# MASTER THESIS

A Study of Students' Attitudes Towards English Varieties

in EFL at the Lower Secondary Level in Norway

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# Abstract

This thesis examines Norwegian students' attitudes towards English varieties and sheds light on whether language learning can help to form or adjust attitudes. The thesis is based on a teaching project that aligns with the competence goals in the English curriculum (ENG01-04), which places emphasis on developing linguistic and *Intercultural Competence*. The theoretical framework draws on the works of recognized researchers such as Byram, Chrystal, Galloway and Rose and explores concepts like *Kachru's Three-Circle Model*, standard and non-standard varieties, and the concept of *Intercultural Competence*.

The project utilized various methods, including log-keeping, group discussions, presentations, and an online survey, to examine the topic from different angles. The results indicated a preference for standard *Inner Circle* varieties because students found them easy to understand and enable communication. Even though some students found non-standard varieties challenging to understand, the study showed that half the participants thought raising awareness of different varieties was essential and perceived them as exciting. Furthermore, several students' responses acknowledged the impact of the English language on their everyday language.

The classroom project demonstrates that working with non-standard varieties of English can encourage positive attitudes towards English varieties and enhance *Intercultural Competence*.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Why do people have different attitudes toward language varieties? There is no definitive answer. Many factors influence people's views of other people's dialects or accents. These aspects lead to people commenting on other people's speech, and they accept or condemn accents they think are inappropriate or more correct than others (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. 174).

After an inspection by Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills, a UK governmental organization for inspecting schools), a teacher was asked to "sound less Northern". The teacher was told to tone down her Northern English accent. Subsequently, this was met with criticism from language associations (Garner, 2013, in Galloway & Rose, 2015). As this case shows, dialect use can be perceived as a mistake, and this is, unfortunately, not a unique occurrence. Similar examples could also be found in the television and radio business, where presenters have been asked to speak standard English to keep their jobs (Ibid.).

English was introduced as a school subject in Norway after the "School Act of 1936" and has traditionally been defined as a foreign language. Since the 1990s, the language has evolved into a second language due to the extensive use of, e.g., English in schools, professional life, studies abroad, and English-language films (Simensen, 2014). In comparison, earlier curricula linked the English subject rather closely to Great Britain and the United States as the target language area, but both Læreplanverket for Kunnskapsløftet 2006 (LK06) and Læreplanverket for Kunnskapsløftet 2020 (LK20) place greater emphasis on English as a communication language on a global level.

Using English as a lingua franca, described as "a means of communication between people who come from different first language backgrounds" (Jenkins, 2012, p. 486), is just as necessary as communicating with native English speakers (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training). Although the goal of speaking like an American or a Brit lingers to some degree, famous politicians and influential people have contributed to changing this trend (Sannes, 2013).

LK20 does not require the students to strive for a particular standard of spoken language. Nevertheless, research indicates that the native-speaker norm, which prevailed for a long time in Norwegian schools, still affects students and teachers to a certain extent (Simensen, 2014). There is, therefore, a need to convey to Norwegian students that speaking English with a native accent is acceptable if the communication works according to the purpose (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2021). The approach to language learning in Norwegian schools is based on the goal of *Communicative Competence*, and knowledge of the various elements of the language must be used to understand and convey nuances of meaning in different contexts (Ibid.).

Because of globalization, multiculturalism, and technological change, English Foreign Language (EFL) students will need to be able to communicate with English speakers from various backgrounds in the future. However, only a tiny fraction of their future interlocutors will be native speakers of well-known standard varieties such as British and American English (Schildhauer et al., 2020). This requires changes in English Language Teaching (ELT):

> Teachers need to prepare their students for a world of staggering linguistic diversity. Somehow, they need to expose them to as many varieties of English as possible [...] And above all, teachers need to develop a truly flexible attitude towards principles of usage. The absolutist concept of 'proper English' or 'correct English' which is so widespread, needs to be replaced by relativistic models in which literary and educated norms are seen to maintain their place alongside with other norms, some of which depart radically from what was once recognized as 'correct' (Crystal, 2001, p. 20, in Sannes, 2013).

A greater focus on English varieties and attitudes may enhance intercultural understanding and communication. LK20 aims to "give the pupils the foundation for communicating with others, both locally and globally, regardless of cultural or linguistic background and help the pupils to develop an intercultural understanding of different ways of living, ways of thinking and communication patterns" (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2021).

## 1.2 Aims and Research Questions

This thesis discusses students' attitudes towards English varieties in EFL at the lower secondary level in Norway and investigates whether they are consistent with the competence goals after year ten in the English subject curriculum. It aims to show the importance of teaching a wide spectre of varieties to improve students' language and *Intercultural Competence*.

Communication across various types of borders involves *Intercultural Competence*. Possessing this valuable competence means acquiring an understanding, being welcoming, and showing an open attitude whether people meet face to face or communicate digitally. Developing *Intercultural Competence* in EFL thus means preparing students for interaction with people from different cultures and enabling them to understand, accept and value people with other perspectives, values and attitudes (Byram et al., 2002, p. 10).

The project seeks to reveal the students' perspective on English varieties. Because there is a lack of research investigating students' attitudes towards Global Englishes, and while students continue to favour standard English, further studies can provide teachers with an awareness of their students' beliefs, help curriculum development, and increase self-awareness among the students (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. 192). Moreover, attitudinal studies can help students reflect on their own stereotypes (Jenkins, 2006, p. 155).

Furthermore, it can be argued that the current teaching materials and methods utilized in ELT are excessively focused on standard English, despite the objective of the LK20 curriculum to incorporate other varieties of the language (Sannes, 2013; Simensen, 2014). This further emphasizes the need for a more inclusive approach to ELT that exposes students to a variety of English varieties and prepares them for a global context where English is becoming increasingly prevalent (Rose et al., 2021). As a result, the following research questions arise:

1. What attitudes do Norwegian students have towards standard and non-standard varieties of English?

2. To what extent may ELT contribute to forming or adjusting attitudes in regard to respect and tolerance toward varieties of English?

The thesis investigates to what extent a teaching project can strengthen students' attitudes toward non-standard varieties and develop *Intercultural Competence*.

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The proposed study aims to provide insight into whether a project containing various teaching methods and internet resources promotes students' development of better understanding and tolerance of English varieties. The study first seeks to find patterns of what attitudes students have towards standard varieties and non-standard varieties of English. Secondly, it investigates to what extent ELT may contribute to forming or adjusting attitudes in regard to respect and tolerance toward varieties of English.

This thesis draws on a project outline and literature review submitted as part of an obligatory master course in "Methods and Projects" at the University of Gothenburg (Fjørtoft Floen, 2022).

## 1.3 Outline of the Thesis

The master's thesis contains six chapters. The first chapter describes the background of the thesis, previous studies, and the research aims. Chapter 2 presents theoretical aspects of English language development, language variation, and communicative and *Intercultural Competence*. In addition, the concept of attitude and Norwegian research on attitudes towards standard and non-standard varieties are described. Chapter 3 comprises the didactic framework, curriculum goals, and teaching plan. Chapter 4 presents the chosen research methods, and Chapter 5 gives the analysis results, including comments and discussion. Chapter 6 sums up and concludes the thesis and suggests further research.

# 2. Theoretical Framework

## 2.1 Kachru's Three-Circle Model

A well-known language model designed by Braj Kachru has since 1985 helped to place English language varieties and their speakers into three different categories based on how the language has been learned. Kachru's model (Figure 1) shows the type of spread, the patterns of acquisition, and the functional domains in which English is used across cultures and languages (Kachru, 1985, in Bauer, 2002). The *Inner Circle* includes those whose mother tongue is English, e.g., the UK, USA, and Australia, which is often viewed as "norm-providing" because the English language standards have been developed in these countries.

The *Outer Circle* includes those whose English is a post-colonial second language, for example, India, Nigeria, and Singapore, described as "norm-developing." The *Expanding Circle* comprises those learning English as a foreign language, illustrated by China, Greece, Saudi Arabia, and Indonesia. Speakers in this circle are "norm-dependent," which means they are concerned with the norms in the *Inner Circle* (Bauer, 2002, p. 23).

The *Three-Circle Model* is debated since the clear dividing lines between the various circles have changed significantly due to globalization and a reduced focus on standard varieties such as British and American English (Schildhauer et al., 2020). Some countries, like Ireland and South Africa, with many first-language speakers, need to be added to the model. In South Africa, many people speak English as a second language. Furthermore, many people in countries like India and Singapore speak English as their only language but are placed in the *Outer Circle*. Still, although this model was introduced more than thirty years ago, Kachru's influential model is widely used as a benchmark in the research literature. A modernized model using data reflecting estimated national population figures in 2014 illustrates varieties as three overlying circles (see Figure 2 below) (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. 19).



**Inner circle:**
Australia
Canada
New Zealand
UK
USA

**Outer circle:**
Bangladesh
Ghana
India
Kenya
Malaysia
Nigeria
Pakistan
Philippines
Singapore
Sri Lanka

**Expanding circle:**
China
Egypt
Indonesia
Israel
Japan
Korea
Nepal
Saudi Arabia
Taiwan
USSR
Zimbabwe

Figure 1: *Kachru's Concentric Circles of English* (Kachru in Bauer, 2002, p. 23)

The "Expanding Circle"

| China | 1,363,840,000 |
| Egypt | 86,270,000 |
| Indonesia | 247,425,000 |
| Israel | 8,158,000 |
| Japan | 127,120,000 |
| Korea | 50,220,000 |
| Nepal | 26,495,000 |
| Saudi Arabia | 29,995,000 |
| Taiwan | 23,379,000 |
| Russia | 146,220,000 |
| Zimbabwe | 12,974,000 |

The "Outer Circle"

| Bangladesh | 154,700,000 |
| Ghana | 25,200,000 |
| India | 1,242,000,000 |
| Kenya | 44,354,000 |
| Malaysia | 30,042,000 |
| Nigeria | 173,620,000 |
| Pakistan | 186,317,000 |
| Philippines | 99,403,000 |
| Singapore | 5,400,000 |
| Sri Lanka | 20,278,000 |
| Tanzania | 44,929,000 |
| Zambia | 14,580,000 |

The "Inner Circle"

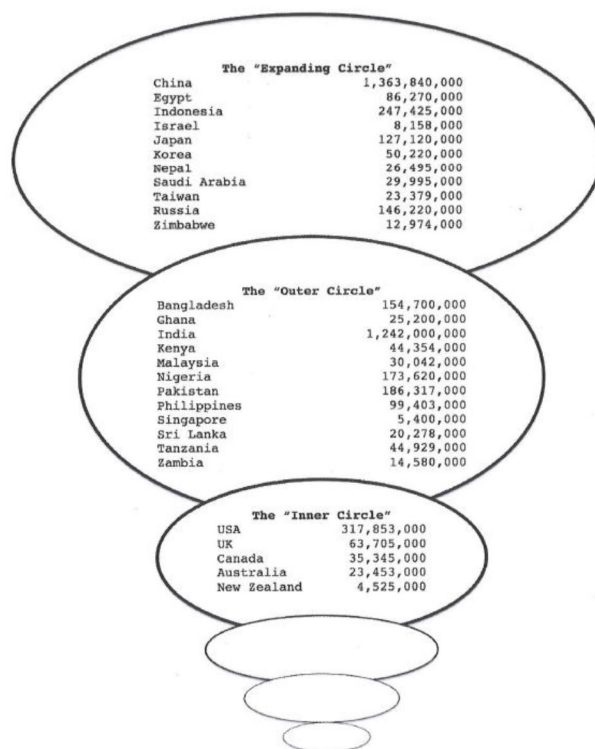| USA | 317,853,000 |
| UK | 63,705,000 |
| Canada | 35,345,000 |
| Australia | 23,453,000 |
| New Zealand | 4,525,000 |

Figure 2: An updated version of *Kachru's Three Circle Model of World Englishes*

(Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. 19)

Critics claim that *Kachru's Concentric Circles of English* takes too much account of historical and geographical factors and includes, only to a small extent, native speakers who live in countries where English is considered a *lingua franca*[1] or those who use English as a second language. The model has also been criticized for using native speakers as a yardstick while including words such as "norm-providing," "norm-developing," and "norm-dependent" (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. 22).

Furthermore, there needs to be more focus on degrees of *Communicative Competence*. Jenkins (2009) argues that even if someone has English as a second or third language, it does not mean their English competence is less than that of a native speaker. Likewise, the model needs to consider varieties, such as *pidgin*[2] and *creole*[3].

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[1] *Lingua franca* is a means of communication between people who come from different first language backgrounds(Jenkins, 2012).

[2] A *pidgin* simplifies grammatical features of the superstrate language which is the contact language or the imposed language (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. 41).

[3] There are several theories regarding the origins of *Creoles*. One may be the simplification of pidgins, another the influence from established languages, or the effect of universal grammar, such as simplifying grammar structures (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. 42).

Although the model may not perfectly reflect present-day English language usage, it remains a widely used and valuable tool. The data presented indicates that countries in the *Outer Circle* have experienced the most significant growth in English language usage, including a fourfold increase in non-standard speakers. This trend suggests a shift from English being merely an international language to a truly global one. It is worth noting that the majority of English speakers today are non-standard speakers, and despite their limited proficiency, English has become the predominant language of international communication. This observation highlights the remarkable extent to which English has spread worldwide (My translation, Hunstadbråten, 2020).

In addition, researchers use the model to challenge the dominance of standard English and the *Inner Circle* (Galloway & Rose, 2015). The model is used to point out that those whose mother tongue is English do not "own" the English language. Regardless, the standard language ideology is still strong, especially in the *Expanding Circle*, where a belief in English as a monolithic entity still exists (Ibid., p. 47).

Thus, although the model gives a simplified picture of English language development, it has influenced the development of curricula and language teaching in many countries (Galloway & Rose, 2015). Also, in this thesis, the model forms a basis for understanding the spread of and attitudes towards English.

## 2.2 Aspects of Variation

Traditionally, many countries in the *Expanding Circle* have chosen an *exonormative*[4] native speaker model, primarily because of prestige or because standard English has been codified. These countries often have established publishers that produce easily accessible teaching resources, such as dictionaries and grammar books (Kirkpatrick, 2007). Using such a model can affect how English varieties are emphasized. The model has been criticized because native English teachers have often been preferred when hiring, making it more difficult for local teachers to teach English. Furthermore, the native speaker model may lead to the stereotyping and neglect of varieties that differ from the standard varieties (Galloway & Rose, 2015).

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[4] The word exonormative is based on the way a country's second language is used in the country it came from originally, rather than the way local speakers use it (https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/).

According to McArthur, standard English is a native speaker model easily recognisable in print, frequently used by news presenters and relates to the speaker's social class and education. The native speaker model is widely accepted, understood, and valued within an English-speaking country (in Farrell & Martin, 2009). Besides, the community decides what is correct usage and not, and so-called non-standard varieties may be devalued, considered illegitimate, and may promote discrimination (Ibid., p. 3).

Many countries traditionally placed in the *Outer Circle* have adopted and adapted the English language and made it their own. These new English varieties, or World Englishes, reflect local interests, are characterized by the country's or area's history, and comprise local and borrowed words (Crystal, 2013). English has been appropriated in these new contexts to suit the needs of those who live there, developing into both phonological, lexical, and grammatical variations in the use of English (Galloway & Rose, 2015, p. 97).

Consequently, several countries in the *Outer Circle* have chosen an *endonormative* [5] nativized model because the local English variety has become more socially accepted. Teachers using a local variety can have an advantage and benefit from their multilingual competence in the classroom and experience of learning English as a second language.

The idea of teaching English as an international language (EIL) focuses more on using a multicultural approach (Xu, 2018, p. 102) and the importance of being culturally sensitive to the diversity of contexts in which English is required and used (McKay, 2012, p. 128 in Farrell & Martin, 2009). Metacultural competence is part of the teaching in EIL. According to Sharifian, metacultural competence is "a competence that enables interlocutors to communicate and negotiate their cultural conceptualizations during the process of intercultural communication" (Xu, 2018, p. 104). It comprises three components, variety awareness, explanation strategy and negotiation strategy (p. 106). To develop EIL awareness and literacy and teach metacultural competence, Xu suggests that one must recognize the paradigm shift in the current use and users of English and acquire and achieve new literacy, skills, and competence to engage in intercultural communication in English as an international language (p. 102).

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[5] The word endonormative is "based on the way a country's second language is used by local speakers, rather than the way it is used in the country where it came from originally" (https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/)

In comparison, Matsuda and Friedrich propose three different options for teaching varieties in the context of choosing an instructional variety: an international variety of English, the speakers' variety of English, and an established variety of English. On the one hand, they argue that when using an international method, a limited set of specialized varieties for worldwide use cannot reflect the reality of international communication. So, enforcing a universal variety as a standard is unrealistic because the language is often context-based and not static, and users of English will use standard versions (Matsuda & Friedrich, 2012, p. 19). On the other hand, a variation based on the users' variety can enable users to express indigenous values and culture, where users feel ownership of the variety and do not need to copy a native speaker. This model contrasts with the monolithic view of English. A danger is that a traditional approach is preferred, meaning choosing standard varieties such as American or British usage, which may negatively affect the students' attitudes toward other varieties (Ibid., p. 22). Choosing an established variety from the *Inner* or *Outer Circle*, which is codified, may be easier to implement because it is widely used and accepted in international contexts and gives the students more communicative options. English taught with fixed rules will also simplify assessments and mainstream the materials (Ibid.).

A *Global English* method sees the first language as a resource. It emphasizes respect for different cultures and identities and focuses less on, for example, using British or American English as the linguistic norm (Galloway & Rose, 2015, pp. 204-206). Only a few studies have been conducted in the field that has examined students' attitudes toward Global Englishes. Studies have indicated that by focusing on Global Englishes, students can increase their awareness of how they will use English in the future and develop their confidence as speakers of an international language (Galloway, 2011, in Rose et al., 2021). Besides, to communicate successfully with people from different backgrounds, students must understand different varieties to deal with English interactions in international contexts (McKay, 2012, p. 73). But it can be challenging for teachers to raise students' awareness of the globalization of English because of the need for globally oriented-ELT material (Galloway & Rose, 2018).

Using an *intercultural speaker norm* is claimed to be more appropriate because it means less focus on a standard language norm. In a multicultural and multilingual world, this norm promotes *Intercultural Competence*, accepts cultural differences, and reduces stereotyping (Kramsch, 1998). In addition, the focus becomes more on the context in which intercultural communication is used (Sannes, 2013, p. 26).

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The use of English as a *Lingua Franca* (ELF) has been prevalent for a long time. It has enabled individuals with different primary languages to communicate effectively (Jenkins, 2012). In today's world, ELF has become increasingly crucial in various fields, such as international business, politics, technology, and education. Research shows that ELF has gained more attention since the most significant part of verbal exchanges in English occurs among non-native speakers (Bieswanger, 2008, p. 27). One significant advantage of ELF is that it can utilize its speakers' linguistic and cultural resources, making it multilingual, multicultural, and multi-normative (Mortensen, 2013).

Global English has become a prerequisite for, a driver of, and a result of globalization. As it is used today, English has become a global language of communication and is not, to the same extent, a language that reflects the culture or linguistic characteristics of the countries where it was first spoken. While native speakers, especially Brits and Americans, were previously considered to have a special status and ownership of the English language, one now tends to see non-standard speakers liberate themselves more from this perception. Instead, non-standard speakers have become more confident in their use of English and have developed their own identities as English users. Non-native speakers now make up a significant proportion of their users and have given rise to various forms of the language known as "World Englishes" (Hunstadbråten, 2020, p. 22).

## 2.3 Accents and Dialects

The English language has many varieties that English speakers consider essential for their identities. These varieties are called *accents* and *dialects* and are often linked to the speaker's region (Trudgill, 1999, p. 2). According to Bauer (2002), an accent concerns itself with the sound one makes when speaking. In contrast, dialects include vocabulary items, grammatical patterns, and words often spoken with a particular accent (pp. 2-3). When linguists study variety across time in languages, they examine the languages' spelling, vocabulary, word form, and grammar (Freeborn, 2006).

England is said to contain as many different dialects as there are places to be from. Even within the different English dialects, there are unconditioned variations based on personal preferences, referred to as free variation. As in any other language, these extensive linguistic variations have been developed over time (Hughes et al., 2005, pp. 8–9).

## 2.4 Culture, Communicative Competence, Intercultural Competence

First, the term *culture* will be defined. Then the term *Communicative Competence* will be presented as it belongs to a significant shift in language teaching, and lastly, the concept of *Intercultural Competence.*

### Culture

The term *culture* can be understood in several ways. Oxford Learners Dictionaries defines it as "the customs, beliefs, art, way of life or social organization of a particular country or group" (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, n.d.). The term has also been used to describe national or ethnic cultures, often experienced as homogenous and static (Eschenbach & Dypedahl, 2011).

Cultures have been compared, for example, according to mindset and behaviour. Gradually, this understanding has been expanded and is now seen as a dynamic process where meaning is created through human encounters and becomes part of human identity (Ibid., p. 5).

In the 1980s, a cultural shift led to a more significant focus on the students' own background, knowledge, assumptions, and perceptions of their culture. The change opened intercultural perspectives in foreign language teaching, and it became more common to compare one's own culture with the culture of the target language country (Ibid., p. 8).

### Communicative Competence

The *Communicative Competence* of the language learner is emphasized more than ever. The sociolinguist Dell Hymes, who coined this term in the 1960s, explained it as using knowledge to interpret and understand messages and communicate in varied contexts. He also expressed that the sociolinguistic aspect must be underlined in the interaction between theory and practice in language learning (Hymes, 1972, p. 288). Later, linguists underlined that grammar, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence belong to *Communicative Competence* and that all aspects must have a central place in the classroom where the practical use of the language is emphasized (Brown, 2007).

Scholars emphasize that there must still be norms in ELT, but these must be used correctly, and both communicative processes and products must be assessed (Sewell, 2013, p. 9). In comparison, researchers stress that the concept of *Communicative Competence* needs to be consistent with the development of the English language, where both standard and local languages in our English-speaking world are important (Leung, 2005, p. 139).

A current emphasis on oral *Communicative Competence* in the language classroom means less focus on form and grammar and less on standard norms. It is also crucial for students to be able to read, write, listen, reflect, and communicate intelligently about different cultures. To effectively communicate, students need to understand content and communication methods (Swaffar, 2006, p. 249 in Byrnes, 2006). One way to emphasize practical and cultural content in language learning is by providing students with opportunities to use digital tools (Larson, 2007, p. 257 in Byrnes, 2006).

Intercultural Competence

The concept of *Intercultural Competence*, developed by, among others, Michael Byram (2002), is defined as the "ability to ensure a shared understanding by people of different social identities, and [the] ability to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality" (p. 10).

*Intercultural Competence* is a combination of attitudes, knowledge, understanding, and skills, supplemented by the values one has due to belonging to several social groups, and put into practice through actions (Ibid. p. 21). These actions form a basis for understanding and respecting other people. They enable interaction and communication with respect and help establish positive and constructive relationships. They enable understanding of one's multicultural affiliations through meetings with people with cultural differences (Barrett et al., 2014, pp.16-17).

Social psychology defines attitudes as a predisposition to react positively or negatively towards a group of objects. Attitudes can encompass beliefs about the world, emotional responses, behaviour patterns, and mental constructs that develop as a result of positive or negative experiences (Galloway & Rose, 2018, p. 279), The interpretation of the concept of attitude can be multifaceted, as it can be influenced by personal experiences, knowledge, history, politics, stereotypes, societal norms, and motivation.

According to Byram, attitudes are, for example, about valuing cultural diversity, respecting others with other cultural affiliations from one's own, being open and curious, being willing to learn from others, showing empathy, being tolerant, and interacting with others who think differently (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 19).

Knowledge and understanding include, e.g., awareness and understanding of one's own and others' assumptions, preconceptions, stereotypes, prejudices, and open and hidden discrimination; understanding of the influence of one's language; knowledge of beliefs, values, and practices; and interaction with others (Ibid., p. 20).

The skills in *Intercultural Competence* include skills such as multiperspectivity, which is the ability to decentre. It also includes interpreting other cultural traditions, empathy, critically evaluating, adapting one's behaviour to new cultural settings, and linguistic skills (Ibid., p. 20).

In order to acquire, promote and develop *Intercultural Competence*, there is a need for experiences and being in contact with people from different linguistic and cultural contexts. It also includes exposure and interaction with other cultures' products. To acquire, promote and develop *Intercultural Competence*, there is a need for experiences and contact with people from different linguistic and cultural contexts (Barrett et al., 2014).

The students should become aware of their cultural backgrounds and frames of reference. Therefore, foreign language teaching should stimulate students to see their own culture and foreign cultures from different points of view where cultural topics are linked to several countries or cultures. Researchers argue that students must be confronted with many countries, cultures, and multiple perspectives to identify and reflect on their own cultural identity, which is only one of many possible identities (Kramsch, 1997, in Lund, 2008, p. 4). Byram calls this the ability to "decentre," that is, to remove oneself from the centre of the universe (Byram, 1997, p. 73, in Lund, 2008). The central elements here are independent thinking and critical reflection, which corresponds with what Byram believes is 'critical cultural awareness', a prerequisite for students to question their ways of understanding. In language education, preparing students to develop critical cultural awareness is challenging.

Many theorists agree with Byram that attitudes, knowledge, and skills are crucial for developing *Intercultural Competence* (Lund, 2008). However, the teaching of *Intercultural Competence* and aspects of language teaching are questioned, such as how we can know which parts of a culture students must be prepared for. This question can be experienced as

problematic in ELT. Because the English language is spoken worldwide, it can be challenging to choose which cultures to emphasize. Therefore, Lund underlines that the global aspect has become more central, arguing that "an interculturally competent person is someone who knows and cares about global issues and who sees himself as a citizen of the world rather than a citizen of a certain nation" (Ibid., p. 3).

The next part examines Norwegian studies in this area.


## 2.5 Norwegian Studies

Only some studies about the student perspective on English varieties have been conducted in Norway (Sannes, 2013). Some researchers discovered that the view of the ideal language in the English subject was divided. These studies were carried out before the new curriculum was introduced in 2020 but can provide interesting input (Rindal, 2010; Hansen, 2011).

A study conducted in 2011 looked at to which extent teachers at various levels related to a standard or an intercultural teaching model in English teaching. It was found that the respondents recognized a more intercultural teaching model when it comes to content in the subject but that the preferences concerning skills are more varied (Hansen, 2011). 50 % of the respondents answered that students should be more conscious of which standard speaker variety they want to model and should aim to be consistent in their use of this variety. The other half expressed students should aim to communicate independently of a native speaker as the reference point (Ibid.). Similar results are found in Bøhn's study from 2017. The study investigated upper secondary school teachers' priorities for pronunciation standards regarding nativeness and intelligibility. A large majority of participants believed that understanding pronunciation is essential to emphasize (Hansen, 2022).

Rindal's study (2013) in upper secondary schools revealed that students favored American English pronunciation and that this variety was the most manageable. However, they still perceived British English as the most prestigious pronunciation variety.

Sannes (2013) looked at opinions and attitudes among upper secondary school students. The study discovered that students perceived British English as polite and successful, while American English was easier to understand and appealing. Results demonstrated that many students reacted negatively to speakers of English with a solid Norwegian accent.

Norwegian studies indicate that teachers are relatively unsure of how much weight they should place on the native speaker ideal concerning students' ability to make themselves understood. Furthermore, research shows that neither the previous curriculum, LK06, nor the current LK20 provides central guidance on a specific language ideal.

 Linguists have expressed the need to move away from the notion of the native speaker as the ideal standard. Several different arguments have been put forward and can essentially be gathered into two main categories: Firstly, such competence is not a realistic goal for language acquisition because it is perceived as impossible for a foreign language user. Secondly, it is wrong to strive for this competence for someone who will acquire a foreign language because English is today used as a foreign language by up to 1 billion users in a world that is becoming increasingly globalized and multicultural. Therefore, foreign language users must follow linguistic and social developments, strive to understand the culture and context in which English is used, and be less concerned with correct pronunciation (Byram, 1997; Simensen, 2014 in Hansen, 2022, p. 16-18).


## 2.6 Curriculum in English (ENG01-04)

The current English subject curriculum was introduced in 2020 and is based on national and international language research and anchored in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2021). It states that English is essential for cultural understanding, communication, general education, and identity development. The subject aims to prepare the students for education and working life that requires English-language competence in reading, writing, and oral communication and shall give the students the foundation for communicating locally and globally, regardless of cultural or linguistic background. English shall help the students develop an intercultural understanding of different ways of living, thinking and communication patterns (Ibid.).

Competence goals after year ten emphasize the value of authentic language input and the students' experience of English language varieties, emphasizing listening and understanding words and expressions. Students will gradually develop knowledge of English as a system and learn phoneme pronunciation, vocabulary, word structure, and syntax to communicate and interact with others.

The subject also emphasizes that digital resources provide enormous opportunities for the language teacher to incorporate authentic language experiences that make students more aware of phonemes, speech sounds, spelling patterns, and syllables (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2021).

Presenting varieties in lower secondary school can enrich students' knowledge and experience of linguistic diversity. It can stimulate the learner to explore the language and discover similarities between Norwegian and English varieties (Flognfeldt & Lund, 2016). One way to do so is to use authentic sources which bring the English language varieties to life in the classroom. Digital media resources like YouTube provide videos with valuable examples of intonation, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary and by comparing English accents and dialects, students discover that it is achievable to communicate using different English varieties, even with grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary variations.

The following chapter describes the classroom project, consisting of a teaching project followed by group discussions and a written online questionnaire designed for this study. These methods will be described in part 4.

# 3. Didactic Framework

## 3.1 The Classroom Project

The classroom project and the teaching plan, *Attitudes towards Varieties of English,* was designed in line with the Curriculum in English (ENG01-04) and a selection of competence aims after year ten:

- Listen to and understand words and expressions in varieties of English
- Describe and reflect on the role played by the English language in Norway and the rest of the world
- Describe ways of living, ways of thinking, communication patterns and diversity in the English-speaking world.
  (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training)

The teaching plan was linked to central values in ENG01-04:

- English shall help the students develop an intercultural understanding of different ways of living, thinking and communication patterns.

Likewise, it followed the interdisciplinary topic of democracy and citizenship:

- By learning English, students can experience different societies and cultures by communicating with others around the world, regardless of linguistic or cultural background. This can open new ways to interpret the world, promote curiosity and engagement, and help to prevent prejudices (Ibid.)

The approach was supported by the theory in the field stating that ELT students should be prepared to meet speakers of varieties of English that differ from their own and that teachers should focus on teaching both strategic and intercultural skills that will help students to be able to communicate with people from a wide range of backgrounds (Jenkins, 2006).

The teaching plan was designed to develop knowledge of the English language and allowed students to express opinions about language variations and attitudes towards varieties and speakers. The plan contained tasks that allowed students to explore a wide range of standard and non-standard varieties, interact with others, create texts, and acquire knowledge by obtaining, exploring, and critically evaluating information from various English-language internet-based sources (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2021).

### 3.1.1 Participants, location, and time spent

The participants were 24 students aged 15–16, including approximately the same number of boys and girls. The majority were born in Norway and had Norwegian as their native language and had participated in English lessons from first grade. Several students were bilingual or multilingual and had Russian, Polish, Somali, Icelandic, and Syrian backgrounds. For these students, English was an L3. Two students started learning English at school at the age of ten.

The project was conducted during the spring term of 2022. The time spent on the total classroom project was four lessons (á 60 minutes), in addition to a presentation time of approx. 5 min. per student, which amounted to, in total, two lessons. The participants spent, on average, approx. 20 minutes on group discussions and 15 minutes to answer the online survey.

### 3.1.2 Teaching plan

The teaching plan comprised basic skills; oral tasks, including listening, speaking, participating in conversation, and presenting information; written tasks provided opportunities to convey thoughts and views; reading activities enabled students to find information in multimedia texts; digital activities allowed students to look for information in a critical and verifiable way.

Ideas for the teaching project originated from Norwegian and European studies: *To Teach Standard English or World Englishes? A balanced approach to teaching* (Farrell & Martin, 2009), *Development of intercultural competence through education* (Barrett et al., 2014), and the textbooks, *Echo 8-10* (Burner et al., 2020) and *Enter 8-10* (Enter 10, 2017).

Specifically for the group discussions, learning objectives originated from *Echo 8-10*. These seek to

- Increase the students' language awareness by using varied strategies for language learning, text production, and communication.

- Enable the students to explore similarities and differences between different types of English, using different media connected to their interests.

  (Burner et al., 2020)

### 3.1.3 Parent information

The teaching project was presented and linked to competence goals in the English Subject Curriculum at a parents' meeting, and those attending were briefed about the study. The following week, the students received a letter with information about what participation would entail. Everyone who wanted to participate returned the letter with the parents' signatures following the Norwegian Centre for Research Data requirements (see Appendix I).

### 3.1.4 Student information

At the start, the students obtained an overview of the teaching project to enable participation in choosing tasks and presentation methods. They were informed that collaboration, the topic, and the content were part of the subject syllabus. Also, they were informed about continuous

log-keeping as a tool for data collection, personal reflections, and an essential means of student assessment.

## Lesson 1

Lesson 1 (60 minutes) highlighted how English has become a global language and included listening and speaking activities to provide theoretical and historical input, promote interest, and stimulate activity.

The first specific learning goal in lesson 1 was for the students to be able to describe and reflect on the role played by the English language in Norway and the rest of the world. In task 1, the Lang Focus video *Why Did English Become the International Language?* was used to evoke interest (Langfocus, 2017) (see Appendix II). Since this video contains much information on language development, only the first five minutes, focusing on historical facts, were selected. A discussion on why English has become a world language was carried out in groups of three or four to recapitulate the content. The time spent was 15 minutes (including video and discussions).

Task 2 was a teacher-led before-listening exercise. Students were exposed to non-standard varieties of English with the objective of understanding the spread of the English language, visualized in Kachru's model. A picture of the concentric circles of English was displayed on the smart board. The meaning of the *Inner, Outer*, and *Expanding Circle* was explained from the early development of English to colonization and globalization. The time spent was 10 minutes.

Task 3 focused on listening comprehension. The activity included listening for specific information, words, and expression in recordings found in *Varieties of English* on *NDLA* (Hagen, 2018) and *30 Varieties of English from Across the World* (VoicesOffProductions, 2016) found on YouTube. The time spent was 15 minutes.

The learning objective in task 4 was for the students to understand what lies in the term variety. Students were told it was better to use the broad term variety since the terms accents and dialects are challenging to define and often misinterpreted. A word map with words related to the tasks was displayed on the smartboard. Language concepts such as accent, dialect, variation, *Lingua Franca*, standard English vs non-standard English, global language, *pidgin*, *creole*, and borrowing were clarified. Finally, lesson 1 was summed up. The time spent was 15 minutes.

## Lesson 2

Lesson 2 (60 minutes) contained four varied tasks focusing on reading, speaking, and listening about exploring and describing ways of thinking, communication patterns, diversity in the English-speaking world and the development of the English language.

In task 1, students read the blog post *The many faces of English* (FionaMcF, 2023) and talked about linguistic and cultural differences portrayed by Fiona from Stirling, Scotland, who worked as an English language assistant in France, together with a colleague from New Delhi, India. They had different backgrounds but were speaking the same language. Next, as a pre-listening activity, students were asked to define in pairs the following expressions: 'the Queen's English' and 'standard English'. The time spent was 20 minutes.

In task 2, the students studied the differences between British and American English. First, students watched the *YouTube video How are British and American English different?* (Langfocus, 2018). The video offers examples on vocabulary, accent, spelling, and grammar. The time spent was 10 minutes.

In task 3, the students compared the standard British and American English varieties. An overview of some differences was first shown on the smartboard. Students were given the task in paper format, worked in pairs and matched the British words with their American equivalents, and finally, we summarized the difference. The time spent was 15 minutes.

In task 4, the students identified connections between English and other languages and learned more about how English has developed. They watched the first 6:00 of 17:27 minutes of the Lang Focus video *VIKING-INFLUENCE on the English Language* (Langfocus, 2019). The video explained influences from Old Norse, Anglo-Saxon, French and Germanic and commented on examples of words that entered English from the Old Norse language. We summarized the main content of the video. The time spent was 15 minutes.

## Lessons 3-4

The learning goals from lessons 1 and 2 were continued. In lessons 3 and 4 (120 minutes), the learning goals aimed to develop language awareness and acquire knowledge of the language as a system by comparing pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar with prior knowledge of standard and non-standard varieties. Students were asked to note negative or positive attitudes

towards varieties expressed in videos, audio files, or texts and to check comments on status and value. The following activity combined listening, reading, writing, and digital skills and using digital resources in language learning, text creation, and interaction.

As a pre-listening activity, the teacher played and commented on the YouTube video *Learn a Geordie Accent | Newcastle Accent Tutorial* to illustrate a British variety (Tyrie, 2020). The video shows that even a specific variety, such as this Northern accent, may vary because of age, area, and culture within an area. Furthermore, it offered samples of general features, such as vowels, diphthongs, and consonant sounds. A native Geordie speaker demonstrated examples of words and expressions. The time spent was 10 minutes.

Internet resources such as the *British Library and IDEA - International Dialects of English Archive* (2011) were presented on the smart board and shared on the learning platform to help students find reliable sources and audio material for their study. The time spent was 5 minutes.

As the teaching project's main activity, the study of a selected variety was initiated. The learning objective was to find information, perform a study of general features of a variety, and create a presentation to be held in class. Students were asked to produce a PowerPoint presentation, including manuscripts, and to share ideas, collaborate, and continue the task at home. The time spent was 110 minutes plus homework.

The students were given precise guidelines to ensure the creation of an informative and exciting presentation to be performed in class:

1. Make a pleasant and understandable PowerPoint presentation of a chosen variety.

2. Include relevant information, for example, geographical, historical, and linguistic facts. Also, look for information about the status or value of non-standard vs standard varieties.

3. Use/include audio files in the internet resources shared on the learning platform and include videos with examples to make it easier for listeners to understand.

4. Hand in a draft for teacher approval.

5. Carry out a presentation in class. The approximate presentation time is five minutes (including audio files or videos).

6. Deliver your PowerPoint presentations and manuscripts at the end of the project period.

7. You will receive feedback and assessments of the presentation work.

Sum-up Lesson: Group discussion and student questionnaire

Inspirational videos from the digital learning tool *Echo* were used to initiate group discussions about attitudes towards varieties of English. Following the previous lessons, the students evaluated the teaching project in groups of two and three. They conveyed thoughts about what had been instructive and whether they had changed attitudes towards some English varieties and their speakers. At the very end, they answered the online survey. The total time spent was 30 minutes.

# 4. Methods and Materials

## 4.1 Method

Various methods can be used to study teachers' and students' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours. The conducted empirical study included collecting qualitative and, to some extent, quantitative data from a teaching project log, PowerPoint presentations including student manuscripts, written texts from the group discussions, and an online survey.

The research methods to find answers to the research questions will be presented in what follows:

The present study involved a qualitative research method, where interpretation and assessment of information were natural components and comprised participants' subjective experiences. It sought to collect attitudinal information to learn more about students' opinions, beliefs, or interests (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 35 in Sannes, 2013). A qualitative research method was suitable because the study went in-depth and examined how a smaller number of participants acted or expressed their attitudes toward English varieties and speakers (Ibid., p. 37).

Approval from the *Norwegian Centre for Research Data* was granted (from 1 January, merged into SIKT (Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research) and a student survey was developed with the help of the online survey tool "Nettskjema" (appendix III). The present language survey gathered data from a smaller number of participants using

written questionnaires (Brown, 2007). The survey provided a very efficient means to gather information in a short time with little cost (Dörnyei in McKay, 2006, p. 35).

To sum up, the method used in the present study was basically qualitative. However, as will be shown, it included some quantitative data collected through a survey.

## 4.2 Materials

### 4.2.1 Log

Teacher log-keeping was one of the methods to collect data. The data contained personal observations in the classroom. Observations involved, for example, student comments on how they experienced encountering unfamiliar dialects, grammar, and pronunciation. The log included positive and negative experiences made in the classroom. In the interest of obtaining valuable data, logging was carried out throughout the project period of six weeks.

### 4.2.2 Classroom activities

#### Presentations and manuscripts

PowerPoint presentations contained written linguistic, geographical, historical, and cultural information, images, audio files with language samples, and YouTube videos. Most participants studied a non-standard variety of English, while some examined a standard variety.

#### Written texts from group discussions

Group discussions comprised questions on how competent they think a person who speaks a variety seems to be, how attractive a variety might appear, how difficult it may be to understand someone who speaks this variety (considering speed, vocabulary, etc.), and whether the teaching project had changed their attitudes towards speakers of a specific variety. They evaluated their own development of *Intercultural Competence* during the project period and submitted written texts with comments on the teaching project.

### Survey – Student questionnaire

The data collection methods included written questionnaires with open-ended questions and close-ended questions with a *checklist format* (see questionnaire included in Appendix III). Open-ended questions allow respondents to write personal answers, and they may provide detailed information. Close-ended questions require the respondent to choose one of several pre-specified answers (McKay, 2006, p. 38).

The questions followed up on the EFL competence goals included in the teaching project.

The questionnaire was distributed on the learning platform and was answered by 17 students during one lesson. They were asked to refrain from discussing the survey questions with anyone.

## 4.3 Limitations

This is a small-scale study, and the results are not generalizable, and, evidently, a teacher's personal log is not a completely objective tool. Further, as one can see from the results, not all students participated in all activities, and time constraints may have impacted the results. However, considering these limitations, the study may still provide valuable input regarding students' attitudes towards English varieties.

# 5. Results and Discussion

The study was concerned with students' perspectives on English varieties. Through a teaching project, it aimed to investigate how students' attitudes were expressed through reflection on the content of, e.g., videos and audio materials and other people's attitudes to different varieties and speakers. The results of this attitudinal study were based on log-keeping, student presentations, manuscripts, notes from group discussions, and online questionnaire data. Survey results provided input on mindsets and the development of *Intercultural Competence*.

## 5.1 Results from the Log-keeping

As previously mentioned, teacher logs are only partially objective because they are based on personal experiences. A log can, nevertheless, reflect some of the students' experiences and thoughts about attitudes. The observations presented below derive mainly from oral input, such as comments and discussions in the classroom.

### Ridicule or testing pronunciation?

At the beginning of the project, the students watched a funny YouTube video in which a presenter caricatured English varieties. The students laughed at parodying pronunciation, intonation, words, and expressions. It was emphasized in the humorous video that it was not intended to offend anyone. The video created reactions in the classroom and became a reminder to assess which videos are suitable for teaching. Nevertheless, even if the choice of this YouTube video could feel like a balancing act, it was necessary to create motivation and let the students express their attitudes in the classroom.

YouTube videos, TV channel clips, TikTok, and audio files could be a good starting point for language learning, as seen in the next examples: Most students were familiar with the Harry Potter films and therefore looked at Harry Potter clips on YouTube. They made fun of the speech and tried to imitate British English. They only expressed positive attitudes towards standardized speech. Likewise, some students giggled at commercials using Indian English varieties. This situation seemed different from the latter because they commented and laughed at both the characters and their speaking. The contrast may indicate that the students expressed acceptance and positive attitudes towards accents and speakers that seemed familiar. The British English variety was perceived as more understandable than the unknown Indian English variety, where students responded less positively. However, imitation of pronunciation, copying of words and expressions, and reactions that could be perceived as ridiculing varieties and their speakers could demonstrate students' testing of varieties and reveal language learning. After noticing the emerging attitudes, it was essential to advise the students how to present what they thought was strange or different in class.

## Curiosity

The teaching project seemed as if the students found it more motivating and fun when they began to study a variety of their own choice, and most were interested in imparting acquired knowledge about varieties. Their interest aligns with what Byram calls "being open and curious," which is a significant part of *Intercultural Competence* (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 19).

## Others' perceptions of varieties

Some students also commented on information about others' perceptions of a specific variety, such as challenging to understand, popular, or humorous. These experiences became evident in several PowerPoint presentations focusing on standard Australian English varieties. Instead of examining a non-standard variety, these students compared standard varieties' vocabulary, grammar, and intonation variation instead of doing as requested. Despite this, several attitudinal findings were found in the presentations and will be commented on further down in the results section.

## The study of varieties

Most participants followed the advice to study geographical, historical, and linguistic facts, look for information about the status or value of non-standard vs standard varieties, and include this in their PowerPoint presentations. They enclosed descriptive videos and audio materials, compared varieties, and exemplified similarities and differences unbiasedly. A few included funny videos uncritically. Those who primarily studied historical and cultural facts found it too demanding to look at specific language features in-depth. These also found fewer examples of other people's attitudes toward the variety.

## 5.2 Results from PowerPoint Presentations and Manuscripts

The PowerPoint presentations mostly contained images, keywords, short sentences, videos, and audio files with examples. Findings are, therefore, primarily taken from submitted PowerPoint manuscripts as these contained much of what the students presented during the presentation, including live oral input.

## Strange, weird, difficult, and odd

Several findings showed the extent to which the students were familiar with non-standard vs standard varieties. Students commented on standard varieties, such as Australian English, divided into broad, general, and cultivated. One student presented what he found as "strange" and "weird" expressions in cultivated Australian English. He answered: "A very typical slang word in the posh accent is 'Old bean', which is a term used to describe a person". Another student found the following expressions slightly odd: "A yobbo, […] is an uncultivated person" and "put a sock in it […] is the same as shut up (or stop talking)". Both examples describe a person in a negatively charged way.

The Irish variety Hiberno could be difficult for some to understand, and one student explained that "Hiberno English is, in my opinion, very weird". She also thought that the words "Boy = Friend" and "Eejit = idiot" were unusual.

The selected samples may indicate that the students perceived some varieties as unfamiliar or strange, and those more used to linguistic diversity found these easier to understand.

Most students compared non-standard with standard varieties, e.g., British or American English. A reason could be that they knew British English from primary school and were later regularly exposed to American English via movies, YouTube, TikTok, and music. For example, American words and expressions have become popular and part of everyday speech. Therefore, the results suggest they did not perceive these standards as weird or strange and only positive attitudes towards these standard varieties emerged in the presentations. Australian, Irish, or Indian English seemed more unfamiliar to some students, even though these varieties are spoken by many people today.

These findings correspond to previous studies, demonstrating that students at upper secondary schools favor British and American English because the varieties were easy to understand and manageable (Rindal, 2010; Sannes, 2013).

## Status

Geographical variations and status were underlined in the following comment: "The Australians from south Australia sound more British and posher than the other Australians". This is comparable to a student's discoveries when studying American varieties. This student

found that a spesific pronunciation can be associated with status or prestige, and he described that New Yorkers "often speak with a higher tempo, and either a higher or lower pitch. They speak at a steady pace and the pronunciation makes it sound more confident". The examples show that varieties can be ranked according to status and popularity.

The following example illustrates attitudes towards an Indian English variety. One student had perceived that "Many people in the world are looking down on the Indian English accent and people often make fun of it, because of how they talk and pronounce the words […] they can say things like […]my teacher is sitting on my head, and my friend is eating my brain" (Student text). The student examined videos and found information about Indian English on websites. He thought other people's attitudes towards Indian English were negative, but this view cannot be generalized. Furthermore, research has noticed a growing self-confidence of previously often stigmatized standard and non-standard national and regional varieties outside the UK and the USA, such as Australian English, New Zealand English, South African English and Indian English, and the traditional prestige and standard varieties are not considered any longer as target norms by many speakers of these national and regional varieties (Bieswanger, 2012, p. 6).

It is difficult to know why some varieties have become more popular. Earlier, British dialects were perceived as inappropriate and less correct than standard varieties. Now, non-standard varieties, such as Geordie (Newcastle), Cockney (London), and Scouse (Liverpool), have been referred to as popular in YouTube videos and TV channels and equally in student presentations. Two students studied language feature samples and compared Scouse and standard British English. One student presented Scouse positively stated: "Scouse is also very distinctive, which means it does not have many similarities to other English accents. The variant also has an interesting grammar because they formulate some sentences differently than Standard English" (Student text). These findings indicate that English has developed into a means of communication that can open greater acceptance of non-standard varieties.


English language development

Language mixing and borrowing were commented on in one presentation. The student described the New York urban accent as "strongly influenced by other languages and dialects to which it may have relations". He also found that the Internet has significantly affected it, as slang and new words are mixed into the language and "the variety is seen as a more modern

accent of the English language" (student text). The student expressed himself in positive terms and showed an understanding of the cultural influence on the language.

## Prejudice and discrimination

In meetings with people from places with distinctive language features, both intolerance and stigmatization may occur. One finding is included in the following example:

> A guy from Adelaide, a city in South Australia, was made fun of for not sounding like an "Aussie". People told him that he sounded more like he was from England or South Africa than Australia. When he told them he was from Adelaide, they told him, "That`s why". Many people think that Cultivated Australian English is the best variation to use, but that is not true. It is not a superior way to speak English in Australia". (Student text)

This quotation suggests that no variety is better than another and may indicate an understanding and respect for others with a different cultural affiliation than one's own (for a discussion of attitudes, please see Barrett et al., 2014).

Discrimination can occur when someone sees themselves and their language as superior. One student explained that Chicano speakers have been discriminated against and that "Chicano is an identity for many Mexican Americans […] they have their own culture and form of English." A variety like Chicano contains words from different languages and is quite different from standard American English, and it can therefore be perceived as hard to understand. However, knowledge of other cultures and languages can lead to positive attitudes, tolerance, and appreciation of what is different (for a discussion of knowledge and understanding, please see Barrett et al., 2014, p. 19).

## 5.3 Analysis of Notes from Group Discussions

Before conducting the survey, the students were divided into small discussion groups and encouraged to share the experiences gained in the teaching project. They were asked to note positive and negative comments about what they had learned about varieties. Some selected answers are presented in what follows, grouped according to content in language development, status, and respect.

## Language development

During the project, the students learned about how immigration, colonization, language contact and language borrowing have influenced English language development. One student commented: "Their language can tell you how their past has been and what the country has experienced". This concerns language being the result of historical events, language mix and borrowing. Another student pointed at travelling across borders: "Immigrants […] will influence the original language […] spoken in the country that they are living in". None of the answers indicated negative attitudes.

## Status

When replying, "British English sounds nice and formal" and "American English is normal and basic." students expressed themselves in positive terms. The use of "formal" can mean that the varieties are spoken by those who are well educated and therefore have a certain status, while "basic" in the context of US usage could indicate that it is a norm that underlies other varieties of English. These findings may signify that many students still value the standard varieties highly.

In contrast, even though British English seems to have high status, the variety may also be experienced as a bit negative, as shown in the following statement: "I think it sounds very posh and high class, so it gets a snobby attitude amongst us 'normal'. They are often very clear when they talk, so it is easy to understand. It can be soothing to listen to, but it can also get pretty annoying". The remark suggests an appreciation of standard pronunciation, but negatively charged expressions, "snobby attitude", and "annoying" signal negative associations.

Students thought, e.g., that "The scouse accent is funnier and a bit hard to understand because they talk fast" and "it is a very broad accent with hard sounds and words". Words like "funnier", "broad" and "hard sounds and words" suggest that Scouse was somewhat unfamiliar and has an unusual way of pronouncing consonants compared to standard British English.

Students were clear on which varieties they liked the most. Mexican English was described as "beautiful" and Nigerian English as "funny and cool" because "they say many words very

weird compared to other variants of English". Also, the students revealed positive attitudes toward Australian English accents because they were "easy to understand" and "really cool". They stated that standard Australian, British and American English were "the easiest".

## Respect

Valuing cultural diversity and respecting people who have different cultural affiliations than one's own, expressing openness and empathy for others (Barrett et al., 2014), was clearly expressed in the next student's answer: "Show respect to others who speak another language than you are speaking. For example, you don't laugh when they are trying to tell you something that is not meant to be funny". The comment demonstrates a thoughtful and respectful attitude towards people and how they speak.

## Tolerance

Tolerance towards language varieties came into play in the next argument: "You don't discriminate people because of how they pronounce words or how they speak". Both remarks contrasted with previous observations when students laughed at unfamiliar pronunciations in commercials and videos. In this final phase, several students expressed negative attitudes when they said, "We think the Indian accent sounds weird, and it can sound funny often. […] For example, […] 'Today' […] sounds like 'Doday'. They speak very monotonous, so it can get annoying listening to it for a long time". And similarly, "Nigerian English sounds a bit weird" and "I don't like Swedish English" illustrate negative mindsets.

Results indicate that students had developed positive and negative attitudes by exploring unknown varieties. Several students expressed interest in linguistic variations in the group discussions, and some of those who made fun of speakers still had a negative attitude towards representatives from non-standard and standard varieties.

The questionnaire and the resulting findings will be presented in the next section. Figures 5.1-5.5 illustrate results from close-ended questions with a *checklist format.* Tables 5.1 – 5.5 show findings from the open-ended questions.

## 5.4 Presentation of the Questionnaire

24 students participated in the classroom project. However, only 17 students of these answered the questionnaire.

1. How many varieties do you know?

Figure 5.1 below illustrates that all participants, 17 students, were familiar with American and British English, and the majority knew Australian, Indian, and African American English well. However, only 10 students (58,80 %) knew New Zealand English.
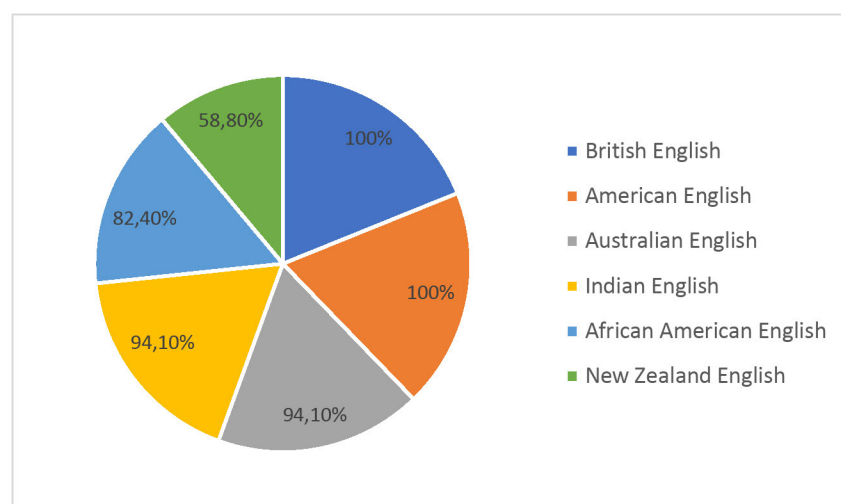


Figure 5.1 How many varieties do you know?

Research reveals that many people think it has been "safe" to use standard varieties in the classroom (Sannes, 2013, p. 26). Many have considered them correct, and British and American English pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar have been favored. However, this is criticized by scholars who promote Global Englishes because there are many more non-standard English speakers than standard English speakers worldwide (Ladegaard & Sachdev, 2006).

The results in Figure 5.1 above show that most have acquired knowledge about standard varieties, and these results correspond with previous research, e.g., in Norway (Sannes, 2013). However, the revised English curriculum in Norway emphasizes authentic language input and allows students to become familiar with non-standardized English varieties (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2021). Exposure to varieties is a step in the right

direction. Students need to understand different varieties in order to communicate with people all over the world (McKay, 2012, p. 73). However, focusing more on non-standard varieties can mean a change for students and teachers who have traditionally relied on the native speaker model (Galloway & Rose, 2018).

## 2. Why do you think that English has become a World Language?
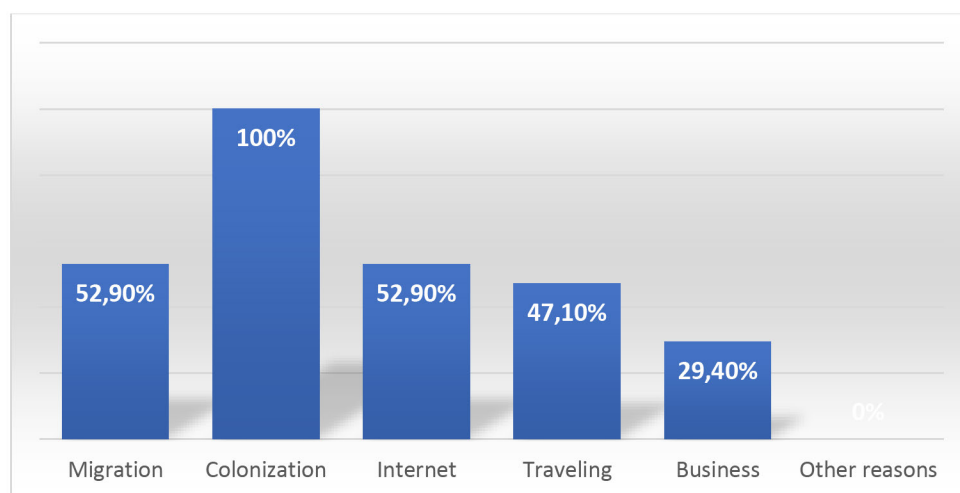


Figure 5.2 Why do you think that English has become a World Language?

Figure 5.2 above shows that 17 participants (100 %) understood that colonization was the decisive reason for English becoming a world language. This result was expected as the introduction of the project focused on colonization. 9 students (52,9 %) believed migration was a significant reason, and an identical number of respondents thought the internet contributed to English language development. 8 students (47,10 %) responded that travelling was an major factor, while only 5 students (29,40 %) thought business was less important for the English language, having gained this status. This demonstrates that students need to be made aware of the importance that English has in professional life.

## 3. Standard English varieties in schools

Students were asked why learning standard English varieties in school is essential, and Figure 5.3 below shows that the option of learning standard varieties makes it easier to understand

each other was marked by 16 students (94,1 %). 6 participants (35,3 %) thought learning proper pronunciation and grammar seemed crucial. Only 1 student (5,9 %) thought learning standard English may promote discrimination, 1 thought that standard varieties are valued, and 3 believed learning correct usage is essential.

The other options received a lower response rate. Just 4 participants (23,5 %) believed that learning standard varieties makes it easier to understand the news etc., and 6 (35,3 %) students answered that learning the correct pronunciation and grammar is vital. No more than 1 student replied that learning standard varieties can combat discrimination and that standard varieties are valued and accepted. The answers may suggest that the students generally understand that learning standard forms provides a good basis for language learning. But, strangely, only 6 say that it is important to learn the correct pronunciation, considering that language learning has long emphasized standard English.
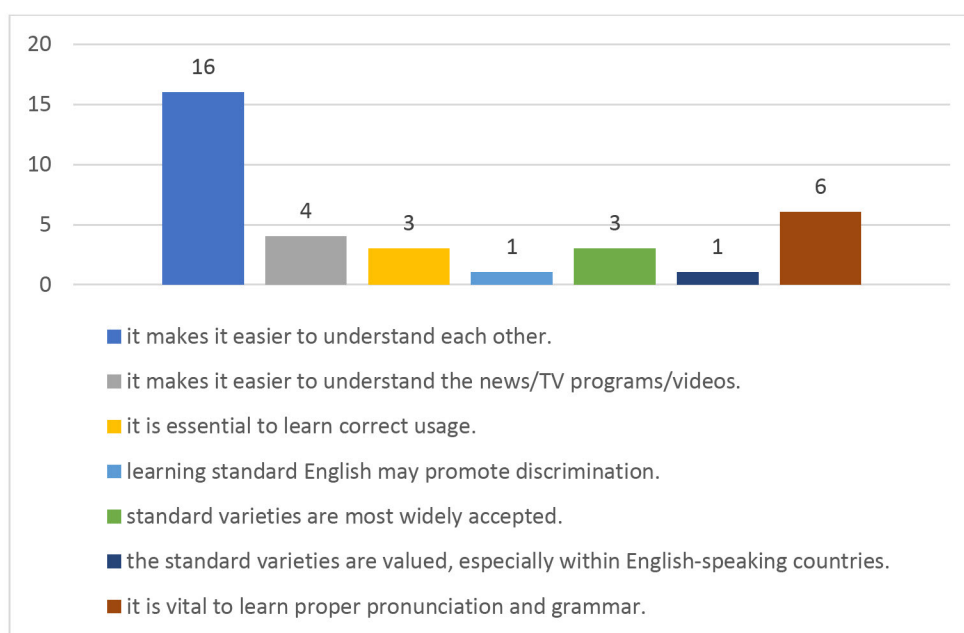


Figure 5.3 To learn standard English varieties in schools is essential.

## 4. Attitude towards speakers of English varieties

The participants were then asked about their attitude towards speakers of English varieties. The options were chosen based on experiences made during the project and group discussion.

Interestingly, after conducting the teaching plan, nobody thought that people often have positive attitudes toward non-standard varieties. Figure 5.4 below shows that 9 participants (52,9 %) found that increasing students' awareness of different varieties of English is essential. The same number of respondents thought people often have negative attitudes towards non-standard varieties, and only 6 (35,3 %) replied that exposing students to many non-standard varieties is essential.
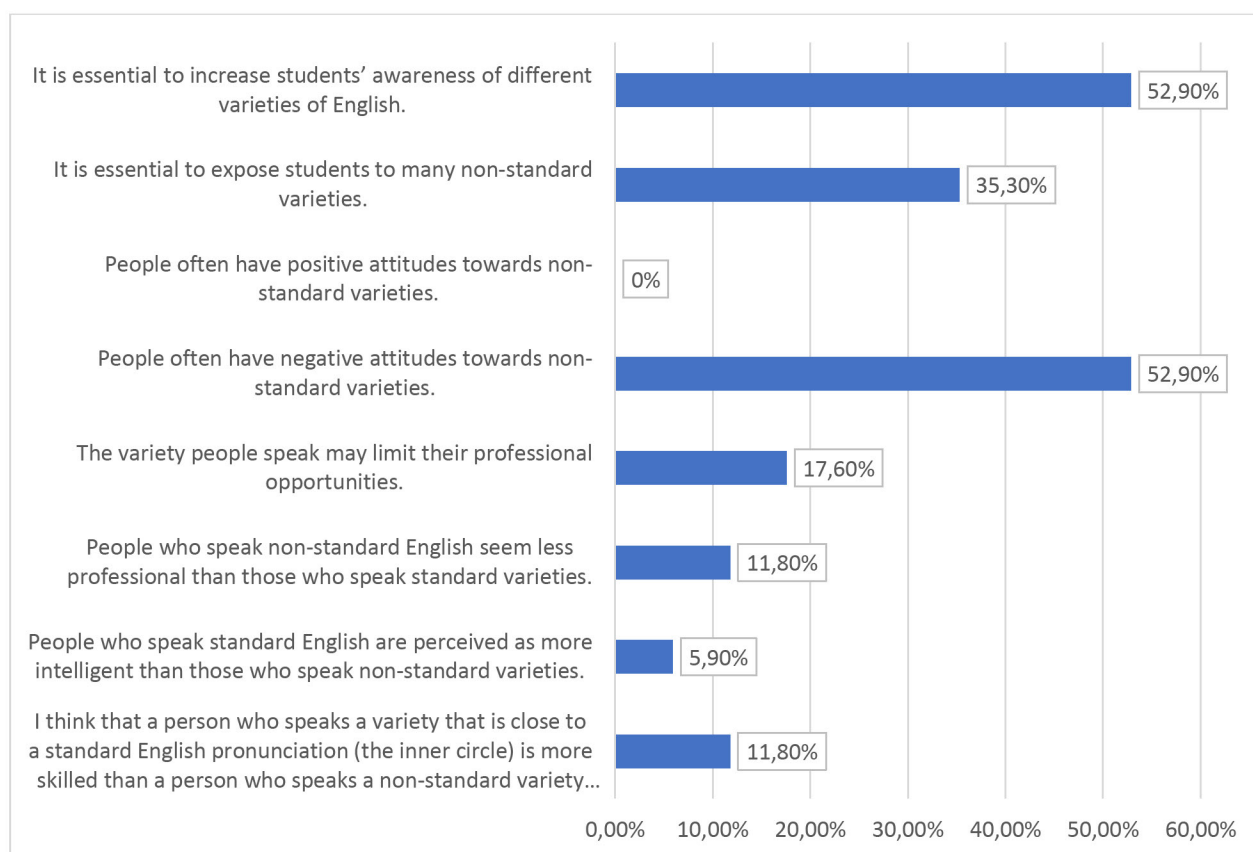


Figure 5.4 Attitude towards speakers of English varieties

Only 1 respondent (5.9 %) believed that people who speak standard English are perceived as more intelligent than speakers of non-standard varieties. 3 (17.6 %) seemed to think that how people speak can limit their professional opportunities. 2 students (11.8 %) answered that a person who speaks a variety that is close to a standard pronunciation is more skilled than a person who speaks a non-standard variety of English. Just as many thought that people who speak non-standard English seem less professional than those who speak standard varieties was significant.

In Figure 5.4, two alternatives, in particular, stand out. The first choice shows that half of the students realized that there are negative perceptions about non-standard varieties. These results are similar to discussion results where several students thought different accents and dialects seemed "strange" or "wrong". The second noticeable result clarifies the students' opinion that it is essential to increase students' awareness of different varieties of English. This belief may indicate that students benefited from delving deeply into the diversity of Englishes and is consistent with research in the field, which asserts that students need to be prepared for future encounters with English speakers that differ from their own (Jenkins, 2006).

## 5. What have you experienced so far after working with English Varieties?

The students were asked what they had experienced so far. The answers displayed in Figure 5.5 below suggest various learning outcomes after the project period.
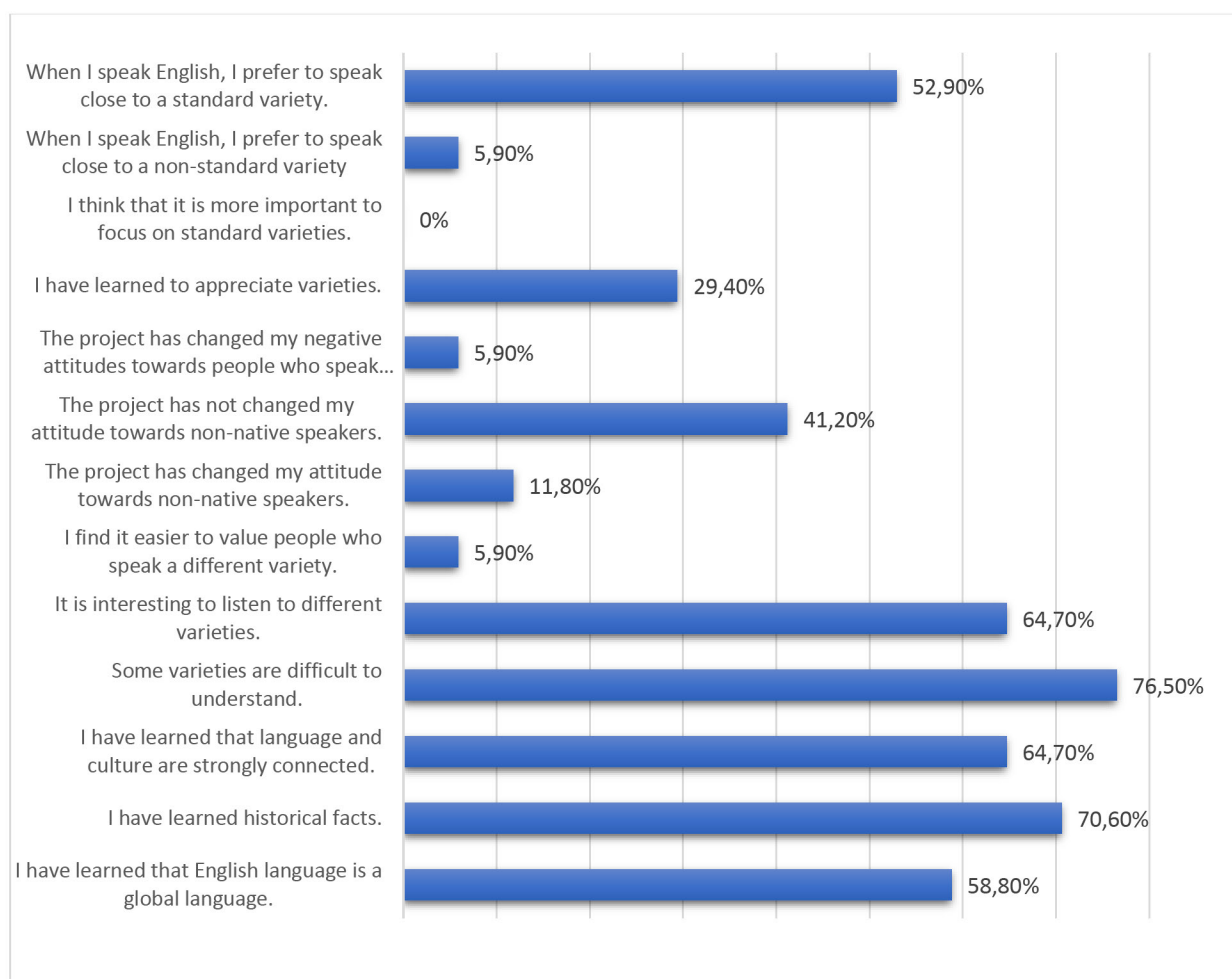


Figure 5.5 After working with English Varieties, what have you experienced so far?

As many as 13 students (76,5 %) replied that some varieties are difficult to understand. 12 students (70,6 %) responded they had learned historical facts, and 11 students (64,7 %) answered that language and culture are firmly connected and this may indicate the development of *Intercultural Competence*. The same number of respondents (64,7 %) found it interesting to listen to different varieties. However, only 5 (29,4 %) replied that they have learned to appreciate varieties. 10 participants (58,8 %) said they had learned that the English language is a global language. Notably, 9 students (52,9 %) preferred speaking close to a standard variety, which may indicate that learning standard varieties still has a foothold in the English classroom. Only 2 students (11,8 %) answered that the project had changed their attitude towards non-standard speakers. This may imply that students are more exposed to non-standard varieties in everyday life, and a project does not affect their attitudes to a significant degree. Just 1 student (5,9 %) seemed to think that he found it easier to appreciate people who speak a different variety, that the project has changed negative attitudes toward non-standard speakers, and preferred speaking close to a non-standard variety.

Although almost everyone says that learning standard varieties is essential for understanding each other (see Figure 3), according to Figure 5, no one believes it is crucial to focus on standard varieties. Nevertheless, 9 students say they prefer to speak close to a standard variety.

There are only 5 students who think they have learned to appreciate non-standard varieties, while 11 believe that such non-standard varieties are enjoyable to listen to. Such findings may mean that the project has changed attitudes towards varieties to some extent and may signal that students have become more curious about non-standard varieties.

### 6. Is English influencing your native language (your everyday language)?

The next open-ended question aimed to determine whether English affects the student's native language. Most participants (14) thought that English influenced their daily speech, and some (3) believed that the Internet was the primary source. One respondent answered as follows: "Yes, English does influence my native language on a daily basis. It is heavily influenced by the internet. Examples of this can be social media, YouTube, Tik Tok, Instagram, Snapchat, and Netflix" (student text). Several students (10) described more generally that English words blend naturally into everyday language and replace Norwegian expressions, even when

communicating with other Norwegians. One student explained how English words have blended into Norwegian: "Yes, I often use words like random instead of tilfeldig." Another believed that English influence "can create new slang words or expressions." Only two respondents felt that English did not affect their daily language.

The majority feel that the influence of the English language on Norwegian is only positive and that this influence seems exciting and natural since they both hear and speak the language regularly.

## 7. Describe your attitudes toward English varieties (and the speakers)

In an open-ended question, the students were invited to describe their attitudes towards English varieties and their speakers. The responses relevant to the research questions are presented in the following:

### Valuing diversity

Most respondents seemed to think they have a positive attitude towards the vast number of varieties. The appreciation of diversities was expressed like this: "I do not see any of the English varieties as better than others. Your speech gets influenced by your culture, and I think […] it is great that people sound different". (Student text). Whether the student has changed his attitude and developed an openness to other languages and cultures cannot be determined with certainty. Nevertheless, the response may show curiosity and satisfaction with global English. The answer also indicates that she is in the process of developing *Intercultural Competence*, which can be supported by Byram, who underlines the importance of "being open to, curious about and willing to learn from and about people who have different cultural orientations and perspectives from one's own" (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 19).

A student thought it was encouraging that many people have learned to speak English because it makes it easier for people to communicate, even though we speak English differently. She believed we shouldn't judge those who try their best to speak the language (Student text). It can also be argued that many speakers of World English use their variety of English as an expression of their identity and their cultural values (see Crystal, 2003, p. 22).

## Culture

The following answer indicates acquired valuable cultural understanding, and it is conceivable that the study of audio files and videos has contributed to it: "I think it's fun to hear all the differences and that people who talk the same language can have their own language mixed with it" (Student text). The student expressed a positive attitude towards how new language varieties, such as Creole and Pidgin, have emerged. Likewise, the subsequent response valued culture: "I think that having English varieties is good to show culture, and it would be boring if everyone talked standard English" (Student text). Research shows that language skills, motivation, and attitudes can be fundamental for discovering cultural elements and that using digital resources and practical working methods contribute to the development of *Intercultural Competence* (Barrett et al., 2014; Dudeney et al., 2013).

Several of the other responses also indicate a positive mindset towards varieties and their speakers. One student claimed that varieties "give you a greater perspective on the English language. You also get to see the heavy bond between culture and language" (Student text). The response aligns with the English subject curriculum, expressing that knowledge about cultures, lifestyles and ways of thinking opens up new perspectives on the world and ourselves (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2021).

## Preference and ridicule

One student expressed himself somewhat ambiguously when he explained, "I do not have any negative attitudes towards English varieties, but I prefer some accents over another. I think it is cool that there are a lot of varieties" (Student text). He preferred some varieties but did not say which; standard or non-standard. Favouring some varieties over others can lead to some varieties and their speakers being less valued. However, a way to address this issue through language teaching is to expose students to various dialects and accents, both familiar and unfamiliar. By using, for instance, authentic materials, students can gain more deep knowledge and appreciation of linguistic diversity. This involves "being willing to question what is usually taken for granted as 'normal' according to previously acquired knowledge and experience" (Barrett et al., 2014). This approach promotes more positive attitudes and combats prejudice.

The following statement may reveal a lack of respect for what is different: "I make fun of some varieties because they sound a bit funny." The student then explained that specific

varieties were difficult to understand (Student text). This response shows that there is a way to go when it comes to developing the kind of attitudes that Byram et al. includes in the model for *Intercultural Competence*. The answer expresses a need to develop positive attitudes towards others, develop openness and a desire to understand others and gain better knowledge of their culture and what is experienced differently. It also signals a need to acquire knowledge that can affect the ability to interpret and relate (Barrett et al., 2014).

8. Describe your attitude toward standard English varieties.

Ten students shared mainly positive views when asked to describe their attitude towards standard English varieties, while three said they had no specific attitude towards them. Several thought standard varieties could make communication more accessible and felt they were easy to understand and learn. Moreover, one student thought it was better to learn standard English "before you try to learn, say, Scouse." There was no doubt that some students favoured a standard variety. One preferred to speak American and British English rather than Australian English because "the abbreviation of a lot of words is a bit strange." This preference may result from many students being exposed to American English, particularly today. Another student expressed both negative and positive feelings about standard varieties, believing some were "very boring." However, he still believed that it is good to learn standard varieties so that he "can communicate with different people all over the world."

Many teachers' and students' experience of English teaching is highlighted in the statement "I think the standard variants are more 'correct' compared to how we write and expect words to sound like. I do not, however, think that this makes the standard variants superior to the other ones". The comment is consistent with research indicating that Norway has traditionally promoted American English and British dominant standard varieties in ELT (Simensen, 2014).

9. What is your impression of English varieties after the project period?

The following question was designed as a closed question with a checklist format and aimed to find out the students' impressions of English varieties after completing the teaching project.

Figure 5.5 below shows that 15 respondents (88.20 %) found some varieties challenging and some easy. As many as 11 respondents (64.70 %) replied that "Many varieties are familiar to me", while only 7 (41.20 %) expressed that "Many varieties are easy to understand". In comparison, only 5 participants (29.40 %) believed that "Many varieties are difficult to understand". Only 3 (17.60 %) said, "I would like to learn more about English varieties after the project period". As many as 6 students (35 %) answered that "I think it is important to learn how to use standard varieties". This response does not match the previous findings in question 5, "After working with English Varieties, what have you experienced so far?" where no student answered that it is more important to focus on standard varieties. This answer may indicate that the participants have changed their minds or answered quickly and uncritically to the questions.
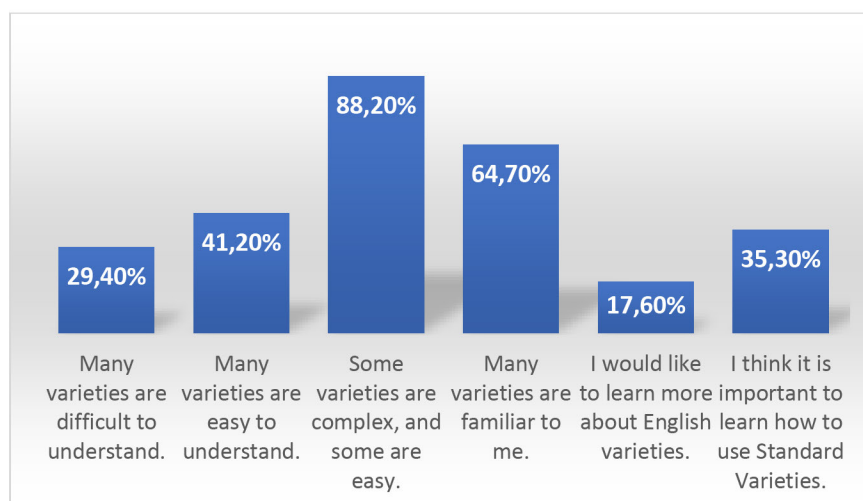


Figure 5.6 What is your impression of English varieties after the project period?

## 10. a) How can language learning contribute to developing Intercultural Competence?

First, the students were asked to explain how language learning can contribute to developing students' *Intercultural Competence*. Findings may indicate that most have learned that language learning is essential for communication and can contribute to broadening cultural understanding. For example, one student said, "There is a lot of culture in the language," and another, "Language can help to understand the culture and history behind different groups of people." Seven students clearly expressed that language learning is essential for understanding each other and essential for communication between people all over the world.

## 10. b) Has the project contributed to developing your Intercultural Competence?

Finally, the participants were asked whether the project had contributed to developing their *Intercultural Competence*. Most responded positively and said that the work with varieties was decisive. One thought he had "learned a lot about different languages and cultures" (Student text). Only one student did not think that the project had influenced his intercultural competence, and not all explained their answers.

The results in the last two-part question suggest that most of the language students felt the project has contributed to developing their *Intercultural Competence* and to a better understanding of the connection between culture and language.

# 6. Summary and Conclusion

This thesis has mapped students' attitudes towards varieties of English by carrying out a teaching project performed with a small number of participants. It must be kept in mind that the results cannot be generalized but may still provide valuable insights.

## 6.1 The First Research Question: Student's Attitudes Towards Varieties of English

Based on the log results, it has been shown that standard varieties from the *Inner Circle* are preferred because students find them easy to understand, and that they enable communication. These findings are confirmed by the results from the questionnaire, where 16 respondents answered that it was essential to learn about standard varieties at school because "learning standard varieties makes it easier to understand each other". The answer in the questionnaire also showed that non-standard varieties were perceived as exciting, but some found them challenging. These results match the presentation outcomes. The presentations demonstrated that several students found it natural to compare non-standard and standard varieties regarding vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. There is reason to believe this was done because standard varieties were known to them.

Many students expressed openness to non-standard English and their speakers in the discussions, while a few found them "weird," "funny," or "strange." Further, a few students

ranged standard varieties from "elegant" to "annoying". These findings showed that, in the main, students respected non-standard English varieties, but also that there were those that found it difficult to see them as equal to standard varieties.

As revealed in the questionnaire and log results, students believed that learning standard varieties makes it easier to understand each other, signalling the need to learn more about non-standard varieties, and half of the participants thought it was essential to raise awareness of different English varieties.

The perception of the English language's influence on students' everyday language was clear in several comments. The comments were overall either neutral or positive. The students found the diversity of English varieties interesting, as learning about several varieties enables better communication, creates a greater perspective on the English language and helps to develop tolerance and respect for what is different.

Likewise, several answered that the project helped them understand culture, history, and language. They answered that these factors had contributed to developing knowledge about non-standard varieties. Furthermore, most answered positively about how language learning and this project can contribute to *Intercultural Competence*.

## 6.2 The Second Research Question: To What Extent may ELT Contribute to Forming or Adjusting Attitudes?

The second research question focused on whether EFT can help to form or adjust attitudes. The teaching project was primarily based on LK20, which emphasizes authentic language input and allows students to become familiar with non-standardized English varieties (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training, 2021).

The conducted classroom project shows that working with non-standard varieties of English may help students develop positive attitudes and *Intercultural Competence*. It was done through the use of authentic material and collaboration in the classroom. The project also shows that teaching Global Englishes can be a step in the right direction as it can contribute to less focus on standard varieties.

However, teaching Global Englishes is demanding, but the project shows that it is possible to prepare students for future encounters by exposing them to non-standard English varieties and

help improve students' intercultural competence by opening up to encounters with English varieties, consequently, with the cultures in which those varieties are spoken.

As indicated in the theoretical framework of this thesis, English teaching in many countries has favoured British and American standard varieties, and there is a widespread belief that British or American standards are essential to learn before focusing on non-standard varieties. This research study shows that these traditions are still alive to some extent but that it is also possible to work, and succeed, with changing attitudes to non-standard varieties and their speakers in the English classroom.

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# Vil du delta i forskingsprosjektet

## *"Attitudes towards Varieties of English"*

Dette er eit spørsmål til deg om å delta i eit forskingsprosjekt som handlar om det engelske språket. I dette skrivet gjev eg deg informasjon om måla for prosjektet og om kva deltakinga vil innebere for deg.

Føremål
*Føremålet med prosjektet er at elevar skal lære om utviklinga av det engelske språket, lære om ulike språkvariantar og sjå nærmare på kva haldningar dei har til desse. Prosjektet handlar også om å utvikle ein interkulturell kompetanse fordi språk og kultur heng nøye saman.*

*Undervisningsprosjektet er ein del av masterstudiet mitt som heiter «Master i framandspråk i skulen - engelsk». Eg held no på med den avsluttande oppgåva og har laga eit undervisningsprosjekt som eg gjerne vil gjennomføre i klassa. Prosjektet er i tråd med fleire ulike kompetansemål i den nye læreplanen, som t.d.:*

1. lytte til og forstå ord og uttrykk i variantar av engelsk.
2. utforske og beskrive levemåtar, tenkjesett, kommunikasjonsmønstre og mangfald i den engelskspråklege verda

*Undervisningsprosjektet skal handle om*

1. at engelsk blitt eit globalt språk (historie, utvikling, status osv.)
2. standardvariantar
3. andre engelske variantar
4. kva haldningar ungdomar har til ulike språkvariantar (og dei som snakkar)
5. påverknad av det engelske språket

I prosjektet blir du beden om å ta aktivt del og samarbeide med andre elevar i klassa i ulike oppgåver. Du skal studerer ein type engelsk variant og presentere denne for dei andre elevane. Ei anna oppgåve er å diskutere ulike engelskvariantar og gi uttrykk for eigne meiningar. Eg kjem til å skrive logg undervegs. I denne loggen skriv eg til dømes noko om korleis de arbeider med engelske variantar, kva

de synest er interessant eller vanskeleg i dette undervisningsprosjektet, og kva de legg vekt på når de skal fortelje dei andre elevane om ein variant (uttale, lånord, språkpåverknad, status osv.) Etter undervisningsprosjektet er slutt, bed eg dykk om å svare på eit spørjeskjema. Både det de leverer skriftleg etter diskusjonen, alle svara i undersøkinga og loggen vert anonymiserte, og ikkje noko skal kunne sporast tilbake til deg.

**Kven er ansvarleg for forskingsprosjektet?**

*Høgskolen i Østfold* er ansvarleg for prosjektet.

**Kvifor får du spørsmål om å delta?**

Du får spørsmål om å vere med fordi prosjektet tek utgangspunkt i kompetansemåla i engelsk på 10. trinn og at du går i ei klasse der eg underviser i engelsk.

## Kva inneber det for deg å delta?

1.  *Dersom du vel å ta del i prosjektet, inneber det at du fyller ut eit spørjeskjema. Det vil ta deg ca.10-15 minutt. Spørjeskjemaet inneheld spørsmål om engelskvariantar du kjenner til frå før og andre variantar, kva du har lært gjennom å vere med i undervisningsprosjektet og haldningane dine til det engelske språket. Svara dine frå spørjeskjemaet blir registrerte elektronisk.*
2.  *Dersom du vel å ta del i prosjektet, inneber det at du er med på å gjere oppgåver som inneber å levere manus til presentasjonen av ein engelskvariant og levere skriftlege svar etter gruppediskusjonen til lærar.*
3.  *Dersom du vel å ta del i prosjektet, inneber det at lærar fører ein logg undervegs og at desse opplysningane vert brukte i forhold til forskingsprosjektet.*

*Foreldre kan ved å ta kontakt få sjå spørjeskjema på førehand.*

**Det er frivillig å delta**
Det er frivillig å delta i spørjeundersøkinga. Dersom du vel å delta, kan du når som helst trekkje samtykket tilbake utan å gje nokon grunn. Alle personopplysingane dine vil då bli sletta. Det vil ikkje føre til nokon negative konsekvensar for deg dersom du ikkje vil delta eller seinare vel å trekkje deg.

*Forskinga blir gjennomført i samanheng med undervisinga, og det er difor viktig å informere her om at hovuddelen av prosjektet inngår i normal undervising. Sjølve forskingsprosjektet eg bed om samtykke frå dykk foreldra til, gjeld i hovudsak spørjeundersøkinga. Dei som ikkje deltek, får tilbod om eit alternativt opplegg.*

**Ditt personvern – korleis vi oppbevarer og bruker opplysingane dine**
Eg vil berre bruke opplysingane om deg til føremåla eg har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Eg behandlar opplysingane konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

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1.  Veiledere frå *Høgskolen i Østfold* Eva Margareta Lambertsson Björk og Jutta Eschenbach vil ha tilgang til prosjektet.
2.  For å sikre at uvedkomande ikkje får tilgang til personopplysingane vert namn m.m. anonymiserte.
3.  Deltakarane i prosjektet vil ikkje kjennast att i opplysningane frå spørjeundersøkinga og heller ikkje i masteroppgåva.

**Kva skjer med opplysingane dine når vi avsluttar forskingsprosjektet?**

Det er kun anonymiserte opplysingar frå spørjeundersøkinga som blir tekne vare på etter arbeidet med masteroppgåva er ferdig, noko som etter planen er 1. juni 2023.

**Kva gjev oss rett til å behandle personopplysingar om deg?**
Vi behandlar opplysingar om deg basert på samtykket ditt.

På oppdrag frå *Høgskolen i Østfold* har Personverntjenester vurdert at behandlinga av personopplysingar i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

**Dine rettar**

Så lenge du kan identifiserast i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

1.  innsyn i kva opplysingar vi behandlar om deg, og å få utlevert ein kopi av opplysingane,
2.  å få retta opplysingar om deg som er feil eller misvisande,
3.  å få sletta personopplysingar om deg,
4.  å sende klage til Datatilsynet om behandlinga av personopplysingane dine.

Dersom du har spørsmål til studien, eller om du ønskjer å vite meir eller utøve rettane dine, ta kontakt med:
1.  *Høgskolen i Østfold* ved Eva Margareta Lambertsson Björk (eva.l.bjork@hiof.no) , telefon  696 08 145 og Jutta Eschenbach (jutta.c.eschenbach@hiof.no), telefon 696 08 142.
2.  Vårt personvernombod: Line Mostad Samuelsen line.m.samuelsen@hiof.no, telefon 696 08 234.

Dersom du har spørsmål knytt til Personverntjenester si vurdering av prosjektet kan du ta kontakt med:
1.  Personverntjenester, på e-post (personverntjenester@sikt.no) eller på telefon: 53 21 15 00.

Venleg helsing

*Prosjektansvarleg*
Eva Fjørtoft Floen

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# Samtykkeerklæring

Eg har motteke og forstått informasjon om prosjektet «Attitudes towards Varieties of English» og har fått høve til å stille spørsmål. Eg samtykker til at (eleven) _____:

- ☐ kan delta i spørjeundersøkinga
- ☐ at opplysningar frå loggføring, manus og gruppediskusjonar kan nyttast i forskingsprosjektet.
- ☐ at opplysingar om meg kan publiserast, men svara vert anonymiserte

Eg samtykker til at opplysingane mine kan behandlast fram til prosjektet er avslutta.

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(Signert av prosjektdeltakar, dato)

# Appendix II

## Teaching Resources

The teaching project includes several online resources providing both teachers and students with facts and inspiration, as presented in this overview:

*NDLA* is an open online resource with learning resources intended for teachers and students in upper secondary schools but can be adapted to secondary school language classrooms. The sections "*English as a World Language*" and "*The English-Speaking World*" texts and audio files present the English language's Development and offer examples of varieties in the classroom.

*Langfocus videos* convey information in the field, e.g., *Why Did English Become the International Language?* This video and more, found on *YouTube*, give students a general idea of English language development. Moreover, it explains the importance of using the language as a lingua franca and why English is essential in many areas of society today, e.g., communication, traveling, and work contexts. The spread is explained because of colonization, the USA has become a world power, and English has been given the status of a second language. The video addresses that the subject has become part of curricula worldwide and points to the extensive use of English on the Internet. Finally, it summarizes that globalization and technological development have contributed to English becoming a world language.

*Kachru's Concentric Circles of English*, as commented on in a previous chapter, gives the students a simplified picture of English language development. The model can act as a starting point for a class- or group discussion about, such as, history, language change, and variation, native Englishes, standard and non-standard languages, lingua franca, pidgin, creole, or borrowing. Worth noting is that English is endemic in England, and everywhere else, English has been introduced (Bauer, 2002, p. 23).

David Crystal is a British linguist, academic, and author whose contributions to the field of language development and such as *Global Englishes* and more, are easily available on *YouTube*. Two of his encouraging videos are *Which English*? (a talk about *Global Englishes*) and *World Englishes* (a talk about future Englishes). ([https://www.davidcrystal.com/GBR/Biography](https://www.davidcrystal.com/GBR/Biography)) . These videos serve as teacher resources and may also be presented in class.

*Enter 8-10* has an online resource that offers a teaching plan with activities on, for example, differences between British and American English and comparisons regarding vocabulary and spelling. The online resource requires login access [https://podium.gyldendal.no/enter/laerer/enter-ressursbank](https://podium.gyldendal.no/enter/laerer/enter-ressursbank).

Dialect examples, comparisons, or videos with a specific focus on grammar, pronunciation, and geographical varieties can help stimulate activity, such as *30 varieties of English from around the world*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEMMtKjYx_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEMMtKjYx_w) and *The English language in 67 accents and random voices* [https://youtu.be/riwKuKSbFDs](https://youtu.be/riwKuKSbFDs) are houmous videos with numerous examples from around the world.

Regarding the teaching project, I asked *Fagbokforlaget* for permission to use the digital resource *Echo,* created in line with the competence objectives in LK20. The access allows admittance to all texts, videos, and audio files for a limited teaching period. As stated by the publisher, *Echo* looks with fresh eyes at the English-speaking reality worldwide and has a rich selection of texts that can be used at all secondary school levels (*Echo*). Videos from the *English-around-the-world* section may be an inspirational source for learning about English varieties.

N Nettskjema

## Attitudes towards English Varieties in the Norwegian EFL Classroom

Thank you for participating in this survey which is part of my research.
Participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw from the research whenever you want.
The information collected in this questionnaire will only be used in my research, and the answers will be anonymous.
This questionnaire takes approx. 15-20 minutes to answer.

In this project, you have worked with audio material/videos and presented an English variety in class. Then, you have collaborated and recorded a podcast while discussing English varieties and your attitudes towards them.
You were asked to discuss
- how competent do you think a person who speaks a variety seems to be
- how attractive/popular does this variety appear
- how difficult is it to understand someone who speaks this variety (speed, vocabulary, etc.)
- has the work changed your attitudes towards those who speak this variety
- finally, how do you think this project has developed your intercultural competence
According to the English subject curriculum,
- "English shall help the pupils to develop an intercultural understanding of different ways of living, ways of thinking and communication patterns"
- "the pupil is expected to be able to use different digital resources and other aids in language learning, text creation and interaction"
- and "listen to and understand words and expressions in variants of English"

### How many varieties of English do you know?
Tick the varieties which you think are correct according to your own experience.

    British English
    American English
    Australian English
    Indian English
    African American English
    New Zealand English

### Why do you think that English has become a world language?
Tick the keywords which you think are correct.

    Migration
    Colonization
    Internet
    Traveling
    Business
    Other reasons

### To learn standard English varieties in schools, such as, i.e., British English, American English, and Australian English, is essential because
Tick the claims which you think are correct.

    it makes it easier to understand each other.

it makes it easier to communicate.

it makes it easier to understand the news/TV programs/videos.

it is essential to learn correct usage.

learning standard English may promote discrimination.

standard varieties are most widely accepted.

the standard varieties are valued, especially within English-speaking countries.

it is vital to learn proper pronunciation and grammar.

## Attitude towards speakers of English varieties:
Tick the claims that you think are correct.

I think that a person who speaks a variety that is close to a standard English pronunciation (the inner circle) is more skilled than a person who speaks a non-standard variety of English (the outer circle).

People who speak standard English are perceived as more intelligent than those who speak non-standard varieties.

People who speak non-standard English seem less professional than those who speak standard varieties.

The variety people speak may limit their professional opportunities.

People often have negative attitudes towards non-standard varieties.

People often have positive attitudes towards non-standard varieties.

It is essential to expose students to many non-standard varieties.

It is essential to increase students' awareness of different varieties of English.

## After working with English varieties, what have you experienced so far?
Tick the claims which you think are correct.

I have learned that English language is a global language.

I have learned historical facts.

I have learned that language and culture are strongly connected.

Some varieties are difficult to understand.

It is interesting to listen to different varieties.

I find it easier to value people who speak a different variety.

The project has changed my attitude towards non-native speakers.

The project has not changed my attitude towards non-native speakers.

The project has changed my negative attitudes towards people who speak differently.

I have learned to appreciate varieties.

I think that it is more important to focus on standard varieties.

When I speak English, I prefer to speak close to a non-standard variety

When I speak English, I prefer to speak close to a standard variety.

## Is English influencing your native language (your everyday language)?
Please give reasons for your answer!

## Describe your attitude toward standard English varieties (such as American English, British English etc.):
Please give reasons for your answer!

**Describe your attitudes toward English varieties (and the speakers):**
Please give reasons for your answer!

**What is your impression of English varieties after the project period?**
Tick the claims which you think are correct.

Many varieties are difficult to understand.

Many varieties are easy to understand.

Some varieties are complex, and some are easy.

Many varieties are familiar to me.

I would like to learn more about English varieties.

I think it is important to learn how to use Standard Varieties.

**Final thoughts:**
A. How can language learning contribute to developing your intercultural competence?
B. Has the project contributed to developing your intercultural competence?
Please give reasons for your answer.

Thank you for taking part in this survey!