

UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN

The Younger the Yankee?

a sociolinguistic study of Norwegian attitudes to
English varieties

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Summary in Norwegian

Denne studien tar for seg seks forskjellige engelske dialekter ('accents') med det formål å kartlegge hvilke holdninger disse dialektene tilknyttet i Norge. Dialektene inkludert i studien er 'General American', 'Received Pronunciation', 'Southern USA', 'Cockney', 'Scottish English' og 'New York City', og for å undersøke forskjeller over generasjoner er det inkludert respondenter fra tre forskjellige aldersgrupper. Dataene er også samlet inn ved hjelp av to forskjellige metoder for å unngå at metodologiske svakheter skal påvirke resultatene til for stor grad.

Dette er en type studie som har vært populær i Storbritannia siden den ble introdusert på 1960-tallet, og i de siste tiårene har den også spredt seg til USA og andre land. I Norge har det derimot aldri vært utført en slik type studie om engelsk dialekter, og det til tross for den spesielle posisjonen språket har i det norske samfunnet. Det er nemlig slik at selv om engelsk teknisk sett er et fremmedspråk i Norge, så har det etter hvert fått en unik rolle i samfunnet. Nordmenn begynner å lære engelsk allerede i første klasse på barneskolen, og hverdagen vår er gjennomsyret av språket gjennom alt fra jobb og utdanning til film, TV, Internett og musikk. Dette har ikke bare ført til kjennskap til forskjellige engelske dialekter, men også til at så godt som hele befolkningen kan både forstå og gjøre seg forstått på engelsk.

Det er denne gjennomgående språklige kyndigheten som gjør det interessant å undersøke norske holdninger til engelske dialekter, samt hvordan disse holdningene skiller seg fra britiske og amerikanske. Hans J. Ladegaard sin danske studie (1998a) burde også nevnes, da den har vært en stor inspirasjonskilde i planleggingen av studien.

Oppgaven arbeider ut ifra fem underliggende hypoteser, hvorav tre kan sies å bli styrket av resultatene. Først og fremst viser det seg at norske holdninger til engelske dialekter i stor grad samsvarer med dem man finner i land som USA, Storbritannia og Danmark. Det ser også ut til å stemme at økt inntak av engelsk via film og TV fører til økt toleranse for forskjellige dialekter. Til sist indikerer resultatene at metodologien er avgjørende i en slik type studie, da det er iøynefallende forskjeller på resultatene fra de to delene.

Det viser seg derimot at variablene 'kjønn' og 'alder' ikke har den samme innvirkningen på resultatene som antatt i hypotesene. Med hensyn til kjønnsvariabelen var det forventet at kvinner mer enn menn skulle foretrekke de mest prestisjetunge dialektene. Dette er imidlertid ikke tilfellet, da kvinnelige respondenter ikke oppgraderer *noen* dialekter sammenlignet med de mannlige. Aldersvariabelen skulle heller ikke vise seg å være veldig

utslagsgivende – i alle fall ikke på det viset som kommer frem av hypotesen som omhandler den.

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List of abbreviations

GA: General American

IDEA: International Dialects of English Archive

LQ: Linguistic Quality

MA: Master of the Arts

MG: Matched Guise

MGT: Match Guise Technique

NYC: New York City

OED: Oxford English Dictionary

RP: Received Pronunciation

SA: Social Attractiveness

UWDC: University of Wisconsin Digital Collections

VG: Verbal Guise

VGT: Verbal Guise Technique

WQ: Written Questionnaire

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim and scope

In present day America and Great Britain, there exist a wide array of accents and dialects of English – all of which are accompanied by different attitudes. These attitudes differ from person to person, and the aim of this study is to investigate the attitudes Norwegian people harbor towards six English varieties. Moreover, it aims to compare these attitudes with those found in similar studies to see if the Norwegian pattern coincides with native attitudes. After all, studies of this kind have frequently been carried out ever since they were introduced in the 1960s and 1970s (see chapter 2), but regarding attitudes to English – the international *lingua franca* – none have yet been carried out in a Norwegian context¹. This dearth is what the present study tries to alleviate. The wider the array of studies and contexts, the more credibility can be assigned to the accumulated patterns. A single study may be viewed as tangential, but if similar findings feature in an extensive body of research, they will be much more difficult to refute. The study is primarily inspired by Ladegaard, whose Danish study (1998a) made comparison possible in a Scandinavian context.

The present study explores attitudes towards three British and three American varieties of English, and the respondents comprise three different age groups of native Norwegians. These age groups consist of high school students, newly graduated university students and adults in their 50s, and are included to inquire whether Norwegian attitudes to English have changed over the generations. The gender distribution is also relatively even to see whether the gender of the respondents is decisive for the outcome. To ensure that the results are not too heavily skewed by potential methodological flaws, the data is collected by two different means of elicitation (see chapter 3). Factors such as the respondents' usage and exposure to English are also taken into consideration to see if they are decisive for the evaluations.

1.2 Hypotheses

This study seeks to explore five different hypotheses. These are established on the basis of previous findings as well as personal observations, and are as follows:

¹ There is that of Neumann (1998) who employs a written questionnaire, but she does not include different varieties; she only operates with the broader terms 'American' and 'British' English.

1) The results will to a large degree reflect those of similar studies conducted in other countries.

Attitudinal studies conducted in different places tend to find relatively similar patterns of evaluation for the varieties involved (see 2.3.2). This is true not only for different states and cities, but also for different countries; stigmatized accents in the US are oftentimes similarly disparaged in the UK, and vice versa. As to why these attitudes would be reflected in Norway where English is not spoken as a first language, one possible answer is the media. Movies and TV series often portray stereotypical characters with exaggerated accents to evoke certain emotional responses from the audience (see 2.1.5). These stereotypes, amplified as they might be, usually reflect existing attitudes in society and are in turn perpetuated by the media. And, seeing as the media are the main source of English exposure in Norway, I expect many of these stereotypical attitudes to be reflected in the Norwegian evaluations.

2) The younger the respondents are, the more they will favor General American (GA) over Received Pronunciation (RP)².

Throughout the second half of the 20th century, the industrial and technological advances of the USA made the country increasingly influential on the international scene. This has manifested itself not only by products such as Coca Cola becoming commodities all over the world, but also by America's global military presence. Regardless of this rising American influence, British English – epitomized by RP – is still the traditional model of pronunciation for most adults in Norway. I do, however, find reason to believe that this is changing with newer generations. The advent of television has made it possible for American culture to permeate the vast majority of Norwegian homes, and I hypothesize that this will be reflected in positive GA evaluations for the youngest respondents who grew up with this persistent presence of GA and American culture. As the youngest age group is also the largest, I expect that they will raise the overall evaluations of GA to equal the traditionally more prestigious RP. What is more, I hypothesize that this preference will invert linearly with age since the older respondents most likely were less exposed to American culture in their upbringing.

² GA and RP are the non-regional accents of the USA and the UK (respectively) which have come to be perceived as 'standard' varieties by laymen. In this thesis, the term 'standard accent/variety' refers to varieties such as GA and RP, despite the problematic aspects of employing the term standard with regards to spoken varieties (see 2.2.3 and 3.2.3.1).

3) Female respondents will favor GA and RP over the non-standard varieties more than the male respondents.

This hypothesis is based on the widely held assertion that women tend to choose variants commonly associated with prestige (see 2.3.2.1). The reasons behind this trend are disputed, but since it is a recurring pattern in sociolinguistic studies, I expect the female respondents of the present study to upgrade RP and GA, which are commonly perceived as prestigious and even superior.

4) The more the respondents watch English-speaking movies and TV series, the more positive evaluations they will have for GA.

The vast majority of foreign productions featured on Norwegian TV and movie screens are produced in America. This results in increased exposure to American English for those who watch a great deal of movies and TV series, and my hypothesis is that this will be reflected in the results – especially with regards to GA since that is the variety most spoken by protagonists (see 2.3.2.3).

5) Cockney and the New York City accent will receive more positive evaluations in the written questionnaire (WQ) than in the verbal guise (VG) experiment³.

Cockney and the New York City (NYC) accent are both traditionally stigmatized accents (see 2.3.2), but I nevertheless believe that most Norwegians carry positive associations towards the cities. Both London and ‘the Big Apple’ are popular travel destinations and they frequently feature as the setting for widely distributed movies and TV series. Most of the characters in such movies and TV series do, however, speak the standard GA or RP (see 4.1.1), and this leads me to believe that Norwegians will upgrade the accents in the WQ, which relies predominantly on associations. Upon hearing the accents in the VG experiment, on the other hand, I believe they will downgrade them without successfully identifying the accents.

1.3 The structure of the thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters which all shed light on different elements of the study. The first chapter briefly introduces the overall aim and scope of the thesis, and elaborates

³ These are the two methods of data elicitation (see 3.1).

upon the underlying hypotheses. The second chapter gives an account of the theoretical background for this type of attitudinal study and presents both relevant theories and an overview of previous studies. Sociolinguistic methods and approaches are presented in the third chapter, with a special focus on the ones employed in this thesis. This chapter also outlines the accents chosen for the experiment, as well as the respondents and the contributing speakers. In the penultimate chapter, the results of the experiment are first presented and then discussed in light of the theoretical background elaborated upon in chapter 2. The last chapter concludes the thesis by summing up the findings while simultaneously discussing potential weaknesses and the need for future research.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Attitudes

In trying to grasp the term ‘language attitude’, it is first important to have a basic understanding of what attitudes are, how they work and where they come from. While the word is close to ubiquitous in society today, appearing in everything from TV commercials and casual conversations to scientific papers and government directives, I venture to say that few laymen could satisfactorily define the term attitude. Luckily, however, in the field of social psychology, attitude stands out as an indispensable concept (Baker 1992: 11), and as a consequence, there are ample definitions to be found. The fact that there exist so many could nonetheless indicate that defining the term is no easy endeavor. Not only do the definitions vary greatly in both form and content, there is also disagreement as to what really constitutes an attitude.

Some have adopted a simple approach, defining attitude as ‘affect for or against a psychological object’ (Thurstone 1931⁴; in Garret 2010: 19). This indicates that an attitude is a positive or negative feeling that arises from the examination or contemplation of an object or a psychological construct. While this definition might well be one facet of an attitude, it does seem somewhat narrow, seeing as its sole concern is that of the affective part of attitudes, leaving out both the cognitive and conative aspect (see 2.1.1).

One straightforward definition that has found its way into the works of many researchers is that of Sarnoff (1970: 279; in Baker 1992; Garret 2010; Garrett et al. 2003). He states that an attitude is ‘a disposition to react favorably or unfavorably to a class of objects’. Here, Sarnoff broadens the horizon compared to the definition above. By not merely calling it a reaction, but ‘a disposition to react’, he accomplishes two things. First and foremost, he shows that attitudes are intangible and imperceptible to any outside source. It is not a discernible action, nor even is it a thought or a feeling; it is merely an inclination to feel, think or act – or a combination of the three – favorably or unfavorably towards the object at hand. Secondly, in not specifically mentioning whether the reaction involves thoughts, feelings or behaviors, he shows that while a ‘class of objects’ might induce certain thoughts or emotions within the subject, that does not inevitably lead to an action. Finally, the vague nature of ‘a class of objects’ shows that attitudes can pertain to anything.

⁴ It proved difficult to obtain some of the original works cited in Garrett (2010) and Garrett et al. (2003), and these works are thus cited through secondary sources.

Others go further and elaborate upon the ways in which attitudes are expressed:

[Attitude is] a construct, an abstraction which cannot be directly apprehended. It is an inner component of mental life which expresses itself, directly or indirectly, through much more obvious processes as stereotypes, beliefs, verbal statements or reactions, ideas and opinions, selective recall, anger or satisfaction or some other emotion and in various other aspects of behavior (Oppenheim 1980: 39; in Garrett 2010: 19).

Once again highlighting the latent and impalpable nature of attitudes, Oppenheim here reports that concepts such as beliefs, reactions, emotions and behaviors are the concrete means through which the more abstract attitudes are manifested. Such a view is reflected in Baker's (1992: 11) definition where he says that 'attitude is a hypothetical construct used to explain the direction and persistence of human behavior.' What both Oppenheim and Baker are trying to convey is that in society, due to the incorporeal nature of attitudes, people's attitudes are best observed through what they say and do. One example would be if someone consistently makes racist remarks, then it is natural to assume that that person has negative attitudes towards people of other races. Similarly, if a person has negative attitudes towards alcohol, then that person will not believe it smart to drink it, and nor is that person likely to do so.

2.1.1 The internal structure of an attitude

Attitudes are often said to comprise three parts, namely the cognitive, affective, and conative or behavioral (Garret et al. 2003: 3). This classical division is based on the works of Plato (Baker 1992: 12), and while there is some discussion as to how the three parts correlate, few deny the division altogether.

The affective part of attitudes is what relates to feelings, the cognitive part has to do with thoughts and beliefs, and the conative part pertains to actual behavior. Since this is a thesis on language attitudes, a scenario concerning language will be used to exemplify. If a Welshman believes that widespread use of Welsh is good for tourism in Wales, this pertains to the cognitive part of his or her attitudes. At the same time, that person might feel that the language is a part of the Welsh identity, and should therefore be preserved. This would originate from the affective component of his attitudes. The conative part would be how he or she acts on these feelings and beliefs, for instance by attending Welsh language courses. The three components are in other words deeply entwined, which means that it is often possible to

predict a person's actions based on his or her attitudes. As shown in the next chapter, however, this predictability is not always present.

2.1.2 Behavior and attitude

Of the three parts allegedly constituting an attitude, the behavioral part is by far the most problematic. To state the obvious, people do not always carry out what they think they should do or what they feel like doing. In terms of attitudinal studies, there is one seminal experiment which is often used as an example of the relationship between attitude and behavior. It was carried out by LePiere in 1934 USA, and it demonstrates that people do not necessarily act according to their alleged attitudes (Baker 1992: 15). LePiere traveled the country together with a Chinese couple at a time when people of oriental origin were frequent victims of social stigma. In spite of this, of all the establishments they visited on their way, only one refused to offer them their services. Subsequently, however, he contacted the respective establishments through mail and was told by 92 percent of the respondents that they would not allow Chinese people onto their premises.

While such evident incongruity makes it easy to say that people do *not* act according to their attitudes, concluding thus would be premature. Garret et al. (2003: 7ff) point to several theories which explain why it at times is perfectly normal to let one's actions stray from one's attitudes. The theory most pertinent for the example above is the 'theory of reasoned actions' (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980; in *ibid*: 8). Widespread prejudice towards what they called 'chinks' at that time is well documented, but according to this theory, social context is the reason why the proprietors let the Chinese couple onto their premises. It is harder to refuse entry to a person face to face than it is to reiterate widely held attitudes in a written questionnaire. It should also be mentioned that this incident took place only five years after one of the most devastating recessions the US has ever seen. Thus, while the proprietors might not have been exuberant with admitting the Chinese couple onto their premises, they might have prioritized their businesses over their private attitudes.

Lastly, it is to be noted that a perceived incongruity between action and attitude could very well be a misinterpretation of the attitude in the first place. For example, Garrett (2010: 24) points out that it is safe to assume that a person walking down the street with a Cardiff City football shirt has favorable, or at least not unfavorable, attitudes towards Cardiff City Football Club. I have, however, personally been in a situation where making such an

assumption would be fallacious. A small group of students were playing football after a lecture, and I, living a long way from the university, had to ask a friend to bring an extra t-shirt for me. Knowing I am a staunch supporter of Chelsea Football Club, however, he brought the jersey of Chelsea's greatest rivals, Manchester United, in which I was then forced to play.

2.1.3 The origin of attitudes.

Now that the nature of attitudes is outlined, it follows as a natural succession to investigate their origin. Allport (1954; in Garrett 2010: 22, my emphasis) states that an attitude is 'a *learned* disposition to think, feel and behave toward a person (or object) in a particular way', so he clearly believes that attitudes are learned and not dwelling within us from our creation. Sherif goes even further and addresses the question directly:

When we talk about attitudes, we are talking about what a person has *learned* in the process of becoming a family member, a member of a group, and of society that makes him [sic] react to his social world in a *consistent* and *characteristic* way instead of transitory and haphazard way. (1967: 2; in Garrett et al. 2003: 4)

In addition to proclaiming that attitudes are learned, Sherif reports attitudes to be what (or at least a part of what) makes one act consistently in different scenarios, as opposed to arbitrarily choosing from time to time.⁵

If it really is the case that attitudes are something we learn, then the question remains as to how this acquisition takes place. According to Garrett (2010: 22), attitudes are mostly acquired through personal experience and the people around us. Naturally, some attitudes will spring up without the influence of others, but many or even most develop in collaboration with teachers, family, friends etc. In addition to these social arenas, there is one other important sphere which plays a major part in shaping our attitudes.

⁵ That attitudes lead to a consistency in behavior is a disputed claim. Sears and Kosterman (1994: 264; in Garrett et al. 2003:5) point to the fact that attitudes elicit a different degree of stability contingent on the scenario in which the reaction is called forth. Reactions that regard fleeting matters are obviously not as thought through as ones that concern life and death. Likewise, if a new topic is introduced to which a person has no pre-existing knowledge, then a response to this will often be spontaneous and superficial – making it what Ostrom et al. (1994; in Garrett et al. 2003) call a 'non-attitude'.

2.1.4 The media

In recent times, the media have become close to omnipresent. Whether in the form of television, radio, internet or the written press, it is hard to go through a single day in contemporary Western society without encountering one of the media's many manifestations. As further outlined in 2.3.1, English has established itself as the prevalent language in this mass communication industry, and not only in the USA and the Commonwealth. Here in Norway, for instance, where English only serves as a foreign language, it dominates the media scene completely. Whenever listening to music, watching TV, going to the cinema, playing video-games or surfing the internet, English is the encountered language. Moreover, David Crystal (2003: 92) reports from figures gathered by *Encyclopedia Britannica* (2002: 850ff) which show that 57 percent of the world's newspapers are published in countries where English is prevalent. Consequently, he feels safe to assume that the majority of all the world's newspapers are printed in English. Furthermore, America completely dominates the international movie market. Hollywood is where the majority of movies are made, and it is estimated that the USA controls 85 percent of the motion pictures circulating the globe (Crystal 2003: 93). Similarly, the advent of popular music also came to be dominated by the Anglos. The Rolling Stones, Elvis Presley and the Beatles marked the beginning of the international popular music era, while today it is possibly even more dominated by English-speaking artists such as Coldplay, The Killers, Eminem and Rihanna. Equally influential is the internet, which today is unfathomably extensive and contains virtually unlimited amounts of information. In order to tap into this unequalled source, however, you need to know English. As Michael Specter pointed out in the *New York Times*:

whether you are a French intellectual pursuing the cutting edge of international film theory, a Japanese paleobotanist curious about a newly discovered set of primordial fossils, or an American teen-ager concerned about Magic Johnson's jump shot, the Internet and the World Wide Web really only work as great unifiers if you speak English. (Crystal 2003: 117)

Through all this diffusion of American music, movies and newspapers, the USA has also been able to spread commercial advertisements. As early as 1972, they dominated the international advertising arena – owning all but 3 of the top 30 global advertising agencies (Crystal 2003: 95). This becomes apparent when looking at the international profiles of companies such as McDonald's, Coca-Cola Company, Ford and Kellogg's – all of which originated in the US.

This omnipresence of American culture is not received as unequivocally positive throughout the world, and some scholars have called such cultural and linguistic dominance ‘linguistic imperialism’ (Kramsch 1998: 76).

Regardless of the implications, the media are deeply entrenched in contemporary society, and their main means of communication is the English language. And even though people usually develop certain filters through which information from the media is funneled, some of it will inevitably ‘stick’ and is therefore bound to influence people’s attitudes. Such influence will often result in ‘social stereotyping’.

2.1.5 Social stereotypes

Garrett (2010: 32f) explains social stereotyping as a sort of categorization through which we organize the different social groups of society. The categories are endless, and can include everything from people ‘from Europe’ and ‘who speak English’ to people ‘who wear glasses’ or ‘are left-handed’. The categories do not really matter; what matters is that the people in these categories are assigned attributes on the sole basis of belonging to a specific group. The attributes assigned are also very diverse, and can be both positive and negative. They can relate to personal characteristics, such as the exceptionally polite Canadians (Renzetti 2012), or professional features, such as the uniquely efficient Germans (Pidd 2011). Another example is Africans who are often perceived as having a very relaxed relationship to time (BBC News 2003) – a social stereotype which has given name to the expression ‘African Time’⁶. Stereotypes are also highly relevant for language attitudes, because people have a tendency to assume that people with a specific accent have certain common characteristics (Garrett 2010: 33). To exemplify, if the interviewee at a job interview speaks with an urban working class accent, then it is easy for the interviewer to conclude that the interviewee is poorly educated and thus neglect to offer him or her the job. In this sense, Smith and Mackie (2000; in *ibid*: 33) conclude that ‘stereotypes (...) play a role in maintaining the inequities which advantage some and disadvantage others.’

⁶ What is interesting about this stereotype is that while it is primarily used pejoratively in Europa, at least in my experience, I found that it had another meaning when I visited Tanzania some years ago. There, the expression African Time was used as a positive term which contrasted the ‘up-tight’ Europeans who were unable to enjoy life.

2.2 Language attitudes

Language is not merely a carrier of content, whether latent or manifest. Language itself is content, a referent for loyalties and animosities, an indicator of social statuses and personal relationships, a marker of situations and topics as well as of the societal goals and the large-scale value-laden arenas of interaction that typify every speech community (Fishman 1971: 1; in Ryan and Giles 1982: 2).

This citation exemplifies the degree of information it is possible to deduct from simply listening to someone speak. Regardless of the actual content, the form of articulation can reveal plenty of evidence as to the identity of the person speaking. First and foremost, the language used will substantially narrow down the possible countries of origin. Next, the accent will delimit the location even further, boiling it down as far as to a city, borough or even a specific street. In addition to this, the voice quality will give hints regarding age and gender, while the vocabulary can reveal the class and level of education of the speaker. After some time, a silhouette will even start to materialize and conclusions are drawn as to whether the person is smart or stupid, kind or pitiless, funny or boring, etc.

The difference between a layman and a linguist, however, is that while the former might actually believe this type of visualization, the latter knows it to merely be a manifestation of the language attitudes. After all, not only could the hypothetical speaker above be bi- or multilingual and speak in a language unrelated to his country of birth, such visualizations are also solely based on stereotypes (see 2.1.5), rendering them questionable at best.

On the other hand, it is not in the least bit strange that people jump to conclusions. Kramsch (1998: 77) points out that ‘although there is no one-to-one relationship between anyone’s language and his or her cultural identity, language is *the* most sensitive indicator of the relationship between an individual and a given social group.’ Thus, if a person uses an accent primarily spoken by African-Americans in working-class neighborhoods in Harlem, it is not surprising that people would presume that person to be just that. Lippi-Green (1997: 63) supports this notion by saying that language is ‘a flexible and constantly flexing social tool for the emblematic marking of social allegiances.’ She continues by explaining how ‘we use variation in language to construct ourselves as social beings, to signal who we are, and who we are not and cannot be.’ In other words, even though it is impossible to determine with absolute certainty a person’s origin and social identity by listening to him or her speak, it will certainly paint a vivid picture in which there often is some truth.

Language attitudes, then, are attitudes that regard language. The term ‘language’, on the other hand, is not completely unproblematic in itself. As Baker (1992: 29) points out, language attitudes are two-faceted and can relate either to ‘languages’, as in the actual codification of countries’ system of communication, or to the general term ‘language’ – meaning any given form of written or oral communication. In this chapter, these two types of language attitudes are presented combined with examples from both facets. Then the underlying reasons behind such attitudes are pursued, followed by a closer look at the theories of ‘imposed norm’ and ‘inherent value’.

2.2.1 Attitudes to languages

For every language, there is an attitude. Be it a dying language such as Latin or the language indigenous to people of the Daintree Rainforest in Australia, if it is spoken or even acknowledged, then there will exist attitudes towards it. And while global languages such as English are bound to be more heavily debated, smaller languages also receive their share of attention. In New Zealand, for instance, the indigenous language of the Maori is only spoken fluently by 1 percent of the 3 million inhabitants (Harlow 1998: 10), and many people claim that the language is inadequate for a range of purposes. It is looked upon as crude and simple, and hence inherently inferior and ill-suited for anything as refined as scientific jargon or literature (ibid: 9). The same goes for the Swiss minority language ‘Romansh’ which is descended from the Latin used by Roman settlers. In this case, it is even the speakers of the language themselves who report the language to be of lower quality in certain contexts (ibid: 11). From a scientific point of view, claims such as these have no root in reality. Not only has the ‘inherent value hypothesis’ been picked apart by numerous empirical researches (see 2.2.4), there are also examples throughout history that work against such ‘accusations’. The most striking example that Harlow (1998: 10) mentions is that of Latin. Centuries before the Roman Empire became a world power, it was the Greeks who dominated the western European arena – making Greek the dominant language for both science and literature. Thus, when the renowned orator and philosopher Cicero wanted to publish his works in Latin to make it available to a wider audience, he was deemed an idiot. As with Maori and Romansh, Latin was seen as a deficient language that could under no circumstances encompass the great thoughts and theories of the wise and knowledgeable Greeks. In hindsight, however, it is easy to see that such opinions were fallacious, considering Latin’s omnipresence in the following

millennium. According to Harlow (1998: 9), it is especially easy for negative attitudes to develop towards minority languages when they coexist with dominant ones in the same geographical area – a notion which is further corroborated by Kramsch (1998: 75) who claims that ‘the totemization of the dominant language leads to a stigmatization of the dominated language’. This is reflected with all the languages above as Latin, Romansh and Maori have (/had) to compete with Greek, German and English respectively.

As an attempt to remedy such negative attitudes as are described above, many minority languages have experienced a profound resurgence in their respective communities throughout the last few decades. The Welsh identity, for instance, is for many people inseparable with the Welsh language (Kramsch 1998: 72f). Therefore, in order to feel true to their identity, people fight to maintain the existence of their indigenous language. The same can be said about the Sami language in Norway. For centuries, this had been restricted by the Norwegian government in an attempt to eradicate what was viewed as a pagan language, but as of late, the national broadcasting channel has even found airtime for Sami news and entertainment on national TV. In terms of language attitudes, this would certainly point to a positive swerve for the language in question, but as briefly touched upon in 2.1.1, attitudes are hard to observe. They can merely be inferred through actions, and this may also be misleading at times (see 2.1.2). In order to analyze a language’s position in society, then, the concept of ‘ethnolinguistic vitality’ was developed in the late 70s (Garrett 2010: 83). This concept comprises three separate aspects which are all indicative of a language’s strength in society; namely ‘demography’, i.e. its distribution among people; ‘status’, as in what people think and feel about the language and its users; and finally ‘institutional support’ which is based on the language’s role in public, official and educational matters. The Welsh language can be used as an example. When more people decide to stand up for the Welsh language, the government determines to introduce Welsh as a subject in school, which in turn proliferates the language to a larger part of the population. In other words, the three aspects are linked together in a causal relationship.

Needless to say, when minority languages receive such attention as displayed above, major global languages are bound to be even more contentious. Going back to the roots of western civilization, the word ‘barbarian’, whose contemporary definition reads as follows: ‘a crude uncouth ill-bred person lacking culture or refinement (*Wordweb Dictionary*)’, was originally a word in ancient Greece describing people who spoke a different language than the ‘superior’ Greek (Kramsch 1998: 75). It should be noted, however, that the ancient Greeks are

said to have held themselves in high esteem, so it would probably be safe to say that the original term held some of the same meaning as ours, though inferentially.

In more modern times, the French still have their ‘Académie Française’ whose sole purpose is to maintain the alleged primacy and purity of the French language. While this is not a unique institution, equaled by a similar one with regards to English in America (Kramersch 1998: 73), France has also in other matters been protective of their language. During the French revolution, a survey was administered to supposedly gain insight into the various dialects and accents spoken throughout the country. As it turned out, however, this was really a categorization that would later be used in the effort to eradicate any varieties other than the official national variety. Whether this was done for the sake of national unity; to break with the omnipotent Catholic Church who supported local varieties; or simply to elevate its speakers above the crude accents of the peasants remains unknown, but such a laborious endeavor nevertheless exemplifies the emphasis put on language attitudes in society (Kramersch 1998: 73).

Similarly, in times of colonialism and national expansion, language is often used actively as a means of keeping control of the colonized countries or occupied territory. As America expanded beyond its thirteen original states, it deliberately diffused English as the only acceptable language, even if it meant coercing people in e.g. Louisiana to abstain from speaking French, which was their mother tongue (Kramersch 1998: 75). With regards to language and colonialism, there were two distinct educational language policies in use. As might be inferred from the above-mentioned language policy of France, they used the ‘metropolitan language model’ which forced the colonies to adopt the language of Paris (Migge and Légalise 2007). Furthermore, they banned the use of any other language in official and educational matters, and simultaneously unified the colonies’ curriculum to that of France. Conversely, the British used what Migge and Légalise (2007) call the ‘vernacular model’, which relied on the use of indigenous languages in their colonies. While this might sound like a very noble and respectful gesture, it was first and foremost chosen for pragmatic reasons. It was both cheaper and simpler for one teacher to learn a new language than it was for a whole country to do so. In spite of this less rigorous language policy, however, it was the British Empire’s language that would come to dominate the world – a reality which is discussed further in 2.3.1.

2.2.2 Attitudes to language

In the larger cities of Norway, there is an ongoing debate which centers on the pronunciation of words traditionally pronounced with the fortis palatal fricative / ʧ /. The fact that this phoneme is regularly pronounced as the fortis post-alveolar fricative / ʃ /, is simply too much for some people to bear. It is an ongoing linguistic change which has led to quite a lot of agitation and discussion (Simonsen and Moen), and I have personally been told by numerous people (educated at that), that they detest the trend – calling it a speech impediment, and saying that it is corrupting the Norwegian Language.

As a response to such reactions, the Norwegian Council of Language, ‘Språkrådet’, posted an article online explaining that such phenomena are both usual and inevitable in all languages (Simonsen and Moen). They further establish that the sounds are merging due to a variety of reasons; not only is / ʧ / a rare phoneme, hence making it hard for settlers and immigrants to learn, the / ʧ /- / ʃ / distinction is also one of the last features a child acquires when learning the Norwegian language. Further, the merger rarely distinguishes meaning, and where it does, context will decide as with other homophonous words (ibid). Thus, they concluded that it is both more interesting and constructive to investigate why the merger occurs than complaining about its occurrence.

As indicated in 2.2.1, there is more to language attitudes than what concerns national languages, and the example above is one example of attitudes regarding varieties *within* a language. Encompassing everything from accent and intonation to use of words and grammatical structures, this aspect is often more nuanced and more contentious. The Norwegian language change mentioned above is a good example of how lay people react critically to language changes without considering the reasons behind them. Accent and language use is something everyone seems to have an opinion about, but while other conversational topics such as health and nutrition usually revolve around a new ‘find’ in research, discussions about accent and language tend to disregard the field completely. On the other hand, it is not surprising that the public is engaged in matters concerning their mother tongue. Not only are people constantly exposed to their mother tongue, thereby making its evolution (or lack thereof) more interesting than that of other languages, it is also the language with which people are the most familiar. This enables people to discern its different variants and varieties, as well as the ever ongoing changes.

Before explaining the theories behind such agitation, there is one other linguistic variable which should be mentioned, namely what Wells (1982: 254) has described as ‘the single most powerful pronunciation shibboleth in England’: ‘H-dropping’. This feature occurs whenever the fortis glottal fricative /h/ is omitted in initial position, and it is one of the most stigmatized features in England. Its absence is, according to Wells (1982: 254), inexorably linked to the social class of the speaker. This connection is further corroborated by Hudson and Holloway’s study from 1977 (reported in *ibid*: 254) which shows that middle class boys only dropped word-initial /h/ 14 percent of the potential times, while the percentage was 81 for their working class counterparts. What is more, Mugglestone (2003: 95) holds that it has almost become an axiomatic truth in Britain that people who omit word-initial /h/ are not just of a lower class, but also vulgar and ignorant. H-dropping does not, however, appear to be a new phenomenon. Wells (1982: 255) claims that it must have started subsequent to the colonization of America, seeing as it has never been a phenomenon in the USA, whereas others claim it has existed since medieval times (Mugglestone 2003: 97). Origin set aside, Mugglestone (2003: 98) shows that H-dropping has been stigmatized for centuries. Nineteenth century phonetician Henry Sweet described the presence or absence of /h/ as ‘an almost infallible test of education and refinement’ (*ibid*: 95), while certain mid-nineteenth century textbooks advocated categorizing its absence under the heading ‘Defective Intelligence’ (*ibid*: 103).

H-dropping and the /ç /- /ʃ / merger are just two examples of linguistics variables towards which people have very expressed attitudes. There exist many more – so many, in fact, that entire books have been devoted to these fallacious, yet commonly held beliefs about languages (e.g. Bauer and Trudgill 1998). It is, however, strange that people harbor such attitudes – especially when contemporary linguists agree that change is intrinsic to all languages, and that no languages are inherently superior to others. The attitudes nevertheless exist, and one important reason for their existence is what has been coined the ‘standard language ideology’.

2.2.3 Standard language ideology

The notion of a standard language is, contrary to many people’s beliefs, most suited to use when referring to written languages (Kramsch 1998: 75). ‘Standard English’, for instance, refers to the written grammar and lexis that are codified in English grammar books and

dictionaries. If these rules are systematically broken, such as in written representations of vernacular speech, then that is an example of non-standard English. This is fairly unproblematic, but employing the term in relation to spoken languages complicates the matter.

In a great deal of countries where there exists one dominant language, there is a tendency for speakers to believe in the existence of a superior variety of that language (Milroy 2001: 530). These standard varieties are usually non-regional, and associated with people of power. Britons have come to see RP or ‘BBC English’ as the British standard, while Americans view GA as their standard variety.

Standard varieties are widely believed to be inherently more esthetic and intelligible than other accents, and it is such myths and beliefs which are referred to as the standard language ideology. Not only is it a recognized fact that RP enjoys high social prestige in many countries (Hiraga 2005; Ladegaard 1998a; Ryan and Giles 1982), the superiority of certain linguistic forms are even reflected in the 1989 Oxford English Dictionary (OED). As Lippi-Green (1997: 58) points out, OED defines ‘accent’ as ‘the mode of utterance peculiar to an individual, locality or nation (...) [which] may include *mispronunciation* of vowels or consonants, *misplacing* of stress, and *misinflection* of a sentence.’ While this definition does not explicitly mention the notion of standard language, it certainly begs the question as to what these vowels and consonants are mispronounced relative to – a question to which Standard English would have to be the answer. By this definition, then, all the accents that do not follow the same rules of pronunciation and inflection as RP and Standard English are amiss. In OED’s defense, it should be noted that they have subsequently revised their definition, but the fact that such a recognized authority espoused these theories only twenty years ago is revealing in itself.

Despite being embedded in the mindset of most people, the standard language ideology is not something of which people are consciously aware (Garrett 2010: 7). It has been imprinted through social arenas such as schools and the media, and it inconspicuously colors people’s perception of non-standard accents. Milroy (2001: 535f) further argues that one of the underlying reasons for why this ideology is so far reaching is its appeal to common sense. When people say that an already established belief is common sense, it renders discussion on the subject superfluous. Any able-minded person should agree, and if not, the problem is clearly with the person, not the theory. It is this kind of common-sense position the standard language ideology holds today, and, despite its apparent fallacies, this is reflected in the results of the attitudinal studies presented in the following paragraphs.

In her attitudinal study conducted in the UK, Hiraga (2005) found that standard varieties hold more social prestige than rural and urban ones. This is not only the case with RP, but also GA, and it would consequently seem that the standard language ideology transcends national borders.

Hiraga's results are echoed by the internet survey, *Voices*, carried out by *the BBC* and reported in Coupland and Bishop (2007). Extremely extensive in its reach, the survey asked over 5000 people what they think about 34 different accents of English. The answers show a clear pattern that standard accents are held in considerably higher regard than the rest.

Ladegaard (1998b) set out to explore whether the standard language ideology is present in Denmark by comparing the standard variety (of Danish) with the rural and urban varieties. He found that this largely is the case, as the standard variety is perceived to be more prestigious and pleasant than all the other varieties. This is a clear indicator to both the fact that the standard language ideology exists, and that the perceived superiority is not restricted to English-speaking countries.

2.2.4 'Imposed norm' vs. 'inherent value'

As discussed in 2.2, language is a highly contentious subject to which a wide array of attitudes are attached. People claim that linguistic varieties are everything from ugly, inferior and less communicative to esthetically beautiful, prestigious, and more grammatically correct than others. What is interesting from a linguist's point of view is where such claims originate. According to Edwards (1982: 21), there are two theoretical possibilities to explaining the commonly held view that some accents are 'better' than others. They could be inherently more beautiful and intelligible than others, or they could simply reflect the stereotypes surrounding the users of such accents. This discussion, albeit relatively obsolete today, is often referred to as 'Imposed norm vs. Inherent value', and stems back to the words of Henry Wyld (1934; in Hiraga 2005: 300) who argued that:

(...) if it were possible to compare systematically every vowel sound in Received Standard with the corresponding sound in a number of provincial and other dialects, assuming that the comparison could be made, as is only fair, between speakers who possessed equal qualities of voice, and the knowledge how to use it, I believe no unbiased listener would hesitate in preferring RS as the most pleasing and sonorous form, and the best suited to be the medium of poetry and oratory.

In other words, he advocates the ‘inherent value hypothesis’ which, hence the name, claims that standard accents are adopted due to their inherent superiority in esthetic and linguistic quality (Giles et al. 1979: 590f). The proponents of this hypothesis will refer to non-standard accents as esthetically unpleasing, and say that there can only be one ‘correct’ way of pronunciation.

The ‘imposed norm hypothesis’, which is what Ryan and Giles (1982: 21) and most other contemporary linguists espouse (e.g. Hiraga 2005; Ladegaard 1998a; Giles et al. 1979), holds that standard varieties have gained their elevated position in society due the success and status of their speakers. Accents used by prestigious people are associated with competence and status, an association which in turn evolves into a more favorable disposition towards their esthetic qualities as well (Hiraga 2005: 299). In other words, there is no universal truth about the esthetics of languages. Just like music, some may find beautiful what others find hideous. The problem is that accents are so laden with stereotypes that it is next to impossible to assess them unbiasedly. The hypothesis further claims that the status of an accent develops to a large degree based on historical coincidence. RP, for example, carries an unequalled position in contemporary Britain with regards to prestige, something Malmstrom (1967; in Giles et al. 1979: 591) claims to be preordained by the history of the British Isles. From medieval times and onwards, the city of London has been the center of commerce and politics in Britain, thereby elevating its variety above that of other geographical areas. Conversely, he claims, if York had been the medieval bastion of the English Court, then the Yorkshire accent would probably have been the UK standard today.

As mentioned above, the discussion of the inherent value vs. imposed norm hypothesis is not very relevant today, simply due to the amounts of data supporting the latter hypothesis. In an article directly concerning these two hypotheses, Giles et al. (1979: 592ff) report from an experiment where they presented different varieties to respondents who had no pre-existing knowledge of the language, and then asked them to rate the varieties. This way, they could not be biased by the norms imposed on the varieties, simply because they were not privy to such information. The results were unmistakable. There were no consistent evaluations that favored any of the varieties, despite the undeniable difference they carried in their respective societies. They thus conclude that the imposed norm hypothesis is the most plausible. This is further corroborated by Hiraga (2005: 300f) who reports from two similar studies whose results also support the imposed norm hypothesis.

2.3 Attitudes to English

2.3.1 The ascendance of the English language

The British Empire may be in full retreat with the handover of Hong Kong. But from Bengal to Belize and Las Vegas to Lahore, the language of the sceptered isle is rapidly becoming the first global lingua franca. (2003: 1)

David Crystal here cites one of the many newspaper articles which focus on the role of the English language around the world. Today, English enjoys an unequalled role on the international scene, a fact that has become widely recognized in most corners of the globe. The language has come to serve as a common tongue in the realm of tourism, and speaking from my own experience, many people from the western hemisphere will simply stare in disbelief if they encounter someone who does not understand English. These are the realities of the modern world, but Crystal (2003: 3f) nevertheless questions whether people actually know what a global language is.

In an attempt to clarify, Crystal (2003: 3ff) states that a global language is one which carries some degree of importance to the majority of the countries in the world. Be it an official language as in Ghana and India; the mother tongue as in the UK and New Zealand; or even a foreign language as in Scandinavia; if it is recognized by most countries in one way or another, it attains the status of being global. In our contemporary world, English is the only language which truly has attained such status (Crystal 2003: 6). Granted, there are more first-language speakers of both Spanish and Chinese (Melchers & Shaw 2003: 9), but neither of these can compete with the international status of English. Crystal (2003: 3f) justifies this claim by pointing to the fact that over 1.5 billion of the world's population speak and understand English. On that cue, it should be noted that Chinese is spoken by 1.1 billion people as well, which is 'just' 400 million less than English, but the fact remains that most Chinese people are situated within the boundaries of China which sets a natural limitation on its international grasp. English, on the other hand, is spread across all the continents of the globe. In addition to all those who use it as their first language, over one hundred countries teach English as a foreign or second language (*ibid*: 5). Crystal (2003: 5) further holds that the reasons behind elevating English as an official language vary from country to country. While countries such as India have a long history with the British, others might propagate the language as a means to an end. Regardless of the reasons, this English ubiquity is certainly an

incentive for people to embrace the language as it is becoming *the* global means of communication.

As to how this English prevalence came to be, Janicki (2005: 15f) asserts that it is due to the political, economic, and cultural power of the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

In the 19th century, at the peak of its power, the British Empire was commonly described as ‘the empire upon which the sun never sets’. All these colonies, combined with Britain being the high seat of the industrial revolution, had a staggering effect on the country’s monetary capabilities. With such a large economy, the British Empire was able to further extend its commercial and political reach, and thus diffuse its language to an even greater extent. Furthermore, when the British Empire met its demise, the English legacy was carried on by the thirteen British colonies in North America. During the 20th century, America established itself as *the* economic and military power – disseminating both its products and its language throughout the world. Taken together, the historical development of these two countries laid the foundation for the cultural dominance of English which was elaborated upon in 2.1.4.

2.3.2 Attitudes to varieties of English

As outlined above, English has become the most spoken language in the world, and as a result, there exist hundreds, if not thousands of different varieties of English. Each of these are accompanied by different attitudes, and from the mid-1960s and onward (fronted by the seminal works of Labov 1972), such attitudes became the focus of many sociolinguistic studies whose purpose it was to observe and measure these attitudes. In the following sections, the main trends from some of these studies are outlined, but first it is necessary to explain how accents are evaluated in these types of studies. Attitudinal studies often operate with a series of adjectives which describe the character traits of the speakers included in the studies. When the recordings are presented to the respondents, they are asked to connect these adjectives to the speakers in various ways depending on the type of study (see chapter 3). Subsequently, the researcher categorizes these adjectives into ‘dimensions’ to get a more complete impression of the evaluations. There are usually two or three such dimensions; one relating to professional status and prestige (‘Prestige’); one regarding personality and sociability (‘Social Attractiveness’); and one concerning the accent of the speaker ‘Linguistic

Quality'). The two former are present in most attitudinal studies and usually include adjectives such as 'rich' and 'friendly' respectively. The latter is not as frequently used, but includes e.g. 'correct' or 'esthetic' when it is present.

2.3.2.1 Britain

During the 1970s, there was a steady increase of sociolinguistic attitudinal studies, a trend of which Howard Giles was at the forefront. Throughout that and the following decades, he conducted a series of attitudinal studies discussing the different accents of the UK (e.g. Giles 1970; 1971a; 1971b; 1972; Giles et al. 1981; Giles et al. 1987; Giles and Sassoon 1983). The first of these studies was conducted in 1970, and has apparently been an inspiration to others, as the extensive *Voices* survey (which will be discussed shortly) is said to be a direct 'replication and extension' of this study (Coupland and Bishop 2007: 76). What Giles (1970; in Garrett 2010: 53ff) did was to present a group of students with a series of accents and ask them to evaluate the accents on three dimension (status, communicative and aesthetic content). His results revealed a clear pattern where the standard RP was assigned positive evaluations on all dimensions, the regional varieties received neutral or slightly negative evaluations, while the urban varieties were consequently downgraded on all dimensions. This trend is reflected in other studies of that time (e.g. Trudgill 1975), and already in 1965, Wilkinson (in Edwards 1982: 23) suggested that there exists a descending hierarchy between standard, regional and urban accents.

Attitudinal studies are still conducted today, and one contemporary example is the collaborative research *Voices* (reported in Coupland and Bishop 2007) by *BBC* and *Greenfield Online*. Through an online questionnaire, they were able to gather replies from 5010 British informants who were asked to rate 34 different accents of English, and the results show some interesting patterns. First and foremost, the accents that have come to be known as standard were unequivocally the most favored accents. 'Queen's English' and 'Standard English' were evaluated the most favorably on the Prestige dimension, and considerably more so than all the other varieties. The same goes for Social Attractiveness where Standard English ended up as the most favorable accent. Conversely, Queen's English was surpassed by six other varieties on the Social Attractiveness dimension, but this may very well be due to the emotionally charged connotations of the word 'Queen'. Granted, the Court and Queen are perceived as speaking correctly, but they are also commonly associated with being pompous and having

stiff upper lips. What is more, prestigiously acclaimed accents are known to be downgraded in terms of Social Attractiveness (Giles et al. 1979; Hiraga 2005; Ladegaard 1998a) even if that was not substantially so for Standard English.

Secondly, it appears from this study that there exists a hierarchical relationship between standard, regional and urban accents. Contrary to the positive evaluations of the standard accents, the urban varieties of Birmingham, Glasgow, Liverpool and Black Country were all rated among the five least favorable accents in terms of both Prestige and Social Attractiveness. Albeit not as extreme as these four, the urban accents of Swansea, Cardiff, Leeds, Manchester and Bristol were also rated negatively on both dimensions. Edinburgh served as the only exception to this trend with evenly positive ratings, and had it not been for the negative score for the Glasgow accent, this could have been viewed as a reflection of the positive evaluations for Scottish English. Between the two poles of standard and urban were regional accents such as Lancashire and Northern Irish which were rated more positively on Social Attractiveness than Prestige. The same goes for Englishes spoken in countries outside the British Isles which were also rated relatively neutrally. German-accented English served as an exception, however, as it was markedly downgraded on Social Attractiveness.

The main variables of the *Voices* study were ‘age’, ‘gender, and ‘diversity’, and in many respects, these variables were influential on the results. Age, for instance, proved to be decisive when rating standard accents (Coupland and Bishop 2007: 81). These were evaluated positively in unison by the subjects, but linearly more so by older people; in other words, the younger the subjects, the less positive rating for standard accents.

With regards to gender, there were also some apparent differences. Women on the whole evaluated varieties more positively than men, while simultaneously being more reserved towards their own accents. When discussing gender and accents in general, sociolinguists normally agree that women are more likely to choose variants associated with standard accents. This trend is coined the ‘Sex/Prestige Pattern’ by Hudson (1996), and it is similarly corroborated by other studies (e.g. Friedland 2003; Gordon 2006; Irwin and Nagy 2007; Milroy et al. 1998; Watt 2002). This pattern is not particularly evident in these results, however, as women indiscriminately upgraded (relative to men) standard and non-standard accents alike.

The respondents of the study were distributed among six regions in the UK, and the results show that people from the ‘Celtic Fringe’ exhibit the strongest in-group solidarity by elevating their own accents. In total, however, it was evident that diversity was the most decisive variable. The degree of diversity was established by simply asking the subjects

whether they enjoyed listening to a diversity of accents and dialects, and a correlation was found between a high degree of diversity and positive evaluations for non-standard varieties.

In sum, the results from the *Voices* survey are more or less in accord with previous findings. The descending tripartite hierarchy of standard, regional and urban varieties is unmistakable. Standard accents are rated high on both dimensions, but higher in terms of Prestige than Social Attractiveness. Regional varieties show the opposite pattern, while urban ones are rated negatively altogether. Concludingly, Coupland and Bishop (2007: 85, my emphasis) state that these trends ‘do reflect broad language-ideological structures that are the backdrop to accent encounters in contemporary Britain.’

As foreshadowed by Coupland and Bishop above, the results from *Voices* are echoed in similar attitudinal studies in contemporary Britain. One example is the attitudinal study of Yuko Hiraga (2005), where she investigated the attitudes of British subjects towards six varieties of English. These varieties also fell into the categorization used in the *Voices* survey, namely standard, regional and urban. New York City and Birmingham constitute the urban category and were evaluated as the least favorable accents when considering all the traits combined. The regional varieties, i.e. Alabama and West Yorkshire, were evaluated relatively neutrally, while the standard RP and GA received the most favorable evaluations in the study – as expected from the discussion above. Once again, the results show a tripartite hierarchy descending from standard, through regional, to urban – further establishing the perceived superiority of the standard accents.

Delving deeper into Hiraga’s results reveals a greater variation once the evaluations were divided into the commonly used dimensions of Prestige and Social Attractiveness. With the exception of New York City being markedly upgraded, the evaluations concerning Prestige, i.e. education, intelligence, wealth, success and elegance, remained the same as the overall evaluations. This was not the case in terms of Social Attractiveness (i.e. friendliness, comfortableness, sociability, sincerity and reliability), however, as the ever so favorable RP was considerably downgraded on this dimension. Considering the traditionally prestigious status of RP, this downgrading might come as a surprise, but Hiraga (2005: 299) explains that varieties which are associated with high status are often deemed cold or arrogant, and thus downgraded on the dimension of Social Attractiveness – a notion which is echoed by Giles et al. (1979: 590). The only problem with this explanation is that GA, the other standard accent, received positive evaluations on both Social Attractiveness and Prestige. This is, however, explained by Hiraga (2005: 302) as relating to the fact that GA is not an accent commonly associated with any specific class.

Another recent study is that of Dixon et al. (2002) which shows that language attitudes can apply to more contexts than just scientific research. Here, 119 British psychology students were asked to rate two speakers on a scale from ‘innocent’ to ‘guilty’ in the setting of an interrogation in a murder investigation. One of them spoke RP, while the other spoke the stigmatized ‘Brummie’ accent, and the results show that the Brummie speaker was viewed as much more likely to have committed the crime than the RP speaker. And even though an actual jury have much more to rely on than the accent of the accused – a point the authors duly point out – it is still alarming to see that it had an impact on the question of guilt.

Taken together, the studies above highlight two recurring trends regarding language attitudes in the UK which do not seem to have changed much during the last three decades. The standard language ideology (see 2.2.3) appears to be firmly intact, with RP as the most favorable accent in all the studies. In addition to this, regional accents are evaluated neutrally, while urban accents are consistently downgraded, and the three categories thus form a descending hierarchy in terms of social prestige. This is summed up by Edwards (1982) who concludes not only that ‘there exist in Britain a tripartite accent prestige hierarchy’ (23), but also that ‘language varieties which diverge from Standard English are liable to be viewed, even by speakers of those varieties themselves, less favourably than the Standard’ (30).

2.3.2.2 The United States of America

Some of what Edwards concludes with above also applies to America, but there are a few exceptions. With regards to the standard language ideology, Britons and Americans are more or less in unison. Like the vast majority of non-linguist users of English, Americans generally adhere to the notion of standard varieties and their inherent superiority (Milroy 2001: 530). The further a variety strays from the standard, the less prestigious it automatically is perceived. This is not based on any research or backed up by evidence, it is simply deemed axiomatic and taken for granted. Concerning to the hierarchy of standard, regional and urban varieties, however, matters are not as simple.

On the one hand, the urban accent of NYC is one of the most stigmatized in America. Wells (1982: 502) claims that while it is not uncommon for the accents of urban centers to be spoken of with disparagement, as is the case with Liverpool, Birmingham and London in the UK, ‘(...) there is no other American city whose accent evokes such disapproval [as NYC].’ On the other hand, the rural accents of America, epitomized by the Southern accent, are

perceived just as negatively as the NYC accent, if not worse. Preston (1998:139ff) reports from his folklinguistic studies (see Niedzielski and Preston 1999), and shows that 153 Michiganders rated the accent spoken in Alabama as *less correct* than that of NYC and the surrounding area. The same goes for the 76 Indianan college students he asked in a similar survey (Niedzielski and Preston 1999). Their replies were even clearer and showed that the accents of the states from Louisiana to South Carolina (excluding Florida) were perceived as the least favorable varieties. Conversely, the NYC accent was rated neutrally, a fact which Preston (1989a; in Lippi-Green 1997: 57) hypothesizes is because of NYC's stereotypical duality; it is seen as both the center of culture and the capital of crime. Furthermore, the accents of California – which is dominated by the urban centers of Los Angeles and San Francisco – were ranked among the most correct in the same survey. Thus, while standard varieties undoubtedly enjoy the most status in America, it is problematic to say that the tripartite hierarchy of Britain exists as many urban varieties are positively evaluated.

Parallel to measuring the perceived correctness of American accents, the folklinguistic studies of Niedzielski and Preston (1999: 41f) also assessed people's impression of the pleasantness of various accents. This was carried out in the same manner, but the results differentiate to some degree. With regards to the urban and regional accents (the NYC and Southern accent), the results mirror those found in Britain to a certain extent. The general trend there, as discussed earlier, is that urban varieties are evaluated negatively on the dimensions of both Prestige and Social Attractiveness. Regional varieties, on the other hand, are evaluated slightly more favorably in terms of Prestige and substantially so in terms of Social Attractiveness. In America, the regional (Southern) accent might be perceived as negatively as the urban (NYC) in terms of Prestige – thus deviating from the British trend – but concerning Social Attractiveness, Americans are in concert with the British. Niedzielski and Preston (1999: 63) show that Michiganders rate all the southern accents as more pleasant than the NYC accent, with the sole exception of Alabama which is perceived equally negative. This pattern is even clearer with the Indianan respondents who evaluated the southern accents, including that of Alabama, substantially more favorably than the NYC accent in terms of SA.

As already established, people believe that some varieties are 'better' than others, and the *Voices* study (reported in Coupland and Bishop 2007) shows that an 'accent identical to own' was among the most favorable varieties in terms of both Social Attractiveness and Prestige. Whenever this trend is contradicted and speakers devalue their own variety, this is called 'linguistic insecurity'. Meyerhoff (2006: 172) holds that the concept of linguistic

insecurity relates to speakers who feel ‘(...)that the variety they use is somehow inferior, ugly or bad [- i.e.] negative attitudes to one’s own variety expressed in esthetic or moral terms.’

Wells reports from the seminal NYC study of Labov (1966: 499; in Wells 1982:502) and shows that ‘(...)almost all [of Labov’s] New York informants had a very negative attitude towards the accent associated with their native city.’ Such linguistic insecurity is further reflected in the qualitative interviews Labov (1966; in Preston) gathered in the same study (reported in Preston):

I’ll tell you, you see, my sons is always correcting me. He speaks very well – the one that went to [two years of] college. And I’m glad that he corrects me – because it shows me that there are many times when I don’t pronounce my words correctly. (1998: 141)

This passage shows the duality of the negative attitudes towards the NYC accent. Not only does the son correct the pronunciation of the person who most likely taught him his words, the father even thanks him for it, believing that his son’s two years of college have made his speech superior to his own.

Due to their similarly stigmatized accent, southerners may also be prone to linguistic insecurity. Lippi-Green (1997: 202) humorously reports of a Virginian attending Harvard who was tempted to carry a sign around his neck exclaiming: ‘Yes, I am from the south. No I do not know your uncle in Mobile (...) Both of my parents are, in fact, literate (...) No I do not own slaves. No I do not want any.’ Despite such blatant stigma, the folklinguistic studies of Niedzielski and Preston (1999: 66f) show that southerners are not as negative to their own accent as Labov reported New Yorkers to be. Niedzielski and Preston asked a group of students from Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina how they perceived different American accents in terms of both correctness and pleasantness. Admittedly, the accents of Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi were evaluated the least favorably in terms of correctness, but the accents of South Carolina and Georgia – from where the majority of subjects originated – were evaluated neutrally. Furthermore, with what concerns pleasantness, the southerners featured the very opposite of linguistic insecurity. The Alabama accent was among the most favorable accents of the study, and the other Southern accents – excluding those of Texas and New Mexico – were also evaluated relatively positively. Thus, it would seem that while both the Southern and NYC accent are heavily stigmatized, the Southern accent’s evaluations are somewhat ameliorated with regards to Social Attractiveness. Additionally, the Southerners differ from New Yorkers in that they think relatively highly of their own accent.

Attitudinal accent studies, such as the ones discussed in 2.3.2.1, have a much stronger tradition in the UK than they do in the US. In America, the bulk of sociolinguistic studies consists of either folklinguistic studies (e.g. Niedzielski and Preston 1999), or societal treatment studies (which will be discussed shortly). There is, however, one traditional attitudinal study which has been conducted in America, and this was carried out by Stewart, Ryan and Giles (1985; in Garrett 2010: 63f). They set out to compare the status of GA and RP, and established that on the Prestige dimension, RP was rated higher than GA, even among Americans. In terms of Social Attractiveness, however, RP was downgraded and viewed as ‘less intelligible’ and ‘arousing discomfort’ (Garrett 2010: 63).

2.3.2.3 Societal Treatment Studies

Societal Treatment studies focus on publicly accessible material instead of human respondents, and one example is Doughty’s (2010) examination of the book series about Junie B. Jones, and its reception. These are all children’s books written by Barbra Park, and they make for an interesting study due to the fact that they are highly unconventional. The prepubescent Junie B Jones is not only the protagonist and titular character, she also narrates the stories – with both language and behavior characteristic of a girl of that age (ibid: 186). The unconventional nature of these books led to an ambivalent reception, and in order to gather people’s opinions, Doughty studied the various customer reviews in online book stores such as *Amazon.com*. She found that some people, parents especially, strongly opposed the books because of the influence it potentially could have on their children. Doughty’s (2010) findings are in other words relatively straight forward, and support what was discussed in 2.2.3, namely that people put a great deal of emphasis on adhering to the standard variety of a language.

While Doughty’s study (2010) does fall under the category of societal treatment studies, it is still borderline to a direct approach since it looks at people’s expressed opinions (Garrett 2010: 46). A more typical example would be Haarmann’s (1984 and 1989; in Garrett 2010: 143ff) examination of advertisements in Japan. In order to disclose Japanese connotations towards French and English, he investigated how and when the two languages were implemented in Japanese advertisements. A pattern emerged which illustrated that French was associated with elegance, sophistication and refinement, whereas English equaled reliability, quality and practicality (Garrett: 143f). This pattern was based on the type of

products the two languages were used in promoting. While the ‘elegant’ French was used to advertise fashion and perfume, the ‘practical’ and ‘reliable’ English promoted cars, television and sportswear (ibid: 143f).

Lastly, there are two studies which are not only good examples of societal treatment studies, but also pertinent for the study of language attitudes in Norway. The first is the widely cited study of Lippi-Green (2012: 101ff) which investigated the accents featured in one of the world’s largest fictional universes, namely that of Walt Disney. The other was conducted by Dobrow and Calvin in 1998. They also examined accent use in animation for children, but unlike Lippi-Green who studied movies, they analyzed TV shows.

Both studies seek to unveil how accents are used to call upon common stereotypes, and as a backdrop to her study, Lippi-Green (2012: 105ff) shows how Disney from early on has been known to use offensive stereotypes in their cartoons. When *The Three Little Pigs* first appeared on screen in 1933, the antagonistic ‘Big Bad Wolf’ was portrayed as distinctively Jewish. The voice actor used an unmistakably Yiddish accent, and he was dressed as a typical Jewish peddler – his appearance strikingly similar to that of the Nazi propaganda caricature ‘The Eternal Jew’ (ibid: 105).

The Big Bad Wolf is an extreme example of stereotypes used in Disney animations, but both the studies of Lippi-Green (2012) and Dobrow and Calvin (1998) show that stereotyping is still a persistent trend in contemporary animation, albeit not as conspicuously malicious as the Jewish Wolf.

Both studies find that accent is a key variable in deciding the characteristics of different characters, and in Disney movies, there is a clear correlation between accent and whether a person is good or bad (Lippi-Green 2012: 119). While roughly 3/4 of the American accented characters are good, the same can only be said about 1/3 of the foreign accented characters. For characters who speak other national Englishes, i.e. British or Australian, the good-bad ratio is about fifty-fifty. This correlation between accent and character traits is equally apparent in Dubrow and Calvin’s (1998: 116) study, if not more so. First, it should be mentioned that they have a slightly different categorization of the included accents. Dubrow and Calvin (1998: 114f) define US English as the ‘domestic’ accent, rendering all others national Englishes ‘foreign’. Furthermore, they employ a more nuanced view of ‘US English’ and separate GA from non-standard varieties. The results are unmistakable and showed that *all* the villains use a foreign or non-standard accent, while GA is reserved for the protagonists. Also, contrary to the Disney Universe, the foreign accent most commonly used by villains was some variety of British English (ibid: 115). Other foreign accents commonly spoken by

antagonists include German- and Slavic-accented English, while the non-standard US accent most associated with crime and evil is that of NYC – referred to as ‘Italian American gangster’ (ibid: 115).

In sum, these two studies show that cartoons and animated movies, both new and old, are highly stereotypical. If you find yourself speaking a non-standard accent of English, or worse yet, a foreign one, you are likely to either commit a crime, or be too dimwitted to know how. According to Lippi-Green (2012: 104), such blatant stigmatization might be harmful because children are not necessarily able discern cartoons and animations from reality. Children of all ages constantly observe and mimic the behavior of others – even if it occurs in animated movies and TV shows. Admittedly, they will probably not devote their lives to catching road runners, but they will probably remember the accent used by characters who do.

2.3.2.4 Scandinavian Studies

Needless to say, most attitudinal studies concerning English are conducted in countries where it is spoken as the mother tongue. In recent times, however, due to the substantial spread of English around the world, such studies are conducted elsewhere as well – Scandinavia being one example. Ladegaard (1998a), for instance, set out to explore the standing of different English accents among people in Denmark. He presented two groups of Danish students (university and high school level) with five different varieties of English. The varieties were presented by five different people who spoke RP, GA, Scottish, Australian and Cockney, and the respondents were asked to evaluate the speakers on the dimensions of Prestige, Social Attractiveness and Linguistic Quality (Ladegaard 1998a: 254).

The results show that RP is not only evaluated as the most prestigious variety, it is also regarded as the most fluent, beautiful and correct English accent (Ladegaard 1998a: 258f). Furthermore, this prestigiously acclaimed accent was downgraded on the Social Attractiveness dimension, a trend which is reflected in a series of other attitudinal studies (Giles 1970; Hiraga 2005; Ladegaard 1998a; Coupland and Bishop 2007). On this dimension, it was the regional accents of Scotland and Australia which were seen as the most favorable varieties. Lastly, it should be mentioned that contrary to what Ladegaard (1998a: 260) might have suspected, the evaluations of the high school and university students showed no consistent discrepancies.

It would thus seem that along with the spread of the English language came the attitudes commonly held towards it. The language attitudes of both America and Great Britain are, according to the findings of Ladegaard (1998a), relatively similar to those held in countries where English merely serves as a foreign language. Another example of such a country is Norway, and in the same year as Ladegaard published his study (1998a), Ingrid Neumann (1998) finished her MA thesis which explored Norwegian attitudes towards British and American English. Unlike Ladegaard, she employed a written questionnaire which directly inquired about the respondents' attitudes towards the two varieties. Additionally, she did not include different varieties of British and American English, but used the terms in their broadest sense. Her respondents consisted of two equally large age groups, one with an average age of 15 years, the other with an average of 47 (ibid: 39f).

Through this written questionnaire, Neumann (1998: 41ff) elicited attitudes which form a rather conspicuous pattern. Her questions were posed in a manner which required the respondents to choose between a preference for British or American English, and the results were clear. A great majority of the adult respondents claimed that they preferred British over American English in all the named contexts (ibid: 42ff). These contexts ranged from TV to education, and the same was found when she asked about the intelligibility and esthetic qualities of the two varieties. Conversely, an even greater majority of the younger respondents held a preference for American over British English in the same contexts. This trend was also echoed by the results from the second part of her study, where she asked the respondents to encircle the adjectives they found suiting for the two varieties. With a few exceptions, British English was associated with positive adjectives by the older age group and negative adjectives with the younger one – and vice versa for American English (ibid: 49ff).

While Neumann's study is not as nuanced with regards to *different* British and American accents, its results do show an interesting trend concerning the age variable. Whereas Ladegaard (1998a) found no discrepancies between university and high school students, Neumann found that evaluations do differentiate once the age gap is extended. This is at least the case with Norwegian subjects, but due to the linguistic and cultural similarities of Denmark and Norway, it is reasonable to assume that the foundation for language attitudes is very similar for Norwegian and Danish respondents.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Studying language attitudes

As stated in the previous chapter, there are three main approaches to the study of language attitudes, all of which have their own sub-approaches. Attitudes are, however, difficult to measure as they are not directly observable. They are manifested through actions, and as seen in chapter 2.1.2, these actions oftentimes deviate from what is expected. This is one of the reasons why there has been developed so many different approaches, and in the following sections, an account is given of each of the three main approaches – outlining their fields of application, as well as their strengths and weaknesses.

3.1.1 The direct approach.

The direct approach is usually applied in circumstances where people's overt attitudes are of interest (Garrett 2010: 39). If a study using the direct approach investigates British attitudes towards Welsh, then British respondents are asked directly about their attitudes towards the Welsh language. This can take place through an oral interview, a written questionnaire or any other direct method; the important aspect is that the respondents are aware of the aim of the inquiry and explicitly report their attitudes. This method is in many respects the simplest way of eliciting attitudes, and definitely the most utilized in the history of sociolinguistics (ibid: 10). The written questionnaire allows for a feasible means of collecting virtually inexhaustible amounts information. This is exemplified by the *Voices* study discussed in 2.3.2.1. Here, the questionnaire was accessed through the internet which made it even more accessible, and it was consequently completed by more than 5000 respondents. Despite these obvious strengths, however, there are some clear weaknesses to the direct approach as well.

First and foremost, Kristiansen (2009; in Garrett 2010: 43) points out that there is often a difference between the attitudes that people consciously harbor, and those of which people are not explicitly aware. The former, he claims, has a tendency to represent the ideologies of people's different communities, rather than their private attitudes. To use the example from above, if a Welsh respondent participated in the hypothetical study of British attitudes towards Welsh, then he might report favorable attitudes because of Wales' renewed focus on this minority language. It does not necessarily mean that he personally likes it, even

though that *might* naturally be the case. The important thing is to be aware of this potential weakness when discussing studies which employ the direct approach.

Secondly, regarding the actual form of direct approaches, Garrett (2010: 43f) gives an account of a series of pitfalls that might skew the results. The first of these concerns the manner in which questions are asked. He warns about hypothetical questions, and shows – with reference to a study of attitudes towards snakes – that people express quite different attitudes in actual scenarios (with snakes present) than they do in hypothetical ones (without snakes in their presence). Questions which contain heavily charged language are also discouraged, and an example could be: ‘what do you feel about the language spoken by the Nazis in WWII?’ Regardless of the linguistic qualities of this language, such a question would undoubtedly conjure negative associations due to the negative connotations of the word ‘Nazis’. Slanting of questions can also occur without such charged words (Garrett 2010: 44). Questions can for example be leading, in the sense that it would seem inhuman or unethical to disagree (‘do not people in Wales deserve the right to speak the language of their ancestors?’), or contain more than one question which makes it unclear to what the respondent actually replies (‘do you think children should learn German if they or their parents want it?’).

Lastly, when people are aware of the fact their attitudes are (attempted) measured, certain biases are likely to appear (Garrett 2010: 44f). Not only will respondents often try to answer in accordance with what society has deemed correct – what Garrett calls ‘social desirability bias’ – sometimes they will also give the interviewer ‘what he wants’. If for instance a respondent knows that the study is about the dominance of British English in school, he might report that British was more prevalent than it really was to answer in accordance with the hypothesis of the interviewer. This is called the ‘acquiescence bias’. The last bias Garrett mentions is one which is at the core of many sociolinguistic study, namely the ‘observer’s paradox’. This concerns the fact that respondents will always be aware that they are being observed, and Meyerhoff (2006: 38) defines observer’s paradox as ‘the double-bind researchers find themselves in when what they are interested in knowing is how people behave when they are not being observed; but the only way to find out how they behave is to observe them.’ The observer’s paradox can, however, be resolved with the use of written, anonymous questionnaires where the respondents never meet the interviewer, and are thus never observed.

3.1.2 The indirect approach

Whereas the direct approach is an open and fully disclosed form of attitude elicitation, the indirect approach is subtle to the point of deception. It is designed to go beyond the ideologies often elicited in the direct approach and unveil people's private attitudes to language. This is usually done through a technique called 'the matched guise technique' (MGT). This was developed during the 1950s (Garrett 2010: 59) and it implements recorded speech passages. These passages are played to respondents who in turn are asked to evaluate various character traits of the speakers, relating to everything from career success to personality aspects. What the respondents are not told, however, is that all the accents are recorded by the same speaker. This means that the recordings are evaluated on the sole basis of the accent, seeing as other supra-linguistic factors are excluded entirely (ibid: 41). In order to ensure that the respondents will not realize they are listening to the same speaker, 'distractor recordings' are sometimes included. These are similar types of passages, but recorded by another person and of no interest to the research. To avoid suspicion, these recordings are also evaluated by the respondents, but excluded from the analysis. An example of the MGT is the study of Dixon et al. (2002) which is presented in 2.3.2.1.

The positive contributions of the MGT are many. Not only has it been a major asset in the field of attitudinal studies ever since it was developed in the 1950s, it is also an efficient way of uncovering people's private attitudes, and not just ideologies. Since the MGT does not explicitly clarify that it is designed to measure people's attitudes, many of the weaknesses mentioned with regards to the direct approach do not apply. Direct questions are not asked, and while the respondents believe they are evaluating a series of unknown speakers, it is really themselves and their attitudes which are the object of study (Garrett 2010: 41).

No method is perfect, however, and the MGT is no exception (Garrett 2010: 59). As more and more studies have utilized the technique, so has it become the object of increased scrutiny, and Garrett mentions a series of questions which are raised about the MGT.

First of all, if a study includes a large amount of accents, then it will be close to impossible to find any *one* person who is able to mimic them without error. Even if the imitations are only slightly imprecise, this can still be recognized by the respondents and influence the evaluations (Garrett 2010: 58). This is particularly relevant for studies which include accents from more than one country. Giles (1970), for instance, employed only one speaker to present 13 different accents, and this is a fact which many would see as a weakness.

Secondly, in order to focus solely on segmental features, other factors such as intonation and speech rate are often held constant. This can cause some accents to appear unnatural due to the fact that certain varieties have different speech rates and intonation patterns than others (Garrett 2010: 58).

The style in which the passages are recorded is also a factor. Most recordings consist of a text which is read out loud, and this is a more formal style than everyday spontaneous speech. Ergo, it can be problematic to claim that the evaluations from a matched guise (MG) experiment represent attitudes towards the vernacular of the speakers (Garrett 2010: 59). In addition to this, the texts used for the recordings are selected on the basis of being ‘neutral’, but since people process information in their own ways, a neutral text to some might be charged to others.

Lastly, Garrett (2010: 57) points out that some accents might not be perceived as they were intended to. Non-standard accents can sometimes be misperceived as ungrammatical, and the regional accent of e.g. Scotland might be wrongly identified as that of Ireland or Wales.

Some of the above-mentioned problems can be solved by implementing another branch of the indirect approach, namely the verbal guise technique (VGT). In most respects, the VGT is identical to the MGT, the only difference being that the VGT employs one native speaker for each accent (Garret 2010: 41). This means that the accents in themselves are presented more authentically, but it does introduce problems relating to the possible influence of supra-segmental factors such as pitch and voice quality. Nevertheless, the VGT is used in a great deal of attitudinal studies, especially ones where the accents originate from different countries (e.g. Hiraga 2005; Ladegaard 1998a).

3.1.3 Societal treatment studies

Societal treatment studies use published material as the basis for their analysis, and they are concerned with how language is used and treated in society, hence the name. Instead of asking people what they think or feel, these types of studies scrutinize the language already existing in the public sphere and use that to analyze the position of different languages and varieties thereof. As a result, societal treatment studies differ from the two previously mentioned approaches in that they do not include human respondents. These studies do not in other words measure people’s attitudes *per se*, but rather offer insight into the various opinions and

beliefs that are circulated by the media (Garrett 2010: 51). It should be noted that these do not necessarily reflect public opinion, but the media are a major culprit in creating and perpetuating social stereotypes. Moreover, if a belief or opinion repeatedly makes its way into the media, it is bound to be held by someone. Due to this unorthodox approach, societal treatment studies have been criticized for being too imprecise, and some claim that they can only serve as preliminary research to more thorough and extensive studies.

Garrett (2010: 51), on the other hand, claims that the societal treatment approach has made important contributions to the field of sociolinguistic research. Not only does it offer insight into the way languages are treated in the public sphere, it can also illustrate which types of stereotypes and ideologies that are disseminated through the media. The media have, after all, permeated close to every aspect of modern society, which means that people are constantly surrounded, and thereby influenced by it (see 2.1.4). Furthermore, Lippi-Green (2012: 102) shows in her study that children are estimated to watch over 32 hours of television *every week* between the ages of 2 and 5 – and only slightly less the five subsequent years. This means that children are heavily exposed to the media in a period where they are uniquely susceptible to input of all kinds – and language especially (Meyerhoff 2006: 289). Consequently, when several studies (see 2.3.2.3) find that the media frequently employ stereotypical representations regarding gender, ethnicity and accent, the effect of such representations should be explored in further detail. This is particularly true when studying attitudes to English, since that is the language most prevalent in the media (Crystal 2003: 90f).

3.2 The present study

This section is devoted entirely to the method employed in the present study which is a sociolinguistic attitudinal study. Its aim is to establish Norwegian attitudes towards different accents of English, and there are three main reasons for my choosing this kind of study. First and foremost, through the soon to be five years of English studies at university level, the field of language attitudes is simply what has intrigued me the most. Secondly, there appears to be a dearth of English attitudinal studies conducted outside the UK and US. Admittedly, there are some from Australia and New Zealand, but very few from countries where English is not the first language. Lastly, great inspiration was found in Ladegaard's (1998a) similar Danish study – a fact which is apparent from the similarity of the two studies.

3.2.1 The sociolinguistic experiment

The present study employs a combination of the direct and the indirect approach. It is indirect in that it uses the VGT to present recorded speakers to a group of respondents (part 1).

Without being informed of the study's aim, the respondents are asked to evaluate the speakers on the dimensions of Prestige, Social attractiveness and Linguistic Quality (see 2.3.2). These three dimensions comprise twelve adjectives in total; five of which relate to Social Attractiveness (Humor, Outgoingness, Trustworthiness, Sociability and Friendliness); four to Prestige (Wealth, Education, Self-confidence and Intelligence); and three to Linguistic Quality (Correctness, Esthetic Quality and Model of Pronunciation). The accents are presented in random order, and evaluated by the respondent through means of 'likert scales' while listening to the recordings. There are twelve likert scales which accompany each accent, and the scales are seven-point, where '1' represents the most favorable evaluation, and '7' represents the least favorable. To exemplify, one scale going from 1-7 has 'rich' on the left side (beside the number '1') and 'poor' on the right (beside the number '7'), and this means that the higher the number, the less wealth the speaker is perceived to possess. In addition to evaluating the different accents, the respondents are also asked to state from where they believe the speakers originate. This question is, however, placed at the end of each questionnaire so that the respondents do not ponder the origin of the speakers while evaluating them (see Appendix 1).

There are several reasons for my choosing the VGT, but one of the most important factors was time. If I were to choose the MGT instead, this would entail finding a person who can mimic the accents flawlessly, and doing so would be extremely time-consuming. With the VGT, on the other hand, the recordings could simply be chosen from an extensive online database which made it possible to find people with relatively similar voice qualities. While this was the original reason for choosing the VGT, I have later come to realize that there are other advantages to it as well. The accents included originate from different countries, a fact which can compromise the authenticity of the accents when using the MGT. This is further outlined in 3.1.2, along with other problems which can be solved by using a native speaker of each accent. Even though there are problems with using multiple speakers – for the purpose of the present study – these are outweighed by the advantages.

The direct part of my study is a written questionnaire which asks the respondents how they perceive people from different places in the UK and US (part 2). These places coincide

with the accents evaluated in the first part, but the respondents are not aware of this. The questionnaire is very simple. Underneath each accent are twenty adjectives, and the respondents are told to circle all the adjectives they associate with the accent above. The adjectives consist of 10 negative and 10 positive ones, all of which are fairly similar to the ones used in the indirect part – but not identical. The reason for having equivalent and not identical adjectives is to make it less conspicuous for the respondents that they are rating the same accents in the questionnaire as they evaluated in the VG experiment. Some examples of the adjectives⁷ are ‘Smart’, ‘Stupid’, ‘Boring’, ‘Good sense of humor’, ‘Honest’, ‘Conniving’, ‘Arrogant’ and ‘Friendly’. The respondents could also add adjectives of their choosing if they felt the present ones did not suffice (see Appendix 2).

The WQ is included for the sake of comparability. While the indirect approach elicits attitudes to the way people actually speak, the evaluations in a direct approach are more likely to be rooted in ideologies and associations (see 3.1.1 and 3.1.2). In that sense, comparing the two parts can reveal possible differences between society’s widely held notions and the private attitudes harbored by individuals. This is also why relatively similar adjectives are used in both parts: to make the two parts more easily comparable.

After the two attitudinal experiments, the respondents are asked to fill in a form consisting of ten questions (part 3). These questions are aimed at revealing the more personal variables of the respondents which include age, gender, nationality, spoken English accent, preferred English accent, and exposure and usage of English (see Appendix 3). In most of the questions, the respondents are simply asked to circle the alternative fitting for them, but there are three exceptions. Two of them relate to how much time the respondents have spent in the US and the UK, while the last concerns how many hours per day they watch English movies and/or TV. Since the answers to these questions can be quite diverse, they are categorized according to quantity⁸. Watching movies and TV between 0 and 1 hour daily falls under the category ‘some’; 2-3 hours falls under ‘average’; while watching 4 hours or more falls under ‘a lot’. The same goes for how much the respondents have been to the US or UK, but here the categories are ‘no’ (never), ‘yes’ (1-4 weeks) and ‘a lot’ (5 weeks or more).

⁷ Some of these are ‘adjectives’ are phrases instead of words, but they are nevertheless referred to as adjectives for the sake of convenience.

⁸ This categorization happens subsequent to the written questionnaire and without the respondents’ knowledge (see appendix 3).

3.2.2 Respondents

All in all, there are 54⁹ respondents who evaluate the accents above, and as previously mentioned, there are three age groups. The first consists of high school students between 17 and 18; the second comprises newly educated university students of 25-30; while the third contains adults in their 50s. Effort was put into having relatively equal gender distribution, and the final ratio is 56-44% in favor of females. The female majority is due to one high school class which only contained 2 male pupils, one of whom was Polish. As a consequence, it was decided to include another high school class, and this resulted in the youngest group being overrepresented with 35 of the 54 respondents. The last 19 are equally divided between the two remaining groups, but the results are presented for each group individually, so this overrepresentation will not skew the results too badly.

In terms of origin, a prerequisite for participation is Norwegian nationality, and with the exception of the high school students, the respondents come from different parts of the country. The graduated university-students all studied in Bergen, but they originate from different parts of the country. The same applies to the adults who, despite residing in Mandal, all grew up elsewhere. With the high school students, things are naturally different as it is safe to assume that most pupils originate from the place where they attend high school.

While it is hard to argue for the existence of distinct social classes in Norway, there are obviously differences in people's employment and education. This is not, however, a social variable included in this study. All the respondents have, or are in the process of acquiring, a higher education¹⁰, and it could thus be argued that the study is unrepresentative. I do not believe this is particularly decisive for the results, but if such an argument were presented, my refutation would be as follows.

First of all, the kind of social strata seen in the US and UK are virtually non-existent in Norway. In other words, the attitudes of a plumber do not necessarily deviate substantially from those of a teacher. Secondly, except for the one mandatory English course in high school, there is no reason why education should equal exposure to English. The media are arguably the greatest source of exposure to English in Norway, and I daresay uneducated

⁹ Originally, there were 59 respondents, but I had to remove five from the high school classes because some of the pupils were of other nationalities.

¹⁰ The high school students may naturally choose not to pursue a post-secondary education, but they have chosen the non-compulsory *studiespesialisering* (meaning 'a specialization in general studies') over vocational training and education.

people are just as ‘tuned in’ as the educated people, if not more so. Lastly, while I do recognize that including uneducated people would abolish this discussion altogether, doing so would feel unfeasible with the time-constraint of an MA thesis. That being said, I have ensured that none of the respondents have attended English or Linguistics at university level, as this most likely would have influenced their views on languages and language attitudes.

In sum, the respondents are as representative as they are likely to be in this kind of study. There are roughly as many male as there are female respondents, they come from different parts of the country, and the most pertinent age groups for my hypotheses are covered. Admittedly, I could have included people with different degrees of education, but an MA thesis can only cover so much.

3.2.3 Accents

In the present study, the following six accents are included as the object of scrutiny: RP, GA, Scottish English, the Southern USA accent, Cockney and the NYC accent. These accents are included because they are believed to be the most familiar varieties for Norwegian respondents. GA is ubiquitous in all parts of the media, and is therefore an accent Norwegians are highly exposed to. While not as striking, RP is also widely portrayed in the media, and a majority of the respondents reported a prevalence of British English in their education. The four remaining varieties are most likely not as familiar to Norwegians due to the overrepresentation of standard accents in the media, which arguably are the main source of exposure to English in Norway. It is nevertheless believed that these four accents are among the most featured in Norway, and on that note, it should be mentioned that there is a difference between recognition and identification. While all the respondents have most likely heard the accents before, this does not mean they can correctly identify them. As pointed out by Ladegaard (1998a: 269f), however, identification is not necessarily a prerequisite for drawing on associations and stereotypes towards a specific accent.

3.2.3.1 RP and GA

Received Pronunciation is the traditionally non-regional British accent which over time has acquired the status of being standard. While this term is problematic to employ with regards to spoken languages (as discussed in 2.2.3), it has nevertheless become an accent inseparably associated with the higher classes of Britain, and ‘it is what English people mean when they

say that someone “hasn’t got an accent”” (Wells 1982: 117). RP is also the norm for pronunciation dictionaries, and the ‘reference accent’ for British English.

General American is to Americans what RP is to Britons in that it serves as a reference accent to other American varieties. Moreover, it is also non-regional and commonly referred to as standard, but whereas RP is mostly reserved for the educated upper and middle classes – equaling approximately 10 percent of the population – GA is spoken by 2/3 of the country (Wells 1982: 118). In the following, the diagnostic features of these two standard accents are outlined.

- One of the most salient features of RP is its lack of pronunciation of non-prevocalic /r/. Put differently, RP is a non-rhotic accent as opposed to the rhotic GA which produces /r/ in all contexts. This results in words such as *car* and *heart* being pronounced as /kɑ:/ and /hɑ:t/.
- The phoneme /l/ is another consonant feature which is different for the two reference accents. Whereas GA, and indeed most American accents, use the allophone [ɫ] in all contexts, RP uses [l] in prevocalic environments.
- In intervocalic contexts, GA uses the voiced tap [ɾ] for the phoneme /t/. This is commonly referred to as T-voicing, and words such as *city* are thus pronounced [sɪɾi] instead of the RP [sɪti].
- In terms of vowels, the lexical sets BATH and LOT are pronounced differently in the two reference accents. For these kinds of words, GA employs the vowels /æ/ and /ɑ:/ respectively. RP, on the other hand uses /ɑ:/ and /ɒ:/, the latter of which is not even an existing phoneme in GA.
- Centring diphthongs are another distinct vowel feature of RP. These can be phonemically represented as /ɪə/, /eə/ and /ʊə/, and the glide towards the center (/ə/) usually substitutes what would be pronounced as /r/ in GA. This leaves words such as *fear*, *dare* and *cure* with the respective pronunciations of /fɪə/, /deə/ and /kjʊə/.

3.2.3.2 New York City

- NYC speech has two salient consonant features which distinguish it from GA. The accent is traditionally non-rhotic, but is variably rhotic today. Non-prevocalic /r/ is

i.e. pronounced to a varying degree, and its absence is often greater in colloquial speech because of rhoticity's overt prestige in the US (see 3.1.2).

- The second distinct feature is called TH-stopping, which means that the dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ are pronounced as the dental stops [t̪] and [d̪] respectively.
- One of the most prominent vowel features of the NYC accent is the frequent use of centring diphthongs in the lexical sets NEAR, SQUARE, CURE, PALM, START, THOUGHT, CLOTH and NORTH. This renders a word such as *force* to be pronounced /fɔəs/.
- The vowels in the lexical sets BATH and TRAP are both raised and diphthongized in certain contexts so that *bath* and *cab* are pronounced as /beəθ/ and /keəb/ respectively.
- Lastly, with certain lower-class speakers, the vowel in NURSE words are diphthongized as well, with the unique realization of [ɜɪ]. *First word* in other words pronounced as /fɜɪst wɜɪd/ among certain traditional NYC speakers.

3.2.3.3 London English/Cockney

While RP is the accent that is historically linked to the court and upper classes of London, the working class of the British capital speaks a quite different variety, namely Cockney. In the following section, an account of the most distinct features of this urban variety is given.

- The most salient features of Cockney relate to realization of consonants. One of the most stigmatized realizations is the so-called H-dropping (see 2.2.2) which entails not pronouncing /h/ in lexical words, rendering a word such as *happy* to be pronounced /æpi/.
- Another characteristic Cockney feature is called L-vocalization where non-prevocalic /l/ is realized as a vowel. This means that a word such as *milk* is pronounced as /mɪʊk/.
- Cockney also has a feature called TH-fronting, which entails that the place of articulation for the dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/ is pushed forward – turning them into the labio-dental fricatives /f/ and /v/.
- A relatively new feature is on the rise in the southeast of England which entails pronouncing /r/ as the labio-dental approximant /ʋ/. This means that *grey* is pronounced as /gʋæɪ/.

- Lastly, T-glottaling is very common among the broader varieties of London English. This means that the phoneme /t/ is realized as a glottal stop as in e.g. *butter* ([bʌʔə]).
- Regarding vowels, Cockney has a diphthong shift which involves diphthongization of the vowels in both FLEECE and GOOSE (/əi/ and /əʊ/), and a different starting point for the diphthongs in FACE, GOAT, PRICE, CHOICE and MOUTH (/æi/, /ʌʊ/, /ʌi/, /oi/ and /æʊ/).

3.2.3.4 Southern USA

Along with the NYC accent, the Southern accent of America is the most stigmatized in the country, and the following is a summary of the commonly held features of the South.

- Many of the characteristic southern features relate to vowels, and one of the most prominent is their monophthongization of the PRICE vowel which turns the GA /taɪm/ (*time*) into /ta:m/.
- The vowels in BATH and TRAP, on the other hand, are diphthongized in certain contexts. Here /æ/ becomes /æi/ in words such as *bath* and *man* (/bæiθ/ and /mæin/).
- Southern Breaking is another case of diphthongization which occurs with front vowels in lexical sets such as KIT, DRESS and TRAP. The vowels here become the diphthongs [iə] [eə] and [æə] respectively.
- The lexical set of STRUT is also pronounced differently than in GA. The vowel is raised to the mid central [ɜ], as opposed to the open GA [ʌ].
- Finally, the vowel of DRESS has a special realization before nasals. It becomes raised, so that *pen* becomes homophonous to *pin*.
- In terms of consonants, the only feature worth mentioning is rhoticity, as the Southern accent traditionally is non-rhotic. Lately, however, as with the NYC accent, rhoticity is on the rise, which presumably is due to the spread of GA.

3.2.3.5 Scottish English

- With regards to consonants, Standard Scottish English (SSE) is a rhotic variety, and /r/ can be realized as a roll [r], a tap [ɾ] or the post-alveolar approximant [ɹ].
- Words which start with *wh-* are in SSE pronounced with a clear aspiration or glottal fricative, as in *whale* (/hweɪl/).

- SSE does not systematically distinguish between long and short vowels, but vowel length varies according to phonetic context.
- There is no distinction between the vowels of FOOT and GOOSE in SSE, both are realized as the central /ʌ/.
- The vowel in NURSE words show great regional variation in Scottish English, but in terms of SSE, there are usually two realizations. The first appears in FIRST and HURT words which use the phoneme /ʌ/. PERCH words, on the other hand, use the front vowel /ɛ/.
- The vowels in FACE and GOAT are monophthongized, and are pronounced as /e/ and /o/ respectively.
- Lastly, the vowel of MOUTH words are usually realized with the raised starting point [əʊ].

3.2.4 Speakers

Five of the six recorded speakers are gathered from the ‘International Dialects of English Archives’ (IDEA), while the last speaker (NYC) is taken from ‘American Languages: Our Nation’s Many Voices’ in the University of Wisconsin Digital Collections (UWDC). The reason for using a different source for the last accent is that the male Caucasian NYC speakers in the IDEA database spoke predominately GA, or had only a hint of a NYC accent.

Speaker A is a male Caucasian born in Northern California who has a college education in Drama. He represents the GA accent in the VG experiment, and his accent includes all the features of this particular variety. His speech is fully rhotic, he uses the dark [ɫ] in all contexts, he voices the phoneme /t/ in intervocalic environments and his vowel realizations are as outlined in 3.2.3.1.

Speaker B is born and raised in the UK, but presently works and lives in the USA as a professor of Linguistics at the University of Kansas. He is Caucasian and represents RP in the VG experiment with all the segmental features that entails. His accent is non-rhotic, his realization of the phoneme /l/ depends on the linguistic environment, and his vowels are produced as described in 3.2.3.1.

Speaker C is Caucasian and grew up in Ridgetop, Tennessee, but neither his education nor his occupation is disclosed on the IDEA website. He represents the Southern accent in the VG experiment and displays some of the diagnostic features of the Southern variety, yet not

all. The PRICE vowel is not entirely monophthongized as described in 3.2.3.4, but rather a prolonged /a:/ with an off-glide. The same goes for the diphthongization of the vowels in BATH and TRAP words; instead of becoming diphthong they acquire a slight off-glide. Southern breaking is present in his speech, and the vowel of STRUT is raised to the mid central [ɜ]. There is, however, no raising of DRESS vowels before nasals, and despite being variably rhotic, the absence of non-prevocalic /r/ is rare in the recording.

Speaker D is Caucasian and comes from Islington, northern London. He works for the local government and represents the Cockney accent in the VG experiment. While he does not use all the diagnostic features of Cockney, he does use some of them. ‘T-glottaling’ is present (yet not in all potential places), TH-fronting occurs regularly, L-vocalization happens in some place and /r/ is consistently pronounced as the labio-dental approximant /v/. He does not, however, have H-dropping and his diphthongs are only mildly shifted.

Speaker E is a Caucasian male Drama student from Renfrewshire, Scotland. He is represents the Scottish accent in the VG experiment and uses all the diagnostic features of SSE discussed in 3.2.3.5. His accent is rhotic; he has a clear word-initial aspiration in words starting with *wh-*; and the lexical sets NURSE, FOOT, GOOSE, FACE, GOAT and MOUTH are all pronounced as outlined in 3.2.3.5.

Speaker F represents the NYC accent in the VG experiment, but unlike the IDEA, the UWDC database does not disclose any personal information about their speakers. It is, however, clarified that he comes from Brooklyn, New York, and his accent is very characteristic of the NYC vernacular (see 3.2.3.2). His accent is variably rhotic, he uses centring diphthongs for NEAR, SQUARE, PALM, START, THOUGHT, CLOTH and NORTH words (the recording did not include any CURE words), he raises and diphthongizes the BATH vowel and he has the distinct lower-class diphthongization of NURSE words. The only typical NYC feature his speech does not display is TH-stopping.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part of the thesis revolves around the results from the present study, i.e. the evaluations from the VG experiment and the WQ. The two parts are also compared with each other, and in addition, the VG results are cross-referenced with the personal variables given in part 3. Lastly, after each presentation of results, these are discussed in light of pertinent theories and previous studies.

4.1 Verbal guise results

4.1.1 Overall evaluations

Disregarding all variables, Figure 1 shows how the Norwegian respondents rated the six accents included in the present study. The higher value an accent got, the more negatively it was evaluated by the respondents (see chapter 3), and with that in mind, it is clear that RP was the most favored accent. With a score of 2.67, it was the only accent rated below 3 – roughly 0.5 lower than GA which was rated the second most favorably. Scottish English received the relatively neutral score of 3.97¹¹, while New York City (NYC) accent was evaluated more negatively with 4.45. The least favorable accents were nevertheless Cockney and the Southern accent. They scored 4.96 and 4.98 respectively and thus received the most negative evaluations in the experiment. It is interesting to note, however, that not even the least favorable accents received a score higher than 5, even though the respondents could go as far up as 7.

¹¹ 4.0 constitutes neutrality as the scales potentially could go from 1.0 to 7.0

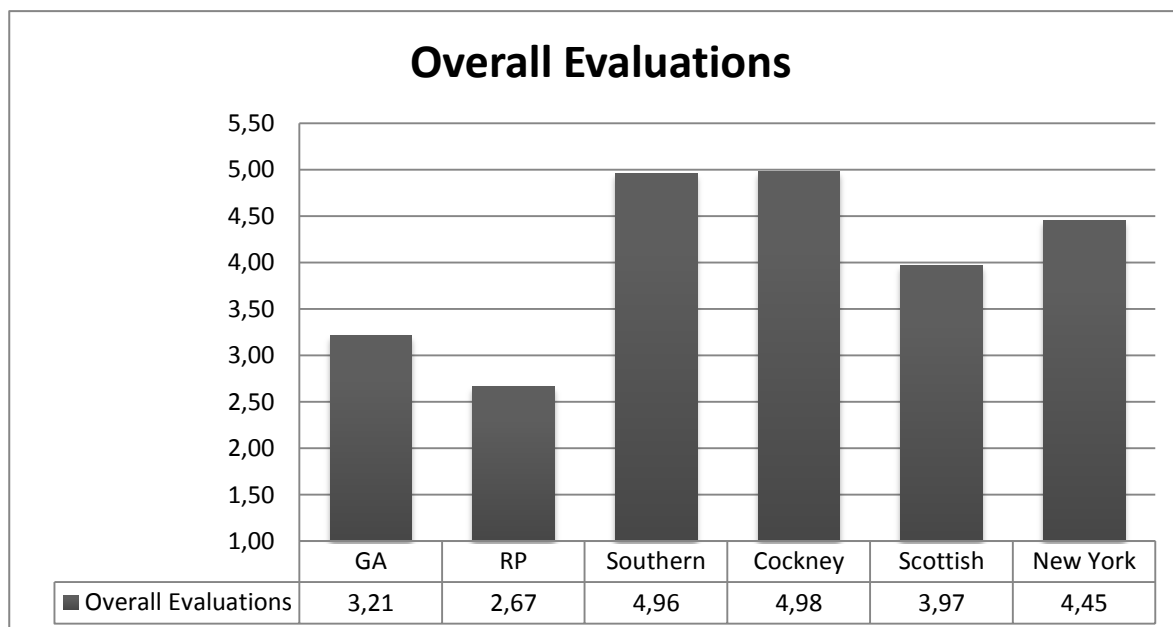


Figure 1 Overall Norwegian evaluations for all accents, variables notwithstanding

These overall evaluations indicate that Norwegian attitudes to English accents are very similar to those found in the US and the UK. As elaborated upon in 2.3., standard varieties are evaluated the most positively in close to all attitudinal studies, and the present study is no exception. GA and RP are the varieties most prominent in the media, they are the accents most used in school, and people have come to view them as inherently superior to non-standard accents (see 2.2.3). While this perceived superiority is especially true in countries where English is spoken as the first language, it would seem from the standard varieties' positive scores in the present study that this illusion of superiority has reached Scandinavia as well. This assertion is corroborated by the Danish study of Ladegaard (1998a) which points in the same direction. In his study as well, RP is the overall most favorable accent, and GA is the second most favorable (see 2.3.2.4).

While the standard varieties are unmistakably perceived as the most positive among Norwegian respondents, the trends for the remaining accents are slightly more nuanced. As for the British accents, these seem to follow the pattern found in the UK, which is often referred to as a descending tripartite hierarchy (see 2.3.2). RP was evaluated the most favorably, the regional Scottish accent followed after with a relatively neutral score, and the urban variety of London was evaluated the least favorably. Taking the American accents into consideration, however, complicates the matter. GA was rated the most favorably, as expected, yet following the British hierarchy, the regional Southern accent should be evaluated more positively than the urban NYC variety. This was not the case, however, as the NYC accent was rated more favorably than the Southern accent. While this might contradict

the pattern found in the UK, it is not as surprising when considering studies conducted in the US. As discussed in 2.3.2.2, the Southern accent is often found to be just as stigmatized as the NYC accent, and sometimes even more. There are in other words some differences between the trends in the US and the UK. Unfortunately, neither Ladegaard (1998a) nor Neumann (1998) include urban and regional varieties of American English in their studies (see 2.3.2.4), so it is hard to see if the US and UK patterns are reflected in other Scandinavian studies. Nevertheless, when considering the present study by itself, Norway strays from the ‘*cross-national* tripartite hierarchical framework(...)’ Hiraga allegedly ‘(...)confirmed the existence of(...)’ in his study (2005: 289, my emphasis). For his subjects, there is a very clean division for both American and British accents; standard accents are evaluated the most favorably (RP & GA); regional accents are rated neutrally (West Yorkshire and Alabama), and urban accents receive the least favorable evaluations (NYC and Birmingham).

Even though Hiraga (2005) confirms that American accents follow the British hierarchic pattern, this is with British respondents, not Norwegian. Speaking the same language, British respondents are more likely to recognize the NYC accent as a stigmatized variety, and thus draw on the negative connotations the NYC accent often elicits. As further discussed in 4.3.6, close to none of the Norwegian respondents identified the accent as NYC, and one possible explanation for its comparatively positive score might thus be that Norwegians simply do not recognize the accent, and therefore cannot draw on the commonly held stereotypes towards NYC speakers. On the other hand, as Ladegaard (1998a: 269) points out in his discussion, stereotypes are often stored subconsciously and can be acted upon in VG or MG experiments without successfully identifying the accent. This is exemplified by the stereotypically ‘laid-back’ evaluations of the Australian speaker despite failure of identification. While this is a valid point, such stereotypes are elicited in the WQ of this study, and also here they turn out much more positive for the NYC accent than for the Southern accent (see 4.3.1).

The positive WQ results are not, however, necessarily related to the VG evaluations (see 4.3.6). The failure to identify the NYC accent indicates that the majority of the respondents – especially the younger ones who constitute the biggest group of respondent – have no real impression of what the working class vernacular of NYC sounds like. It is not an accent often presented in school¹², and even though NYC is the setting for copious amounts of movies and TV series, the majority of the characters in those movies and TV series speak GA

¹² I ascertain this not only from recently being a pupil myself, but also from being enrolled in the student teacher program.

(e.g. *How I Met Your Mother*, *Sex and the City*, *Suits*, *Friends*, *Seinfeld* etc.). Therefore, many Norwegian respondents are unfamiliar with the accent and treat it as something unknown. They do recognize it as non-standard, hence the below-average rating, but apparently not as the heavily stigmatized variety it is perceived as in the US and UK.

As for the Southern accent, the negative connotations it carries in America (see 2.3.2.2) seem to be echoed by the Norwegian respondents. Why this is the case with the Southern accent and not to the same extent with the NYC accent is hard to say with certainty, but it is probably linked to the fact that the Southern accent was the most widely recognized accent of the study. Unlike the NYC accent, almost all the respondents recognized the Southern accent, and if they are able to discern the accent, they are bound to know some of the stereotypes surrounding it. This is enforced by the media which frequently portray Southerners with unnaturally broad accents to evoke the ‘redneck’ (e.g. Zed from *Pulp Fiction*) and ‘gullibly ignorant’ (e.g. Forrest Gump) stereotypes commonly associated with the South (Leopold 2012). Slade et al. strengthen this view of southern stereotypes in their book, *Mediated Images of the South*, where they say the following:

Poor white trash. Racecar drivers. Drunkards. Racists. The South has heard them all. Often perpetuated in popular media, it’s also what is shown to the world. In a Google search of “Southern celebrities,” the first two topics were “Stupid Celebrities Gossip: 10 Hottest Southern Celebrity Babes” and “Redneck – Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.” (2011: 16)

As Slade et al. point out, the media diffuse stereotypes through movies and TV series, and these are watched by millions of people throughout the world. Norwegians are in other words exposed to the same media portraits as Americans, so when most Norwegians have not been to the South themselves (at least my respondents), it is not strange that they rely on the only image they have of people from the South.

What came more as a surprise was that RP received considerably more favorable evaluations than GA. Granted, I had expected the oldest age group to favor RP because it carried so much weight prior to the ‘Americanization’ of the world, but I had hypothesized that the overall ratings would be relatively equal due to the ubiquity of American culture in contemporary Norwegian society (see 2.1.4). The evaluation of RP and GA is discussed further below, but for the current discussion, it is sufficient to say that the hypothesis was rejected by the results.

4.1.2 Scores divided by the three dimensions.

Figure 2 shows a more nuanced representation of the scores, dividing them into the dimensions of Prestige, Social Attractiveness (SA) and Linguistic Quality (LQ) (see chapter 3). Also in this regard, it is RP and GA which stand out the most. Whereas the four other accents were downgraded on LQ compared to the two other dimensions, RP and GA received more favorable scores on the LQ dimension than they have on SA (2.56 vs. 2.99 and 3.16 vs. 3.51 respectively). Moreover, these were also the only accents which featured a more positive score for Prestige than SA (2.34 vs. 2.99 and 2.87 vs. 3.51). Conversely, the Scottish accent was the only accent with a more positive score for SA than Prestige (3.69 vs. 3.96). In addition to this, it received the least favorable score on the LQ dimension relative to the two other dimensions (4.46 vs. 3.69 and 3.96).

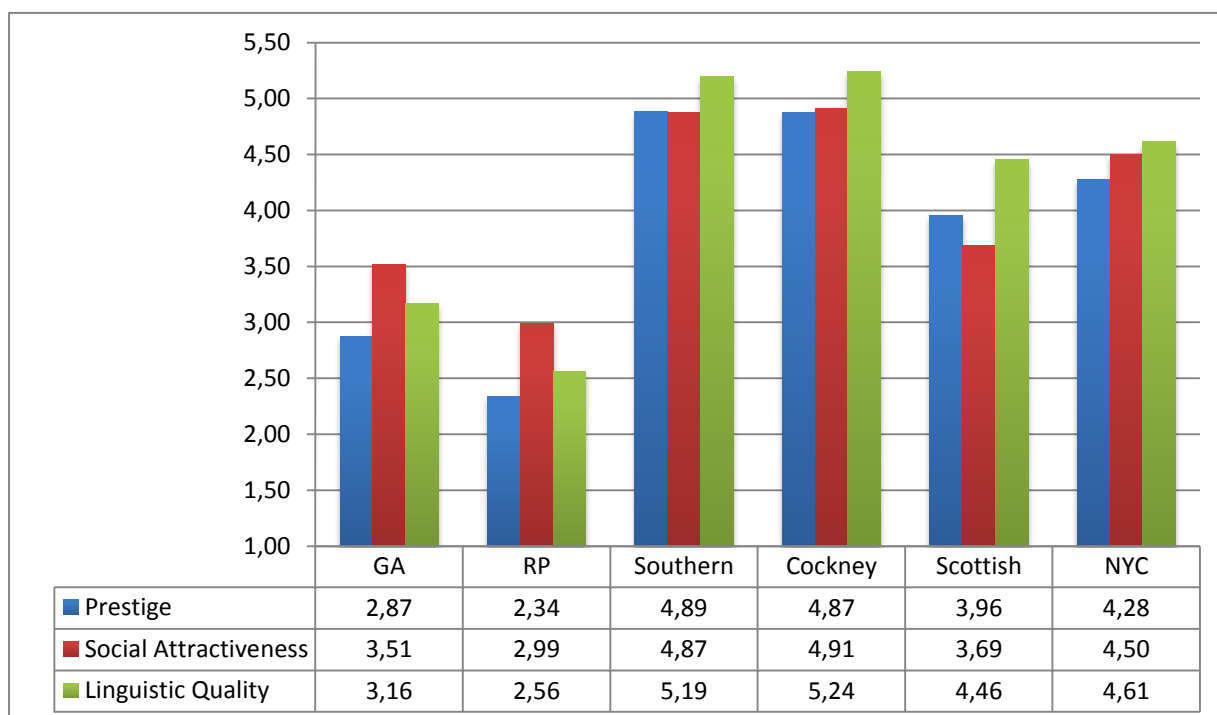


Figure 2 Evaluations on the dimensions of Prestige, Social Attractiveness and Linguistic Quality

When dividing evaluations into these kinds of dimensions, it is very common for standard accents with positive evaluations on the Prestige dimension to be downgraded on SA compared to regional varieties such as Scottish (see 2.3.2.1). In that sense, the results from the present study differ from what was to be expected. Even though GA and RP were downgraded on the SA dimension compared to the two other dimensions, their SA evaluations were still more positive than the SA ratings for the remaining accents. What is

more, of the two standard varieties, it is usually GA which receives the best score on the SA dimension (Hiraga 2005; Bayard et al. 2001; Ladegaard 1998a). Regardless of such trends, the overall pattern seen in Figure 1 is still reflected for all the dimensions in Figure 2, with RP as the most favorable variety on SA as well as the two other dimensions. Norwegian respondents are in other words very consistent in their evaluations; if they find an accent positive in one regard, they will find it similarly positive in other regards.

Even though the scores for the three dimensions follow the overall pattern from Figure 1 without exception, there are some minor differentiations within each accent. RP and GA were both upgraded on the Prestige dimension compared to the two others. While this is the recurring pattern for standard accents, it is usually the other way around for regional accents (see 2.3.2). They usually receive a more favorable score for SA than they do for Prestige – a trend which is echoed in the present study as the regional Scottish accent was rated just so. As for the other regional accent, Southern, this does not follow the same pattern. Despite being disparaged in the US and the UK, it usually receives relatively positive evaluations in terms of SA (see 2.3.2.2). This is not the case with Norwegian respondents, however, as they rated the Southern accent equally negative on the Prestige and SA dimensions. This could suggest that of all the existing Southern stereotypes, the majority of those which have reached Norway – or at least these respondents – are negative, while the notion of ‘Southern Hospitality’ has gone unnoticed (Lippi-Green 1997: 209). On the other hand, this is not entirely true, as the WQ results featured sympathy for the Southern accent with many positive adjectives relating to SA. This is further discussed in 4.3.3, but it would somehow seem that these more positive stereotypes are not triggered upon hearing the Southern accent (i.e. in the VG experiment). Regarding the urban accents, it has already been established that the evaluations for the NYC accent were not entirely in line with expectations and this is further discussed in 4.3.6. Cockney, on the other hand, followed the ‘prescription’ for urban British varieties and was downgraded altogether.

In terms of LQ, the standard accents are the only ones which seem to serve as a model pronunciation. Both RP and GA received relatively positive scores on the LQ dimension, whereas all the others are uniformly downgraded on LQ compared to the other dimensions. This does not, however, strike me as particularly odd. RP is the most prevalent accent in Norwegian schools (accompanied by GA), and it was consequently seen as the most correct and esthetic accent, as well as *the* model of pronunciation. Additionally, the main source of exposure to English is the media, where, as discussed in 2.3.2.3, standard varieties are highly overrepresented. What is more, characters in films and TV series who speak non-standard

varieties are often portrayed as peripheral, dimwitted or antagonistic – i.e. not exactly the image people strive to reflect. As for the Scottish accent, which received the least favorable scores on LQ compared to the other dimensions, this can be explained by a relatively high percentage of respondents perceiving the speaker to be of foreign origin, and thereby speaking English as a second language (see 4.3.5).

4.1.3 The age variable

In terms of social variables, age is one of the most pertinent for this study, since one of my hypotheses relates directly to it. As Figure 3 demonstrates, however, it is not as decisive as it was hypothesized to be. Starting from the left, GA was evaluated slightly more favorable among adults and adolescents than it was by the intermediary age group (respectively 3.10 and 3.14 vs. 3.40). RP showed some minor differentiations with one group compared to the two others. The adults rated it 2.74, while the adolescent and post-university groups gave it a score of 2.65 and 2.61 respectively. The Southern accent was the least favored by the intermediary age group with a score of 5.25, followed by the adolescents with 4.99 and finally the adults with the least negative score of 4.64. Cockney was downgraded by the post-university and adult groups (5.19 and 5.09 respectively) compared to less negative 4.67 of the adolescents. The Scottish accent featured the largest gap between the age groups; while it received a score of 3.48 from the post-university respondents, the adults rated it 4.13 and the adolescents evaluated it even more negatively with a score of 4.31. Lastly, the NYC accent was slightly downgraded by the post-university group, compared to the adult and adolescent ones (4.68 vs. 4.36 and 4.32 respectively).

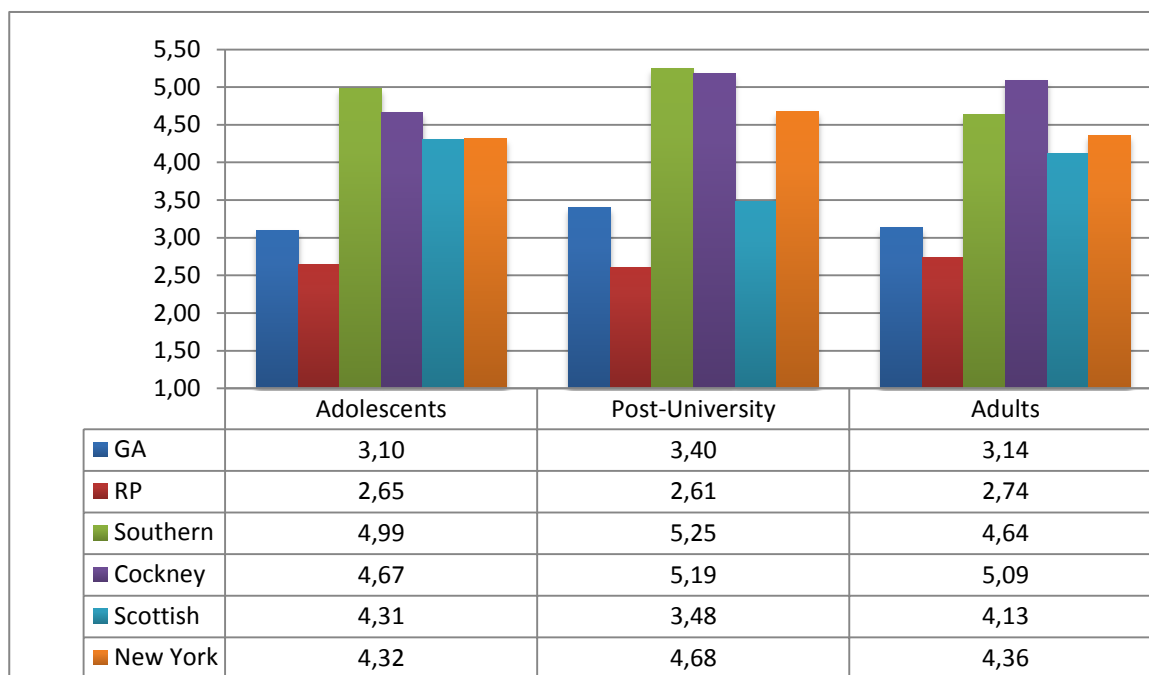


Figure 3 Evaluations divided by the three age groups

Before going into further detail, the overall pattern in Figure 3 suggests that the age variable is not as decisive as one might have expected. There is some variation between the different age groups, and this is further discussed below, but not nearly as much as expected.

As briefly mentioned before, I hypothesized that GA would be evaluated more or less equal to RP. This was rooted in a supposition that the youngest age group, which is also the largest, would favor GA over RP due to the widespread ‘Americanization’ of the world which has been prevalent throughout their lifetime. In addition to this, the results from Neumann’s (1998) study show a clear preference for American over British English among her young Norwegian respondents. The same study also shows that her adult respondents heavily favored RP, which resulted in my anticipating the youngest respondents to favor GA over RP, and that this would linearly invert with age. While the adolescents did evaluate GA more favorably than the two other age groups, this served as the only solace to an otherwise refuted hypothesis.

Despite having the most positive score for the American standard variety, the adolescents still rated RP more favorably than GA. This breaks with what Neumann found in her study, and it indicates that ubiquity of American culture (see 2.1.4) has not had a great enough impact on Norwegian youth to elevate GA above the traditionally more prestigious RP. On the one hand, it seems strange that Norwegian respondents should favor British today when they favored GA fifteen years ago at the time Neumann conducted her study. If anything, the preference should have become stronger as American culture has continued its explosive expansion since 1998. On the other hand, it is important to note that Neumann did

not use the VGT or the MGT, but rather a WQ. With that in mind, it is interesting to see that while her findings deviate from the VG results of the present study, they do correlate with the results from the WQ. The WQ results are further discussed in 4.3, but for the sake of the current discussion, it is sufficient to say that GA was rated more positively than RP. It would thus seem that when discussing the position of RP and GA in Norway, it is imperative to consider the method of data elicitation. The use of the indirect approach seems to find a preference for the British variety. This is not only the case for the present study, but also for Ladegaard's Danish study (1998a) which – despite being conducted in the same year as Neumann's – found all the respondents to favor RP over GA. He speculated, like I do, that the Americanization of the world had swayed the younger generation from the traditional preference for RP towards a preference for GA, but it did not turn out to be true. Conversely, when employing the direct approach in the form of written questionnaires – as seen in this study and those of Neumann (1998) and Ladegaard (1998a) – elicited responses favor American over British English – at least in a Scandinavian context (see 4.3).

This pattern has led me to speculate that the USA's aforementioned linguistic imperialism (see 2.1.4) has invoked an image or ideology of American superiority in Norway which is not necessarily reflected by people's private attitudes. They associate GA with the wealth and influence of the world's sole superpower, but upon hearing the two accents, the status of the traditionally prestigious RP is still ingrained in their attitudes – subconscious as they may be (see further 4.3.1).

Secondly, the adults' evaluations of GA were more or less identical to those of the adolescents, and more positive than the intermediary age group's evaluations. This means that there is no linear inversion along the age of respondents as predicted by the hypothesis. The most surprising aspect is nevertheless that RP was rated the least favorably by the adult respondents. Growing up prior to the peak of America's cultural ubiquity, they were less exposed to American English than children are today, and all of them claim that they were taught RP in school as the model for prestige and pronunciation. Taken together, this led me to believe that the adult respondents would rate RP more favorably than their progeny. This hypothesis is also supported by the *Voices* survey (reported in Bishop and Coupland 2007) which showed that older respondents are more likely to favor traditionally prestigious varieties – of which RP looms above all others. The Norwegian respondents nevertheless broke with these preconceived notions, as there were no systematic differences in the three age groups' evaluations.

It can prove somewhat more difficult to discuss the remaining varieties simply because there are few studies which discuss them with regards to the age variable, and even fewer which do so in a Scandinavian context. There is that of Ladegaard, but in addition to only having two groups of respondents (high school and university students), he proclaims early on that there are ‘(...)no significant differences to be noticed [between the two age groups]’ (1998a: 259). While such a lack of differences between the age groups could have made discussion uninspiring, the lack is interesting in itself as there *are* some differences between the two youngest age groups in the present study. The most noteworthy of these differences pertains to the Scottish accent which was evaluated much more favorably by the post-university group than the adolescent group.

As far as I can tell, there are no apparent reasons for this gap in evaluations. It could very well be coincidence, especially since the group in question only comprises 10 respondents. On the other hand, there is no other accent which is as distinctly favored by one age group as Scottish is by the post-university group. It more or less equals their evaluation of GA, which is the second most favorable accent of the study. If I were to speculate as to why the Scottish accent stands out with this age group, one possible explanation comes to mind. The post-university group was the most successful in identifying the speaker as Scottish with 9 out of 10 doing so. As shown in several other studies (see 2.3.2.1), the Scottish accent usually receives positive evaluations in VG and MG experiments, a fact which indicates that it is associated with positive stereotypes. Consequently, when this particular age group almost uniformly recognizes the speaker as Scottish, they are likely to draw on some of those positive stereotypes when evaluating the speaker. This theory is further supported by the fact that the adolescents, of whom very few recognized the speaker as Scottish, rated the Scottish accent the most negatively. While the majority abstained from answering, most of those who did answer thought he spoke English as a second language. As a result, they are not likely to have any special relationship with the accent, which can be seen as a reason for their negative evaluations.

The remaining accents, Cockney, NYC and Southern, are all traditionally stigmatized in their respective countries of origin – a trend which seems to be echoed by the Norwegian respondents. When discussing the accents in light of the age variable, it should be noted that the previously mentioned *Voices* study (reported in Coupland and Bishop 2007) shows a pattern which indicates that younger respondents are less negative towards such recurrently disparaged accents. This is, however, not the case in the present study, where the only

discernible pattern was that the post-university group was the overall most negative – having the least favorable score for all three accents.

Trying to explain the negative evaluations of the post-university age group will only be speculation, but I once again turn to the issue of recognition. For the NYC accent, a high percentage of the post-university respondents identified the speaker as coming from New Jersey, and subsequent to the experiment I overheard them saying he sounded like a character out of *the Sopranos*. This is a highly acclaimed TV series revolving around a modern crime syndicate operating out of New Jersey, and they clearly drew associations to this kind of activity. Also for the evaluations of Cockney, the post-university group stood out, as half of them recognized it as a British urban variety. Even though some of them guessed Liverpool or Birmingham instead of London, these are also heavily stigmatized accents in the UK which could explain their stereotypically negative evaluations. As for the Southern accent, this cannot be blamed on recognition as the vast majority of all the respondents successfully identified it. On the other hand, the middle age group seems to be more ‘up to date’ when it comes to stereotypes presented in the media (as with *the Sopranos*), of which the Southern accent is a frequent victim. Moreover, this group of respondents also spontaneously burst into laughter when they heard the Southern accent, so they obviously harbor *some* association of ridicule towards it.

4.1.4 Gender

Figure 4 features the overall scores when distinguishing the gender of the respondents. With the sole exception of RP, where the two genders have virtually identical ratings (2.68 and 2.65), the female respondents gave more negative evaluations for all the accents. For Cockney, the Southern and the NYC accent, the score was roughly 0.5 more negative for females than for males, whereas for the Scottish accent the gap was higher still at 0.7. GA is the accent which, aside from RP, featured the smallest difference with regards to gender, but there was a difference of 0.2 nonetheless.

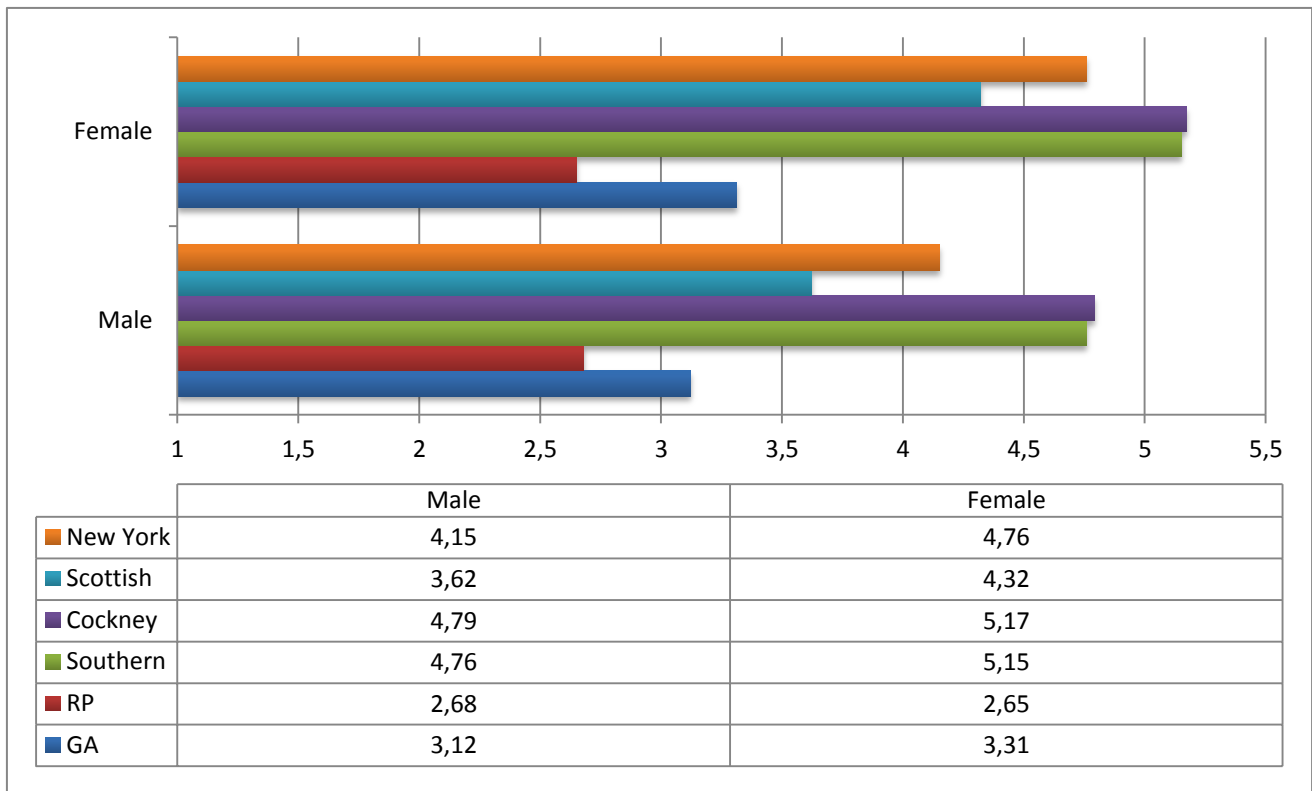


Figure 4 Evaluations divided by gender

Gender is a variable which is known for displaying one categorical trend, namely that women use more prestigious variants than men (2.3.2.1). On the basis of this widely held and corroborated theory, I had hypothesized that the female respondents would rate RP and GA more favorably than their male counterparts, but vice versa for the non-standard accents. As seen in the section above, however, this did not turn out to be entirely true. Granted, females were more negative towards the non-standard accents, but this was expected to be contrasted by positive evaluations for the standard varieties. However, GA was also slightly downgraded by female compared to male respondents, and RP was the only accent which the females rated more positively than the males. This was, however, an almost imperceptible differentiation, so in reality, women did not rate a single accent more favorably than men – at least not to any noteworthy degree. The hypothesis is therefore strengthened based on females’ downgrading of non-standard accents, but simultaneously weakened since they did not upgrade the standard varieties. Furthermore, comparing the results with the British respondents in the *Voices* study (reported in Coupland and Bishop 2007) reveals that the two studies are in contradiction concerning the gender variable. On both the Prestige and SA dimensions, and for close to all the accents included, British women had a more positive disposition than British men.

4.2 Verbal guise and personal variables

4.2.1 Reported spoken accent

After completing the VG experiment and filling out the WQ, the respondents filled in a form stating personal variables such as usage of and exposure to English, and the following is a cross-reference of these variables and the results from the VG experiment. Figure 5 shows the VG results sorted by which accent the respondents reported using. Comparing the color-coded bars for the ‘British’ and the ‘American’ respondents¹³ shows that this particular variable was not as decisive as age and gender. There are, however, a few points worth mentioning. First of all, the British respondents have rated both RP and GA more favorably than the American respondents have (2.23 and 2.8 vs. 2.57 and 3.0 respectively). Cockney is the accent which shows the greatest variation between the two groups, as it was rated more negatively by the British respondents than the American ones (5.16 and 4.79 respectively). The last accent to show any variation worth mentioning is the Southern variety. Unlike Cockney, this accent was evaluated slightly more favorably by British respondents than it was by American ones (4.52 vs. 4.71).

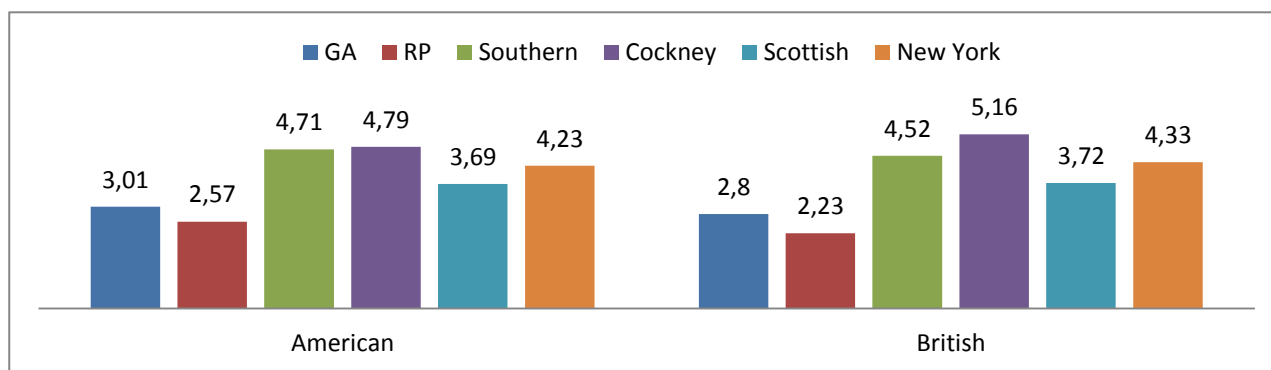


Figure 5 Evaluations sorted by stated spoken English Accent

Intuitively, one would perhaps expect the American respondents to show the most positive rating for GA – the way RP is favored by the British respondents – but this is not the case. While there are no obvious explanations as far as I can tell, these results show that people do not necessarily use the accent they find the most appealing. The majority of the respondents reported speaking American English – which is predominantly caused by the youngest and

¹³ As all the respondents are Norwegian in this study, ‘British’ and ‘American’ do not indicate nationality in the following section, but rather what they answered in the questions. In other words, if a group of respondents state a preference for British over American, they will be referred to as British.

biggest group, who almost uniformly say they speak American – but this nevertheless combined with more positive ratings for the British standard variety.

As for the two remaining accents which show any mentionable differentiation, there is one possible explanation. Cockney and the Southern accent are the two most stigmatized accents in this study, and with regard to the variable at hand, both accents have received more negative evaluations from respondents who speak a variety from the same country of origin. Simply put, the British respondents were more negative towards Cockney – just as the American respondents were towards the Southern accent. The reason for this, speculative as it might seem, could be that they are more familiar with the accents of the country from where their spoken accent originates, and thus more successful at linking them to the commonly held stereotypes – which for the accents at hand are quite negative. Ladegaard (1998a: 266) also tests whether his Danish respondents actually use the variety they claim to use, or if this is just something they imagine. The latter turned out to be the case, as even the ones who reported using an American accent used predominately British variants. This means that the ‘spoken accent’ variable might not be as accurate as I had assumed – a fact which would undermine my reasoning behind the results.

4.2.2 Preferred accent

In Figure 6, the focus changes from spoken accent to preferred accent – a change which evens the evaluations compared to the previous variable. Except for RP, which was evaluated markedly more positively by the British than the American respondents (2.38 vs. 3.02), the scores for the remaining accents were fairly similar for the two groups. It is interesting to note, however, that the respondents who specifically stated a preference for American over British English, still rated RP more positively than GA¹⁴.

¹⁴ I also asked the respondents to state which accent was the most prevalent in their education, but since this variable did not show any noteworthy differentiation I decided not to include it in the thesis.

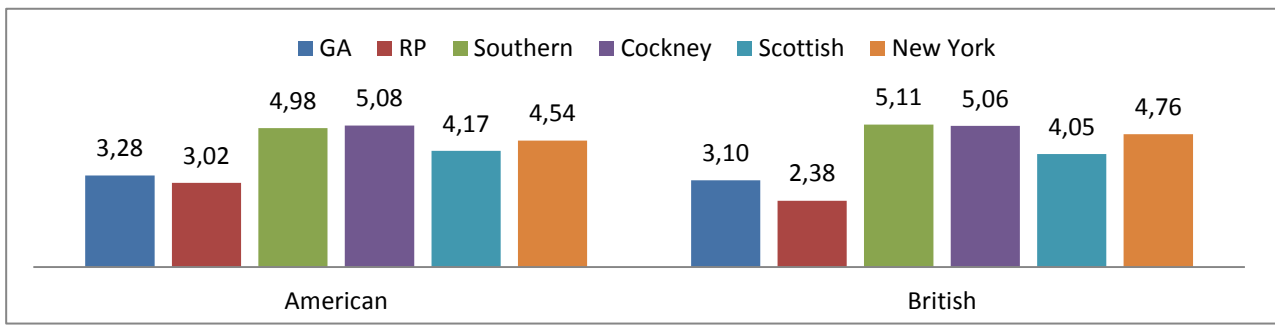


Figure 6 Evaluations sorted by preferred English Accent

Contrary to the ‘spoken accent’ variable which could be misleading due to many people not accurately perceiving which variety they speak, the ‘preferred accent’ variable is less equivocal, and should thus yield more predictable results. This is the case for the British respondents who rated RP more favorably than GA, but the same cannot be said about the American respondents. Not only did they – despite their proclaimed preference for American English – rate RP more favorably than GA, they even rated GA more negatively than the respondents who stated a preference for British over American English.

While such incongruity might seem illogical, one possible explanation is already discussed in section 4.1. When directly asked to state a preference for either British or American, the respondents will most likely draw on the same associations as they do when they fill in the WQ, and as already mentioned, the WQ results show that GA is more favored than RP. In that sense, the incongruity of the results can be said to support what was discussed in further detail in section 4.1, namely that evaluations will vary markedly depending on which method of elicitation is employed.

4.2.3 Having visited the UK

Figure 7 relates to whether or not the respondents have been to the UK, and if they have, then to what extent¹⁵. Contrary to what might seem logical, this variable had an effect on the ratings of GA, but not particularly so for RP. The respondents who have had never been to the UK rated GA as negatively as 3.8, while those who had been there a great deal evaluated it as favorably as 2.5. The remaining respondents – having visited the UK, but not frequently or extensively – rated it intermediately with a score of 3.2. In addition to this gap in the evaluations, there was one other noteworthy difference among the groups; the respondents

¹⁵ The respondents who fall under the category ‘No’ have never been to the UK; those who fall under ‘Yes’ have been there between 1 and 4 weeks; while the ones who fall under ‘a lot’ have been there 5 weeks or more (see chapter 3).

who had never been to the UK downgraded the traditionally disparaged Southern and Cockney accents.

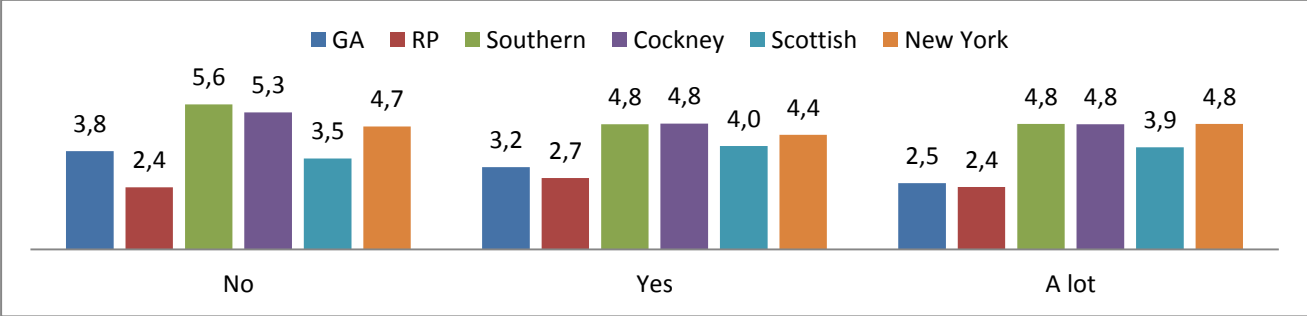


Figure 7 Evaluations based on to what degree the respondents have been in the UK

On the one hand, these evaluations seem to indicate that the respondents who have traveled the least are on the whole more inclined to downgrade accents, as GA, Cockney and the Southern accent have all received the most negative scores from this group of respondents. On the other hand, the lack of any logical correlations suggests that it might simply be coincidental. If this variable were to be influential, it should logically be so with regards to British varieties. It is, however, primarily the American GA and Southern accent which are affected. Granted, Cockney is also downgraded, and this could be explained by a lack of exposure to London-English which is the main destination for Norwegians traveling to the UK. I would, however, argue that one or two trips to London have no long-lasting effect on a person’s language attitudes. Furthermore, when regarding the two other British varieties, Scottish and RP, these were in fact rated the most favorably by the well-traveled respondents. This, combined with the fact that there were no clear differences for the ‘have you been to the USA’ variable, corroborates the coincidence argument further. What is more, in Ladegaard’s (1998a: 256) Danish study, he asked the respondents the same questions, and even though there were clear differences in how much they had traveled, this had no discernible outcome on the VG results.

4.2.4 Having visited the US

Figure 8 relates to whether or to what extent the respondents have visited the US, and as mentioned above, there were no clear correlations between this variable and the VG evaluations. The only accent with systematically different scores for this variable is the NYC accent which was evaluated more positively the more the respondents had visited the US. On

the one hand, this can be seen as a logical correlation, if one supposes that an increase in exposure leads to increased tolerance. NYC is, after all, a very popular destination for Norwegians traveling to the US. On the other hand, there was neither any similar pattern for the other American varieties, nor did the same variable reveal any clear differences in Ladegaard’s (1998a) study. In addition, if it is true that the NYC accent did not receive as negative evaluations as the Southern accent due to failed identification (see 4.1.1), then the respondents who have been to the US should be more qualified to recognize the heavily stigmatized NYC accent and downgrade it accordingly. The opposite is however the case, which suggests that the difference is merely coincidental.

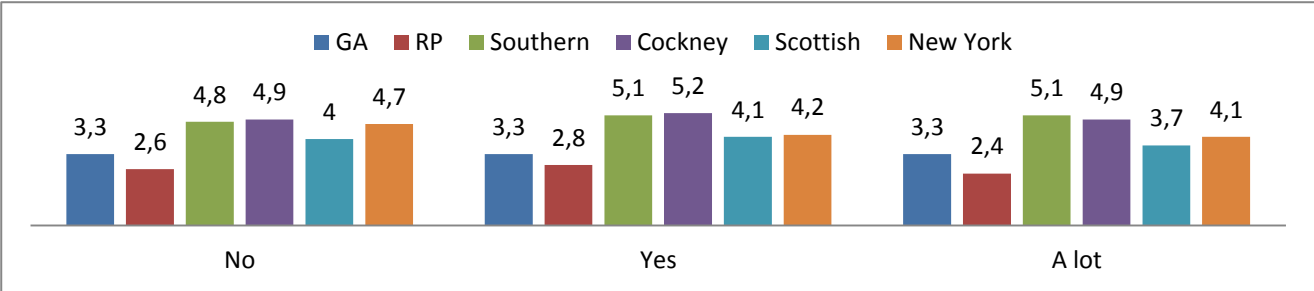


Figure 8 Evaluations based on to what degree the respondents have been in the US

4.2.5 Movies and TV

The influence of the media is substantial in first world countries (see 2.1.4), and Figure 9 shows the VG evaluations based on the amount of English-speaking movies and TV series the respondents watch on a daily basis¹⁶. While the evaluations are fairly similar for the three groups, there is one main trend, namely that the respondents who watch the most movies and TV series were generally more positive towards accents. With the exception of the Scottish and NYC accent – which the movie enthusiasts rated in line with the other groups – the four remaining accents were all rated more positively by this group.

¹⁶ The respondents who fall under the category ‘Some’ watch between 0 and 1 hour daily; those who fall under ‘Average’ watch between 2 and 3 hours daily; while ones who fall under ‘A lot’ watch 4 hours or more daily (see chapter 3).

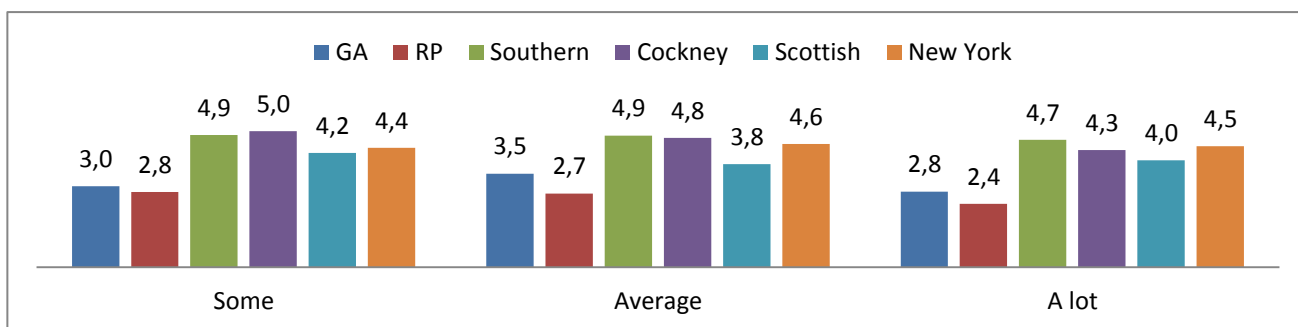


Figure 9 Evaluations based on the amount of English-speaking movies and series watched daily

For this variable, I had hypothesized that the respondents who watch a great deal of English movies and TV would have the best ratings for RP and GA. These respondents are presumably the most exposed to these accents, and as further discussed in section 2.3.2.3, the media help perpetuate the commonly held misconception that standard varieties are superior. What was not expected, however, and therefore not accounted for in the hypothesis, was that this group also rated Cockney and the Southern accent more positively than the others. These are both heavily stigmatized accents, and as elaborated upon in section 4.1.1, the stereotypes surrounding them are often utilized by the media for comic (or some other) effect. In that sense, the respondents who watch a great deal of movies and TV should be even more exposed to such negative stereotypes and thus logically downgrade these accents. As the opposite is the case, it could seem that an increase in exposure – regardless of the kind – can lead to a more tolerant view of language varieties, or at least not a less tolerant view. On the one hand, such an assertion contradicts the theory presented in 4.1.1 about the post-university group being negative towards the stigmatized accents due to the media’s portrayal of them. On the other hand, none of the post-university respondents belonged to the group in question, so it might be possible that they have ‘picked up’ negative images from certain shows (as was the case with the NYC accent and *the Sopranos*), without watching enough to become increasingly tolerant of non-standard varieties.

4.2.6 English on a daily basis

The last variable pertains to whether or not the respondents for one reason or another use English in their day-to-day lives. This can be everything from work-related use of English, to talking with friends over the phone – as long as they frequently speak English, they were told to answer ‘yes’. The results are displayed in Figure 10, and they show a pattern which

indicates that people who speak English on a day-to-day basis are on the whole more favorably disposed English accents. While this was especially true for the two standard accents, it was also the case with urban and regional varieties – except for the NYC accent which was rated identically by the two groups. In combination with the previous variable, these evaluations seem to give the general impression that an increase in both usage of and exposure to English will have positive outcomes on people’s tolerance towards its various varieties.

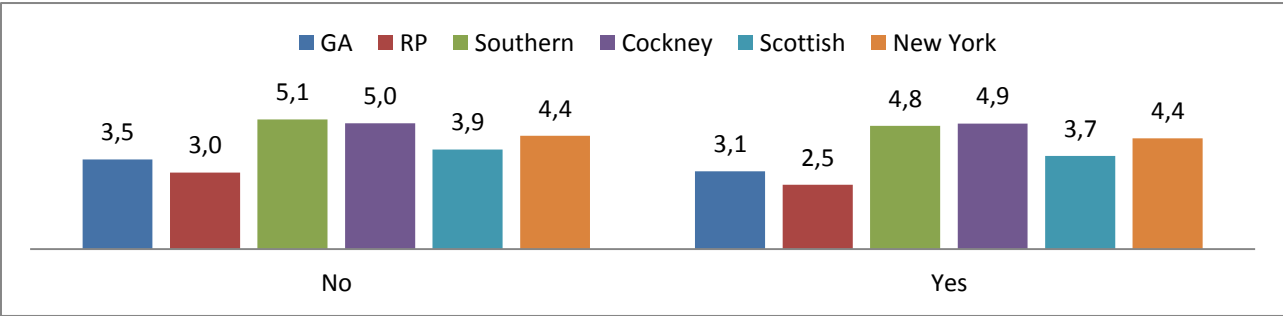


Figure 10 Evaluations divided by presence or absence of day-to-day spoken English

4.3 Written questionnaire and comparison

As outlined in 3.2.1, the WQ in this study consists of twenty adjectives adjoining each of the six accents, and the following section is devoted to presenting which adjectives the respondents encircled, as well as comparing the results with those from the VG experiment.

4.3.1 Overall distribution of adjectives

To give an overall impression of how the accents were evaluated in this task, Figure 11 shows the total amount of positive and negative adjectives encircled for each accent. It should be mentioned that the adjectives used in the WQ are not identical to the ones employed in the VG experiment (see 3.2.1), but they were nevertheless relatively similar for the sake of comparability. To exemplify (directly translated); ‘Intelligent – Unintelligent’ in the VG experiment became ‘Smart’ and ‘Stupid’ in the WQ; ‘Trustworthy – Not Trustworthy’ became ‘Honest’ and ‘Conniving’; and ‘Humorous – Not Humorous’ became ‘Good sense of humor’ and ‘Boring’. From all the 54 respondents, there were a total of 1414 adjectives encircled for all the varieties, 1020 of which were positive and 394 negative. This indicates

that the respondents were more inclined to upgrade than to downgrade accents, and there is also a clear correlation between the amount of positive and negative adjectives an accent received. Varieties which were allotted a large share of positive adjectives received proportionately less negative adjectives, and vice versa. This is best exemplified by GA, the ‘winner’ of the WQ, which received both the most positive adjectives, and the least negative ones. RP, Cockney and the NYC accent all received relatively positive evaluations, but none as favorable as GA. Of the three accents, the two former received the most positive adjectives, but the latter received fewer negative ones, so the three varieties were evaluated relatively similarly. The Scottish and Southern accents both received the least amount of positive adjectives, but seeing as the Southern accent received the most negative ones, this variety must be said to be the least favorable accent in the WQ.

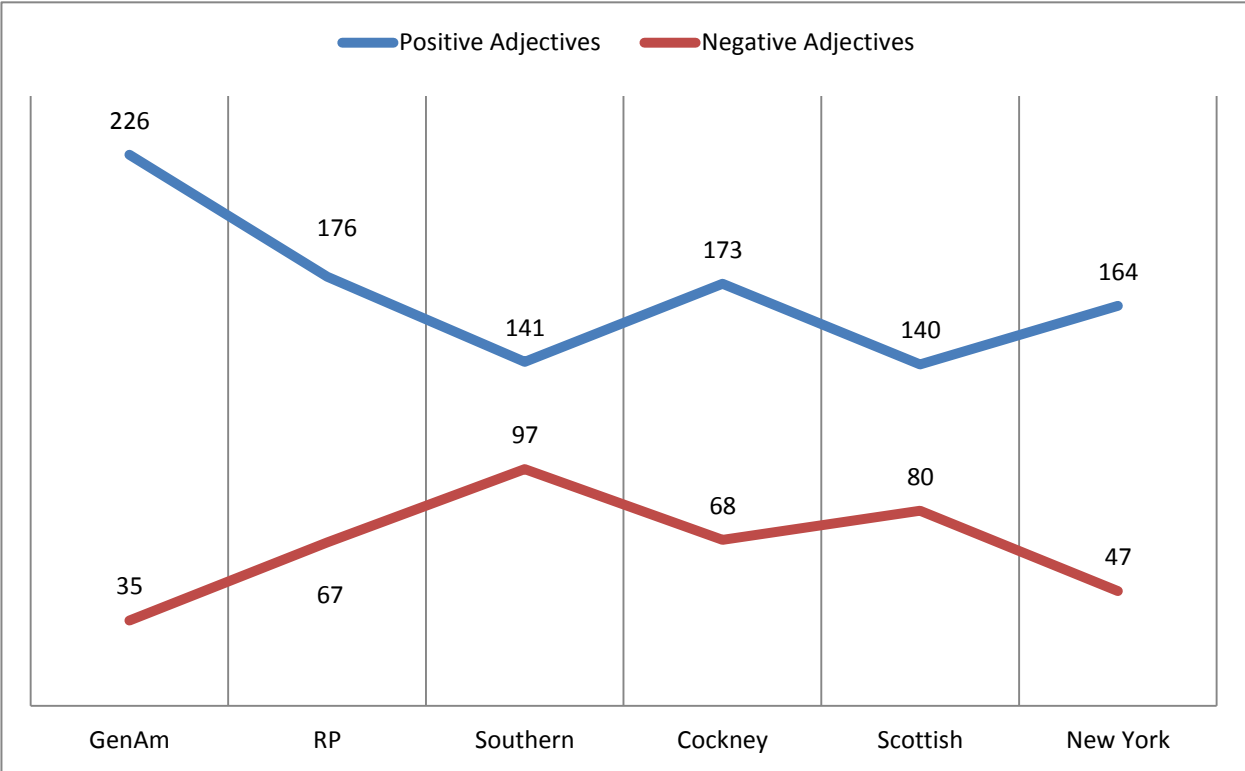


Figure 11 The total number of positive and negative adjectives for each accent

Trying to give a more nuanced representation the WQ results can prove difficult because they are not as easily quantifiable as the numbers from the likert scales. Therefore, in trying to elaborate on the results from the WQ, these are compared to the VG results to investigate to what degree the two parts coalesce.

Starting with the overall evaluations, there are some interesting points to be made about how the VG results (Figure 1) differ from those of the WQ (Figure 11), and for the sake of convenience, Table 1 contains the overall evaluations from both parts (Figure 1 and 11).

Table 1 Compared overall results from the WQ and the VG experiment

Verbal guise evaluations		Written questionnaire evaluations ¹⁷	
1. RP	2.67	1. GA	226 vs. 35
2. GA	3.21	2. RP	176 vs. 67
3. Scottish	3.97	2. New York	164 vs. 47
4. New York	4.45	2. Cockney	173 vs. 68
5. Southern	4.96	5. Scottish	140 vs. 80
6. Cockney	4.98	6. Southern	141 vs. 97

First of all, while RP was the unequivocally most favored accent in the VG experiment, it was surpassed by GA in the WQ, and was thereby evaluated as the second most favorable accent. What is more, RP even got similar evaluations as two other varieties, and two of the least favorable ones at that. Cockney received the highest score (i.e. the least favorable) in the VG experiment and the NYC accent received the third highest, but in the WQ, they both equaled the evaluation of RP. This leaves the Scottish and Southern accents, and whereas the latter retained its position as the least favorable in both parts (together with Cockney in the VG experiment), the former was downgraded in the WQ compared to the VG experiment.

4.3.1 GA

The American standard variety received fairly similar evaluations in the two parts, as most of the adjectives that were encircled in the WQ fit together with the scores from the VG. There are, however, some exceptions worth noting. The adjectives ‘good sense of humor’ and ‘nice accent’ were recurrently encircled by respondents who neither found the GA speaker to be ‘humorous’, nor ‘speaking with a nice accent’ in the VG experiment. These recurring contradictions are present with all the age groups, but frequently more so with the adolescents than the two older groups of respondents. This trend can be said to strengthen the point made earlier about the role of GA in Norway (see 4.1). Its ubiquity in the media has led to very

¹⁷ The numbers on the left represent the amount of positive adjectives circled for the accent, while the numbers on the right represent the negative adjectives.

positive associations to the accent – which is inexorably tied to the American culture – but these are not necessarily reflected in each individual’s private attitudes. The same can be seen in the quantitative and qualitative parts of Ladegaard’s (1998a) study. As in the present study, RP was perceived as the most favorable accent his VG experiment. In the qualitative part, on the other hand, his respondents stated a clear preference for American culture – as is reflected in the WQ of the present study. Ladegaard (1998a: 266) thus concludes that while the media might influence people’s impression of a country and its culture, ‘(...)this seems to have no effect on their language-behavior and language-preference’ – a conclusion my findings seem to corroborate. It is also interesting to see that even though there is a high degree of correspondence between the WQ results and those from the VG experiment, a considerable amount of the respondents failed to realize what accent the GA speaker used. Some thought he spoke British but, more interestingly, many respondents guessed the speaker to use a NYC accent – a phenomenon which is further discussed in section 4.3.6.

4.3.2 RP

As with GA, RP had fairly corresponding results from the two parts of the study, but it also had two main exceptions, namely the adjectives ‘cold’ and ‘arrogant’. These often featured in the WQ without being reflected in the VG experiment, and it seems to be a trend which disregards the age variable, as it recurs with all three groups. In contrast to GA, then, RP was downgraded in the WQ as opposed to the VG experiment – a fact which seems logical when using the same explanation as for GA’s opposite pattern (see 4.3.1). Recognition of the accent was slightly worse for RP than it was with GA. The majority of the respondents have simply written ‘London’, while the remaining ones have either written ‘British’ or ‘American’. It would in other words seem that the traditionally non-regional RP is commonly associated with the inhabitants of London, even though only a small minority of its inhabitants speak RP. This issue is further discussed in section 4.3.4.

4.3.3 Southern

For the Southern accent, there was a great deal of divergence between the two parts, and this was primarily caused by positive adjectives encircled in the WQ which were not echoed in the VG experiment. Despite receiving the least positive adjectives in the WQ, there are nevertheless 141 positive to be accounted for (see 4.3.1), and these were for the most part

distributed among the adjectives ‘friendly’, ‘helpful’ and ‘honest’. As discussed in 4.1.1, it came as a surprise that the negative VG evaluation of the Southern accent was not somewhat ameliorated on the dimension of SA. This is not only the general trend for regional accents – of which the Southern variety is an example – it is also the impression held by most Americans (see 2.3.2). In the WQ, however, the Southern accent was evaluated more positively in terms of SA, and it would thus seem that while the stereotype of ‘southern hospitality’ has reached Norway, it is not evoked upon hearing a Southern accent (i.e. when using the VGT). Moreover, as the vast majority of the respondents correctly identified the speaker as coming from the South, this is further indication that the evaluations differ due to methodological issues. Since the respondents identified the speaker as coming from the South in the VG experiment, the difference in evaluation in the two parts cannot be blamed on failed recognition, and that primarily leaves the manner of elicitation as a possible explanation for the differentiation.

4.3.4 Cockney

The urban variety spoken in London was rated markedly differently in the two parts of the study. In the WQ, the respondents were overly positive, and frequently used adjectives such as ‘rich’, ‘educated’, ‘friendly’, ‘helpful’ and ‘nice accent’ to describe Londoners. This drastically contradicts the unequivocally negative evaluations elicited towards the Cockney-speaker in the VG experiment. It would thus seem that while Norwegian respondents harbor negative attitudes towards Cockney, this accent is not necessarily associated with London. As discussed in 4.3.2, most of the respondents believed the RP-speaker to come from London, and this might indicate that RP is the accent they associate with the London, and not the working class vernacular. After all, the question was phrased (directly translated) ‘what do you think people from London (Cockney accent) sound like?’, and since the majority thought that RP is a London accent, the misunderstanding seems plausible. For linguists, it might seem obvious that Cockney is the working-class accent of London, but not necessarily for Norwegian laymen. This is part of the reasoning behind my hypothesizing that the NYC and London accent would receive more positive scores in the WQ than in the VG experiment. Both cities are associated with wealth and elegance, and the working classes are much less frequently presented in the media. This theory is further strengthened by the identification of the actual Cockney-speaker in the VG experiment. A striking amount of the respondents abstained from answering, and while many guessed other big cities such as Liverpool,

Manchester and Birmingham, only three respondents thought he came from London. Others guessed ‘small town in England’, Scotland, Ireland and Australia, and one respondent even wrote ‘British, not London’. Evidently, the respondents were not particularly familiar with the Cockney accent.

4.3.5 Scottish

The Scottish accent would have had the most uniform evaluations in the two parts had it not been for the female adolescents. The other respondents all rated Scottish English similarly in both parts, but the youngest females form an exception, and seeing as they are by far the largest group, this has a considerable impact on the overall score (as reflected in Figure 11). The female adolescents deviate from the other respondents in that they have encircled the adjectives ‘stupid’, ‘funny’, ‘friendly’ and ‘honest’ in the WQ, while swaying towards antonyms in the VG experiment. It should be noted, however, that unlike the majority of the other respondents, only 3 of the total 23 adolescent females were able to identify the speaker as Scottish. Most of them thought he spoke English as a second language. Five simply stated ‘foreign’ while others proposed his origin to be Irish, French, Italian, and even Afghan. Taking this into consideration, most of the respondents who correctly identified the Scottish speaker rated him according to the expected pattern discussed in 2.3.2.1 – i.e. neutrally but upgraded on SA compared to Prestige. And for those who did not follow the pattern in the VG experiment – i.e. the female adolescents – they ‘made up for it’ in the WQ by consistently underlining positive adjectives relating to the dimension of SA.

However, due to Cockney and the NYC accent being considerably upgraded in the WQ compared to the VG experiment, the overall ratings (Figure 11 and Table 1) suggest that Scottish is downgraded in the WQ. This nevertheless appears to be more an indication of Cockney and the NYC accent being misconceived in the WQ, than Scottish being downgraded. This assumption is primarily based on the respondents’ failure to identify the two former accents in the VG experiment. They apparently do not link these stigmatized varieties to London and NYC, so when asked in the WQ how they speak in these cities, the respondents draw on their positive associations of the cities and not the stigmatized vernacular spoken there. In addition, whereas the evaluations for Scottish English were very similar in the WQ and the VG experiment (with the exception of the female adolescents), both Cockney and the NYC accent have markedly different evaluations in the two parts (see 4.3.4 and

4.3.6). This is further indication that Scottish English is perceived similarly in the two parts, but is surpassed by Cockney and the NYC accent due to a misconception.

4.3.6 New York

The urban accent of NYC is similar to that of London in that its evaluations in the two parts are in marked contradiction. Whereas the VG results portray New Yorkers as poor, uneducated people without a sense of humor, they are collectively characterized as ‘rich’, ‘smart’, ‘educated’, ‘(having a) nice accent’ and ‘having a good sense of humor’ in the WQ. This seems to indicate that the respondents do not associate the NYC vernacular with NYC. Of the 54 respondents, only 3 discerned that the NYC-speaker spoke a NYC accent. Conversely, there was a much higher percentage of respondents who thought that the GA-speaker came from NYC. Thus, it would appear that while the NYC vernacular is stigmatized among Norwegians, these stigmas are not linked to NYC which seems to carry very positive association (see 4.3.4). Granted, the majority of the male post-university respondents thought the speaker came from New Jersey – which is close – but that still leaves the majority oblivious. The other alternatives were many, and besides from ‘American’, which strictly speaking is vague but correct, the most common answer – indeed more common than the correct one – was ‘Australian’. Other than that, the guesses ranged from ‘Texas’, ‘Western Movie Accent’ and ‘Chicago’ to other nationalities such ‘New Zealand’, ‘England’ and ‘South Africa’. It was also the recoding where the most respondents abstained from guessing an accent, so it was apparently difficult to identify.

4.4 Summary

Before summarizing the outcome, there are certain methodological aspects of the present study that should be pointed out. As further discussed in chapter 3, the use of the VGT is not completely unproblematic. The accents in question are presented by different speakers, and there will inevitably be differences in e.g. pitch, speed of articulation and quality of voice. This means that the differences in evaluations are not necessarily based solely on the accents of the speakers, but can be caused by other supra-segmental features as well. Even though such features are not specifically mentioned in the discussion, they are acknowledged as a possible influence on the results. It should be mentioned, however, that measures have been taken to reduce such factors to a minimum. The speakers are all male, they read their passages

in approximately the same speed and with the exception of one speaker, they all read the same text. This puts additional emphasis on the accents of the speakers so that this is the decisive factor for the evaluations.

In summing up the results from the present study, there are four general trends which characterize the outcome of the study. First of all, the VG results are very similar to what one would expect from comparing it with similar studies conducted in the UK and the US. The two standard varieties are perceived as the most prestigious, and RP is preferred over GA. What is more, the Norwegian respondents have rated the British varieties in line with the trend of rating standard varieties the most favorably, regional varieties neutrally and urban accents the least favorably. This trend is not as clear cut with American accents, however, and this is also reflected with the Norwegian respondents. Generally speaking, the urban NYC and the regional Southern accent are both heavily stigmatized, but there is no norm as to which one is more disparaged. In that sense, the Norwegian respondents can be said to follow the American trend. They prefer the standard, they rate both the NYC and Southern accent negatively, and they have downgraded one accent (the Southern) compared to the other (the NYC) in this particular study.

Secondly, a closer look at the VG results reveals that the scores are unusually similar with regards to the three dimensions present in the study. The dimensions include Prestige, SA and LQ, and unlike most studies of this kind, the ratings for the different dimensions followed the overall ratings without exception. This means that for all three dimensions, RP was rated the most favorably, GA the second most, the Scottish accent the third, the NYC accent the fourth and Cockney and the Southern accent were rated the least favorably. Such uniformity along the three dimensions is rare in these kinds of studies as e.g. the most prestigious variety (in this case RP) is usually downgraded on the dimension of SA (see 2.3.2.1).

Thirdly, the social variables included in the study are not as influential as one might have expected. The main variables are age and gender, and whereas the latter does reveal that women are slightly more inclined to downgrade most accents, the former shows no clear pattern of any kind. Not a single accent is evaluated linearly more positively or negatively as the age of the respondents increases, and with the sole exception of the Scottish accent, which is considerably upgraded with the post-university group, there are no striking differences for any of the accents. For the personal variables of the respondents, it is only the 'movie and TV' and 'English on a daily basis' variables which are somewhat decisive for the results. These show that the respondents who watch a great deal of movies and TV are on the whole more

positively disposed towards accents, and the same is true for the respondents who use English on a daily basis.

Lastly, a comparison of the direct and the indirect part of this study reveals that results differ markedly depending on the mode of elicitation. Using the VGT, RP was rated as the unequivocally most favorable accent, but the use of a WQ resulted in GA becoming the most favorable accent. Even more striking is the case of Cockney, which went from being the least favorable accent in the VG experiment to being the second most favorable in the WQ with similar scores as RP. It is in other words imperative to consider the method of data elicitation when attempting to measure language attitudes in Norway. The present study indicates that the respondents draw on different associations when they listen to an accent (in a VG experiment) and when they are asked to characterize it (in a WQ).

5 CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a short summary of the study and attempts to recapitulate the main patterns of the findings. The thesis is also discussed in the wider context of sociolinguistic studies, with an emphasis on how it can be seen to prompt future research.

5.1 Summary and main trends

In this thesis I have attempted to map the attitudes of 54 Norwegian respondents towards six varieties of English, thus making it a sociolinguistic attitudinal study. The varieties included are GA, RP, Southern USA, Cockney, Scottish English and the NYC accent, and the respondents comprised the three age groups of adolescents, post-university and adults. The main variables were age and gender, and the methods of data elicitation included both the VGT and a WQ.

5.1.1 Verbal guise results

Starting with the overall ratings from the VG experiment, the general trend largely coincided with previously established patterns, and my first hypothesis was thereby strengthened. RP and GA were evaluated the most favorably by the respondents, Cockney and the Southern accent were both downgraded, while the Scottish and NYC accent were rated relatively neutrally. The NYC accent thus formed the only exception by not being downgraded to the same extent as Cockney and the Southern accent, but this could very well be caused by the respondents' failure to identify the accent.

In terms of the three evaluative dimensions (Prestige, SA and LQ), the results differed slightly from what was expected. Prestigious accents such as RP are often surpassed by regional accents (e.g. Scottish English) on the dimension of SA, but this was not the case with the Norwegian respondents. Their evaluations for the three dimensions were identical to their overall 'ranking' of the six varieties.

For the age variable, I had hypothesized that the younger respondents would break with the traditional pattern and evaluate GA more favorably than RP. This did not turn out to be the case, however, as the age variable on the whole proved to have little or no systematic influence on the evaluations. My second hypothesis was in other words refuted by the results.

While the age variable was not very decisive on the evaluations, the gender of the respondents proved to have more influence on the results. With the exception of RP, which received similar evaluations by both genders, the male respondents were generally more positive towards all the accents than the female respondents. My third hypothesis was in other words not corroborated, as I had predicted that the female respondents would favor the standard varieties more than the male respondents. If anything, the hypothesis was refuted since the females did not upgrade RP and downgraded GA compared to the males.

Most of the personal variables included in the thesis did not prove to be very decisive, but there were two exceptions. One of these was the variable regarding my fourth hypothesis, namely the effect of watching English-speaking movies and TV series. This hypothesis was corroborated as the respondents who watched the most movies and TV series had the most favorable evaluations for GA. Interestingly, the same was true for most of the varieties, so it would seem that an increase in exposure can increase tolerance towards accents in general. The second exception concerned the regular use of spoken English, and the respondents who reported to speak English frequently were on the whole more positive towards the varieties of the study.

5.1.2 Written questionnaire results and comparison

The last of my hypotheses related to the WQ results – more specifically how Cockney and the NYC accent would be upgraded compared to the VG results – and it was decidedly corroborated by the findings. Both the urban varieties received considerably more positive evaluations in the WQ than they did in the VG experiment. This appears to be caused by positive associations to the cities which are not linked to their vernaculars. While very few respondents correctly identified the Cockney and NYC speakers, a lot of the respondents believed the RP and GA speakers to originate from London and NYC respectively. This is not very surprising, however, as these two cities are common settings for internationally broadcast movies and TV series whose characters speak predominantly standard varieties.

Cockney and the NYC accent were not the only varieties which featured different evaluations in the two parts, however. Whereas RP was the unequivocally most favored accent in the VG experiment, it was surpassed by GA in the WQ. It would thus seem that while the ubiquity of American culture has led to increasingly positive associations towards GA, this has not been sufficient to penetrate the private attitudes believed to be elicited by the VGT.

As for the Southern and Scottish accent, the former retained its position as the most stigmatized accent in both parts of the study, while the latter was downgraded in the WQ compared to the VG experiment. It should, however, be noted that the Scottish accent was only downgraded in relation to the other varieties. Cockney and the NYC accent – the two varieties which were evaluated more negatively than Scottish in the VG experiment – were both confused with less stigmatized varieties, so the relative downgrading of Scottish English could very well be a result of this misconception, and not increased negativity towards Scottish English.

5.1.3 General observations

On a more general note, the substantially different scores in the two parts indicate that the method of elicitation is decisive for the evaluations and should thus be considered both when discussing and devising studies of this character. Furthermore, it would appear from the similarities of the Scandinavian patterns (found in this study and Ladegaard 1998a) and those found in the UK and US, that Scandinavians share certain attitudes with Anglos and Americans. This is not particularly surprising, however, as Scandinavians share many cultural experiences with the US and UK by watching the same English-speaking movies and TV series as Americans and Britons do. Language attitudes are, after all, usually based on commonly held stigmas and stereotypes which are known to be disseminated by the media.

It is also interesting to note that Norwegian respondents on the whole are relatively conservative in their evaluations. RP has traditionally been perceived as the superior accent of English, but in more recent times, it is often surpassed by GA and various regional accents on the dimension of SA. This trend is not echoed by the Norwegian respondents, however, as they hold RP as the most favorable variety on all the three evaluative dimensions. Since the media cannot be blamed for this deviation – as Norway airs the same movies and TV series as the UK and US – the answer may lie in the other main source of exposure to English in Norway, namely the schools. Whereas many teachers in the UK and US use their local varieties, it is very common for Norwegian English teachers to adopt RP. Consequently, even though RP is not specifically taught in Norwegian schools, it is arguably the most prevalent English accent among Norwegian teachers, and this might be a reason for why RP is also upgraded on the SA dimension by Norwegian respondents.

Moreover, if schools are more influential than the media on people's private attitudes, then that might also be the reason why the three age groups all favored RP over GA. Hypothesizing that young respondents would favor GA was predominantly based on its prevalence in the media. RP is, however, the dominant variety in Norwegian schools, and if this truly is an important factor for language attitudes, then it is not as surprising that my titular hypothesis was refuted by the results.

5.1.4 Critique and future research

With the time and space constraints of an MA thesis, certain delimitations of the study had to be made, and these have led to some potential weaknesses. First and foremost, more respondents could have been included to strengthen the elicited patterns. With only 54 respondents, there is always the possibility that some parts of the results are merely coincidental. That being said, the study is the first of its kind in a Norwegian context, so more research is needed in any case to see if the findings are supported.

Secondly, the sample could have been made more representative by including respondents of different backgrounds. All the respondents had, or were in the process of acquiring (see 3.2.2), a higher education, and this means that there were no uneducated people represented in the sample. In addition, there are always individual preferences, so different respondents of the same background could also have yielded different results.

What is more, the amount of evaluative adjectives included in the WQ and VG experiment had to be delimited. Some character traits were thus not covered by the adjectives, and it may well be that other adjectives could have captured other dimensions of attitudes that would have influenced the accent evaluations differently.

There was also the issue of which variables to include. Even though it is my belief that the most pertinent variables were included, there may well be others that could have been more decisive for the results.

Lastly, there are some potential weaknesses with my method of data elicitation. The VGT employs different speakers to represent the different varieties, and it is not easy to find speakers who use all the diagnostic features of the accents they represent. Moreover, since the technique uses different speakers, other supra-segmental factors such as pitch and voice quality might influence the evaluations. This is the reason why many researchers prefer the MGT where the varieties are presented by one multidialectal speaker. For this study, however, using one speaker would have been problematic for two reasons. Not only would it have been far

too time consuming to find a speaker who could adequately mimic the six accents; if such a speaker had been found, the authenticity of the accents would also most likely have been compromised.

It is, however, important to keep in mind that the weaknesses above reflect deliberate choices which were necessary in order to make the study feasible to conduct, and it is my belief that these choices in no way have rendered the results invalid. So in spite of the limitations of the present study, it has made important contributions to the field of sociolinguistics. First and foremost, it is the only study conducted in Norway which employs the indirect method in investigating attitudes towards various English varieties. By themselves, however, the findings do not carry as much authority as they would with a series of corroborating studies, and in that sense, I hope that this thesis can serve as a point of departure for more Norwegian attitudinal studies to come. It would not only be interesting to see if the results would be echoed in similar types of studies, but also how the findings would vary with different varieties, variables and respondents.

Secondly, this thesis is in many respects a replication of the Danish study of Ladegaard (1998a), and together the two sets of results can form the beginning of a Scandinavian body of research. What is more, the findings support each other in many ways, so it would be interesting to see if similar patterns would emerge in other Nordic countries such as Sweden, Finland and Iceland.

It should also be mentioned that the Scandinavian context is somewhat rare compared to the larger European scene as dubbing of English-speaking movies is virtually non-existent. In Norway, Denmark and Sweden, subtitles are preferred in foreign productions, whereas many other European countries show foreign productions with a voice-over in the native language. This means that Scandinavians are more exposed not only to the English language, but also to the stereotypes allotted to the various varieties by the media (see 2.1.5). It would therefore be interesting to see if Scandinavians are more in tune with the stereotypes of the US and the UK than other European respondents who are used to watching movies and TV series in their native language.

Lastly, the two parts of this study (the VG experiment and the WQ) contained the exact same accents and equivalent adjectives, but the evaluations nevertheless proved to differ substantially. This shows that the methodology of attitudinal studies – especially those conducted outside the US or UK – can be very decisive on the results, and more research should be put into the cause of this variation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Survey

Fill in and/or circle your answer

Part 1

Listen to the recoding and indicate where on the scale the speaker belongs:

This person sounds:

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

It sound like this person speaks:

Correctly 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Incorrectly**

This person sounds:

Friendly 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Unfriendly**

I would like to speak like this person:

Yes 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **No**

This person sounds:

Educated 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Uneducated**

This person has a:

Nice accent 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Ugly accent**

This person sounds:

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

This person sounds:

Self-confident 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Unsure of himself**

This person sounds:

Socially attractive 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Socially unattractive**

This person sounds:

Trustworthy 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Not trustworthy**

This person sounds:

Humorous 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Not humorous**

This person sounds:

Outgoing 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 **Introvert**

Describe your first impression of this speaker in your own words.

Answer: _____

Which accent do you think this speaker spoke (city/country/area?)

Appendix 2

Survey

Fill in and/or circle your answer

You can circle as many adjectives as you see fit

Part 2

What do you think people from London sound like (the Cockney accent)?

Friendly - Smart – Helpful – Good sense of humor – Affluent - Stupid - Nice accent - Boring -
Honest - Angry - Creative – Educated – Interesting – Arrogant – Unhelpful -Ugly accent - Cold -
Economically challenged - Not Educated – Conniving

Other descriptions: _____

What do you think people from New York City sound like?

Friendly - Smart – Helpful – Good sense of humor – Affluent - Stupid - Nice accent - Boring -
Honest - Angry - Creative – Educated – Interesting – Arrogant – Unhelpful -Ugly accent - Cold -
Economically challenged - Not Educated – Conniving

Other descriptions: _____

What do you think people from Scotland sound like?

Friendly - Smart – Helpful – Good sense of humor – Affluent - Stupid - Nice accent - Boring -
Honest - Angry - Creative – Educated – Interesting – Arrogant – Unhelpful -Ugly accent - Cold -
Economically challenged - Not Educated – Conniving

Other descriptions: _____

What do you think people from the South of USA sound like?

Friendly - Smart – Helpful – Good sense of humor – Affluent - Stupid - Nice accent - Boring -
Honest - Angry - Creative – Educated – Interesting – Arrogant – Unhelpful -Ugly accent - Cold -
Economically challenged - Not Educated – Conniving

Other descriptions:_____

What do you think people who speak the British standard accent sound like (BBC English/Queen’s English)?

Friendly - Smart – Helpful – Good sense of humor – Affluent - Stupid - Nice accent - Boring -
Honest - Angry - Creative – Educated – Interesting – Arrogant – Unhelpful -Ugly accent - Cold -
Economically challenged - Not Educated – Conniving

Other descriptions:_____

What do you think people who speak the American standard accent sound like (American actors and news anchors)?

Friendly - Smart – Helpful – Good sense of humor – Affluent - Stupid - Nice accent - Boring -
Honest - Angry - Creative – Educated – Interesting – Arrogant – Unhelpful -Ugly accent - Cold -
Economically challenged - Not Educated – Conniving

Other descriptions:_____

Appendix 3

Survey

Fill in and/or circle your answer

Part 3

1) Age_____

2) Gender_____

3) Nationality _____

4) Which English accent would you say you speak? British American Unknown
Other:_____

5) Which English accent would you like to use? British American Unknown
Other:_____

6) Have you been to a country where English is the mother tongue? Yes No

7) If so, which countries was it, and for how long?

(For instance: 'Canada, 3 weeks. USA, 2 months')

Answer:_____

8) Do you have friends, family or a job which requires you to frequently speak English?

Yes No

9) On average, how many hours per day do you watch English-speaking movies or TV series?

Answer: _____

10) Which accent would you say has been the most prevalent in your education?

British American