Emilie Anja Teichroeb

Norwegian Attitudes Toward Non-native English Speakers and Accents

A Mixed Methods Study on Language Attitudes

Master's thesis in English
Supervisor: Susanne Mohr
June 2022

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Norwegian University of
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Abstract

This master's thesis employs two sets of data to answer the following research questions: 1) What are Norwegian attitudes toward non-native English speakers and their accents and 2) Are there links between stereotypes/prejudices against certain nationalities and Norwegian attitudes toward non-native English speakers and accents? The first method used to assess these questions is an indirect method called a verbal guise test - executed as an online questionnaire in this study. 51 Norwegian university and college students responded to this questionnaire, evaluating four speech samples of different non-native English accents based on how they thought the speaker sounded. The speech samples included are recordings of a German, a French, a Hindi and a Russian speaker. These four non-native speakers were evaluated on 12 semantic differential items using a 7-point scale. These 12 items represented the following three factors: *socio-intellectual status, aesthetic quality,* and *dynamism.* In order to gain further insight into Norwegian attitudes, four non-native English speakers studying in Norway (who are not Norwegian) were interviewed. The qualitative data collected through these interviews are included in this thesis to provide insight into the experiences of non-native English speakers living in Norway. Specifically, they provide insight into Norwegian attitudes toward non-native English speakers and their accents. Importantly, the qualitative data is used to clarify findings from the verbal guise test. Similarities between the two datasets are drawn on to develop the discussion of Norwegian attitudes. The main findings of this study are that western European non-native accents such as German and French are rated and perceived higher in terms of socio-intellectual status than other non-native English accents and speakers. Specifically, that the Russian speech sample is evaluated quite negatively in comparison to the other speech samples. Another main finding is that Norwegians rate and perceive the French accent and French people higher in terms of aesthetic quality and attractiveness.

Acknowledgements

I am finally completing the last step of my education– submitting my master's thesis. Though this has been a long and challenging process, it has been an extremely rewarding one. One of the discoveries I have made during my studies at NTNU is that the English language can have myriad interpretations and resonances to all of the different people that speak it. English may be "universal" but it is not unidimensional. I have learned so much and wouldn't have gotten to this point today without the help of so many.

Thank you to my supervisor, Susanne Mohr, for being so supportive throughout this entire process. Thank you for sharing your immense knowledge on the topic and for your diligent feedback – I have learned so much from you.

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Emilie Anja Teichroeb
Oslo, June 2022

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1.0 Introduction

Language should be a connector between members of society and yet sometimes, features of language are the very obstacles that hinder connection – because sometimes we think we know who someone is based purely on the way they speak (Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010). This thesis studies Norwegian attitudes toward non-native English speakers and accents. It aims to shed light on the factors influencing the way non-native accents can trigger assumptions about a speaker's social identity. Specifically, it examines the role that stereotypes and prejudices play in shaping language attitudes and vice versa. Furthermore, this thesis aims to provide insight into the extent to which non-native English speakers and accents are accepted in Norwegian society. The analysis of qualitative and questionnaire data will be used to answer the following research questions: 1) What are some Norwegian attitudes toward non-native English speakers and accents? and 2) Are there links between stereotypes/prejudices against certain nationalities and Norwegian attitudes toward non-native English speakers and accents?

The selection of non-native English accents studied in this thesis is based on Kachru's (1996) understanding of the inner, outer and expanding circles. However, I must clarify that I recognize the issue of solely linking *nativeness* to geographical location and that there are many grey areas that are misrepresented by Kachru's Three Circle Model (Galloway & Rose, 2017: 18). Additionally, I recognize that there is variation in the understanding of whether or not speakers of 'New' Englishes are considered native speakers or not, and moreover, variation in the understanding of the term *nativeness* (Galloway & Rose, 2017: 120). For lack of a more adequate term, this thesis links *nativeness* to accents of English spoken by speakers in the inner circle. The outer and expanding circles will in this case be recognized as *non-native*, although I do recognize the potential incorrectness of this label. Given this usage of the term, none of the non-native accents studied in this thesis are "native".

2.0 Theoretical Background

2.1 The Role of Stereotypes in Perceiving Identity

Tajfel's Social Identity Theory presents social identity as an individual's understanding of their own self-identity as derived from their affiliation and identification with social categories they perceive themselves as belonging to (Tajfel, 1982: 2). Attributes of an individual's identity such as their culture, ethnicity, and nationality are all influential factors in the categorisation of these social groupings (Beinhoff, 2013:19). Specifically, language,

which is a prominent part of ethnic identity, is linked to social identity (Rakic et al., 2011 in Hills & Tombs, 2011: 651). The categorization of social groups leads to the development of in- and out-groups in society (Beinhoff, 2013:19). When perceiving the identity of an individual, stereotypes toward the out-group(s) to which the individual is assumed to belong influence the way the individual is perceived. In other words, stereotypes lead to "[...] the homogenization and depersonalization of out-group members", as individuals are perceived based on overgeneralizations of a social category and not by the distinct nature of the group members' individual identities (Beinhoff, 2013: 21).

As stereotypes play a large role in the perception of social identity, and ethnicity, and therefore, language, make up an important part of social identity, the characteristics of an individual's accent can provide indications of race, social class, and job, amongst other attributes (Hills & Tombs, 2011: 651). Social stereotyping can be both positive and negative overgeneralizations of social categories. Negative stereotypes can lead to prejudice where negative attitudes are held against a social group in its entirety (Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010: 217). Stereotypes and prejudice can affect the way an interlocutor processes what a speaker is saying and refers therefore to the cognitive aspect of attitudes. Discrimination, however, occurs when attitudes lead to behaviour such as the "[...] the unfair treatment of others based on their social category membership" (Biernat & Dovidio, 2000 in Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010: 217).

Through social stereotyping based on language, society holds power over the perception of its members. In other words, members of society are labelled and ranked into hierarchical structures based on their social identities, and "[...] accents become both manner and means for exclusion" in society (Lippi-Green, 1994: 165) or one of the ways some social groups gain societal privilege.

2.2 Linguistic Stereotypes and Prejudices

As stated previously, stereotypes play a prevalent role in the way an individual is perceived. In the case of linguistic stereotypes, speech characteristics trigger the listener to make assumptions about the speaker's personality based on stereotypes associated with the social group to which the accent is linked (Giles, 1970: 211). Stereotypes influence our attitudes and vice versa, both toward language and language users.

These attitudes are prevalent in our daily lives (Garrett, 2010: 21). Specifically, language attitudes affect the way we perceive other language users, but also how we expect other language users to react toward us. We can shift our language and speech style

depending on the image we would like to portray and how we wish to be perceived by our interlocutor(s) (Garrett, 2010: 22). An interview with actress Diane Kruger on the Late Show with Stephen Colbert is an example of this.

In the interview, Diane Kruger is asked if she puts on different accents in different situations in order to be perceived in different ways, to which her immediate response is "All the time, like when I get pulled over, I'm French! [...] It's worked before!" (The Late Show with Stephen Colbert, 2016). She is then asked to choose which accent she would use in a number of fictitious scenarios, between a French, German or English accent. When put in the scenario of having trouble getting service at an internet store, Kruger instantly adopts the role of an angry and heavily accented German, loudly expressing her frustration, but quickly snapping out of character as soon as she realises she has just cursed on American national television. Onto the next scenario, Colbert asks which accent she would use if she was trying to get upgraded on a flight, to which Kruger quickly steps into the role of a French woman complaining that she is so tired and needs to change seats, while seductively extending her leg to show that her foot is swollen. This is accepted by Colbert, who steps into the role of flight attendant and allows her to change seats, mentioning that "the French accent puts a hook into our hearts here in America" (The Late Show with Stephen Colbert, 2016).

While the French language is globally romanticised and a French accent triggers stereotypes of romance, love and attractiveness, the German language is stereotyped as being "rough, ugly and [even] aggressive", being used for the voices of villains in films and media (Fries, 2022). Children's cartoons and movies show a prevalent representation of German accents, as well as Russian and other Eastern European accents used to portray villainous characters (Dobrow & Gidney, 1998 in Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010: 217). In Dobrow and Gidney's (1998) study, they illustrate just this, suggesting that the influence of global politics and events taking place in the 20th century influenced the creation of cartoons in the 1990s. Particularly, they shed light on the Cold War and the Second World War, leading to the portrayal of villainous characters through German and Russian, amongst other Eastern European accents (Dobrow & Gidney, 1998: 117; Waters, 2019: 75).

Lippi-Green (1997) discusses the role of Disney in influencing children and teaching them how to categorise people into subgroups based on race, ethnicity and accent. Children watch Disney films during early stages of language acquisition and are heavily influenced by this input (Lippi-Green, 1997: 104). In fact, the linguistic portrayals children are exposed to during childhood can influence their judgement of speakers in real life (Dobrow & Gidney, 1998: 107). For some children, Disney may even be their first encounter with foreign accents

of English. This point underlies the importance of accurate portrayals of linguistic varieties of English - something Disney lacks, as their portrayals are often stereotypical and prejudiced. Lippi-Green (1997) discusses to what degree "[...] Disney animated film goes about setting up conceptions of good and evil with strong correlations to race and ethnicity" and concludes by saying that "[...] the manipulation of accent is part of that process, and [...] works very well" (Lippi-Green, 1997: p. 126).

Lippi-Green (1997) presents an example of the use of foreign accents in *The Lion King*, where the three hyenas, who are portrayed as evil and dangerous characters, speak with foreign accents. Specifically, Disney goes as far as to highlight the characters' identity as being foreign by highlighting that one of the hyenas speaks with a Mexican accent by having him at one point say "?que pasa?" (Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 122). However, in *Beauty and the Beast*, Lippi-Green (1997) presents an example of a foreign accent being used without representing evil or bad characters. In this case, French accents are only used on three characters: "[...] the sexy chamber maid, the amorous butler, and a temperamental cook are voiced by actors contriving French accents" (Lippi-Green, 1997: 109). While the use of French accents in this case may not be overtly negative, it still contributes to the discussion around how stereotypes can be "[...] problematic and limiting" (Lippi-Green, 1997: 104).

Stereotypes can be particularly problematic and limiting when representation of a certain type of accent is already underrepresented in society, especially in terms of film and media. The portrayal of *The Simpsons* character Apu - a heavily-accented Indian convenience-store owner - received a lot of criticism for this very reason (Deb, 2018). One of the biggest critics was Hari Kondabolu, a South Asian man, who addressed issues with this character in the documentary *The Problem With Apu* (Melamedoff, 2017). When Hari Kondabolu went on the *Daily Show* with Trevor Noah, after receiving backlash for this documentary, he explained why he criticised the portrayal of this Indian character (The Daily Show with Trevor Noah, 2018). He brought up the issue of underrepresentation of Indian accents and characters, stating that "[...] if we had a bunch of other characters at that time, then Apu would have been-- it would have been fine, just one of many characters [...]", however, when you only have one character to portray an entire social category of people, it is problematic that the character is shaped on the basis of stereotypes and prejudices (The Daily Show with Trevor Noah, 2018). The portrayal of Apu does not account for the diversity of the Indian population or even the South Asian population. In reality, of all South Asian Englishes, Indian English receives the most academic recognition (Bernaisch & Koch 2016: 119) - further highlighting the issue of the one Indian character in 30 years of the Simpsons

being portrayed as a convenience store owner with a heavy Indian accent. Important points were made during the interview with Trevor Noah. The quote I want to conclude this subchapter with is that of Trevor Noah saying, "[...] lack of representation fundamentally shapes how people see the world around them" (The Daily Show with Trevor Noah, 2018).

2.3 Language Ideology

Language ideology is the maintenance of linguistic hierarchy in society, recognizing some languages as more dominant than others. To understand language ideology, it is important to recognize how it is not solely made up of language in its linguistic form and use, but that language ideology is also constructed on the basis of the humans behind the languages and the sociocultural identities which they possess (Schieffelin et al, 1998: 3). It is the link between sociocultural identity and language that leads to the societal dominance of some languages and the subordinacy of others (Schieffelin et al, 1998: 7). In some cases, this subordinacy has even led to the extinction of language variations (Woolard, 1992: 240). Language ideologies are beneficial to some, while it is the manner and means of some of the societal and systemic inequality experienced by subordinate sociocultural groups (Eades, 2012: 474; Schieffelin & Woolard, 1994: 56).

Language ideology is a social construct which relies heavily on society's role in maintaining the systems which promote linguistic hierarchy (Schieffelin et al, 1998: 10). Although ideology is defined in more than one manner, this paper links language ideology to the definition of ideology as the maintenance of power both politically, socially and economically - as an unbalanced system of dominance where the subordinated group's identities are recognized as being non-ideological (Schieffelin et al, 1998: 7). A clear representation of this power is found in social institutions such as schools where certain languages are dominantly represented, amongst other social institutions which all "[...] hinge on the ideologization of language use" (Schieffelin & Woolard, 1994: 56). For example, in Norway, English, French, German and Spanish are offered in all middle and upper-secondary schools. This societal maintenance of power of certain languages in institutional systems is an illustration of language ideology (Woolard, 1992: 240).

The evaluation of languages as ideological or non-ideological, is heavily influenced by history (Schieffelin et al, 1998: 10), and "[...] the notions of power typically invoked in language ideological analysis are also necessarily historical" (Kroskrity, 2010: 202). In particular, colonial history (Schieffelin & Woolard, 1994: 68) - how colonisation led to the global spread and dominance of both the French and English language. Additionally, the

missionisation of European countries (Schieffelin & Woolard, 1994: 68) has also led to the global spread and dominance of European languages, such as German and Spanish.

2.4 Language Attitude Theory

Language Attitude Theory is essential in the discussion on Norwegians' attitudes toward non-native English speakers as attitude is recognized as a core concept in sociolinguistics - especially in regard to studies on social psychology (Garrett, 2010: 19). Additionally, attitude has been defined as "[...] an evaluative orientation to a social object of some sort", such as language (Garrett, 2010: 20). Attitude is a complex social psychological construct that cannot be directly perceived as it includes not only an individual's behaviour toward a person or object, their verbal statements, emotional reactions or other elements that can be observed, but also their thoughts, beliefs and views (Garrett, 2010:19). Cognition (thoughts), affect (feelings) and behaviour (actions) are the three components of attitudes - although some argue that behaviour should not be included. Assessing attitudes can be challenging as studying these components does not always provide an accurate or reliable portrayal of an individual's real attitude toward a person or social object (Garrett, 2010: 25).

This has been shown in previous studies on language attitudes, where participants' behaviours do not correlate with the attitudes they claim to or *think* they have. Similarly, in some studies, when participants are presented with hypothetical questions regarding how they would behave in certain scenarios, their answers do not reflect the actual behaviour that is later seen when participants are put in X scenario (Garrett, 2010: 25). These examples can show a number of things. For instance, 1) that rather than sharing their own attitude, the participant is providing the researcher with answers they believe the researcher wants to hear, 2) that the participant is not aware of their own attitude, and 3) that the participant does not want to admit to having a socially unacceptable attitude (Garrett, 2010).

Some studies use a direct approach to study language attitudes and overtly ask participants about their attitudes (Garrett, 2010: 39). However, the direct approach cannot rule out interfering factors such as those listed above. In order to collect reliable data on something as personal as attitudes, participants must be distracted from the true purpose of a study (Garrett, 2010: 45). To do this, language attitude researchers employ indirect methods - "[...] [using] more subtle, even deceptive, techniques than simply asking straight questions about what people's attitudes are to something" (Garrett, 2010: 41). The matched guise technique was invented to do just this by having participants complete attitude rating tasks of

speech samples without giving participants knowledge of what exactly it was they were evaluating (Garrett, 2010: 41).

A variant of the matched guise technique is the verbal guise technique, which like the matched guise technique, is an indirect method used to study language attitudes. In both of these instances, participants are aware that they are participating in an attitude rating task, however they do not know that they are for example being assessed based on their attitudes toward the accents of the speakers, which is what makes these techniques indirect methods (Garrett, 2010: 41). In many tests using these techniques, participants are asked to evaluate the way speakers sound in terms of semantic differential items. However, the difference between the tests is what speech samples are included and how variables of idiosyncrasy are controlled. In matched guise tests, participants are tricked into believing they are listening to speech samples from multiple speakers, when in actuality, they are listening to different speech samples all produced by one speaker (Garrett, 2010: 41). On the other hand, verbal guise tests include various speech samples that are recordings from multiple speakers (Garrett, 2010: 42). In terms of variables of idiosyncrasy being controlled, the matched guise technique limits differences such as speech quality and other aspects of language that could interfere with the sole evaluation of a speaker's accent (Giles & Billings, 2004 in Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010: 217). However, this technique has been criticised in terms of authenticity, as it is rare that a single speaker can authentically portray more than one dialect or accent (Clarke & Garrett, 2004 in Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010: 217). For this reason, some researchers choose to employ the verbal guise test to study language attitudes, just as I will do in this study.

2.5 Attitudes to Languages and Non-native Accents

As interlocutors to a non-native English speaker, subjective evaluations are often made about the speakers' accent. These assessments are influenced by a variety of factors, ranging from the interlocutor's relationship to the speakers' L1, to the interlocutor's connection and view of the culture and society linked to this language and even whether or not the interlocutor speaks the language themselves (Degenern, 2016). Moreover, the level of accentedness influences the way a non-native accent is perceived, where speech intelligibility is significant in an interlocutor's attitude toward a speaker (Beinhoff, 2013: 33). However, it is suggested that in order for some of these variables to be of significance in the evaluation of non-native accents, an interlocutor should have knowledge of the nationality or native language of the speaker (Teufel, 1995: 142).

Teufel (1995) studied Australians' attitudes toward German-accented English to defer whether or not stereotypes of German people hold true by having participants evaluate 4 different speech samples in terms of semantic differential items, where 9 of the 13 items represented adjectives associated with Germans from earlier studies: *intelligent, industrious, determined, self-confident, efficient, scientifically-minded, educated* and *upper-class* (Ball, 1983; Callan–Gallois, 1982 in Teufel, 1995: 138), while the remaining 4 were items on *solidarity*. Additionally, Teufel had participants guess the speaker's nationality and native language, in order to see whether or not this knowledge would influence participants' evaluations of the speakers, thereby elucidating the role of stereotypes in language attitudes and perception of speaker identity.

Results showed that very few participants were able to pinpoint the country of origin or the native language of the three German speakers as being German. Results also showed that the evaluations of the three speakers did not correlate with the stereotypes toward Germans. It seemed that the participants evaluated the speakers as non-standard speakers of English, generally, and not as German speakers (Teufel, 1995: 142). Additionally, the level of accentedness played a role in their evaluations, where the highest level of accentedness was evaluated lowest of the three accented speakers in terms of both *status* and *solidarity* (Teufel, 1995: 140). However, all three German speakers were evaluated higher than the native English speaker in terms of *solidarity/social attractiveness* (Teufel, 1995: 140).

Previous research in the field of language attitudes suggests that some non-native accents are preferred over others. Non-native accents that are associated with a higher level of prestige are often accents from western European countries (Lippi-Green, 1994 in Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010: 217-218), while non-native accents from the rest of the worlds' non-native English speaking countries are perceived as lesser (Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010: 217-218). This theory could also help explain why my literature review of language attitude studies is skewed, where there are plenty of language attitude studies on the French and German language or accents in English, while studies evaluating other non-native accents such as Russian and Hindi are less prevalent. This concept of western European attitudes being recognized as more prestigious than other non-native English variants may be explained by the amount of representation certain accents get in society - and importantly, the manner in which they are represented - supporting the prevalence of language ideologies in society, as discussed in subchapter 2.3.

This rings true in Coupland and Bishop's (2007) study, which examined attitudes toward 34 different varieties of English, both native and non-native. The 34 varieties of

English were evaluated in terms of variables *prestige* and *pleasantness* (Coupland & Bishop, 2007: 77). Non-native varieties of English included in the study are Spanish, German, French, 'Afro-Caribbean' and 'Asian' - (Coupland & Bishop, 2007: 79). Results mirror Lippi-Green (1997) and Gluszek and Dovidio's (2010) understanding that western European non-native accents are more often associated with *prestige* than other non-native English variants.

In this particular study, German is evaluated as more prestigious than it is socially attractive, while French and Spanish are both evaluated as more socially attractive than they are prestigious, although French is evaluated higher than Spanish on both variables. Interestingly, both Afro-Caribbean and Asian score much higher in terms of social attractiveness than prestige. Additionally, both non-native variants are evaluated higher than German in terms of social attractiveness (Coupland & Bishop, 2007: 79).

Another example where the variety of English that is evaluated lower in terms of attributes similar to status and prestige, and is evaluated higher in terms of solidarity, is in Bernaisch and Koch's (2016) study on attitudes toward Englishes in India. Here, Indian participants evaluate British English highest in terms of the factors competence, power and status, while evaluating their own variety of English (Indian English) higher in terms of *humble* and *friendly* - items from the solidarity factor (Bernaisch & Koch, 2016: 124).

2.6 Norwegian Attitudes

There are a few examples of Norwegian attitudes that I would like to include in this chapter that are highly relevant in terms of my data analysis. Firstly, Norwegian attitudes toward Russians in Norway and secondly, some Norwegian attitudes toward immigrants and immigration policies in Norway.

Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, Norwegians have shown tremendous support toward the Ukrainian people, condemning Russia's attacks and their treatment of Ukrainians. However, Raymond Johansen, the city council leader in Oslo, is afraid that some of the ways Norwegians are showing their support is resulting in the exclusion of Russians in Norwegian society (Borgersrud, 2022). Specifically, Johansen addresses his concern about anti-Russian attitudes in Norway and the way these negative attitudes are affecting Russians living in Norway, such as university exchange students from Russia (Borgersrud, 2022).

In terms of attitudes toward immigrants, examples of negative Norwegian attitudes toward immigration are: 1) that by taking in immigrants, Norwegians are giving up valuable resources that should be used on Norwegian citizens, and 2) that all immigration does for

Norway is destabilise Norwegian society (Zahler, 2019). Additionally, it is relevant to mention that the majority of immigrants coming to Norway are from eastern European countries and Asian countries, along with Turkey (Statistisk Sentralbyrå, 2022).

Friberg and Midtbøen (2017) studied immigrant employment hierarchies in the low-wage labour market in Norway (Friberg & Midtbøen, 2017: 1463). They found that Norwegian employers in the low-wage labour market employ immigrants on the basis of an ethnic employment hierarchy. In other words, applicants are assessed in terms of skill and suitability for jobs based on ethnic stereotypes and the social status associated with different ethnic groups (Friberg & Midtbøen, 2017: 1463). What is also interesting to note is that there are fewer Norwegians working in this market as Norwegians associate these jobs with low status and often do not take this low-wage work (Friberg & Midtbøen, 2017: 1465). However, in terms of jobs requiring higher levels of intellect, Indian immigrants in Norway are often recognised as being most qualified of all immigrants for these jobs (Solberg, 2020).

3.0 Method

Gluszek and Dovidio (2010) discuss the importance of not only studying non-native accent evaluation from the perspective of the listener, but also from the perspective of the speaker as it is an approach that has not received enough attention in previous research (Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010: 216). For this reason, this study includes two research methods: one quantitative and one qualitative method. Using a mixed-method approach allowed me to include two types of data in my study that could account for some of "[...] the inherent variability, complexity, and multidimensionality" of language attitudes (Soukup, 2015: 56).

In order to study Norwegian university and college students' attitudes I have employed the verbal guise technique, administered as an online questionnaire - an indirect method presented in the previous chapter (Garrett, 2010). In order to better understand the prevalence and effect of Norwegian attitudes toward non-native English and their speakers, I have also conducted qualitative interviews with non-native English speakers living in Norway, (who are not Norwegian). This provided insight into attitudes, as well as the opportunity to clarify and support findings from the verbal guise test.

In terms of reporting this research project to *NSD: Norsk senter for forskningsdata,* the two separate methods and research designs were submitted. In the case of the qualitative interviews, my application was last approved after revision on February 10th, 2022. In terms of the online questionnaire, NSD informed me that my research project only needed to be approved by them if I was collecting identifiable information about my participants. Further

they informed me that if I was to collect identifiable information, that I would need to inform participants of the true purpose of my study prior to collecting data. In order to successfully employ an indirect method, where participants are not aware of what exactly it is they are being assessed on, I chose not to collect potentially identifiable data. Therefore, NSD confirmed on November 2nd, 2021, that as long as I took measures to ensure the anonymity of my respondents, that the online questionnaire did not need their approval.

3.1 The Verbal Guise Test

I chose to employ an indirect method to study Norwegian language attitudes - particularly, their subconsciously held attitudes toward different non-native speech samples - rather than applying a direct method where interferences could lead participants to respond based on the attitudes they think they hold, think they *should* hold or want me to think they hold (Garrett, 2010). Additionally, employing an indirect method and choosing to provide limited information on my research project reduced the risk of participants responding to the questionnaire based on the results they believed I was searching for as the researcher (Garrett, 2010). However, it is important to note that "[...] the respondents can [still] have a fairly good guess about what the desirable/acceptable/expected answer is, and some of them will provide this response even if it is not true" (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2009: 8).

3.1.1 Research Design

The verbal guise test was designed using a web-based questionnaire through Qualtrics (https://www.qualtrics.com). Using a web-based questionnaire gave me access to a broader sample group as participation was not limited to factors such as geographic location or specific study programs. This increased the likelihood that my sample group could more accurately represent the diversity of the sample population (Sue & Ritter, 2012: 18). Additionally, factors such as time efficiency in terms of the size of my study and economic resources available to me influenced my decision to conduct a web-based questionnaire (Sue & Ritter, 2012: 18).

The survey included 4 recordings of the same passage read by 4 different non-native English speakers (appendix 1). Voice recordings were retrieved from *The Speech Accent Archive (*https://accent.gmu.edu/) - a database with a number of English speech recordings compiled by Steven H. Weinberger. The following speakers were included: 1) a Russian 2) a German 3) a French and 4) a Hindi speaker. These speech samples were selected with the intention of providing approximate linguistic samples of the nationalities of the non-native

English speakers whom I interviewed - a Russian, a German, a French and a Bangladeshi. While it would have been interesting to include accents from various continents in the verbal guise test, my access to non-native English speakers living in Norway was limited and resulted therefore in a more limited, but intentional combination of speech samples. More on this second method and sample group is presented in subchapter 3.2.

In addition to the controversy of whether or not 'New' Englishes from the outer circle (including both Bangladeshi and Indian English) are recognized as official or native variants of English (Galloway & Rose, 2017), I also recognize that Bangla and Hindi are different languages. As I was unable to find a suitable Bangla speech sample, I chose a Hindi speech sample as both languages are mutually intelligible.
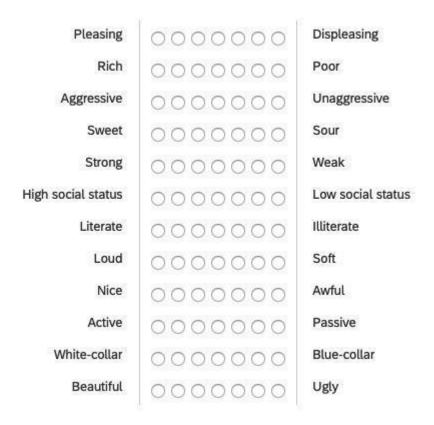
In order to strengthen the validity of the verbal guise test, measures were taken to decrease idiosyncratic differences between speech samples. These measures included: choosing recordings of similar length (ranging from 14-19 seconds), choosing speakers of the same sex (male), choosing speakers from similar age groups (ages 18 to 37), choosing samples with a similar number of reading mistakes, and finally, that each speaker spoke with a distinct foreign accent. Although measuring the level of accentedness is difficult, a lot of effort was put into finding speech samples that sounded mutually accented. Additionally, using recordings of the same passage allowed the content of speech to be controlled, resulting in the sole evaluation of the speakers' voices (Allport & Cantril, 1934: 38). The URL to each speech sample is included in the appendix (appendix 1). However, it is important to note that each recording needed to be cut off at a certain point as one of the original samples included a mistake at the end. The transcription of the passage included in the speech sample can also be found in the appendix (appendix 1).

The choice of items included in the verbal guise test relied heavily on established questionnaires used in previous research on language attitudes (Zahn & Hopper, 1985). This was essential as the selection of items could significantly impact the validity and reliability of the test (Dörnyei & Csizer, 2012: 75-77). Moreover, it is in part due to the significant variation in measurement instruments employed in studies on speech evaluation that data in the field is not integrable (Zahn & Hopper, 1985: 113). Specifically, many speech evaluation studies have designed their research for the purpose of their own study and not to generate generalisable data in the field (Zahn & Hopper, 1985: 114). For this reason, my verbal guise test is based on a well established instrument that is seminal in the field of speech evaluation.

Mulac´s *Speech Dialect Attitudinal Scale* (1976) is a suitable measurement instrument for studies like mine which aim to provide brief evaluations of multiple speech samples

(Zahn & Hopper, 1985: 120). The *Speech Dialect Attitudinal Scale* categorises 12 semantic differential items into three factors: *Socio-Intellectual Status*, *Aesthetic Quality*, and *Dynamism* (Mulac, 1976). The bipolar items were presented in the following matrix tables as a 7-point scale:

Figure 1: Matrix Table of Semantic Differential Items

Pleasing	○○○○○○○	Displeasing
Rich	○○○○○○○	Poor
Aggressive	○○○○○○○	Unaggressive
Sweet	○○○○○○○	Sour
Strong	○○○○○○○	Weak
High social status	○○○○○○○	Low social status
Literate	○○○○○○○	Illiterate
Loud	○○○○○○○	Soft
Nice	○○○○○○○	Awful
Active	○○○○○○○	Passive
White-collar	○○○○○○○	Blue-collar
Beautiful	○○○○○○○	Ugly

Before conducting the questionnaire, I piloted the questionnaire asking a few Norwegian university students if they understood the semantic differential items included (Dörnyei & Csizer, 2012: 79). Based on the feedback I received, I included the following definitions above every matrix table: *White-collar: the class of salaried employees (høy yrkessatus)* and *Blue-collar: the class of wage earners (arbeiderklassen)*. I chose not to translate the other semantic differential items into Norwegian for fear that a "[...] close or literal translation [would] not express the real meaning [...]" of the items (Dörnyei & Csizer, 2012: 78), thereby affecting the validity and reliability of the results. Although Dörnyei and Csizer (2012) do discuss the benefits of translating a questionnaire into the participants' native language, I had limited resources available to me to do this, such as access to an independent translator or a team to translate with, as suggested (Dörnyei & Csizer, 2012:79). Instead, I chose to

strengthen the reliability of the results by solely incorporating responses from participants who rated their proficiency level in English as moderate or high. In this way I hoped to limit responses where participants might not have understood the items.

3.1.2 Participants

51 Norwegian university and college students responded to my questionnaire. The respondents were selected on the basis that they were Norwegian, were currently studying in Norway and had a moderate to high proficiency level in English. Respondents were recruited using *opportunity sampling* as I recruited respondents who were easily accessible to me and who met the criteria for my research project (Dörnyei & Csizer, 2012: 81). Additionally, *snowball sampling* was used to recruit a greater variation of students outside of my own network, where I asked respondents to suggest potential participants that met the criteria for my research project (Dörnyei & Csizer, 2012: 81). As mentioned above, the web-based questionnaire allowed me to recruit a broader sample group that more accurately represented the diversity within the population (Sue & Ritter, 2012: 18). However, although my sample group cannot provide an accurate representation of all Norwegian university and college students, it provides insight into Norwegian attitudes - which is the aim of this research.

In terms of sample selection, the employment of web-based questionnaires can limit my control as the researcher - especially in the case of *non-probability sampling*. In this case, many of my respondents were self-selected as they had chosen to participate in the study based on their own evaluation of whether or not they fit into the sample population (Dörnyei, 2007: 122). This limited my ability to control all variables potentially affecting the generation of valid data - one being the certainty that all respondents truly matched the criteria for participation. However, by using Qualtrics, I was able to control some variables. Qualtrics allowed me to limit URL access with password protection and to ensure that participants only responded to the survey once. Additionally, data was analysed afterwards, which gave me the chance to control variables such as participants' nationality(ies). A table providing an overview of the participants' demographic details is presented in the appendix (appendix 2).

3.1.3 Data Collection Procedure

Participants were asked to participate in a web-based questionnaire called *How does the speaker sound?*, but were not informed that their attitudes toward non-native varieties of English and their speakers were being studied, nor were they given detailed information

about my research project. Additionally, participants were asked questions regarding their demographics.

Using an online questionnaire meant participants could complete the survey in their own time where they were able to give personal evaluations without the potential pressure or influence of a researcher or other respondent present (Sue & Ritter, 2012: 18). The participants were asked to listen to each recording and to evaluate *how the speaker sounded to them*. This was clearly stated before each speech evaluation. Participants were able to play the recordings multiple times. Additionally, Qualtrics allowed me to randomise the order in which speech samples appeared in the questionnaire, meaning the order they were evaluated in would differ from participant to participant.

In terms of the format of the questionnaire, I aimed to make the questionnaire reasonably short by only focusing on elements that were most important for my research (Dörnyei & Csizer, 2012: 76). Additionally, the semantic differential items in the matrix table were mixed to ensure that items from the same factor did not appear right after one another. This was to provide variation to the test - to reduce the chance of participants rating all items from one factor the same by repeating responses (Dörnyei & Csizer, 2012: 78).

3.2 Qualitative Interviews

My qualitative research is based on Kleining and Witt's (2000) presentation of the Qualitative Heuristic Approach which "[...] [tries] to bring back the qualities of exploration and discovery into psychological and sociological academic research" (Kleining & Witt, 2000: 2). This approach focuses on four rules for qualitative research and collecting qualitative data: 1) that the researcher is open to new findings and capable of diverging from presupposed opinions if findings from qualitative research contradict the researcher's initial beliefs on the topic of study (Kleining & Witt, 2000: 2), 2) that exploration during the research process is crucial in deciding the final topic of research and that the initial research topic is therefore only preliminary and can be changed (Kleining & Witt, 2000: 2-3), 3) that data collection methods and sample groups should be designed to capture a variation of perspectives so that collected data represents the diversity of the research topic (Kleining & Witt, 2000: 3), and 4) that the analysis takes this diverse data and uses it to elucidate similarities (Kleining & Witt, 2000: 3). Throughout this section, examples of how my research process is influenced by the Qualitative Heuristic Approach are provided.

3.2.1 Research Design

To capture a variation of perspectives on Norwegian attitudes toward non-native English accents and their speakers, I conducted one-on-one in-depth qualitative interviews with non-native English speakers living in Norway. These interviews are also used to better understand social relations and societal dominance in Norwegian society (Tjora, 2021: 129). In this case, the experiences of non-native English speakers living in Norway provided a perspective on Norwegian attitudes toward non-native accents of English and their speakers. In this way, informants contributed to the discussion of social relations between Norwegians and non-native English speakers. They provided insight into Norwegian attitudes by sharing their experiences as non-native English speakers in Norway. Additionally, they were able to provide insight into what kind of attitudes they believed Norwegians had, thoughts on where the attitudes might stem from, and whether or not they believed some non-native accents and speakers had societal dominance over others.

I wanted to choose an interview structure that gave respondents the chance to express their personal experiences as non-native English speakers in Norway. I felt that I was able to do this by choosing an interview structure that would permit the respondent to have greater influence over the direction of our conversation. For this reason, I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews (Johannessen et. al., 2017: 148). The respondent's ability to go into depth on certain topics and my ability to ask follow-up questions, allowed for a collection of rich data that may not have been collected if the interview had been structured differently, (information on my interview guide follows). Specifically, the use of open-ended questions led respondents to share relevant information that I had not thought of asking them prior to conducting the interview (Tjora, 2021: 128).

While the in-depth interviews allowed for flexibility and digressions, I also needed to ensure a level of standardisation in all interviews (Johannessen et al., 2017: 148). With the understanding that the data collection process and process of analysis were mutually dependent on one another, I strove to ask informants similar questions in order to later draw on their similarities (Kleining & Witt, 2000: 3). This was possible as the semi-structured interviews were based on an interview guide (appendix 3) which was used as an outline for each conversation. This interview guide was designed on the basis of Johannessen et al. (2017)'s interview guide suggestions where Johannessen et al. (2017) recommended a list of question types to ask in a specific order: 1) factual questions - simple questions used as a warm up for the respondent, 2) introduction questions - general questions related to the theme of the interview, 3) transition questions - questions that bring the conversation from a general

level to a personal one, 4) key questions - the main part of the qualitative interview where the interviewer aims to gather in-depth answers from the respondent, 5) complicated/sensitive questions - in this case, questions regarding whether or not the respondent had experienced discrimination due to their non-native accent in English, and finally 6) concluding questions - questions that round the interview off cleanly, leaving the respondent with a good feeling (Johannessen et al., 2017: 150). The variation of questions in the interview guide took into consideration the goal of collecting data that would capture a variety of perspectives (Kleining & Witt, 2000: 3). For example, similar questions were asked throughout the interview, but in different ways and from different angles. This choice was influenced by the third rule of the heuristic qualitative approach, where Kleining and Witt state that a "[...] variation of questions avoids just one answer [and] if researchers assume that a variable may influence the data they should implement variations" (Kleining & Witt, 2000: 3).

3.2.2 Choice of Informants

Similar to the verbal guise test, *non-probability sampling* was used to recruit informants for my interviews. Due to accessibility and the intention of generating comparable data between methods, I chose to interview international students in Norway - a subgroup of non-native English speakers living in Norway that would correlate best with the sample group responding to the verbal guise test, i.e., Norwegian university and college students. Thus, the respondent groups of the verbal guise test and the interview were comparable.

Informants were recruited through Facebook groups for international students studying in Norway. Additionally, informants were also recruited on my behalf by personal contacts who knew informants who met the criteria for my project. The criteria for participation were as follows: 1) that the participant is an international student studying in Norway, 2) that they speak English with a discernible non-native accent, and 3) that they use or have for some period of time used English as their main language of communication in everyday life in Norway.

In terms of ethical considerations, I ensured the anonymity of potential informants by having those recruiting on my behalf provide potential participants with my contact information, asking them to contact me directly if they were interested in participating. From there, I received quite a few offers to participate. However, I was selective in which informants I ended up choosing. As Tjora (2012) mentions, the main rule for recruiting respondents for qualitative interviews is that the respondents can provide good reflections around the topic of study. The thoughts and experiences they share around the topic should to

some extent represent not only themselves, but also a more general point of view or position in later analysis (Tjora, 2012: 145 own translation).

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, it was of high priority throughout the design of my research project in its entirety that both methods used for this study complemented the other - also while recruiting participants.

I interviewed four non-native English speakers who were currently studying in Norway. Interviewing a larger sample group would have been very interesting, however I made the conscious decision to only include four informants as this allowed me to go into more detail in my interviews given the time constraints of my project. Additionally, this study already uses a multi-method approach, which some have argued could limit the ability to produce an in-depth analysis of data. I was therefore hesitant to interview too many participants as I did not want it to affect the quality of my analysis considering the size of this particular study. The four informants are presented in the table below. Each informant was given a pseudonym.

Table 1: List of Informants

Name	Native Language(s)	Nationality(ies)
Sadia	Bangla	Bangladeshi
Line	German	German
Sofia	Russian	Russian
Camille	French	French

3.2.3 Data Collection Procedure

After my research project and choice of qualitative method was approved by NSD, I began conducting interviews. The interviews took a minimum of 28 minutes and 33 seconds and a maximum of 46 minutes and 55 seconds. The interviews were conducted via Zoom both due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but also so that access to participants was not limited by geographic location. This had additional benefits such as the informants being able to choose the location for the interviews which might have made them more comfortable.

During the first few minutes of each interview, my priority was to establish contact and trust with the informant (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2017: 160). This was done through casual conversation, where informants were asked how they were doing, how long they had been in Norway for, how they were liking it - amongst other questions that aimed to produce a relaxed dialogue between myself and the informant. These moments were essential for the outcome of the rest of the interview as they allowed the informants to gain a general impression of who I was before they were asked to share personal experiences and feelings (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2017: 160).

Next, I briefly provided information regarding the research project and asked the informants if they had any questions. In some instances, I had already been in contact with the participants by email prior to the interview and was able to move directly into the interview as time was limited. Additionally, prior to the interviews, all informants were provided with information regarding the research project, their rights as informants, anonymity, the process of storing and deleting data, amongst other relevant information all based on NSD's guidelines. Additionally, all informants were asked for consent in writing - both for their participation, that their answers would be stored and analysed, but also that the interviews would be recorded with a diktafon (a recording device). Each participant was informed that an audio recording would be taken of the interview, but the diktafon was purposefully not noticeable and I did not give it any attention during the interview as I did not want potential scepticism to make participants nervous (Tjora, 2012: 138). As NSD had given me permission to record the interviews, using the diktafon let me focus solely on the informant and our communication (Tjora, 2012:137).

Throughout the interview, I focused on actively listening to what the informant had to say. I was aware of possible personal biases on my part and tried to the best of my ability to be objective. In this case, I wanted to be open to what the informant was saying, especially if it contradicted my predisposed beliefs on the topic of study (Kleining & Witt, 2000: 2). In one instance where the informant had difficulty understanding my question, I needed to reword the question and even present an example to help them understand. While listening back to the recording of this interview, I recognized that my example could have reflected my own bias. I have therefore chosen to exclude the response that followed, from my data analysis.

Near the end of the interview, I followed Johannessen et al.'s (2017) suggestion to round off the interview on a light note. I also asked them if they had anything else they wanted to add to the conversation or if they had any questions. This gave the informants the

chance to address any subjects that they might not have had the chance to speak about, or to ask me any questions about things they might have felt anxious about or thought about during the interview (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2017: 161 own translation).

3.2.4 Transcription

For this research project, I decided to produce standard orthographic transcripts (Hepburn & Bolden, 2017a). In replicating exact wording and including details of utterances that were relevant for my topic of research I was able to produce "full transcriptions" (Tjora, 2012: 143). In these transcriptions, all participants were anonymised by giving them pseudonyms and leaving out identifiable information from the transcriptions (Hepburn & Bolden, 2017a). An outline of the transcription conventions used is included as an appendix (appendix 5).

In each process of transcription, I chose to listen to the entire interview once before beginning transcribing. This was especially helpful in the case of this study where informants had a variety of non-native English accents and different ways of speaking (Hepburn & Bolden, 2017b). For this reason, it was also important that interviews were transcribed with the exact words of the informants, without correcting grammar or replacing any words that were said (Hepburn & Bolden, 2017b).

It is relevant to briefly draw on Kvale and Brinkmann (2017) here, as they have written on the importance of taking into consideration verbal and non-verbal differences between cultures when interviewing people from a different cultural background. With one informant I was at times unsure if her saying "yes" represented her answer to the question or if it was her way of expressing that she understood what was being asked. Interestingly, Kvale and Brinkmann (2017) also discuss this where "yes" is said to indicate different things in different cultures. This is an example of how I benefited from the process of transcription, but also why it was important that my transcriptions were an accurate replica of the dialogue from the interviews as the intention behind the utterances became more apparent when seen as a whole. This helped me enhance the validity of my data analysis, as I would be able to select extracts by carefully ensuring that I was interpreting the data correctly (Friedman, 2012: 194) and not for example taking quotations out of their original context.

As for the presentation of participants in my data analysis, I was selective in which transcription excerpts I included to ensure to the best of my ability that informants' identities would be kept anonymous (Tjora, 2012: 159). I did this by carefully selecting data to avoid presenting data that could, in combination, identify the participant.

4.0 Data Analysis

In order to analyse the data from the verbal guise test and the qualitative interviews, I chose to draw on the similarities between the two data sets. During the process of coding, I categorised interview data into Mulac's (1976) three factors: socio-intellectual status, aesthetic quality and dynamism – the three factors that were evaluated in this study. Within each factor, I conducted a content analysis, where I discovered patterns between the evaluations of semantic differential items and the qualitative data (Friedman, 2012: 191). This inductive approach was used to establish the themes for my data analysis, which are presented thematically within the following subchapters: *5.1 Socio-intellectual status, 5.2 Aesthetic Quality* and *5.3 Dynamism*. In terms of authenticity, I find it is important to address that I do recognize how my personal bias or stance could have influenced my analysis (Friedman, 2012: 194). However, as illustrated throughout the previous chapter, diligent measures were taken to limit this bias from affecting the validity of data or the authenticity in which data is presented.

The evaluations of the French, German, Hindi and Russian speech samples are presented at the beginning of each subchapter. When presenting results, the notion of an item being rated "highly" or "higher than" other speech samples indicates that the evaluation is closer to the left-handed adjective (1) of the semantic differential item, i.e., the lower the number the "higher" the rating. In the 12 tables presented in this chapter, the average evaluations of each item can be found under the "mean" column. To the left of every table, numbers are assigned to each semantic differential item, signifying the order in which the items appeared in the verbal guise test.

In the data analysis the qualitative data from the interviews is used to support the findings from the verbal guise test and to further strengthen the validity and reliability of the results and the methodological approach used. Additionally, the qualitative data provides a new perspective on the discussion of Norwegian attitudes, both in terms of language, but also in terms of Norwegian attitudes toward non-native English speakers.

4.1 Socio-intellectual Status

The socio-intellectual status factor includes the following items: *rich – poor, high social status – low social status, literate – illiterate* and *white-collar – blue-collar.* What is interesting to note about the verbal guise test results is the order in which the speech samples are evaluated, i.e., how the speech samples are ranked in the same order for every semantic differential item. Evaluations are presented in the following tables:

Table 2: Socio-Intellectual Status – French

#	Item	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance
2	Rich:Poor	1.00	6.00	**3.29**	1.11	1.23
6	High social status: Low social status	1.00	6.00	**3.16**	1.07	1.15
7	Literate:Illiterate	1.00	6.00	**3.10**	1.27	1.62
11	White-collar: Blue-collar	1.00	7.00	**3.35**	1.28	1.64

Table 3: Socio-Intellectual Status – German

#	Item	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance
2	Rich:Poor	1.00	6.00	**3.12**	1.13	1.28
6	High social status: Low social status	1.00	7.00	**2.94**	1.38	1.90
7	Literate:Illiterate	1.00	6.00	**2.80**	1.28	1.65
11	White- collar: Blue-collar	1.00	7.00	**3.08**	1.38	1.92

Table 4: Socio-Intellectual Status – Hindi

#	Item	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance
2	Rich:Poor	1.00	6.00	**4.43**	1.30	1.70
6	High social status: Low social status	1.00	7.00	**4.45**	1.23	1.50
7	Literate:Illiterate	1.00	7.00	**3.76**	1.46	2.14
11	White-collar: Blue-collar	1.00	7.00	**4.49**	1.42	2.01

Table 5: Socio-Intellectual Status – Russian

#	Item	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance
2	Rich:Poor	1.00	7.00	**4.80**	1.17	1.37
6	High social status: Low social status	1.00	7.00	**4.98**	1.28	1.63
7	Literate:Illiterate	1.00	7.00	**4.65**	1.41	1.99
11	White-collar: Blue-collar	1.00	7.00	**5.10**	1.36	1.85

Table 6: Mean Evaluation of All Socio-Intellectual Status Items

Speech Sample	Mean evaluation of all items
French speech sample	*3.23*
German speech sample	*2.99*
Hindi speech sample	*4.28*
Russian speech sample	*4.88*

As seen in the tables, the German accent is evaluated highest in terms of socio-intellectual status, receiving an overall rating of 2.99 - which is the highest rating of all evaluations of items in the verbal guise test. Following the German speech sample, the French speech sample received an overall evaluation of 3.23. The speech sample rated in third place in terms of socio-intellectual status is the Hindi sample with an overall evaluation of 4.28. What is interesting to note regarding the evaluation of the Hindi speech sample is that it received a significantly higher evaluation in terms of the item *literate – illiterate* than it did on the other items. The Russian speech sample is evaluated lowest at 4.88 - which is the most negative overall rating of all factors from the verbal guise test results. Specifically, the two most negative evaluations in the entire test were evaluations of the Russian speech sample in terms of the items *white-collar (1) – blue-collar (7)* where the Russian speech sample is rated at 5.10 and *high social status (1) – low social status (7)* where it is rated at 4.98.

Overall, the results from the verbal guise test show that Norwegians evaluated the German and French speech samples higher than the Hindi and Russian speech sample in terms of socio-intellectual status. These results concur with the proposition of accents from western European countries being regarded as more prestigious than accents from other non-native English speaking countries (Lippi-Green, 1994 in Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010: 217-218). Moreover, the concept of language ideologies can be used to discuss both the findings from the verbal guise test, but also the claim that western European accents are regarded as more prestigious than other non-native English accents. As stated in chapter 2.0, history plays a fundamental role in building linguistic hierarchies, and society plays a rudimentary role in maintaining them (Schieffelin & Woolard, 1994). An example of this in Norway is the Norwegian education system where students are taught a western European

language as their third language, such as French, German or Spanish - which could invoke notions of these languages being ideologically better than others, thereby gaining higher positions of status in Norwegian society.

Socio-intellectual status stereotypes of Germans being intelligent and belonging to the upper class (Ball, 1983; Callan–Gallois, 1982 in Teufel, 1995: 138), are also supported - both through Norwegians' evaluations of the verbal guise test, but also through Line's experience as a German international student in Norway.

When Line was asked both if she thinks Norwegians would consider Germans as highly educated or as having high status in Norwegian society, she responded the following: "hm maybe high [status] sounds very high <laughs> um but maybe like upper. Like from above upper middle class", and continues "hm maybe not highly [educated], but high". Additionally, stating that based on what she thinks and what she has heard, she thinks the stereotypes Norwegians have toward German people are that Germans are punctual, hard-working and diligent - all attributes that can be related to socio-intellectual status. She then mentions the impact she thinks these stereotypes have on German people living in Norway: " um in general, I would say that the German stereotype is beneficial um for a person speaking with a German accent here in Norway".

The excerpts of qualitative data and the results from the verbal guise test are indicators that stereotypes do play a role in Norwegians' perceptions of identity concerning Germans and a German accent in English. Additionally, the results from the verbal guise test provide evidence of the role of accent in perceiving a speakers' class and profession, amongst other attributes indicating the level of a speaker's socio-intellectual status (Hill & Tombs, 2011: 651). Thirdly, the transcription excerpt presents an example of how some non-native English accents can be beneficial for the speaker in Norwegian society, further elucidating how other accents can be "[...] both manner and means for exclusion" in society (Lippi-Green, 1994: 165), or at least regarded as less beneficial. One of the accents that may be less beneficial in Norwegian society is the Russian accent.

Norwegians' evaluations of the Russian speech sample in terms of socio-intellectual status correlate with Sofia's experiences as an international student from Russia living in Norway. However, unlike the German accent being beneficial in Norwegian society, the Russian accent is not regarded positively, especially in terms of socio-intellectual status. When asked whether Sofia thinks Norwegians associate Russian accents and speakers with a high level of status in society, she replied "I don't think they do. I think just an average people [sic!]". Sofia's comment that Norwegians do not associate the Russian accent with a

high level of status correlates with Norwegians' evaluations of the Russian speech sample where the speech sample is rated at 4.98 in terms of *high social status (1) – low social status (7)*, and 5.08 for *white-collar (1) – blue-collar (7)* - the most negative ratings out of all the verbal guise test results.

Norwegians' attitudes toward the Russian non-native English accent could be discussed and explained in a number of ways. One of the possible explanations was addressed during my interview with Line, the German international student. Interestingly, Line made the link between Norwegians' language attitudes toward non-native English accents and Norwegians' perceptions of out-groups in Norwegian society, such as refugees. In other words, a link was drawn between Norwegians' perception of an out-group's socio-intellectual status and Norwegians' attitudes toward non-native English accents.

Extract 1:

Line: [...] I don't know how many refugees are in Norway here in [city] I've never heard of anything but um I would only say that maybe when it comes to Eastern European accents that [Norwegians] could be more or could – that they could also think oh yeah that's (like) a person with a lower academic background [...]

Line was however quick to mention that refugees can of course have an academic background too, also noting that refugee families can definitely be recognized as having high status and a high academic background in Norwegian society. While Line was quick to follow up her initial response with a more socially acceptable response (Garrett, 2010), her initial response implying that Norwegians associate eastern Europeans with a lower academic background, invites further discussion.

According to *Fakta om Innvandring* (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2022), 270 592 immigrants of the 819 356 immigrants living in Norway today are from eastern European countries. This means that eastern Europeans make up 33% of the immigrant population in Norway - making up the largest geographical group of immigrants here. Additionally, according to Zahler (2019), some Norwegians hold strong negative attitudes toward immigrants in Norway, fearing that immigration can have significant consequences for Norwegians and Norwegian society - especially in terms of economic resources (Zahler, 2019). Moreover, according to Friberg and Midtbøen (2017) many eastern European immigrants get jobs in the low-wage labour market in Norway - a labour market that many Norwegians do not want to be associated with because they associate it with low status

(Friberg & Midtbøen, 2017). Each of these pieces of information could be valuable in understanding Norwegians' attitudes toward the Russian speech sample, as an eastern European accent like the Russian accent could potentially trigger negative connotations like those mentioned above, that could lead to an interlocutor making assumptions about the speaker's levels of social and economic status and job prestige.

Similar to the Russian speech sample, the Hindi speech sample was evaluated below average in terms of socio-intellectual status. The Hindi speech sample was evaluated at 4.45 in terms of *high social status (1) – low social status (7),* 4.49 for *white-collar (1) – blue-collar (7),* 4.43 for *rich (1) – poor (7)* and 3.76 *for literate (1) – illiterate (7)*. To discuss these results I draw on the role of stereotypes and prejudice in perceiving identity (Beinhoff, 2013: 21). Firstly, there are a number of different stereotypes associated with Indian people - some that could be considered as prejudices as they are negative connotations held against Indian people as a whole (Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010: 217). Examples of these are as follows: "Indians are poor", "the 'real India' is dirty and chaotic", and all Indians have the same overexaggerated heavy Indian accent that is portrayed and made fun of in the media (Culture Vulture, n.d.), for example in the case of Apu, as discussed earlier in this thesis, which is one of the few portrayals of Indian or even South Asian people in American cartoons.

As mentioned in chapter 2.0 the overexaggerated and stereotypical Indian accent of Apu is used to portray an Indian convenience store owner. As this character is one of the few cartoon characters to represent Indian or even South Asian people in American cartoons, Apu's identity holds a lot of weight in shaping the public image of both Indian and South Asian people in America (The Daily Show with Trevor Noah, 2018), especially in regard to socio-intellectual status where producers of *The Simpsons* have drawn a link between the Indian accent and a less prestigious job. However, this portrayal of an Indian man along with other stereotypes regarding Indian people may also influence Norwegians' perception of Indian people. Moreover, this could influence the associations Norwegians have to accents similar to Apu's - such as the Hindi speech sample included in the verbal guise test.

The original version of *The Simpsons* was televised on Norwegian TV for 20 years before an announcement was made that the show would be dubbed into Norwegian (Brattland & Cedsal, 2007). Many Norwegians were sceptical of this development as they had "[...] built close relationships to the characters' voices and linguistic personalities" (Brattland & Cedsal, 2007 own translation), illustrating how some Norwegians link language to personality and vice versa. Norway is one of the European countries that most prefers watching undubbed versions of films and TV shows (Micola et al., 2019: 490). With this information, it is

possible to assume that cartoons like *The* Simpsons and other English-speaking films could influence Norwegian language attitudes. As stated by Lippi-Green (1997) the linguistic portrayals of the English language in animations, such as *Disney*, play a significant role in shaping children and youths' attitudes toward foreign accents and speakers (Lippi-Green, 1997). Furthermore, the linguistic input children are exposed to during childhood can influence their language attitudes in real life (Dobrow & Gidney, 1998: 107). It is therefore possible that Norwegians' exposure to English-speaking films and shows, such as *The Simpsons* influence their attitudes toward non-native English accents and speakers. Further still, it could provide evidence of the role of stereotypes and prejudices in shaping Norwegian language attitudes.

A lack of representation of an entire social group enhances the weight and power of stereotypes and prejudice in defining group members. In other words, stereotypes and prejudice can be especially problematic when representation of a social category is limited. This can even lead to greater overgeneralizations of social categories, grouping together multiple social groups that are highly different, but judging them as if they were the same. Additionally, it is problematic and limiting when these groups are judged on the basis of prejudiced assumptions. An example of this was brought up in my interview with Sadia, the international student from Bangladesh.

> Extract 2:
> Sadia: [...] I heard from someone like okay Asian people come here (not for the study actually [sic!]) they come here to earn money – a way to earn money so they just take the way [sic!] as a student but they actually [sic!] (xxx) earning money and (not to) pursue the studies [sic!] [...]

This assumption is an example of prejudice, where negative stereotypes become an attitude toward a social grouping in its entirety (Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010: 217), failing to recognize the diversity and idiosyncratic characteristics of its members. In this case, a Norwegian placed all Asians in the same negatively connotated category, implying that they were only in Norway to earn money.

Another example of a Norwegian associating Asians with lower economic status is presented by Sadia who shares her experience coming to Norway during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Extract 3:

Sadia: [...] my previous flatmate she didn't – she used to not talk to me she's like – she thought like ok you are coming from Asia you are dirty okay you have corona like that – that time like that peak time of corona so she was really mean to me she has a little – I don't know – for others she was ok but for me she's like please keep away from me please maintain 6 feet distance [...]

Here, Sadia provides an example of how global issues can affect Norwegians' behaviour toward out-group members. In this excerpt, Sadia also implies that she thinks her Norwegian roommate associates Asia with 'dirtiness'. These prejudiced assumptions insinuate that some Norwegians associate Asian people with low economic status, which emphasises the results of the questionnaire - at least in terms of how the Hindi speech sample is evaluated in comparison to the French and German samples in terms of the items *rich – poor.*

Norwegians' evaluated the Hindi speech sample higher in terms of the semantic differential item *literate – illiterate*, than the other items in the socio-intellectual status factor (which are all evaluated lower and quite similarly). Here, it is interesting to tie in Norwegian attitudes toward Indian immigrants in Norway where Indians are recognised as most qualified for intellectual jobs in comparison to other immigrant groups living in Norway (Solberg, 2020). This could explain why the Hindi speech sample is evaluated closer to the Russian speech sample in terms of *high social status – low social status, white-collar – blue-collar* and *rich – poor* , while being evaluated closer to the French sample in terms of *literate – illiterate.*

4.2 Aesthetic Quality

Mulac (1976) categorises the following semantically differential items under the factor *Aesthetic Quality: pleasing – displeasing, sweet – sour, nice – awful* and *beautiful – ugly.* Similar to the previous factor, the speech samples are ranked in the same order for every semantic differential item, meaning there is a hierarchical evaluation of the entire aesthetic quality factor. However, in terms of aesthetic quality, the speech samples are placed in new positions in the evaluation order.

Table 7: Aesthetic Quality – French

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Pleasing: Displeasing	1.00	6.00	**3.06**	1.14	1.31	51
4	Sweet:Sour	1.00	6.00	**3.24**	1.02	1.04	51
9	Nice:Awful	1.00	5.00	**2.94**	1.06	1.11	51
12	Beautiful:Ugly	1.00	6.00	**3.22**	1.13	1.27	51

Table 8: Aesthetic Quality – German

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Pleasing: Displeasing	1.00	7.00	**4.14**	1.40	1.96	51
4	Sweet:Sour	1.00	7.00	**3.61**	1.52	2.32	51
9	Nice:Awful	1.00	7.00	**3.45**	1.35	1.82	51
12	Beautiful:Ugly	1.00	7.00	**4.31**	1.26	1.59	51

Table 9: Aesthetic Quality – Hindi

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Pleasing: Displeasing	1.00	7.00	**4.08**	1.37	1.88	51
4	Sweet:Sour	1.00	7.00	**3.39**	1.42	2.00	51
9	Nice:Awful	1.00	6.00	**3.06**	1.16	1.35	51
12	Beautiful:Ugly	2.00	6.00	**4.27**	1.03	1.06	51

Table 10: Aesthetic Quality – Russian

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Pleasing: Displeasing	1.00	7.00	**4.96**	1.45	2.12	51
4	Sweet:Sour	1.00	7.00	**4.57**	1.42	2.01	51
9	Nice:Awful	1.00	7.00	**4.37**	1.34	1.80	51
12	Beautiful:Ugly	3.00	7.00	**4.88**	0.92	0.85	51

Table 11: Mean Evaluation of All Aesthetic Quality Items

Speech Sample	Mean evaluation of all items
French speech sample	**3.12**
German speech sample	**3.88**
Hindi speech sample	**3.70**
Russian speech sample	**4.70**

These ratings show a clear order of evaluation for the aesthetic quality factor in its entirety: the French speech sample being rated highest (3.12), the Hindi speech sample rated second highest (3.70), followed by the German speech sample (3.88) and then the Russian sample (4.70). In terms of individual items within this factor, the French speech sample is rated significantly higher than the other speech samples in terms of *pleasing – displeasing* and *beautiful – ugly,* while only being evaluated slightly higher than the Hindi sample in terms of *nice-awful* and *sweet-sour.* While the German sample is not rated much lower than the Hindi sample in terms of the items *pleasing – displeasing* and *beautiful – ugly,* the largest jump in the order of evaluation is between the German and Russian speech sample, especially in terms of items *nice – awful* and *sweet – sour.*

The *Aesthetic Quality* factor resembles the *Social Attractiveness* factor presented in many language attitude studies, such as that of Coupland and Bishop (2007). Moreover, the results from the verbal guise test correlate with the evaluations of accents in Coupland and Bishop's study (2007), where participants also evaluated the French accent highest, while the Asian accent (in my case the Hindi speech sample) was also evaluated higher than the German accent (Coupland & Bishop, 2007). What is further illustrated by both Teufel's (1995) and Bernaisch and Koch's (2016) studies is that accents that are regarded as less prestigious or as having less high status, competence and power than another accent, will be evaluated higher in terms of social attractiveness and solidarity than the accent that was recognized as more prestigious, competent or powerful. This evaluation pattern is comparable to Norwegians' evaluations of non-native English accents presented in this study.

In Bernaish and Koch's study (2016), Indian English is rated higher than British English in terms of the solidarity items *humble* and *friendly.* This evaluation correlates with

Norwegians' evaluations of the Hindi speech sample and the German speech sample. In the previous subchapter, the German accent was rated highest in terms of socio-intellectual status. In this chapter we see that the Hindi speech sample is evaluated higher than the German speech sample in terms of aesthetic quality especially in terms of the items *nice – awful* and *sweet – sour.*

The similarities between studies are used to highlight the notion that accents associated with higher connotations of status are not necessarily preferred in terms of factors such as solidarity, social attractiveness or aesthetic quality. To support this claim, I would like to draw on how language ideologies can originate from historical dominance (Schieffelin & Woolard, 1994: 68) and how this dominance over societal groups leads to the subordination of some languages in society. On the basis of my findings and the findings of other studies, I would like to argue that language ideology and the societal power of some languages over others could influence the evaluation of a language regarding socio-intellectual status, but not necessarily factors such as aesthetic quality. In this way, it is possible to understand how non-native English accents, like the Hindi speech sample, are rated higher in terms of aesthetic quality than more prestigious non-native accents, such as German. The French sample, however, is linked to higher status in Norwegian society, while still rating highest in terms of aesthetic quality. This could be explained in a number of ways - one being the role of stereotypes on attitudes toward the French people and language.

According to the results of the verbal guise test, the French speech sample received the following evaluations: 3.22 for the semantic differential item *beautiful (1) – ugly (7),* and 3.06 for item *pleasing (1) – displeasing (7)*. In terms of these items, the Hindi speech sample was evaluated at 4.27 and 4.08, the German speech sample at 4.31 and 4.14, and the Russian sample at 4.88 and 4.96.

While a French accent or the French language is often perceived as the language of love, triggering stereotypes of romance and attractiveness, languages like German are seen as being rough and ugly (Fries, 2011). In film and media, the French language is sexualised, romanticised and idealised - typically being used to portray attractive and/or passionate characters, leaving the audience with a stereotyped view of the French language, and even French people (see Lippi-Green, 1997: 109 and The Late Show with Stephen Colbert, 2016). This is also seen in *Disney* movies, where most foreign accents in English are used to portray villainous characters, whereas the French accent is used to portray love, attractiveness and passion (Lippi-Green, 1997). This exact notion was addressed during my interview with Camille, the international student from France, who shares her experiences of Norwegian

attitudes toward the French language and French people, especially women. Camille suggests that Norwegians' attitudes are impacted by stereotypes portrayed in film, media and literature. When asked what stereotypes she thinks are attached to the French language she responds "the seduction", further presenting an example of this in Norway:

Extract 4:
Camille: [...] I spoke about this – this kind of thing with my norwegian roommates and they told me yes I completely agree for me french – you are very seducing you are very attractive uh and he told me because in each movie that there is a french [sic!] it's always about – that it's always linked with seduction and love stories and its true <laughs>

———

Extract 5:
Camille: one of my friends um is studying french literature [...] she's here with me in norway to study french literature – that has no sense [sic!] but okay it's like that and um during her course they have to speak in a group and they were talking about the cliché about each culture and some Norwegian guys told her that the cliché that comes to their mind about french were their underwear and we have a lot of cliché [sic!] about seduction love uh romantic or not kind of things.

When asked whether Camille thought the French accent alone could trigger Norwegians to think of these stereotypes, or 'clichés' as she called them, she replied:

Extract 6:
Camille: I think some yes and uh during a party it happens a lot of times

———

Extract 7:
Camille: uh yeah just because they hear the accent, they are [sic!] ah french people and they – I think they have not all of them but some can have a biased idea of us and think that maybe we can be like easy girls or something like that yep

With these examples, Camille illustrates the role of stereotypes in Norwegians' perceptions of French people. Additionally, her examples shed light on how stereotypical connotations of foreign accents can lead to assumptions being made about the speaker's social identity (Giles,

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1970: 211). In Camille's case, assumptions are even made regarding French people's demeanour and personality. This example directly elucidates the issues of stereotyping and the way French women are then homogenised and depersonalised (Beinhoff, 2013: 21), essentially being perceived as one entity by Norwegians; a monolith. This categorization presents evidence of how stereotypes are limiting and problematic (Lippi-Green, 1997: 104). Additionally, Camille's experience provides an example of Norwegians' attitudes toward the French accent and the way this accent triggers associations of seduction, amongst other stereotypical associations. This is also supported by Norwegians' evaluation of the French speech sample in terms of the item *beautiful – ugly* in comparison to the other speech samples.

On the other hand, Camille also provides examples of how her French accent is perceived positively, and how positive stereotypes toward the French people and culture have led to Norwegians having positive reactions to her accent, which are not necessarily as problematic and limiting as the example mentioned above.

Extract 8:

Camille: [...] from my experience I saw that we – we <laughs> – that – that a lot of people like french so immediately when they hear the accent which is obvious <laughs> they start uh saying some words in french that are very happy it depends on the which norwegian [sic!] most of the time it's like that when they're a little bit drunk

When asked whether Camille thinks Norwegians like French culture, she responded with: "I have the feeling, yes <laughs> yeah for what I saw uh they seem to appreciate French people". As mentioned in the previous chapter on *socio-intellectual status*, having certain non-native English accents could be more beneficial than having other non-native accents in Norwegian society. While Line, the German international student, spoke on the socio-intellectual status stereotypes linked to the German non-native accent as being beneficial, Camille presents examples of how the French non-native accent is beneficial in Norwegian society, specifically in regards to social situations.

4.3 Dynamism

The Dynamism factor includes the following items: *aggressive – unaggressive, strong – weak, loud – soft,* and *active – passive.* Unlike the two previous factors, the results from the verbal guise test show that all speech samples are ranked in different orders depending on the semantic differential item in question.

Table 11: Dynamism – French

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
3	Aggressive: Unaggressive	3.00	7.00	**5.39**	1.10	1.22	51
5	Strong:Weak	1.00	7.00	**3.53**	1.14	1.31	51
8	Loud:Soft	2.00	7.00	**4.61**	1.12	1.26	51
10	Active:Passive	1.00	7.00	**3.39**	1.07	1.14	51

Table 12: Dynamism – German

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
3	Aggressive: Unaggressive	2.00	7.00	**4.84**	1.65	2.72	51
5	Strong:Weak	1.00	7.00	**3.61**	1.60	2.55	51
8	Loud:Soft	1.00	6.00	**3.65**	1.40	1.95	51
10	Active:Passive	1.00	6.00	**3.10**	1.32	1.74	51

Table 13: Dynamism – Hindi

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
3	Aggressive: Unaggressive	2.00	7.00	**5.84**	1.21	1.47	51
5	Strong:Weak	2.00	7.00	**4.51**	1.09	1.19	51
8	Loud:Soft	2.00	7.00	**4.53**	1.29	1.66	51
10	Active:Passive	2.00	7.00	**4.29**	1.29	1.66	51

Table 14: Dynamism – Russian

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
3	Aggressive: Unaggressive	2.00	7.00	**4.92**	1.37	1.88	51
5	Strong:Weak	1.00	7.00	**3.96**	1.44	2.08	51
8	Loud:Soft	2.00	6.00	**4.10**	1.14	1.30	51
10	Active:Passive	2.00	7.00	**4.39**	1.57	2.47	51

In terms of the semantic differential item *aggressive (1) – unaggressive (7)*, speech samples are ranked in the following order: German (4.84), Russian (4.92), French (5.39) and Hindi (5.84). In terms of the item *active (1) – passive (7),* the order of evaluation is: German (3.10), French (3.39), Hindi (4.29) and Russian (4.39). In terms of the item *strong (1) – weak (7)* the order of evaluation is: French (3.53), German (3.61), Russian (3.96) and Hindi (4.51). And lastly, in terms of the item *loud (1) – soft (7)* the evaluation order is: German (3.65), Russian (4.10), Hindi (4.53) and French (4.61). As shown in these results, there is not one consistent order of evaluation for all items within the *dynamism* factor. For this reason, it is important to discuss some of these evaluation orders separately. Based on the similarities in findings

between the two data sets in this study, this section will focus specifically on the evaluations of semantic differential items *aggressive – unaggressive* and *active – passive.*

Although none of the speech samples are rated highly in terms of aggressiveness, the German and Russian speech samples received a distinctly higher rating than the French and Hindi samples. As presented earlier, in the second half of the 20th century, there was a dominant use of German and Russian accents, amongst other eastern European non-native English accents, to portray villainous cartoon characters (Dobrow & Gidney, 1998: 117; Waters, 2019: 75). Based on the information that Norway is one of the European countries that most prefers watching undubbed films and TV shows, and Lippi-Green's (1997) understanding of the influence of *Disney* on children's perceptions of language and accents, it is possible to assume that the portrayal of German and Russian-accented characters as villains could have aided in the development of Norwegians' attitudes toward these accents and speakers (Dobrow & Gidney, 1998: 107). This could then support the results from the verbal guise test where Norwegians evaluate the German and Russian accents as more aggressive than the other speech samples.

Additionally, cartoon characters portrayed with German and Russian accents, among other eastern European non-native English accents, were considered to have been influenced by global political events, such as the Cold War and the Second World War (Dobrow & Gidney, 1998: 117; Waters, 2019: 75) - an additional explanation for the German and Russian speech samples being evaluated as more aggressive than the other speech samples. This helps illustrate how society links accents to social identity, and furthermore, how global issues and historical events lead to the stereotyping of or prejudice toward social groupings - i.e., nationalities, ethnicities and cultures (Beinhoff, 2013: 19 & 21).

In terms of stereotyping and prejudice toward some non-native English speakers living in Norway, I will draw specifically on the current war between Russia and Ukraine, and Norwegians' attitudes toward Russians living in Norway. An example of this is provided by Sofia, the international student from Russia, who has experienced first-hand prejudice due to her social identity being linked to the war in Ukraine.

Extract 9:

Sofia: [...] right now it's not very comfortable to tell people where I'm from because you're like really afraid to get negative comments (about) something you don't have relation to [sic!] like at one of the corporate parties uh one of the waitresses at the

restaurant where I'm working she was pretty drunk <laughs> but then she asked me
where I'm from as I said like I'm from Russia and she called me a
terrorist as a joke but it was like a very bad joke

Earlier in our interview, Sofia shared that Norwegians are rarely able to identify her accent as being a Russian accent. It is possible that the reason her colleague's behaviour shifted once she knew Sofia was Russian was because she was not able to place her accent earlier, and was therefore unable to connect Sofia to stereotypes linked to that nationality. When Sofia was asked whether she thought a Russian person with a strong Russian accent living in Norway would receive more comments like this, she responded: "I would think so. They might".

Therefore, it is possible that Sofia's accent could have triggered negative connotations such as aggression or terrorism if her accent were to have been obviously Russian. This indicates that accent can provide information about a speaker's social identity, leading to assumptions being made based on the speaker's assumed nationality and ethnicity, amongst other attributes (Hill & Tombs, 2011: 651). The argument that a Russian accent could trigger negative connotations is also supported by the results of the verbal guise test, where Norwegians evaluated the Russian speech sample almost as highly as the German speech sample in terms of aggressiveness, which like Russia has also been the oppressor in a war (Dobrow & Gidney, 1998: 117; Waters, 2019: 75).

Interestingly, Line, the German international student, made a comment regarding exactly this notion that accent can trigger assumptions about a speaker. She stated that it is difficult to hear an accent and *not* make inferences about the speaker's background, especially during a global crises like the war in Ukraine.

Extract 10:
Line: [...] not only Norwegians also I know I immediately [sic!] ah a russian accent so you immediately have in mind that russia – or ah I don't want to say russia because maybe only putin ah but um you have a picture in mind and I also think it's natural and human to have that picture in mind immediately and I would admire if people are able not to have a picture immediately popping up in their head when they hear a certain accent [...]

This comment was quite significant and supported a central discussion in this thesis – whether or not accents can trigger interlocutors to make assumptions about the speaker's identity - i.e.,"to have a picture immediately popping up in their head when they hear a certain accent". Here, especially, it was interesting to be provided with an example of how a global crisis such as the war in Ukraine is linked to accent, which could help explain why Norwegians' evaluations of Russian and German accents were similarly seen as aggressive, and decidedly more aggressive than the other two speech samples in this study.

An evaluation that is also quite significant is the response to the Hindi speech sample which was evaluated at 5.39 for the item *aggressive (1) – unaggressive (7).* This evaluation is in fact the most positive evaluation of all the results from the verbal guise test and also the evaluation that most favours one side of a semantic differential item. What I find interesting to draw on here is how an accent could be linked to perceptions of religion.

Hinduism is generally considered to be a very peaceful religion, both in terms of finding inner peace, but also in how Hindus treat others. In this way, a possible explanation for this evaluation of the Hindi speech sample in terms of the item *aggressive – unaggressive* is that Norwegians associate the Hindi accent with Hinduism and therefore with peacefulness. This would then demonstrate that accent can trigger assumptions regarding a speaker's identity. Additionally, it would show how Norwegian language attitudes could stem from overgeneralizations about social groups (Beinhoff, 2013: 21), such as the linking of all Hindi speakers to Hinduism.

In terms of the semantic differential item *active (1) – passive (7)*, the German speech sample was rated highest at 3.10 – which is also the item within *dynamism* where the German speech sample was evaluated highest. Here, I find it interesting to draw on a quotation from Line, the German exchange student, who explains how she thinks Germans are perceived by Norwegians.

> Extract 11:
> Line: [...] that [Germans] are quite interested and open um towards um new cultures and that they want to know new things and do adventures and stuff
> _____
>
> Extract 12:
> Line: [...] um and then yeah very like oh yeah I want to go outdoors I want to go hiking and skiing and stuff like that or at least also the germans that come to norway are like that

Line's understanding of Norwegians' perceptions of Germans living in Norway is consistent with the evaluations of the German speech sample in the verbal guise test. In terms of the speech sample that was rated lowest in terms of the item *active – passive*, the Russian speech sample is evaluated at 4.39. This is similar to the ratings of the *socio-intellectual status* factor where the German speech sample was rated highest, while the Russian speech sample was rated lowest. A possible link between the evaluation of *socio-intellectual status* and the item *active – passive* is that adjectives *passive* and *active* can also be used to describe a person's work ethic, indicating how well they do at their jobs or studies. This could then help explain why the Norwegians participating in the verbal guise test evaluated the Russian speech sample similarly in terms of both the item *active – passive* and in terms of *socio-intellectual status*.

5.0 Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to assess Norwegian attitudes toward non-native English speakers and accents. Additionally, the purpose was to find out if there are links between stereotypes and prejudices against certain nationalities and Norwegian attitudes toward non-native English speakers and accents. This was done by collecting two sets of data that could bring two different perspectives to the discussion of Norwegian attitudes and paint a fuller picture of Norwegian attitudes toward non-native speakers and accents.

As seen through examples and data presented in this thesis, there are links between stereotypes and prejudices against certain nationalities and Norwegian attitudes toward non-native English speakers and accents. This thesis suggests that stereotypes and prejudices against nationalities develop through media, film, historical events, societal systems, politics and global crises, and the examples provided in this thesis suggest that these factors do play a role in shaping Norwegian language attitudes. With both the data from the verbal guise test and the qualitative interviews, examples are provided of how non-native English accents trigger Norwegians to make assumptions about a speaker's identity. Moreover, this thesis illustrates how certain non-native accents are more beneficial in Norwegian society than others, further suggesting that Norwegians accept some non-native English speakers and accents more than others. Examples would be the German non-native accent in terms of socio-intellectual status and the French non-native accent in terms of aesthetic quality and attractiveness. Further, this thesis provides examples of how accent leads to the categorisation and division of members of society – that accents can be the very thing that indicates

out-group membership and is therefore a determining factor in the way a speaker is perceived and accepted in Norwegian society.

5.1 Suggestions for Further Research

During the process of developing and writing this thesis, I have spent a lot of time reflecting on ways I could have designed the research methods or analysed data differently. Based on these reflections, I have thought of suggestions for further research. First of all, in terms of sample population, it would be interesting to study a larger sample group in order to collect generalisable data. Second, it would be interesting to then take a closer look at comparing data in terms of demographics, to identify whether there are differences in language attitudes between genders, age groups, geographic location, etc. Further, it would be very interesting to have the participants who are evaluating the speech samples also guess the nationality or native language of the speech sample speakers. In this way, we could see if evaluators' knowledge of the speakers native language/nationality influence their evaluation of speech samples.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Speech Samples

Speech Sample Passage:
Please call Stella. Ask her to bring these things with her from the store: Six spoons of fresh snow peas, five thick slabs of blue cheese, and maybe a snack for her brother Bob. We also need a small plastic snake and a big toy frog for the kids.

Information About the Speakers:

French Speech Sample:
https://accent.gmu.edu/browse_language.php?function=detail&speakerid=514

Age: 31
Sex: Male
Native language: French
Birth place: France
Age of English onset: 11

German Speech Sample:
https://accent.gmu.edu/browse_language.php?function=detail&speakerid=2753

Age: 18
Sex: Male
Native language: German
Birth place: Germany
Age of English onset: 5

Hindi Speech Sample:
https://accent.gmu.edu/browse_language.php?function=detail&speakerid=2353

Age: 24
Sex: Male
Native language: Hindi
Birth place: India
Age of English onset: 6

Russian Speech Sample:
https://accent.gmu.edu/browse_language.php?function=detail&speakerid=671

Age: 37
Sex: Male
Native language: Russian
Birth place: Russia
Age of English onset: 18

Appendix 2: General information about participants

1) Gender:

21 Male – 30 Female – 0 Non-binary/Third gender – 0 Prefer not to say

2) Are you Norwegian?

51 Yes – 0 No

3) Are you a university/college student studying in Norway?

51 Yes – 0 No

4) Is Norwegian your native language?

50 Yes – 0 No
(1 test where this question did not show up for the participant due to a technical error)

5) What is your proficiency level in English?

28 High – 23 Medium – 0 Low

6) Have you lived in Norway your entire life?

47 Yes – 4 No

7) Do you have affiliation (tilhørighet) to any other culture(s) other than Norwegian culture?

7 Yes – 44 No

Appendix 3: Interview Guide

Fact questions:

1. How long have you lived in Norway?
2. Where and when do you use English in everyday life in Norway?
3. Where did you learn English and at what age?
4. What is your native language/What are your native languages?
5. What is your nationality?

Information questions:

6. What kind of non-native accent do you have when you speak English?

Transition questions:
7. Do you think Norwegians view all non-native English accents equally? If not, which accents do you think they prefer?

Key questions: (the main section of the interview)
8. Have Norwegians commented on your accent? Have they reacted positively/negatively, what have they said?
9. Do you think stereotypes play a role in Norwegians' attitudes toward different non-native English accents? Explain.
10. What stereotypes do you think Norwegians associate with your accent?
    a. Do you think your non-native accent is associated with a high level of education?
    b. Do you think your non-native accent is associated with high status?

Sensitive/Personal questions:

11. Have you ever felt that having an accent in English has stopped you from getting jobs, housing, friends or other opportunities in Norway? Explain.
12. Have you ever experienced not being taken seriously on phone calls in Norway? If so, please explain the situation.
13. Have you ever felt discriminated against in Norway? Did you feel that this had to do with your accent in English?
14. Have you ever been told to "stop speaking English and learn Norwegian"?

Conclusion questions:

15. Do you enjoy living in Norway?
16. Could you see yourself living here permanently?

Appendix 4: Information and consent form

Do you want to participate in the research project

Norwegians' attitudes toward non-native English accents and their speakers

Would you be interested in participating in a research project on Norwegians´ attitudes toward non-native English accents and their speakers? This form will provide you with both information regarding the project and what participation would entail for you.

Purpose
This is a master's thesis, where the purpose of my thesis is to study norwegians´ attitudes toward different non-native accents in English. The research questions I hope to answer are: 1) Do stereotypes play a role in the evaluation of non-native English accents and their speakers? 2) What are Norwegians' attitudes toward non-native accents and speakers of English? To answer these questions, I would be very interested in hearing your experiences as a non-native English speaker in Norway. The evaluation of non-native accents can be both positive and negative. Linguistic stereotyping, accent discrimation and linguistic profiling are all topics that have been discussed at great length in other countries. However, little research has been done on these topics in Norway - especially in terms of attitudes toward non-native accents and speakers of English. Your participation will allow me to gain a better understanding of the prevalence of these topics/issues in Norwegian society.

Who is responsible for the research project?
NTNU Department of Language and Literature

Why are you being asked to participate?
You are being asked to participate in this research project because you use/have for some period of time used English as your main language of communication in your day to day life in Norway. You are also being asked to participate because you speak English with a non-native accent and could therefore provide interesting information on the discussion of norwegians´ attitudes toward non-native English accents.

What does participation entail for you?
Choosing to participate in this project entails participating in a 30-40 minute interview via Zoom. During the interview you will be asked questions regarding your experience as a non-native English speaker in Norway and how you think Norwegians perceive and evaluate your accent. I will also register your native language, your ethnic background and your nationality. The interview will be recorded and your answers will be registered electronically. However, your answers will be registered without registering directly identifiable background information.

Participation is voluntary

Your participation in this project is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you are able to withdraw your consent at any point without giving me a reason for your choice to withdraw. All of your personal information will be deleted. There will be no negative consequences for you if you do not want to participate or if you choose to withdraw your consent at a later time.

Your privacy - how we store and use your information

The information you provide in your interview will only be used for the purpose presented in this form. Data will be processed confidentially and in accordance to the privacy regulations (personvernregelverket). The only people that will have access to your information are student Emilie Anja Teichroeb and supervisor Susanne Mohr. Your name and contact information will not be included in the thesis. Your name and contact information will be replaced with a code that will be saved in an independent list of names that is separate from other data.

What happens to your information once the research project is finished?

The information is anonymised when the project is completed / the assignment is approved, which according to the plan is in the spring semester of 2022. The assignment may not be approved until fall of 2022.

Your rights

As long as you can be identified in the data material, you have the following rights:
- access to which personal information is registered about you, and to receive a copy of the information,
- to have personal information about you corrected,
- to have personal information about you deleted, and
- to send a complaint to the Norwegian Data Protection Authority about the processing of your personal data.

What gives us the right to process personal information about you?

We process information about you based on your consent. On behalf of NTNU, NSD - Norwegian Center for Research Data AS has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance to the privacy regulations (personvernregelverket).

Where can I find more information?

If you have questions about the study, or want to exercise your rights, please contact:
- NTNU Institution for language and literature via Emilie Anja Teichroeb (emilieanjat@gmail.com) or supervisor Susanne Mohr (susanne.mohr@ntnu.no)
- Our privacy representative (personvernombud): Thomas Helgesen (thomas.helgesen@ntnu.no)

If you have questions regarding NSD's evaluation of the project, contact:
- NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS by e-mail (personverntjenester@nsd.no) or telephone: 55 58 21 17.

Kind regards,

Susanne Mohr   Emilie Anja Teichroeb

I have received and understood the information about the project *Norwegians' attitudes toward non-native English accents and their speakers,* and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I give my consent to:

      "to participate in an interview"

I give consent to my information being processed up until the project is completed

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(Signed by project participant, date)

Appendix 5: Transcription Conventions

<u>Underline:</u> words that were emphasised

[ ]: square brackets used to indicate overlapping of speech

< >: used to signify laughing and sighing

(xxx): used to mark unintelligible utterances

( ): uncertain speech is written within these brackets

– : used to mark unfinished utterances

[sic!]: used to mark ungrammatical utterances

Appendix 6: Relevance for Teaching Profession

As a future English teacher, I felt a responsibility to educate myself about language attitudes, especially the role of stereotypes and prejudices in shaping them. In order to do this, I chose to write this master's thesis on Norwegian attitudes toward non-native English accents and their speakers. In this way, I hoped to better understand Norwegian thoughts and beliefs about non-native English accents that may be present in the attitudes of future students.

When I start teaching in the fall, I will aim to bring this insight and awareness into the classroom through discussions of language attitudes. I will encourage my students to reflect on their personal perceptions and the basis on which they have developed. Additionally, I will teach my students about the many accents and dialects of the English language, without portraying them or their speakers in a stereotypical or prejudicial light. I believe this is essential in English language teaching as the English language should be taught to students in a way that encourages them to use the language to learn about and connect with people who are different from them. This is supported by *Utdanningsdirektoratet* (2020) which states that English language teaching should aid in developing students' knowledge of other cultures and enhance their ability to communicate with people from different cultures and backgrounds. To be open in this way it is essential that Norwegian students be taught to experience other non-native English accents as much as possible without the stereotypes and prejudices that can limit or hinder these essential inter relational skills. To do this I would strive to create awareness of these issues and tendencies within the class group. Moreover, it is an essential part of students' development as people that they learn to be aware of their own perceptions and possible prejudices toward out-group members in order to counter these issues of inequality in Norwegian society.