ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA AND THE IMPORTANCE OF STANDARD ENGLISH:

Native English speakers' attitudes

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Englannin kielen asema maailmassa on viime vuosikymmenten aikana muuttunut perin pohjin: Englantia puhutaan nykyään enemmän vieraana kielenä kuin äidinkielenä. Tällaisen muutoksen keskellä on tarpeen miettiä kielen luonnehdintaa uudelleen. Englantia lingua francana (ELF) eli yhteisenä kielenä onkin tutkittu omana varieteettinaan. ELF:ssä kielen puhumisen tavoite ei ole vain täydellinen kieliopillinen osaaminen, äidinkielisten puhujien kanssa kommunikointi tai kielen kulttuurisiin piirteisiin mukautuminen, vaan keskinäisen ymmärryksen saavuttaminen. ELF:ssä onkin huomattu piirteitä, jotka poikkeavat perinteisestä standardienglannista ja joiden syntymisen taustalla on viestinnällinen motiivi: ymmärryksen parantaminen.

Olisi tärkeää tutkia englantia äidinkielenään puhuvien näkemyksiä alati muuttuvaan englantiin, sillä myös heidän asemansa muuttuu kielen kokemien muutosten myötä. Tämän tutkimuksen tavoitteena olikin selvittää natiivien asenteita ELF:iä kohtaan. Tarkemmin tutkimus tähtäsi sen selvittämiseen, pitävätkö natiivit standardienglantia ihanteena, jota kohti kaikkien englantia puhuvien tulisi pyrkiä, vai voisivatko he hyväksyä ELF:n pätevänä tapana käyttää englannin kieltä sen sijaan, että sitä verrattaisiin standardienglantiin ja nähtäisiin standardista poikkeavat ilmaisut ja kielelliset muodot vain virheinä. Tutkimus toteutettiin sekä määrällisin että laadullisin menetelmin: Aineisto kerättiin verkkokyselyllä, joka sisälsi niin suljettuja kuin avoimiakin kysymyksiä. Aineisto analysoitiin käyttämällä tilastollisesti kuvailevaa analyysia sekä sisällönanalyysiä.

Tutkimuksesta ilmeni, että standardienglantia ihannoiva ideologia kukoistaa edelleen eri muodoissa englantia äidinkielenään puhuvien keskuudessa. Aineistosta nousi esiin myös näkemys, jonka mukaan englanti on joustavaa ja tärkeintä kommunikaatiossa on yhteisymmärryksen saavuttaminen. Näkemyksen takana piili kuitenkin usein ehkä tiedostamatonkin standardikieli-ideologia: Englantia kuvailtiin joustavaksi ja koettiin tärkeäksi, että kielenkäyttöä mukautetaan tilanteen mukaan, mutta tällä usein tarkoitettiin lähinnä ennalta määrättyjä, kulttuurisidonnaisia ajatuksia ja sääntöjä siitä, millainen kielenkäyttö on missäkin tilanteessa sopivaa. Yleisesti koettiinkin, että kieliopillisesti oikean englannin tärkeys riippuu paljon kontekstista. Aineistosta nousi esiin myös arvostus englantia vieraana kielenä puhuvia kohtaan sekä halu pelastaa keskustelukumppanin kasvot.

Asiasanat – Keywords English as a lingua franca, standard language ideology, native speaker, non-native speaker, language attitudes

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1 INTRODUCTION

Over the decades, the English language has achieved a unique position in the world. For centuries, English has served as a *lingua franca*, the chosen mean of communication between people who do not share a native language. Through colonisation and rapid advances in technology that have accelerated communication, English has spread across the world like no other language before. Its position in terms of lingua francas is unique as this is the first time in the history of the world any language has reached such global dimensions. English currently serves as "the most widespread means of international and intercultural communication that the world has ever seen" (Seidlhofer 2011: ix). In fact, the number of people who speak English as a second or foreign language has far exceeded that of its native speakers a while ago already; and the number of non-native speakers grows constantly.

The status of English is not, however, uncontroversial: There exists uncertainty about what kind of English we are talking about, who it belongs to, and how people should react to it. Seidlhofer (2011: 2) explains, quoting David Graddol, that there has been a remarkable qualitative change due to English's role as a global lingua franca, which inevitably has significant consequences for the language as well as the way we conceive it. The globalisation of English and its unique position speaker-wise has, indeed, been an interest of research for a few decades now. Numerous researchers have examined the use and role of English and how it might look in the future. In the field of World Englishes research, the English language has been examined not as one language, but several Englishes. Among the most fundamental and most researched ones are English as a native language (ENL) and English as a foreign language (EFL). As Seidlhofer (2011: 16) writes, the 'E' in these Englishes is not the same and it cannot be. Different localised varieties have also been identified, such as Indian English and Nigerian English. As a result, questions have been raised about the 'ownership' of English: do native speakers still have the authority to decide what is considered English, even though they are the minority group speaking English and non-native speakers are the majority?

More recently, the study of the English as a lingua franca (ELF) model has increased. Jenkins (2014: 2) defines ELF, in a nutshell, as "the world's most extensive contemporary use of English, in essence, English when it is used as a contact language between people from different first languages (including native English speakers)." Jenkins (2014: 24) admits, however, that defining ELF is both problematic and controversial. Even though the difference between English as a lingua franca and English as a foreign language has been perpetually questioned, the majority of researchers distinguishes ELF and EFL from each other and sees them as completely separate phenomena (Jenkins, Cogo, Dewey 2011: 283). Using the model of ELF, an attempt is made to view lingua franca speakers as language users rather than language learners (Sweeney and Zhu 2010: 478), thus further separating ELF from EFL. The model suggests that ELF is a flexible, functional variety of English, which non-native speakers use in contexts where the participants do not share a native language. As Jenkins (2007: 3) explains, native speakers often do participate in such interactions, but the difference is that in ELF communication, standard native English is not used as a linguistic reference point. Rather, ELF is seen as a form of adaptable and creative language use in its own right (see e.g. Seidlhofer 2011). As House (2012: 189) explains, an important characteristic of ELF is its inherent variability. She underlines that it should not be equated with non-native speakers' failure to fulfil native norms nor their levels of competence in English, but rather their ability to "creatively exploit, intentionally appropriate, locally adapt and communicatively align" (House 2012: 189) the potential of the virtual English language they resort to as the need arises.

ELF users creatively utilise all the language resources available to them to create unconventional forms to the language to replace the established, corresponding forms of the English language. ELF speakers use these forms because they believe them to be communicatively more effective than the conventional English forms: to accommodate to their interlocutors in order to enhance reaching mutual understanding and, reciprocally, to avoid communication breakdowns and misunderstandings. It has, indeed, been noted that ELF discourse includes less communication breakdowns and misunderstandings than interactions between native speakers and non-native speakers (see e.g. House 2003: 567; Jenkins 2014: 35). In contrast, it has been argued that native speakers are less comprehensible and cause more breakdowns in communication with non-native speakers because they are often poorer at linguistic accommodation, but rather keep using the

language in ways that are unintelligible to someone who does not share their cultural and linguistic background (see e.g. Sweeney & Zhu 2010: 480).

In linguistics, accommodation means the process of adjusting one's communicative behaviour according to one's interlocutors in order to establish effective communication (Cogo 2009). Accomplished communicators frequently modify their language to accommodate to their audience and to ensure intelligibility (Seidlhofer 2011: 81). Linguistic accommodation is especially important for ELF users, because they encounter different types of situations which include participants from different linguacultural backgrounds. In ELF, the process of accommodation often causes the language to depart from its conventional norms. The prevailing attitude has, however, traditionally been that all use of English should strive for native-like use. The present study seeks to find out whether this still stands: The aim of the study is to find out what kinds of attitudes native speakers of English have towards this type of creative and communicative way of using English, i.e. ELF.

Attitudes seem, indeed, to be a major factor causing problems in intercultural communication. The way native speakers define English and their view on how it should be used is likely to be different from non-native speakers' views. This friction brings with it potential problems in communication. (Sweeney and Zhu 2010: 480.) Furthermore, Seidlhofer (2011: 35) notes that attitudes may affect intelligibility: Perceptions of ethnic, racial, and linguistic differences can lead to a different 'reading' of a linguistic form and cause expectations of intelligibility problems which are independent of the actual linguistic forms produced. Language attitudes are the attitudes that a person holds towards different languages or language varieties or their users. Aspects of these languages or varieties trigger the attitudes, and the person responds to them either positively or negatively. Language ideologies, then, are larger frameworks shared by a group, which steer the social practices and interpretations of the group's members. The standard language ideology, an ideological position that a standard language form exists, is an example of such a language ideology. Despite the unique, global role of English and the attention given to it, it seems to not have led to any extensive reconceptualisation of English and the Standard English ideology still seems to prevail (Seidlhofer 2011: 28). Seidlhofer (2011: 11) writes that "far more people learning English today will be using it in international contexts rather than in just English-

speaking ones" and yet it seems to be the prevailing, often unconscious view that English remains the property of it native speakers and standard English is the norm for which every user of English should strive.

The interest in ELF is timely given the unique role of English as an international mean of communication, but criticism and challenges are involved in this field of research as well. A lot of criticism relates to the concepts of community, variety, and competence and how they have been traditionally understood in linguistics. One main perspective criticising ELF claims that ELF and EFL are one and the same: no distinction is made between English learnt for international communication and English learnt specifically for communication with native English speakers. According to this perspective, ELF also lacks any standards and only exhibits errors where it differs from native use of English. Seidlhofer (2011), indeed, argues that it is necessary to rethink these concepts in linguistics in today's globalised world, where communication has been taken to a new level and the old concepts do not necessarily apply. Rethinking these concepts is also crucial for an understanding of ELF, as it does not fit into the framework of what has traditionally been understood as a language variety; many researchers, indeed, say that ELF is not a variety and is unlikely to even develop into one.

ELF has been researched for a few decades now, and the field has gained a lot of interest in the past ten years or so. However, most of the research has focused more on ELF speakers and very little on native speakers and how they fit into the picture with the ELF model. ELF itself and its characteristics have been studied, as well as ELF speakers' attitudes towards the phenomenon and their perception on learning ELF. Until recent years, the prevailing view has perhaps been that as English is increasingly spoken around the world, native English speakers are in a privileged position as they have perfect command of the language. A lot of research has been conducted on the unfair position of ELF users in a world where English as an international language is often equalled with ENL: in, for instance, academia, it is expected that everyone using English should conform to the rules of Standard English (see e.g. Jenkins 2014; Mauranen, 2012). More recently, it has conversely been speculated that if ELF is the future of English, native speakers may be side-lined in intercultural communication because they often do not have the same accommodation skills as ELF speakers (see e.g. Mauranen 2012: 243; Phillipson 2003:

167, cited in Seidlhofer 2011: 39; Sweeney & Zhu 2010: 480). Considering the implications of the changes in English use for its native speakers, it is crucial that native speakers are able to adapt to these changes and that their position in the phenomenon is examined. Therefore, the aim of the present study is to gain insight into native English speakers' views on English as a lingua franca; the attitudes they hold towards this type of use of English. The aim is to develop an idea of whether native speakers hold Standard English as the only valid variety of English, for which all learners of the language should strive for, or whether they think that ELF with its accommodative processes is, or could be, a legitimate way of using English in intercultural situations. The study also involves the idea of context-dependence, i.e. whether ELF is acceptable in some settings, but Standard English should be employed in certain contexts. The present study also aims to serve as a comprehensive yet compact package of information on English as a lingua franca.

The study was carried out as a mixed method research: both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in gathering and analysing data. Data was collected with a questionnaire consisting of both closed an open-ended questions to receive a more versatile picture of the native speakers' attitudes. The final set of data consisted of 118 survey responses from native English speakers from around the world. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data, i.e. the responses for the open-ended questions were analysed with qualitative content analysis.

The present study is divided into seven chapters. Following the introduction, chapter 2 outlines the different Englishes relevant to the present study. This chapter includes the examination of English as a native language and English as a foreign language. In chapter 3, the focus will be on the English as a lingua franca model: its main characteristics as well as criticism and problems of the model will be discussed. Chapter 4 will discuss the field of language attitude studies: what language attitudes and language ideologies are and how they can be researched. The basic approaches to language attitude studies will be shortly presented. In chapter 5, the present study and its methodology will be explained in detail. Chapter 6 will present the results of the present study. The results will be further discussed and analysed in chapter 7, which also discusses the

present study's place in its wider field of research as well as its possible limitations and suggests directions for future research.

2 THE MANY ENGLISHES

The aim of this chapter is to provide general insight into the role of English(es) in the contemporary world. First, I will briefly present the World Englishes paradigm along with an overview of the spread of English in the world and its changing role and use today. Second, I will discuss Kachru's well-known model of speakers of English as a reference point for the present study. After that, two separate sub-sections are dedicated to varieties of English that are relevant to the present study: English as a native language (ENL) and English as a foreign language (EFL).

Over the centuries, English has spread globally in a way that has gained the language a unique position in the world. The spread of English has not led to one uniform, global language that would drive the world towards monolingualism; rather, new vernaculars as well as national and international varieties of English have evolved and are constantly evolving, and a new form of diversity is substituting the old one (Seoane 2016: 1). These new varieties are most commonly called *World Englishes* (also 'New Englishes' and "varieties of English around the world"). World Englishes are the results of the processes of natural appropriation and adaptation in post-colonial settings, when varieties of English have been assigned legitimacy (Seidlhofer (2011: 76, 91). Researchers turned their focus on the emerging varieties in the 1980s, acknowledging that the more English spreads around the world, the more heterogeneous the language becomes (Mair 2013: 255, cited in Seoane 2016: 2). Since then, the field has become one of the most vibrant in English linguistics, and a number of models have been suggested in research to explain and categorise the forms and functions of World Englishes. One of the most influential and well-known of these models is Kachru's Concentric Circles model that distinguishes between three circles of English-speakers dividing World Englishes into English as a native language (ENL), English as a second language (ESL), and English as a foreign language (EFL); a division that has been suggested by other researchers as well. As Seoane (2016: 3) and Kirkpatrick (2007: 28) both explain, the largest merit and advantage of these models has been that they popularised the idea

that English is not a single entity but actually involves a number of different Englishes that all deserve scholarly attention.

2.1 Kachru's model of speakers of English

A very fundamental reference point for the present section which should be discussed before turning to definitions of different Englishes and questions of native and non-native speakers and their language use, is Kachru's model of the spread of English from 1985. The widely accepted model of Kachru (1985: 12) depicts three concentric circles of English users: the *Inner Circle*, the *Outer Circle* (or the *Extending Circle*), and the *Expanding Circle* (see Figure 1). These circles represent "the types of spread, the patterns of acquisition, and the functional domains in which English is used across cultures and languages" (ibid.). The model, being well-known if not completely accepted, provides a conventional way of discussing the different groups of English-speakers.

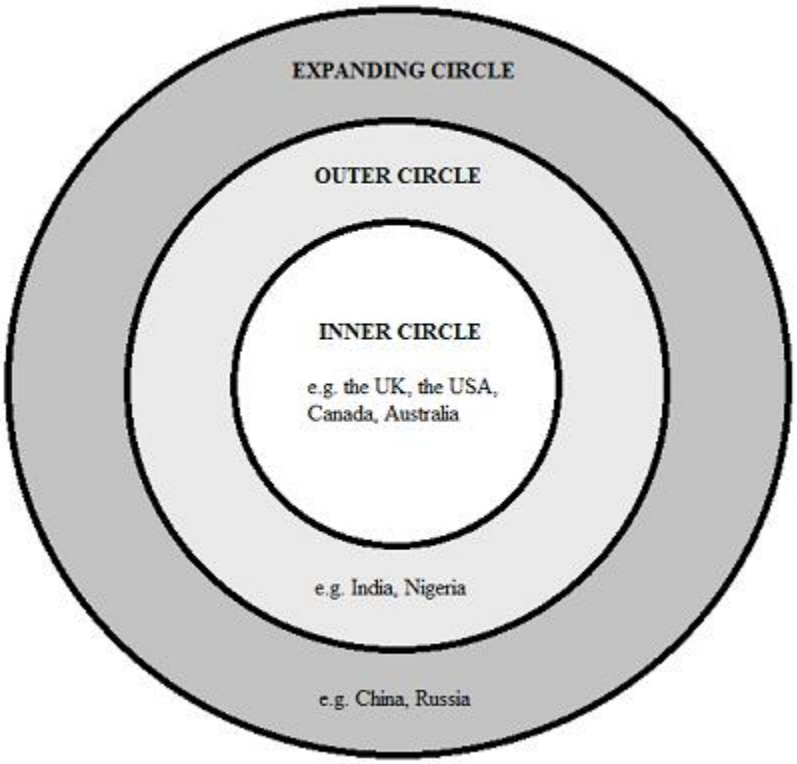

Figure 1. Kachru's three concentric circles of English speakers

The model's first and innermost circle, the Inner Circle, consists of English users from the regions where English is the majority first language, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and the Republic of Ireland; in other words, the historically Anglophone countries. The language varieties in the Inner Circle have been defined as *norm-providing varieties*, because they are used by native speakers of English. (Kachru 1985: 16.) The middle circle, the Outer Circle, covers countries where English has, as a result of colonisation by the users of the Inner Circle, been institutionalised and has gained an official status as a second language. These countries include, for instance, India, Nigeria, and Singapore. The Outer Circle varieties, such as Nigerian English and Indian English, have been labelled as *norm-developing varieties.* (ibid.) The third and outermost circle, the Expanding Circle, represents the rest of the countries where English has no official status, but where its importance has largely been recognised and it is taught and learnt as a foreign language (EFL). The language varieties used within this circle have been labelled as *norm-dependent.* (ibid.) Kachru (1985: 13–14) notes, however, that no clear line between the Outer and the Expanding Circles exists. The language policies on the status of English in these countries change from time to time, and the two circles share several characteristics with each other. Not all countries can be straightforwardly placed in any of the three circles, either, because their situations in terms of English-using population and the functions of English are rather complex.

As Seidlhofer (2011: 5) points out, the Kachruvian circles model offers a convenient way of referring to a distinction between English used by its native speakers (ENL), English used as an additional or second language in settings, where it has a special or an official status (ESL), and English learned and used as a foreign language (EFL). These distinctions are, of course, rough and cannot be made absolutely, but offer a way of researching and discussing the issue, not least because the model is so widely known. Terms are needed to discuss any phenomenon, and using convenient terms does not necessarily indicate accepting the concepts they express: rather, I agree with Seidlhofer (2011: 5) in that it is perhaps easier and more constructive to discuss the shortcomings of established terminology than to invent new ones. Kachru's model thus offers a compact way of describing the global spread of English and a framework for (re)thinking the role of English in the world. As Kirkpatrick (2007: 27–28) further argues, one of the greatest advantages of the model is that it does not suggest that one variety is linguistically any better than

another, whereas the traditional ENL/ESL/EFL classification tends to see ENL as the superior variety and a model for ESL and EFL countries to follow. However, the model obviously has some shortcomings as well. As already mentioned above, it is not easy to place every region or variety of English into the circles, because the functions and status of English varieties vary and are sometimes complex even within one region. A lot of the definitions and terminology related to the model are problematic as well, considering the changes in the usage of English. In contemporary terms, it is extremely difficult to define any one form of a 'native variety' or what can be considered a 'second language'; and these are only two examples. However, the problematic concepts and terms related to Kachru's model actually serve the present study rather well, because the aim is to find out attitudes towards these conservative ideas and models and if native speakers of English have responded to the changing role and use of their native language.

2.1.1 Native speaker, non-native speaker? Notes on terminology

Over many years, the terms 'native speaker' and 'non-native speaker' have been under debate in World Englishes research. Many scholars have tried to provide rational and workable definitions for the terms, and many have argued that such a task is impossible or that it no longer makes sense to differentiate between native and non-native speakers, for one because their linguistic abilities might in some cases be indistinguishable (Kirkpatrick 2007: 8). The terms have become problematic as languages spread throughout the world, people learn new languages and become competent in them, and the languages themselves undergo changes. The question then is: Who is competent enough to identify as a native speaker?

As Seidlhofer (2011: 5–6) remarks, the only problem with the terms 'native' and 'non-native' is not their definitional, semantic meaning but also the connotations and ideological load they have become to carry. Jenkins (2007: 88) argues that the traditional native/non-native speaker dichotomy promotes the power of the native speaker in determining what kind of language use is appropriate and is offensive towards those who have learnt English and achieved bilingual status as fluent, proficient users. Kirkpatrick (2007: 8) further explains how, in the contexts of World Englishes, the problem is that many people believe that native speakers are automatically better at using as well as teaching English than non-native speakers. He remarks that there exists an assumption that "a person will speak the language they learn first better than languages they learn later, and that a person who learns a language later cannot speak it as well as a person who has

learned the language as their first language" (ibid.). This is not, however, always true: A person may, for example, be born in Switzerland and learn e.g. German as a first language and French as a second language, then move to the UK at the age of eight and learn English, continue to speak it and over time have the best command of English and the lowest proficiency in German. Kirkpatrick (2007: 9) as well as Jenkins (2007: 87–88) write about these types of 'shifting L1s', which are common in multilingual societies and prove that for many multilingual people the order of acquisition is irrelevant for language proficiency. Kirkpatrick goes on to state that monolingual societies are actually less common than multilingual ones, and in these contexts, concepts such as 'native' and 'mother tongue' speaker make little sense. The definition of a native speaker is thus not a simple one.

For the purposes of this study and clarity in terms of discussing these themes, 'native speaker' will be used to describe a person whose first language is English, and, consequently, 'non-native speaker' will be used to describe someone whose first language(s) is some other than English and who has learnt English through education. This does not entail that native speakers would necessarily have better command of English; rather, I am interested in this traditional dichotomy between native and non-native varieties of English and how native speakers, as they have traditionally been defined, see the issue. The use of these terms was considered appropriate for this particular study because they are well-known and if they raised questions or criticism from the respondents, it served the aim of the study.

2.2 English as a native language (ENL)

English as a native language is an important notion for the present study as it is often used as a sort of a yardstick against which the English used and learnt by non-native speakers is measured. This chapter will briefly discuss what is meant by ENL, and how it more precisely relates to ELF. The concept of a 'Standard English' along with standard language ideology and Anglo-Saxon attitudes to English and their global role will also be discussed.

English as a native language very simply means the English spoken by its native speakers; the speakers in the Inner Circle, who have English as their first language. 'English' can be conceived

in various ways; thus, the concept of "World Englishes". Therefore, the 'E' in ENL and EFL or ELF are not one and the same:

> ENL is full of conventions and markers of in-group membership such as characteristic pronunciations, specialised vocabulary, idiomatic phraseology, and references and allusions to shared experience and the cultural background of particular native-speaker communities. (Seidlhofer 2011: 16.)

From this point of view, then, non-native speakers cannot be members of the community of native speakers, no matter how high their proficiency in the language is.

Standard English, which will be further discussed in section 2.2.1, is only one version of ENL: not all ENL speakers speak the same standard model (Kirkpatrick 2007: 28), and the version of English that is accepted as a 'standard' varies from one ENL territory to another (Jenkins 2009b: 16). Thus, the concept of ENL does not refer to a single variety of English, but covers all the native varieties of English (ibid.). As Seidlhofer (2011: 46) states, most native speakers do not conform to the norms of Standard English, especially not in their spoken language. The English language includes many accents and dialects, such as the Irish accents, which are very distinctive compared to the standard varieties of English. The standard varieties have traditionally been considered by many to be standard British English (BrE) and standard American English (AmE) with Received Pronunciation (RP) (Modiano 1999: 3). The distinction between Standard English and English as a native language was not crucial in this study, however, as the aim was not to compare Standard English to other native varieties and examine opinions on the hierarchy of these varieties.

2.2.1 Anglo-Saxon attitudes/Standard English (ideology)

Despite the global role of English today, the language has not undergone a radical reconceptualisation: There still seems to prevail an attitude and assumption that English remains, and should remain, the property of its native speakers (Seidlhofer 2011: 28). Seidlhofer (2011: 30) lays out some examples of native English speakers' attitudes that she refers to as Anglo-Saxon attitudes. She reports that, in general, the idea that English is used internationally is accepted and appreciated, but within a framework that the English people have the advantage and also the right and responsibility to protect the integrity of the language. Quoting several different publications (academic publications as well as highly appreciated newspapers such as The Times), she illustrates the opinion held by many native speakers that English in international use

should conform to the ‘pure’ English that is used by its ‘real’ owners; the English people. Deviations from this ‘pure’ English are ‘corrupt’, and there is a terrible chance that these ‘barbarisms’ may spread throughout the world. (ibid.) Seidlhofer (2011: 32–33) also points out that the authority of the native speaker in linguistics is often taken for granted to such an extent that it is not even noticed: even scholars maintain this strong belief which they cannot comprehensively define.

It is not, however, only native speakers who hold these attitudes. In her recent study concerning the English language policies of international universities, Jenkins (2014: 198) interviewed non-native students and found that many of them oriented very positively towards native English, describing it as ‘perfect’, ‘correct’, ‘clear’, and ‘international’ among other similar descriptions. In contrast, non-native English was thought of as ‘imperfect’, ‘incorrect’, and ‘being on a lower level because it is not native’. This was the students’ conscious view, anyway. Exploring the notions further with the students, Jenkins (ibid.) found that they were not necessarily clear on what they meant by their descriptions, and it seemed that native English was best merely by virtue of being native. Many students, indeed, found non-native speakers and non-native English easier to understand than native English.

Garrett (2010: 7) remarks that standardisation of languages often influences attitudes towards languages, be they positive or negative. Language attitudes stem from powerful ideological positions that are largely based on the supposition that a standard form exists. These attitudes together constitute the ‘standard language ideology’. (Milroy 2007: 133, cited in Garrett 2010: 7.) Standard language ideology (Seidlhofer 2011: 33, 42) seems to underlie the Anglo-Saxon attitudes discussed above. Garrett (2010: 229) shortly defines standard language ideology as “a pervasive set of beliefs about the superiority of an idealised language variety imposed by dominant social groups who are its speakers”. Milroy (1999: 173, cited in Jenkins 2007: 33) more moderately characterises standard language ideology as

> a particular set of beliefs about language… [which] are typically held by populations of economically developed nations where processes of standardisation have operated over a considerable time to produce an abstract set of norms – lexical, grammatical and… phonological – popularly described as constituting a standard language.

Standard language ideology places a great emphasis on correctness: Within the ideology, there are strong views on which forms of language are right and which are wrong. Standard language

and its ‘correct forms’ are reinforced and spread by authorities: for example, dictionaries, grammar books, and whole educational systems. Standard languages are also reinforced by placing either prestige or stigma to a certain language form. Devaluing a form leads to viewing it as nonstandard. (Garrett 2010: 7.) Standard languages are not born in a void, but as Milroy (2007: 138, cited in Garrett 2010: 7) writes, have to be given legitimacy, maintained, and protected through authorities and doctrines of correctness. Seidlhofer (2011: 43) also points out that standard language ideologies tend to operate on a subconscious level: They are internalised by most people who have been socialised in the conventional education setting. Jenkins (2007: 33) further explains that ideologies are historically deep-rooted and naturalised, and are thus resistant to analysis or argument.

Prescriptive ideas about language are strongly connected to standard language ideology. Crystal (2008: 384) describes linguistic prescriptivism as “any approach that attempts to lay down rules of correctness as to how language should be used”. He states that prescriptivism aims to “preserve imagined standards by insisting on norms of usage and criticizing departures from these norms” (ibid.). Standard language ideology is sometimes equalled with linguistic prescriptivism or at least identified as a constitutive element of it, thus defining prescriptivism as a concept where a certain language variety is promoted as superior to others (Mooney & Evans 2018). Prescriptivism may also be described as an “approach which recommends or mandates the usage or avoidance of linguistic units in a particular context or register” (Kliffer 2009: 1).

Yule (2006: 250) defines ‘standard language’ as “the variety of language treated as the official language and used in public broadcasting, publishing and education”. Seidlhofer (2011: 46) points out that it is difficult to define Standard English as a distinct variety, because language is a continuum and the boundaries between different varieties cannot be identified absolutely. She continues to explain that a standard variety of a language involves complex ethno-political, socio-economic and other interests, concluding that “StE is a linguistic object – something that is described in grammars and dictionaries, but it is also itself an ideological construct” (Seidlhofer 2011: 47). Seidlhofer (2011: 42) suggests that Standard English ideology is a special case of the standard language ideology, as it involves a claim that national standard language should be valid globally, not only within a particular country. As Jenkins (2007: 33) explains, ELF speakers are

deeply affected by the standard language ideology. In the light of standard language ideology, ELF speakers' Englishes are seen as 'performance' varieties that should keep Britain or North America as their models. The prevailing ideology of the superiority of Standard English over all the other Englishes is involved in the politics of language in multilingual situations, such as social inclusion and exclusion. Jenkins (2007: 34) reports that there is also a duality rooted in standard language ideology that is a characteristic way of thinking for both non-native speakers of English and natives: even though Standard English is not seen as 'our voice', it is seen as the voice of success.

2.3 English as a foreign language (EFL)

The following chapter provides an overview of English as a foreign language. I will shortly describe what is meant by the concept and how it differs from English as a native language and English as a lingua franca. The notion of EFL is important to the present study because it is often seen as the equivalent of ELF; both are Englishes used by non-native speakers. EFL does, however, differ from ELF on a few important aspects in their use: the linguacultural norms, the objective, and the processes involved in language use.

The 'E' in EFL means English as a subject that is taught. This involves two things: the objective that is to be eventually attained and the process that leads to the objective. For some learners, the eventual objective in EFL is to reach native speaker norms. (Seidlhofer 2011: 196–197.) In settings where English, or any other language, is conceived as a 'foreign language', the focus is on the origins of the language, its native speakers and the cultural associations tied to it. When a person learns and uses a foreign language, she is encouraged to strive for native-like language use. Native speakers are accepted as the authority; the distributors of the language. Thus, in foreign language teaching, the learning of a language is combined with learning about and appreciating the culture associated with the language, and the primary purpose of learning is to engage with the language's primary community (Seidlhofer 2011: 54). Hülmbauer (2009: 328) adds that one of the main differences of EFL and ELF lies in the speakers' goals: EFL is considered successful when it conforms to the norms of the target model (ENL), ELF when it is mutually intelligible. Of course, as Seidlhofer (2011: 17) points out, for a person who has a particular interest in the English-speaking culture(s) and who wishes to identify with the English-

speaking community, conceiving English this way and conforming to the linguacultural norms of the native speakers may well be the relevant model.

The English that is actually learned and used does not, however, always conform to ENL norms. Seidlhofer (2011: 194) explains that EFL is taught, but it is not necessarily the English that is learned, which is the English that is actually put to use in intercultural communication. Seidlhofer (2011: 194) thus asks that if English is taught for international communication, would it then not make sense to examine how it is actually used for it: how it functions as a lingua franca. I think this is a fair point, which has motivated the present study as well. We will now examine the model of English as a lingua franca.

3 ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA (ELF)

In this chapter, I will discuss the English as a lingua franca model as it has been researched to date. First, I will provide an overview of the model: definition(s) of the concept and how it has been, and is, researched. Second, I will discuss in more detail the communicative nature of English as a lingua franca. Third, I will present some of the most major characteristics of ELF, such as its inherent variability and situationality. Last, I will present the most salient lexicogrammatical innovations that have been reported to occur in ELF talk and discuss the underlying motives behind the emergence of these features.

English as a lingua franca and the sole notion of lingua franca languages are not new phenomena at all: lingua francas have existed for centuries (Jenkins 2014: 22). The English language has served as a lingua franca since the countries belonging to Kachru's Outer Circle were first colonised in the late 1500s (Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey 2011: 281). As Seidlhofer (2011: 3) explains, English has spread across the world through colonisation, but also through people who have learned it as a second or foreign language. The term 'lingua franca' is usually understood as "any lingual medium of communication between people of different mother tongues, for whom it is a second language" (Samarin 1987: 371, as cited by Seidlhofer 2011: 7). Seidlhofer (2011: 7) notes, however, that this definition better applies to local or regional lingua francas which usually serve speakers of certain, quite stable combinations of first languages rather than ELF, which is

truly a global phenomenon. Seidlhofer (2011: 81) further explains the origins of the term lingua franca: it has its roots in Romance languages, basically meaning ‘free language’. She defines lingua franca in this sense:

> a means of intercultural communication not tied to particular countries and ethnicities, a linguistic resource that is not contained in, or constrained by, traditional (and notoriously tendentious) ideas of what constitutes ‘a language’. (ibid.)

The phenomenon of English as a lingua franca was first identified and reported by the German scholars Hullen and Knapp in the 1980s. (Jenkins, Cogo, Dewey 2011: 282). Research into communication in English as a common language has been conducted since the 1990s, but the focus then was on how this communication was often successful despite the deficiencies in the language use (when compared with ENL) and the low proficiency of some of its speakers (Jenkins 2007: 143.) Since the 2000s, when findings on ELF phonology and lexicogrammar were published, several papers have been published using data from two existing ELF corpora: the Vienna-Oxord International Corpus of English (VOICE) and the English as a lingua franca in academic settings corpus (ELFA) (Kaur 2010: 192–193). These corpora have made it possible for researchers to explore the ELF phenomenon at all linguistic levels, in different geographical areas, and in different domains (Jenkins 2007: 143).

ELF is in a unique position in terms of lingua francas in its extensive, geographic spread, which means great diversity among ELF speakers in terms of their linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This, again, makes ELF unique in nature: its flexibility in use. This is also the first time in the history of the world that any one language has reached such global dimensions. Jenkins (2014: 8) emphasises the extent to which ELF is connected to globalisation. In her words, ELF “represents how the majority of English speakers actually use the language in their daily lives” (ibid.). As ELF users are non-native speakers, a major aspect characterising ELF is that non-native speakers “drive the spread and innovation of the language (Jenkins 2007), and they tend to focus on efficiency, relevance, and economy of learning (Seidlhofer 2001) rather than the acquisition of nativelike correctness” (Sweeney and Zhu 2010: 478).

In Kachruvian terms, ELF means English being used among speakers from the Expanding Circle, because this group of speakers is larger in numbers than the two other circles. English has spread

across the world to serve the communicative needs of users beyond the Inner and even Outer Circle. As the language has been appropriated to different settings, it has been adapted since the norms of use that suit the surroundings of these Circles are no longer appropriate. (Seidlhofer 2011: 91.) This does not, however, mean that the Inner and the Outer Circle are excluded from the definition of ELF: The vast majority of researchers broadly include all English users within the definition (Jenkins 2009a: 201). Jenkins (ibid.) emphasises, however, that no matter which circle the participants in an ELF situation come from, from an ELF perspective everyone needs to adjust their local variety of English for the benefit of their interlocutors. In other words, ELF is about mutual negotiation requiring effort and adjustments from all parties, not about orienting to the norms of a particular group of English speakers (ibid.) ELF thus involves English users from all Kachru's circles, but ELF itself cannot straightforwardly be placed in any of the Kachruvian circles, because it exploits the communicative resources of all three concentric circles (Seidlhofer 2011: 81). ELF is marked hybridity in an extent not seen in other kinds of language use: speakers from diverse linguistic backgrounds exploit a range of non-English forms in their ELF use. (Jenkins 2014: 31.) The nature of communication in general has changed along the expansion of communication through the internet, and this has accelerated the expansion of ELF into the global dimensions it has today (Seidlhofer 2011: 7).

ELF researchers are interested in the linguistic processes that are involved in ELF creativity as well as the surface-level manifestations of these processes (Jenkins 2009a: 201). In ELF, it is not assumed that an item differing from ENL is by definition an error: As Jenkins (2009a: 202) explains, ELF research differentiates between a *difference* and a *deficiency*. Errors in ELF are not determined in reference to ENL norms and thus proficiency in ELF should not be either. Jenkins (2007: 30) points out, however, that this does not mean that all ELF speakers are proficient or that in ELF speech "anything goes". Rather, the point is that ELF proficiency is not determined by conformity to ENL norms. While there is still some uncertainty about which items are legitimate ELF variants and which are ELF errors, some sufficient patterns have been identified and research has allowed ELF researchers to make some hypotheses about ELF communication. The factors that are considered when researching ELF patterns are the systematicity, frequency, and communicative efficiency of a particular item. (Jenkins 2009a: 202.)

Seidlhofer (2011: 7) reminds us that the conceptualisation of ELF is not a formal one, but rather functional. Even though ELF is frequently discussed and understood as a 'language variety', and though ELF use exhibits regularities (Seidlhofer 2011: 48), it is not strictly speaking a variety nor is it likely to develop into one. Seidlhofer (2011: 77) concisely describes ELF as "not a variety of English but a variable way of using it: English that functions *as* a lingua franca" (author's italics). In fact, as Jenkins (2007: 19) writes, against the common misconception, it is not the goal of ELF to establish a single lingua franca norm. More recent research has shown that at the very core of ELF is its flexibility and functionality; ad hoc use of certain features and negotiation of meaning. The nature of ELF is inherently variable, and situationality is a key feature of ELF use (Hülmbauer 2009: 324), which will be discussed in more detail in section 3.2. Cogo and Dewey (2012: 77) explain that the notion of a 'variety' requires permanence and stability, whereas ELF research has shown that ELF interaction is characterised by an inherent fluidity of forms. Thus, there is far too great a potential for diversity in ELF for it to stabilise into anything as regularised as the native and Outer Circle Englishes (Jenkins 2014: 33). In fact, Hülmbauer (2009: 342) argues that it would not even be desirable to label ELF as a language variety in the traditional sense, because it would mean establishing new norms and thereby positioning ELF speakers as 'error-committers' all over again, as well as sacrificing valuable features such as linguistic flexibility and the exploitation of strategic competence.

Indeed, calling ELF a variety may be a little misleading. Mauranen (2012: 243) describes ELF as a "second-order language contact between similects arising from first-order contacts between English and a good proportion of the world's other languages". In other words, the English that ELF users speak is a product of language contact between their first language and the English they have encountered in their learning process. Mauranen (2012: 6) does not, then, see ELF as a 'target language' that can be learned the same way EFL is, but more of an instrument for achieving communication. Mauranen (2012: 243) continues to summarise that "ELF thrives in complex, multilingual communities and networks, which generate linguistically intriguing features in lexis, structure, phraseology, and discourse". Cognitively, lingua franca speech is oriented towards achieving mutual comprehension: Research has found a strong orientation to content over form. In contrast, learners are far more oriented towards language form, because the

pedagogical setting they are in emphasises mastering the elements of the language, such as grammar and phonology. (Mauranen 2012: 7.)

Mauranen (2017: 228–29) emphasises that ELF communities are non-local, i.e. they are not based on physical proximity. They also vary highly in their duration and stability: The communities can be formed for just one occasion, such as a conference, or they can be more long-term, such as international organisations or married couples. ELF communities do not reflect what has traditionally been understood as a 'community' in sociolinguistics. Hülmbauer (2009: 325) adds that in typical ELF gatherings there are different linguacultural influences present, and thus "the traditional notion of a stable "speech community" uniting the speakers of a particular language variety cannot apply to lingua franca contexts". In general, the traditional notion of a community needs rethinking in the contemporary world, where the social contexts networks of communication have changed their forms with globalisation. As Seidlhofer (2011: 83) points out, they have become much more extensive and go beyond conventional communal boundaries, transforming the very concept of community.

3.1 Communicative nature of ELF

Seidlhofer (2011: 95–96) claims that in order to understand ELF as a natural language, rather than identifying linguistic processes on the surface, one must take a more communicative view and investigate these linguistic features as indications of various functions that ELF fulfils in all the interactions it makes possible. In other words, one must move past surface descriptions of linguistic features to the underlying significance of these forms and ask what their functions are. Research has shown that the interactional work undertaken in ELF usage often has to do with pragmatic and creative processes. As Seidlhofer (2011: 96) describes, these processes can lead to, for example, maximising explicitness and thus clarity and intelligibility or exploiting redundancy and thus minimising effort. That is to say, processes for creating effective communication and conditions for reaching mutual understanding and intelligibility. Seidlhofer (ibid.) neatly concludes the communicative finesse of ELF users:

> When people use ELF, they find ways of exploiting and exploring the meaning potential of the language as a communicative resource and realize (in both senses of the word) the significance of the forms they use, their relative functional usefulness. In other words, form and function can be clearly seen as operating interdependently. (Seidlhofer 2011: 96.)

Seidlhofer further suggests that individual speakers appropriate the language and make it their own for particular purposes and conditions; they take hold of it and mould it to their own needs in various ways. She explains that accomplished ELF users know from their experience that "they can rely on their 'ways of speaking' (Hymes 1989) for fulfilling whatever communicative needs they have" (ibid.). Thus, according to Seidlhofer (ibid.), these ELF speakers are likely to develop a sense that the language is theirs to use and an enhanced ability to accommodate to their interlocutors.

Research into ELF pragmatics (Firth, 1996; House, 1999; Meierkord, 2001; cited in Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey, 2011: 293) has pointed to mutual cooperation as one major factor characterising ELF communication. This is accompanied with a strong orientation towards ensuring mutual understanding regardless of the 'correctness' of language use, i.e. its conformity to ENL norms. One common finding in recent ELF pragmatics research has been that non-/misunderstandings tend to happen less frequently than they do in communication involving native speakers. Furthermore, when these problems in communication do occur, ELF users have shown a high degree of interactional and pragmatic competence in signalling non-understanding in a way that does not disrupt the flow of the exchange but still provides enough information to the interlocutor so that the problem can be solved. (Pitzl, 2005; cited in Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey, 2011: 293.)

3.2 Characteristics of ELF

Even though ELF cannot exactly be thought of as a variety of English, research has shown that ELF does exhibit some regularities in lexicogrammatical (and phonological) innovations that stem from communicational motives (see e.g. Mauranen 2017; Seidlhofer 2011). Cogo and Dewey (2012: 77) explain how speakers in intercultural communication are especially motivated to interact cooperatively, and using language in mutually convergent ways often results in the emergence of innovations in lexis and grammar. Jenkins (2009b: 148–149) further points out that all living languages evolve over time through natural processes, such as regularisation; and so does English. For instance, the six present tense verb endings that were present in Old English have been reduced to two endings over the years: -s on the third person singular and zero marking on the others. It can be expected that this process continues and the –s be replaced with zero marking eventually (Jenkins 2009b: 149). These kinds of natural processes can be seen in ELF as

well, and Jenkins (2009b: 148–149) points out that the evolution of the innovative features occurring in ELF has strikingly much in common with changes that have occurred, and are still occurring, in ENL. Jenkins (2009b: 149) writes that in many cases ELF speakers are simply accelerating the processes that have already been taking place through the mutual reinforcement that arises from contact between ELF speakers. She further notes that the problem for ELF speakers is that when they innovate and use English creatively in such ways, the outcome is described as 'error' until it has been approved of by native speaker use. In what follows, I will discuss the processes of language use and creation that have been identified in ELF and accompany them with illustrative examples of ELF speech where relevant. After identifying the surface level features, I will explain the motivations behind the use of these features in more detail: why and how these innovations have come into being.

As Seidlhofer (2011: 99) writes, when speakers choose to communicate via a lingua franca, thus choosing a mean of communication that excludes as few participants as possible, they are usually also conscious of the need to make a certain effort to ensure mutual intelligibility and communicative efficiency. Thus, a premium on maximising pragmatic clarity is present (Kecskes 2007, cited by Seidlhofer 2011: 99). This goal of enhancing *clarity* and *accessibility* can be pursued through various means, which are all interconnected and overlapping, include giving prominence to important elements, adding or exploiting redundancy, increasing explicitness by regularising patterns, and making word classes or semantic relations more explicit. Using accommodation strategies, such as repeating and paraphrasing, are also obvious ways of making accessible what one is saying. Accommodation, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, has been noted to be an especially salient feature of ELF interaction. (Seidlhofer 2011: 99.)

Cogo & Dewey (2012: 95) explain that "ELF settings are usually characterised by a reduction in the forces of standardisation that habitually impacts language use, giving rise to a condition of greater flexibility and variability". *Variability* is a major characteristic of ELF use and is well exhibited in the third dimension of Wenger's definition of communities of practice: shared repertoire (Wenger 1998: 73, in Hülmbauer 2009: 324). As mentioned above, the traditional concept of 'community' does not apply to ELF users and researchers have instead suggested they

be assigned members of communities of practice. ELF users become members of situational speaking communities and contemporary relationships. The members of such a community make use of a shared repertoire, which is jointly developed by the participants on the basis of their competencies to suit the purposes of their mutual interactional endeavour. This means that hardly anything can be taken for granted in communication, because every meaning has to be negotiated among the participants. Hülmbauer (2009: 325) states that this kind of variability is an inherent characteristic of ELF communication. According to her, users must come to terms with the situation and make use of the resources available to them in the best possible way. ELF communication also includes situational in-group linguistic resources. Some resources become known-in-common during a particular situation, when participants create and negotiate them in the moment, after which they can be used. These resources are, however, only valid for that particular situation and cannot successfully be carried out to other ELF situations. According to Hülmbauer (2009: 327), this *situationality factor* is what the intelligibility of ELF forms is largely based on.

Seidlhofer (2011: 98) also brings up the centrality of situationality in ELF talk. She writes about how ELF users are

> absorbed in the ad hoc, situated negotiation of meaning – an entirely pragmatic undertaking in that the focus is on establishing the indexical link with between the code and the context, and a creative process in that the code is treated as malleable and adjustable to the requirements of the moment (ibid.)

In Seidlhofer's words, ELF users thus exploit the potential and underlying resources of the language in full. They are completely involved in the interactions: fully focused on the interactional purposes of the talk as well as on their interlocutors as people, rather than the linguistic code itself. Doing this, ELF users sometimes push the frontiers of Standard English when needed. We will take a look at some concrete examples of the ways in which ELF users do this in the next section.

Hülmbauer (2009: 324), for her part, characterises ELF as having a certain kind of duality in itself. She explains that at times, ELF departs radically from established norms and other times conforms to them; ELF is not determined by a stable set of features and cannot be absolutely located anywhere. It is, however, also an established resource in some people's communicative routine; a reliable means of intercultural communication where miscommunication is exception

rather than a rule. According to Hülmbauer (2009: 325), there are thus two opposing forces in constant tension in ELF: variable and stable aspects. Inherent variability is an important general characteristic of ELF talk (House 2012: 189), and as Hülmbauer (2009: 325) explains, variability is brought to ELF by the communicators who use it, who are from different linguacultural backgrounds and are faced with the challenge of finding intelligibility and mutual understanding in a language that is not their mother tongue. Stability, then, is present because the majority of ELF users are non-native speakers, and this shared non-nativeness tends to create cooperative behaviour and certain flexibility in language use (Hülmbauer 2009: 325). The participants are united by their learner history: Because of their shared non-native perspective they can be expected to understand a great number of linguistic constructions even if, or even because, they deviate from native norms. (Hülmbauer 2009: 328). Hülmbauer (ibid.) reports that ELF speakers seem to have the ability to "infer the production process of such unconventional constructions" and use their non-native status as a resource for sense-making.

3.2.1 Lexicogrammatical features

As has already been established, ELF speakers use their common language in mutually convergent ways. Cogo and Dewey (2012: 77) state that this has its influence on the language: it often results in the emergence of new patterns of lexis and grammar. In previous research (Seidlhofer 2004; Cogo & Dewey 2012), the following has been identified as a preliminary list of recurring lexicogrammatical features of ELF. It has been compiled by analysing the VOICE corpus, and was more of a set of hypotheses than a determinate list of ELF characteristics at the time. It has, however, later been proven to be quite durable and has been supported by other research. Seidlhofer's work can also be seen as ground-breaking in the field as it was the first list of features presented as ELF variants in their own right when they would previously have been described as errors (Jenkins et. al. 2011: 289; Cogo & Dewey 2012: 47). These features are:

- Dropping the third person present tense –s
- 'Confusing' the relative pronouns who and which
- Omitting definite and indefinite articles where they are obligatory in ENL, and inserting them where they do not occur in ENL
- 'Failing' to use correct forms in tag questions (e.g., isn't it? or no? instead of shouldn't they?)
- Inserting redundant prepositions, as in *We have to study about*…)

- ‘Overusing’ certain verbs of high semantic generality, such as do, have, make, put, take
- Replacing infinitive-constructions with that-clauses, as in I want that
- Overdoing explicitness (e.g. black color rather than just black)

  (Seidlhofer 2004: 220)

Some of these features will be discussed in more length in the following section, in addition to other lexicogrammatical innovations prominently occurring in ELF that have been identified in subsequent research.

For a lexicogrammatical feature to be identified as typical in ELF research, it has to meet four key criteria. Firstly, the patterns of their use have to be ascertained to be systematic. Secondly, they have to occur in the data frequently and extensively and be used by people from different linguacultural backgrounds. Thirdly, the features have to be communicatively effective. Finally, in meeting all these criteria the language features can be considered ELF variants and not errors when contrasted with equivalent ENL forms. (Jenkins et. al. 2011: 289; Cogo & Dewey 2012: 47.)

Cogo & Dewey (2012: 76) found that the most prominent innovations in language use in ELF operate on several different linguistic levels: grammar, lexis, morphology, syntax, semantics, and ultimately discourse. They were also able to make a clear distinction between features that can be regarded as innovative and ones that are more idiosyncratic: transitional features of an individual speaker’s language and thus cannot be regarded as typical features. Based on the evidence, they can thus reassure that it is simply not the case that lexicogrammatically ‘anything goes’ in ELF use, but “speakers actively vary the forms at their disposal, but that they do so in principled ways, orienting very attentively to the communication of meaning”. (Cogo & Dewey 2012: 80.) As Seidlhofer (2011: 109) concludes:

> [W]hile all these innovations are not attested in StE, they are ‘legal’ in terms of the English phonological/phonotactic, morphological, and syntactic systems, and these provide speakers with a set of basic bearings that they exploit to communicative effect.

The following section will examine the motives and functions of the lexicogrammatical innovations of ELF use more deeply.

3.2.2 Underlying motives and functions

Seidlhofer (2011: 124) argues that "simply to home in on the formal properties of ELF and their lack of conformity to the norms of ENL is to fail to understand how ELF functions as an entirely natural linguistic phenomenon". She continues to explain that the formal properties of ELF are functionally motivated like any other use of language. Since the functions that ELF forms are required to serve are different from those served by forms of native speaker usage, their non-conformity is, according to Seidlhofer (ibid.), "a natural consequence of appropriate communicative adaptation". Seidlhofer (2011: 108) points out that ELF users do not just call up elements of the language like they have learned them in school and put them to use as 'correctly' as possible. Seidlhofer (2011: 109) states that ELF speakers can clearly be competent in English without conforming to ENL norms. She writes that ELF is more about engaging in appropriate ways of speaking and using the underlying resources of the language as well as adjusting their own language for the benefit of the interlocutor.

Cogo and Dewey (2012: 90) identify *regularisation* as one key motivation underlying lexicogrammatical innovation emerging in ELF speech. According to them, the process of regularisation is caused by a modification in the grammatical system together with an underlying semantic motivation (ibid.). Simply put, regularisation is the process of taking irregular forms of the language and regularising them to follow the common rules (Mauranen 2017: 238). Mauranen (ibid.) categorises regularisation in ELF as a form of *simplification*: Based on currently available evidence, structural simplification largely manifests itself in regularisation. Simplification can be detected in morphological regularisation, syntax and lexis. Mauranen (2017: 241) explains how, as a counterpart for the tendency to regularise, there are irregular tendencies present in ELF use as well when compared to conventional English use, which stem from the process of *complexifying*. Mauranen (2017: 244) postulates that increased variability in ELF use makes the language system more complex.

Patterns of preposition use and collocation are prominent examples of regularisation in Cogo and Dewey's (2012) ELF data. Cogo and Dewey (2012: 90) noticed that the verb *discuss* is often used in ELF with the preposition *about*, which brings about the regularisation of the system. The same kind of pattern of regularisation is seen in, for instance, *mention + about* and *influence + on*.

Verbs with high level of semantic generality are also affected in ELF data: in fact, Cogo & Dewey (2012: 95) report that comparison of ELF and ENL data regarding verbs such as *have*, *do*, *get*, *make*, and *take* revealed a significant difference in their distribution in the respective data. They further note that innovations in how these verbs collocate in ELF corpora seem to be largely semantically motivated. For instance, the ENL phrase *have an interview*, has been transformed into *take an interview*, which arguably is semantically a better representation of the action. Based on a large amount of similar collocations, Cogo and Dewey (ibid.) conclude that there is some tendency in ELF interaction to assign semantic value to verbs of high semantic generality, similar to prepositions. This is a process of modifying the grammatical system of the language with an underlying semantic motivation, ultimately regularising the language.

Furthermore, Seidlhofer (2011) presents lexical innovations, i.e. regularising verbs and nouns as an example of regularisation motivated by communicative need in ELF. Of course, as Seidlhofer (2011: 101) points out, new words frequently arise in any natural language: for one, expressions for new phenomena are constantly needed. Coining new words when a communicative need arises is common in ELF use as well. New words are coined through well-informed processes of word-formation, such as suffixation. For intelligibility, it is important to know morphology: to be able to identify what is a verb and what is a noun. As Seidlhofer (2011: 102) points out, however, the English morphology is not very regular. The suffix *-ate* is typical for verbs, and a word can often be assigned the right word class based on it: *communicate, motivate,* and *differentiate*. By no means do all English verbs follow this pattern: *conspire, examine, finance, pronounce*. Seidlhofer (ibid.) reports that in the VOICE corpus, forms are found that have been 'regularised' by "applying a regular morphological convention in unconventional ways to produce *conspirate, examinate, financiate*, and *pronunciate*" (ibid.). Seidlhofer (2011: 103) reports that the same process also occurs with nouns: for example, *increase* (which, in Standard English can be either a verb or a noun) has been made into *increasement* and *approvement* has on occasions been used to replace *approval*. The lexical innovations noted in ELF use often follow the regularities of Standard English; sometimes more so than the corresponding ENL forms (Seidlhofer 2011: 103–104). ELF speakers also coin new words to fill a lexical gap in the language. Seidlhofer (2011: 104) gives examples of such words from the VOICE corpus: *forbiddenness*, *bigness*, *unitedness*, and *clearness*. Some coinages that are created to fill either a permanent or perceived gap in the

language are also heavily influenced by the speaker's first language, such as *dictature* (Seidlhofer 2011: 105). In word coinage, we see ELF speakers using the underlying rules and resources of the language, regularising it in the process.

Exploiting redundancy is the second key motive underpinning the emergence of lexicogrammatical innovations in ELF which Cogo and Dewey (2012) identified from their data. They report that a number of innovative lexicogrammatical features occur in ELF as a result of speakers exploiting the redundancy inherent in the language system. The use of 3rd person singular zero, disclosed in the previous section, is one of the most prominent one of these features. As Cogo and Dewey (2012: 82) explain, 3rd person -s in contemporary Standard English is a typological anomaly. It is a unique feature as well as an irregularity: from present tense verbs, only 3rd person singular has any morphological marking. The zero variant is made use of in some ENL varieties as well, such as East Anglian dialects in the UK, African American Vernacular English, and nativised Englishes such as Singapore English. The 3rd person zero variant produces better consistency, and using it results in a more systematic pattern in present tense verb forms. Furthermore, the zero variant is communicatively redundant because English is a 'non pro-drop' language, meaning that in normal circumstances, the subject pronoun cannot be omitted from a clause. The 3rd person -s thus does not offer any relevant information necessary for interpreting the utterance that the subject pronoun would not offer. (Cogo & Dewey 2012: 82–83.) Another example of exploiting redundancy is 'confusing' relative pronouns *who* and *which*, also mentioned in Seidlhofer's (2004) list. As Seidlhofer (2011: 108) explains, distinguishing between these relative pronouns is semantically redundant and therefore often not felt to be important, as long as the pronoun is recognised as a relative one. Indeed, there are many languages where one invariant relative pronoun serves to indicate both persons and non-persons.

Cogo and Dewey (2012: 84) report that ellipsis of objects and complements with transitive verbs is also an example of exploiting redundancy in ELF. In cases like this in their data, the object or complement that was omitted had either been explicitly stated earlier or was strongly implied. Cogo and Dewey (ibid.) give an example utterance from their data: "would you allow gay couples to adopt or wouldn't you allow?" Even without the complement for *allow*, the message is clear. In ENL the complement would be restated despite its apparent redundancy; here, the zero

complement only affected the surface form, removing the redundancy but not compromising the clarity of the utterance. There are a number of transitive verbs in English that are being used this way in ELF. Cogo and Dewey (2012: 85) report that this phenomenon seems to be a quite an extensive feature, occurring in various different settings, in the speech patterns of ELF users from different linguistic backgrounds. The use of 3rd person zero, 'confusing' relative pronouns *who* and *which,* and ellipsis of complements and objects with transitive verbs have been found to be prominent ways of exploiting the redundancy inherent in the language for the purpose of efficiency of communication.

The third of the four key underlying motivations for the lexicogrammatical innovations in ELF identified by Cogo and Dewey (2012) is *enhancing prominence*. Cogo and Dewey (2012: 98–101) give article use as one prominent example of a realization of this process. According to them, the frequency of articles in ELF data and ENL corpora are very similar, but the way in which articles are reportedly used in ELF and ENL is different. Cogo and Dewey (2012: 100–101) explain that ELF speakers may use definite article where the ENL established pattern would place zero article. They argue that this is done to add prominence to a key word or to give additional emphasis. They also report having found many cases in ELF where a speaker chooses to use zero article when the ENL norm would require definite article. This feature is, according to Cogo and Dewey (2012: 99), especially common in cases where the ENL form involves idiomaticity or a degree of redundancy. The level of importance attached to a noun or noun phrase in the larger discourse is thus a major factor determining whether zero or definite article is used in ELF; as opposed to the specific-generic contrast of article use in ENL (Cogo & Dewey 2012: 100).

Mauranen (2017: 246) explains that *enhanced explicitness*, or *explicitation,* is the fourth salient phenomenon enhancing the effectiveness of communication in ELF. It takes many forms: Repetition, synonymy, rephrasing (see e.g. Cogo & Dewey 2012: 110), discourse reflexivity, and negotiating topic (Mauranen 2017: 246) are common manifestations of explicitation. These can potentially alter the preferences for syntactic patterns (Mauranen 2017: 246). An example of a high degree of explicitness is given by Cogo and Dewey (2012: 110): 'English is in the national – English this subject is in the national curriculum', where the speaker repeats the word 'English'

and adds ‘this subject’ to show that she specifically means English as a school subject, thus making the intended message clearer and more explicit. Another salient way of using repetition and rephrasing to enhance explicitness in ELF talk is using subject pronoun in conjunction with the subject that has already been mentioned: ‘Widdowson he’s mentioned’ (Cogo & Dewey 2012: 110). These examples show some ways in which meaning is made more explicit in ELF talk by giving additional emphasis to an item; reinforcing the intended message by exploiting the potential of the language more fully (Cogo & Dewey 2012: 110, 112).

3.3 ELF and linguistic accommodation

The lexicogrammatical features discussed above can also be regarded as accommodation, because the motivation behind their use (and also criterion for their identification as features of ELF) is to enhance communicative efficiency. They are not, however, general strategies or features of linguistic accommodation, but specific to ELF use. This chapter focuses on accommodation as one major motivation underlying the occurrence of lexicogrammatical innovations in ELF. The basic notion of accommodation in the field of linguistics and its relationship with ELF will be discussed. Linguistic accommodation will be defined and its importance in ELF use briefly explained. Finally, accommodation strategies that frequently occur in ELF will briefly be discussed.

In linguistics, accommodation means the process of adjusting one’s communicative behaviour to that of one’s interlocutors to facilitate communication (Cogo 2009: 254). As Seidlhofer (2011: 48) further clarifies, accommodation happens in flight as speakers in a given situation adjust their speech as well as non-verbal behaviour and fine-tune these in order to become both more accessible and more acceptable to each other. According to Seidlhofer (ibid.) this process is usually unconscious. There are several different strategies of accommodating one’s language use as well as motivations for doing so.

People accommodate to their interlocutors in all types of situations and for different reasons. Giles and Coupland’s Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), which will be discussed in more detail in section 4.2, provides a framework for analysing and interpreting the linguistic adaptations speakers make, or choose not to make, in relation to their interlocutors’ speech

patterns. The theory suggests that speakers can converge towards or diverge away from the interlocutor in terms of their communicative behaviour, or they can maintain their own communicative patterns. Alterations can be made to phonology, grammar, lexis, and pragmatics. CAT was designed for understanding and explaining the adjustments speakers make to their communicative patterns. Possible reasons for making adjustments are seeking approval (convergence), signalling distinct identity, affiliation or disapproval (divergence), and the desire to be understood. (Cogo & Dewey 2012: 102.) Accommodation is a naturally occurring phenomenon and can, of course, be a characteristic of any communicative situation but has an especially potent role in ELF talk because the diversity of ELF interactional settings intensifies the communicative imperative. Studies have, indeed, suggested that processes of accommodation are a particularly distinguishing feature of ELF communication. (Cogo & Dewey 2012: 102).

In multilingual contexts, people may well speak the same language but not necessarily speak the same way because of differences in sociocultural conventions or differences in levels of linguistic competence (Rogerson-Revell 2011: 433). Thus, accommodation is especially important for ELF users, because they conduct various types of tasks with other bilinguals around the world in a language that is not their mother tongue. The encounters involve speakers with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and thus bring with them their own culturally-bound manners of communication. ELF speakers face the challenge of managing differences in communication and finding out how different speakers negotiate differences in cmmunication where the common ground cannot be presumed but needs to be negotiated locally. (Cogo 2009: 254.) To steer clear of negative outcomes in multilingual contexts where differences in ways of interacting are present, Bhatia (1997: 318, cited in Rogerson-Revell 2011: 433) suggests that it is important to be aware of cross-cultural variations in English use and maximise one's abilities to negotiate, accommodate, as well as accept plurality of norms. As Nelson (1992: 337, cited in Rogerson-Revell 2011: 433) underlines, only the number of speakers of English and their geographical distribution create the need for active accommodation from every participant involved in communication across varieties to maintain intelligibility.

Phillipson (2003: 167, cited in Seidlhofer 2011: 39) argues that native speakers of English may have greater facility in using the language, but not necessarily greater sensitivity in using it

appropriately. In international contexts, competent non-native speakers of English are often more comprehensible than native speakers, because they are better at adjusting their language depending on their audience; people from different linguistic as well as cultural backgrounds. Speakers from the Inner and Outer Circles, where English is perfectly adequate for local domestic purposes, may not realise the need for adjustments in intercultural communication, which is when difficulties often arise (Guido 2008, Wright 2009; cited in Seidlhofer 2011: 81). Seidlhofer (2011: 81) further speculates that for people in the Expanding Circle, the language is not so bound up with communal significance, and it is thus easier for them to employ it as a lingua franca resource. ELF use has been noted to include less communication breakdowns and misunderstandings than native-non-native interaction (see e.g. House 2003: 567). Mauranen (2006: 135) suggests that this might be due to proactive work that is a striking feature of ELF interaction: preventing such problems in communication from the outset. Cogo (2009: 257) concludes that ELF speakers are especially sensitive to the linguistic and cultural differences that might cause misunderstanding and are prone to taking steps to prevent possible misunderstandings, using pragmatic strategies to enhance communication.

In her conversation analysis study, Kaur (2009) noticed a remarkable lack of communication breakdown in ELF talk given the disfluencies and ungrammaticalities in the participants' utterances. This, in her opinion, reflects the speakers' accomplished way of compensating the lack of linguistic competence with increased use of interactional practices in order to achieve shared understanding (ibid.: 119). These strategies include paraphrasing (displaying given information in a new and different way), repetition and other-repetition (re-saying some or all elements that occurred in an ongoing or preceding turn), request for clarification, request or confirmation of understanding (Kaur 2009), and code-switching (Seidlhofer 2011: 99). Kaur (2009: 120) explains that there are many instances in her data where the speakers make an informed decision to use a particular strategy, making the decision based on the speaker's assessment of the source of the problem or the local context. For instance, the speaker is likely to repeat their earlier utterance when the potential problem is attributed to the interlocutor's difficulty in hearing rather than in understanding (2009: 120) As Kaur (ibid.) concludes, mutual understanding is not taken for granted in ELF communication, but received as something that has to be cooperatively worked at and monitored. The fact that ELF is being used with success by its

speakers in different situations and for different purposes demonstrates ELF users' ability and competence in making strategic use of these kinds of interactional practices to avoid communicational problems and so ensure mutual understanding.

3.4 Criticism and problems

Research on English as a lingua franca, and its very definition is not without problems: The model has gained some criticism over the years. There are some misinterpretations involving ELF, which have led to criticism towards it. This, perhaps, speaks for the fact that the ELF model is not very well known, and the motivations behind researching and describing it are not clear even though the concept involves a great number of people. Some criticism is caused by sociolinguistic concepts that have not been updated in accordance with the changing, globalised world. In this section, I will briefly discuss the most frequently debated aspects of ELF.

One major reason ELF is often criticised is caused by the misconception that the goal of ELF is to establish a single norm of lingua franca use to which every user should conform. ELF is deemed monocentric by many scholars. Jenkins (2007: 20) identifies five common misconceptions inherent in the accusations along this line of thought:

1. ELF research ignores the polymorphous nature of the English language worldwide
2. ELF work denies tolerance for diversity and appropriacy of use in specific sociolinguistic contexts
3. ELF description aims at the accurate application of a set of prescribed rules
4. ELF researchers are suggesting that there should be one monolithic variety
5. ELF researchers suggest that ELF should be taught to all non-native speakers

This monocentric idea of ELF is purely a misinterpretation: As Jenkins (ibid.) clarifies, ELF research aims to promote international intelligibility and show respect for diversity at the same time. Even though ELF characteristics have been, and continue to be identified, it is not the goal of ELF research to establish ELF a standardised variety of English.

Interestingly enough, another reason ELF is often criticised is the complete opposite of the previous. Some critics of ELF take a monolithic position on it and claim that ELF lacks any standards and exhibits errors where it departs from native English varieties. Differences from

native speaker English in ELF are thus by definition seen as deficiencies rather than legitimate ELF variants. According to this perspective, there is no difference between ELF and EFL: No distinction is made between English learnt for intercultural communication and English learnt for communication with native speakers of English, even though their linguacultural contexts are completely different. (Jenkins 2009a: 202–203.)

Seidlhofer (2011) writes about the deep-rooted beliefs about language and language use in linguistics that need to be rethought for an understanding of ELF. These are the ideas of variety, community, and competence. As Seidlhofer (2011: 74) explains, World Englishes have emerged from the process of natural appropriation and adaptation that occurs in post-colonial settings, where the variety is assigned legitimacy. This idea of varieties as clearly defined, discrete entities lies at the core of one aspect of ELF research which is criticised or seen as problematic. The traditional concepts of variety, community, and competence do not apply to ELF, and researchers stuck in these ideologies criticise the phenomenon and its research for precisely that reason. In fact, Seidlhofer (2011: 95) argues that these concepts are by definition arbitrary and cannot be made static, because they represent a dynamic process as a fixed state of affairs. These concepts are, however, often used to deny ELF the status of a variety: As Seidlhofer (2011: 94–95) writes, legitimacy tends not to be accorded to ELF because its speakers do not belong to particular primary communities, whereas there indeed exists a large spectrum of variation in the grammar, lexis, and phonology of dialect-like varieties of English such as Norfolk or Texan, and nativised varieties like Indian or Nigerian English.

4 STUDYING LANGUAGE ATTITUDES

The present chapter will provide insight into language attitudes, how they have been, and how they can be researched. The fundamental concepts involved in the area of study, such as ‘attitude’, ‘language attitude’, and ‘language ideology’ will be explained and discussed. Furthermore, different approaches available for researching the topic will be presented, including *direct measures*, *indirect measures*, and the *societal treatment* approach.

4.1 (Language) attitudes and (language) ideology

Kalaja (1999: 47) wrote in 1999 that attitudes at that time were defined as a person's inner state, which is triggered by a certain stimulus and which can affect the person's behaviour. Language attitudes mean the attitudes that people have towards either different languages altogether or different varieties (social or regional) of one language or the users of these (Kalaja 1999: 45). Hence, in terms of language attitudes, the stimuli that trigger the attitudes are speech and writing, and people respond to them either positively or negatively. Language attitudes may be inflicted by mere forms and aspects within a language, such as grammatical forms or vocabulary, or directed towards larger phenomena such as accents, codeswitching, or whole languages (Garrett 2010: 1–17). Ultimately, language attitudes originate from social aspects. Some languages or varieties may, for example, trigger positive attitudes because their speakers are socially valued for their high societal status and power. (Kalaja 1999: 47.)

Language attitudes are thus personal, whereas language ideologies form larger frameworks for social perceptions, which are shared by groups. Language ideologies have been defined in a variety of ways. I will use a combination of definitions where they are conceived as sets of beliefs or ideas about language which are loaded with moral and political interests and emphasis is placed on their sociocultural dimension: linguistic and social relationships and the roles of language in the social experiences of people (Woolard 1998: 21.) Jenkins (2007: 106) emphasises that attitude and belief are two different matters. She explains that attitudes operate below the level of awareness whereas beliefs are overt categories and definitions that people have concerning linguistic matters (Hartley & Preston 1999 and Giles 1998: 210, cited in Jenkins 2007: 106).

Language attitudes and ideologies seem to be important for intercultural communication. Sweeney and Zhu (2010: 480) explain how the views of native speakers of English on the use of English may differ from that of lingua franca speakers. They state that differences in opinions and understanding of how and for what English should be used are likely to cause problems in communication. As Seidlhofer (2011: 35) states, basing her argument on a number of studies in anthropology, sociolinguistics, and social psychology, attitudes affect perception. She writes that attitudes "can lead to a different 'reading' of linguistic forms used, depending on who the

speakers/writers are thought to be" (ibid.). Perceptions of ethnic, racial, and linguacultural differences can thus cause expectations of problems in intelligibility which have nothing to do with the actual linguistic forms produced by the speakers. An array of past research also shows that language affects social judgements made of people on a variety of personal traits: status, prestige, character, social attractiveness, and so forth (see e.g. Giles & Billings 2004: 195). Judging others by their use of language is also strongly connected to standard language ideology (discussed in section 2.2.1). Prescriptive ideas of language use exist in our culture and it is thus not uncommon to form judgements (positive and negative) about people based on their language use (Mooney & Evans 2018). Especially standard varieties are often evaluated positively in terms of personalities, social background, academic abilities, and job suitability. Studies show, however, that non-standard varieties are assigned some positive traits over standard varieties, such as traits relating to social attractiveness and solidarity. (Giles & Billings 2004: 193-195.) The ways English as a language is taught, used, and defined are changing greatly, and native speakers are required to adapt and change along with the environment; otherwise, they might find themselves side-lined (Sweeney and Zhu 2010: 481). It is thus important to include native speakers in the research on the changing English.

4.2 Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT)

Howard Coupland's Speech Accommodation Theory (SAT) from the 1970s, which was later revised to Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), is probably the best known theory in intercultural communication providing a framework for understanding linguistic accommodation. It is also related to language attitudes, and will be briefly discussed in the following chapter from that point of view. According to CAT, speakers have different strategies and motives for accommodating their speech. One strategy is to *converge* to the conversational partner/s, i.e. to make some aspect/s of one's speech more like those of the other interlocutor; reduce dissimilarities in the communication features used by the interlocutors. The other strategy is to *diverge* from the other interlocutor, i.e. to make one's speech more different than that of the conversational partner; accentuate dissimilarities. *Maintaining* one's own speech style is also recognised as a speech strategy in CAT, but it is usually identified as divergence. According to CAT, the main speaker motivations behind the use of these strategies are to gain approval, to

show distinctiveness, and to achieve clearer or smoother communication. (Gallois et al. 1995: 117; Garrett 2010: 106.)

The accommodation strategies can involve a variety of features: phonological variants, lexical diversity, gestures, facial expressions, speech rate, pause frequencies, and so on. Garrett (2010: 106) also points out that convergence and divergence do not necessarily involve all of these features at once, but both strategies can co-occur on different features of communication. Furthermore, the strategies do not always happen symmetrically between participants: even though one participant converges on one feature, the other may not necessarily reciprocate by converging on the same feature.

Communication Accommodation Theory is relevant for language attitude studies, because as Garrett (2010: 105) summarises, "accommodation theory foregrounds the dynamic communicative shifts that occur as we respond in communicative interaction", and the psycho-social processes that are involved in attitudes are also those that influence the choices made in interaction. Garrett (ibid.) continues to say that making adaptations in communication may be (seen as) signalling a person's attitudes. These attitudes may, then, evoke attitudinal responses in other interlocutors. Thus, Garrett (ibid.) concludes that Communication Accommodation Theory can be seen as the "implementation of attitudes in discourse".

4.3 Approaches to studying language attitudes

As Kalaja (1999: 48) explains, language attitudes are a relatively new area in research: the first steps into this field of research were taken in the 1960s, when Lambert et. al. examined Canadians' views on English and French and speakers of these languages. They proved that the way people speak influences the first impression they give to other people. Their research inspired other researchers to look into language attitudes in various different countries, and to develop new methods for researching language attitudes. The topic has been researched from various points of view by experts from different fields, and there thus exist various methods as well as different kinds of data within the area. Language attitudes have been examined in terms of societies or communities as well as individuals or groups of people. (Kalaja 1999: 46–47.)

The methods of measuring language attitudes are often divided into three broad approaches: *direct measures*, *indirect measures*, and the analysis of the *societal treatment* of language varieties (Garrett 2010: 37). The category of *direct approaches* relies on overt elicitation of attitudes. Using questionnaires and interviews, the participants are simply asked direct questions about their preferences, language evaluation, and so forth. Questionnaires and interviews may consist of both open and closed questions. The participant may, for example, be asked to listen to a sample and tell their review of the speaker in their own words. The participant may also be handed a questionnaire consisting of statements (such as "I like the French language" or "I think French is useless") and asked to evaluate each statement on the Likert scale ("I strongly agree", "Sligthly agree", "Undecided", "Slightly disagree", "I strongly disagree") by choosing the option that is closest to their own view. (Garrett 2010: 39; Kalaja 1999: 49.)

The *indirect approach* to language attitude studies involves more subtle, sometimes even deceptive, techniques than direct questions about the participants' attitudes towards something. In language attitude research, indirect methods used have mainly been the *matched guise method.* This technique was designed to evaluate the participant's initial reaction to a sample of speech and the person speaking. Typically, the participants hear a series of audio recordings which differ from each other in one respect only: for example, a single reader reading the exact same text only varying his or her accent, but maintaining the speech rate, pausing etc. as constant as possible. The participant may be deceived to believe that all of the recordings were read by different speakers. The participants are then asked to fill in an attitude rating scale. The idea behind the matched guise method is that people will first categorise the speaker by their way of speaking (accent or language) as a member of a certain group and then evaluate the speaker's personal traits. For example, a person speaking 'standard British English' (Received Pronunciation) will often be considered as sophisticated, educated, and possibly having a high social status. It was initially thought that the evaluation process was indirect, as described above. Later, however, it was reconsidered and admitted that the evaluation may also happen in a direct manner (language -> the speaker's personality). It may also be that a language or an accent triggers the evaluation of the group that the speaker represents. (Garrett 2010: 41; Kalaja 1999: 49–50.)

The third main approach to the study of language attitudes is somewhat controversial as it has, as explained by Garrett (2010: 51–52) received a lot of criticism and tends to be overlooked. The *societal treatment approach* typically involves observing and analysing various sources in the public domain, such as language policy documents, media texts, and advertisements, and inferring attitudes from the language use in these. It is, thus, less intrusive than the other approaches. It has, however, been criticised for being somewhat informal and not allowing rigorous statistical analysis and generalisation to any broader or specific populations (ibid.)

4.4 Previous research into ELF attitudes

Jenkins (2007) provides an overlook on research done into ELF attitudes. She explains that even though the majority of ELF attitudes studies concern all linguistic levels, most tend to focus solely on pronunciation (ibid.: 93). In this section, I will provide a brief overlook on the types of ELF attitudes studies that have been conducted in the past, and discuss more in detail a few studies that have been particularly influential for the present study.

Earliest studies in the field were not strictly studies into ELF attitudes, but still relevant to the topic. These early studies have focused on non-native speakers' attitudes towards different native and local non-native varieties of English. For instance, Forde (1995; as cited in Jenkins 2007: 93) conducted a research on the attitudes of elementary Chinese students of English toward Hong Kong English as well as a variety of native English accents. (Jenkins 2007: 93–95.)

Practicing teachers' as well as prospective teachers' attitudes towards ELF have been researched quite a bit: Jenkins (2007: 95–103) already mentions several of these studies. One of the most influential of these types of ELF studies is Timmis (2002; cite in Jenkins 2007: 95), which Jenkins (2007: 95) describes as "one of the first ELF attitudes studies 'proper' to be published". The study, also relevant for the present thesis, investigates both learners' and teachers' attitudes towards ELF, and the starting point is the issue of whether learners of English should still conform to native speaker norms in an age when English is increasingly used in international communication. Timmis collected questionnaire responses from teachers in more than 40 different countries, including native speakers. His questionnaire concerned attitudes towards pronunciation, standard grammar, and informal spoken grammar with statements about language

use. The results revealed an overall tendency to prefer conforming to native speakers norms, though, as admitted by Timmis (2002, cited by Jenkins 2007: 96) the 180 responses analysed solely with statistical analysis cannot be claimed to provide neither a statistically accurate nor a qualitatively rich picture.

Jenkins (2007: 103–105) also mentions a few studies on learners' attitudes to ELF and non-native Englishes. Timmis' 2002 study discussed above involved a part focused on students' attitudes with a similar questionnaire to the one aimed at teachers, resulting in approximately 400 responses in 14 countries. The data revealed that students are moving away from the attachment to native speaker norms more slowly than teachers. (Jenkins 2007: 103–104.) A similar attachment to native speaker norms is present in other studies of learners' attitudes reported by Jenkins (2007).

A major influence on the current study is Jenkins' (2014) three-part study on ELF in the international university. In her study, she focuses on the policies of English language universities around the world in terms of the language attitudes and ideologies of university management and staff as well as international students in the UK. The starting point is that many universities present themselves as 'international' while the English language policies of these universities do not necessarily reflect this. The first part of Jenkins' study attempts to find out how these international universities orient to English on their websites (explicitly stating the matter or implying it in the discourses used): the extent to which universities with extensive or partial English medium instruction require native-like norms of academic English from their non-native English-speaking students. The data was collected from 60 university websites across various countries including both non-Anglophone and Anglophone countries. The second part of the study consisted of a questionnaire about the universities' staff's perspectives on English language policies and practices. The 166 respondents were dispersed in 24 different countries around the world. The third and last part of the study sought to find out the "perceived effects of current English language policies and practices on international, EU and home students" (Jenkins 2014: 165). The setting of this interview study was the UK, where 34 international students from 15 different countries were interviewed. The data of the three-part study revealed an overall picture where the native English ideology, i.e. the traditional views of native speaker authority, seems to

be pretty much in operation in all of the higher education domains examined. Internationality was largely just equalled with the English language, and conformity to native English norms was required from non-native students.

As also appears in Jenkins (2007), research into ELF attitudes has mainly involved non-native English speakers, both teachers and students. Ranta (2010: 157) remarks that as a result of the new conceptualisation of English (discussed in chapter 2), debates about the English language teaching norms and models have been going on. She points out that especially teachers play an important role as 'agents of change' in this debate, as their position towards the reconceptualisation of the subject they are teaching may determine if a change in ELT is possible; hence the high number of studies concerned with the educational field. Native speakers of English have, however, been largely ignored in this field of study. While I do agree that teachers and students play an important role in the future of English, I think it is equally important to include native speakers in the discussion as they have become a minority in the entirety of English speakers in the world. It is crucial that native speakers are able to adapt to the changes English is undergoing because of its increased and increasingly diverse use. Furthermore, as has been uncovered by decades of research, attitudes about certain forms of language may significantly affect decision-making on many levels (see e.g. Giles & Billings 2004). The current study intends to fill this research gap by involving native speakers to the discussion by examining their attitudes towards and providing information on the changing English.

5 THE PRESENT STUDY

This chapter presents the research problem and questions, the data along with the process of data collection as well as the pool of respondents and the methods of analysis of the present study. First, the research problem along with the actual research questions will be presented (section 5.1). Motivation and justification for the chosen research problem will also be discussed. Second, the data and the respondents will be discussed (section 5.2). This section includes information and description of when, where, and how the data was collected. Third, the methods of data collection and analysis will be discussed (section 5.3). In this section, questionnaire as a data

collection method will also be discussed in more detail: its suitability for the present study, its advantages and disadvantages, as well as the process of constructing the questionnaire.

5.1 Research problem

The purpose of the present study was to explore native English speakers' attitudes towards ELF as a valid way of speaking English, which may, in traditional terms, include linguistic deviations from Standard English. The aim was to find out whether native speakers find ELF use appropriate or acceptable, and to what extent, if at all. The characteristic of ELF as a largely functional medium of communication was emphasised when gathering the respondents' attitudes. The intention was to find out whether native speakers think that efficient and successful communication is more important than native-like language use or, for example, grammatical correctness. This study also aimed to find out whether the importance of using grammatically correct English depends, in native speakers' opinion, on the context. A section about the native speakers' habits of and attitudes towards linguistic accommodation was also included in the present study as a way to find out about possible subconscious language ideologies that the respondents may hold.

The main research questions of the present study are as follows:

1. **What are native English speakers' dominant attitudes towards ELF and its users?**
2. **Does context play a role in native speakers' expectations of English use? How? Why?**

Through these questions, I hoped to get an idea of native English speakers' attitudes towards English as a lingua franca and its speakers. The more specific purpose behind the research questions was to find out if native speakers hold standard English or ENL as something every user of English should strive for, or if they accept ELF as a legitimate way of using English even though ELF use often includes deviations from standard English. The research problem did not differentiate between spoken and written use of English, but rather focused on differences in the contexts in which the language is used: Is native-like English seen as more important in formal settings than informal ones, or do native speakers differentiate based on the formality of the situation at all?

In the light of previous research in the same area of interest (e.g. Jenkins 2014), it could be hypothesised that native speakers see standard English as the desired outcome, and non-native speakers as EFL learners rather than legitimate language users. Thus, I expected an (underlying) standard language ideology to emerge from the respondents' answers to the extent that ELF and ELF forms might be accepted and appreciated in theory but in reality there is an expectation of conformity to standard English. In other words, I expected that native speakers do not see a difference between ELF and EFL, but perceive ELF speakers as learners of English as a foreign language.

5.2 Data and respondents

The data for the present study were collected during May and June of 2018 with an online questionnaire (see Appendix). The survey and the process of constructing it will be further discussed in section 5.3. The survey yielded 121 responses in total, three of which were omitted from the final set of data because they did not meet the framework set for desired respondents. The survey was shared and circulated in social media: I shared it on my personal Facebook page as well as a freshmen's group of the University of Limerick, Ireland. The latter only resulted in two responses. The post on my personal page, however, gathered respectable momentum and attention. It was shared by many of my acquaintances and further by their acquaintances around the world.

The only personal details gathered from the respondents were their home country, mother tongue, and the languages they have learned or studied: The respondents were not identified by, for instance, their gender, age, or occupation, as these were not seen as important information to the research problem. Thus, the data did not include any information about the respondents by which they could be identified. It was not the main goal of this study to see if the respondents' views differ based on their home countries or how many languages they speak etc., but while designing the survey, I kept in mind that it could be a possibility to compare and contrast groups of people. However, the data that ultimately was got was not suitable for that type of analysis: There were not large enough groups of respondents representing each variable to make any reliable comparisons.

The criteria for the respondents and the ways to measure that these criteria were met turned out to be a little shaky: home country, for many, means the country they currently or permanently live in, and it is not necessarily the same country in which the person was born. Furthermore, as was already discussed in section 2.1.1, the definitions of 'native speaker' and 'mother tongue' may vary from person to person. These are not easy distinctions, but they have to be made one way or another. I was specifically looking for the views of people from (historically) Anglophone countries who are native speakers of English, i.e. Inner Circle speakers in Kachruvian terms. The chances are, there are responses from people who do not meet these criteria among the data, but that is a risk in all questionnaire studies where the respondents are anonymous. After some pondering, I also decided to accept responses from a few respondents who informed they are bilingual and reported having lived in a historically Anglophone country or being raised by English-speaking parents.

5.3 Methods

In this section, I will discuss the methods of data collection and analysis.

5.3.1 Data collection

The online questionnaire for data collection was constructed and conducted with Webropol, a program that automatically stores the data into a separate computer file and allows gathering statistical data concerning the respondents and their answers. The survey consisted of open-ended questions and closed questions, most of which were on the Likert scale. The questionnaire compiled for the purposes of this study contained both direct and indirect questions concerning the participants' attitudes and language ideologies. In terms of language attitude research, a questionnaire is considered a direct approach.

The questionnaire consisted of fifteen (15) questions in total. There were five (5) multiple choice questions, three (3) of which were on the Likert scale, one (1) further containing sixteen (16) statements on the Likert scale. The rest of the questions, ten (10) of them, were open-ended questions. Three (3) of these concerned background information about the respondent, and two (2) provided a possibility for the respondent to comment on her/his responses or the issue/survey in general. The questions were designed mainly with help of previous studies on ELF (see

Jokilehto 2014; Jenkins 2014; Mauranen 2011). The respondents were also given the opportunity to state their own views in their own words on the topic in open questions, as well as an opportunity to explain their answers to the closed questions. The questionnaire was piloted in May 2018 with the help of a few of my personal contacts and was revised accordingly.

5.3.2 Researching language attitudes with a questionnaire

It is worth noting that questionnaires have some limitations. The different approaches to language attitude research and various methods available for use in the field were comprehensively discussed in chapter 4. The following paragraph will shortly explain some possible problems in the direct approach to studying language attitudes that should be taken into account and avoided in utilising direct methods in order to guarantee validity. They are relevant to the present chapter and the overall study, as a direct approach was used to gather data, and the current section discusses the process of constructing the questionnaire used for data collection.

Garrett (2010: 43–46) identifies a few common stumbling blocks in using direct methods in language attitude research. The first of these is asking hypothetical questions from the respondents involved in the study. Responses to hypothetical questions about how people would react to a certain object, event, or action are often poor reflections of what kind of behaviour said situation would actually trigger in them. The second possible mistake Garrett (2010: 43–44) identifies is asking strongly slanted questions. These are questions that contain ‘loaded’ words that tend to push people into answering in a certain way. In addition to slanted wording, the whole question may include leading content or be phrased in a way that leads to one response. As the third problem Garrett (2010: 44) mentions asking multiple questions in one clause: a question where a positive answer could refer to more than one component of the question, or a question containing a type of double negative where a negative answer would be ambiguous. These three factors are such that should be considered when designing a questionnaire for measuring attitudes, and in terms of the present study, this was done as far as possible.

The respondent may misunderstand a question and thus answer it inappropriately, as the researcher does not have the opportunity to clarify the contents of the survey to the respondent or ask specifying questions based on the respondent’s answer. Furthermore, the respondent may report carelessly and not use time in forming well-structured answers, which is a problem with

open-ended questions (Dörnyei 2009: 12). As Kalaja (1999: 61) explains, questionnaires that measure the participants' language attitudes always measure them only within the scope that has been established by the researcher. There is often little or no room for the participants to explain their answers or disagree with the given options, but the participants are forced to choose from the given options. She further criticises that these kinds of approaches to studying language attitudes tend to separate the attitudes from the broader societal contexts, when they should be seen as everyday language use and discourse customs (p. 62). Furthermore, there are always possible problems with asking direct questions about a person's attitudes towards something. As Garrett (2010: 42–44) points out, there may sometimes be a difference between a person's private attitudes and the ones they are ready to reveal to other people. The respondents may as well tell the researcher about the attitudes they believe the researcher wants to hear, and be, for instance, reluctant to admit their negative attitudes towards a certain group or phenomenon. According to Oppenheim (1992: 126; as cited by Garrett 2010: 45), this so called social desirability bias is, however, more a significant risk in interviews than in questionnaire, and the anonymity of the survey conducted for the present study hopefully lowered the bar for the participants to honestly articulate their thoughts.

In constructing the questionnaire for the present study, slanted wording and leading questions were avoided as far as possible. However, some terminology included in the questionnaire may seem loaded to some respondents, such as 'native speaker' or 'correct language'. These kinds of terms may also lead to misunderstandings, as one respondent may have a different idea of the meaning of the term than another. This issue was also raised by respondents in this study: A few respondents commented on the terminology used in the questionnaire. For example, the meaning of 'native speaker' (i.e. who is included in the scope of the term) was questioned by some respondents and it was said that the term could have been defined in the questionnaire. This is true: for the sake of clarity on who was welcome to take the questionnaire, it would have been helpful to define what was meant by 'native speaker'. However, questioning and criticising the somewhat problematic terminology in the questionnaire is also an important part of the results. Terms such as 'correct language use', 'native speaker', 'non-native speaker', and 'native language' are exactly the kinds of concepts that are being discussed in this field of research, as their meanings are not straightforward with the unique climate surrounding contemporary

English use. Thus, these terms were quite carefully chosen to the questionnaire and the respondents were given multiple opportunities to explain their answers and comment on any issue regarding the questionnaire or the topic. It was, indeed, expected that especially people who are more familiar with this topic would question the use of certain terms. Furthermore, as questionnaires should be as precise and compact as possible, it is often not convenient to include a definition for every controversial term.

For the sake of clarity, I decided not to explain the phenomenon of ELF extensively or use the term in the questionnaire. Instead, the main idea was explained briefly and understandably: that non-natives may use English and other language resources available to them creatively to improve communicative efficiency. Thus, the phenomenon was, in fact, explained but it was not referred to as the particular model of ELF. This path was chosen because I felt that making the questionnaire about a precise phenomenon of linguistics might make it distant or complicated for the respondents, even though the phenomenon itself is not complicated and probably all native speakers have encountered it in their international encounters. The idea behind the study was, indeed, to find out native speakers' attitudes towards this creative, functional, and communicative way to use English (which ELF is) as well as their attitudes towards the desirability of native-like or standard English. Presenting ELF this way in the questionnaire, I also hoped that the participants would be able to tie the phenomenon to actual broader societal contexts rather than see it as a separate phenomenon from everyday communication.

Despite the shortcomings of questionnaire as a data collection method, it appeared to be the most suitable choice for the present study. One of the greatest assets of questionnaires is that a large amount of data can be collected and it provides generalizable facts. As there does not seem to be up-to-date information on native speakers' attitudes towards ELF, a questionnaire is suitable for gaining an overview of the contemporary climate around the topic. Furthermore, as Jenkins (2014: 126) points out, a questionnaire offers convenience to researchers working with a geographically dispersed group of participants as it allows data collection. While questionnaires can be criticised for their inherent limitation of offering superficial engagement, Dörnyei (2009: 36) points out that including open-ended questions in the questionnaire also adds certain richness to the study compared to fully quantitative data, such as illustrative quotes and identifying issues

that were not previously anticipated. More importantly, as language attitudes often operate on an unconscious level it was important to gain written responses that were formed by the respondents themselves so as to be able to interpret the responses on a deeper level. All in all, the convenience of a questionnaire as a data collection method and its suitability for particularly the present study outweighed it shortcomings and was seen as the best choice.

The process of constructing the survey was guided and inspired by previous ELF research, especially Jenkins' 2014 study concerning ELF and English language policies in international universities. I got the inspiration for studying native English speakers' views on ELF particularly from the angle of standard English from the aforementioned study, and I was guided by the study in designing the survey questions as well. A few of the survey questions were completely self-designed, though based on previous research. The guidelines provided by Dörnyei (2009), Garrett (2010), and Kalaja et.al. (2011) on constructing a questionnaire were carefully considered and applied.

5.3.3 Methods of analysis

The responses to the multiple choice questions of the survey will be presented and analysed by means of descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics, according to Dörnyei (2009: 96–97), are used to "summarize numerical data in order to conserve time and space", describing the answers of the respondents by providing the mean and the range of a variable. Dörnyei (ibid.) emphasises, however, that these statistics do not allow drawing any general conclusions: the statistics are applicable only within the range of this particular sample.

The data gained from open-ended questions were analysed by the means of qualitative content analysis, which Dörnyei (2009: 99) describes as "reducing the pool of diverse responses… to a handful of key issues in a reliable manner". As Sarajärvi and Tuomi (2018: chapter 4.4.3) write, the data represents the phenomenon under examination in the study, and the analysis aims at composing a clear depiction of the phenomenon in a verbal form. With content analysis, the researcher aims at organising the fragmentary set of data into a compact, coherent, and clear form without losing any of the information it entails. The data is disassembled, conceptualised, and reassembled into a logical whole to gain deeper meanings from surface structures. (ibid.)

In order to carry out the process of analysis as systematically and accurately as possible, I followed the guidelines provided by Sarajärvi and Tuomi (2018). The process of analysis involved various stages. I began by reading through the data and identifying prominent topics as well as reducing the data. Then I clustered the reduced expressions by grouping together expressions that represented the same phenomenon. Finally, I conceptualised the reduced expressions into theoretical concepts and continued to combine them into categories until I had the final main themes with their sub-categories. The process of analysis included exploring and interpreting deeper meanings from the literal meanings expressed by the respondents. It should be noted that making the distinctions between the themes emerging from the data can often be tricky. Many of the themes overlap and cannot be completely separated from each other. Furthermore, many of the responses to the survey reflect multiple different themes, i.e. included more than one reduced expression. These types of overlaps in the themes will be discussed where relevant. For the same reason, calculating percentages and quantifying qualitative data was not easy in all cases. The qualitative data were, however, also quantified whenever possible and reasonable.

6 RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the study at hand. First, I will briefly go over the background information about the respondents: their home countries, languages they speak, and their intercultural communication experience. I will then present the findings on research question 1. First, I will examine the theme of *standard language ideology* that emerged from the data. This section is further divided into subsections in accordance to the subcategories found under this theme. The second prevailing theme that emerged from the data in response to the first research question is *non-conformist approach to language*. In relation to research question 2, I will discuss the theme of *context specificity*. Lastly, I will examine another interesting theme that emerged from the data and which opens up a new perspective on the topic: *appreciation towards non-native speakers*.

6.1 Background information

It was a positive surprise that the questionnaire gathered good momentum and responses were received from native English speakers from various different countries: Canada (48 respondents), the United States of America (30), Ireland (11), the United Kingdom (18, six of whom specified England, four Scotland, and one Northern Ireland), Australia (5), Finland (2), New Zealand (1), France (1), USA/UK (1), and Canada/Austria (1). Mother tongues stated by the respondents (question 2) were English (109), Finnish/English (2), French/English (1), Gaelic/English (1), American (1), Scottish (1), Scottish English (1), German/English (1), and Estonian (1). The respondent stating Estonian as her mother tongue was included in the data after careful consideration, because she later specified that she has lived in Canada her whole life, so her English is native but she grew up with Estonian parents. Thus, I considered the respondent bilingual.

The respondents were also asked if they have studied or learned any other languages in addition to their mother tongue (question 3). Almost all of the respondents claimed knowing or having studied at least one additional language: only one respondent stated knowing none in addition to her mother tongue. The number of languages reported varied from one to as many as nine, the most common answer being two additional languages. From the 115 respondents who answered this question, the responses were distributed as follows: one language (29), two languages (36), three languages (27), four languages (10), five languages (6), six languages (3), eight languages (2), nine languages (1), and none (1). It is probably safe to assume that the three people who did not reply to this compulsory question have not studied or learned any languages in addition to English, thus making the overall number of those respondents four (4).

The last piece of background information that was inquired from the respondents concerned their intercultural experience: if they have any, and approximately how often they communicate (speak or write) with non-native speakers of English (questions 4 and 5). Out of the 118 respondents, 97,5% reported having intercultural experience and the rest 2,5% reported not having any intercultural experience. Figure 2 illustrates the frequency of communication with non-native speakers reported by the respondents.

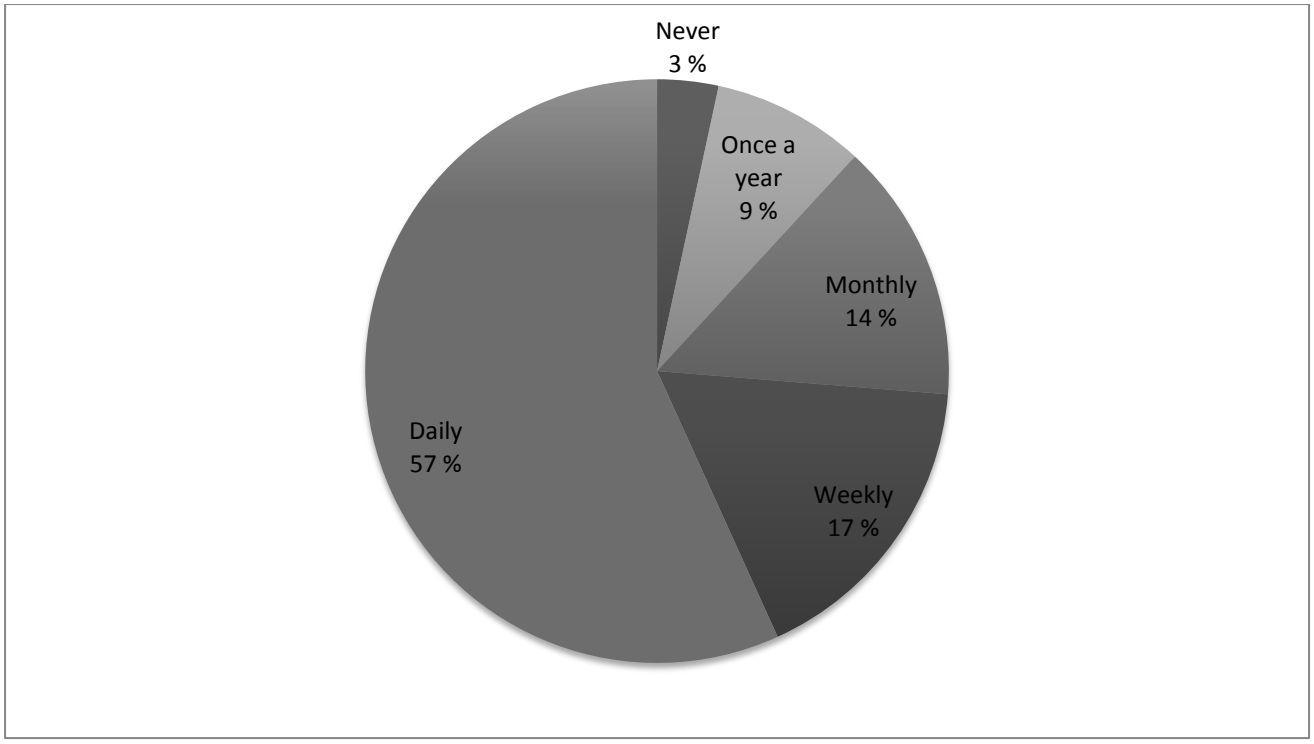

Figure 2. The frequency of communication with non-native speakers

6.2 Native speakers' views on ELF and its speakers

The first research question of this study sought to find out native English speakers' attitudes towards English as a lingua franca and its users. The data revealed a quite strong sense of a standard language ideology among the respondents. In contrast to standard language ideology, a non-conformist approach to language also emerged from the data. In the following section, I will examine the different ways standard language ideology emerged from the data. The theme is further divided into three subcategories of *ELF speaker as language learner*, *native speaker as model/target,* and *maintaining a standard of English*. I will then move on to discussing the non-conformist approach to English and how it was expressed in the data.

6.2.1 Standard language ideology

The theme of standard language ideology was clearly present in the data in a variety of ways. Multiple questions in the questionnaire aimed at finding out if a standard language ideology still exists among native speakers of English. This ideology took many forms and was rarely expressed straightforwardly; rather, it could be interpreted from the answers to the questionnaire and it seems that many of the respondents hold this ideology unconsciously. As was already

discussed in section 2.2.1, standard language ideology is, indeed, often unconscious and moulded by the education system and other institutions. I identified three main categories from the data that fall under the theme of standard language ideology: one in which the native speaker is seen as the model and target for speaking English, another where the respondent sees the non-native speaker as a learner rather than a speaker of English, and a third where the respondent believes that a standard form of English should be maintained. I thought it useful to examine these subcategories of standard language ideology individually because they could be clearly categorised from the data, and the theme of standard language ideology was a vast one and entails different aspects. Before discussing these three subcategories, I will examine the explicit statements illustrating standard language ideology that emerged from the respondents' answers to the open questions in the survey.

The open-ended question 8 in the questionnaire asked the respondents to name three matters that they consider the most important in communicating in a foreign language. From the answers to this question, standard language ideology emerged quite explicitly and prescriptive ideas of language use emerged quite prominently in the respondents' answers. The idea that 'correctness', i.e. conformity to standard English, is one of the most important things in using a foreign language appeared in 41,9% of the 105 responses to question 8. The expressions I categorised under this theme included for instance *correctness, (correct) pronunciation, (correct) grammar, correct use of pronouns* and *tenses, syllable stress, willingness to be corrected by a native speaker,* and *not deliberately butchering the language*. In this category, I included all the responses that seemed to suggest that non-native speakers should conform to and strive for standard English and thus expressed standard language ideology.

Standard language ideology emerged also from the answers to the open questions 7 (an opportunity for the respondents to explain their responses to the Likert statements in the previous question), 9 (a question about the context specificity of correct English), and 15 (free word). Some respondents wrote that they have different standards for the language use of natives and non-natives: They have higher standards for native speakers and are more forgiving of errors made by non-native speakers. One respondent even said that *native mistakes are literally 'unforgivable'* (Example 1). This together with the appreciation many of the respondents

expressed towards non-native speakers' effort of communicating in a foreign language (which will be further discussed in section 6.4) reflects the idea that native speakers understand that it is difficult to learn a foreign language perfectly; which indicates that there exists a standard of that language, one correct way of using English that should be learnt and striven for. Merely using expressions such as 'mistake' and 'error' reflects a prescriptive ideology about language.

> (1) However, the mistakes made by native English speakers - both written and spoken - are literally 'unforgivable' so my tolerance level for any mistakes made by non-native speakers is very high - in comparison. (R15)

6.2.1.1 ELF speakers as language learners

The first of the three subcategories expressing the theme of standard language ideology that was identified from the data is an account where the ELF speaker is seen as a language learner rather than a language user. I will first examine how the subcategory emerged from responses to the closed question 6 in the survey. I will then move on to discussing how the subcategory was illustrated in some answers to the open questions 7, 9, and 15. There were four different types of answers to the open-ended questions that reflected the idea of ELF speakers as learners. Examples of these will be presented in Table 2 and further categorised and discussed.

Closed question 6 in the questionnaire included one Likert scale statement aimed at exploring whether the respondents see non-natives rather as language learners than language users. The respondents were asked to indicate their agreement to the statement on a scale of 1 to 5 (see Table 1). Statement 11 claimed that non-native speakers should be corrected when they use English incorrectly, so that they learn the language properly. Only 7,6% of the respondents *strongly disagreed* with the statement and 20,3% *slightly disagree*d, while 38,1% *slightly agreed* and 6,8% *strongly agreed*. The remaining 27,1% were *undecided*. Based on the responses to statement 11, a slight majority thus sees ELF speakers rather as language learners than language users, i.e. that ELF speakers are in the process of learning the language and deviations from standard English norms should be corrected. It should be noted, however, that the responses do not tell us how the terms 'incorrectly' and 'properly' that appeared in the statement were understood by the respondents.

Table 1. Non-native speaker as learner

Statement	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Undecided	Slightly agree	Strongly agree
11. Non-native speakers should be corrected when they use English incorrectly, so that they learn the language properly	7,6%	20,3%	27,1%	**38,1%**	6,8%

The theme of non-native speaker as learner emerged from some responses to the open-ended questions as well. Some of these responses represent a multitude of similar types of ideas, and some were one of a kind. Examples of the four types of responses that expressed the subcategory of non-native speaker as learner are given in Table 2, and categorised and explained below. The extracts were responses to the open questions 7 (opportunity to explain responses to the closed question 6), 9 (asking the respondent whether they think correct language use is context specific), and 15 (free word; see Appendix).

Example 2 is an example of the view that **non-natives should learn correct English.** The respondent states that if one has time to write and edit, *all measures should be taken to use correct grammar*. She reasons this with practice being the way to learn, i.e. indicating that all measures should be taken to learn grammatically correct English. The language user is thus explicitly categorised as a learner. Some responses to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire reflected the idea that while meanings can be perfectly well communicated even if a person's English is not 'perfect', non-natives should *try their best*. Some respondents specified that non-native speakers should try their best to communicate effectively, while a few merely said non-native speakers should do their best without specifying what it is they should do their best in. I interpreted this to mean that non-native speakers should try their best to use English correctly or be as effective in communicating as they can; which, according to the results of this study, for some respondents, mean the same thing. Either way, it suggests that that ELF speakers are viewed as language learners, not users.

Example 3 illustrates a theme characterised as **ELF as an excuse to use bad English**. The respondent voices her worry that the concept of ELF is sometimes used to *allow English learners*

to settle for bad English or force native speakers to accept ungrammatical English. The word choice ‘settle’ indicates that not achieving full command of standard English is considered settling for bad language skills rather than a valid way of using the language. The fear that native speakers could be ‘forced’ to ‘accept’ ungrammatical English seems to indicate that native speakers have the power to regulate how English is used and what type of English they allow, thus positioning other English speakers as learners of English as a foreign language rather than legitimate users of English.

In Example 4, the respondent articulates a view of **mastering English**. The respondent writes that *it seems easy to learn enough English to be able to make oneself understood, but it's very difficult to master*. She also uses the expression *non-native attempts at communicating in English* and states that few non-native speakers she knows speak with *complete correctness*. This statement indicates that making oneself understood is not enough but that there, indeed, is an end result of language learning: completely mastering the language as a closed entity. The response raises an interesting question: what does it actually mean to “master” a language? The impression is that the non-native speaker is deemed learner, and her use of English is an ‘attempt’ at communicating until she achieves full command of standard English, rather than seeing the non-native speaker as language user.

In Example 5, the respondent expresses her view of **misusing English.** The respondent states that there are different standards for English use in different situations and that these standards should be conformed to. The respondent argues that English is very flexible but contradictorily in the same sentence says that English can be *misused by a non-native speaker unintentionally*. The word choice ‘misuse’ indicates that in the respondent’s opinion, there is truly a standard of English to which all speakers should conform and if one fails to do so, it is considered a misuse of the language. Thus, it seems that the respondent does not categorise non-native speakers as valid users of English who have the same rights to use English as native speakers, but deviations from Standard English are considered misusing the language. The idea that the language can be misused contradicts the claimed flexibility of the language: if language truly is flexible and can be used flexibly, what then constitutes ‘misusing’?

Table 2. Examples from the data: non-native speaker as learner

(2) When given time to write things out and think through if it is properly written all measures should be taken to use correct grammar. That's how one learns - practice! If in an academic or official situation it is important to make sure all parties are clear and understand the situation, and that the official record remains legible to future readers. (R29)
(3) I can appreciate and accept the phenomenon of English as a Lingua Franca and the need for it, but I worry that the concept is sometimes used to allow English learners to settle for bad English (or force native speakers to accept ungrammatical English, or worse make natives feel bad for considering it bad English). (R115)
(4) In Canada, so many people come from somewhere else, especially in the Toronto area where I live, that one hears foreign accents and non-native attempts at communicating in English all the time. It seems easy to learn enough English to be able to make oneself understood, but it's very difficult to master. Few non-native speakers that I know speak with complete correctness. (R103)
(5) Academic journals should be held to a higher standard as improper use of the English language in such a situation can lead to greater amounts of confusion. In the case of a Facebook status, one can usually puzzle out what has happened. It's the same as speaking informally to some friends and speaking formally for a larger group: the importance lies in being professional at the proper times. That being said, English is used by so many foreign speakers that it is very flexible and can be misused by a non-native speaker unintentionally. (R60)

6.2.1.2 Native speaker as model/target

The second subcategory of the theme of standard language ideology that emerged from the data is one where native speakers of English are seen as the model as well as the main target audience for English use. This view emerged from the data on several occasions. I will first present the results on the statements in closed question 6 which concerned this view. I will then discuss the responses to the open-ended question 8, which revealed consideration of the importance of cultural aspects of learning and using a foreign language. Lastly, I will present and discuss extracts from answers to other open questions in the questionnaire that represent different ways of expressing the subcategory of native speaker as model/target for language use.

Statement 2 in question 6 aimed at finding out whether the respondents think non-native speakers should strive for native-like use of English. The observation of the statements (see Table 3) reveals that the statement somewhat divided the respondents' views. A little over half of the respondents (51,7%) leaned on the *disagree*ing side of the scale, while around a third (31,35%) either *slightly* or *strongly agreed* with the statement 16,95% are undecided. There was thus a slight preference of striving for native-like use not being necessary.

Responses to the statements 1 and 5 on the question 6 in the survey (Table 3) indicate that the majority of the respondents do not think that English belongs solely to English-speaking countries. An overwhelming majority of 78,0% agreed (both alternatives *strongly agree* and *slightly agree*) with the statement that English has spread so wide that it cannot be seen as belonging solely to the English-speaking countries anymore. The results were similar for statement 5, which presented a similar idea to statement 1 but inversely: According to the answers to this statement, 79,7% of the respondents do not think English belongs to the countries where it is spoken as a native language. It is, of course, somewhat ambiguous what is meant here with English "belonging" to a country (as was pointed out by one respondent in the survey).

The responses to the Likert statements indicate that it is recognised and accepted by the majority of native speakers that English is used for communication all around the world and the ownership of English is not restricted to English-speaking countries. Some responses to the open-ended questions, however, emphasised the culture specificity of English and implied that a standard language ideology still exists that suggests that native speakers have the power to regulate how the language is used.

Table 3. Native speaker as model

Statement	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Undecided	Slightly agree	Strongly agree
2. People learning English should strive for native-like use	10,2%	**41,5%**	17,0%	25,4%	5,9%
1. English has spread so wide, it cannot be seen as belonging solely to the English-speaking countries anymore	3,4%	6,8%	11,9%	33,9%	**44,1%**
5. English belongs to the countries where it is spoken as a native language	**62,7%**	17,0%	10,2%	9,3%	0,9%

Question 8 in the survey inquired the respondents what they thought were the three most important things in communicating in a foreign language. Aspects related to cultural understanding emerged as a prevailing theme in the responses to this question: From the 105 responses to this question, around a fourth (24,8%) included a mention of cultural aspects. These included expressions such as *respect for* and *understanding of the culture* related to the language,

understanding and using *regionalisms, slang, colloquialisms* and *idioms* correctly, as well as *politeness codes*. Based on the responses, it seems that to many of the respondents, culture-specific knowledge and adapting to the culture surrounding the language is an important part of learning and speaking a foreign language. Thus, they embody the view in which native speaker of the language is the target audience and the model for learning the language in question. While most of the answers mentioning cultural matters in question 8 concerned learning about the culture, some also indicated that mere consideration and acknowledgement of different cultures is important in intercultural communication in general; not necessarily the need to learn and adapt to cultural habits related to a specific language, but to at least acknowledge and be sensitive to the fact that other people may have different cultural habits.

Table 4 presents extracts from the data illustrating the six different ways in which the subcategory of native speaker as model/target was expressed in the open question by the respondents. The extracts are responses to open questions 7 (providing the respondents an opportunity to explain their answers to the statements in question 6), 9 (inquiring about the respondents' opinions on the context specificity of correct language use), and 13 (asking the respondents to specify why they do not accommodate their speech towards non-native speakers).

In Example 6, the respondent makes a comparison between native and non-native use of English and thus partakes in the construction of **native speaker as the model for language use**. The respondent states that even native speakers switch between more colloquial language and more correct language according to the context in which they are communicating. She emphasises the importance of context and audience in steering language use (this aspect will be discussed further in section 6.3). She also makes a comparison between native and non-native speakers, thus constructing an ideal of native speaker as the model for English use. There were multiple similar responses in the data.

Example 7 illustrates two views: **native speaker as target audience** and **native speaker as the model for language use.** Firstly, the respondent seems to suggest that native speakers are the main target group with which English is used, because she states that non-native speakers *need to learn how to communicate with native speakers*. Secondly, the respondent articulates that she

does not modify her English to non-native speakers so that they get *to see real examples of how their language should sound*. She suggests that the way she, the native speaker, uses English is a *real example* of how the English of a non-native speaker *should* sound, thus setting the native as the model for English use. Example 7 also illustrates the subcategory of **non-native speaker as learner** discussed in section 6.2.1.1: the respondent positions the non-native speaker as a learner and herself as the good example for language use.

Examples 8 and 9 indicate that it is **important to use correct English with native speakers**. Some respondents seemed to indicate that non-natives should aim for native-like English to make the communication easier for natives. The respondent in Example 9 expresses the view that it is a *big issue* that native speakers tend to *do the work for them [non-native speakers] in understanding their incorrect English.* A few comments where incorrect English use was characterised as *annoying*, *distracting*, or *exhausting* also emerged in the data (e.g. Example 8). This view sets the native speaker as the sole target of the communication: it gives the impression that non-native speakers should conform to the way native speakers communicate, native speakers are not required to accommodate to non-native speakers. The responsibility for successful communication is also put on the non-native speaker, as the accommodation process is not seen as a mutual one. However, the respondent in Example 9 establishes she works as an English teacher, and thus looks at the issue from an educational point of view, which may differ from the outlook of a purely everyday/casual conversationalist. Similarly to Example 6, the context specificity of language use is also emphasised in Example 8.

Example 10 indicates the view that **language is connected to culture**. The respondent quite clearly expresses that for her, an important part of adapting to a foreign culture involves learning the language of that culture. By adding that she would want to speak the language of her new home country correctly, she seems to indicate that it is respectful for the language and its native speakers to learn the language correctly. This viewpoint seems to assume that English (or any other language for that matter) is learnt for communicating with the native speakers of that language. No distinction is thus made between ELF and EFL (see the discussion on this issue in section 2.3), but they are seen as one and the same.

In Example 11, the respondent voices her view that **English belongs to Anglophone countries** (or specifically England). She refers to *dumbing down* the language due to *misusing* it, indicating that standard language use should be striven for. There is a contradiction in the response (identical to the one in Example 5 discussed in section 6.2.1.1), as the respondent also articulates that English can be *used as a tool to communicate, either with correct or incorrect use*; what does the respondent then consider 'misusing' and how does it differ from 'incorrect use'? The view that incorrect use of a language damages the language itself (and the sole idea that there is such a thing as incorrect language use) is also strongly related to prescriptive ideas about language.

Table 4. Extracts from the data: native speaker as model/target

(6) I think it's important to think about your audience. In an academic journal, for example, using correct English will ensure you can be understood by a wide variety of language users. In a Facebook post, using more colloquial English might actually be better for expressing emotions, humour etc in a way your friends understand. Even native English speakers switch between colloquial and correct English in informal and formal contexts (R64)
(7) I choose not to modify my language all the time because they need to learn how to communicate with native speakers and not every person will modify their language. It also presents opportunity for them to question a form they don't understand, and to see real examples of how their language should sound. (R72)
(8) I think that it is much more important to use "correct" English in "official" contexts (such as an academic journal, and perhaps a public speech) when your audience includes native English speakers. Using "correct" English in these scenarios ensures that native English speakers are not distracted by the use of the language. In more casual contexts, this is not an issue. (R77)
(9) There's a big issue with my students to have them aim to be correct when the vast majority of people just do their best to understand them in the real world. They don't understand that people in Canada tend to do the work for them in understanding their incorrect English, and so, when they come to school and I'm pointing out all of their errors and how it's not at a certain level, they get frustrated because "people understand me okay". It's a challenge to get them to see that for further education/employment etc., proper English is an asset. (R72)
(10) I am very indifferent about these matters. Nevertheless, if I traveled long-term or moved to a different country with a different national language, the first thing I would want to do is learn that language and speak it correctly. (R84)
(11) English is the language spoken in the UK, belonging solely to England. There is no problem for it to be used as a tool to communicate, either with correct or incorrect use, or native and non-native use. However, care should be taken not to dumb down the language due to misuse. (R23)

6.2.1.3 Maintaining a standard of English

The third subcategory of the theme of standard language ideology that was represented in the data is the idea that a standard form of English should be maintained. There were multiple different

ways the respondents expressed this view in their answers to the open-ended questions 7, 9, and 15 in the survey. The different ways are presented with examples in Table 5. I will examine and discuss each of these examples further below.

In Example 12, the respondent explicitly states that a **standard of grammatically correct English should be maintained** by appropriate institutions. This view is present also in responses such as Example 13 which claims that correct English should be used by individuals so as not to forget it, thus implying that a standard of grammatically correct English should be maintained. These extracts, as well as Example 14, also include the view that **correct language should be pursued**. In Example 14, the respondent writes that especially when there is a chance to prepare and edit a text, it is more important to speak correctly (than, assumptively, when language use is more ad hoc). This is also a way to express that standard language should be maintained, as pursuing and using standard language maintains its existence.

Example 15 shows the respondent **associating valuing language with correct English.** She writes that for her correct language use is important in all contexts, but that she realises that not everyone feels the same way as language may not be *as valued for them* as it is to her. She thus implies that striving for and maintaining a standard of correct English represents valuing language.

Table 5. Extracts from the data: maintaining a standard of English

(12) A high standard of grammatical correct English should remain and be maintained by appropriate institution(s). (R23)
(13) Using incorrect English in day to day context can encourage people to stop or forget the correct use of grammar and punctuation. (R26)
(14) [I]n professional situations, especially when there is a chance to prepare and edit written remarks, it is more important to speak correctly. (R41)
(15) I think correct usage of English is important in all contexts, personally, but I realize that not everybody feels the same way. There are many who have no trouble making grammatical or spelling mistakes on Facebook updates, but for me I always edit mine to make sure they are accurate. It's a personal thing, and I think it's hard to instill a sense of...caring? into other people, where language is maybe not as valued for them. (R117)

In Example 11 (Table 4 in section 6.2.1.2), the respondent states that **English can be 'misused'.** She further articulates that *care should be taken not to dumb down the language* by misusing it.

She thus expresses strongly prescriptive ideas about language: that it, in general, is possible to 'misuse' a language and that this misusing may somehow damage the language. She claims that this damage should be avoided, thus implying that maintaining a standard of English is important.

The views explored above, and the overall category of the ideal of maintaining a standard of English, are strongly connected to prescriptive linguistics and standard language ideology. Mooney and Evans (2018) explain that prescriptivism often entails resistance towards language change and incorrect use of language may be viewed as damaging the language itself. The whole idea that language can, indeed, be used incorrectly emanates from linguistic prescriptivism and the standard language ideology.

6.2.2 Non-conformist approach to language

Although standard language ideology and its different manifestations as discussed above emerged from the data quite prominently, there was also a strong view of English as a flexible tool of communication, and intelligibility was seen as more important than conformity to standard English. This non-conformist approach to language (Jenkins 2014) emerged from the responses to both closed and open questions in the survey. I will first examine the answers to the statements in question 6 of the survey. The question included statements that aimed at exploring the respondents' 1) tolerance of grammatical structures that deviate from standard language norms, 2) preference of intelligibility over linguistically correct language, 3) views on what constitutes efficient communication, and 4) attitudes towards actual ELF structures. After this, I will move on to discussing the open-ended question 8, where the responses exhibited that a considerable portion of the respondents finds intelligibility one of the most important aspects of using a foreign language. Lastly, I will discuss how the theme of non-conformist approach to language emerged from the responses to the open questions 7 and 15, which provided the respondents the opportunity to comment freely on their responses or the issue in general.

The results on statements concerning the linguistic correctness and communicative aspect of language use are presented in Table 6. Statement 7 claimed that the same level of linguistic correctness should be required from non-native speakers and native speakers of English. A clear majority of 76,2% of the respondents disagreed (both options *strongly disagree* and *disagree*) with the statement, while only 13,5% agreed. The results to this statement suggest that the

respondents are more lenient in terms of linguistic correctness when it comes to non-native speakers. In statement 3, nearly all of the respondents (96,6%) claimed that non-native errors are not disturbing if the meaning was otherwise comprehensible. It is worth noting, that only 0,9% thought non-native errors are disturbing. Based on two other statements (14 and 8) as well, the respondents seem overall tolerant of English that deviates from ENL norms: 69,2% of the respondents reported they would accept the use of non-existent words and phrases, if their meaning was clear, and 75,4% indicated that erroneous use of English is perfectly fine, if the message comes across.

The respondents also held a fairly unanimous preference of intelligibility over linguistic correctness: in statement 6, 77,8% of the respondents reported that intelligibility is more important than linguistic correctness. In their views on the relationship between efficient communication and linguistic correctness, the respondents were not quite so unanimous. In statement 10, 78,8% indicated that communicative efficiency cannot be guaranteed through grammatical correctness, while a different expression of the same idea (statement 4) resulted in less clear results. Half (50,0%) of the respondents indicated that correct language use is not enough to guarantee efficient communication, while 33,8% claimed the opposite and 16,1% were undecided.

Statements 15 and 16 gave the respondents concrete examples of typical ELF forms which deviate from the norms of ENL. 61% of the respondents reported that to them, it does not make a difference whether someone says *We discussed it* or *We discussed about it* because both clauses are perfectly understandable (statement 16); almost a third (27,1%) did think it makes a difference. Statement 15 "*I studied about prepositions* is bad English" somewhat decentralised the respondents across the scale. Almost a half (49,2%) agreed with the statement, whereas approximately a fourth (24,6%) disagreed with it. As many as 26,3% were undecided. So even though based on responses to the other statements, the respondents are very tolerant of grammatically incorrect English produced by non-native speakers as long as the message remains understandable, an ungrammatical form is still considered 'bad English' by many, thus reaffirming the existence of a standard language ideology (see section 6.2.1).

Table 6. Intelligibility vs. linguistic correctness

Statement	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Undecided	Slightly agree	Strongly agree
3. It is disturbing when non-native speakers make errors using English, even if I understand what they want to say	**83,9%**	12,7%	2,6%	0,9%	0%
4. Correct language use is enough to guarantee efficient communication	22,9%	**27,1%**	16,1%	23,7%	10,2%
6. Intelligibility is more important than linguistic correctness	1,7%	10,2%	10,2%	32,2%	**45,8%**
7. The same level of linguistic correctness should be required from non-native speakers and native speakers of English	**52,5%**	23,7%	10,2%	11,0%	2,5%
8. Erroneous use of English is perfectly fine, if the message comes across	0,9%	11,0%	12,7%	**39,0%**	36,4%
10. Communicative efficiency and grammatical correctness do not have a straightforward relationship: the former cannot be guaranteed through the latter	1,7%	6,8%	12,7%	33,1%	**45,8%**
14. I would accept the use of words and phrases that do not actually exist, but the meaning of which are clear (such as 'undirectly', 'proletariatic')	2,6%	12,8%	15,4%	**40,2%**	29,1%
15. *I studied about prepositions* is bad English	11,0%	13,6%	**26,3%**	**26,3%**	22,9%
16. It does not make a difference, whether someone says *We discussed about it* or *We discussed it* because both clauses are perfectly understandable	5,9%	21,2%	11,9%	28,8%	**32,2%**

Looking at the results to the statements, it seems that for the majority of the respondents, intelligibility is more important than conformity to standard language, and that using grammatically correct language does not always guarantee successful communication. It also seems that the majority of the respondents would accept deviations from the standard language in communicative situations. Responses to the open questions also revealed that many respondents thought that getting one's message across is most important (in most situations) and intelligibility

does not require perfect English, but there are other more important aspects to language use than grammatical correctness (Examples 16 and 17). The respondent in Example 17 even articulates that what she considers proper language is simply language that gets communication across.

However, while the overwhelming majority of the respondents claimed in several statements that intelligibility is more important than linguistic correctness, the respondents' attitudes were interestingly not as emphatically flexible when they were later given concrete examples of typical ELF structures that deviate from the standard structures of ENL grammar. This conflict was explained by one respondent in the open-ended questions providing the respondents free word (Example 18). The respondent in Example 18 does not consider incorrect usage of words/phrasing problematic, but still believes that *correct usage of the language should be striven for* rather than *"being lazy" about it*. Even though the respondent claims not to be a fan of prescriptive grammar, she still seems to hold a standard language ideology in that she thinks that striving for correct language is important and not doing so can be interpreted as "being lazy".

> (16) Communication (getting your message across) is most important for most people in most situations, e.g. when traveling, shopping, or having informal conversations. In those cases, non-native grammar does not bother me as a native speaker. (115)
>
> (17) It dosent (sic) matter much anywhere in my opinion, the "correct" use of English is given too much weight. So long as communication gets across, its proper language. (R78)
>
> (18) Whilst I answered that I don't believe there's a problem with incorrect usage of words/phrasing, I still believe that correct usage of the language should be striven for. I'm not a fan of prescriptive grammar, but I do believe that the L2 speaker of English should strive to use correct syntax rather than "being lazy" about it, so to speak. (R118)

Question 8 in the survey asked the respondents what they consider to be the three most important matters when it comes to communicating in a foreign language. The intelligibility and communicative aspect of language use emerged from the responses quite prominently: matters emphasising effective communication over the use of grammatically correct English were mentioned in approximately half (50,5%) of the responses. The types of ideas the respondents mentioned in this question included for instance *intelligibility*, *communication*, *meaning*, *being understood*, *being creative*, *patience*, and *getting one's message across.* It is worth noting that matters related to correctness of the language and the intelligibility and communicative side

sometimes emerged from the same responses. As will be seen from the results examined in section 6.3.3 below, many respondents think that at least some conformity to standard English is needed to ensure intelligibility; the two aspects are not mutually exclusive.

The notion of a standard language or 'correct' English was questioned by some respondents in the survey (questions 7 and 15, which gave the respondents the opportunity to explain their answers to closed questions and free word). Insightfully, some respondents said that it is not easy to define correct English when there are so many different dialects and varieties of English. One respondent explained her answers to the Likert statement, stating that *Language is much too fluid for a number of these to have a real answer*. Furthermore, a few respondents pointed out that even different native dialects may be viewed negatively by other native speakers with different regional dialects (Examples 19 and 20). This thought of language being too abstract a concept for a standard form to exist is at the very core of this study: With English being so widely spoken, who is to define what the "correct" way to speak it is?

Furthermore, Examples 21 and 22 raise an important and interesting perspective on the issue of standard English and English users. Both of these respondents bring up the English(es) of the former British colonies and connect the idea of standard English and native speakers to wider social structures and even discriminatory language ideologies. The respondents both argue that no variation of English should be repressed as a form of communication; the respondent in Example 22 even states that *a "normative" English is especially repressive towards former colonies*. The social status and power associated with different varieties of English (or any language) have, indeed, been very widely studied and discussed in linguistics (see e.g. Labov 1966, Woolard 1998), and it seems that the issue is also relevant in terms of ELF, though perhaps in a different way or scale than before due to the wide distribution of English today. Indeed, Woolard (1998: 39) writes that the belief that distinctly identifiable languages can and should be isolated enters into various strategies of social domination. She continues to say that "ideas about what is and is not a "real" language have contributed to profound decisions about the civility and even humanity of others, particularly subjects of colonial domination" and that "rankings of languages continue to be invoked to regulate the access of speech varieties to prestigious institutional uses and of their speakers to domains of power and privilege" (ibid.) It seems that the whole concepts

of ‘native speaker’ and ‘standard language’ that are at the core of ELF studies carry discriminatory associations.

Based on the responses to the open questions, some respondents value non-native variations of English as much as native ones. It was stated by some respondents that all varieties of English, non-native and native, are equally valid (Examples 23 and 24). The respondent in Example 23 seems to have a good understanding of the phenomena related to ELF, and expresses a non-conformist approach to English use by stating that while native-type English *is likely to be clearer*, this is not always the case but a deviant form common and understandable to non-native speakers is perfectly fine for interaction between them and does not need to be corrected with its standard English equivalent. She thus recognises the flexibility of language rather than holding solely prescriptive ideas about its use. While the respondent in Example 24 mentions ‘errors’ in the sense of linguistic prescriptivism, she also states that non-native English is as vital as native English, and creative non-native uses of the language may enrich the language. One respondent also wrote that *regardless of the language, speakers learn from and with each other*: native speakers may also garner a new perspective on communication from non-native speakers. Similarly to Example 24, another respondent added that non-natives *can only add value to native speakers of English*.

> (19) The existence of different dialects and regional variations means that correct English is an arbitrary distinction anyway. As a native speaker I have had negative reactions from native speakers of different regions to constructions that are perfectly natural to me.
>
> (20) While there are avenues, such as academia, which require 'proper' English this is (in my opinion) a preference. It has nothing to do with degree of importance. What is correct English? Within continental America alone there are numerous differences regarding proper grammar, spelling, slang, etc. Some forms of English may be more effective for certain circumstances, but I don't know what correct English is in a global context.
>
> (21) There is no point trying to standardize English usage. It is impossible to determine what is "native English" when people from two different parts of the UK can barely understand each others' accents and have completely different ways of saying the same thing. I fear that the person defined as a "native speaker" of English will be assumed to be white. Through British imperialism, English became a global language, with many different variations which are equally valid forms of communication. West Indian "brukup" is as English as the "Queen's English" - more people speak that version of English than the "Queen's English" anyways. Yes, in certain settings English as a Second language speakers should be entitled to polite guidance in certain situations,

> but in reality, we can all work a little harder to try and learn the different flavours of our mother tongue. It's really not that difficult - a bit of intercultural exposure via the internet is all it takes. (R109)
>
> (22) I genuinely enjoy learning English slang specific to other regions, such as India and the Caribbean. No English "dialect" should be repressed in general communication. A "normative" English is especially repressive towards former colonies.That said, for new learners (EFL), the class should be tailored towards their own field and the places that they will be speaking so that they can be confident that they will be understood. (R107)
>
> (23) I think it makes sense to try and strive towards native type use only because it is likely to be clearer, but not in all cases. I know there have been studies that show also that non-natives are better than natives at expressing some things. If it's something that is common for non-natives and understandable then it's not really important to correct, but if it's something individual-specific that's confusing then it's useful to correct it.
>
> (24) Non-native English is just as vital as native English, not for the errors and other linguistic barriers that it can create, but for the enrichment through idioms and other creative ways to use language that native speakers were previously unaware of. (R117)

To conclude all of the findings examined in this section, it would seem that 'non-native grammar' (as it was referred to by one respondent in the survey answers) is, at least to some extent, acceptable to the majority of the native speakers. Many of them seem to realise the difficulty of mastering a foreign language and appreciate the effort non-native speakers make and the fact that non-native speakers are able to communicate successfully in a language that is not their mother tongue. Getting the message across seems to be the most important aspect of communication for most people. At the same time, the respondents hold deeply prescriptive ideas about the language in that non-natives should still strive to master the language in its standard form; as should native speakers as well. In other words, intelligibility in communication is appreciated as is the ability to achieve intelligibility in a foreign language, but the standard language ideology is still hovering in the back of native speakers' minds, requiring the effort to at least try and 'master' standard English.

6.3 The context specificity of standard English

The second research question of this study aimed to find out if context plays a role in native speakers' expectations of English use and if it does, how and why. Statements 9 and 13 in question 6 as well as question 9 in the questionnaire (see Appendix) addressed this issue. The respondents were quite unanimous on the topic, and the issue was addressed in some responses to the other open-ended questions as well. A very clear preference for *context specificity* of

language use could be seen in the data. The respondents who thought the importance of correct language use depends on the context were also very unanimous on the types of situations they thought correct language use is important. Specific categories which were present in the data under this theme were *written/oral* language, *formal/informal* contexts, and *audience*. After these topics, I will examine the matter of *register/expectations of language use* as well as the *reasons* provided by the respondents as to why they thought the importance of correct English use is context specific.

6.3.1 Context specificity

A clear majority of the respondents seemed to think that context determines how important it is to use correct language. This view was clearly reflected in the responses to both closed and open-ended questions in the questionnaire. I will first present the findings that emerged from the closed questions and then move on to discussing the findings from the open-ended questions.

There were two statements in question 6 in the survey that were designed to find out native speakers' views on whether or not correct use of English is context-dependent. As shown in Table 7, the answers to the statements 9 and 13 quite clearly indicate that the majority of the respondents think the need for correct English depends on the situation. Statement 9 "No matter the situation or context, English should be used correctly" resulted in 72,0% of the respondents disagreeing with the statement and only 16,1% agreeing. The rest, 11,9% of the respondents were *undecided* on the matter.

Statement 13 addressed the same issue of the context specificity of correct English use, claiming that "It is important to use proper English in official situations, but in casual contexts it does not really make a difference". As Table 7 shows, 66,1% of the respondents lean on the agreeing side (25,4% *strongly agree* and 40,7 *slightly agree*), and 22,0% on the disagreeing side (6,8% *strongly disagree* and 15,2% *slightly disagree*). 11,9% of the respondents remain *undecided* on the issue. The respondents are slightly more evenly distributed compared to statement 9, but a clear majority still seems to think context matters in the importance of correct language use.

Table 7. Questionnaire statements concerning context specificity

Statement	Strongly disagree	Slightly disagree	Undecided	Slightly agree	Strongly agree
9. No matter the situation or context, English should be used correctly	**39,8%**	32,2%	11,9%	13,6%	2,5%
13. It is important to use proper English in official situations, but in casual contexts it does not really make a difference	6,8%	15,3%	11,9%	**40,7%**	25,4%

The open-ended question 9 in the survey also addressed the importance of context specificity in language use, asking the respondents whether they think using correct English is more important in some contexts than others and asking for reasoning to whatever the respondent's opinion is. The unanimity of the respondents was even clearer in this question than in the closed question statements presented above. Out of the 111 respondents who chose to comment on question 9, a clear majority of 85,6% stated that the importance of correct language depends on the context. The respondents clearly differentiated between formal and informal contexts and, to some extent, written and oral use of language. Audience was also mentioned frequently as an aspect determining whether or not correct language should be used in a certain situation. The specific aspects of these views will be discussed in more detail below. Only 7,2% did not seem to see correct language use more important in some situations than others: a few respondents stated that using or at least striving for correct English is always important, whereas others stated that correctness overall is given too much weight or did not see correctness as a contextual issue. The whole concept of "correct English" was also questioned (which will be discussed further in chapter 7).

I will now discuss in more detail the responses to the open-ended question 9 in the survey and the main aspects that emerged from those. I will discuss the main divisions between contexts made by the 85,6% of the respondents who stated that context determines whether or not correct use of English is important.

Formal/informal

A division between formal and informal contexts determining the importance of correct language use was very clear in the responses to question 9 in the questionnaire: 39,6% of the 111 respondents explicitly mentioned the terms *formal, informal, professional, official,* or *casual* in their responses. An additional 17,1% did not specifically name these contexts but made a difference between formal and informal contexts by naming situations that can be grouped into these categories. Different types of formal situations were listed by the respondents as specific contexts where correct language use is important. Some of these were probably inspired by the questionnaire, as the open-ended question about context specificity (question 9) gave two different situation pairs as examples so as to paint a more concrete picture to the respondents and help with imagining different types of situations. The contexts that were mentioned by the respondents as contexts that require correct language use were *formal, official, professional business* and *academic settings, professional publication, journalism, academic journals, scholarly articles, public speeches, work meetings, job cover letters, resumes, emails, corporate setting, formal* and *official documents,* and *announcements*. In contrast, some contexts were written out by the respondents as examples of situations where correct language use is not as important as in others. These were casual situations and contexts, in contrast to more formal contexts mentioned above. The contexts the respondents gave as examples of situations where correct language use is not important were *social media, (non-professional) social media account, Facebook, with friends,* and *(casual) conversation*. This categorisation between formal and informal contexts seemed to be the most important for the respondents in determining the importance of correct language use.

Written/spoken

For some of the respondents, correct language was more important in written text than in spoken language. A few respondents explicitly stated that correct language use is especially important in written form. However, many respondents did not state the matter so clearly, but gave written forms of text as examples of contexts where correct language use is important in their opinion (see the list above).

Some respondents said that if one has time to prepare and edit a text or a speech, they should make every effort to use correct language. So perhaps the line drawn between written and spoken word is, in part, about spontaneity: errors are more easily accepted in spontaneous, ad hoc use of language than in situations where the speaker/writer has had time to formulate what they say/write. The preference for correct language use in written language is also somewhat present in the formal/informal category discussed above. The majority of the situations listed by the respondents as situations that require correct language use were not only formal situations, but also written forms of language. Many respondents said that it is important to use correct language in scholarly articles or official documents and the like. However, many respondents did not compare these to anything, so it is difficult to say whether their opinion is more about the fact that the language is written, or the formality or academic atmosphere of the context.

Audience

For some respondents, the intended audience also mattered in the importance of correct language use. From the 111 respondents that answered question 9, approximately 12,6% were of the opinion that audience should be taken into account in deciding what type of language should be used in each situation. A typical argument was that with large audiences, such as for journalism or public speeches, correct/standard English is more important because it is understandable to a wider variety of language users. In contrast, it was said that in casual conversations with friends, the audience is familiar with one's communication style and the group may even share their own slang, so language can be used more creatively and deviations from the standard norm are more acceptable. In other words, the respondents who stated that it is important to consider one's audience in communication seemed to think that it is important to customise one's language use to match the intended audience, whichever the situation.

6.3.2 Register and expectations of language use

A fairly prominent theme emerging from the responses to question 9 was the idea that there are different registers and expectations of language use depending on the situation. It seems that these expectations of language use concern natives as well, and seem to be a cultural matter. These social norms are, however, also expected from non-native speakers. This suggests that native speakers are seen as the model for language use (see discussion in section 6.2.1.2). There

is also a sense of prescriptive ideology in the view that a certain way of language use (register) is correct for a certain situation.

In responses to question 9, approximately 18,9% of the 111 respondents indicated that different contexts involve different registers and expectations when it comes to language use. Some respondents of both opinions brought up their individual preferences and the expectations of others. Example 25 illustrates the idea that emerged from the data quite frequently: the respondent has her own view or opinion on the topic, but she realises other people may not see the issue in the same way. The cultural habits and rules associated with language use may differ from her view, in which case she would abide by those rules against her own preference. This indicates how strongly the expectations of language use tied to each type of situation steer language users' decisions in terms of manner of language use.

> (25) Language has no intrinsic value and as such I don't see "correct English" as a contextual issue. Don't get me wrong, I would still use "correct English" in a journal entry for example rather than when I'm talking with mates, but that is simply because I understand that other people (readers of said journal) do have an expectation of "correct English". (R118)

All of the main categories discussed above, of course, go hand in hand. Audience determines the situation and through that the kind of register that is expected in that situation. Taking the audience into consideration also determines whether one can use slang words or not; the speaker/writer makes an assessment of whether these are understandable or acceptable to the audience. The expectations of register and the language that is then actually used might, then, affect how the language user is seen by others (a point which will be discussed below). The tight relationship between all of these aspects could clearly be seen in the responses to question 9, which asked the respondents whether correct language use is, in their opinion, context specific and why/why not. Example 26 illustrates well many different aspects that emerged from the data concerning context specificity as well as their connection to each other. The respondent voices her judgement made of a person based on the level of the person's language correctness. She also states that people in general do not *expect a high level of 'correctness'* on Facebook, and thus it is not as important as in an academic journal, where *the importance of the message and consideration for the audience* requires a higher level of correctness. She also voices her own

expectations of language use in a certain type of context, which seem to differ from someone else's expectations in the same context, perhaps due to cultural or other similar reasons.

> (26) Absolutely. A Facebook update does not require using correct English because people don't expect a high level of 'correctness' when reading posts on Facebook. An academic journal or public speech require the speaker to use correct English because of the importance of the message and in consideration of their audience. For example, when I read a news article that is full of spelling and grammar mistakes I wonder if the author ever bothered to proofread their work. What about the editor? Are they off drinking coffee and eating donuts instead of doing their job? The number of scientific articles I read that are chock full of spelling mistakes and errors is mind boggling. In fact, I'm taking an on-line course offered by the University of Helsinki and am very surprised at the quality of English being used. It's as if the creators of the course feel that a casual, fun approach is more important than using proper English. (R92)

The expectations of certain type of language use in a certain type of situation reflect prescriptive ideologies of language. As was discussed in section 2.2.1, linguistic prescriptivism entails attempts to recommend or mandate language use in certain contexts or registers as well as forming negative judgements about language users who do not meet these expectations.

6.3.3 Reasons for context specificity of language use

The second part of the open-ended question 9 in the questionnaire asked the respondents to specify why they see or do not see context as important factor in correct use of English. Approximately a third (30,6%) of the respondents specified situations where they think correct language use is important, but did not state why they think this is. From the responses that specified the reason, three main categories emerged: *clarity/conciseness*, *language use and preconceptions*, and *register and expectations*.

Clarity and conciseness

The main reason given for requiring correct language use in a certain situation was that grammatically correct, i.e. correct English ensures that the message gets across. Approximately a fourth (24,3%) of the 111 respondents who answered question 9 thought that correct English is more important in some situations than others specifically because a standard of English brings about a certain degree of clarity. It was further explained by some respondents that it is more important for some contexts than others that the message is correctly understood, which brings about the need for correct English use. Situations and platforms mentioned as examples of these

kinds of contexts were for instance *public announcements*, *formal documents*, *official settings* and *academic journals*, and overall texts or speeches that are intended for a large audience and a wide variety of language users. Correct English use was thus seen as providing consistency and clarity vital for understanding, which was considered more important in some contexts than others. According to Mooney and Evans (2018), the idea that the standard form of language is needed for clarity of communication is in part informed by prescriptive ideas of language and thus also connected to linguistic prescriptivism and standard language ideology.

In contrast, some respondents said that in private communicative situations, correct language use is often not as important because people who know each other well most likely understand each other's ways to communicate and they might even have developed their own mutual "slang". One respondent even argued that for some situations, more casual English might even be more effective. Furthermore, some respondents stated that it is easier to correct misunderstandings and question ambiguities in oral communication and face-to-face situations, so correct language use in those contexts is not as vital compared to written form. Extracts 6, 27 and 28 from the data exemplify well the most common arguments on this matter. Example 6 (in Table 4 in section 6.2.1.2) shows the respondent clearly and in detail explaining why she thinks correct language use is more important in academia than in social media: different audiences require different registers. In Example 27 the respondent simply states that *an agreed-upon variety of English* is important for *consistent communication*. Example 28, on the other hand, gives the register and expectations of language use attached to certain contexts as the reason for why the respondent thinks the need for correct language use is context dependent.

> (27) Yes, because for "official" purposes I do believe there needs to be an agreed-upon variety of English for consistent communication and to avoid misunderstanding. (R7)
>
> (28) Yes, I think there are different standards expected of the English language we use in different contexts. Academic and published writings generally have a higher and more formal level of English expected than every day conversion. Even from native speakers, it takes time to write and proofread to the level needed for professional published writing. In casual conversation and social media there is more room for slang, mistakes and experimentation. While the goal in each media is to be understood, there is a different culture around how the writer should be understood. (R20)

Language use and preconceptions

Question 9 in the questionnaire concerned the context specificity of correct language use. The question included a part inquiring why using correct language is (not) more important in some contexts than others. This inspired several responses about the image a speaker or a writer gives of themselves with their language use. A good portion of the respondents reported that, at least in certain situations, departure from the norms of English, i.e. grammatically incorrect English use gives a negative image of the speaker or writer. In contrast, correct and "good" English convey positive associations about the speaker or writer for some of the respondents. From the 111 respondents who chose to answer question 9, 16 (14,4%) brought up the idea that the way a person uses language affects the image other people form of this person. Furthermore, the matter was mentioned in three responses to question 7 as well.

According to these respondents, erroneous use of English suggests mostly *laziness*, but also *apathy*, *poor education*, *carelessness*, and *lack of attention to detail*. It was also said to give an *unprofessional* and *sloppy* image of the language user. Furthermore, some respondents said that incorrect language use can be *annoying*, *distracting*, or *too tiring to try and understand*, and people often require correct language use to *respect* or *take seriously what is being said*. A few respondents also claimed that they do not judge people negatively by their English skills, but others might do so. One respondent summarised this attitude in its whole by saying that it is important to use correct language in contexts where people *associate the quality of your English with ability.* In addition to directly stating that incorrect English is associated with negative traits, it was also implied by some respondents by stating that correct language use is more important in professional settings than casual conversation because the latter is more forgiving (such as Example 29). This idea of a more forgiving context implies that in professional/official/formal contexts people are more likely to make negative judgements about a person based on their language use.

> (29) In any professional or business context then using correct english will gain more respect, with bad english less likely to be forgiven than in an informal context. It would also depend on the market, if a business is specifically marketing towards english speaking people, yet using poor english then this would be considered much worse than a situation where the market is not specifically for english speaking customers. (R6)

Respectively, grammatically correct and well pronounced English was also reported to contribute to a positive image of the writer/speaker. Correct English use was said to *add credibility*, *convey authority*, *keep the respect of judgemental readers*, *convey a certain level of intelligence* and *show professionalism* and to just *give a good impression* in general. Education was associated with language skills here as well, as a few respondents said that correct language use *conveys a certain level of education* and people with higher education are expected to have better English skills. Proper English was also said to be an *asset professionally*.

As discussed in section 4.1, ideological interpretations of language affects social judgements made of people on a variety of personal traits, such as status, character, and prestige (see e.g. Giles and Billings 2004: 195) Prescriptive ideas about language and thus standard language ideology also often connects to judging other, both positively and negatively, based on their use of language. Judging others by their use of language is also strongly connected to standard language ideology. As seen above, the results of this study showed similar attitudes in that the correctness of English use is, by some, strongly associated with positive qualities in a professional sense and especially in professional contexts. Respectively, incorrect language use in situations where correct language is expected resulted in a negative evaluation of the speaker/writer.

Register and expectations

The different registers and expectations of correct language use were discussed in section 6.3.2. This was also one of the main reasons given in question 9 in the questionnaire for the importance of the context specificity of correct English. From the 111 respondents who reasoned their opinion of language use being context specific, 21 (18,9%) mentioned register or expectations as a contributing factor for the need for correct English use.

The cultural associations of English and their importance to the respondents were already examined in section 6.2.1.2. It is relevant here as well, since different registers for different situations are a cultural product. One reason given as explanation for the opinion that errors are more acceptable in oral communication was that *speech is naturally more casual*. This refers to

the theme prominent in the data that different situations have different registers for language use, which was discussed in section 6.3.2. Furthermore, the expectations of language use as a reason for context specificity were also explained by setting native-like language use as the model. In Example 30 (a response to question 9), the respondent states that it is more important to use correct English in a formal setting than on social media or with friends. She reasons this by setting native speakers as the model. She thus compares native and non-native use of English. In the ELF model, ENL is not used as the model for successful English use; in EFL, it is (see discussion in section 2.3). In EFL, the learners are encouraged to keep the natives as their model. In the case of Example 30, as well as many other instances in the data, the respondent thus does not seem to differentiate between ELF and EFL, but instead compares native and non-native use of English and through the comparison partakes in the construction of an ideal of a native-like language user.

> (30) Yes it is more important to use correct English in a formal setting such as work meetings than on social media or with friends. My reasoning for this is that most native speakers do not use correct English with friends but make much more of an effort in a corporate setting. (R3)

In conclusion, the results examined in this section revealed that an overwhelming majority of the respondents consider context an important factor in determining the importance of 'correct' English. Some respondents claimed that a standard of correct English is important for clarity, and should thus be used in contexts where ensuring intelligibility is crucial. There also seemed to be strong, culturally bound ideas about appropriate registers for each situation and platform and these are expected to be followed by native speakers and non-native speakers alike. Failure to follow the expectations of language use seemed often to result in assigning negative traits to the language user, whereas moulding one's language according to the predetermined guidelines of appropriate language use resulted in a positive evaluation of the language user.

6.4 Appreciation towards non-native speakers

In addition to the original research aims, an interesting theme of appreciation and face-saving emerged from the data. The questionnaire included four questions concerning linguistic accommodation, which is an important part of the concept of English as a lingua franca. The

answers to these questions suggest quite a strong tendency for appreciation towards non-native speakers for their linguistic skills as well as a desire to save face.

Question 10 in the questionnaire asked the respondents whether they modify their language in interaction with non-native speakers to make it easier to understand. The respondents were given five options as to how often they modify their language, if ever. All of the 117 respondents who answered this question reported accommodating towards non-native speakers at least occasionally; none of the respondents reported *never* modifying their language (see Figure 3). 6,8% of the respondents reported accommodating *rarely*, 19,7% *always*, 34,2% *sometimes* and 39,3% *often*. Responses to question 13 reaffirmed these results. The question inquired the respondents why they choose not to modify when communicating with non-native speakers. There were only 27 responses to this question, 11 of which were N/A responses.

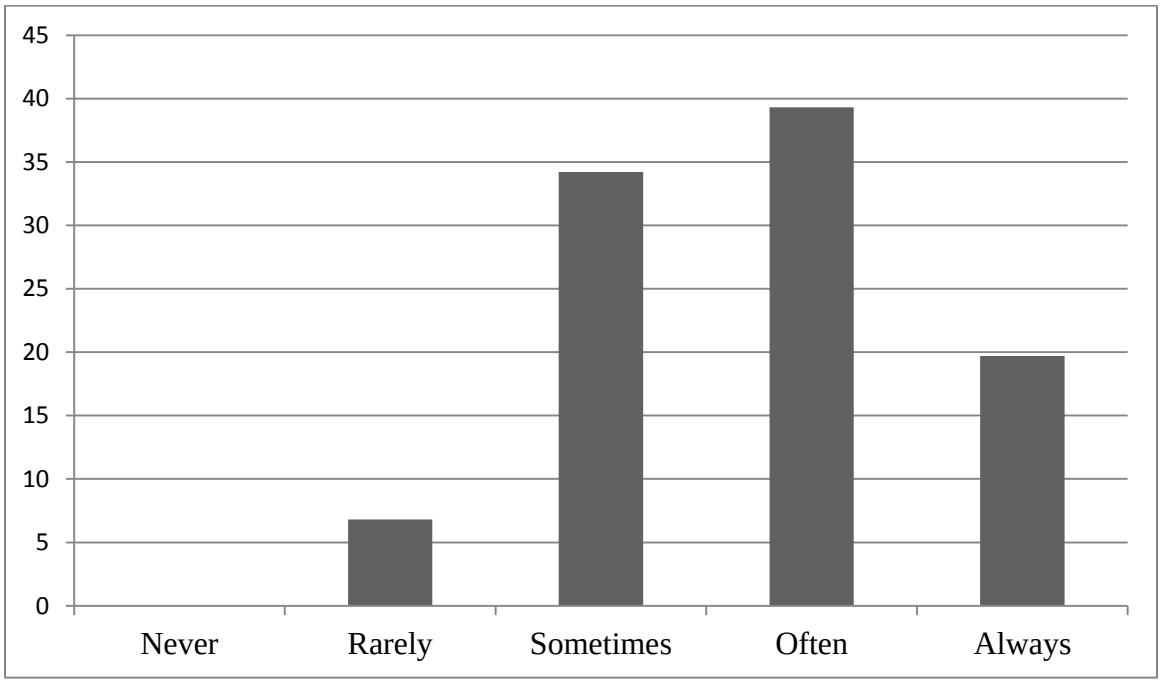

Figure 3. The frequency of linguistic accommodation

Question 12, then, asked the respondents to explain why they modify their language when they interact with non-native speakers. Based on the 109 responses to this question, face-saving and appreciation towards non-native speakers seem to motivate many of the respondents to accommodate towards their interlocutors: 40 responses (36,7%) included this motivation. Under

this theme I included answers that indicated the native speaker's consideration towards the non-native speaker's feelings or situation. The respondents expressed the theme by stating that, for instance, they do not want the non-native speaker to feel *stressed*, *insecure* or *confused*, but instead want to make them feel *comfortable*, *confident*, *more at ease* and *like they can communicate.* The respondents also mentioned that they want to *encourage* non-native speakers and be *polite*, *helpful*, and *friendly* by modifying their speech. It was also stated that it is *insulting* and *disrespectful* to overdo modifying, and some respondents could empathise with the vulnerability of being in a non-native speaker's situation because they had experienced that themselves. All of these types of motivation to accommodate towards the non-native speaker reflect the want from behalf of these native speakers to save non-native speakers' face: to not embarrass them or make them feel like they are ignorant but rather encourage them and make them feel at ease. It shows consideration of non-natives' feelings and understanding of how vulnerable people might feel speaking a foreign language to the native speakers of that language. There can be different motivations for wanting one's speech to be comprehensible, and not all of these motivations include face-saving acts or appreciation towards one's interlocutor. Thus, I did not include responses stating merely that the respondent modifies their language 'want to make sure non-natives understand me' but not being more specific about **why** they wish to make it easier to understand. I did, however, include to this category responses stating that the respondent wants to make their language 'easier to understand' and 'help non-natives understand', because I think these expressions indicate that the respondent wants to make the situation easier for the non-native speaker and help them. Being helpful and wanting to make understanding more effortless for the non-native speaker, in my opinion, shows consideration towards the non-native speaker and their situation.

Furthermore, there were multiple answers to questions 7 and 9 (providing the respondents an opportunity to explain their responses and comment freely on the questionnaire or the issue) where the respondent straightforwardly expressed their appreciation towards non-native speakers. Multiple respondents wrote in their answers that they appreciate and have respect for anyone learning a foreign language and being able to communicate in it, and are impressed by this (e.g. Examples 31 and 32). Similar comments to the ones to question 12 (discussed above) on not wanting to discourage non-native speakers also emerged from questions 7 and 9. It was also said

by one respondent that it is *appalling and shameful* that some native speakers judge people who *learned English as a 2nd or 3rd language or do not speak English*.

> (31) A non-native speaker however already receives a huge amount of respect from me for being able to effectively communicate, regardless of grammatical correctness. (R6)
>
> (32) Even some native English speakers can fail to use the English language correctly. I think it is unfortunate when native English speakers act pompously and think they are better than a non-native speaker just because of accent or use of language, and perceive this as a potential deterrent for non-native speakers to continue to utilize their skills. Non-native speakers have worked hard to learn an entirely new language, and I think it is impressive whenever someone has taken that time and effort to overcome language barriers and contribute to an internationally-integrated culture throughout the world. (R82)

7 DISCUSSION

The aim of the present study was to find out native English speakers' views on English as a lingua franca and its relationship to standard or native English: whether native speakers could accept this way of using English in international contexts as a valid and acceptable way of using the language. Another aim of the present study concerned a counterpoint of the previous. I aimed to find out whether native speakers hold language ideologies, such as the standard language ideology, which govern how they think English should be used by people who do not have English as their first language. The context specificity of language use was also under examination; if it is more important, in non-native speakers' opinion, to use correct English in some contexts than others. To reach these goals, data were collected with a questionnaire which resulted in 121 responses, 118 of which were used in the analysis. The data were analysed and presented with descriptive statistics and content analysis. In this chapter, the main findings of the present study are summarised and discussed in relation to previous research. I will examine the results to the research questions in respective subsections, and then move on to evaluating the study and suggesting next possible steps for future research.

7.1 Attitudes to ELF and ELF speakers

The first research question aimed at finding out native speakers' views on ELF and its users. More specifically, I intended to examine whether standard English is seen as the ideal for which non-native speakers of English should strive or whether ELF type use with its deviations from

ENL could be accepted as legitimate language use in its own right. In the light of previous research, it was hypothesised that an (underlying) standard language ideology would emerge from the data of this study: that native speakers perceive ELF speakers as EFL learners who should conform to the expectations of EFL rather than identifying and accepting ELF as language use in its own right. In many respects, the hypotheses were supported by the findings of the present study. Prescriptive ideas about language and standard language ideology emerged strongly from the responses. I identified three subcategories of the theme of standard language ideology: non-native speaker as a language learner, native speaker as the model/target, and maintaining a standard of English. However, a theme of a non-conformist approach to language could also be seen in the data. Finally, I examined a theme of face-saving and appreciation towards non-native speakers that also emerged from the data.

On a conceptual level, many of the respondents advocated communication and intelligibility over lexicogrammatical correctness. When ideas related to intelligibility over grammatical correctness and the ownership of English were conceptually presented in the closed questions in the questionnaire, the majority of the respondents appeared to have a non-conformist approach to English. However, responses to open questions illustrated quite strongly an underlying standard language ideology: viewing non-native speakers as learners rather than users of English, perceiving native speakers as the model for and target of English use, and advocating maintaining a standard of English. Where the flexibility of English use was emphasised by the respondents, it was often equalled with culturally regulated expectations and registers predetermined for specific contexts rather than actual flexibility or non-native speakers' equal right to use the language creatively (see Example 33). It is important to note, however, that these context-bound expectations also concern native speakers. Ultimately the interesting aspect here is that the 'flexibility' that was many times mentioned in the data, often did not mean genuine flexibility, but rather predetermined context specificity of language use.

> (33) Just as slang is permissible in some settings, it is not in others. Understanding and applying the proper language in the settings requires flexibility. (R91)

Thus, in the light of this study, it seems that many native speakers do not see a difference between English as a foreign language and English as a lingua franca: in other words, all non-

native English speakers are seen as foreign language users. As was discussed in section 2.3, when English is considered a foreign language, the focus is on its origins, its native speakers, and the cultural associations bound to the language. Non-native speakers are expected to conform to native speakers norms in not only what is grammatically correct, but also what is situationally typical and appropriate (Seidlhofer 2011: 17). Many responses illustrated a construction of the native speaker as the ideal of language use: native speaker use was set as an example of 'real English'. Furthermore, approximately a fourth of the respondents reported considering aspects related to culture one of the three most important aspects in using a foreign language. Culturally bound expectations and registers of language use played a big role for many of the respondents, and it seemed important for them that non-native speakers learn these expectations and adapt to them. Some respondents also reported judging language users by their success in striving to abide by native speaker norms of language use, a point which is also discussed by Seidlhofer (2011: 17) in accordance to ELF versus EFL. Incorrect or situationally inappropriate language use was reported giving a negative image of the language user, and respectively correct or situationally appropriate language use was said to contribute to a positive image of the language user.

Perceiving non-native speakers as learners and equalling ELF with EFL also often seems to deny linguistic creativity from non-native speakers. Linguistic creativity is perfectly acceptable in native use, but it seems that in non-native use this creativity, i.e. deviations from standard English, is often merely seen as errors in language use. Jenkins (2014: 13) writes about international English and linguistic creativity. She reports that according to her research, native English-speaking academics "assume the right to be creative in their use of English" (ibid.), while international students "risk being told their English contains errors if they, too, are creative with it". Denying native speakers the right to linguistic creativity in this way reflects the mind-set where the non-native speaker is seen as a learner rather than a rightful user of the language. Seidlhofer (2011: 33–34) also writes about how the very deeply entrenched normative assumption of English as a stable, hegemonic entity denies different kinds of speakers the adaptation of the language to suit their needs in different communities and contexts and any variation from standard English is denied any real significance. While this study did not include any examples of authentically creative language use by non-natives, any real conclusions about

this issue cannot be made. This type of thinking did, however, lurch in the themes of standard language ideology and expectations of language use that emerged from the data.

As opposed to the standard language ideology and other prescriptive ideas about language, a non-conformist approach to language use also emerged from the data. The closed question statements revealed that most of the respondents do not think native speakers can claim the ownership of English. Intelligibility seemed mostly to be ranked higher than grammatical correctness, and many respondents seemed to understand that communication entails more than just grammar. A theme was illustrated in some open responses where non-native language use was seen as equally valid to native varieties, or even adding value or a valuable perspective to native use of English. A few respondents also observed an issue of a racist language ideology: how the mere concept of a 'native speaker' can be discriminatory to the immense variety of English speakers, especially from the former British colonies.

The closed question statements indicated that the majority of the respondents do not think that English belongs to solely English-speaking countries anymore. Two statements (in question 6 in the questionnaire) about the ownership of English both resulted in approximately 78% of the respondents indicating that the English language cannot be claimed by solely the English-speaking countries and only about 10% claiming the opposite. However, from the open-ended questions a multitude of replies emerged where the respondent implicitly expressed their view that native speakers are the model and target of communication in English (see the results in section 6.2.1.2). Thus, there could be seen a contradiction between the two views. Of course, although the majority responded to the closed question statements in a certain way, the rest of the respondents were naturally of a different opinion, and the opinions of these two groups can naturally both be seen in the data. However, the contradiction may also indicate that at least some of the respondents hold the standard language ideology unconsciously, even though they conceptually advocate a non-conformist language ideology. As discussed in section 2.2.1, this is often the case. This interpretation of an unconscious standard language ideology is reaffirmed by the point made above that for many respondents the flexibility of language use does not mean authentic flexibility, but culturally determined expectations of what is appropriate language use in

a given type of context (as examples, see discussion on Examples 5 (in section 6.2.1.1) and Example 33 earlier in this section).

While many respondents seemed tolerant for non-native English and claimed to make allowances for it, this does not mean they consider non-native use of English a legitimate way of using the language. In correspondence to Jenkins' (2014) findings, the respondents advocated intelligibility and seemed tolerant of non-natives' 'mistakes', but expressed prescriptive ideas of English use. In essence, many of the respondents seemed lenient towards non-natives' language use but advocated non-natives to *try their best* and strive for correct English. It seems that the allowances are thus made for non-natives because they are seen as learners of English, not because non-native English is considered a legitimate way of language usage in its own right. Furthermore, this view seems to make an assumption that there is, indeed, an end result of language learning or successful communication. Thus it seems that the view is largely based on a prescriptive language ideology.

7.2 Context specificity

The second research question aimed at finding out native speakers' views on whether the importance of correct English is context specific and if so, how and why. I predicted a preference for context specificity: correct English expected in formal situations and more leniency in language use in casual contexts. The findings strongly supported this hypothesis: a clear majority of the respondents reported believing that correct English use is context specific. The formality of the situation, the form of the language (written/oral), the intended audience, and the register and expectations of language associated with a specific context were considered important factors in determining the importance of correct English.

The respondents were also asked why they (do not) consider correct English context specific. Three main reasons emerged from the responses: clarity and conciseness, preconceptions formed based on one's language use, and register and expectations of language use. Many respondents stated that it is important to aim for standard English, and that a standard of English in general is necessary, for clarity of communication. It was reasoned that the standard variety of English is most likely to be comprehensible across a large variety of English users. It was also stated by

some respondents that a high level of clarity is more important in some contexts than others (typically official and professional contexts), which is why correct English was more important in these types of situations. Mooney & Evans (2018) argue that assigning standard English the trait of being clearer than other varieties can also be seen as stemming from prescriptive language ideologies, and thus contributes to the construction of a standard language ideology.

The second main reason for the context specificity of correct English that emerged from the data was preconceptions made based on language use. Some respondents mentioned that a speaker of correct English is likely to be assigned positive qualities, whereas incorrect forms of language are associated with negative traits. The likelihood to judge language users seemed also to be context specific to some extent: the expectations of language use in a particular context and the success of the language user to meet those expectations counted. In other words, when correct language use is expected in an academic journal, the failure of the author to fulfil the expectations leads to a negative evaluation of the author. As discussed in section 4.1, judging individuals (whether negatively or positively) based on language use is often seen as belonging to prescriptive language ideologies, and thus also standard language ideology.

The third main reason for the context specificity of language use was register and expectations of language use: to some respondents, it seemed important that the culturally mandated rules of what is situationally appropriate language use be followed by both native and non-native speakers. This view, again, reflects prescriptive ideas about language by deeming the adaptation to culture related to the language crucial in foreign language use. Moreover, approximately a third of the respondents did not give an explanation as to why they think the importance of correct English use is context specific. It could be argued that this decision also reflects, at least in part, the importance of register and expectations of language use to the respondents. By not reasoning why correct English use is context specific, it seems that the respondents merely accept that language use is context specific, i.e. they have got used to the culturally-bound norms of using the language, where each context is assigned a register. A few respondents even said that they would conform to these norms even though they personally do not think it is important. It could thus be argued that at least some of the responses with no reasoning for context specificity

of language use contribute to the idea that English includes culturally-bound rules and expectations of what is situationally appropriate language use.

In interpreting these responses, however, it is important to bear in mind that the idea of 'correct language' most probably varies from person to person. Some see it as 'professional language use' and others merely proper language use for a particular situation, i.e. type of language use that is culturally mandated for a certain context. For instance, one respondent mentioned that *being professional at proper times is important* and specified that *professional may or may not mean correct*. Another respondent referred to slang in her responses, stating that slang may be confusing for some people and thus correct English should be used with large audiences. Here, it is not so much a case of grammatically correct, standard English but appropriate English; the appropriate register for a certain situation. The ideas of proper, correct, standard, and professional language seem to be interchangeable to some, and have differences to some. It should also be born in mind that answers to question 9 clearly did not only concern non-native speakers, but also presented rules of language use that apply to native speakers as well.

7.3 Appreciation and face-saving

Finally, a theme of face-saving and appreciation towards non-native speakers emerged from the data. Responses to a closed question about linguistic accommodation revealed that all of the respondents accommodate their language towards non-native speakers at least on occasion. This alone suggests the wish to save face and be considerate, and the result was reaffirmed with some responses to open questions. Multiple responses illustrated that the respondents are considerate of non-native speakers' sometimes vulnerable stand when speaking in a foreign language: Many respondents wrote that they want to make non-natives feel comfortable communicating in English and do not wish to embarrass them or seem disrespectful. Many respondents also showed appreciation of non-native speakers' learning a foreign language and ability to communicate in it. The wish to save face has been found to be a prominent feature in ELF interaction: The participants avoid insulting behaviour as well as putting the interlocutor in an embarrassing situation by, for instance, using phrases the interlocutor does not understand (see e.g. Meierkord 2000).

7.4 Evaluation of the present study

The present study was successful in gaining insight into native English speakers' attitudes towards ELF and its users. As the primary aim was to gain a general overview of native speakers' attitudes to ELF, an (online) questionnaire was both a practical and natural choice for collecting data. The questionnaire successfully reached native English speakers from around the world. Combining both quantitative and qualitative methods in data collection and analysis proved suitable for the study at hand as the data collected with both methods supported and supplemented each other and thus increased the validity of the study. The open-ended questions provided the needed depth to the analysis. As attitudes often operate on an unconscious level, it was crucial to gain the respondents' justifications for their responses as well as their opinions on the matter with their own voice in order to uncover the attitudes beneath the surface.

As any study has its limitations, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of the study at hand. Probably the main issue with a questionnaire is the heightened chance for misunderstanding as there is no opportunity to clarify the questions or terms. This study involved various difficult concepts which are assigned different meanings by different people, and thus the data and results should be examined with some caution. Moreover, due to the lack of research on native speakers' attitudes on ELF, the questionnaire was in part self-designed and thus it was difficult to predict its functionality. In further studies the questionnaire could be revised as questions 11 and 14 did not provide any reliably generalizable information on the topic.

7.5 Conclusion

Standard language ideology and prescriptive ideas about language use still seem to thrive among native English speakers. On a conceptual level English use, and language use in general, was seen as quite flexible and the 'correct' way to use language depends on the context of use. The flexibility was, however, mostly seen as predetermined cultural habits and rules of what constitutes proper language use in a given situation: There are expectations of language use in place to which both natives and non-natives should conform. Different contexts involve different kinds of expectations of language use: In some contexts grammatically correct English was considered more important than in others. Nevertheless, there also seemed to exist quite a strong sense of appreciation and respect towards non-native speakers through recognition of the

difficulty of language learning and using. This resulted in many of the respondents stating that they allow non-native speakers more room for ‘errors’ than native speakers. Allowing errors seems to, for many of the respondents, mean that they do not judge the language user so quickly by their language use. Quite a strong sense of grammatically incorrect or situationally inappropriate language use resulting in negative judgement of the language user emerged from the data. All in all, ELF was mainly equalled with EFL.

In the light of the findings, it seems that ELF as a phenomenon is quite poorly known and many respondents seemed to merely equal it with ‘bad English’. It would be beneficial to spread the idea that English can be used in multiple different ways and deviations from the standard form are not always just ‘lazy language use’, as was often suggested by the respondents in the data of this study. This idea seems to emanate from the deep-rooted prescriptive ideas about language and the standard language ideology which, according to this study, seem to be fairly common without many people even consciously realising they hold these ideologies. For future research, I thus suggest that native speakers be included more and their attitudes towards ELF be examined more thoroughly and on a larger scale. ELF research has focussed mainly on the non-native speaker and in relation to education, it has been researched if ELF should be included in the language teaching of non-natives. I believe it is equally important to inform native speakers about the changes in how their native tongue is being used and how differences in language use can be accommodated. The present study was of a small scale, and thus research should be conducted with a larger number of participants in order to gain a more reliable picture of the prominent attitudes. Moreover, the present study lacks a more thorough quantitative examination of the possible effect of demographic variables (such as age, gender, home country, linguistic background, and educational background) to ELF attitudes. I argue that it is crucial to research native speakers’ attitudes towards non-native uses of English more deeply. As discussed in section 4.1, language attitudes have been noted to affect perception, which may then increase the likelihood of intelligibility issues which are independent of the linguistic accuracy of the speaker. Language attitudes and ideologies matter thus greatly in intercultural communication, and intercultural communication is without a doubt increasingly common at this day and age.

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APPENDIX: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Views on English as a Lingua Franca

Hello and welcome!

I would like you, a **native speaker** of English, to help me by answering the following questions about your views on international use of English. The purpose of this survey is to gather data for my Master's thesis which I am currently working on at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland.

English is very widely used as a lingua franca, a mean of communication between people who do not share a common first language. Non-native speakers often use English and their other language resources creatively: they may modify the language (e.g. grammatical forms or vocabulary) according to their audience, in ways they believe more efficiently gets their message across. The goal of my thesis is to find out native English speakers' views on non-native use of English and (successful) communication in intercultural settings.

There are no "right" or "wrong" answers – I am interested only in your intuitions and personal views on this matter.

Filling out the questionnaire will only take about 5-10 minutes and all responses will be kept anonymous. If you have any questions, comments or concerns regarding this study or anything related to it, feel free to contact me at kerttu.m.keto@student.jyu.fi. If you wish to read the thesis once it is finished, it will be published on jyx.jyu.fi, where it will be freely accessible.

I sincerely thank you for your time – each and every reply is most appreciated.

Kind regards,
Kerttu Keto

1. Home country

2. Mother tongue
3. Other languages you have learned/studied

4. Do you have any intercultural experience? (Any experiences where you have interacted with people from a different culture and with a different mother tongue than your own)
   - Yes
   - No
   - I am not sure

5. Approximately how often do you communicate (speak or write) with non-native speakers of English?

   1 never

   2 once a year

   3 monthly

   4 weekly

   5 daily

6. Below, there are 16 statements about English and its use. Please read the statements carefully and check the option closest to your opinion on the matter. Please answer all of the questions and only check one of the options.

   1= Strongly disagree, 2= Slightly disagree, 3= Undecided, 4= Slightly agree, 5= Strongly agree

   1. English has spread so wide, it cannot be seen as belonging solely to the English-speaking countries anymore 1 2 3 4 5 □
   2. People learning English should strive for native-like use 1 2 3 4 5 □
   3. It is disturbing when non-native speakers make errors using English, even if I understand what they want to say 1 2 3 4 5 □
   4. Correct language use is enough to guarantee efficient communication 1 2 3 4 5 □

5. English belongs to the countries where it is spoken as a native language 1 2 3 4 5 □
6. Intelligibility is more important than linguistic correctness 1 2 3 4 5
7. The same level of linguistic correctness should be required from non-native speakers and native speakers of English 1 2 3 4 5
8. Erroneous use of English is perfectly fine, if the message comes across 1 2 3 4 5 □
9. No matter the situation or context, English should be used correctly 1 2 3 4 5 □
10. Communicative efficiency and grammatical correctness do not have a straightforward relationship: in other words, the former cannot be guaranteed through the latter 1 2 3 4 5 □
11. Non-native speakers should be corrected when they use English incorrectly, so that they learn the language properly 1 2 3 4 5
12. Native English is more valuable than non-native varieties of English 1 2 3 4 5
13. It is important to use proper English in official situations, but in casual contexts it does not really make a difference 1 2 3 4 5
14. I would accept the use of words and phrases that do not actually exist, but the meaning of which are clear (such as 'undirectly', 'proletariatic') 1 2 3 4 5
15. *I studied about prepositions* is bad English 1 2 3 4 5
16. It does not make a difference, whether someone says *We discussed about it* or *We discussed it* because both clauses are perfectly understandable 1 2 3 4 5

7. If you would like to comment on the statements or explain your answers, please do so here:

8. What would you say are the three most important things in learning/using foreign languages?
9. Do you think using correct English is more important in some contexts than others (e.g. Facebook update vs. academic journal, casual conversation vs. public speech)? Why/why not?

10. Do you modify your language use in any way when interacting with non-native speakers of English to make it easier to understand?

    1 2 3 4 5 (never – always)

11. If so, how? You can choose as many options as you like.

I modify my language with non-native speakers by…

Please note that you probably use the following features when you communicate with other native speakers of English, as well – try and think about features you use MORE FREQUENTLY with non-native speakers.

- … stressing a central word important to understanding the message
- … pausing before a central word (to stress it)
- … speaking in a slower pace
- … omitting prepositions, articles, conjunctions, subject pronouns or inflectional morphology (i.e. using ungrammatical forms of language)
- … using shorter sentences
- … avoiding vocabulary that I believe to be problematic to the other person (e.g. idioms, colloquial words, overly formal words, etc.)
- … using present tense more (even when talking about the past)
- … being more direct
- … discussing topics more superficially; in less detail
- … using questions rather than statements in introducing new topics
- … accepting inappropriate responses
- … checking the other person has understood me correctly
- … checking I have understood the other person correctly
- … repeating myself or the other speaker
- … requesting clarification to something the other person has said
- something else: _____

12. If you modify your language when communicating with non-native speakers, why?
13. If you do not modify your language when communicating with non-native speakers, why?
14. If you experience a communication breakdown or trouble reaching mutual understanding with a non-native speaker, what would you say are the most likely causes?

15. Anything else you would like to say regarding the issue or the questionnaire?

Thank you for your participation!