The passage read by the speakers is a text called 'Comma gets a cure' (McCullough & Somerville 2000, ed. by Honorof) written in connection to the online archive of English accents and dialects IDEA (see Appendix 4). 'Comma gets a cure' is written in such a way that all the keywords for the standard lexical sets (Wells 1982:127-168) occur in the text. These words, such as *nurse*, *goat*, and *bath*, illustrate how vowel pronunciation differs between accents of English.

### **3.2.2 The respondents**

A total of 82 respondents is a part of this study where 51 are female and 31 are male. There was a total of 92, but for various reasons 10 of these had to be excluded from the study. The respondents were chosen within two age groups hypothesised to have different attitudes towards and different levels of familiarity with the six accents. One younger group of mainly adolescent pupils and some young adults (aged 17 to 20), and one group of middle-aged adults (aged 40 to 60). The knowledge of the various accents between these two age groups could vary to a large degree based on the rapid development of technology and media in recent years (cf. 1.2). There is reason to believe that the younger group of respondents has been more exposed to the different English varieties due to the fact that technology and an increase in access and diversity of media has been available throughout their upbringing. The older group on the other hand did not have the same exposure to technology or English-speaking media when they were children and teenagers.

The data was collected in groups of various sizes. The pupils were in groups of up to 20-25 respondents each time. To find respondents from the older age group and a time that suited them was more difficult, so these groups included only 1 to 6 respondents each time.

As the survey started I gave them some information about what they were to do regarding filling in the questionnaire, ensured them anonymity, told them that there were no right or wrong answers, and gave them a chance to ask any questions they might have. Since the researcher may affect the answers provided by the respondents I chose to dress neutrally and speak in Norwegian to ensure my own English accent would not indicate any preference towards a specific accent of English. I also gave them the questionnaires in Norwegian so that they would be more comfortable when answering and filling out the questionnaire.

*Table 3.1 Respondents*

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>17-20</b>	<b>40-60</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Male</b>	23	8	31
<b>Female</b>	31	20	51
<b>Total</b>	54	28	82

As Table 3.1 shows, the younger age group includes respondents between the ages of 17 and 20 and the older group from 40 to 60 year olds. The two groups include both female and male respondents. There was a total of 54 respondents in the younger age group and 28 in the older age group. Thus, the number of respondents is not equally distributed, neither when it comes to gender nor age. The younger group comes from three different upper secondary classes, but from the same school, except for a few acquaintances of mine who volunteered. The older group consists of random people invited by me and my acquaintances. The younger group of respondents is larger in number than the older because it was easier to get access to them. It was also problematic getting older men to take part in the study. The distribution in the younger group is more equal with 23 males and 31 females, but the older group only has 8 males and 20 females. This makes the foundation for gender comparison weaker. However, it will serve to give an indication as to how this age group’s attitudes may be.

All the respondents are Norwegian, that is, their mother tongue is Norwegian. This was simply to ensure that all the respondents would have the same nationality and the same cultural and linguistic background. The respondents come from or at least live in the same small town of Norway, those in the younger group are mostly pupils at the same school and those in the older group work in this town. There is no reason to believe that the attitudes of

the respondents in this study are significantly different from the general population of Norway, because Norway is a small and homogenous society, and all schools follow the same curriculum.

### 3.2.3 The questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into three parts (see Appendix 1, 2 and 3). Part 1 of the study involved listening to six recordings, each of which represents one variety of English. The respondents were to judge each speaker on the different dimensions Status, Social Attractiveness (SA) and Linguistic Quality (LQ) (cf. 2.2), set on 13 evaluative scales going from 1 to 7 where 1 was the lowest, 7 was the highest, and 4 was neutral. One adjective was used per scale (e.g. *intelligent, wealthy, friendly*) where the respondents were to state to what extent they think the speakers possess the quality. My choice of adjectives is based on adjectives used in previous studies to enable comparison with these. The respondents were not told which variety was represented in each recording and were at the end asked to state where they believed the speaker came from.

In Part 2, the respondents were asked directly what they thought about the different varieties and their opinion of the native people speaking the given variety. When asked about the variety they were given various opposing adjectives, for example *confident – insecure, rich – poor, and comprehensible speech – incomprehensible speech* and were to circle which adjectives they related the most to the variety. They could also add their own adjectives. When asked about the native people they were given an open space to give their own opinion. I included the fixed categories to make comparison with previous studies possible, and the open categories to capture any other dimensions that may be relevant for my informants but not covered by the traditional adjectives.

Finally, the respondents were asked to provide some information about themselves in Part 3 of the questionnaire. They were informed that the details were anonymous and that they would only be used to make an analysis of their answers and the results of the survey. This included information regarding their gender, age, number of years learning English, visits to English speaking countries and TV-habits. The surveys took 30 to 45 minutes each time. The respondents in the younger group had no interest in asking questions afterwards or knowing which accent belonged to which speaker. The respondents in the older group, however, often

had several questions and a larger interest in knowing if they had guessed the right accent or not.

The present study uses a combination of the direct and the indirect method. The indirect method with the verbal guise technique is used in Part 1 of the questionnaire while the direct method is used in Part 2 (see Appendices 1 and 2). Part 1 of the questionnaire also uses evaluative scales with a design inspired by Likert scales (Oppenheim 1992:195-200). There are several different evaluative scales and they are commonly used in attitude measurement studies. Many of the different types of scales are outlined in e.g. Oppenheim (1992:187-207) and Baker (1995:17-19; 55-68). Evaluative scales are often used because the procedure is easily understandable for the respondents, they are easy to construct for the researcher, and with today's technology and computers they make it easy for the researcher to calculate the scores and find differences or similarities between respondent groups. When making a questionnaire with evaluative scales the researcher must decide what labels the respondents are to evaluate, how many scales to operate with, and how many points on the scale the respondents should choose between. In addition, one must decide which point, or end of the scale should be positive, and which should be negative (Garrett 2010:55).

Evaluative scales are considered a reliable procedure of measuring attitudes providing valid results. However, one criticism of the procedure is that it is difficult to know at which point on the scale we go from less positive to less negative, and even if providing a neutral midpoint one cannot be certain if this represents neutrality, little knowledge or lack of attitude (Oppenheim 1992:200). Similarly, when it comes to positivity and negativity, it is difficult to know how strong a 7 is, and how weak a 1 is. This will differ between the respondents according to their perception. Nonetheless, for this study the scaling procedure with a 7-point scale, and 4 as a possible neutral point, will suffice when the researcher has these weaknesses in mind. This method with evaluative scales is highly used within the field of research. In addition to this, Oppenheim explains how Likert scales give nuanced data of how strong attitudes the respondent has, because there are several answers, or more points to choose between on a graded scale, than simply yes/no or positive/negative (1992:200). As the scaling procedure used in the present study is inspired by the Likert scale design, it can provide possibilities of comparison between the respondents' variables (e.g. gender and age), and the researcher can find connections between the various labels and attitudes.

This study collects both qualitative and quantitative data through the survey and questionnaire. This is connected to the questionnaire where the quantitative part refers to the

options of adjectives/labels regarding the sound clips in Part 1 (cf. Appendix 1), and where the qualitative aspect refers to the open answers regarding the named accents and stereotypes of the speakers of these accents in Part 2 (cf. Appendix 2).



## **4. RESULTS**

This chapter will give an overview of the results from the two questionnaire parts. The first part is related to the verbal guise test, and the second has direct questions regarding opinions about the six varieties and the peoples connected to these varieties. It presents the average scores for all the respondents, as well as for the different age and gender groups. It also looks at how competent the respondents are at recognising different varieties of English and which varieties are most used among the respondents. Further, it evaluates whether various factors, such as the media or travels, affect the evaluations by the respondents. Finally, it compares the results from the two parts of the questionnaire, with the indirect and direct methods used, as well as with results of previous studies.

### **4.1 Results: Part 1 of the questionnaire**

In the first part of the questionnaire (see Appendix 1) the respondents were to judge the speakers of each voice recording and rate them on different evaluative scales. The highest and most positive rating they could give was a 7.0 score and the lowest, most negative was a 1.0 score. A score of 4.0 indicates a neutral rating. At the end, the respondents were asked to state where they believed the speaker came from.

The overall scores for all respondents will first be presented, before the results are divided by age and gender groups. The score will also be shown divided by the evaluative dimensions Status, Social Attractiveness and Linguistic Quality.

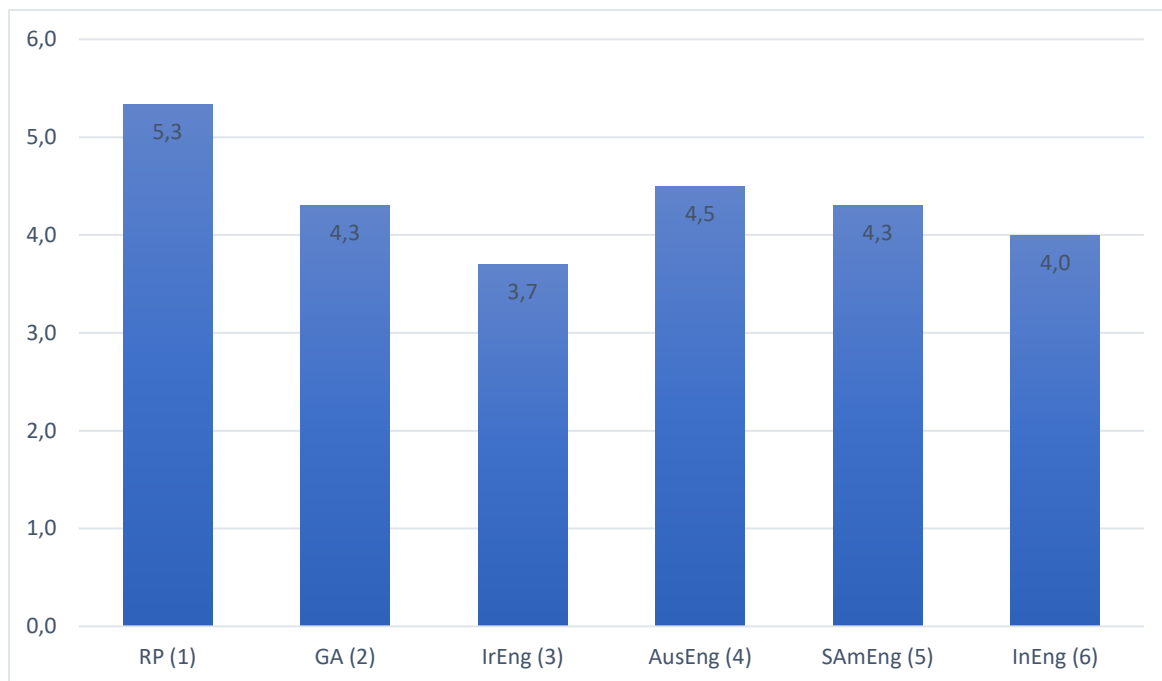


Figure 4.1 Overall average scores, all respondents

Figure 4.1 shows that RP is the most positively rated variety of English. It is the only variety with an overall score above 5.0. The second most positively rated variety is AusEng closely followed by GA and SAmEng, which had the same overall score. InEng is the second lowest rated variety, while IrEng is at the bottom with the most negative score. The exact overall average score and average score divided by dimensions are shown below in Table 4.1. Even if RP is the highest evaluated variety, only 31 respondents claim that they use British English when speaking themselves. However, 14 respondents say they use both British and American English, or a mixture of the two. 48 respondents would like to speak as Speaker 1 (RP), 25 would not and 9 do not know if they would speak as him. AusEng as second most favourable is not reported to be spoken by any respondent, but 33 would like to speak as Speaker 4 (AusEng). On the other hand, 39 respondents would not like to speak as him and 10 are not certain if they would.

The speaker of GA (Speaker 2) was not that popular among the respondents, as only 22 would like to speak as him, 51 would not and 9 do not know if they would speak as speaker 2. However, 33 of the respondents claim that they use American English when they speak English. Speaker 5 (SAmEng) was not any more popular with the respondents even if they judged him quite positively. 54 respondents would not like to speak as him, 19 said they would like to and 9 were not certain if they would. When it comes to InEng, the evaluations

of the variety were not bad, but as many as 72 respondents would not like to speak as Speaker 6 (InEng). Only 6 respondents would like to speak as the speaker of InEng and 4 were not sure if they would. Finally, the least favoured variety had 67 respondents stating that they would not like to speak as the speaker of IrEng. Although InEng received higher ratings than IrEng, there are fewer people who would like to speak InEng than IrEng, which implies that personal preference does not always relate to personal evaluation. Speaker 3 (IrEng) received a yes from just 10 respondents, and 5 respondents did not know if they would like to speak as him. Neither SAmEng, InEng nor IrEng was claimed to be used by any respondents when asked which variety they themselves used when speaking English.

*Table 4.1 Overall average scores and average scores by dimensions, all respondents*

Dimensions	RP (1)	GA (2)	IrEng (3)	AusEng (4)	SAmEng (5)	InEng (6)
Status	5,3	4,6	3,5	4,1	4,4	4,0
Social attractiveness	5,2	4,3	4,0	4,6	4,4	4,3
Linguistic quality	6,0	4,6	3,4	4,6	4,5	3,4
Overall average score	5,3	4,4	3,7	4,5	4,4	4,1

As one can see from Table 4.1, RP received the highest overall score of 5.3, a score of 0.8 better than the second most positively rated variety, AusEng, which got a score of 4.5. Both GA and SAmEng received an overall average score of 4.4, closely followed by InEng which was rated neutrally with a score of 4.1. Finally, the most negative, yet quite close to neutrally rated variety is IrEng with a score of 3.7. None of the varieties was rated very positively or very negatively, the respondents could go as far up as 7.0 and as low as 1.0, but all the varieties can be seen as quite closely rated together. The difference between the most negatively and the most positively rated variety is 1.6 points. Further, three of the varieties are rated quite close to neutral and one is rated exactly neutral.

The scores by dimensions are also shown in Table 4.1, revealing that even when divided by dimensions, RP is the most favourably rated variety. It receives the highest rating when it comes to LQ with a score of 6.0, however, it is also rated high on Status with a score of 5.3. For SA it receives 5.2, which is its lowest score. Nonetheless all scores for RP are above 5.0, a score none other variety achieves. Interestingly, AusEng is not rated the second

most positively when the scores are divided by dimensions. GA is second, rated slightly more favourably than AusEng when we look at the scores by dimensions. Both GA and AusEng receive a 4.6 for LQ. GA receives a 4.6 also for Status, where AusEng only receives a 4.1. However, for SA AusEng receives a 4.6 while GA gets a score of 4.3. SAmEng then comes as the fourth most favourable variety with a score of 4.5 for LQ, and 4.4 for both Status and SA.

InEng is the second least favourably rated variety, but still rated quite high. The highest received score is for SA with a 4.3, which is above neutral and thus more positive than negative. For Status InEng is rated at a neutral 4.0. The score for LQ is 3.4 and is the lowest for InEng. Finally, IrEng comes as the variety rated most negatively with most scores below 4.0. IrEng receives a score of 3.5 for Status, 4.0 for SA and a score of 3.4 for LQ, which is the lowest score. It is most positively rated when it comes to SA, which is exactly neutral.

The overall rankings for the varieties are for the most part similar to what previous studies have found (cf. 2.8). Similar to my results, both Ladegaard (1998) and Loftheim (2013) found that RP was rated highest as the preferred variety. However, this was only so for their verbal guise experiments. In their written questionnaires they found that GA scored better. They also found that GA followed RP as second best in the verbal guise test, whereas AusEng was rated second by my respondents. Jarvella et al. (2001) also found the English varieties highest rated, followed by the Scottish and Irish, and surprisingly the American varieties were ranked at the bottom. It is interesting to see that the results are quite similar, and that the results place RP, or English varieties as the preferred variety. This implies that Danish and Norwegian respondents hold quite similar attitudes towards varieties of English, and that British English still holds a position of status and prestige.

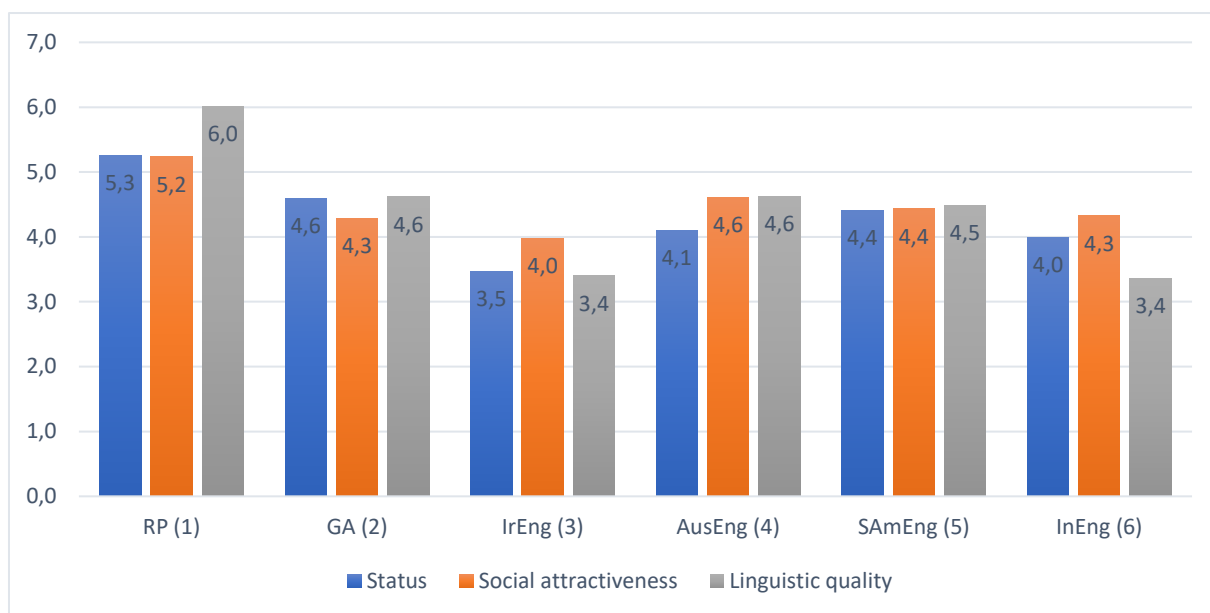


Figure 4.2 Average scores by dimensions, all respondents

Figure 4.2 shows that RP is rated highest also when the score is divided by dimensions, but that GA then receives higher scores than AusEng. SAmEng is then rated at a fourth place. InEng is still rated number five, as it also is for the overall average score shown in Figure 4.1, and IrEng is the least positively rated variety. All the scores are based on what the respondents heard in the voice recordings, how they perceived this and what variety they believed it to be. The respondents recognised the varieties to a high degree, but there were some confusion or mistakes about some varieties more than others.

When it comes to RP 74 of 82 respondents placed the speaker correctly as British English answering either England, London or Great Britain when asked where this speaker came from. It was expected that RP would be one of the most familiar varieties for the respondents (see hypothesis 8 in 1.2). More surprising was the fact that only 53 of 82 respondents knew that the GA speaker came from the US, and guessed USA or America. A total of 18 respondents guessed that the GA speaker came from England. GA was expected to be well known and familiar to most respondents (cf. hypothesis 8), but perhaps the speaker spoke too “correctly”. The GA speaker uses a rather formal style that perhaps for some is more closely associated with RP or British English. Interestingly, Loftheim had the same discovery among his respondents (see 2.8). His respondents also had difficulty identifying the GA speaker. As Loftheim does not write which recording he used from IDEA, I do not know if we used the same speaker, but it is nevertheless difficult to say why our respondents did not

identify the GA speaker as expected. The respondents should be familiar with the GA pronunciation from the media, and they should have knowledge about American speech. In the case of the GA speaker's pronunciation from the present study, he may have had a style that the respondents did not relate to American English.

IrEng was not expected to be well known and it was also expected to be confused with Scottish English (cf. hypothesis 10 in 1.2). A total of 34 respondents answered Ireland, and 18 more were in the general geographical area when guessing England, Scotland or Wales. In addition to this, 7 respondents believed the speaker to come from Europe, The Netherlands or Norway, and 4 replied the USA. The Australian speaker was not that easily recognised either, with 38 respondents answering Australia. There were 22 respondents who answered England, another 3 who said Scotland or Wales, and 5 respondents replied that they believed the speaker came from the USA.

The accent of the speaker of SAmEng was well known to the respondents and easily recognised. 74 of 82 respondents placed the speaker correctly as they replied Texas, Alabama, South or Southern USA, USA and America. It was not expected that the respondents would be this familiar with SAmEng because it is not that well represented in the media (cf. hypothesis 10). InEng, however, was expected to be more known due to an increase in the use of this variety in the media (see hypothesis 9 in 1.2). There are 63 respondents who recognised the variety, and most gave the correct answer of India (a very few of these said Asia, Pakistan and Sri Lanka). In addition, 7 respondents believed the speaker to come from Africa.

Thus, the most recognised, or most familiar varieties of English for the respondents was RP, or British English, and SAmEng with a total of 74 respondents guessing correctly. The second most familiar variety was InEng with 63 correct answers, followed by GA with 53 respondents placing the speaker in the US. Following GA is AusEng with 38 respondents placing the speaker in Australia, which can be seen as surprising as there are several series on Norwegian TV where they speak Australian English. Finally, the least familiar variety, or most difficult to recognise, was IrEng with only 34 correct answers. However, the respondents placed most speakers quite correctly within the general geographical area they belong to. Looking at my hypotheses (8, 9 and 10), this is not completely as expected. The expectation was that most would recognise both RP and GA, and to some degree InEng. AusEng, IrEng and SAmEng was expected to be difficult to identify, or un-known for most of

the respondents. The hypotheses were correct concerning RP, InEng, AusEng and IrEng, but not regarding GA and SAmEng.

The way that my respondents were quite able to recognise many varieties corresponds to previous studies. Especially to the results of Jarvella et al. (cf. 2.8), where the respondents were best at identifying the English varieties. However, the American varieties was second (not similar to the present study), before the Scottish and the Irish being the most difficult to recognise. Moreover, Jarvella et al. found that there was some confusion between Irish and Scottish English, which is similar to the results of this study. IrEng was also difficult to identify for my respondents, in addition to AusEng. This was also evident among Ladegaard's respondents who best identified GA, then RP, and had difficulties recognising Scottish, Australian and the Cockney accent (see 2.8). Lofthim had similar results as Ladegaard, except then for the GA speaker.

### 4.1.1 Results by gender

One of my hypotheses concerned the belief that female respondents would be more positive to the varieties than the male respondents (cf. hypothesis 3 in 1.2). I did not expect a major difference between the genders, but the female scores were expected to be higher for all the varieties.

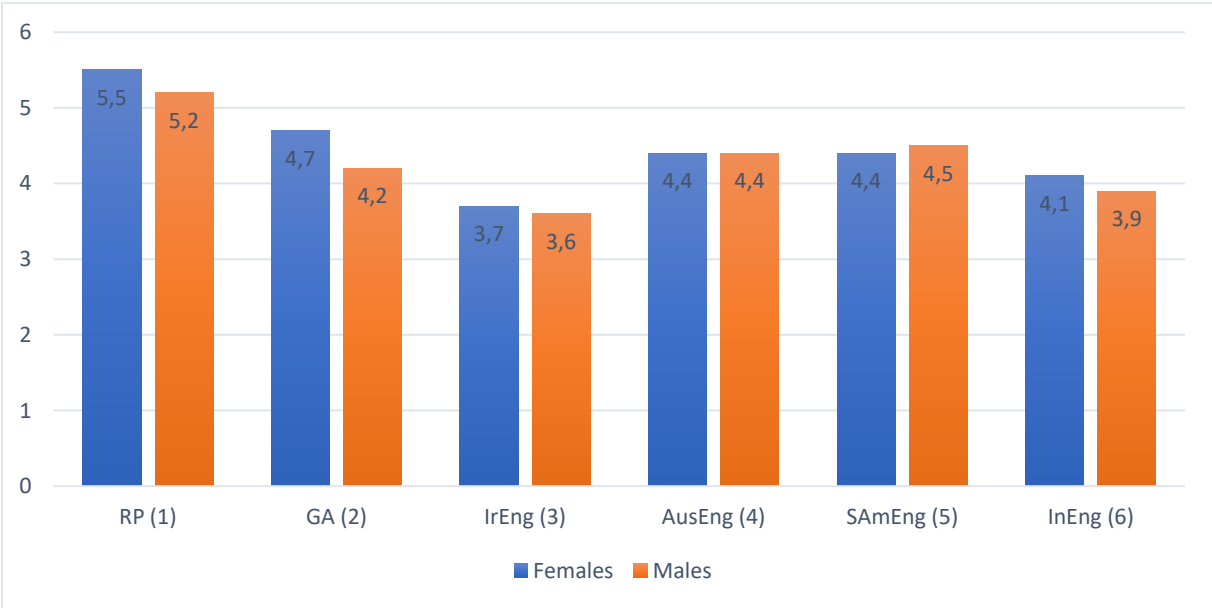


Figure 4.3 Average scores by gender

Figure 4.3 shows average scores for females and males. It is clear that females evaluate most varieties slightly more positively than males. RP, GA, IrEng and InEng all receive higher scores from the female respondents than from the males. The female respondents give RP a 5.5 while the males give a 5.2, which constitutes a difference of 0.3 points. GA gets a score of 4.7 from the females and a 4.2 from the males, making a difference of 0.5 points. IrEng is rated the least favourable by both genders, but the females give a slightly more positive score of 3.7 while the males give a 3.6. InEng receives a 4.1 score from the females and a score of 3.9 from the male respondents. AusEng receive a 4.4 from both genders, while SAmEng receives slightly better scores from the males than the females, a score of 4.5 and 4.4 respectively. This means that the female respondents give scores above 4.0 for all varieties except IrEng, while the males give scores below 4.0 to both IrEng and InEng. The ranking is then also a bit different between the gender groups. The female respondents rate RP the highest followed by GA, before AusEng and SAmEng sharing a third place with similar scores. Further, the females rate InEng as the second least favourable variety and IrEng at the bottom. The male respondents also rank RP on top, however they rate SAmEng as the second most favourable variety. Moreover, AusEng is third best before GA which is only seen as the fourth most favourable variety. As the females, the male respondents rank InEng second least and IrEng as the least favourable variety.

Although the difference between female and male scores is not major it is in accordance with my hypothesis, where I expected the females to be more positive than the male respondents. On the other hand, the fact that the male respondents downgrade GA and the females rank it second shows that my hypothesis regarding the gender groups being equally positive to GA is wrong (cf. hypothesis 1 in 1.2). Loftheim (2013) also divided his respondents into gender groups, but had the opposite results, where the females overall judged the varieties slightly more negatively than the male respondents. In addition, Levin et al. found that gender had little effect on the results (1994:270). This makes gender differences rather coincidental and not of high importance. It should also be noted that I had fewer male respondents than female, which may have an impact on the results. In addition, a higher overall number of respondents might also show other results between gender groups.



Table 4.2 Average scores by dimensions, both genders

Gender	Females			Males		
	Status	SA	LQ	Status	SA	LQ
<b>RP (1)</b>	5,4	5,4	6,1	5,1	4,9	6,0
<b>GA (2)</b>	4,8	4,5	4,8	4,4	4,0	4,4
<b>IrEng (3)</b>	3,5	4,0	3,5	3,5	3,9	3,4
<b>AusEng (4)</b>	4,2	4,6	4,7	4,0	4,7	4,6
<b>SAmEng (5)</b>	4,4	4,5	4,6	4,5	4,4	4,6
<b>InEng (6)</b>	4,1	4,3	3,5	3,8	4,3	3,3

Table 4.2 shows how the female and male respondents evaluate the varieties when the scores are divided by the three dimensions Status, Social Attractiveness (SA) and Linguistic Quality (LQ). The ranking of the varieties is fairly similar as the overall scores, but SAmEng receives slightly better scores than AusEng when divided by dimensions. Nonetheless, the scores are for the most part quite high in general, but when the scores are divided by dimensions it is clearer how the females generally give higher scores than the male respondents. This is especially so for GA and InEng, which both are downgraded more by the males. The different evaluations for GA is interesting, as the females give higher scores and rank it as second, while the male respondents rank it as fourth. This may be related to the formality or speech style of the GA speaker (Speaker 2, cf. 3.2.1.6) which is mentioned above in 4.1. However, the males did rank RP on top which also can be seen as a more formal variety, thus it is odd that GA should be downgraded this much. Moreover, since the overall differences only are minor, no further speculations will be made in this study, but it would be interesting to see if a larger sample would yield results with more extensive differences.

#### 4.1.2 Results by age

The respondents were divided into a younger group and an older group. My hypotheses (see hypotheses 1, 2 and 4, in 1.2) included expectations about the younger group being less positive to RP than the older group. Both groups were expected to be equally positive to GA, and approximately neutral to IrEng, AusEng and SAmEng. How they would judge InEng was more difficult to anticipate since it has not previously been included in such studies as far as I know, but InEng was expected to be seen as less positive and be taken less seriously. The differences between the age groups will now be outlined.

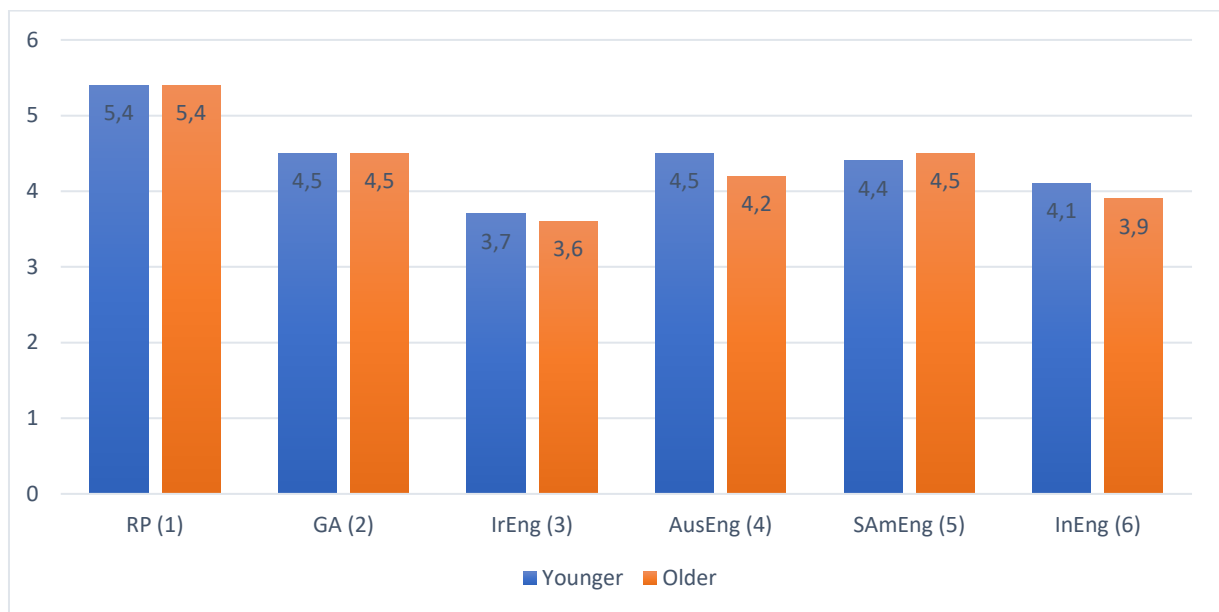


Figure 4.4 Average scores by age

As Figure 4.4 shows, there are no major differences between the age groups when it comes to overall scores for the varieties. Both younger and older respondents evaluate RP as the most favourable with the same score. GA follows, and here as well the age groups give the same score. After this there is a difference in that the younger group places AusEng as third most favourable, while the older group has SAmEng in third place. However, the older group downgrades AusEng more than what the younger group downgrades SAmEng. Both groups rank InEng as second least and IrEng as the least favourable variety, but the older group gives lower scores for both varieties. This means that hypothesis 1 was confirmed, as both groups were equally positive to GA, but hypothesis 2, which predicted that the younger group would be less positive to RP, is not supported since both groups rate it as the most favourable with higher scores than GA. Hypothesis 4 is partly confirmed as the groups rated AusEng and SAmEng fairly neutral, but IrEng is seen as more negative, and InEng more neutral than negative.

My results show that the age variable had surprisingly little impact on the evaluations, which is similar to the results of Loftheim (2013). One can wonder why, with approximately 20 years in age difference, there are no major differences in evaluations and results. The age groups are born in different times, with different opportunities and limitations. The older

group had very little exposure to TV and films growing up, and no exposure to internet whatsoever. In addition, they did not start learning English at an early age in school. The younger group on the other hand grew up with all the recent (and advanced) technology, extensive exposure to TV, internet, films, etc., and started learning English almost immediately when starting school. The fact that the age groups are quite similar in their evaluations implies that the attitudes might be dependent on other factors.

*Table 4.3. Average scores by dimensions, both age groups*

Age group	Younger			Older		
	Status	SA	LQ	Status	SA	LQ
<b>RP (1)</b>	5,3	5,2	6,1	5,3	5,3	6,0
<b>GA (2)</b>	4,5	4,4	4,5	4,7	4,1	4,8
<b>IrEng (3)</b>	3,6	4,0	3,4	3,3	4,0	3,4
<b>AusEng (4)</b>	4,2	4,6	4,8	3,8	4,6	4,4
<b>SAmEng (5)</b>	4,4	4,4	4,6	4,4	4,5	4,5
<b>InEng (6)</b>	4,1	4,4	3,4	3,8	4,2	3,3

Table 4.3 shows that also when the scores are divided by dimensions, the age groups are quite similar in their evaluations. The younger group gives slightly more scores above 4.0 than the older respondents. The older group gives more scores below neutral for several varieties, which could mean that they are stricter or more negative than the younger group. This can indicate that the older respondents are more inclined to judge unfamiliar or less known varieties more negatively. It may also be due to less knowledge of, or less exposure to the various varieties, as one can see that they are highly positive to both RP and GA and less positive to the varieties they are likely to be less familiar with. However, the differences are smaller than expected and thus, the age variable cannot be claimed to have a major impact on the results. Loftheim (2013) also concluded with this, as he could not find big differences between the age groups in his study either. As mentioned above, it is peculiar that there are such minor differences when one considers the age difference and social differences between 17 to 20 year olds and 40 to 60 year olds. Perhaps the attitudes are more related to society in general and the stereotypes within a community. Again, it could be of interest to see if a larger number of respondents would provide a different outcome.

### 4.1.3 The amount of media exposure

One research question for this thesis was whether factors such as TV habits affect the attitudes of the respondents. The hypothesis was that a higher exposure to English through media would give higher scores and more positive results than a lower exposure, especially regarding GA due to the high number of films and series in American English (see hypothesis 5 in 1.2). The respondents indicated how many hours per week, approximately, they watch English-speaking films/series/TV. As many use the internet and various streaming services online, TV could not be the only option. The respondents were then divided into those who had exposure of ten hours or less, and those who had exposure of more than ten hours per week.

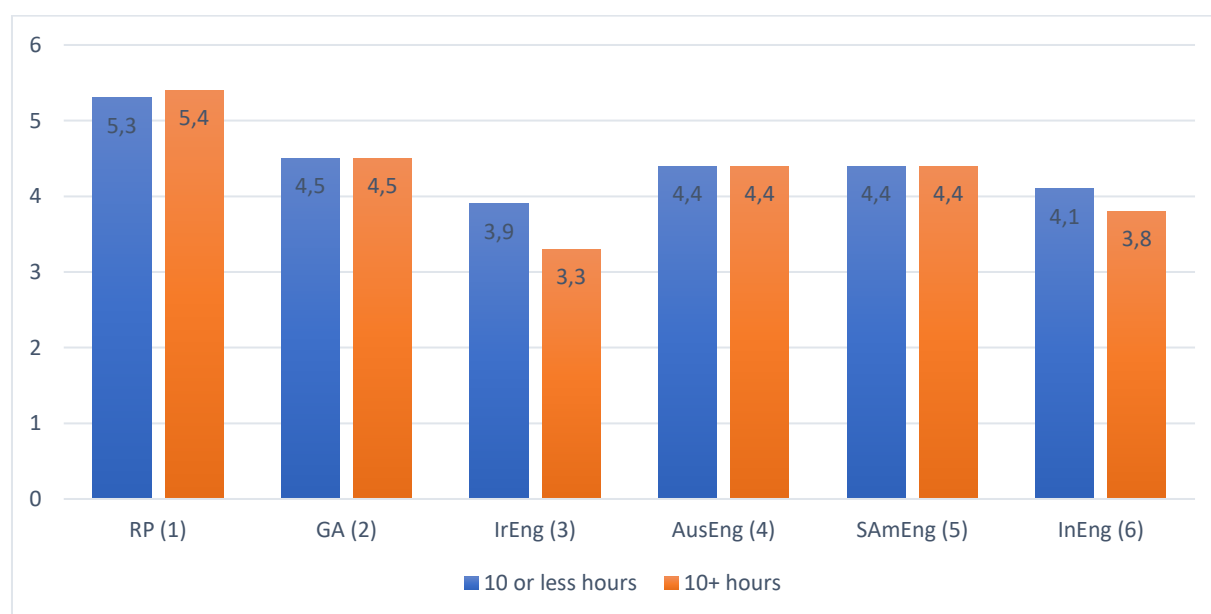


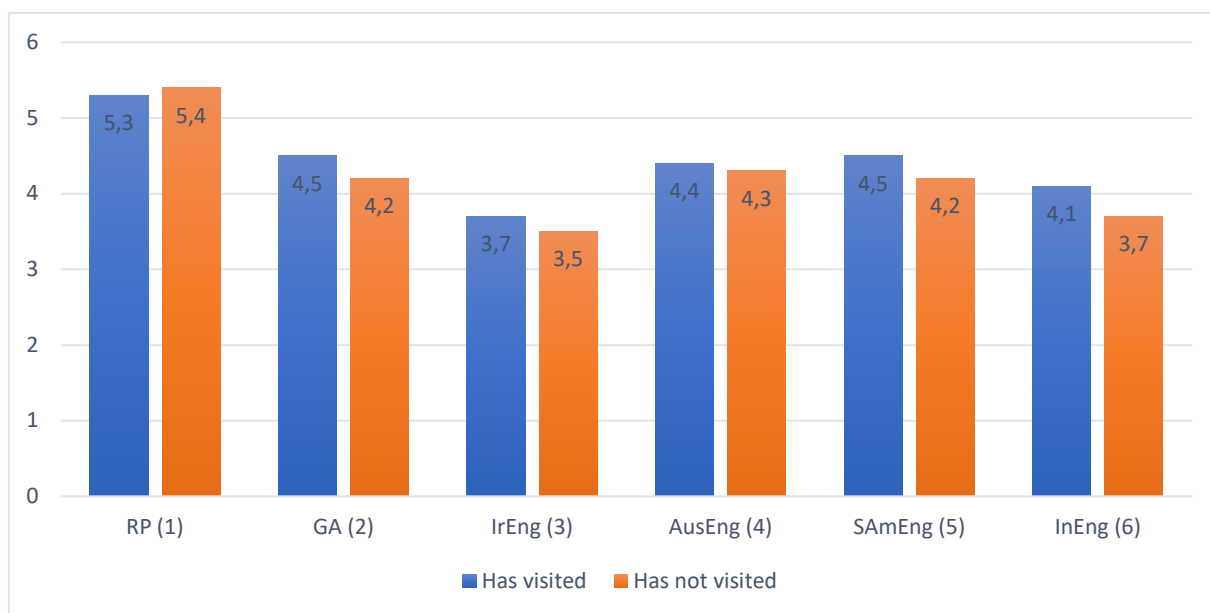
Figure 4.5 Average scores, exposure of media

Figure 4.5 outlines the average scores when the respondents are divided into groups according to exposure of English through media. As one can see, the scores are very similar and mostly positive for both groups. RP is rated the most positive by both groups, and is the only variety with a score above 5.0. Most varieties are given scores just above 4.0, and IrEng is rated at the bottom with the least positive evaluation. The scores for GA, AusEng and SAmEng are the same for both groups and these varieties are evaluated quite neutrally, although more

positively than negatively. The varieties with most difference are InEng and IrEng, which also are the two least favourable varieties. Nonetheless, there seems to be little difference between those who are less and those who are more exposed to English-speaking media. However, the group who has high exposure is slightly more negative to Irish English and Indian English than the group who is less exposed to media. Thus, it seems that my hypothesis was not correct when it comes to this matter. The amount of exposure to English-speaking media does not seem to have any major effects on the attitudes of the respondents. Interestingly, Loftheim (2013) found that the respondents who had high exposure to media were overall more positive to the varieties than those who had little exposure, which contrasts with the present results. This could be related to the fact that the two studies used different speakers to represent the varieties in the verbal guise test, or it could mean that media exposure has no predictable impact on accent evaluation, or it could be purely coincidental.

#### **4.1.4 Visits to English-speaking countries**

Another factor which is thought to impact the attitudes of the respondents is whether or not they have visited any English-speaking country. The hypothesis (see hypothesis 7 in 1.2) was that those who had travelled abroad and experienced first-hand the peoples and countries would be inclined to evaluate the varieties more positively. Any visits to England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, the US, Canada, Australia, India etc. have been included, but those respondents who have visited European countries where English is not an official language have been excluded. Most of my respondents had visited English-speaking countries, some for vacations and some for exchange study trips, all ranging from weekends to years. The division has been kept between those who have visited and those who have not, simply because there were not that many who had spent years abroad. However, 61 respondents have answered yes and only 18 no. This makes a very uneven distribution of respondents and may have an effect on the results.



*Figure 4.6 Average scores, visits to English-speaking countries*

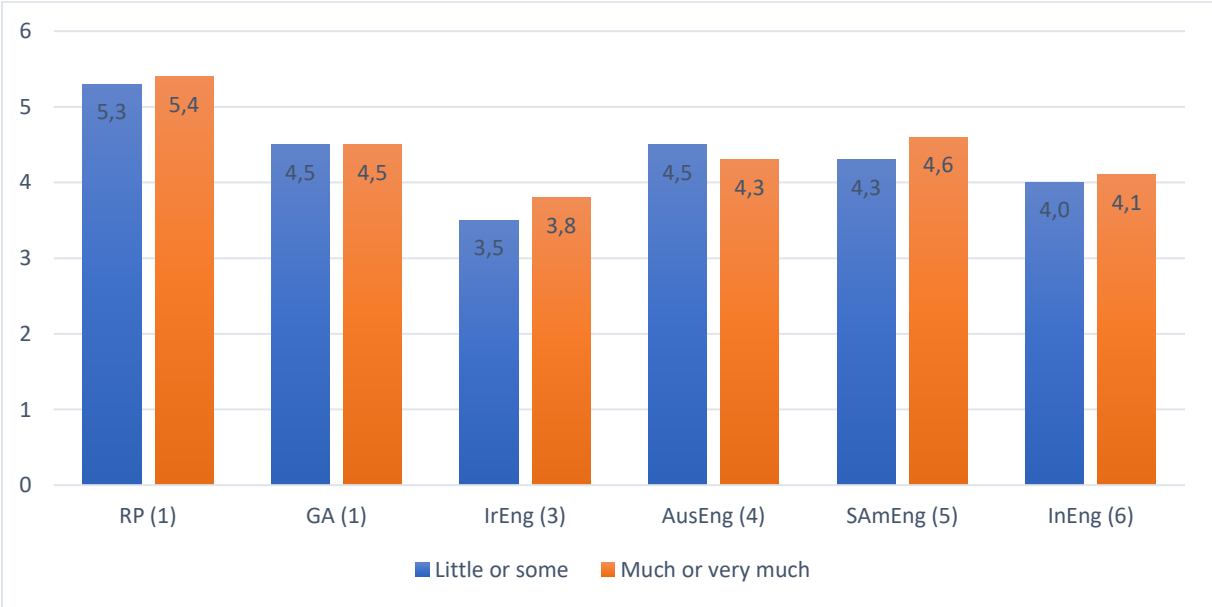
As Figure 4.6 shows, the respondents who have visited English-speaking countries are positive to most varieties, rating RP as the most favoured one followed by GA and SAmEng. Just behind these, AusEng comes with only a 0.1 point lower score and after this comes InEng. The least favoured variety is IrEng. Figure 4.6 also shows the average scores given by those respondents who have not visited an English-speaking country. The expectations were lower scores from these respondents because they had not been to these countries and not experienced the peoples and cultures the same way as those who have visited such countries. The scores by those who have not visited are all slightly lower, except the score for RP, which is slightly higher than the evaluations of the respondents who have visited English-speaking countries, 5.3 and 5.4 respectively. GA receives a 4.2 from those who have not visited, and a 4.5 by those who have. IrEng receives a 3.5, AusEng a score of 4.3, SAmEng a 4.2 and InEng a score of 3.7 by those respondents who have not travelled. By those who have been traveling to English-speaking countries GA receives a score of 4.5, IrEng a 3.7, AusEng a 4.4, SAmEng a score of 4.5 and InEng receives a score of 4.1.

Although the scores are lower, they are all quite high even if the respondents have not visited any English-speaking country. This may be related to how the general knowledge of English varieties, the countries they belong to and the peoples who use them is quite high in today's society. Norway has a very high exposure to English in several areas, such as schools, business, media and entertainment, and has citizens of various backgrounds, something which

may impact the typical Norwegian to being more familiar with and neutral to different varieties of English. However, overall one could say that visiting English-speaking countries might make a person marginally more positive to different varieties due to the fact that all of the varieties, except RP, receives higher scores by those respondents who have. The results found by Loftheim (2013) also showed that travels had little impact on the results, with only a minor difference where the respondents who had travelled little were slightly more negative in their evaluations.

**4.1.5 The amount of English usage daily**

All respondents were asked how much they use English in their everyday lives. The answers ranged from little, some, much and very much. Only one respondent had no usage of English at all. 40 respondents answered that they used English little or some every day, and 40 answered that they used it much to very much. It was expected that those respondents who claimed to use English much would be more positive to the varieties, and those who use it little would be less positive (cf. hypothesis 6 in 1.2).



*Figure 4.7 Average scores, use of English daily*

Figure 4.7 shows the average scores when the respondents are divided into groups according to how much English they use daily. The respondents who use English little or some seem in

general to be quite positive to all varieties, except IrEng, which again is downgraded. RP is seen as the most favourable. The results for those respondents who use English much or very much on a daily basis is quite similar to the evaluations of those who only use it little or some. When comparing the results, one can see that there are no major differences between these two groups. This implies that using English little or much has little impact on the attitudes to these respondents. The results from Loftheim's study showed that the respondents who used English much on a daily basis in general were more positive to the varieties. Again, it is difficult to say why the results are not the same for this study. It may be that my respondents are overall more positive so that it makes little difference whether they are divided into groups by variables or not. Another possible explanation is that English has become even more ubiquitous during the time period between the studies, and thus different varieties of English are not seen as strange or unknown, giving higher, more positive results. Then again, as implied in 4.1.3, it could be coincidental.

The overall evaluations are favourable, the respondents seem in general to be positive to most of the varieties and judge them neutrally to positively. The results outlined above are all from the use of the indirect method and a verbal guise experiment. It seems that the respondents are quite good at distinguishing between most varieties and labelling them, and that they seem to have quite positive attitudes to the varieties. I will now turn to Part 2 of the questionnaire and outline the results from this.

## **4.2 Results: Part 2 of the questionnaire**

Part 2 of the questionnaire (see Appendix 2) involved the use of the direct method, and asked the respondents their opinions of each of the six varieties (RP, GA, IrEng, AusEng, SAmEng and InEng) and of the peoples from the countries where these varieties belong. When asked about the varieties the respondents could choose among various opposite adjectives to circle, in addition to having the option of adding any other adjective(s) they saw fit. To answer the question of their opinion regarding the peoples of the countries related to the varieties, the respondents were given an open space to fill out using their own words.

### **4.2.1 Evaluations of the varieties**

There were not too many respondents who added adjectives to describe what they thought about the varieties, but a few did. Adjectives added for RP were 'precise', 'cultural',



‘reliable’, ‘correct’, ‘polite’, ‘arrogant’, ‘dry’, ‘professional’, and ‘self-righteous’. RP received the most adjectives, which may imply that this is the variety that triggers the most associations for the respondents, not all of which are captured by the adjectives in the questionnaire. The adjectives added refer much to prestige and correctness, something which one can say belongs to a stereotypical view of a British person, at least one from the upper-class. When it comes to GA the respondents added only ‘self-righteous’, ‘patriotic’ and ‘less upper-class’, which can be seen as a comparison to the British (who are often referred to in relation to the upper-class). The adjective *patriotic* is something that fits to a stereotypical American, because of how they are often portrayed in the media. The Americans help each other and their country when there is a crisis, they protect their own and they have fought for their freedom. Billboards of ‘Uncle Sam’ with the American flag in the background comes to mind and is a reference in several films and series. There is a probability that the respondents could be influenced (most likely indirectly) by what they see in the media.

IrEng received the additions of ‘working class’, ‘rough speech’, ‘not easily understood’ and ‘good humour’, all of which are related to a basic knowledge and perhaps a stereotypical view of the Irish people. Ireland may not be the country most Norwegians visit in their vacations, nor is it the largest contributor on TV, which explains why the respondents rely on existing stereotypes (something seen more clearly in the evaluations of the people below, see 4.2.2.3). There were not many additions to AusEng either, but the respondents wrote ‘lively’, ‘fun’, ‘fresh’, and ‘some difficult words’. These adjectives could be related to the view of Australians being friendly and spending much time outdoors, which again is the stereotypical portrayal in films and series. That ‘some difficult words’ were added could be a reference to how Australians have borrowed words that originally comes from the Aboriginal language. Not many of the respondents claim to have visited Australia, thus there is a great chance that the knowledge and opinions the respondents express are gained through the media.

Only three respondents added words for SAmEng, which were ‘melodic speech’, ‘religious’ and ‘weak’. The addition of ‘weak’ is difficult to interpret, but it could be related to how there are many poor people in the South and that they are seen as less superior when compared to the typical white American who is strong, rich and powerful (cf. the president or the military in the media). The added adjective ‘religious’ is a classic definition of Southerners if the opinions are based on historical background, since religion has been important in the South. Part of the South is even known as the “Bible belt” because of the

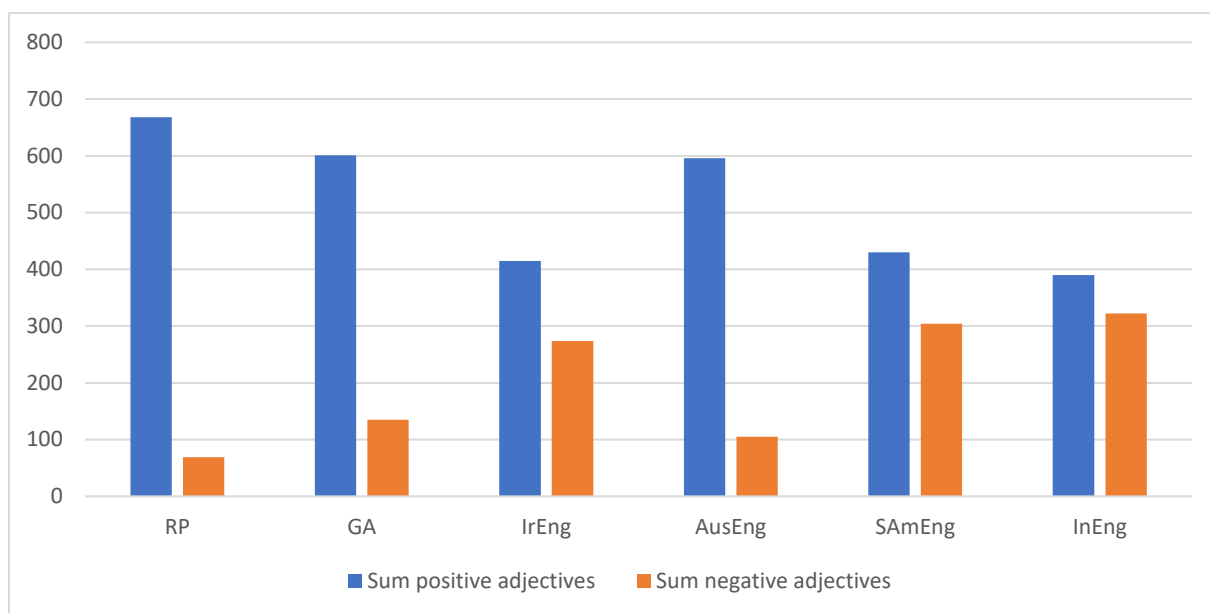
prevalence of evangelical Christians. ‘Melodic speech’ could refer to the intonation of Southern accents, which, in combination with the “Southern Drawl” sets them apart from GA.

Finally, InEng also received three additional adjectives from the respondents, those were ‘entertaining’, ‘incomprehensible’ and ‘careful’. The word *entertaining* can be related to how people of India are portrayed humorously in some films and series, which is discussed in 1.2. The adjective ‘incomprehensible’ is most likely a reference to the distinct pronunciation Indian people have, in addition to the fact that they also speak quite rapidly, often with syllable-timing, which makes it difficult for other people to fully understand everything they say. The final word added, *careful* is not easy to interpret, but perhaps the respondent feels that it is not a group of people who stand out much compared to the other nationalities. As many of the added adjectives seem to touch upon stereotypes of the groups of people, one might assume that they could fit into the ‘keyword’ categories which Garrett et al. discusses (cf. 2.5), but there has to be a certain frequency of the adjectives to make them valid as *keywords* (2005:42). Hence, as there were very few respondents who did add any adjectives, the words added cannot be said to be representative as general opinions.

Table 4.4 Overall evaluations of the varieties

Dimensions	VARIABLES	SCORES					
		RP	GA	IrEng	AusEng	SAmEng	InEng
<b>Status</b>							
	Intelligent	65	31	18	39	20	42
	Less intelligent	1	19	24	9	33	15
	High education	63	34	13	23	12	24
	Low education	2	15	42	23	49	36
	Rich	54	44	9	26	16	10
	Poor	3	8	39	13	46	47
	Self confident	68	69	44	57	58	20
	Insecure	0	2	14	4	6	29
	Ambitious	38	49	34	35	27	39
	Passive	13	7	11	10	15	16
<b>Social attractiveness</b>							
	Friendly	64	51	52	64	46	56
	Less friendly	5	18	14	6	22	8
	Extrovert	41	62	44	54	46	31
	Introvert	5	2	8	3	10	17
	Popular	38	53	24	51	28	12
	Unpopular	5	3	20	3	23	29
	Honest	40	25	45	46	33	37
	Dishonest	6	18	6	3	12	10
	Helpful	43	33	42	52	42	53
	Not helpful	3	11	10	4	13	11
	Good humour	21	45	44	46	29	23
	Bad humour	22	11	12	4	18	18
<b>Linguistic quality</b>							
	Comprehensible speech	68	68	24	56	49	27
	Incomprehensible speech	1	3	42	7	15	44
	Pleasant speech	65	37	22	47	24	16
	Not pleasant speech	3	18	32	16	42	42

Table 4.4 shows how many respondents who circled each of the adjectives given in Part 2. It also gives an overview of which adjectives the respondents could choose from and how they are approximately opposite of each other, one more positive and the other negative. From an overall picture, one can see that RP and GA tends to have more positive than negative adjectives encircled. This can to a degree also be said for AusEng, but for IrEng, SAmEng and InEng the distribution is more even. The respondents seem to circle both positive and negative adjectives more equally for these varieties. To get a clearer picture of which varieties received most positive and most negative adjectives, a summary of each variety's total sum is helpful.



*Figure 4.8 Summation of positive and negative adjectives*

Figure 4.8 shows a clearer summary of which variety received most positive and most negative scores for Part 2. RP is by far the variety which receives most positive adjectives and least negative, with a total amount of 668 encircled positive adjectives and only 69 negative ones. This means that for both parts of the study, RP is seen as the most favourable variety of the six included. The second most favourable here is GA with a sum of 601 positive adjectives circled and 135 negative ones encircled. AusEng is very close to GA with a total of 596 positive adjectives, however, it received a lower sum for negative adjectives than GA, with only 105 encircled. The variety coming in fourth place is SAmEng with a sum of 430 encircled positive adjectives. The respondents also encircled negative adjectives 304 times, which is the second highest sum of negative adjectives. This means that IrEng is not evaluated as negatively as in Part 1 of the questionnaire. Here it receives a total amount of 415 positive and 274 negative adjectives, which means that it is quite similar to SAmEng when it comes to positive ones, but it gets fewer negative adjectives circled than SAmEng does. The variety with least positive and most negative adjectives, in addition to the most even distribution of positive and negative, is then InEng. The respondents circle positive adjectives 390 times and negative ones 322 times.

To summarise, the ranking of the varieties is not that different in the two parts of the study. RP is evaluated most positively and seen as the most favourable variety in both the verbal guise experiment and in the choice of adjectives. The second most favourable variety

was AusEng in Part 1 of the questionnaire, but GA in Part 2. They nonetheless have relatively similar scores in both. SAmEng follows closely to these two with scores just below them. The two least favourable varieties are in both parts of the questionnaire InEng and IrEng. However, IrEng was seen as the most negative variety in Part 1, also when the results were seen divided by different variables and factors, but in Part 2 of the questionnaire IrEng is seen as less negative than both InEng and SAmEng in that it receives fewer circled negative adjectives. InEng is at the bottom as the least favourable variety in Part 2. The fact that IrEng is the least favoured variety in Part 1, but ranked above both SAmEng and InEng in part 2 could be related to how the respondents might have more prejudices towards some nationalities than others. In Part 1, the respondents listened to the speakers without knowing which variety they spoke before they gave them scores and guessed their place of origin. This made them judge what they heard, without labels (cf. 3.1.1) and could be a reason for the difference between the results.

The evaluation of the varieties in Part 1 was not steered by labels, as they are asked what they think of the speaker (i.e. what they just heard), which encourages the respondents to evaluate the variety rather than the group of people. In part 2, labels were given to the varieties which could evoke negative connotations for the respondents when it comes to the nationalities. The respondents may have more negative connotations to the way IrEng sounds and less negative connotations towards the people of Ireland. Likewise, the connotations towards spoken InEng and SAmEng could be more positive than the connotations the respondents have towards people from India and people from the South of the USA. Southern speech may be pleasant to listen to, but Southerners may be evaluated negatively due to historical events such as slavery. In the same way, the respondents may find InEng agreeable to listen to, but they can have negative connotations to the people, culture or country, which makes them downgrade the variety when it is labelled. One might judge differently according to how one is asked to evaluate (indirectly or directly), and whether one is given a label which could steer the evaluation depending on what experience or opinion one has. Moreover, it is possible that the respondents, when they do not know where the speaker comes from, evaluates the sounds, the intonation, the speech rate or other factors concerning the speech of the speaker.

## 4.2.2 Evaluations of the peoples

For this evaluation, the respondents were given the question “What do you think of people from ...?” and a blank open space to write in their own words, expressing their attitudes. Not all respondents answered this part, but there were enough answers to see a pattern of similar responses, which indicates some attitudes towards these peoples and existing stereotypes. A selection of representative answers covering the main attitudes of the respondents will be presented below for each of the six varieties (all translations are mine).

### 4.2.2.1 People from England

The general impression among the respondents seems to be that people from England are very polite and helpful. Many write that they feel the British are a pleasant people, who are usually kind and obliging. People from England are also considered to be quite proper, with a proper and correct way of speaking, and seems to be regarded as educated. However, some respondents state that this is not the same for those who live in the cities and those in the countryside, as those who live outside the cities are not as educated, and have a rougher behaviour. Several respondents also mention that people from England have a good sense of humour, are easily understood and seems to include others. Thus, the answers are mostly positive, although some have given more negatively loaded answers. Some respondents say that people from England are dry, conservative, stiff or arrogant, and that they tend to be posh. Some of the answers given by the respondents are as follows:

*Respondent nr. 11, male, 18: People from England are polite.*

*Respondent nr. 13, female, 18: Polite, helpful.*

*Respondent nr. 18, male, 20: Pleasant. Kind. Most are obliging and helpful.*

*Respondent nr 31, female, 46: Polite. A bit cold. Keeps their distance.*

*Respondent nr. 42, male, 51: Okay. Some can seem a bit stiff/arrogant.*

*Respondent nr. 49, female, 18: They are often loud, but nice. They are also often very polite. You more often hear an apology there than in Norway.*

*Respondent nr. 50, female, 18: I think people from England are very polite and helpful.*

*Respondent nr. 51, male, 18: Englishmen are proud and independent. They have completely different values about being polite and proper in public and private settings.*

*Respondent nr. 64, female, 18: They are very friendly and charismatic. They are helpful, and they often seem highly educated.*

*Respondent nr. 83, female, 43: Generally, a positive impression of people from England. Polite, friendly, a bit dry (boring), but good humour.*

Interestingly, the words and comments added by the respondents are very similar to what respondents from the UK, the US, Australia and New Zealand answered in a study by Garrett et al. (2005b). In their research they asked the respondents to name 8 countries in the world where they knew English was a native language and then to describe the Englishes in these countries (ibid.:217). The data collected regarded Australia, New Zealand, the UK and the US. English English received many positive comments when it comes to culture with words such as ‘correct’, ‘standard’ and ‘proper’ (ibid.:227) which are similar to what my respondents added for people from England. Likewise, both in this study and in the study by Garrett et al., the respondents also added ‘wealthy’, ‘rich’ and ‘high society’. Negative remarks included words such as ‘stuffy’ and ‘they feel they are better than you’, which again is similar to what my respondents answered. Thus, it seems that the attitudes of Norwegians are more or less equal to attitudes of native speakers of English, and they are related to similar stereotypes.

#### **4.2.2.2 People from the USA**

After being asked about people from England, the respondents were asked about people from the US. Several respondents wrote that it was difficult to give one answer since the US is of such a large size and the people there are many and diverse. There are also quite a few respondents who have negative thoughts about Americans and several respondents mention the presidential election, Donald Trump, that Americans are not able to think for themselves, and how the respondents do not approve of this political change. Perhaps the answers would be more positive if the timing of the study was further away from the election. However, there are also many positive replies. In general, it seems that Americans are regarded as a friendly and hard-working people. Most think that they are open, social, very polite and extrovert. The respondents also agree that the people in the US are patriotic, that they can tend to be too confident and that they are self-righteous. Some of the answers provided by the respondents are as follows:

*Respondent nr. 14, male, 18: Nice, some can be self-righteous.*

*Respondent nr. 18, male, 20: Nice, obliging and helpful people. Good and productive people.*

*Respondent nr. 19, female, 18: Outgoing, talkative, polite – most places. Like “the language” – the most common “dialects”. Funny – good humour.*

*Respondent nr. 33, male, 40: Patriots, nice, but often simple, direct and honest = To the point.*

*Respondent nr. 35, female, 18: People from USA are very shallow and high on themselves. Many are very conservative. They have their own opinions and are not afraid to say them.*

*Respondent nr. 39, female, 42: Seems often a bit high on themselves. Strong/large ego, world champions, funny. Creates a storm and wants the attention. Friendly.*

*Respondent nr. 51, male, 18: Americans are often outgoing and patriotic. They often look on the bright side and are hard-working.*

*Respondent nr. 53, female, 50: Too confident. Variably knowledgeable. Partly un-informed and without knowledge. Self-righteous. But USA is too compound to let the negative picture characterise all.*

*Respondent nr. 57, male, 18: Outgoing, self-righteous, and patriotic. Different from each other, many different peoples. Very friendly.*

*Respondent nr. 68, female, 60: Bragging, self-confident, conservative, too interested in religion, crazy for weapons.*

*Respondent nr. 89, male, 48: Open, honest, to the point, friendly, shallow.*

US English was another variety evaluated in the study by Garrett et al. (2005b), and again the answers are similar to those found in this study. The overall picture Garrett et al. found was astoundingly negative, and the respondents focused much on power, how Americans were too present everywhere, and the high arrogance among this group of people (ibid.:228). My respondents were also surprisingly negative, more so than expected. However, they did use the word ‘friendly’ often, which is similar to the respondents in Garrett et al., who added ‘friendly’, ‘casual’ and ‘enthusiastic’ among other positive comments. Nonetheless, it is interesting to see that the answers given by both native and non-native respondents are so similar, and that the attitudes seem to be based on the same stereotypical views. This may not be too surprising when we consider the global role of English today, and the widespread use of English language in many areas and many countries (cf. 2.6).



### 4.2.2.3 People from Ireland

The third group the respondents were to give their opinion of was the people of Ireland. What is striking among the respondents' answers is that they very much agree upon some keywords to describe Irish people. *Beer, song, good humour, down-to-earth* and *open* are words that many seem to connect to people of Ireland. The general impression seems to be that Irish people are happy, drunk, friendly and outgoing. This seems very stereotypical of what is known about people from Ireland. Some respondents mention the difficult background Irish people have, that they are hard-working and have difficulties within their country. Some also mention that they seem angry, rough, hot-headed and ready to fight. Several respondents claim that the Irish can be difficult to understand when they speak since they speak so rapidly. But most respondents agree about positive features, that the Irish are a kind, open and obliging people. Some of the replies given by the respondents are as follows:

*Respondent nr. 1, male, 19: They are very direct people.*

*Respondent nr. 2, female, 50: Farmers, sheep, agriculture, knitted sweaters... Big, green fields. Fun music – the flute. Calm, steady people with a charming dialect.*

*Respondent nr. 19, female, 18: Funny, lively, open, outgoing, honest, “playful” – cool people.*

*Respondent nr. 24, female, 17: Beautiful dialect. Great people, helpful and hard-working.*

*Respondent nr. 25, male, 18: More difficult to understand. Drunk, Irish men are what first comes to mind. St. Patrick.*

*Respondent nr. 35, female, 18: People from Ireland have a nice accent, which makes them interesting to talk to. They seem like honest people, but have some troubles with each other.*

*Respondent nr. 45, male, 45: They like a party and having fun. A lot of song, music and drinking beer. They are proud of their country, and they are probably tough blokes.*

*Respondent nr. 47, female, 54: Cheerful, pleasant and helpful. Good humour and open and obliging. Social to be with. Lively. They have their particular features and their own culture they are proud of as everyone else.*

*Respondent nr. 64, female, 18: They sound friendly, but it is not always easy to understand what they say. And they drink a lot I think, beer that is.*

*Respondent nr. 82, male, 18: A bit difficult to understand when they speak as they speak quite rapidly. Quick to fight if they are offended.*

*Respondent nr. 89, male, 48: Religious, rural, friendly, generous, proper, holds principles, can handle a conflict, quiet.*

#### **4.2.2.4 People from Australia**

Also for the people of Australia it seems that the respondents are stereotypically bound in their answers. Several respondents think of surfing, life-guards and beaches, the bush and very laid-back people. The overall picture of Australian people is very positive, but a few of the respondents have answered that they feel people from Australia are less friendly, have an irritating accent and are rude. However, the majority of the respondents highly agree about one particular feature: Australian people are friendly. They are also described as kind, helpful, cool, funny and confident. Some respondents find Australian people difficult to understand because they have words and phrases not known to everyone. Several also mention that people from Australia loves nature, and that they must be tough and brave to be able to live with all the different animals, insects and creatures. Many mention TV-programs and connect Australian people to TV since they do not have any personal experience with them. Some of those mentioned include the life guards at Bondi Beach (*Bondi Rescue*), *Home & Away*, and the crocodile-man (*Crocodile Dundee*). Some of the answers provided by the respondents are as follows:

*Respondent nr. 2, female, 50: Jovial, cheerful, relaxed. Pleasant people who have a lot of holiday. Sun and summer.*

*Respondent nr. 25, male, 18: I think immediately at life guards at Bondi Beach. Also, I think a little about bush-people.*

*Respondent nr. 28, female, 20: Nice country, and I believe the people are nice too. A lot of exciting things in Australia.*

*Respondent nr. 34, female, 52: Friendly and good-spirited.*

*Respondent nr. 39, female, 42: Seems lively, playful, funny. Are not that arrogant in the language/way of speaking. Do not show off – I do not have the impression that they want to impress, but will welcome you and take good care of you.*

*Respondent nr. 45, male, 45: They are sporty and nice. Fond of being outdoors, swim, barbeque and live life. Slightly simple people.*

*Respondent nr. 49, female, 18: Very cool dialects, nice. Cool people, have a cool culture and a cool country.*

*Respondent nr. 51, male, 18: They seem to be friendly and simple people. The accent makes them sound less intelligent, but they seem confident and helpful.*

*Respondent nr. 54, female, 18: Speaks nice, calm, takes care of each other and what is theirs. Protective of their country.*

*Respondent nr. 60, female, 18: Speaks totally normal. Seems adventurous, free spirit people, who surfs all day (after work/school).*

*Respondent nr. 64, female, 18: Seems as if they only surf and have bonfires on the beach, but they are probably educated. And they are friendly.*

*Respondent nr. 84, female, 50: They have an annoying accent, I connect it to beach-life and surfing and "Home & Away".*

*Respondent nr. 90, male, 54: Helpful, outgoing.*

As the results for English and American people, the similarities to the results of Garrett et al. (2005b) is fascinating. The comments seem in general to be based, or at least influenced by the media, where the Australians are very often related to sunny weather, the beach, surfing and barbequing (ibid.:224). The respondents of Garrett et al. give reference to TV series and films when discussing Australian English, as do my respondents. In addition, respondents from both studies seem to imagine Australians as people who spend a lot of time outdoors in nature. Moreover, the attitudes seem mostly positive when it comes to this variety, but it seems that the media plays a major role in the knowledge and stereotypical view of the respondents.

#### **4.2.2.5 People from the southern parts of the USA**

The respondents were asked earlier about people from the US in general, connected to GA, but they now also got the question about what they felt about people from the southern parts of the US in particular. This was connected to how they were asked about Southern American English and that they evaluated Speaker 5 (SAmEng) in Part 1 of the questionnaire. The general impression the respondents have of Southern Americans is not a positive one. They seem to look at people from the South as tacky, cowboys, stupid or less intelligent, hillbillies, conservative, rude and mean. The respondents also characterise them as rednecks, judgmental

and racist. This description is not in accordance with the scores Speaker 5 received, nor is it in agreement with the amount of positive versus negative adjectives the respondents circled for SAMEng in Part 2 of the questionnaire. However, some respondents do list positive features about the people from Southern USA. Words such as *nice*, *relaxed*, *friendly*, *self-confident* and *hard-working* are also used to describe them. Nonetheless, it seems that the stigmatisation of this people has infiltrated Norwegians to a high degree. Some of the responses by the respondents are as follows:

*Respondent nr. 2, female, 50: Many descendants from slaves. Poverty. Hard-working.*

*Respondent nr. 25, male, 18: I think of mean, white men with outdated opinions about women, religion and sexuality. Kind of hillbilly.*

*Respondent nr. 32, female, 45: Bragging. Self-righteous. Racist.*

*Respondent nr. 35, female, 18: They seem like a combined "people". Hold their ground and help those who belong (friends, family and close community). Seems kind in the way they speak but perhaps a bit conservative.*

*Respondent nr. 45, male, 45: They are hospitable and nice, but sceptical of anything not American. Very simple and less interested in academic affairs. Very religious.*

*Respondent nr. 47, female, 54: Open, lively, confident, sure of themselves and what they stand for. Easy to get in touch with and connect with, like most Americans. Maybe not that many rich, but still a people who will welcome you and are hospitable.*

*Respondent nr. 48, female, 20: I think people from the South are of the good kind. They seem to be very confident and are not afraid to give their opinion.*

*Respondent nr. 57, male, 18: Conservative. Racist. Rednecks. Not that smart.*

*Respondent nr. 58, male, 18: A people who is very misunderstood. Pleasant, who seem very helpful and hospitable. Southern Hospitality.*

*Respondent nr. 62, female, 18: I connect the accent to small towns and people who take care of each other.*

*Respondent nr. 64, female, 18: Some are probably smart, but I connect the South with low intelligence and more racism.*

*Respondent nr. 82, male, 18: Chew a lot of tobacco and sit with the rifle by the front porch.*

*Respondent nr. 89, male, 48: Cowboys or cotton picking. Suspicious, religious, xenophobia.*

#### 4.2.2.6 People from India

Finally, the respondents were asked of their opinion regarding people from India. InEng did not do so badly in the first part of the questionnaire, but came last in the second part with most negative adjectives circled by the respondents. When asked what they think of the people it seems that the respondents are not in agreement. There are many who believe they are nice, well educated, rich and friendly, but equally many respondents say they believe the people of India to be not nice, uneducated, poor and not friendly. They feel that when it comes to Indian people you can trust some of them, but others will only try to deceive you. In general, the respondents reply that Indians are a hard-working people who truly are ambitious. Yet, they can be difficult to understand because of their dialect, and the respondents are aware of the caste system, which they disapprove of. A few of the respondents connect the people of India to TV series, the character 'Rajesh' from the series 'The Big Bang Theory' is mentioned. Some of the replies from the respondents are as follows:

*Respondent nr. 14, male, 18: Hard-working, seems nice.*

*Respondent nr. 15, male, 20: Low educated, less intelligent, but honest and down-to-earth people.*

*Respondent nr. 19, female, 18: Nice – helpful – overenthusiastic – honest – ambitious.*

*Respondent nr. 30, male, 17: Many are rich and have higher education.*

*Respondent nr. 32, female, 45: Nice. Hard-working. Ambitious. Honourable.*

*Respondent nr. 38, female, 56: Highly varied group of people, big difference of educational level.*

*Respondent nr. 45, male, 45: They are highly educated within e.g. IT and not a poor developing country. Preoccupied by religion and traditional values.*

*Respondent nr. 48, female, 20: The way I see it, Indian people is of that kind who sets a high and ambitious goal and keeps on working until they reach that goal.*

*Respondent nr. 50, female, 18: People from India seem ambitious and friendly. Many have higher education, even though many struggle with poverty too.*

*Respondent nr. 57, male, 18: Nice and peaceful. Often well educated. Traditional.*

*Respondent nr. 64, female, 18. Some are rich, some are poor. There is a caste system, so everyone is not that friendly, rather rude.*

*Respondent nr. 68, female, 60: Ruled by the caste system.*

*Respondent nr. 88, male, 44: Nice people, with great differences in educational level. Seems friendly, but has a despicable culture of discriminations of women in some areas.*

The respondents seem to be divided in two when it comes to attitudes towards InEng. They seem to have different images of people from India. It would be of interest to see if this corresponded to other non-native respondents in Scandinavia, and also to the attitudes of native speakers of English. If the words of Lindemann are taken into consideration, claiming that non-standard speakers usually are evaluated negatively even if they are not stigmatised (2003:348-349), the results are understandable. It is often difficult to anticipate the outcome of evaluations of non-native varieties since one does not know what the respondents base their attitudes on. There can be several stereotypical pictures of the speaker group, and the respondents can have different relationships to or knowledge of this group. This becomes evident in the results from this study where there are opposite ideas of how people from India are, e.g. rich or poor, educated or uneducated. Even though many respondents recognised Speaker 6 (InEng) in Part 1, the knowledge is diverse and varies among the respondents. In addition, there seems to be less agreement on the stereotype when compared to the agreement the respondents seem to have about the other varieties.

#### **4.3 Summary of results and comparison to previous studies**

The results from Part 1 of the questionnaire with the use of the verbal guise showed that RP was evaluated as the most favourable variety. This is similar to both Loftheim (2013) and Ladegaard's (1998) results, which again makes my results similar to those found in studies in the UK and the US (cf. 2.3, 2.4, 2.8), indicating that Norwegians share similar attitudes as Danish, British and American people. However, the results from the present study show that RP was rated with the highest scores on all dimensions too, which is not typical. Usually the standard varieties are downgraded on the dimension of SA, but this is not the case for the present results. Ladegaard and Loftheim found that GA was the most favourable in the written questionnaire when they performed their studies, however, the results from this study show that RP is here as well the most favoured variety. Also, Jarvella et al. found that the English speakers were favoured above the American speakers, somewhat unexpected due to the expected change of the US becoming dominant (cf. 2.3). The results from the present study

indicate that this change has not given RP a lower status yet, and in fact, the Australian speaker was rated higher than both GA and SAmEng.

Loftheim's results placed GA as the second most favourable variety, whereas the respondents of this study ranked AusEng as second. His results also ranked SAmEng as one of the two least favoured varieties, but the results from the present study ranks SAmEng together with GA at a joint third place. This is surprising, as SAmEng is a rather stigmatised variety, which is observed when looking at the answers regarding the peoples in this study. Nonetheless, SAmEng was rated quite high in most parts of this study. The results from this study differs then somewhat from what Loftheim and Ladegaard found. RP is rated best in both the verbal guise experiment and the written questionnaire, and it is also the variety with the highest, or most positive scores in both parts. Loftheim and Ladegaard found RP highest rated in the verbal guise experiment, but GA in the written questionnaire. Ladegaard asked the respondents where they believed the speakers came from, as was done in the present study. His results showed that the respondents were able to best recognise GA followed by RP. The remaining three varieties were not identified correctly by most respondents. Loftheim's results showed that RP was the most easily recognised and that his respondents had troubles identifying the GA speaker, which is the exact same results from the present study. Here RP was the most easily recognised together with SAmEng and InEng was close behind them. GA was the fourth most recognised variety before AusEng and finally IrEng coming last.

As the research by Loftheim, the present study looked at various variables to see if the attitudes were different when the respondents were divided into groups. Loftheim found that age and gender had little impact on the results, the only difference was that females evaluated the accents slightly more negatively than the males. Travels to the UK or the US also had no significant outcome, except slightly less positive results from those who had travelled little. The respondents who had high exposure to media and those who used English on a daily basis were generally more positive in their evaluations. The results from the present study show that age and gender had no major impact on the results. The differences were minor where the female respondents in general judged the varieties slightly more positive than the males, and the older age group judged slightly more negatively in general than the younger respondents. When it comes to the amount of media, this variable had little significance too. Surprisingly those who had high exposure to media were slightly more negative to IrEng and InEng, perhaps because they have attained more familiarity to stereotypes and stigmatisation than the

group who had less exposure. However, it was expected that the more exposure would show more positivity such as Loftheim's results showed.

The variable of having travelled to English-speaking countries showed that those who had travelled were a bit more positive in their evaluations than the respondents who had not travelled. Again, the differences were not major and the results were overall quite high no matter what variable was in question. Using English little or much on a daily basis had no impact on the results, showing the respondents to be quite similarly positive to the varieties. The respondents in the present study were overall positive to the varieties, with only IrEng being judged a little below neutral. No variety received an overall average score below 3.0. Also, when it comes to Part 2 the respondents are generally quite positive, circling more positive adjectives than negative ones for most varieties. It is only when asked about the peoples using the varieties that a more negative view appears. Perhaps the respondents do not hold the same negative attitudes and stereotypes to the spoken varieties as they do the peoples. Or there may be a general increase in acceptance of other ways of speaking English, the familiarity of Englishes might be higher than when Ladegaard and Loftheim performed their studies. It is difficult to say, and beyond the scope of this paper.

In general, the results from the present study are similar to those from previous studies both in Scandinavia, the UK and the US, with the main difference that RP is the most favoured variety in all researched areas. The expected reduced status of RP, or replacement of RP with GA, is not a real factor according to the results from the present study. The change may still come of course, but it does not seem likely to happen overnight.



## **5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

This chapter will discuss the results in reference to the research questions and hypotheses. It will summarise the findings and see them in light of theory and previous research. Moreover, it will look at general tendencies, discuss some of the limitations and shortcomings of the study, and it will suggest avenues for future research. Finally, the chapter will provide a conclusion of the present study.

### **5.1 Summary**

The present work is a study of Norwegian attitudes to six varieties of English: RP, GA, IrEng, AusEng, SAmEng, and InEng. This makes it a language attitudinal study within sociolinguistics. It is based on a survey among respondents in two age groups, 17-20 and 40-60. The survey included the use of the indirect method with a verbal guise test, and the use of the direct method with questions in a written questionnaire. The main variables were age, gender, exposure to media, visits to English-speaking countries and the respondents' use of English. In this study, I have attempted to map the attitudes of Norwegians towards English varieties and see the results in light of previous research to find similarities and differences.

### **5.2 Results and research questions**

In Chapter 1 some research questions were presented, together with some hypotheses concerning the anticipated results. In Chapter 4 the results were outlined and summarised, as well as seen in light of the hypotheses. Here, the focus will be on the research questions, but the hypotheses will also be included in the discussion as they belong closely to the research questions. The questions will be dealt with one by one, and the hypotheses will be included where they are relevant.

#### **5.2.1 Research question 1**

Research question 1 was “What attitudes do Norwegians have towards different varieties of English?”. To answer this question the results from both Part 1 and Part 2 of the questionnaire must be taken into consideration. In general, it seems that Norwegians are quite positive to accents of English. The scores are overall neutral to positive, and for most varieties the

respondents chose more positive than negative adjectives to describe the varieties. The attitudes towards RP seems to be most positive, with only a few negative connotations. The respondents think highly of Speaker 1 (RP) with overall high scores in both parts of the study, and across all variables. Considering the evaluations from Part 2, the respondents' attitudes towards RP are that those who speak it sounds self-confident and highly educated, it is a comprehensible and pleasant accent, and the speakers are intelligent and friendly (cf. Table 4.4). Many also have the impression that the speakers of RP are rich, helpful and extrovert, in addition to being honest people. Some find them to be ambitious and popular, but there is a division where the respondents do not agree whether those who speak RP have a good or bad sense of humour. In summation, the attitudes towards RP are mostly positive and the variety is evaluated highly by Norwegians. The hypotheses (see 1.2) included the expectancy that the older respondents would be more positive than the younger, but that all respondents would be less positive to RP than GA, mainly due to the exposure of GA in media. This was clearly not the case. All respondents are equally positive, and most positive to RP above any other variety.

The second speaker (GA) did not receive as high scores as expected. This speaker was given best scores in Part 2. However, the respondents focus particularly on three adjectives when it comes to speakers of GA: self-confident, comprehensible speech and extrovert (cf. Table 4.4). Many also find GA speakers friendly, popular, ambitious, rich and with a good sense of humour. Some also think that GA sounds pleasant when spoken, that the speakers are highly educated, helpful and intelligent. However, only a few respondents believe these speakers to be honest. The expectations were that all respondents would be positive to GA and evaluate it higher than what they have done. The reason why GA receives lower scores and less positive attitudes than expected is not certain. It may be due to the presidential election where Donald Trump won, which is mentioned by several respondents. It may also have an impact that GA was not recognised by as many respondents as expected, and thus they evaluated Speaker 2 without GA in mind. GA did rank second best in Part 2 and only joint third in Part 1, showing that the respondents do not have as positive attitudes towards this variety. However, it is far from the least positive, it just did not receive as positive attitudes as expected.

Speaker 3 (IrEng) was rated as the least favourable in Part 1 of the questionnaire with generally low scores. The evaluations are mostly below 4.0, or neutral, but this could be related to the speaker and not the variety itself, since IrEng did not do as badly in Part 2. The

negativity towards the speaker in Part 1 could be related to his specific regional accent, intonation, speech rate, voice quality, pitch, etc. The IrEng speaker takes some pauses and sometimes seems insecure before pronouncing words, which could be of annoyance to the respondents. Nonetheless, in Part 2 IrEng receives fewer negative adjectives than SAmEng and InEng, and more positive adjectives than InEng, which puts it in third place in Part 2. The evaluations from the respondents are that most think of speakers of IrEng as friendly, honest, self-confident and with a good sense of humour (cf. Table 4.4). IrEng speakers are also seen as extrovert and helpful. However, the respondents believe them to be less educated, and with an incomprehensible and not too pleasant accent. The speakers can be seen as somewhat ambitious, but they are also expected to be less educated, less intelligent and poor. The attitudes towards IrEng are thus not only positive, which could be linked to less knowledge of and little familiarity with the variety. It was the least recognised accent in Part 1, showing that most respondents cannot identify this variety correctly. Hypothesis 10 predicted that IrEng would be less known to the respondents and that they could mistake it for e.g. Scottish English. Generally, the impression is that the respondents' attitudes towards IrEng are fairly negative when they hear it spoken, but that this is partly related to misidentification of the accent.

The speaker of AusEng, Speaker 4, was given quite high scores in Part 1, where he was judged by all respondents as having the second most favourable accent. AusEng outranks GA and is favoured by many respondents, although it is not recognised by as many. AusEng also receives high scores in Part 2, where it has almost as many positive, but fewer negative, adjectives than GA. Overall the variety has high scores and is evaluated positively by most respondents. The main attitude is that the speakers of AusEng sound friendly, which is the most circled adjective above any other when it comes to AusEng. The image of the Australian seems to be mostly based on popular stereotypes, with the idea of laidback surfers on a beach. This may have to do with the fact that Norwegians primarily get their views of Australians through TV, and not through direct contact or first-hand experience with actual Australians. Most of the respondents probably know of the variety due to media. In addition, the respondents find the variety to be comprehensible and pleasant to listen to, that the speakers sound self-confident, helpful, extrovert, and popular (cf. Table 4.4). Most also judge the speakers of the variety to possess a good sense of humour. It is a neutral to positively judged variety, and few respondents have negative attitudes towards it.

SAmEng is represented by Speaker 5 in Part 1, who receives fairly positive scores. He has the same score as the GA speaker in the verbal guise test. When it comes to Part 2, SAmEng is downgraded more and has the second highest number of negative adjectives circled. However, it does receive more positive than negative adjectives. The general attitudes are that speakers of SAmEng are self-confident and that they speak comprehensibly (cf. Table 4.4). They are also regarded as extrovert, helpful and friendly. However, many respondents believe the speakers of SAmEng to have a low education, that they are generally poor and that their accent sounds less pleasant. Some respondents also think that these speakers are honest, ambitious and with a good sense of humour. Nonetheless, they are also regarded as less intelligent by some, and the respondents are divided when it comes to whether or not these speakers are popular. It is somewhat surprising that the evaluations are so different in Part 1 and Part 2, since SAmEng was recognised by many respondents in Part 1 and the speaker of the variety received fairly positive scores. Perhaps the negative attitudes are not as much evoked by listening to the variety, but more so when thinking of the variety and relating it to the people and geographical area. This could be related to how Southerners are often portrayed in films as quite slow, conservative, old-fashioned and racist. The image of people from the South is in general not positive in films and could be a reason why the stereotype of them becomes negative. In addition, they are stigmatised as being rural (in a negative sense) or hillbillies without proper behaviour, which several of my respondents have picked up on.

The final variety, InEng receives a neutral overall score in Part 1, which means that Speaker 6, the representing speaker of the variety, was not evaluated as negatively as the speaker of IrEng (Speaker 3). It was the second least favoured variety, but the scores were overall neutral to positive. In addition, it was the third most recognised variety, which means that it is familiar to many. The scores from Part 2 are much more negative, where it receives the highest number of negative adjectives, and it is ranked last in this part of the study. The attitudes are in general that speakers of InEng are friendly, intelligent and helpful, but poor, with an incomprehensible and not pleasant accent (cf. Table 4.4). They are seen as extrovert, honest and ambitious, although more respondents believe them to have a lower education. In addition, they are regarded to be insecure and not popular, even if they are thought to have a good sense of humour. The respondents seem to be less definite and in less agreement when it comes to InEng. This could be because they lack knowledge of the variety, the people or the culture, and also the fact that it is a relatively newly popular variety in the media.

### **5.2.2 Research question 2**

The second research question for the study was “Are these attitudes in accordance with other attitudinal studies?”. As discussed in Chapter 4, the results from this study are very similar to results from previous research. RP is generally rated positively, although in the present study it is unexpectedly rated highest overall, and in all parts of the study. This is not how previous studies have placed RP as it is often judged high in Status, but lower in SA, which is shown by the results of e.g. Stewart, Ryan and Giles (1985) (cf. 2.3). However, GA was evaluated better than RP in terms of Status in the studies by Bayard et al. (2001) and McKenzie (2008) which was discussed in 2.3. GA and RP have been very similar and closely rated, as standard varieties are ranked higher than both regional and urban. This has been shown in studies such as Giles (1970), Ball (1983), Coupland and Bishop (2007) and Hiraga (2005), cf. 2.3 and 2.4. In this study, RP and GA are not evaluated similarly, as GA is downgraded, and RP upgraded in all dimensions. However, the results are quite similar to studies in the UK and the US in addition to Scandinavian studies, such as Ladegaard (1998) and Loftheim (2013), which are discussed in 2.8. Although there are some minor differences (cf. 4.3), it is interesting to see how similar the results are, which means that attitudes and stereotypes are quite firmly set in the minds of people, deeply entrenched perhaps, into the culture and the environment one grows up in. The reason why there are similarities also between respondents of different nationalities may be because attitudes are so old and set, but they may also be influenced by communication across borders, such as internet, films and news.

### **5.2.3 Research question 3**

When it comes to the third question, “Do Norwegians’ attitudes of the people and countries the accents represent, reflect popular stereotypes?”, the focus will be on the answers the respondents gave in the open part of Part 2, where they were asked about the people coming from the countries related to the varieties. It seems that Norwegians have quite stereotypical images of the various people, perhaps influenced by TV, as some respondents do not have personal experience with all groups. Firstly, people from England are seen as rich and educated people with good manners and a proper behaviour (see 4.2.2.1). The respondents have also picked up on Englishmen seemingly being quite stiff or arrogant, conservative and posh, which is often the picture of the richer upper-class as displayed in films and series. However, the division of people in the cities and in the rural areas is also something the respondents are aware of. The stereotypical view is perhaps that people in the cities are richer,

more educated, very polite and with a better behaviour than those who live in smaller places. The urban vs. rural is also something which is represented on TV and a part of the respondents' evaluations. The typical Englishman is still quite representative according to my respondents. However, the evaluations are more positive than negative, and the image of the English people is good.

The stereotypical American is also quite characteristic and present in the respondents' replies. The open, friendly and welcoming American is recognised, but the hard-working patriot is also mentioned (cf. 4.2.2.2). The idea that Americans think highly of themselves and believe they are 'the best' is something my respondents mention. The idea of Americans being confident and ignorant, placing themselves on top is agreed upon by many respondents. It seems that most have positive thoughts of them as well, but there is a negative undertone which I mentioned in Chapter 4. Several respondents refer to how Americans make bad decisions and less smart choices, for example regarding the presidential election, something which seems to guide the evaluations to more negativity. Americans are often portrayed and represented through films, series, news and internet, providing the respondents with many stereotypical images. The fact that Americans, or the USA, are often in the media and sometimes places themselves in the spotlight with what they see as an important and helpful role for the world, is seen as both positive and negative by the respondents. However, several respondents are also able to see that the US is a large geographical area and that the diversity among the American people is vast, they say it is quite difficult to describe Americans due to the diversity among them.

Regarding the third group of people, those who come from Ireland, it seems that the respondents have a highly stereotypical view of them. As stated in 4.2.2.3, Irish people are seen as happy, music-playing, drunk and friendly persons. Many respondents think of beer, song and music, and an outgoing culture when they describe people of Ireland. Not many have personal experience or much knowledge about the Irish, thus perhaps the only notion the respondents have of this group of people is the stereotypical one. Some of the respondents do however have some knowledge and mention both a difficult background for the people and a tense situation among the populations of the country. Another quite stereotypical view of the Irish is that they are, as described by some respondents, hot-headed, rough, angry and seem ready to fight. Again, this can be seen in light of little knowledge, or the fact that the knowledge of the respondents comes from the media, and not so much from actual history

books. However, the respondents do mostly agree that the people of Ireland are friendly, kind and open.

People from Australia also seem to be less familiar to the respondents, at least when it comes to personal experience with them. Thus, the knowledge comes from the media and the respondents seem to have a stereotypical view of Australians too. The adjective chosen the most times for AusEng is ‘friendly’, but when the respondents were asked about people from Australia, other descriptions were more in focus. The idea of a laid-back surfer on the beach, or the life-guard, and the more rough people in the bush is what several respondents describe (see 4.2.2.4). The warm weather and the geography of the country are very much linked to the impression of the people. Some respondents imagine the Australians to spend much time at the beach, having time off, barbecuing and simply just enjoying life. The nature seems to be an important part of the picture of Australian people, the respondents know that Australia has a wildlife of more dangerous animals and creatures, and the Australians are seen as brave for living in such a country. Specific TV-series, such as *Home & Away* and *Bondi Rescue*, are mentioned by some respondents who say they have knowledge of the people of Australia through these, in addition the crocodile-man is mentioned (which I can only assume is a reference to the films about *Crocodile Dundee*).

The fifth group of people evaluated by the respondents are people from the southern parts of the USA. The views of the respondents were more negative than positive, and the replies seem influenced by both stereotypes and stigmatisation. The general impression seems to be that people from the South are hillbillies, cowboys or rednecks (cf. 4.2.2.5). They are judged as conservative, less intelligent, rude and not pleasant people at all. The respondents seem to have very negative attitudes towards Southern people, which is surprising, as they evaluated the Southern speaker (Speaker 5) quite highly. The respondents believe that the people in the South are both racist and judgmental, some mentioning “mean white men”. It is also mentioned that these white men have discriminating opinions about women, sexuality and religion. The history of the South with slavery, racist movements such as the Ku Klux Klan and the rich, white people seems to be a part of the view of this people even today. However, some respondents have more positive images and have knowledge about the Southern Hospitality, claiming that Southerners are welcoming, friendly and relaxed, in addition to being hard-working. Nevertheless, the overall notion of Southerners is negative.

Finally, the respondents were asked about people from India. A lack of knowledge can be an answer to why the respondents give two quite opposite descriptions of this group of people. However, it may be said that this reflects the population of India. The respondents are aware of the caste system which exist and to some degree the differences between groups of people. Not so many respondents mention both sides, but perhaps their idea of an Indian is either or. One picture is that people of India are poor and less educated, another that they are rich and highly educated. In addition, the respondents do not agree on whether or not Indians are friendly and nice. Both images of Indians are in accordance with the society and the situation in India, as there are major differences when it comes to wealth and education, and opportunities are not equal for all. Generally, the respondents see people from India as hard-working and ambitious. Some respondents have the stereotypical image of Indian people being very smart and working within IT, and some relate them to TV series. However, it does not seem that there is any major stigmatisation of this group of people, no strong negative connotations are linked to them, and the respondents seem fairly neutral in their judgements.

The classic stereotypes, often disseminated through popular media, seem to be very much alive and present within the minds of Norwegians. Some groups of people are seen more positively, others more negatively. Some seem to be admired, and others are stigmatised and downgraded. In those countries where the number of inhabitants is very high or the differences between the people are great, the attitudes are also divided with various views and expectations by the respondents. Stereotypes are classifications of people, a social categorisation where people are divided into groups based on different criteria possessed by these people (cf. 2.6). According to Kristiansen (2001) this categorisation is a way for people to make sense of the world and understand a social environment. Stereotypes are then in some ways helpful, but they can also be damaging for certain groups of people. Thus, stereotypes are formed based on various qualities that some members of a social group have, which are then applied to all persons connected to this social group. An example would be how some Norwegians are seen as 'cold', not open or outgoing, an idea which has been attached to Norwegians in general. Stereotypes are perpetuated through media where people are portrayed through stereotypes, which could be done either to create familiarity or attention.

#### **5.2.4 Research question 4**

Research question 4 was as follows: "Are Norwegians competent to distinguish between the accents and name them?". I expected most respondents to recognise RP and GA, and that



many would recognise InEng as it is a very distinct variety. I expected that IrEng would be more difficult to recognise and that this variety would be more confused with for example Scottish English. In addition to IrEng, the expectations were also that AusEng and SAmEng could be more misidentified or not known (cf. hypotheses 8, 9, and 10 in 1.2).

The results showed that most respondents, regardless of age, were able to identify and correctly place several varieties within their geographical areas. As outlined in section 4.1, RP and SAmEng was the most recognised varieties, closely followed by InEng. Hypothesis 8 is thus confirmed for RP, 9 for InEng, but hypothesis 10 is not confirmed for SAmEng. There were some respondents who simply placed SAmEng within the US, but very many placed it correctly in the South of the US. More surprising is it then that GA was not known, or misidentified by many. Quite a few respondents placed the speaker of GA in England. The reason why not more respondents recognised this is difficult to say, but as discussed in 4.1, it could have something to do with how the GA speaker has a quite formal speech style which for many may be more associated with British English. Perhaps the respondents did not link him to the US because they have a different notion of how the typical American sounds like, and this speaker did not fit those criteria. Nonetheless, as GA is used in most American films and series (even those who are placed in New York, for instance), it is a bit odd that the familiarity of this variety is not high enough for the respondents to place this speaker in the US.

The final two varieties, AusEng and IrEng, were not known by many respondents. AusEng was more often recognised than IrEng, but both had less than 40 respondents placing them correctly. IrEng was placed in both Scotland and Wales, and also England, which does mean that the respondents placed the variety in the general vicinity of Ireland, but there is still a confusion, most likely due to little knowledge about the different varieties of the British Isles. The confusion could also mean that the speaker of IrEng (Speaker 3) may not have been the best representative accent for Ireland, or that he had some regional colouring in his accent which confused the respondents and affected the recognisability. Quite a few respondents also placed AusEng in England, which means that there is confusion regarding this variety as well. Thus, the hypotheses concerning AusEng and IrEng were supported (cf. hypothesis 10). Age did not seem to affect the ability to recognise varieties.

### 5.2.5 Research question 5

The fifth research question concerns differences among informant groups and is as follows: “Is there any difference in attitude between the age groups, and between male and female respondents?”. The results outlined in 4.1.1 and 4.1.2 show that neither age nor gender have a notable impact on the attitudes. There are no major differences between females and males, or between younger and older respondents. The expectations were that the female respondents would be more positive towards the varieties and give higher scores than the male respondents, which is shown in the results of for instance Coupland and Bishop (2007:85). Although the scores are slightly higher, the differences are only minor, thus it cannot be said that females are more positive and accepting of English accents.

Similarly, the age variable does not have any major impact on the results. The hypotheses were that the younger respondents would be less positive to RP than the older group, and that both respondent groups would be equally positive of GA and neutral to IrEng, AusEng and SAmEng. This is what the results show in e.g. Ladegaard (1998), Loftheim (2013) and Hiraga (2005), if one considers the threefold ranking of standard, regional and urban varieties (cf. 2.3). I did not include urban varieties in my study, as I focused on varieties presumably familiar from Norwegian broadcasting. Overall, the respondents were highly positive to RP, and less so to GA, and the age of the respondents had no major effect on the results. There was a slight difference in accent ranking between the age groups where the younger preferred RP and AusEng together with GA, while the older respondents preferred RP and SAmEng together with GA. However, the results are overall quite similar between the age groups and they seem to provide fairly equal scores. Thus, there are only smaller differences between the age groups, and between female and male respondents. This could be related to how similar the exposure to English is through the media. The portrayals of different groups of people are rather similar throughout different films and series, so even if there are different target groups for films and series, the stereotypes are similar, which makes the basis for attitudes equal. However, it could also be related to how the respondents have similar knowledge of English. One could of course argue that the younger respondents have more English teaching since they start earlier, but the basic knowledge and historical facts taught in school are more or less the same. In addition, both younger and older respondents now have the same opportunities to use the internet or watch the news, which also creates an equal basis for language attitudes.

### **5.2.6 Research question 6**

The final research question was “Do factors such as TV habits and use of English affect the attitudes of the respondents?”. The first expectation was that high exposure to English through media would give more positive scores, and that visits to English-speaking countries would lead to more positive evaluations. Secondly, it was expected that extensive use of English on a daily basis would make respondents more positively disposed to the varieties (cf. 1.2). The respondents were divided into groups by how many hours per week they watch English-speaking films and series, if they had visited English-speaking countries and the amount of English they used on a daily basis.

The results showed that the amount of media exposure and use of English on a daily basis had no major effect on the results, but those respondents who had visited English speaking countries were slightly more positive in their judgements (cf. 4.1.3, 4.1.5). The differences were not major, and overall the results seem to be fairly positive for most varieties. The division of the respondents based on different variables showed no major effect on the results, which could be related to how strongly English is entrenched into the Norwegian culture and everyday life. It seems that most respondents are positive to different varieties of English and evaluate English accents quite positively. Norwegians are very likely to be exposed to English on a daily basis whether they want to or not, which makes them more familiar with the sound of English. This may be a reason why the respondents are generally positive of the varieties included in this study, and why there are no major differences between the respondents’ evaluations.

To conclude, this study has contributed to the field of language attitudes with more results when it comes to non-native respondents. There are very few studies that have used non-native respondents, and to be able to compare results better there is a need for more results. Hopefully, this study can inspire others to do similar studies in order for the foundation of comparative data to grow. Moreover, this study is the first to include an outer-circle variety of English, which is an area of the field that needs much more attention. The results in this study are very similar to previous studies (both with native and non-native respondents), however, there are some minor differences which would be of interest to compare to other studies to see if there are ongoing changes in the attitudes towards accents of English.

### 5.3 Critique and future research

Some weaknesses of this study should be mentioned. The time and space limitations of an MA project impose certain restrictions on the study, which may affect the results. Firstly, the number of respondents could always be higher, it is only a very small group of respondents, which makes the results not as strong as if there were hundreds of respondents. However, many studies have a similar or smaller number of respondents, cf. Levin et al. (1994) with 80 and 95 respondents in their two studies, Ladegaard (1998) with 96 respondents, and Loftheim (2013) with 54 respondents. In addition to a small group of respondents, there is not an equal distribution of respondents when it comes to gender. This could have an impact on the results, but as it generally is more difficult to find male respondents there were not much more to do. Furthermore, I could have added a third age group of respondents, and perhaps I could have searched for respondents of more different backgrounds. A question of profession and/or education could have been added so that another variable could have been researched for potential differences in attitudes.

Secondly, the questionnaire could have included other adjectives than those used, perhaps even more similar to those used in previous studies. In my opinion, the adjectives used are fairly unprovocative and good enough for the research, but perhaps the amount and choice of adjectives should have been more related to previous studies.

Furthermore, the fact that I used a verbal guise test with different speakers instead of the matched guise test with one speaker may also affect the results from the study. The respondents are inclined to judge other aspects of the speaker than the variety itself. Each of the speakers have different speech rates, different intonation patterns, and different voice qualities. The respondents may very well judge these aspects when evaluating the different speakers. But to use a matched guise test was not possible because it would be near impossible, and highly time consuming, to find one person who could produce all six varieties as a native speaker. In addition, there are other weaknesses related to the methods which are inherent weaknesses that the researcher cannot escape (discussed in Chapter 3).

For future research, it would be interesting to see more results for Indian English for instance, because it is only recently that this variety has become popular to use in the media. The respondents have not been exposed to InEng for a long period, but they are quite familiar with it, perhaps due to the distinct pronunciation or the fact that it is included in the very popular TV series '*The Big Bang Theory*' watched by several generations. It would also be of

interest to see results from a larger context, with either more respondents, or respondents from several countries in Scandinavia in the same study. There is a need for more studies of attitudes among non-native respondents. It would be interesting to have data from countries where people are not as exposed to English as Scandinavians are, and compare with my findings. Also, there should be more attitudinal studies that include outer-circle varieties, to test the acceptance of “World Englishes”.

# Appendix 1

## Questionnaire: Part 1

You will now listen to sound-clips of six speakers. After each sound-clip you are to place the speaker on the scales depending on various criteria. Circle your answer.

The scale goes from 1 to 7 where 1 is little/low and 7 is much/high.

<b>SOUND-CLIP NR #</b>
------------------------

**Friendly**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

---

**Intelligent**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

---

**Extrovert**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

---

**Wealthy**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

---

**Educated**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

---

**Self-confident**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

---

**Comprehensible speech**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

---

**Pleasant speech**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

---

**Popular**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

---

**Honest**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

---

**Helpful**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

---

**Authoritarian**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

---

**Ambitious**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

---

Where do you think this person comes from?

---

Would you like to speak as this person?

---



## Appendix 2

### Questionnaire: Part 2

In this part you are to give your honest opinion of different varieties of English and groups of people who use these varieties.

Circle the adjectives you see fit and/or use the open space to use your own words.

#### **How do you think people who speak # English sounds like?**

Friendly – Less friendly – Helpful – Not helpful – Rich – Poor – Popular – Not popular –  
Educated – Uneducated – Self-confident – Insecure – Pleasant speech – Not pleasant speech –

Honest – Dishonest – Good humour – Bad humour – Comprehensible speech – Not  
comprehensible speech – Extrovert – Introvert – Intelligent – Less intelligent – Ambitious -

Passive

Other description: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **What do you think of people from # ?**

Answer:

--

## Appendix 3

### Questionnaire: Part 3

To be able to analyse the results of this survey I need to have some information about you. Please set an X or fill out below.

1. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_ years
  2. What gender do you have?    Woman \_\_\_\_\_    Man \_\_\_\_\_
  3. What is your mother tongue? \_\_\_\_\_
  4. Which languages do you use? \_\_\_\_\_
  5. Which variety of English do you speak?  
British \_\_\_\_\_    American \_\_\_\_\_    Other: \_\_\_\_\_
  6. When did you start learning English? \_\_\_\_\_
  7. When did you finish learning English? \_\_\_\_\_
  8. Was the teaching in British or American? \_\_\_\_\_
  9. How much do you use English daily? \_\_\_\_\_
  10. Have you visited an English-speaking country? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
What country? \_\_\_\_\_  
How long was the visit? \_\_\_\_\_
  11. Approximately how many hours per week do you watch English-speaking tv/films/series?  
\_\_\_\_\_
-

## Appendix 4

### COMMA GETS A CURE

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

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

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

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

Comma Gets a Cure and derivative works may be used freely for any purpose without special permission, provided the present sentence and the following copyright notification accompany the passage in print, if reproduced in print, and in audio format in the case of a sound recording: Copyright 2000 Douglas N. Honorof, Jill McCullough & Barbara Somerville. All rights reserved.

## References

- Allport, Gordon W. 1935. Attitudes. In Carl Murchison (ed.), *A handbook of social psychology*, vol. II, 798-844. Worcester, MA: Clark University Press.
- Baker, Colin. 1995. *Attitudes and language*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- Ball, Peter. 1983. Stereotypes of Anglo-Saxon and non-Anglo-Saxon accents: some exploratory Australian studies with the matched-guise technique. *Language sciences* 5, 163-184.
- Bayard, Donn, Ann Weatherall, Cynthia Gallois, & Jeffery Pittam. 2001. Pax Americana? Accent attitudinal evaluations in New Zealand, Australia and America<sup>1</sup>. *Journal of sociolinguistics* 5(1), 22-49.
- Coupland, Nikolas & Hywel Bishop. 2007. Ideologised values for British accents<sup>1</sup>. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 11(1), 74-93.
- Cruttenden, Alan. 2014. *Gimson's pronunciation of English*. 8th ed. London: Routledge.
- Crystal, David. 2003. *English as a global language*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, David. 2012. Into the Twenty-first Century. In Lynda Mugglestone (ed.), *The Oxford History of English*. 2nd ed., 488-513. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Galloway, Nicola & Heath Rose. 2015. *Introducing Global Englishes*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Gargesh, Ravinder. 2008. Indian English: phonology. In Rajend Mesthrie (ed.), *Varieties of English 4: Africa, South and Southeast Asia*, 231-243. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Garrett, Peter. 2010. *Attitudes to language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Garrett, Peter, Angie Williams & Betsy Evans. 2005. Accessing social meanings: Values of keywords, values in keywords. *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia: International Journal of Linguistics* 37(1):37-54. doi: 10.1080/03740463.2005.10416082.
- Garrett, Peter, Angie Williams & Betsy Evans. 2005b. Attitudinal data from New Zealand, Australia, the USA and UK about each other's Englishes: Recent changes or consequences of methodologies? *Multilingua*, 24(3), pp. 211-235.
- Giles, Howard. 1970. Evaluative reactions to accents. *Educational review* 22(3), 211-227.
- Hickey, Raymond. 2008. Irish English: phonology. In Bernd Kortmann & Clive Upton (eds.), *Varieties of English 1: The British Isles*, 71-104. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

- Hiraga, Yuko. 2005. British Attitudes towards six varieties of English in the USA and Britain. *World Englishes* 24(3): 289-308.
- Horvath, Barbara M. 2008. Australian English: phonology. In Kate Burridge & Bernd Kortmann (eds.), *Varieties of English 3: The Pacific and Australasia*, 89-110. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Jarvella, Robert J., Eva Bang, Arnt Lykke Jakobsen, & Inger M. Mees. 2001. Of mouths and men: non-native listeners' identification and evaluation of varieties of English. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 11(1), 37-56. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Kretschmar, William A. Jr. 2008. Standard American English Pronunciation. In Edgar W. Schneider (ed.), *Varieties of English 2: The Americas and the Caribbean*, 37-51. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Kristiansen, Gitte. 2001. Social and linguistic stereotyping: A cognitive approach to accents. *Estudios Ingleses de la Universidad Complutense*. 9: 129-145.
- Ladegaard, Hans J., 1998, National stereotypes and language attitudes: the perception of British, American and Australian language and culture in Denmark. *Language and communication* 18, 251-74.
- Loftheim, Håvard Lie. 2013. The younger the yankee? A sociolinguistic study of Norwegian attitudes to English varieties. MA thesis, Department of Foreign Languages, University of Bergen.
- Levin, Harry, Howard Giles, & Peter Garrett. 1994. The effects of lexical formality and accent on trait attributions. *Language & Communication* 14(3), 265-74.
- Lindemann, Stephanie. 2003. Koreans, Chinese or Indians? Attitudes and ideologies about non-native English speakers in the United States<sup>1</sup>. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 7(3), 348-364.
- Lippi-Green, Rosina. 2012. *English with an accent: language, ideology and discrimination in the United States*. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge.
- McCullough Jill & Barbara Somerville. 2000. International Dialects of English Archive. Comma gets a cure. <http://www.dialectsarchive.com/comma-gets-a-cure>. Accessed 5-12 September 2017.

- McKenzie, Robert M. 2008. The role of variety recognition in Japanese university students' attitudes towards English speech varieties. *Journal of multilingual and multicultural development* 29(2), 139-53.
- McArthur, Tom. 2012. English world-wide in the twentieth century. In Lynda Mugglestone (ed.), *The Oxford History of English*. 2nd ed., 446-487. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Melchers, Gunnel & Philip Shaw. 2011. *World Englishes*. 2nd ed. London: Hodder Education.
- Nilsen, Thor Sigurd. 2010. *English Pronunciation and Intonation: British, American and World Englishes*. 3rd ed. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Oppenheim, A. N. 1992. *Questionnaire design, interviewing and attitude measurement*. London: Continuum.
- Sarnoff, I. 1970. Social attitudes and the resolution of motivational conflict. in M. Jahoda & N. Warren (eds.), *Attitudes*, 279-84. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Stewart, Mark A., Ellen Bouchard Ryan & Howard Giles. 1985. Accent and Social Class Effects on Status and Solidarity Evaluations, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 11(1), 98-105.
- Stuart-Smith, Jane. 2007. The influence of the media. In Llamas, Carmen, Louise Mullany & Peter Stockwell (eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics*, 140-146 Routledge: New York.
- Thurstone, L. L. 1931. The measurement of social attitudes. *Journal of abnormal and social psychology*, 26(3), 249-269.
- Tillery, Jan & Guy Bailey. 2008. The urban South: phonology. In Edgar W. Schneider (ed.), *Varieties of English 2: The Americas and the Caribbean*, 115-128. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Wells, J. C. 1982. *Accents of English*. Vols. 1-3. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

## **Internet sites**

- International Dialects of English Archive (IDEA)*. 2017. <http://www.dialectsarchive.com/>. Accessed 5-9 August 2017.

*International Dialects of English Archive (IDEA)*. 2017. Received Pronunciation.

<http://www.dialectsarchive.com/received-pronunciation-3>. Accessed 5-9 August 2017.

*International Dialects of English Archive (IDEA)*. 2017. General American.

<http://www.dialectsarchive.com/general-american-8>. Accessed 5-9 August 2017.

*International Dialects of English Archive (IDEA)*. 2017. Ireland.

<http://www.dialectsarchive.com/ireland-9>. Accessed 5-9 August 2017.

*International Dialects of English Archive (IDEA)*. 2017. Australia.

<http://www.dialectsarchive.com/australia-27>. Accessed 5-9 August 2017.

*International Dialects of English Archive (IDEA)*. 2017. Tennessee.

<http://www.dialectsarchive.com/tennessee-6>. Accessed 5-9 August 2017.

*International Dialects of English Archive (IDEA)*. 2017. India.

<http://www.dialectsarchive.com/india-3>. Accessed 5-9 August 2017.