The Effect of EFL learners' Attitudes towards Native English Accents on Listening Comprehension and Comprehensibility

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Abstract

This study sought to contribute to all of the research done on the crossroads of language attitudes and second language acquisition, by examining attitudes towards the two most well-known accents of English: Standard British English (RP) and Standard American English, and the effects of those attitudes, as well as exposure on the constructs Listening Comprehension, Comprehensibility and perceived Teach Ability. This was done in a two part mixed test design. Forty-one EFL learners from the Netherlands were asked to rate two male native speakers, on their native British and American accents, using 11 attitude dimension Likert-scales. Part two consisted of a standard listening test in the two accents, which was used to objectively rate performance in those accents, followed by the subjective comprehensibility and perceived teach ability measures. 41 Dutch EFL participants showed an overall higher attitude score for the General American accent, in spite of a higher status attitude score for Received pronunciation. The effects of the attitudes on Listening Comprehension and Comprehensibility are as diverse and inconsistent as previous studies have been. An effect of attitude towards an accent on perceived Teach Ability is one of the most conclusive results.

Keywords: Attitudes, Attitudes towards Accents, Varieties of English, Language Acquisition, Formal instruction, L2 EFL, L1 Dutch, Comprehensibility, Listening Comprehension, Exposure, Teach Ability, Perception.
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1. Introduction

When learning a second language, listening comprehension and comprehensibility of audio input have been proven to be very important. They are not just important because they improve efficient and rapid second language attainment (L2), but listening comprehension thoroughly tests second language acquisition. In all layers of education, it is a major skill. Listening comprehension is the process of correctly understanding input by simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through involvement with spoken language. It involves the integrated understanding of sentences, paragraphs and spoken texts as a whole, not just understanding individual words or sentences correctly and it is objectively measurable.

Comprehensibility is, in essence, the ‘perception’ of how easy something is to understand, which makes it subjective. Even though the research on this topic is not unanimous, one factor that has been proven to affect listening comprehension (LC) scores and the comprehensibility of second language audio input, is the accent of the speaker. Accent is a language variant that is only phonologically distinguishable from another variant. There is much discussion going on about whether using just one, or multiple accents in second language acquisition is best for L2 attainment. Most studies give evidence for stepping away from single accent exposure and advocate use of multiple accents in second language classrooms for the sole reason that this would better reflect the language situation outside of the classroom. Other studies additionally add that exposure to different accents alone makes them more comprehensible. Finally, some studies have looked at the link between accents and attitude. Attitude is defined as the ‘global and enduring favorable or unfavorable predispositions to respond toward a stimulus or class of stimuli’ (Ito & Cacioppo, 2019, p. 126). The link between attitudes and accents has been well researched and proven. However, to date there have not been enough comprehensive studies into the degree to which an attitude toward an accent, can have an effect on comprehension and comprehensibility of that accent, and additionally the perceived teaching
ability of a language teacher, purely based on the accent they have. This is strange, given that it is tangible in the language classroom, specifically when working with teenagers, that their attitudes make or break their learning processes. Therefore it is not so strange that their attitudes towards the input they hear in the L2 classroom can trigger attitude responses that consciously or subconsciously make them want to (dis)engage from the audio that they hear. This has however not been proven. In the study presented in this thesis, the second language (L2) that is focused on and of which the accents will be used, is English. This was decided for the reason that English is spoken by millions of second language learners. The effect that attitudes towards different accents might be having on that many L2 EFL learners, is therefore a critical issue that needs to be investigated.

This thesis will therefore systematically examine whether just hearing different natively spoken L2 accents, triggers different attitude preferences in the case of L1 speakers of Dutch that speak English as their L2. If so, the objective is to examine whether and to what degree, those preferences affect listening comprehension and comprehensibility in any way and to analyze the role of exposure. In order to do that, the following literature review includes a summary of previous research on the topics of: attitudes regarding accents (section 2.1), the relationship between accents and listening comprehension, comprehensibility (section 2.2), and the effect of attitudes on listening comprehension, comprehensibility and perceived teach ability (section 2.3), prior to addressing the apparent research gap in the field, something which has led to identifying the object of the study.
2. Literature Review

2.1 Attitudes to Accents

Attitudes are dispositions of people towards everything in life, whether positive or negative. Attitudes are not permanent but they are enduring. They are in essence defined as 'global and enduring favorable or unfavorable predispositions to respond toward a stimulus or class of stimuli' (Ito & Cacioppo, 2019, p. 126; Pantos & Perkins, 2013). Attitudes can be result of learned behavior, consciously or subconsciously, and are thus formed by a combination of evaluative processes and impulsive processes (Gawronski & Bodenhausen, 2006; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Pantos & Perkins, 2013; Strack & Deutsch, 2004). People’s attitudes of others are partially influenced by their use of language. This has led to a number of studies in the multidisciplinary area of language attitudes (Cargile, Giles, Ryan, & Bradac, 1994).

Research in this domain has sought to describe attitudes towards different language variations such as entire languages, dialects and accents and is specifically interested in which- and why-certain language varieties are preferred over others (Serrarens, 2017).

Within most of approximately 7000 or so languages in the world, there are usually multiple dialects and accents (Dunn, Greenhill, Levinson, & Gray, 2011; Lewis, 2009). Accents, though often used interchangeably with dialects (Huang, Hansen, & Angkititrakul, 2007), are distinguishable from the latter in linguistics, because only the pronunciation or phonology of words is affected. This in contrast to a dialect which can be distinguishable from others because of differences in syntax or lexicon. For the reason that accents are different in such a specific area, they are sometimes regarded as a special component of a dialect (Upton & Widdowson, 2006). In this study, accents will be the only language variety that is focused on, and it is referred to as a language variant that is only phonologically distinguishable from another language variant.

Attitude has more than once been proven to have a strong link with accent. Specific
research into the link of attitudes and language attitudes has proven that a speaker’s social identity is determined by the listener, purely based on their accent (Giles, 1970). Accents have also influenced behavior in even young children, making them less eager to make certain friends, depending on the accent another child has. It appears that ‘variations in accent are sufficient to evoke these social preferences’ (Kinzler, Dupoux, & Spelke, 2007). This is the case, because language attitudes are based on a combination of cognitions, behaviors from the past, intentions for the future and affective reactions and they in turn impact cognitions, intentions and behavior for the future (Zimbardo & Leippe, 1991). This is substantiated by Eagly & Mlandinic (1989), who also mention the cognitive, affective and behavioral categories as having an effect on the generation of an attitude. The affective category includes the sentiments that people have, the cognitive category encompasses their thoughts, and the behavioral category influences actual behavior towards the item or person that the attitude is about (Eagly & Mladinic, 1989). These language attitudes are formed on a spectrum, and can range anywhere between extremes of negative and positive (Watson, Watson, & Tay, 2018). Where each individual sits between the extremes, whether more on the positive or negative end, can even be formed without a correct mental representation (Zimbardo & Leippe, 1991). Stereotyping has also been shown to play a role in the attitudes that people have towards accents, because this attitude is often connected to whatever stereotype someone has about the social group of those speaking with a certain accent (Serrarens, 2017). Taifel’s (1982) previous views fall in line with this, as he views language attitudes specifically as based on social preferences that are valued subjectively by society in a stratifying way. Similarly Edwards (1982) more generally states that all attitudes to language variations are created based on stereotypes. Additional previous language research has also suggested that these evaluation patterns to accents are often based on the evaluations and stereotypes about the nation that the speaker is from (e.g., Ryan, 1983). One hypothesis, which is known as the
‘imposed norm hypothesis’, states that language attitudes are based on evaluative patterns innate in cultural norms and patterns (Giles, Bourhis, & Davies, 1974; Giles, Bourhis, Lewis, & Trudgill, 1974). It can thus be concluded from previous language research that cultures within countries form attitudes about other accents based on specific stereotypes and views of the country where the speaker is from. It is also not necessarily a bad thing to have these stereotypes, though it is often viewed this way. Categorizing based on cultural norms and patterns that the stereotypes are based on, is needed in order to categorize the world around us (Lippmann, 1922). It is a human way of being able to place speakers into a social hierarchy because when they are categorized they are more easily dealt with (e.g., Labov, 1966; Lambert, 1967; Pantos & Perkins, 2013; Preston, 1989). Stereotyping has therefore also been be defined as ‘a mental concept, picture in our heads which governs the process of perception’ (Ladegaard, 1998b, p251).

Some authors consider attitudes to be the result of a more negative process. Tajfel (1982) for example, describes attitudes as being formed by an ‘us vs. them’ mentality that is triggered by enhancing the status of a group that we feel we are most closely related to. These subjective status perceptions are connected to factors such as a higher level of education, a certain kind of occupation, respectable behavior, being more well-spoken etc. They are also known as status traits (Ito & Cacioppo, 2019). Aside from status, there are other traits included in attitude judgements, which include characteristics such as kindness and humor (Ito & Cacioppo, 2019). These are referred to as solidarity traits (Ito & Cacioppo, 2019), or social attractiveness items (Carrier, 1999; Zahn & Hopper, 1985). Both types of traits combined condition an attitude to language, and they are both shaped subjectively (Ash, 2013). There is a wealth of research looking into what these different attitudes are, in different parts of the world, towards different accents. The status attributes specifically are often attributed to the standard variety of the language, which is the variety that is considered to be
spoken by the educated members of society, in academia, the media etc. (Edwards, 1982). The non-standard accent are generally disfavored by listeners (Gluszek & Dovidio, 2010; Lambert, 1967; Ryan, 1982). Results from diverse research studies have shown that many attitudes are in fact uniform across cultures (Bradac, 1990; Giles & Coupland, 1991; Ladegaard, 1998a; Ladegaard, 1998b). Though there is conflicting research to be found on the subject as well.

2.2 Listening Comprehension, Comprehensibility, Accent and Exposure

Being able to correctly understand spoken language from an L2 language is crucial in learning that language, as this greatly improves L2 development (Moyer, 2009). Correctly understanding verbal input is also known as listening comprehension (LC). It is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through involvement with spoken language (Snow, 2002). Speech is comprehended by processing information that can be gathered from visual and auditory clues by the listener, so that it can be understood what the speaker is trying to express (Rubin J., 1990). It involves the integrated understanding of sentences, paragraphs, and spoken texts as a whole, not just understanding individual words or sentences correctly, and it is objectively measurable (Snow, 2002).

Barlow (as cited in Kagitci, 2017) and Kagitci (2017) looked at an additional construct rather than at just the objective construct of LC. They added a measure of perception to their experiments in which they asked the participants to indicate which accents they perceived easier to understand. This measure of perception, is comprehensibility, and it is closely related to listening comprehension, yet still a separate factor. It is, in essence, the ‘perception’ of how easy something is to understand (Derwing & Munro, 1997). So, while listening comprehension is objectively measured, comprehensibility is someone’s personal judgement of what they hear and therefore subjective.

It needs to be pointed out, for the sake of clarification, that LC, as well as
comprehensibility, are different from another well-known construct in second language acquisition (SLA) research. The construct referred to is intelligibility, which is usually referred to as understanding the words of the message delivered by the speaker (Derwing & Munro, 1997). Intelligibility tests are therefore usually conducted by having participants transcribe what they hear, and interfering factors are for example background noise or someone slurring their language when they are tired or drunk. Listening Comprehension (LC) is not about understanding what is being said word for word, as intelligibility tests prove. It is about truly understanding the content of speech which is why it is so important for communication in interaction. Listening comprehension is however a complicated component of language learning. It is optimal when the listeners are able to pay attention as well as access their knowledge of the world, and the foreign language, while they are processing (Rubin J., 1990). Listening Comprehension is what is tested in formal second language education by asking participants to prove their accurate understanding of the meaning in an oral message, not intelligibility. For this reason, Listening Comprehension, along with comprehensibility, are the focus in the this current study.

Finally, a linguistic dimension which has been found to have an effect on LC and comprehensibility, is the a speaker’s accent. An increasing amount of research has shown that the accent of a speaker, can affect listening comprehension of the listener to such a degree that it can affect assessment scores (e.g. Anderson-Hsieh & Kohler, 1988; Bilbow, 1989; Derwing & Munro, 1997; Eisenstein & Berkowitz, 1981; Kang, Moran, & Thomson, 2019).

Major, Fitzmaurice, Bunta, & Balasubramanian (2002) were pioneers with their large-scale study comparing four groups of 100 listeners from Spain, China, Japan and the USA. The participants listened to English speech spoken with the respective countries’ accents and conclusively considered native English speech as more comprehensible, because it was easier to follow. Other research has gone along the avenue of measuring whether an accent that was
less well-known to the participants, would be less comprehensible. A North American English accent was for example perceived to be more comprehensible than an Indian one because the Japanese participants were more familiar with it from media exposure (Matsuura R., Chiba, Mahoney, & Rilling, 2014). Harding (2012) showed that a speaker’s L1 accent when they spoke in an L2, had a positive effect on the listener’s academic L2 listening comprehension test scores when that listener shared the speaker’s L1. He showed, in essence, a shared-L1 advantage. Major et. al. (2002) however only found a shared-L1 advantaged listener’s L2 English listening comprehension test scores when the speaker and listener shared Spanish as their L1, however not when they shared Chinese as an L1. It has thus been proven in different studies that the accent of a speaker can affect comprehensibility.

Conflicting results can also be found in the relationship between LC scores and comprehensibility ratings. These are often due to the choice of accents that were used in the audio input used in experiments. Barlow’s (as cited in Kagitci, 2017) participants perceived native speakers of the L2 audio input as more comprehensible than non-native speakers, even though the participant’s actual LC test-results showed no difference between audio recordings made by native and non-native speakers. This shows that while listeners may perceive certain speech as difficult to understand, their actual comprehension might not be effected at all. Munro & Derwing (1995a) found comparable results in a study looking at Mandarin-accented speech. They discovered English natives heard perfectly what was said in the Mandarin-accented speech files, even though they only heard the audio once and the English natives had considered the speakers with that accent as not very comprehensible (Munro & Derwing, 1995a). One hypothesis about the reason behind this, is that there is an increase in processing difficulty of speech that has a more unfamiliar accent. This increased processing time would be the reason that speech, spoken in unfamiliar foreign accents, would be considered less comprehensible even though that speech is understood perfectly (Munro & Derwing, 1995b).
While it would be logical to believe that familiarity with an accent, a phenomenon also known as amount of exposure to an accent, would have a positive impact LC and comprehensibility, the research on this topic has not been conclusive either (Adank, Evans, Stuart-Smith, & Scotti, 2009; Bent & Bradlow, 2003; Gass & Varonis, 1984; Ockey & French, 2014). Matsuura, Chiba, & Fujieda (1999) studied the effect of unfamiliar and familiar accents on test scores and perceived comprehensibility, focusing on the standard American accent and Irish accents. The Japanese participants in the study were very familiar with the American accent because it was the dominant accent in school, while Irish was unfamiliar to them. The results showed that the students considered the more familiar accent (American) as more comprehensible, even though such higher comprehensibility did not lead to improved test results. Ockey and French (2014) however found an effect of familiarity of accent on TOEFL LC scores when they investigated the effect of different accents (American, Australian and British) on listening comprehension test scores. Unfortunately, they did not measure the LC test scores to comprehensibility scores given by the speakers which is unfortunate for the fact that the relationship of accent on LC scores with the additional comprehensibility construct would have been interesting.

This effect shown on listening comprehension might not only have an effect on test scores but it can differ from test taker to test taker (Taylor, 2006). This indicates a certain unfairness when it comes to using only one accent in LC assessment (Schmitz, 2015). Studies in the subfield of research on accents have therefore questioned the value of using only a single accent in English listening comprehension tests (L2 LC) (Abeywickrama, 2013; Harding, n.d.; Ockey & French, 2014; Taylor & Garenpayeh, 2011).

2.3 Effect of Attitude on Listening Comprehension, Comprehensibility & Teach ability

As previously stated, research on the relationship between, accent and LC in second language acquisition (SLA) has mostly focused on to what degree attitudes towards accents affect LC
and comprehensibility. Most of the research has concentrated on L2 speech production and whether this accented speech is comprehensible to native speakers (Derwing & Munro, 1997). This is surprising, as there are many more listeners of, for example, English as a second language, than there are native English listeners. Additionally, seeing as a bias toward a particular language or even accent is already enough evoke preferences, it can disadvantage foreign language learners that happen to comprehend one accent better than another. Specifically when that foreign accent is used in listening comprehension tests (Kang, Moran, & Thomson, 2019). Carrier (1999) substantiates this in her research and adds to it by highlighting the role of attitude in listening comprehension testing specifically. She observes that attitudes have an effect on language behavior, which leads to an effect on L2 listening comprehension. She however reaches this conclusion based on research done on the effect of status on conversational interaction.

Munro & Derwing (1995b), discuss the influence of attitudes on all communication, stating that prejudice against a particular speaker may hinder communication, even though a speaker’s message may be perfectly understood. They describe this prejudice as ‘by no means the speaker’s fault’ (Munro & Derwing, 1995b, p. 290), but that they are formed, on the listener’s end, through a combination of social, economic and political factors. These factors are specifically mentioned as having a possible influence on attitudes towards accented speech. However, they choose not to attempt to investigate attitudes in their research (Munro & Derwing, 1995b), in spite of a number of other researchers also noting ‘irritation, a downgrading of attitudes towards speakers, or outright discrimination’ (Munro & Derwing, 1995b, p. 290) because of an accent or dialect (Albrechtsen, Henriksen, & Faerch, 1980; Anisfeld, Bogo, & Lambert, 1962; Brennan & Brennan, 1981a; Brennen & Brennen, 1981b; Cunningham-Andersson, 1993; Fayer & Krasinski, 1987; Gumperz, 1982; Gynan, 1985; Johansson, 1978; Kalin & Rayko, 1978; Sato, 1991).
The bias or attitude towards an accent, as well as exposure have even been proven to affect how students judge their teachers, rightly or wrongly, on their ability to teach certain subjects (Barbour, 2014), sometimes to such a degree that students will not take certain college classes. This attitude has thus been proven to play a role in LC, but also comprehensibility and perceived teach ability (e.g. Major et. al., 2002), however to what degree this is so, remains to be seen. It is clear that although some studies have dealt with the effects of attitude on multiple constructs, the topic has yet to be fully examined.

Regarding research on attitudes to accents, and English accents in particular, Bayard et. al. (2001) discovered that General American (GA) was rated higher on status and power, over the standard British accent (Received Pronunciation or RP, Australian English and New Zealand English. The participants were however all native English speakers from these countries. It was hypothesized by Bayard et. al. (2001) that American English, because of how widespread it is becoming, would replace RP as the previously preferred variant. Ladegaard (1998a) studied language attitudes towards RP, GA and Australian English in Denmark, where the use of both accents is similar to that of the Netherlands. The results indeed showed that there was a higher status and competence attributed to the RP accent, compared to the other two. In contrast, scores for the dimensions of social attractiveness, personal integrity and linguistic attractiveness were higher for the American and Australian accents than for RP. This in contrast to listening comprehension scores, which may not be affected at all by these alleged preferences, or which may be better for the GA accent, which is heard more frequently in the Dutch mainstream media. Exposure may thus have a more significant effect on Listening Comprehension, as shown in the previously mentioned research exposure and familiarity of accent.

Contrasting results came from Serrarens (2017), who in an even more recent study, compared the status and social attractiveness dimensions towards the RP and GA accents in
in the Netherlands, and found that the social attractiveness was higher for RP than for GA. One reason for this could be the way the USA politics have appeared in the news more recently. The Netherlands, as a more liberal, socialist country, has strong opinions about policy changes since president Trump has been elected. This could account for the changes in attitude (Serrarens, 2017). Particularly for this reason, it could be argued that these newly formed, or altered attitudes may end up affecting comprehensibility or the other constructs.

In sum, research on the relationship between LC and accents is inconclusive. Moreover, there is scant research examining the role that attitude plays in both listening comprehension scores and comprehensibility and even perceived teach ability. Against such backdrop the current study seeks to shed some light on the discrepancies around such a phenomenon, taking a special interest in identifying individual variability in the results.

2.4 This Study

The aim of this study was to examine whether the attitude towards an accent has an effect on listening comprehension, comprehensibility and perceived teach ability in the case of L1 speakers of Dutch that speak English as their L2. Its objective was to measure whether just hearing different natively produced L2 accents, triggers different attitudes in the case of L1 speakers of Dutch that speak English as their L2, and whether those attitudes or exposure, affect listening comprehension, comprehensibility and perceived teach ability.

English was chosen as the L2 language to focus on because the number of people that speak English as an L2 almost doubled between 1997 and 2003 (to over 430 million) and it is safe to assume this number has only increased since then (Jenkins, 2009). Dutch is chosen as the L1 because the Netherlands as a country is exposed to a large amount of English. It takes an important place in society as an L2 (Schmitz, 2015). The accents that will therefore be examined in this study are the accepted standard accents of the two varieties of English most frequently heard in the Netherlands and to which EFL learners are most exposed. While it
may be true that real-world performance (i.e. performance outside of the language classroom) could be affected negatively by only focusing on well-known English accents in education, this is still mostly done at the present such as is done in the Netherlands (Kang, Moran, & Thomson, 2019). There, most listening comprehension testing is developed around the only the two most well-known standardized accents, namely General American (GA) of the United States of America and Received Pronunciation (RP) of England. Therefore, looking into the effect that attitudes towards these accents can have on listening comprehension and comprehensibility has great implications for second language testing in the Netherlands, and depending on the results, for second language testing everywhere.

When looking at what could influence attitudes of different English accents the participants are exposed to, Jenkins (2009) points out that there is the view in countries close to the United Kingdom, that the British accent is superior. More often than not, speakers using RP are regarded as more prestigious, successful and well-educated individuals (Smith, 2017). Since the Netherlands is close to the United Kingdom in both geographical location and general contact, the idea of the superiority of a British accent, and in particular RP, prevails. This is partly exacerbated by its use in formal settings in the Netherlands, as for example in higher education and all English communication coming from the government (Schmitz, 2015). In contrast to a British accent, an American accent is overwhelmingly dominant not in formal settings but in the media (social media, television, Netflix, music etc.). As seen from the previous literature, both attitude and exposure have, to differing degrees, been proven to effect listening comprehension, comprehensibility and perceived teach ability. Therefore this previous literature was used to form the following research questions and hypotheses.

2.5 The Research Question and Hypotheses:

Since there has not been much research at all into whether the attitude of an accent has an effect on listening comprehension and comprehensibility, which could therefore affect L2
learning, the main research interest and question is:

**RQ1: Do the attitudes of Dutch EFL learners toward natively produced American and British English accents affect the Listening Comprehension, Comprehensibility and perceived Teach Ability, of these accents and does exposure play a role?**

This research questions encompasses the following questions:

- **Subquestion 1:** What are the differences in Dutch Intermediate EFL learners’ attitudes towards the standard varieties of natively produced British English (RP) and American English (GA) accents respectively.
- **Subquestion 2:** How does Attitude towards an Accent, relate to Listening Comprehension, Comprehensibility and perceived Teach Ability scores?
- **Subquestion 3:** How does exposure towards an accent, relate to Attitude, Listening Comprehension, Comprehensibility and perceived Teach Ability?

On the basis of the above literature review, the following hypotheses were formed:

1. In the Netherlands, most students will have a better attitude towards the standard British accent (RP) than towards the standard American accent (GA), due to higher ratings for specifically the status attitude dimensions.

2. When attitude scores are higher towards one accent, participants will want to pay more attention to that accent, wherefore it will be perceived as easier to understand. This will result in a have a higher comprehensibility rating and perceived teach ability rating for that higher rated attitude.

3. The actual listening comprehension scores will be higher for the American accent because the Netherlands as a country is exposed to more American English in media. There will be a perceivable effect of exposure on this construct.
3. Methods

3.1 Design

The main aim of this study was to discover the effect of attitudes towards native English accents, on the listening comprehension, comprehensibility and perceived teach ability scores of Dutch EFL learners, with an additional focus on the independent variable of exposure. The accents chosen for examination were the standard accents of England (RP) and The United States of America (GA). The accents used in this experiment had to be as close to these possible. Two different research sections (parts 1 and 2) were conducted in a mixed design (see the experimental design in Figure 1). Data collection took place in the Netherlands.

Prior to starting part 1, an information questionnaire was used as a measure to gain insight into the participants’ backgrounds (See Appendix E). Part 1 was then used to measure the two independent variables in this study: attitudes towards accents, and exposure to the accents. The attitudes towards each respective accent were measured by exposing the participants to 1 audio file per accent that participants listened to (See Appendix F). The participants had to rate each accent based on 11 attitude dimensions encompassing both status traits and solidarity traits. The participants were asked to use adapted 9-point Likert scales to rate the attitude dimensions on (See Appendix G).

Part 2 of the study was devoted to gathering data about the dependent variables: the EFL learners’ objective listening comprehension scores and subjective comprehensibility and perceived teach ability ratings, in regards to RP and GA accents respectively. Firstly, in order to have an objective measure of listening performance, students were administered a conventional listening test in each accent, that was created specifically for this study. This was done to accurately compare the listening comprehension scores for two accents (See Appendices H and I). Secondly, in order to measure comprehensibility and perceived teach
ability, the participants were asked to use adjusted Likert-9 point scales subjective measures of ease of understanding (comprehensibility) and perceived teach ability (see Appendix I). In order to be able to conduct both parts of the experiment, speakers of both accents were needed for material creation.

3.2 Speakers

Not enough audio samples could be found, online or otherwise, that in content and in speaker-voice quality. Therefore, the decision was made to record all samples for both parts of the experiment in order to avoid all audio sample anomalies. The speakers were selected carefully. This experiment for instance does not look at speaker gender as a variable, so both speakers had to be either male or female. Additionally, a similar age, height (for larynx length), voice quality and non-smokers status were desirable.

As mentioned previously, the study was designed to have 2 parts. For part 1, two male speakers were found that matched in these different aspects1. Prior to recording, they filled out a speaker consent form (See Appendix B) and a personal information questionnaire (See Appendix A, and Table 1: Speaker Demographic). This was done in accordance to the European Union’s regulations on Data Protection and Freedom of Information criteria (European Commission, 2012; European Union, 1995; Science Europe, 2013). Following the recordings, the speakers were all given a debriefing letter. This was done in order to show appreciation for what they had done, as well as give additional information about the study (See Appendix C). The speakers were all academically educated as they had all completed a bachelor, and speakers #1 and #3 were in the process of doing a master’s

1 It would have been ideal if the speakers for part 1 and part 2 had been the same, however unfortunately the British speaker that recorded for the first part (speaker #2) was unable to record for part 2. He was replaced by another British speaker (speaker #3) that again matched the established requisites, and that additionally matched the accent and voice quality of speaker #1 seemingly perfectly.
degree in connected to linguistics at the time of recording. Additionally, all speakers were employed as English language teachers in Catalonia and therefore had experience in education and with linguistics.

**Table 1: Speaker Demographic**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Nr.</em></th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Accent</th>
<th>Area(s)</th>
<th>Smoking</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>** Other Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>American English (GA)</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Non-smoker</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Spanish, Chinese, Catalan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>British English (RP/ Cockney)</td>
<td>South Yorkshire, County Durham, Essex</td>
<td>Non-smoker</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Spanish, French</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The speakers needed to possess distinguishably native American (speaker #1), and native British (Speakers #2 and #3) accents. Although a perfect general accent (RP or GA) is very difficult to attain as a speaker, and exactly defining the accents is complex due to different regional, national and even individual differences (Preston & Robinson, 2005), the accents needed to at least adhere to the phonological aspects that mark the accents as British English and American English respectively. In previous studies, some accents have been labelled as RP while in fact they were not (Deterding, 2005; Przedlacka, 2001). This error underlines the importance of conducting speaker background questionnaires and comparing the speakers’ accents to the audio samples gathered in the International Dialects of English Archive (IDEA). Based on this online accent database, speakers #2 and #3 could be characterized as maintaining both Cockney and Received Pronunciation accent characteristics (International Dialects of English Archive, 2019). This is possibly due to both speakers having lived in central English regions (Loughborough, Leeds, South
Yorkshire and County Durham), and the greater London area (encompassing Essex). The accents were therefore distinguishable as natively British. The American speaker (#1) was very close to a General American accent, a result of growing up in a part of Illinois that is considered part of the North Midland. This region retains a General American Accent (Labov, Ash, & Boberg, 2006).

3.3 Participants

The participants of this study were L1 Dutch learners of L2 English \( n = 43 \), between the ages of 16 and 25, studying at the vocational college Deltion College in Zwolle, the Netherlands (Deltion College, 2019). The students had graduated high school with a VMBO diploma, which is a diploma that allows entry into vocational education. As all researchers using the participants’ data were employed by the Deltion College at the time of data collection, and no personally identifiable participant information is displayed in this study, no additional participant consent forms were required².

In 1986, English lessons were made mandatory for all high schools in the Netherlands. These lessons are compulsory for all students, regardless of level of education or educational direction (at least 4 years) (Schmitz, 2015). In addition, most primary schools include English classes in their curriculums. All participants had therefore completed at least 4 years of English classes in high school. Subsequently, they had taken at least another 6 months of English lessons at their current vocational educations, prior to participating in this experiment. The only students who would have had more English classes since graduation, would have switched majors in college and as a consequence would have had to repeat a year. Data was collected, which indicated the amount of years of

² We are extremely grateful to Deltion College- and the cooperating colleagues, for allowing us to access these participants and for their collaboration before, during and after this experiment.
English classes taken as between 2\textsuperscript{3} and 11 ($M = 5.7$). The participants had all passed a previous English listening comprehension exam at A2/ B1 Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) level, which counted for half of their total, self-reported grade of between 4.6 and 9.3 ($M = 6.8$) (Council of Europe, 2001). This exam was part of their final high school examinations in the Netherlands, and the students would have had to follow and complete their high school English classes and examinations in order to be able to graduate with a VMBO diploma and gain access to vocational training in college. The participants were gathered based on availability of classes at the Deltion College, at this level, during data collection period\textsuperscript{4}.

Since this study is interested in how attitudes towards two specific accents affect comprehension and comprehensibility of the accents, these specific participants were chosen because in the current growing international society, they are a group that spends a large amount of time receiving input from different sources of media. The participants are therefore, and because of their age, more likely to be more opinionated and biased about the chosen accents\textsuperscript{5}. This would show larger effects when collecting data. For this specific reason, the participants were asked to fill out the speaker informational background questionnaire (See Appendix E). This would divulge any information that would have heavily influenced participants’ attitudes towards one or both of the accents. The participants had not lived in any English speaking country, nor did they have close relatives in any English speaking countries. Out of the total number of participants, 42\% visited an

\textsuperscript{3} Two self-reports (2 & 3 years of previous English classes taken were different than expected, because of the obligatory nature of English classes in the Dutch educational system. The two self-reports might have been off, or the two participants under question could have been subject to special circumstances such as being exempt from the classes for a specific reason.

\textsuperscript{4} The data collection was conducted throughout the last month of this Master’s course (2018–19).

\textsuperscript{5} No other age group was chosen given that this experiment does not look into the issues of age, educational level or language level as independent.
English speaking country (the United States of America, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Canada and Ireland) in their lives, with the most frequently visited country being the United Kingdom. No participant spent more than 5 weeks in any English speaking country. As additionally gleaned from the participation questionnaire (Appendix E), the participants reported between 0-3 and 12+ hours of exposure, with the most frequent answer being 3-6 hours of exposure.

3.4 Materials and Procedure

3.4.1 Materials:

Attitudes towards languages or accents are most often measured by using a ‘speaker evaluation paradigm’, also known as matched guise technique or verbal guise technique (Lambert, Hodgson, Gardner, & Fillenbaum, 1960; Soukop, 2012). This technique allows the participants to evaluate different audio samples, purely based on what they hear. They receive no previous information about the speakers, and can therefore only evaluate them based on the audio they are presented with. In this study the preference was given to a verbal guise, over a matched guise test, as the stimulus to rate. This technique is preferable according to Garrett (2011), because for a matched guise, one specific speaker tries to imitate different accents. For the verbal guise technique, several native speakers record speech in their own respective accents, which makes the verbal guise stimuli sounds more authentic, less forced and less exaggerated (Garrett, 2011). This required the speakers for the GA and RP accents to come to the Second Language Acquisition Laboratory at Universitat de Barcelona, on two different days, in order to record the audio samples for the verbal guise stimuli.

During both recording sessions, the GA and RP sat side by side in order for them to take turns and copy delivery and intonation precisely. This was done to make sure that the only
difference between the audio recordings would be the accent. The recordings were practiced and repeated until equivalent recordings were gathered for all texts for both tasks.

2.4.1 Part 1
For part 1, it was preferred to record texts in the two different accents, that were at the lower end of the participant’s level (A2). This approach was chosen, to assure a level of comprehension on the participant’s part as to enable the participants to focus on listening to the accents, rather than on trying to understand difficult lexical items or grammatical structures. The texts chosen to record, were adopted from the British council material available on their internet website (see Appendix F). The British council assesses their texts thoroughly to make sure the language level is correct, and the content is appropriate for learners studying English as a foreign language (British Council, 2019). The two texts chosen (Story 1 and Story 2 in Appendix F) had the same topic and length, just under 2 minutes each, so as to prevent any listener bias from occurring. The texts were adapted in order to remove any factors that might have influenced the participants’ attitudes, in a manner unrelated to the speakers’ accents. Factors that were adapted for this reason were the genders and ages of the subjects of the two stories, and even the tone of the texts so that one text was not more defiant and/or cold than the other. Additionally, in order for the texts to be congruent, they were adapted for each speaker to reflect where the accent was from in terms of geographical location.

After recording the texts in both accents, the audio recordings were uploaded into Praat, and annotated to be made suitable for extraction. Careful attention was paid to make sure the audio files had the same amount of milliseconds on both ends of the recordings, that the audio isolations were cut at the precise zero-point intervals and merged correctly when separate paragraphs had been recorded. The audio samples were then matched for syllables per minute by matching speech duration, brought to equal intensity, and cleaned of all background noises and anomalies by using the Praat Vocal Toolkit and GSU
Praat Tool plugin (Owren, 2008). The audio files were then converted to mp4 files, and uploaded to YouTube so they could be embedded into the chosen survey tool (YouTube, 2019). The tool chosen to create both tasks was Google Forms (Google Forms, 2019). It was chosen as the preferred survey tool because it is frequently used at the Deltion College. This means that all necessary permission forms are in place for it. Additionally, Google Forms, unlike for instance Praat script, is not required to be installed on any computers prior to executing the tasks. This made it the preferred online tool to use, as the participants would be bringing their own laptops on the data collection dates.

After listening to each audio fragment, the participants would be asked to respond to the audio text they had just heard, on 11 attitude dimensions. The participants were able to give ratings of between 1 (Not … at all) and 9 (Extremely…) for each dimension. The scales used, were based on both the Osgood’s (1964) Semantic Differential scale and the Likert (1932) scale. In the Osgood scale, the participants are asked to rate on a basis of two semantically different ends of an X scale such as poor/rich. An advantage of the Osgood scale is that no names or ratings are given to the individual options on the scale, something which might have resulted in an unintended effect on the participants’ ratings (Hogg & Vaughan, 2008). In the Likert scale (Likert, 1932) participants are asked to rate between agree and disagree extremes, something which makes it clear which trait is discussed. The advantages of both of these scales were combined in this study by having semantically similar extremes that the participants rated on, without having labelled all options in between the extremes (see Example 1).

Example 1: Attitude Dimension on Adapted Likert-Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The person speaking is polite. [Deze persoon is beleefd]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = Not Polite at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 = Extremely Polite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29
The statements used in these scales were created on the basis of solidarity traits and status traits. Both types of traits were included, based on prior research showing that an evaluation of a speaker’s language is typically made based on these two different judgement dimensions (Ryan, 1983). Solidarity traits include dimensions such as kindness and politeness, while status traits include aspects such as high education level and wealth (Ito & Cacioppo, 2019). These major trait groups are sometimes also referred to the constructs social attractiveness and prestige respectively (Barbour, 2014; Derwing & Munro, 2013). In total the participants had to rate 11 dimensions, consisting of status traits and solidarity traits. These 11 dimensions were carefully chosen and revised several times to avoid overlap, and clearer, more simplistic versions in order to improve ease of understanding.

Subsequently, the 11 dimensions were embedded into the google forms format. This list was presented to students as: ‘The person speaking is..’ with the following final 11 dimensions in order of easy to difficult to understand and rate: Polite, Nice, Funny, Reliable, Open-minded, Intelligent, Hard-Working, Good Leader, High level of Education, Rich and Worthy of Respect. To accommodate the students in the Netherlands, Dutch translations were created and added to all text instructions and all dimensions. The translations were made by a native Dutch speaker with an English teaching degree. In total, 4 different versions of Task 1 were generated. This was done in order to minimalize any influence of slight text preferences or order preferences on the results. All participants heard the stories, however the order in which they heard them and the accent in which they heard them were randomized (See Appendices F and G). The participants were randomly assigned a version by their teacher. Those assigned to Version 1 heard Story 1 first, spoken with the GA accent. Text 2, heard subsequently, was thus spoken with the RP accent. Those assigned Version 2, heard Story 1, however spoken with the RP accent, followed by text 2 in the GA accent. Versions 3 and 4 were similarly altered to reflect
different accent orders and story versions (See Table 2).

**Table 2: Task 1 Versions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version 1</th>
<th>Version 2</th>
<th>Version 3</th>
<th>Version 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GA - Story 1</td>
<td>RP - Story 1</td>
<td>GA - Story 2</td>
<td>RP - Story 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RP - Story 2</td>
<td>GA - Story 2</td>
<td>RP - Story 1</td>
<td>GA - Story 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the 11 dimensions for 1 accent, the two questions for comprehensibility and teachability were embedded. The same was done for the second accent (see Appendix I). This was in order to assess the listener’s perceptive accuracy. Finally, after listening to the 11 dimension scales for both accents, the participants were asked which accent they were more frequently exposed to, in order gain information about the independent variable exposure.

### 2.4.2 Part 2

For part 2, a listening comprehension task was generated, for the reason that there was no single official exam or practice exam available that would have been ideal for use in this experiment. The exam was therefore constructed out of several existing comprehensions exams and practice materials created by the British Council and Cambridge (see appendix D). Cambridge, as the British council, makes sure its materials are controlled for level and topics, and are designed mostly for EFL students (Cambridge English, 2019). This made the materials highly suitable for use in this vocational college listening comprehension task. Since there was only one speaker at a time available per accent, it was opted select single speaker materials to re-record, as opposed to using multi-speaker texts. As with the recordings for part 1, texts were carefully chosen that had a similar counterpart in terms of text type, topic, and length. Additionally, because it concerned a listening comprehension task, the questions related to the different texts also had to be made extremely comparable. These matching texts with questions would be presented, 1 in each accent, to the students (see abstracts 1 & 2, and Appendix H). The language level of the texts for task 2, was set at
the higher end of the participant’s listening proficiency level (B1-B2) in order to guarantee that the participants would not be able to understand what was being said word for word. Rather, they would have to strain themselves, and put in more effort in order to understand difficult content, which is where a willingness to understand, or an effect of attitude could come in. If the level would have been A2 again, the participants would have been able to obtain full listening comprehension marks too easily for both accent tests.

Abstract 1: Section 1- Text 1 with question

“So, tomorrow and Friday, we can expect more of this lovely hot weather, with bright sunshine and temperatures up to twenty four degrees, so don’t forget to wear sun screen! Saturday and Sunday will be cooler and cloudier, but it will stay dry without any rain, so you won’t need your umbrellas, and there might be a few sunny periods. It will only be a few degrees difference compared to today.’

Question for text section 1- text 1:

You hear the weather forecast on the radio. What will the weather be like at the weekend?

0 Extremely sunny 0 Partly cloudy 0 Rainy

Abstract 2: Section 1- Text 2 with question:

“In the north tomorrow, the weather will be much the same as today – unsettled weather with outbreaks of rain throughout the day, and temperatures around ten degrees Celsius. In the midlands and the east, there are still likely to be some scattered showers. In the south of the country it should be dry for most of the day, there’ll be a lot of cloud cover but there might be some periods of sunshine – temperatures around eighteen degrees.’

Section 1- Question for text 2:

You hear the weather forecast on the radio. What will the weather be like in the south?

0 Windy with showers 0 Cloudy with sunny spells 0 Cool and wet
As with task 1, the different chosen texts had to be recorded in the GA and RP accents. All recording conditions were the same as for task 1, and the same editing was done in Praat with the toolkits to ensure complete voice, length, syllable per minute, and intensity matching. For task 2, 36 audio files were created in total, 18 per accent, ranging from short (13 seconds) to longer (45 seconds). As with part 1, the wav. files were then converted to mp4 files and uploaded to YouTube so that they could be embedded into Google Forms in a specific way.

The listening comprehension test was set up in two different halves, one half per accent, with 16 questions based on 18 audio samples. Each half contained 3 different sections that were identical per accent and contained the completely matched topics and questions. The difficulty of the texts used in the sections, increased throughout the listening comprehension test. Sections 1 of each accent included short announcements. They contained 3 texts with multiple choice questions, such as the weather forecast messages in abstracts 1&2. Sections 2, dealt with two different topics: games, and friendship. There were 2 short audio texts embedded per topic, in which the speaker gave opinions about the topics. The participants had to select the correct multiple choice answer in a drop-down menu, selecting the correct opinions given in the different audio files. The third sections were about personal heroes and contained 2 longer audio files per accent. The participants had to answer 6 multiple choice questions about these audio files, 3 questions per file (see Appendix I).

After each half, the participants had to rate the just heard voice for ease of understanding (comprehensibility), and for how good of an English teacher this person would be (teach ability). This was done by using an adapted Osgood/Likert - 9 point scale ranging from ‘Extremely easy to understand’ (1) to ‘Extremely hard to understand’ (9), and ‘An extremely bad English Teacher’ (1) to ‘An ‘Extremely good English teacher’ (9). In total 4
different versions of the comprehension exam were made, for the same reasons as in part 1, namely to be able to disregard any accent order effects and random texts preferences (See Table 3). They were distributed randomly between all participants, with a different randomization than for task 1.

**Table 3: Task 2 Versions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version 1</th>
<th>Version 2</th>
<th>Version 3</th>
<th>Version 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stories &amp; Questions:</td>
<td>Section 1: 1+3+5</td>
<td>Section 1: 1+3+5</td>
<td>Section 1: 1+3+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 1: 1+3+5</td>
<td>Section 2/1: 1+3</td>
<td>Section 2/1: 2+4</td>
<td>Section 2/1: 2+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2/1: 1+3</td>
<td>Section 2/2: 1+3</td>
<td>Section 2/2: 2+4</td>
<td>Section 2/2: 2+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2/2: 1+3</td>
<td>Section 3: 1+3</td>
<td>Section 3: 2+4</td>
<td>Section 3: 2+4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3: 1+3</td>
<td>Second half: GA</td>
<td>Second half: RP</td>
<td>Second half: GA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stories &amp; Questions:</td>
<td>Section 1: 2+4+6</td>
<td>Section 1: 1+3+5</td>
<td>Section 1: 1+3+5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 1: 2+4+6</td>
<td>Section 2/1: 2+4</td>
<td>Section 2/1: 1+3</td>
<td>Section 2/1: 1+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2/1: 2+4</td>
<td>Section 2/2: 2+4</td>
<td>Section 2/2: 1+3</td>
<td>Section 2/2: 1+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2/2: 2+4</td>
<td>Section 3: 2+4</td>
<td>Section 3: 1+3</td>
<td>Section 3: 1+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 3: 2+4</td>
<td>Second half: RP</td>
<td>Second half: GA</td>
<td>Second half: GA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second half: GA</td>
<td>Stories &amp; Questions:</td>
<td>Stories &amp; Questions:</td>
<td>Stories &amp; Questions:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Procedure:**

For both parts of this experiment, the test conditions were the following. The participants were asked to come to their English class, prepared with laptop and headphones. Their teacher sent them an email as to which version they were randomly assigned to take. The students were told they needed to take the assignment seriously as participation would be
taken into account in their end of term classroom participation assessments. They were told that there were no wrong answers, but that they would need to focus. The participants were allowed to listen to the audio files as many times as they preferred, they however only had 20 minutes to complete Task 1, and 1 hour to complete task 2. Most students took 15 minutes, and 45 minutes respectively. If the participants had had any uncertainties they were allowed to ask questions. No questions arose during task 1, other than questions about materials (2 participants forgot their headphones and borrowed them from the researchers). During task 2 the participants had some questions, mainly about how long it would take, and about Section 2/1 and 2/2 for which most had to read the instructions more carefully.
4. Results

The main research of this study reads as follows:

‘RQ: Do the attitudes of Dutch EFL learners toward natively produced American and British English accents affect the Listening Comprehension, Comprehensibility and Perceived Teach Ability, of these accents and does exposure play a role?’

In order to address the above question, three sub-questions were established. The first subquestion deals with establishing the independent ‘attitude’, and allows us to establish research groups which will be instrumental for the second subquestion. This second subquestion deals with correlations between the independent attitude and the three main dependent variables in the study. Finally, subquestion three was formed in order to examine the link between the independent variable exposure and the dependents. The results for each subquestion are presented below according to topic, before being thoroughly discussed in order to finally answer the main question in the conclusion. An extensive datafile was used in SPSS (See Appendix L).

Prior to diving into the individual result sections, an issue of normality has to be considered, as the step in any statistical analysis. Much of the data was not normally distributed. Therefore, a scatterplot was used to examine this data. The scatterplot (See Figure 2) displayed two extreme outliers in the attitude responses. After examination, the absolute differences in attitude scores between attitude scores of GA and RP (of between 11 and 99), were: 47 (participant 46) and 32 (participant 8). The next largest difference in absolute attitude scores was 17 and there were multiple participants with an attitude difference of only 15. As a result of this observation, participants 46 and 8 were excluded. Following that, there were no extreme outliers left, and more of the data showed normality. Still not all data was normally distributed however, so a combination of different parametric and non-parametric tests had to be conducted.
4.1 Attitude towards an accent:
The first analysis dealing with attitude was made on the ratings given by participants on both accents on focus, i.e., GA and RP, by means of 11 attitude dimensions, by using 9 point adapted Likert scales. This classification was instrumental to be able to proceed with the study. The results show scores between 11 and 99 per person, for each accent. The attitude towards GA (Attitude GA) received a score ranging between 43 and 83 ($M = 63.44, SD = 9.80$), and the attitude towards RP (Attitude RP) was scored between 39 and 82 ($M = 61.80, SD = 10.44$) reaching a difference of 1.6 in favor of the GA (See Table 6 in Appendix J.1).

Three groups were subsequently identified on the basis of the above mentioned participants’ attitude scores towards each accent. This was done by adopting a selection criteria which consisted of identifying the members of each group on the basis of a difference in attitude points for each accent. A difference in attitude of at least 3 points was
established as the criteria for considering a participant to have a higher attitude towards one accent or towards the other. That put everyone with less than 3 points in attitude difference in group 3: the Equal attitude group. This resulted in the following three groups, with group 1 being slightly smaller.

Group 1: Higher attitude score towards the RP accent (10 participants),
Group 2: Higher attitude score towards GA (16 participants)
Group 3: Equal attitude score towards both accents (15 participants).

Having identified the above 3 groups, the mean for the attitude groups was also calculated (see Table 4 and Appendix J). This was done to be able to contrast the means of the newly created groups towards their higher rated accent, with the means of all participant attitude ratings towards that accent. This resulted the mean differences per accent column.

### Table 4: Means of attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Means of attitude groups toward their preferred accent</th>
<th>Means of all participant attitudes</th>
<th>Mean differences (Md)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group RP (1): (M = 67, SD = 8.59)</td>
<td>Attitude RP all: (M = 61.80, SD = 10.44)</td>
<td>Md of Attitude RP = 5.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group GA (2): (M = 65.38, SD = 10.44)</td>
<td>Attitude GA all = (M = 63.44, SD = 9.80)</td>
<td>Md of Attitude GA = 1.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, the 11 attitude dimension scores were looked at individually. The attitude dimensions that were rated significantly higher for the RP accent, were: Rich, Higher level of Education, and Worthy of Respect. The attitude dimension Funny showed no significant result towards either accent, and all other dimensions were rated higher for the GA accent (See Figure 3 and Appendix J.3).
4.2 Attitude, Listening Comprehension, Comprehensibility and Teach Ability

In order to determine whether an attitude towards an accent, relates to any of the following constructs: listening comprehension, comprehensibility or perceived teach ability, some parametric-, and mostly non-parametric- correlations were run for the reason that not all constructs had a normal distribution. They we run on a by participant and by- group level in order to examine the correlations between the attitude ratings for all participants and the constructs, as well as the relationships between them and the formed attitude groups.

The by participant testing yielded the following results: Pearson Correlations, were used, to try to show linear dependency in the normally distributed data. A matrix of Attitude GA, Attitude RP, Listening Comprehension GA, Listening Comprehension RP, showed strong positive correlations between: Attitude GA and Attitude RP \( (r = .731; p < .000; n = 41) \), as
well as Listening Comprehension GA and Listening Comprehension RP \( (r = .751; p < .000, n = 41) \). In this matrix an additional, negative, weaker correlation was found between Attitude GA and Listening Comprehension GA \( (r = -.393; p = .011; n = 41) \). And the following two construct pairs were tested with Spearman correlations as not all data was normally distributed. Both pairs showed strong positive correlations: Comprehensibility rating GA and Comprehensibility RP: \( r = .541, p < .000; n = 41 \), and Teach Ability GA and Teach Ability RP: \( r = .622, p < .000; n = 41 \).

Following this, specific correlations between the independent and dependent variables of each single accent were examined, in order to see whether any linear correlation, causational or not, exists between the attitude towards an accent, and the related accent constructs under inspection. Or even singularly between the constructs themselves. This was done, starting with the GA variables: Attitude GA, Listening Comprehension GA, Comprehensibility GA, and perceived Teach Ability GA. In this matrix, the following significant results were found: a strong, positive correlation between Listening Comprehension score GA and Comprehensibility rating GA: \( r = .672; p < .000; n = 41 \), a weak, negative correlation between Attitude GA and Listening Comprehension score GA: \( r = -.386; p = .013; n = 41 \), and a strong, positive correlation between Comprehensibility rating GA with perceived Teach Ability rating GA: \( r = .506; p = .001; n = 41 \) (See Table 10 in Appendix K.2).

Then the same was done for the independent and dependents of RP (Attitude RP, Listening Comprehension RP, Comprehensibility RP, and Teach Ability RP), the following correlations were found: a weak, positive correlation between Attitude RP and Teach Ability RP \( (r = .393; p = .011; n = 41) \), a weak, positive correlation between Listening Comprehension score RP and Comprehensibility rating RP \( (r = .313 p = .046; n = 41) \) and a strong, positive correlation between Comprehensibility rating RP and Teach Ability rating
Following both specific correlations between the independent and dependent variables of a single accent, cross correlations were run to see if there was any relation between the attitude towards one accent, and the dependents of the other accent (Attitude RP with Listening Comprehension GA, Comprehensibility GA, and Teach Ability GA and in reverse). The only significant (weak) correlation found, was the attitude score towards RP with the perceived Teach Ability of a speaker of the GA accent ($p = .362$).

As previously stated, additional by group testing was undertaken in order to examine the following, normally distributed data: Attitude groups (1, 2 or 3), More Exposure To groups (RP, GA, Equal Exposure), and Attitude with Comprehensibility ratings for GA and RP. This was done by conducting a one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). This MANOVA was conducted to examine the possibility of differences between the means of the different identified groups, on a combination of dependent variables. No significant results were obtained in the MANOVA (Wilk’s Lambda = .771, $F = .804$, $p = .526$). It was not possible to reject the 0-hypothesis that the Attitude groups had the same levels of Comprehensibility scores, or Attitudes, nor was this possible for any factors in relation to Exposure within this matrix, however those results belong with the next section.

A non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test was used to examine whether there was a group difference between Attitude Group, and the dependents Listening Comprehension and perceived Teach Ability. The results for Teach Ability GA ($p = .003$) showed significance, indicating a rejection of the null-hypothesis, that the distribution of perceived Teach Ability of the GA accent was the same across all categories of Attitude group. Following this result, a Mann-Whitney U test was run, only including two groups at a time. When excluding the Equal Attitude group, the value for Teach Ability GA ($U = 25.5$, $p =$
.003), indicated a significant difference in mean rank, rejecting the null-hypothesis of equal mean ranks. The mean rank for the ‘higher attitude towards RP’ group was significantly higher than the mean rank for ‘Higher Attitude towards GA’ group (18.95 compared to 10.09) (See Figure 4). Only testing groups 1 and 3, additionally indicated a significant difference in mean rank of perceived Teach Ability GA (U = 29.5, p = .010 for). The mean rank of the Higher RP Attitude group (17.55) was significantly higher than that of Equal Attitude group (9.97), leading to a rejection of the null-hypothesis of equal mean ranks for these groups. When examining the final two groups (2 and 3), no significance was found (Teach GA; p = .953).

4.3 Exposure, Listening Comprehension, Comprehensibility and Teach Ability
To test the hypothesis that there would be one or more mean differences between ‘More Exposure To’ an accent (RP, GA or Equal) and the different constructs: listening comprehension, comprehensibility and teach ability, firstly a one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, as stated in the previous result section. More Exposure To’ groups, were formed using the participant’s own answers after their attitude measure was done. They had to answer a question about which accent they heard more, the
first or second speaker’s, or equal amounts of both\textsuperscript{6}. This rating was used to form 3 groups: More exposure to RP (1), More exposure to GA (2), Equal Exposure (3) (See Appendix L) In the MANOVA, all data, apart from Teach Ability, were normally distributed in the More Exposure To groups, and were therefore included (see section 4.1 for explanation). The equality of covariance matrices was 0.89. No significant result was obtained in the MANOVA as stated previously (Wilk’s Lamda = .771, F = .804, p = .526). There was a 40\% (.396) chance of rejecting the 0-hypothesis when looking at the observed Power.

To test whether there was a relation between More Exposure To an accent and the perceived Teach Ability of someone with that accent, a non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test was run. The results for Teach Ability GA (p = 0.013) and Teach Ability RP (p = .017) showed significance. To do further examinations, a Mann-Whitney U test was run, only including two groups at a time. When examining only the more exposure to RP and GA groups (1 and 2 respectively), the values for Teach ability GA (U = 37.5, p = .008), and Teach ability RP (U = 43.5, p = .019), indicated a significant difference in mean rank. This implied a rejection of the null-hypothesis of equal mean ranks. The mean rank was higher for more exposure to RP in both cases (17.82 over 9.88, and 17.39 over 10.35) (See Figure 5). Singularly testing groups 1 and 3, additionally indicated a significant difference in mean rank (U = 45, p = .025 for Teach GA, and U = 39, p = .011 for Teach RP), again indicating possible rejection of the null-hypothesis of equal mean ranks. The mean ranks were both higher for the Equal exposure groups (17.29 over 10.46, and 17.71 over 10.00 respectively). However, when examining groups 2 and 3, no significance was found (Teach GA; p = .667 and Teach RP; p = .839).

\textsuperscript{6} These were the randomly assigned accents as described in methodology section 3.4.1.
In order to examine differences between the different constructs and Amount of Exposure to all English in general (with categories: 0-3, 3-6,6-9,9-12 and 12+ hours per week), an additional Kruskal-Wallis test was run. The p-value for all constructs was < 0.05, indicating that no significant differences were found among any of the constructs, for any of the accents (attitudes, listening comprehension, comprehensibility and teach ability for GA or RP), in relation to Exposure in hours.
5. Discussion

- **Sub question 1: What are the differences in Dutch Intermediate EFL learners’ attitudes towards the standard varieties of native British English (RP) and American English (GA) accents respectively.**

The hypothesis for Subquestion 1 is the following: ‘In the Netherlands, most students will have a better attitude towards the standard British accent (RP) than towards the standard American accent (GA), due to higher ratings for specifically the status attitude dimensions’.

Although one has to be careful in interpreting means with a high standard deviation, some interesting patterns do appear. As seen in the results of the means of attitudes table, the mean of attitude group 1 (RP), was higher than the mean of attitude group 2 (GA). This points to stronger preference of the participants who had a preferred attitude towards RP.

However, when looking at the means of all participants, RP is rated lower than GA. This indicates that, while the participants that preferred RP had a much stronger liking for this accent (group 1), this was not enough to outweigh all other participants, of which there were more, and who comparatively had a much lower attitude towards this accent, creating the larger difference between the means (5.20 difference in means for RP, compared to 1.94 for GA). This resulted in General American being the overall preferred accent of the Dutch EFL learners.

Looking specifically at the results within the dimensions that the participants did significantly rate RP higher on (Wealth, Higher Education Level & Worthy of Respect), are considered to be Status dimensions (Ito & Cacioppo, 2019). This falls in line with part of the hypothesis for this subquestion, predicting that Dutch learners would consider the standard British Accent as having a higher status than the standard American accent (Jenkins, 2009; Smith, 2017). These higher ratings for status dimensions did however not impact the total attitude score enough to surpass the overall attitude score of GA, which had
an overwhelmingly higher score for the solidarity, or social dimension traits (Ito & Cacioppo, 2019). This goes against the hypothesis for this subquestion, which was thought to replicate Serrarens’ (2017) findings that RP was the preferred overall attitude. It seems that this study therefore at least tentatively corroborates the results of Bayard et. al. (2001), who hypothesized that American, because of how widespread it is becoming, would replace the standard British accent as the previously preferred variant.

A possible reason for the discrepancy between the attitude results of this study, and Serrarens’ (2017) results (who found that the solidarity or social traits were higher rated for RP than for GA), could lie with participants. She specifically tested students in higher education, at university level, while the participants of this study are in lower levels of vocational training. The background literature includes that the Netherlands, as a more liberal, socialist country, has had strong opinions about policy changes since president Trump has been elected. According to Serraren (2017), this could have accounted for the higher attitude ratings towards GA to drop, between her data collection period and Bayard et. al.’s (2001). The participants of this study would, however, not be likely to keep up with world politics, in contrast to university students. It would therefore be interesting to investigate this possible link between educational level and accent attitudes in future research.

- **Subquestion 2: How does Attitude towards an Accent, relate to Listening Comprehension, Comprehensibility and perceived Teach Ability scores?**

The hypothesis for this question is: ‘When attitude scores are higher towards one accent, participants will want to pay more attention to that accent, wherefore it will be perceived as easier to understand. This will result in a have a higher comprehensibility rating and perceived teach ability rating for that higher rated attitude.’
This question was attempted to be answered by running tests on the different independents: Attitude Groups and attitude by participant scores, with the dependents: Listening Comprehension, Comprehensibility and perceived Teach Ability. In order to understand the most important data, a selection is analyzed here more thoroughly because of the strength of the correlations or because they showed the most interesting results.

Firstly, by looking at the by participant data, several issues stand out. This data is in a sense more interesting, as the correlations which have resulted from the analyses are the result of the data for all participants, regardless of their ‘higher attitude towards’ ratings that the attitude groups were based on.

Both by-participant Attitude scores (Attitude GA and Attitude RP), correlate with their own Listening Comprehension ratings. This indicates that when Dutch EFL learners perceive an accent as more effortful and difficult to understand\(^7\), this is also reflected in their Listening Comprehension score of that accent. The Dutch learners can thus, in a sense, accurately predict their own Listening Comprehension test results for each accent, on the basis of whether they it was more effortful and more difficult, to understand the speaker. However, with this observation, a certain tentativeness is warranted because of the way in which Comprehensibility was gaged, it would be better measured separately\(^8\). In this study however, the correlation between the Listening Comprehension score of GA and its Compressibility rating is much stronger than the correlation between the same constructs of RP, even though there is a very strong correlation between the Listening Comprehension scores for both tests \((p = .751)\) and a very strong correlation between the Comprehensibility ratings for both tests \((p = .541)\). The correlations seen between both Attitude scores and

\(^7\) Comprehensibility is about ease or difficulty in understand.
\(^8\) More on this will follow in the limitations of the study.
their own Listening Comprehension ratings, could arguably therefore solely exist because both constructs were tested as they were intended.

It is additionally exceedingly interesting that the attitude score for GA, correlates in a negative way with its own Listening Comprehension (LC) score, and nothing else, while the attitude towards standard British, correlates only with a perceived Teach Ability of the speaker of that accent, in a positive way. It could be argued that both of these results have to do with the attitude dimension results as discussed in the previous section. It could be seen in that section, that all participants rated RP higher than GA for the status dimensions. As seen in the previous literature, status traits are considered to be connected with being more well-spoken and having a higher level of education (Ito & Cacioppo, 2019; Smith, 2017). If these traits are connected with the RP accent, it is therefore not surprising that any participants, even the ones who have a preference for the General American accent, would not want to put in as much effort when listening to audio texts spoken by a speaker that they don’t consider to be well-spoken or highly educated. Therefore the hypothesis for this subsection is correct. Rather than stating that when participants have a higher attitude rating towards one accent, it would be more accurate to say that results could be much more easily effected by very specific attitude dimensions.

- Subquestion 3: How does exposure towards an accent, relate to Attitude, Listening Comprehension, Comprehensibility and perceived Teach Ability?

The hypothesis for this subquestion was the following: ‘The actual listening comprehension scores will be higher for the American accent because the Netherlands as a country is exposed to more American English in media. There will be a perceivable effect of exposure on this construct.’
From the results of the non-parametric tests on More Exposure To, in relation to perceived Teach Ability, can be gathered that a higher exposure to RP, and Equal amounts of exposure, have a significant effect on the perceived Teach Ability that Dutch EFL learners can have of others. The group with more exposure to the General American accent, showed that they had no significant relationship with perceived Teach Ability for either accent. There are no other significant relationships between exposure, whether in amount of hours or in type of exposure, and Attitude towards an accent, Listening Comprehension scores or Comprehensibility. This is surprising considering the background literature, as more exposure to a language variation in hours, as well as exposure to more familiar accents have been proven to have a strong effect on listening comprehension scores and comprehensibility scores specifically (Adank, Evans, Stuart-Smith, & Scotti, 2009; Bent & Bradlow, 2003; Gass & Varonis, 1984; Ockey & French, 2014).

If significant results had been found with both independent variables: Exposure and Attitude, regressions would have been run with those respective variables as predictors of the dependent measures. This would have given information as to the relative predictive power of attitude versus exposure, and could have been used to answer the question: ‘Does attitude or does exposure explain a larger amount of variance in predicting the dependent variables?’
6. Conclusion

The main research question was: ‘RQ: Do the attitudes of Dutch EFL learners toward natively produced American and British English accents affect the Listening Comprehension, Comprehensibility and perceived Teach Ability, of these accents and does exposure play a role?’

In order to find out the conclusion to the research question, experimental research was conducted that yielded many results. The attitudes of the Dutch EFL learners showed contrasting results compared to the most previous attitude study. More students have a better attitude towards the standard American English accent (GA) than towards standard British English accent (RP) larger number of Dutch EFL learners has a higher attitude score towards the GA accent. The participants specifically only rated British higher than GA on status traits, showing a persevering higher status for RP in the Netherlands. However, Ga overtook RP as the favored accent.

The attitudes towards accents do have an effect on several of the dependent measures, such as strong, returning correlations regarding perceived Teach Ability. The conclusion can be made, based on the significant results regarding multiple teach ability correlations, that the attitude someone has to an accent, is directly related to thinking this person would be a good language teacher, whether it is true or not.

Attitudes towards an accent interestingly also do not only positively correlate with the constructs based on the same accent. Such as the General American accent, negatively correlating with its own Listening Comprehension score, for reasons that could very well be related to the specific attitude dimensions as well.

Additionally interesting are the correlations found between the dependent measures. Seeing as both listening comprehension tests correlated highly with their corresponding accent comprehensibility scores, and these listening comprehension scores
did not correlate to their opposite accent comprehensibility scores in addition to
correlating highly to the same measure (LC to LC and Comprehensibility to
Comprehensibility), this means that means that Dutch EFL learners can actually gage
quite well whether they find something easy or difficult to understand. This is in contrast
to previous research that did not give conclusive evidence one way or another.

**Limitations of the study & future research**

No study is without limitations, certainly not this one. The main limitations of this study
come from a time constraint, and were exacerbated due to issues that related to
containment of the study to a reasonable size. Due to the amount of independents,
dependents and other information sources, it was hard to exclude any information under
the acceptance that it would just not be possible to go into everything. Several items were
excluded, such as final high school grade, and many of the painstakingly gathered and
analyzed results, did not receive the time they deserved to showcase their implications in
the discussion and conclusion sections. Time had simply run out. Fewer dependents
should have been researched in the allotted time, so that they could have been more
carefully examined in the final stage, as the results of this piece of research are truly
fascinating.

Aside from time-constraints, there were some limitations to the study itself. As
previously mentioned, the Comprehensibility ratings for both accents would have ideally
been tested completely separate from the Listening Comprehension task. Due to time and
classroom- circumstance constraints, this was however not possible. With the way the
Comprehension judgement task was set up now, the correlations seen could be a result of
the participants answering their Comprehensibility scales, purely on the basis of whether
the Listening Comprehension exam in that accent was difficult, rather than rating
Comprehensibility for which it was meant: Perceived difficulty of understanding. Therefore, there is no way to be completely certain where the correlation comes from unless this issue is dealt with in a possible replication study. In order to avoid any uncertainty in the future, any research that will be conducted on the relationship between Listening Comprehension and Comprehensibility, should test the Comprehensibility construct at a different time, using fresh audio samples. This should aid in avoiding any correlational results that were unintentionally affected by the Listening Comprehension tests themselves.

Additionally, in future research it would be good to take multiple educational levels into account, which could not be done during this study. A possible cause for the found attitude result discrepancies between this study and Sarrerens’ (2017) study, could have been because of educational level. Her students were all at university level, while the participants of this study were not. The difference between the attitudes could simply be explained due to a lesser interest in world affairs and politics of this participant group, compared to university students. It would therefore be very interesting to look into level of education as a predictor for the type of attitude someone has towards an accent.

Final conclusion and research implications

The final conclusion is therefore the following:
The Dutch EFL students showed clear ratings for the two examined accents, resulting in an overall higher attitude score for the General American accent, in spite of a higher status attitude score for Received pronunciation. The effects of the attitudes on Listening Comprehension and Comprehensibility are diverse and inconsistent. Sometimes there is a negative effect of attitude, such as shown in a negative correlation such as between attitude towards the GA accent and the Listening Comprehension scores of that same
accent. Some effects are positive, such as the effects of attitude towards an accent on perceived Teach ability of both accents which is one of the most consistent results. The perceived teach ability construct is additionally the only one that exposure has a strong, consistent relationship with. This study has highlighted two specific aspects more clearly. Attitude towards an accent, at least not regarding GA and RP, do not have a negative effect on listening comprehension test results. Additionally, attitude is a complicated phenomenon, not easily generalized because of its many dimensions and possible causalities. The previous literature on these constructs has been so inconclusive and diverse, that the effects of attitude on constructs seems difficult to answer, even a study comparing multiple of the dependents and two independents, in a manner that has never been attempted before. Future research will be needed on a much larger scale in order to fully examine the implications of attitudes towards a language variation, on foreign language learning specifically.

All in all, in spite of the limitations of this study, this avenue of research had to be investigated for its possible word-wide second language testing applications. It is therefore in a sense fortunate that the attitudes towards an accent do not have an effect on listening comprehension testing scores.
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9. Appendices

Appendix A - Speaker Background Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Name:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Age:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sex:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Height:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Nationality:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Native Languages:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Languages spoken apart from English:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Hometown: (Region/Country):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. What is your current place of residence:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. How long have you lived there: (months/years)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Highest level of education completed:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. List the number of years lived outside of your home country:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Choose one of the following: Smoker or Non-smoker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for your participation!
Appendix B - Speaker Consent Form

Departament de Traducció i
Ciències del llenguatge
Universitat Pompeu Fabra

Campus de la Comunicació-Poblenou
C/ Roc Boronat, 138
08018 Barcelona

Consent form

I undersigned ........................................ (name and surnames), of age, with ID no. ................................................................. and residing at ................................................................., born in ................................................................. in the year .................................................................

DECLARE:

that I have been informed that in compliance with Spanish Law 15/1999 of December 13th on the Protection of Personal Data and in accordance with Royal Decree 1720/2007 of December 21st, approving the development of this regulation, the personal data I provide will be stored in the archives of Projectes de recerca, desenvolupament i innovació (‘Research, Development and Innovation Projects’) whose holder is the Pompeu Fabra University. These data will be used...
for the sole purpose of carrying out research projects in the field of Linguistics.

I authorize the Pompeu Fabra University, through the Masters in Theoretical and Applied Linguistics (coordinated by Dr. Pilar Prieto), to reproduce and publish in any medium and form the recordings done as a result of my participation, and that these recordings will be used exclusively for educational, research and nonprofit purposes.

I authorize the release of these data to other research institutions for the purpose of carrying out research projects in Linguistics, under the condition that the university and the host institution carry out non-profit activities with these data.

I have been informed that the body responsible for the archives of the University is the Gerent (University Manager) and that I can exercise the rights of access, rectification, cancellation and opposition by sending a written request, accompanied by a photocopy of an identification card or other equivalent identification document, addressed to: Gerent. Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Plaça de la Mercè, 10-12, 08002 Barcelona

________________________, __/__/____

(Place) (date)

..................................................................................................................................................

(Signature)
Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for volunteering your accent variety in this project. The purpose of this research is to explore the connections between accents, attitude, comprehensibility, and listening comprehension in the context of second language acquisition.

The audio samples will be used for research conducted in The Netherlands for two individual Master Thesis projects. The data you have provided in this study will be held anonymously and in strict confidence. All participants will have the right to access the findings of this study. A copy of the final report and its finding can be made available to you upon your request.
If you have any questions or concerns regarding this project, please do not hesitate to contact the researchers: Kristyn Johnson at kristyn.johnson01@estudiant.upf.edu and Jarna van Gelder at Jarna.vangelder01@estudiant.upf.edu or the supervisors of these studies: Dr. Carmen Perez Vidal at carmen.perez@upf.edu and Dr. Joan Carles Mora at mora@ub.edu

No known risks are associated with volunteering in this Project, beyond those you may experience in everyday life. However, in the unlikely event that you feel you may be experiencing distress or discomfort because of volunteering in this study, you may find the following service helpful:

**External Helpline**

**The Samaritans in Spain**

Free, completely confidential, non-judgmental, emotional support for any English speaker of any age who may be experiencing distress or despair.

Tel: 902 88 35 35

Thank you very much for your participation and assistance!

Kristyn Johnson & Jarna van Gelder
### Appendix D - Table 5: Speaker Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr.</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Accent</th>
<th>Area(s)</th>
<th>Smoking</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th><strong>Other Language</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>American English (GA)</td>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Non-smoker</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Spanish, Chinese, Catalan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>British English (RP/ Cockney)</td>
<td>South Yorkshire, County Durham, Essex, Devon,</td>
<td>Non-smoker</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Spanish, French</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Nr. references to the speakers. Speaker #1 was the speaker used to record the American accent for both tasks. Speaker #2 was the speaker initially used for recording the speech used in Task 1. Speaker #3 filled in for speaker 2 for the recordings of Task 2.

**Other Language** refers to any other languages that the participants indicated to speak.

All participants lived in the Barcelona area the time of recording.

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Appendix E - Questionnaire: Participant Information

Student Information

Answer each of the following questions in section 1 before moving on to sections 2 and 3. In section 2 and 3 you will hear an audio recording. Read the instructions for each section carefully and respond to the questions asked in each section.

[Beantwoord de volgende vragen in sectie 1, voordat je verder gaat naar secties 2 en 3. In secties 2 en 3 krijg je een audiobestand te horen. Lees de instructies voor elke sectie zorgvuldig door en beantwoord de vragen in elke sectie afzonderlijk.]

Email address *

Valid email address

This form is collecting email addresses. Change settings

1. First Name [Voornaam] *

Short answer text

2. Last Name [Achternaam] *

Short answer text

3. Age [Leeftijd] *

Short answer text

4. Sex [Geslacht] *

1. Male [Man]

2. Female [Vrouw]

5. Years of English classes taken [Jaren Engelse les gevolgd] *

Short answer text
6. What was your final grade for English in High school? (On your diploma or on average) 
[Wat was je eindcijfer voor Engels op de middelbare school? (op je diploma, of gemiddeld?)

Short answer text

7. What is your class code (abbreviation of your class)? 
[Wat is je klas code? (afkorting van je klas)]

Short answer text

8. During this past year, what was your total amount of exposure to English, in hours per week? (including talking to friends/ family/ coworkers, tv, music, movies, games, social media etc.) 
[Gedurende het afgelopen jaar, hoeveel blootstelling aan de Engelse taal heb je in totaal gehad, in uren per week? (inclusief praten met familie, vrienden, tv, muziek, films, games, social media etc.)]

1. 0-3 hours
2. 3-6 hours
3. 6-9 hours
4. 9-12 hours
5. 12+ hours

9. Do you speak English with any family members at home on a regular basis? (If your answer is yes, please answer questions 9.A and 9.B). 
[Sprek je op regelmatige basis Engels met bijvoorbeeld famillieleden thuis? Ja/Nee (Als je antwoord ja is, beantwoord dan alsjeblieft ook vragen 9.A en 9.B)]

1. Yes
2. No
9A. For how many hours a week was this on average?  
[Hoeveel uur per week was dit gemiddeld?]

1. 0.1-1 hours
2. 2-3 hours
3. 3-4 hour
4. 4+ hours

9B. How are you related to the English speaker(s) at home? (For example, a parent, cousin or other family member who speaks English frequently around or with you?)  
[Wat is jouw relatie met de Engels spreker thuis? (is het bijvoorbeeld een ouder, neef of niet van ander familie lid die vaak Engels spreekt in jouw buurt of met jou?)]

10. Do you use the English language anywhere else on a regular basis? (For instance at work, internship or at a hobby?) (If your answer is yes, please answer questions 10.A and 10.B).  
[Gebruik je op regelmatige basis buiten huis de Engelse taal? (bijvoorbeeld op je werk, stage of bij een hobby?) Ja/Nee (Als je antwoord ja is, beantwoord dan alsjeblieft ook vragen 10.A en 10.B)]

1. Yes
2. No

10A. How many hours a week on average?  
[Hoeveel uur per week was dit gemiddeld?]
10B. Where do you use English outside of the home?
[Waar gebruik je Engels buiten het huis?]

Short answer text

11. Have you ever been to an English speaking country? (If your answer is yes, please answer questions 11.A and 11.B).
[Ben je ooit in een Engelssprekend land geweest? Ja/Nee (Als je antwoord ja is, beantwoord dan alsjeblieft ook vragen 11.A en 11.B)]

1. Yes

2. No

11A. To which English speaking countries have you been? (England / United States of America or other, for example Australia/ New Zealand/ South Africa etc.)
[Naar welke Engelssprekende landen ben je geweest? (Engeland/ Verenigde Staten van America, of anders bijvoorbeeld Australië/ Nieuw Zeeland, Zuid Afrika)]

Short answer text

11B. How much time in total have you spent in the by you mentioned countries from 11A? Write your answer as [COUNTRY-- number of weeks]
[Hoeveel tijd heb je in totaal doorgebracht in de door jou bij vraag 11A genoemde landen? Schrijf je antwoord als LAND -- hoeveelheid weken]

Short answer text
Appendix F - Task 1: Texts for Attitude and Exposure Measure

STORY 1 - AMERICAN VERSION [1.55min.] (Adapted from British Council (2019))

In April 2007, a twenty-two-year-old student named Charlie Jones was studying for his final exams. But he was not feeling motivated, so he turned on his laptop computer. He found a website called YouTube and watched a video of another guy like him. The teenager was sitting in his bedroom and talking about how unmotivated he was. “I can do better than that!” thought Charlie. So he used his laptop and webcam to make his first video, and posted it on YouTube under the name Charlieissocoollke.

YouTube started in 2005 and is now the world’s largest video website. More than 3 billion videos are watched every day on YouTube and a large number of those are video blogs. These are simply videos of people talking to a camera about their lives or things that interest them.

Since April of 2007, Charlie has become very famous. To say thank you to all his fans he made a video called Challenge Charlie, asking people to suggest funny or difficult things for him to do in his videos.

Charlie is also a singer and songwriter. His most popular videos are of him singing and playing the ukelele. In Duet with Myself, he uses special effects to sing a duet with himself about what a boring person he is. This has now been watched over 7 million times!

With more than one and a half million subscribers, Charlie is the most popular video blogger in the United States. He has now made enough money to buy a house. But what is the secret of his success? “I make the kind of videos that I want to watch,” he says.
And when asked how fame has affected him, Charlie says, "I still sit in my bedroom talking to my camera, and that's what I want to do."

Oh, and how did Charlie do on his final exams back in 2007? Well, he passed with nine A grades and one B! He says that he wants to continue his education in the future but decided to try and make a career on YouTube before that. So, far, it’s going very well!

WORD COUNT: 355

STORY 2 - AMERICAN VERSION [1.50min.] (Adapted from British Council (2019))

https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/study-break/graded-reading/life-youtuber-level-1

Do funny or interesting things happen to you a lot? Do you think hundreds of thousands of people will want to listen to you tell stories about your life?

That’s what life is like for YouTube star, David Smith. More than 150 million people watch his videos of funny stories about himself, and subscribers to his channel grow every day.

Twenty-three-year-old David from the United States, turns his life into his work, six days a week. ‘I spend all of Sunday having ideas for videos to film that week,’ says David, ‘Then, on Monday, I wake up early to start making the videos. Usually, a video takes just over an hour to make. I try to make around five, so it takes most of my day. Then, from Tuesday to Friday, I edit them.’

David also spends a few hours a week writing to his fans. Sometimes he meets fans because people recognize him when he goes out. ‘The other day I went to buy coffee,’
he said, ‘and the girl serving me almost dropped my coffee when she saw that it was me. She left the coffee shop to meet me outside to take pictures. It always makes me happy to see that my fans are happy.’

David has some advice about what kind of videos to make. ‘Be yourself. Don’t change to try to make people like you. They will love YOU! When I first started YouTube, I wanted to look good. In my old videos, I don’t look comfortable because I’m not being myself. But in my videos now, you can see that I’m 100 percent myself. I’m crazy and strange, and I don’t care what people think.’

David also says you should make your channel about something you really care about because that will inspire people. People know when you’re not being the real you because you just want to be popular. ‘Make videos about something you love and your channel will grow much faster, believe me!’

WORD COUNT: 331

STORY 1 - BRITISH VERSION [approx. 1.55min.] (Adapted from British Council (2019))

In April 2007, a 22-year-old student named Charlie Jones was studying for his final exams. But he was not feeling motivated, so he turned on his laptop computer. He found a website called YouTube and watched a video of another guy like him. The teenager was sitting in his bedroom and talking about how unmotivated he was. “I can do better than that!” thought Charlie. So he used his laptop and webcam to make his first video, and posted it on YouTube under the name Charlieissocoollike.

YouTube started in 2005 and is now the world’s largest video website. More than 3 billion videos are watched every day on YouTube and a large number of those videos
are video blogs. These are simply videos of people talking to a camera about their lives or things that interest them.

Since April of 2007, Charlie has become very famous. To say thank you to all his fans he made a video called *Challenge Charlie*, asking people to suggest funny or difficult things for him to do in his videos.

Charlie is also a singer and songwriter. His most popular videos are of him singing and playing the ukelele. In *Duet with Myself*, he uses special effects to sing a duet with himself about what a boring person he is. This has now been watched over 7 million times!

With more than one and a half million subscribers, Charlie is the most popular video blogger in England. He has now made enough money to buy a house. But what is the secret to his success? “I make the kind of videos that I want to watch,” he says. And when asked how fame has affected him, Charlie says, "I still sit in my bedroom talking to my camera, and that's what I want to do."

Oh, and how did Charlie do on his final exams back in 2007? Well, he passed with nine A grades and one B! He says that he wants to continue his education in the future but decided to try and make a career on YouTube before that. So, far, it’s going very well!

WORD COUNT: 354

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**STORY 2 - BRITISH VERSION [approx. 1.50min.] (Adapted from British Council (2019))

Do funny or interesting things happen to you a lot? Do you think hundreds of thousands
of people will want to listen to you tell stories about your life?

That’s what life is like for YouTube star, David Smith. More than 150 million people watch his videos of funny stories about himself, and subscribers to his channel grow every day.

Twenty-three-year-old David from England, turns his life into his work, six days a week. ‘I spend all of Sunday having ideas for videos to film that week,’ says David, ‘Then, on Monday, I wake up early to start making the videos. Usually, a video takes just over an hour to make. I try to make around five, so it takes most of my day. Then, from Tuesday to Friday, I edit them.’

David also spends a few hours a week writing to his fans. Sometimes he meets fans because people recognise him when he goes out. ‘The other day I went to buy coffee,’ he said, ‘and the girl serving me almost dropped my coffee when she saw it was me. She left the coffee shop to meet me outside to take pictures. It always makes me happy to see my fans are happy.’

David has some advice about what kind of videos to make. ‘Be yourself. Don’t change to try to make people like you. They will love YOU! When I first started YouTube, I wanted to look good. In my old videos, I don’t look comfortable because I’m not being myself. But in my videos now, you can see that I’m 100 percent myself. I’m crazy and strange, and I don’t care what people think.’

David also says you should make your channel about something you really care about because that will inspire people. People know when you’re not being the real you because you just want to be popular. ‘Make videos about something you love and your channel will grow much faster, believe me!’
Appendix G - Task 1: Attitude and Exposure Measure

Listening Test - 1

In sections 2 and 3 you will listen to 1 audio recording for each section. For each audio recording, answer the set of adjoining questions underneath. Focus on the way the person is speaking and not on the content. You will hear native speakers of two different varieties of English. Pay close attention to the accent of English that each speaker is using. Answer the following questions based on your opinion about the person speaking.

[In secties 2 en 3 luistert je naar 1 audiobestand. Voor elk audiobestand, beantwoord de bijbehorende vragen die er onder staan. Focus je op hoe de spreker praat, niet op de inhoud. Je hoort moedertaalsprekers van twee verschillende varianten van Engels. Let heel goed op het accent van Engels dat elke spreker gebruikt. Beantwoord de volgende vragen op basis van jouw mening over de spreker.]

Blue - J

1. The person speaking is polite. [Deze persoon is beleefd] *

Not polite at all [Helemaal niet beleefd]

Extremely polite [Extreem beleefd]
2. The person speaking is nice. [Deze persoon is aardig] *

Not nice at all [Helemaal niet aardig]  

Extremely nice [Extreem aardig]

3. The person speaking is funny. [Deze persoon is grappig] *

Not funny at all [Helemaal niet grappig]  

Extremely funny [Extreem grappig]

4. The person speaking is reliable. [Deze persoon is betrouwbaar] *

Not reliable at all [Helemaal niet betrouwbaar]  

Extremely reliable [Extreem betrouwbaar]

5. The person speaking is open-minded. [Deze persoon is ruimdenkend] *

Not open-minded at all [Helemaal niet ruimdenkend]  

Extremely open-minded [Extreem ruimdenkend]

6. The person speaking is intelligent. [Deze persoon is intelligent] *

Not intelligent at all [Helemaal niet intelligent]  

Extremely intelligent [Extreem intelligent]

7. The person speaking is hardworking. [Deze persoon is hardwerkend] *

Not hardworking at all [Helemaal niet hardwerkend]  

Extremely hardworking [Extreem hardwerkend]
8. The person speaking is a good leader. [Deze persoon is een goede leider] *

Not a good leader at all [Helemaal een goede leider]  
Extremely good leader [Een extreme goede leider]

9. The person speaking has a high level of education. [Deze persoon is hoogopgeleid] *

No education at all [Is helemaal niet opgeleid]  
Extremely high level of education [Extreem hoogopgeleid]

10. The person speaking is rich. [Deze persoon is rijk] *

Not rich at all [Helemaal niet rijk]  
Extremely rich [Extreem rijk]

11. The person speaking is worthy of respect. [Deze persoon is respect waard] *

Not worthy of respect at all [Helemaal geen respect waard]  
Extremely worthy of respect [Extreem veel respect waard]

12. In which accent is the person speaking? [Met welk accent spreekt deze persoon?] *

- British [Brits]
- American [Amerikaans]
Listening Test - 2

In sections 2 and 3 you will listen to 1 audio recording for each section. For each audio recording, answer the set of adjoining questions underneath. Focus on the way the person is speaking and not on the content. You will hear native speakers of two different varieties of English. Pay close attention to the accent of English that each speaker is using. Answer the following questions based on your opinion about the person speaking.

[In secties 2 en 3 luistert u naar 1 audiobestand. Voor elk audiobestand, beantwoordt u de bijbehorende vragen die er onder staan. Focus er op hoe de spreker praat, niet op de inhoud. Je hoort moedertaalsprekers van twee verschillende varianten van Engels. Let heel goed op het accent van Engels dat elke spreker gebruikt. Beantwoord de volgende vragen op basis van jouw mening over de spreker.]

Green - K

1. The person speaking is polite. [Deze persoon is beleefd] *

Not polite at all [Helemaal niet beleefd] 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Extremely polite [Extreem beleefd]

2. The person speaking is nice. [Deze persoon is aardig] *

Not nice at all [Helemaal niet aardig] 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Extremely nice [Extreem aardig]
3. The person speaking is funny. [Deze persoon is grappig] *

Not funny at all [Helemaal niet grappig]

Extremely funny [Uiteraard grappig]

4. The person speaking is reliable. [Deze persoon is betrouwbaar] *

Not reliable at all [Helemaal niet betrouwbaar]

Extremely reliable [Uiteraard betrouwbaar]

5. The person speaking is open-minded. [Deze persoon is ruimdenkend] *

Not open-minded at all [Helemaal niet ruimdenkend]

Extremely open-minded [Uiteraard ruimdenkend]

6. The person speaking is intelligent. [Deze persoon is intelligent] *

Not intelligent at all [Helemaal niet intelligent]

Extremely intelligent [Uiteraard intelligent]

7. The person speaking is hardworking. [Deze persoon is hardwerkend] *

Not hardworking at all [Helemaal niet hardwerkend]

Extremely hardworking [Uiteraard hardwerkend]

8. The person speaking is a good leader. [Deze persoon is een goede leider] *

Not a good leader at all [Helemaal een goede leider]

Extremely good leader [Een extreme goede leider]
9. The person speaking has a high level of education. [Deze persoon is hoogopgeleid]  

No education at all [is helemaal niet opgeleid]  
Extremely high level of education  

10. The person speaking is rich. [Deze persoon is rijk]  

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9  

11. The person speaking is worthy of respect. [Deze persoon is respect waard]  

Not worthy of respect at all [Helemaal geen respect waard]  
Extremely worthy of respect  

12. In which accent is the person speaking? [Met welk accent spreekt deze persoon?]  

○ British [Brits]  
○ American [Amerikaans]  

13. Which variety of English are you most exposed to? [Welke variant van Engels hoor jij het meest?]  

○ Speaker 1 [Spreker 1]  
○ Speaker 2 [Spreker 2]  
○ Equal Exposure [Ik hoor ze evenveel]
Appendix H - Task 2: Texts for Listening Comprehension Test

In Red are the parts that were recorded in both the British and American standard accents. These were the audio files that were given to the students to listen to, in different order, within the different versions of the listening comprehension exam.

Section 1: Multiple choice

Section 1-Text 1:
So, tomorrow and Friday, we can expect more of this lovely hot weather, with bright sunshine and temperatures up to twenty four degrees, so don’t forget to wear sun screen! Saturday and Sunday will be cooler and cloudier, but it will stay dry without any rain, so you won’t need your umbrellas, and there might be a few sunny periods. It will only be a few degrees difference compared to today.

Section 1-Text 2:
In the north tomorrow, the weather will be much the same as today – unsettled weather with outbreaks of rain throughout the day, and temperatures around ten degrees Celsius. In the midlands and the east, there are still likely to be some scattered showers. In the south of the country it should be dry for most of the day, there’ll be a lot of cloud cover but there might be some periods of sunshine – temperatures around eighteen degrees.

Section 1-Text 3:
Could passengers travelling to stations to Hastings please make sure they are in coaches A and B, and passengers travelling to Ashford please go to coaches C, D or E, as this train will divide in Tonbridge.

Section 1-Text 4:
Anyone travelling on to Lenton Bridge? This bus isn’t going any further. If you want to
go on to Lenton Bridge, you’ll need to get off here and change onto the 10a. You won’t need to get another ticket. Just show the one you’ve got. There’ll be a bus here in about 5 minutes.

**Section 1-Text 5:**

This is your captain speaking. We are sorry for the delayed departure from Stuttgart. This was due to earlier problems at Heathrow airport, where it’s been very busy today. We’re pleased to say that we’ll be taking a slightly shorter route back to Heathrow, and as a result, we should arrive at round about our scheduled time of 17:35, local time.

**Section 1-Text 6:**

This is a station announcement. We are sorry but, because of the bad weather, the 18:57 to Bristol has been cancelled. A replacement bus service is available. Could passengers please make their way to the station entrance and make themselves known to station staff. The service will leave in fifteen minutes.

**Section 2: (Match the audio files to the correct answers)**

**Section 2-Topic 1 (1-3/2-4)**

**Audio file 1:**

One of the things game developers have to worry about is how to prevent people from copying the games illegally and distributing them on the internet. Some companies have gone to great lengths to make sure that everyone who plays the game is a legitimate user, for example, you might have to have a permanent internet connection to play. This is a problem for some people if their internet connection isn’t reliable. So they prefer to buy pirated versions which don’t have all these restrictions.
Audio file 2:

A lot of games are attractive because the virtual world is fairer than the real world. Your success isn’t determined by your age, social status or education. Your peers are loyal, and when you do something good, you are instantly rewarded, so there’s a real sense of achievement. The sense of community in the gaming world is actually really strong, and what we really need to do is bring some of this spirit of working together and accomplishing tasks into the real world. People should stop criticizing these games and start thinking about how we can incorporate the positive spirit of gaming into our real lives.

Audio file 3:

There have been a lot of studies into whether gaming encourages violent behaviour, but as far as I know, they haven’t been able to come up with any conclusive evidence. Juvenile crime in the States is at a thirty year low, and there is also some evidence that most antisocial acts are committed by kids who don’t play computer games. I reckon all this hype about violent games is a bigger problem than the games themselves. It makes adults suspicious of their kids, and tries to blame big social issues on games rather than eliminating the real cause of youth problems, such as home life and mental stability.

Audio file 4:

I realise that a lot of these pay-for-free games are designed to become addictive. You play for free, but once you’ve invested time and effort into your game, you start paying real money to progress further into the game. With people spending huge sums of money on virtual items, I can see why governments might want to regulate games like these. But on the other side, these gaming companies are businesses and they need to
make money. Governments should focus on the industry’s business model, rather than the game content. It’s a balancing act, because the last thing you want to do is stamp out the creativity of small companies.

Section 2-Topic 2: (1-3/2-4)

Audio file 1:
When I was a kid, I made friends for, what seemed like arbitrary reasons. My best friends were the kid who lived down my street, and the boy who sat next to me in class, whose name was next to mine in the alphabet. When I think about it, it’s strange that we remained friends for so long. But since I moved away, we’ve inevitably drifted apart. Their lives and mine are just so different now. It seems like I’ve moved on, but they’re still doing the same things we did together when we were 17. Going to the same old bars, playing computer games, you know. That stuff doesn’t interest me anymore.

Audio file 2:
I must say that I’ve been finding it difficult making friends lately. After we’ve gone through the usual small talk – Nice day today isn’t it, what did you do at the weekend - I can’t think of anything else to say. So going out has seemed more like a chore than a pleasure of late. That’s why I wasn’t that bothered about going to my school reunion. But in the end I decided to go, and I’m glad I did. As soon as I met up with my old pal Barney, we just picked up from where we’d left off. There weren’t any social graces. Within minutes we were teasing each other just the same as we had done ten years ago.

Audio file 3:
Whenever I meet up with new people, even briefly, I always get their email address and
hook up with them online. People say it’s stupid and these aren’t real friendships. ‘A friend is someone you spend time with, face to face’ – they say. I don’t think that’s strictly true, as people have written to pen friends for decades, and I’m sure most people consider people friends even if they only see them once in a blue moon. I love going online, reading people’s posts and seeing what they’ve been up to. We get into random conversations and comment on interesting topics. I know that without the Internet, our friendships would never have withstood the test of time.

**Audio file 4:**

I was at an anniversary dinner party not long ago, where I didn’t really know anyone except my parents. I was on a table of young people in their late teens and early twenties, which I thought was nice. After all, I didn’t want to hang around with my parents all night. But it soon became apparent that the oldies were having a far better time than we were. I tried to make conversation, but everything I said seemed to fall flat. The people on my table all had their smart phones switched on, and they spent the whole evening texting. They barely said a word. My parents had a fantastic time and by the end of the night, they’d been invited to three more social engagements with people they’d only just met. I came away with nothing, and felt profoundly miserable.

**Section 3: My Heroes**

**Audio file A:**

My hero isn’t very famous, but she ought to be. She’s Mary Anning, who was only 12 years old and from a poor family when she made an amazing discovery. She found the first dinosaur skeleton, that of an ichthyosaur, on the cliffs of Lyme Regis in the south of England. That was in 1811, and until then people had thought that it was impossible for
an animal to become extinct. Because she was a woman and didn’t have enough money for a proper education, she wasn’t able to take part properly in the scientific community of the time. But she read as much scientific literature as she could and continued to search for fossils, often risking her own life to get them by climbing dangerous cliffs. She once nearly died in a landslide which killed her dog. Although she didn’t write famous books about fossils, her contribution to palaeontology, the study of fossils, is said to be enormous. I admire her because she kept on trying to make new discoveries at a time when usually only men, and men with money, were allowed to be scientists. After her death the writer Charles Dickens said that ‘the carpenter’s daughter has won a name for herself, and has deserved to win it’.

**Audio file B:**

I’m really interested in ecology and my hero, or heroine, is Rachel Carson because she first got people thinking about the way we humans are causing permanent damage to the Earth’s ecosystems. She began as a biologist, specialising in writing about the sea, but she gradually became aware of the danger of using pesticides like DDT and the way they can harm the whole of the food chain, from the worm to humans! She wrote her classic book *Silent Spring* in 1962 to explain this to the general public, to explain how humans and nature are interdependent. The title of *Silent Spring* refers to the fact that one day all the birds might be dead so they won’t be able to sing in the springtime. The agricultural and chemical industries reacted very badly to the book and said she was unprofessional. But further research by other scientists proved that she was right about the dangers of chemicals used to kill insects. Nowadays there is a growing movement for organic food production, but unfortunately things in general are still getting worse, rather than better. We still need to read Rachel Carson’s book and think about its message.
**Audio file C:**

My hero is Kailash Satyarthi, who has been campaigning against child slavery for years. He is from India and first became aware of the problem of children working when he was 6 and noticed that a boy younger than himself had to spend all day polishing shoes and was unable to go to school. When he was 11, he began to collect money to help buy textbooks for other children, and when he was 26 he gave up his job as an electrical engineer to fight child slavery in India, by doing things like raiding factories where children were forced to work, making rugs or glass bottles. He introduced a programme first called RugMark, now known as Goodweave, which puts tags on child-labour-free rugs made in factories. He has saved many thousands of children, over 80,000, from a terrible life of enforced labour in South Asia and helped them to get an education. He has often been physically attacked for helping children, for example for trying to free Nepalese children forced to work in a circus. He regularly risks his life to fight injustice; two of his colleagues have been murdered. I believe that the best thing he has done is to change how people think about child slavery and to make it an international issue.

**Audio file D:**

My choice of hero isn’t very original, I’m afraid, but he’s the person I would most like to have met: John Lennon. He died a long time before I was born, and his most famous songs were written long before that, but when I listen to his music I really feel as if he’s speaking to me personally. I love the whole range of the Beatles’ music, from the early pop songs to the very experimental music at the end of their time as a group. John Lennon was the most innovative writer in the Beatles and he continued to create exciting music when he left and went solo. But although I love his music, what I admire about him is his dedication to universal peace. It’s amazing that the song Imagine, written in 1971, is still incredibly popular after all this time. It’s about a world where everyone can
be equal, a world with no wars, no divisions between countries, no greed, no hunger, no material possessions ... I’d like to meet him because he was a lifelong rebel, and although he could be a difficult person, he was original, clever and funny. It was awful that he was killed in 1980 when he was only 40. I wonder what he would be doing if he was alive now.
Appendix I - Task 2: Comprehension Test & Comprehensibility/Teach-ability measures

The participants were asked to fill out the student information again, for the reason that the tasks were done on two different dates. The results of both tasks would otherwise not be matched.

Student Information

Answer each of the following questions before moving on to the 2 halves with listening comprehension sections. In each of the listening comprehension sections you will hear an audio file with containing one or more stories. You will then answer questions about the recordings. Read the instructions for each section carefully and respond to the questions asked in each section.

This form is collecting email addresses. Change settings

1. First Name [Voornaam] *

2. Last Name [Achternaam] *

3. What is your class code (abbreviation of your class)? [Wat is je klas code? (afkorting van je klas)]
1st half - Section 1 - Multiple choice

This section is a multiple choice section. Read the questions first. Then, listen to the adjoining audio file and select which you think is correct. You can listen to the audio samples multiple times if you want to.

(Dit stuk van het examen is meerkeuze. Lees eerst de vragen. Luister dan naar het bijpassende audio bestand en selecteer het juiste meerkeuzeantwoord. Je mag meerdere keren naar het audio bestand luisteren als je wil.)

Audio for: Section 1 - Question 1

Section 1 - Question 1: What will the weather be like at the weekend?  *

- Extremely sunny
- Partly cloudy
- Rainy

Audio for: Section 1 - Question 2
Section 1 - Question 2: Train passengers for Hastings must.... *

- sit in coach A or B
- change trains in Tonbridge
- change trains in Ashford

Audio for: Section 1 - Question 3

Section 1 - Question 3: The captain announces that the plane... *

- will arrive on time
- will arrive late
- will land at a different airport
1st half - Section 2 - Matching

In this part of the exam there are two topics. The first topic is computer games, the second topic is friendship. You will hear two related audio samples per topic. Begin with topic 1, then move on to topic 2. Per topic: read the questions first. Then listen to the adjoining audio file and select the correct answer. You can listen to the audio samples multiple times.

(In deze sectie van het examen zijn er twee onderwerpen. Het eerste onderwerp is computer spellen, het tweede onderwerp is vriendschap. Je zult twee gerelateerde audio bestanden per onderwerp horen. Begin met onderwerp 1, ga daarna over op onderwerp 2. Per onderwerp: lees eerst de vragen. Luister vervolgens naar het bijpassende audiobestand en selecteer het juiste antwoord. Je mag meerdere keren naar de audio bestanden luisteren.)

Audio for: Topic 1 - question 1

Topic 1 - question 1 *

1. The nature of computer games could benefit society

2. Restrictions are discouraging gamers from buying games legally

3. Too many children are addicted to online games

4. Computer games prevent children from learning other things

5. Game regulators need to take several things into account

6. People are unnecessarily worried about the harmful effect of games
Audio for: Topic 1- Question 2:

Topic 1- question 2: *

1. The nature of computer games could benefit society
2. Restrictions are discouraging gamers from buying games legally
3. Too many children are addicted to online games
4. Computer games prevent children from learning other things
5. Game regulators need to take several things into account
6. People are unnecessarily worried about the harmful effect of games

Audio for: Topic 2- question 1
Topic 2- Question 1: *

1. Friendship has limitations
2. The younger generation can't socialize
3. There's no friend like an old friend
4. Social networking keeps friendships going
5. I outgrew my old friends

Audio for: Topic 2- Question 2

Topic 2- Question 2: *

1. Friendship has limitations
2. The younger generation can't socialize
3. There's no friend like an old friend
4. Social networking keeps friendships going
5. I outgrew my old friends
1st half - Section 3

You will hear two audio samples about personal heroes. There will be 2 types of exercises about these audio files. The first exercise will be about answering multiple choice questions. The second will be about matching the audio files to the correct answers.

(Je zal twee audio bestanden horen over persoonlijke helden. Er zullen twee soorten oefeningen zijn over deze audio bestanden. De eerste oefening zal gaan over het beantwoorden van meerkuzevragen. De tweede zal gaan over het matchen van de audio bestanden aan de juiste antwoorden.)

1st half - Section 3 - 1: multiple choice

This exercise is about the personal hero audio samples. Read the sentences first. Then, listen to the adjoining audio files and select whichever multiple choice answer you think is correct. There are three questions about each audio sample. You can listen to the audio samples multiple times if you want to.

(Deze oefening gaat over de persoonlijke helden audio bestanden. Lees eerst de vragen. Luister dan naar het bijpassende audio bestand en selecteer het meerkuzeantwoord waarvan jij denkt dat het de goede is. Je mag meerdere keren naar het audio bestand luisteren als je wil.)

Audio file A: Mary Anning

1. Mary Anning’s discovery was important because it showed that

   - [ ] fossils could teach us about the past
   - [ ] an animal could become extinct
   - [ ] the shape of the coast was constantly changing

   *
2. Mary Anning’s dog died because ______________.*
   - it fell off a cliff
   - a large amount of earth and rocks fell on it
   - it got stuck down a hole while looking for fossils

3. Mary Anning didn’t write a famous book because ______________.*
   - she was too busy exploring the cliffs
   - she did not have access to a formal education
   - she believed only men could be scientists

Audio file B: Kailash Satyarthi

4. Kailash Satyarthi first saw the problems of child slavery when he was ______________.*
   - 6 years old
   - 11 years old
   - 26 years old
5. Kailash Satyarthi has saved over ____________ children from enforced labour.

- 18,000
- 80,000
- 800,000

6. Because of their work, two of Kailash Satyarthi's ____________.

- friends were injured
- children were attacked
- co-workers were murdered
1st half - Section 3 - 2: Matching

This exercise is also about the personal hero audio samples. You can return to the previous page and listen to the audio samples again if you want to. For questions 1-4, choose the audio file in which this subject came up (A or B). You might have to select the same audio file more than once.

(Deze oefening gaat ook over de persoonlijke helden audio bestanden. Je mag teruggaan naar de vorige pagina om er nogmaals naar luisteren als je wilt. Voor vragen 1-4, kies het audio bestand waarin dit onderwerp ter sprake kwam (A of B). Je moet misschien meerdere keren hetzelfde audio bestand selecteren.)

1. Which audio sample (A, B, C or D) is about ...?  
   ...someone who has been the victim of violence as a result of their campaigning

   1. A
   2. B

2. Which audio sample (A or B) is about ...?  
   ...someone who left a more conventional job to help young people in their country

   1. A
   2. B

3. Which audio sample (A or B) is about ...?  
   ...someone who was excluded from the professional community of the time

   1. A
   2. B

4. Which audio sample (A or B) is about ...?  
   ...someone who made an important scientific discovery while still a child

   1. A
   2. B
1st half: Comprehensibility?

Please rate the comprehensibility of the speaker of the 1st half these audio files: How easy or difficult was it to understand this speaker? (for instance think about the amount of effort it takes to understand the speaker). Please be as honest as you can! There are no wrong answers!

(Boordeel de verstaanbaarheid van de spreker van de 1e helft van deze audio bestanden: Hoe makkelijk of moeilijk was het om deze spreker te verstaan? (denk aan hoeveel moeite het bijvoorbeeld kost om de spreker te verstaan). Wees alsjeblieft zo eerlijk mogelijk! Er zijn geen verkeerde antwoorden)

How easy was it to understand the speaker?
(Hoe makkelijk was het om de spreker te verstaan?)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Extremely difficult to understand
(Extreem moeilijk om te begrijpen)
Extremely easy to understand
(Extreem makkelijk om te begrijpen)

1st half: Good English Teacher?

Do you think this speaker of the 1st half would be a good English teacher? Be as honest as you can! There are no wrong answers! (Denk je dat deze spreker van de 1e helft een goede docent voor Engels zou zijn? Wees alsjeblieft zo eerlijk mogelijk! Er zijn geen verkeerde antwoorden)

Do you think this speaker of the 1st half would be a good English teacher?
(Denk je dat deze spreker van de 1e helft een goede docent voor het vak Engels zou zijn?)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
An extremely bad English teacher
(een extreem slechte docent voor Engels)
An extremely good English teacher
(een extreem goede docent voor Engels)
2nd half - Section 1 - Multiple choice

This section is a multiple choice section. Read the questions first. Then, listen to the adjoining audio file and select which you think is correct. You can listen to the audio samples multiple times if you want to.

(Dit stuk van het examen is meerkeuze. Lees eerst de vragen. Luister dan naar het bijpassende audio bestand en selecteer het juiste meerkeuzeantwoord. Je mag meerdere keren naar het audio bestand luisteren als je wilt.)

Audio for section 1 - Question 1

Section 1 - Question 1: What will the weather be like in the south? *

- [ ] Windy with showers
- [ ] Cloudy with sunny spells
- [ ] Cool and wet

Audio for: Section 1 - Question 2
Section 1 - Question 2: Passengers to Lenton Bridge must ...

- stay on the bus
- change onto the 10a bus
- buy another bus ticket

Audio for: Section 1 - Question 3

Section 1 - Question 3: The train to Bristol...

- is not running
- has just arrived
- is late
2nd half - Section 2 - Matching

In this part of the exam there are two topics. The first topic is computer games, the second topic is friendship. You will hear two related audio samples per topic. Begin with topic 1, then move on to topic 2. Per topic: read the questions first. Then listen to the adjoining audio file and select the correct answer. You can listen to the audio samples multiple times.

(In deze sectie van het examen zijn er twee onderwerpen. Het eerste onderwerp is computer spellen, het tweede onderwerp is vriendschap. Je zal twee gerelateerde audio bestanden per onderwerp horen. Begin met onderwerp 1, ga daarna over op onderwerp 2. Per onderwerp: lees eerst de vragen. Luister vervolgens naar het bijhorende audiobestand en selecteer het juiste antwoord. Je mag meerdere keren naar de audio bestanden luisteren.)

Audio for: Topic 1 - Question 1

---

**Topic 1 - Question 1**

1. The nature of computer games could benefit society
2. Restrictions are discouraging gamers from buying games legally
3. Too many children are addicted to online games
4. Computer games prevent children from learning other things
5. Game regulators need to take several things into account
6. People are unnecessarily worried about the harmful effect of games
Audio for: Topic 1 - Question 2

Topic 1- Question 2:

1. The nature of computer games could benefit society
2. Restrictions are discouraging gamers from buying games legally
3. Too many children are addicted to online games
4. Computer games prevent children from learning other things
5. Game regulators need to take several things into account
6. People are unnecessarily worried about the harmful effect of games

Audio for: Topic 2 -Question 1
Topic 2- Question 1: *

1. Friendship has limitations

2. The younger generation can't socialize

3. There's no friend like an old friend

4. Social networking keeps friendships going

5. Virtual friends aren't real friends

6. I outgrew my old friends

Audio for: Topic 2 - Question 2

---

Topic 2- Question 2: *

1. Friendship has limitations

2. The younger generation can't socialize

3. There's no friend like an old friend

4. Social networking keeps friendships going

5. Virtual friends aren't real friends

6. I outgrew my old friends
2nd half - Section 3

You will hear two audio samples about personal heroes. There will be 2 types of exercises about these audio files. The first exercise will be about answering multiple choice questions. The second will be about matching the audio files to the correct answers.

(Je zult twee audio bestanden horen over persoonlijke helden. Er zullen twee soorten oefeningen zijn over deze audio bestanden. De eerste oefening zal gaan over het beantwoorden van meerkuzevragen. De tweede zal gaan over het matchen van de audio bestanden aan de juiste antwoorden.)

2nd half - Section 3 - 1: multiple choice

This exercise is about the personal hero audio samples. Read the sentences first. Then, listen to the adjoining audio files and select whichever multiple choice answer you think is correct. There are three questions about each audio sample. You can listen to the audio samples multiple times if you want to.

(Deze oefening gaat over de persoonlijke helden audio bestanden. Lees eerst de vragen. Luister dan naar het bijpassende audio bestand en selecteer het meerkuzeantwoord waarvan je denkt dat het de goede is. Je mag meerdere keren naar het audio bestand luisteren als je wilt.)

Audio for A: Rachel Carson

1. Rachel Carson first specialised in ______________.*
   
   □ human biology
   □ the study of insects
   □ marine biology
2. Rachel Carson’s book made people realize that ____________. *

- using pesticides was damaging the ecosystem
- birdsong is essential to humans
- humans cannot control nature

3. These days, more and more people are buying ____________. *

- powerful pesticides
- organic food
- Rachel Carson’s book

Audio for B: John Lennon

4. The speaker is apologetic because ____________. *

- he doesn’t know very much about John Lennon
- he gets upset when he thinks about John Lennon
- John Lennon is an obvious choice of hero
5. The speaker likes _____________. *
   - all the Beatles’ songs and Lennon’s solo music
   - all of the Beatles’ music, but not Lennon’s solo music
   - only the Beatles songs that Lennon wrote

6. It’s amazing that Imagine _____________. *
   - is still so well loved today
   - really changed the way things were
   - contained so many important themes
2nd half - Section 3 - 2: Matching

This exercise is also about the personal hero audio samples. You can return to the previous page and listen to the audio samples again if you want to. For questions 1-4, choose the audio file in which this subject came up (A or B). You might have to select the same audio file more than once.

(Deze oefening gaat ook over de persoonlijke helden audio bestanden. Je mag teruggaan naar de vorige pagina om er nogmaals naar luisteren als je wilt. Voor vragen 1-4, kies het audio bestand waarin dit onderwerp ter sprake kwam (A of B). Je moet misschien meerdere keren hetzelfde audio bestand selecteren.)

1. Which audio sample (A or B) is about ... ?
   ...someone who was dedicated to world peace

   1. A

   2. B

2. Which audio sample (A or B) is about ... ?
   ...someone who the speaker wishes he could meet

   1. A

   2. B

3. Which audio sample (A or B) is about ... ?
   ...someone who wrote a book about the effect humans could have on nature

   1. A

   2. B

4. Which audio sample (A or B) is about ... ?
   ...someone who faced strong criticism from big business

   1. A

   2. B
2nd half: Comprehensibility?

Please rate the comprehensibility of the speaker in the 2nd half of these audio files: How easy or difficult was it to understand this speaker? (for instance think about the amount of effort it takes to understand the speaker). Please be as honest as you can! There are no wrong answers!

(Boordeel de verstaanbaarheid van de spreker van de 2e helft van de audio bestanden: Hoe makkelijk of moeilijk was het om deze spreker te verstaan? (denk aan hoeveel moeite het bijvoorbeeld kost om de spreker te verstaan). Wees alsjeblieft zo eerlijk mogelijk! Er zijn geen verkeerde antwoorden!)

How easy was it to understand the speaker in the 2nd half? (Hoe makkelijk was het om de spreker in de 2e helft te verstaan?)

Extremely difficult to understand (Extreem moeilijk om te begrijpen)

Extremely easy to understand (Extreem makkelijk om te begrijpen)

2nd half: Good English Teacher?

Do you think this speaker of the 2nd half would be a good English teacher? Be as honest as you can! There are no wrong answers! (Denk je dat deze spreker van de 2e helft een goede docent voor Engels zou zijn? Wees alsjeblieft zo eerlijk mogelijk! Er zijn geen verkeerde antwoorden!)

Do you think this speaker for the 2nd half would be a good English teacher? (Denk je dat deze spreker van de 2e helft een goede docent voor het vak Engels zou zijn?)

An extremely bad English teacher (een extreem slechte docent voor Engels)

An extremely good English teacher (een extreem goede docent voor Engels)
Appendix J – Table 6: Table of participant’s attitude scores

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<thead>
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<th>Attitude GA</th>
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<th>Diff. Accents GA-RP</th>
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J.2 – Table 7: Differences between means

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<th>(Mean difference of Attitude GA) = 1.94</th>
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<td>Mean of Attitude RP</td>
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<td>Mean of Attitude RP total = 61.80</td>
<td>(Mean difference of Attitude RP) = 5.20</td>
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J.3 – Table 8: Attitude Dimension (AD) Ratings

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Appendix K: Correlation Matrixes

K.1 – Table 9: Pearson correlation

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<th>LCOMPscore GA</th>
<th>LCOMPscore RP</th>
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<td>- .393**</td>
<td>- .238</td>
<td>- .116</td>
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<td>.000</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.133</td>
<td>.476</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
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<td>- .238</td>
<td>- .097</td>
<td>.147</td>
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<td>.134</td>
<td>.548</td>
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<td>Grade after Highschool</td>
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<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
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<td>.147</td>
<td>.512**</td>
<td>.453*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
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<td>.366</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.003</td>
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*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

K.2 – Table 10: Spearman correlation GA

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* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
### K.3: Table 11 – Spearman correlation RP

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* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
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