

Attitudes of native and nonnative speakers of English toward various regional and social U.S. English accents

by

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ABSTRACT

There is a consistent stigma associated with nonstandard U.S. English accents, and language attitude studies have documented that both standard and nonstandard dialect speakers rate speakers of nonstandard accents lower than standard-accented speakers on a variety of personality characteristics. Whether nonnative speakers of English share these negative assessments of nonstandard accents is not clear. The present study investigates the attitudes of native as well as nonnative speakers of English toward various regional and social U.S. English accents and if length of stay in the U.S. has an effect on nonnative speakers' adopting language stereotypes similar to native speakers. Finally, the study seeks to determine if the subjects can correctly identify the accents and if identification has an effect on ratings for nonnative speakers.

Three U.S. English accents, Midwestern, Southern, and African American Vernacular English (AAVE) were evaluated using a 7-point Likert scale by three groups of raters. The groups were native speakers of English, nonnative speakers of English present in the U.S. for six months or less, and nonnative speakers of English present in the U.S. between two and six years. After rating the speakers, the raters attempted to identify the accents of the speakers.

The results showed that all three groups of raters evaluated the Midwestern-accented speech highest on all pairs of characteristics. Both groups of nonnative speakers had similar ratings to native speakers for Midwestern speech, only nonnative speakers in the U.S. for two or more years had similar ratings to native speakers for the Southern speech. Both groups of nonnative speakers rated AAVE-accented speech lower than native speakers. Nonnative

speakers were less successful in identifying Midwestern and Southern-accented English, but were more successful in identifying AAVE-accented English. Skill at identification had little correlation to attitudes expressed by nonnative speakers. The results indicate that time spent in the U.S. is not a factor in adopting the notion of a prestige variety for nonnative speakers. The results also indicate that nonnative speakers become more sensitive to regional accents with extended time in the U.S., but that time is not a factor in nonnative speakers' developing bias toward social accents.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the United States, evidence has shown that dialects which are considered to be nonstandard are stigmatized, and their speakers are associated with negative stereotypes. We all know the clichés well. Many people tend to think of those who speak with a Southern accent as slow and unintelligent (Preston, 1996a). They may also characterize black speech as ghetto, slang, and low-class. A New York accent might be associated with a rude or working class person (Niedzielski & Preston 2000). While these are some of the negative stereotypes associated with speakers of nonstandard accents, there are some positive ones as well. Speakers with nonstandard accents have also, for example, been labeled as being friendlier, and more trustworthy and honest, as well as to possess more personality than standard speakers (Hewett, 1971; Tucker & Lambert, 1969). Since language is so closely tied to identity, how one speaks is often the yardstick by which he is judged. People tend to use dialects and accents as a way to size one another up (Alvarez & Kolker, 1987). The instant someone utters a word, a host of stereotyped reactions may take place. If the speaker happens to speak with a stigmatized accent, the reaction will likely be negative. Of course, whether or not these judgments are true does not matter. The speech simply acts as a cue to group membership, and the stereotyped reaction is formed based on the beliefs which one has about particular groups of people (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Thus, speech is a very powerful tool by which we are judged.

Interestingly, it is not uncommon even for speakers with a stigmatized accent or dialect to regard their own speech as “bad” or “improper” (Alvarez & Kolker, 1987; Niedzielski & Preston, 2000). They often recognize that if they wish to leave the region or to

“climb the ladder of success,” they will have to learn to speak “properly” so that they will not be judged negatively or so that their professional and intellectual abilities will not be questioned. There is often this distinction between a home dialect and a professional dialect among nonstandard speakers (Alvarez & Kolker, 1987). Conversely, however, other speakers with nonstandard accents refuse to adopt what is considered a standard accent (Wardhaugh, 2002). To many, maintaining their home accent and variety in spite of the disadvantages it may bring to them is a way for speakers of nonstandard dialects to show solidarity with other members in their speech community, to preserve their identities and to resist the standardization of their language perhaps due to disappointment in the standard-speaking society. Thus, keeping their home variety has certain advantages within their communities and their language has what is called covert prestige. This means that although its prestige is negative, it is “not without its comforts” (Wardhaugh, 2002, p. 349).

Standard Language Ideology

Such attitudes by both speakers of stigmatized dialects as well as those outside the particular speech community can only be understood because their existence is based on a comparison to a non-stigmatized variety. Clearly, if certain dialects or accents are seen as particularly stigmatized, it must be because these they are being measured against a dialect or accent that is assumed to be superior. Stigmatized dialects and accents are often faulted because they do not sound like what people claim is standard English. While those who make such claims can not explain why, they often state that these varieties are accented and that those who don't speak the standard are just not as intelligent as those who do (Lippi-Green, 1994; Niedzielski & Preston, 2000; Preston 1996a). There is often a sense of “why

can't they just speak right?' Although the concept of standard English is elusive, the fact that it is often used as a mirror by which "bad" English can be measured represents the psychological awareness that people have of the existence of Standard American English (SAE).

One might expect such pervasive beliefs about what is "good" and "bad" English to be the result of some government agency regulating standards of English in the U.S. However such an agency does not exist in this country, as it does in France where the Academie Française oversees all regulation of the standards of the French language. In fact, linguists have had much difficulty defining what standard English is in the United States. It is considered a written as opposed to oral variety (Wiley and Lukes, 2000). Others claim that it is possible to speak "correct" English with a variety of accents, that each region supports its own standard (Falk, 1978). However one attempts to define it, awareness of a standard indicates the psychological reality of SAE and can be explained in terms of standard language ideology. Standard language ideology is defined as, "a bias toward an abstracted, idealized, homogenous spoken language which is imposed from above...which takes as its model the written language" and which has as its goal the "suppression of variation," (Lippi-Green, 1994, p. 166). Under such ideology, one variety attains its status as the prestige variety because it is the variety of a dominant group who is able to impose its variety as superior over others (Wiley & Lukes, 2000). The dominance is imposed through a variety of national institutions, including the educational system, the media, the corporate sector, and the courts (Lippi-Green, 1994). Since the dominant variety is imposed through these institutions, speakers of nonstandard regional or social dialects and accents are at a considerable social and educational disadvantage. Thus, command of the standard variety is

used as a gate-keeping device for social and educational opportunities (Wiley & Lukes, 2000).

The belief in a standard language explains the social stigma attached to nonstandard Englishes. In accordance with standard language ideology, the fact that the standard is learned at school explains part of why people are so negative toward nonstandard varieties. There is a real connection between education and speaking “correct” English. Thus, those who don’t speak the standard variety may be seen as unintelligent, and even worse, those who are seen as unwilling to speak “correctly”, are viewed as possessing a lack of industry, an offense even more unforgivable than being unable to speak in a standard variety (Niedzielski & Preston, 2000; Preston 1996a). However, the belief in a standard language does not clarify the question of what it is. When asked for a definition, linguists and non-linguists alike tend to define SAE in terms of its absence of stigmatizing features (markers of region, race, or social class) rather than by the presence of positive ones (Fromkin and Rodman, 1983; Niedzielski & Preston, 2000; Preston, 1996a). This makes it difficult to define SAE precisely.

Many language attitude studies in which nonstandard U.S. English dialects and accents, including Southern and African American Vernacular English (AAVE), receive consistently lower ratings than speakers of SAE by native speakers of U.S. English (e.g. Alford & Strother, 1990; Hewett, 1971; Tucker & Lambert, 1969). However, while an abundance of evidence has shown the stigma that native speakers attach to nonstandard U.S. dialects and accents, there has been little investigation into the attitudes that nonnative speakers hold of such dialect groups. While Alford and Strother (1990) have shown that nonnative speakers have shown some prejudice against nonstandard-accented varieties, they

did not appear to hold the same prejudices that the native speakers in the study did. Alford and Strother made the claim that the differences in ratings between the nonnative and native speaker raters was due to the short amount of time that the nonnative speakers had been in the country. Since the average length of stay in the U.S. for the nonnative speakers was six months, Alford and Strother's claim was that this short amount of time was "barely enough time to form surface-level value judgments about the area in which they were living, much less to form complex opinions about the individual characteristics of and the interrelationships among various parts of the country" (p. 487). The fact that native speakers have such similar judgments is thought to come from standard cultural beliefs. However, from Alford and Strother, we cannot assume that nonnative speakers share in these beliefs, although they may be assumed to share them the longer they are in the cultural environment.

Purpose

This study aims to examine the attitudes that native and nonnative speakers have about various regional and social U.S. English accents. It also aims to see if the length of time nonnative speakers are in the U.S. will have an effect on their adopting language stereotypes similar to native speakers. Finally, it aims to discover if the speakers are able to correctly identify the accents and to see if identification has an effect on ratings. The specific questions being addressed in this research are as follows:

- (1) Do native and nonnative speakers of English rate SAE (represented by Midwestern-accented U.S. English in the present study) higher than they rate nonstandard U.S. English accents?
- (2) Do nonnative speakers who have been in the U.S. for a substantial period of time (between 2 and 6 years) rate U.S. English accents more similarly to native English

speakers than nonnative speakers who have been in the U.S. for a relatively short period of time (6 months or less)?

(3) Do nonnative speakers of English who do not correctly identify the accents have similar ratings to those nonnative speakers of English who do correctly identify the accents?

The first question was designed to explore whether standard accents are indeed perceived as more prestigious than nonstandard accents. The second question was intended to investigate if the amount of time a nonnative speaker spends in the cultural environment has an effect on his beliefs about accents. The third question seeks to explore the relationship between accent identification and ratings. That is, if a speaker identified a stigmatized accent correctly, would this result in low ratings, as opposed to if he had identified the accent as a non-stigmatized one.

I hypothesized that native speakers as well as nonnative speakers who had been in the U.S. between 2 and 6 years would rate Midwestern higher than Southern and AAVE while those nonnative speakers who had been in the U.S. for 6 months or less would not necessarily distinguish Midwestern as more favorable than Southern and AAVE. Next, I thought that nonnative speakers who had been in the U.S. between 2 and 6 years would have a more similar profile of ratings of Midwestern, Southern, and AAVE to native speakers than nonnative speakers who had been in the U.S. for 6 months or less. Finally, I thought that there would be differences in the ratings between nonnative speakers who could and could not identify the accents of the speakers whom they were rating.

The importance of this study is reflected in the well-documented stigma of nonstandard-accented speakers in the U.S. The work of Niedzielski and Preston, (2000), Preston (1996a) as well as Alvarez and Kolker (1987) has produced evidence which has

shown what folk linguists believe about nonstandard dialects and accents. Language attitudes studies have sought to find out similar information by asking listeners to evaluate the speech of nonstandard-accented speakers by rating their speakers' personality characteristics and personal attributes. However, one criticism of the language attitude paradigm discussed in Preston (1996a) is that they do not ask listeners to identify the dialect or accent group they are evaluating. Nevertheless, language attitude studies, without the knowledge of whom their listeners thought they were evaluating, have concluded for example, that "native speakers regard speakers with a Southern accent as less intelligent than speakers of Standard American English," without knowing if the person judging the voice indeed thought that he was rating a Southerner. The combination of the listening task in the present study with the task of identification will help to bridge the gap between folk linguistic studies such as Preston (1996a) and language attitude studies and through this, hopes to shed some light onto what language stereotypes both native and nonnative speakers have of nonstandard U.S. accents, as has been lacking in other language attitude studies.

In addition the present study will build on the small body of knowledge regarding nonnative speakers' attitudes toward various U.S. English accents. The fact that there have been so few studies in this area reveals the need for the present study. Also, this study introduces the hypothesis of 'convergence', i.e., the adoption of native speaker attitudes by nonnative speakers as they spend progressively more time in the language and cultural environment of the United States. The investigation of this phenomenon is made possible by studying two groups of nonnative speaker raters, who differ in the amount of time they have been in the culture. It is hoped that the present study will shed some light on the stereotypes that both native and nonnative speakers hold toward various U.S. English accents, and in

particular nonstandard-accented English, as well as on the potential ‘convergence’ in attitudes between nonnative and native speaker raters.

This study is valuable because if nonnative speakers increasingly reflect native speakers’ cultural values toward nonstandard-accented English relative to their increased amount of time in the U.S., this suggests that the prejudice perpetuates itself. If this indeed is the case, it can only be assumed that discrimination based on linguistic grounds will continue to be a threat to both immigrants as well as to nonnative speakers who are ESL teachers around the world. For if a native speaker of U.S. English is discriminated against because he speaks with a nonstandard accent, what chance does an immigrant have in competing for jobs and educational opportunities in the U.S.? Similarly, if such pervasive stigmas exist against even native speakers with a nonstandard accent, a nonnative speaker applying for an ESL position may be at an even greater disadvantage because he will never be perceived as a standard English speaker. This is evidenced in the growing trend where many job openings for ESL teachers require that the applicant be a native speaker of English. This reflects these pervasive views that only native speakers (with a particular accent) can speak the standard and its association with “correct” and educated speech.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will provide an overview of the literature that has investigated both native and nonnative speakers' attitudes toward different dialects and accents of American English. Most studies have revealed a stigma attached to speakers of nonstandard dialects and accents and a consistent preference for Standard American English (SAE). I will discuss possible ideologies as well as the way that language stereotypes are transmitted by both native and nonnative speakers of English.

Standard American English

Much of the research on language-based stereotypes has concerned speakers of dialects and accents other than Standard American English (SAE) and has documented the stigma attached to speakers of nonstandard dialects accents (Cross, DeVaney, & Jones 2001). However, many linguists debate the existence of a standard language. Fromkin and Rodman (1983) call it an idealization, and claim that no one speaks it, and that if anyone were to speak it, we wouldn't know it, because SAE has not been precisely defined. In arguing their position, Fromkin and Rodman describe a conference which was entirely devoted to forming a precise definition of SAE. This conference in fact failed to produce a definition of SAE satisfactory to all of the scholars present. Others claim that each region supports its own standard. For example, what is considered standard in New York is not standard in Houston, and vice versa (Falk, 1978). Both of these positions, however, are not confirmed when non-linguists (folk linguists) are asked about their views regarding standard and nonstandard dialects and accents. While linguists have asserted that all languages and varieties are equal

as codes of communication that allow their speakers to attribute meaning, represent logical thought, and communicate within a community of speakers (Wiley & Lukes, 2000), research has shown that folk linguists do not accept this to be true due to strong notions of the existence of a standard language as the “correct” variety in American English.

Niedzielski & Preston, (2000) and Preston (1996a) have done much work in the field which has shown that Americans hold strong opinions about what SAE is as well as about nonstandard U.S. dialects and accents, both regional and social. These opinions are present in conversational evidence of respondents from southeastern Michigan on the topic of the place of Standard American English (SAE) among U.S. regional varieties and other matters of standardness and variety preference. Although many respondents have a difficult time articulating what SAE is, often it is described as what is heard on the news or that it has no accent. In addition, respondents often cited the location of SAE as the Midwest or Northern regions of the U.S. However some confusion arose with the claim from one respondent that, “California talks the same way as here. There’s no accent. I can’t tell the difference,” (p. 330). While this shows that there was some difficulty in pinpointing the location of SAE, respondents are also careful to note that the standard is not spoken in the South or in other dialect areas, including New York City. So, while it is clear that SAE exists for folk linguists, it is difficult to know what it is, but a key factor is that stigmatizing regional features are absent from it.

With the belief in a standard language so firmly in their minds, people often use it as a litmus test against which other accents are measured as “correct” or “proper” English. The assumption then becomes that if one does not know how or refuses to speak the standard, then one must be uneducated. This belief is revealed in many folk linguists’ views about

nonstandard dialects. When describing Southern speech, respondents label it as slower and begin to associate it with lack of intelligence and education (Preston, 1996a). Preston notes that the perceived relationship between poor education and improper Southern speech is common. In a ranking exercise, when Preston asked respondents to rank the fifty states in terms of where the worst English is spoken, the South and New York were associated with the worst English. Conversational evidence reveals that respondents try to claim that Southern speech is bad because of its poor grammar, but they admit that well-educated Southerners also speak bad English, and while this is difficult to explain, they simply conclude that Southerners are “just not as educated as they should be” (p. 331). This shows that the negative judgments of Southern speech are mainly due to its accent and not just because of its “bad grammar” since the folk linguists recognize that even educated Southerners (presumably who know correct grammar) are still labeled as uneducated. Thus, those who speak with a Southern accent are deemed unintelligent simply because they do not sound standard.

Similar negative attitudes are held about African American Vernacular English (AAVE). In Niedzielski & Preston (2000), we see more evidence of non-linguists’ attitudes toward AAVE. The folk linguists claim that the color of a person is not an issue in their prejudice, that one’s skin color does not matter as long as his speech can be “understood,” as they claim is the case when educated African Americans speak. However, what the folk clearly mean by “understand” is that educated African Americans speak “correct” English; that is, they speak standard English. Conversely, the folk linguists claim that African Americans who insist on using their variety as opposed to using the standard are low-class,

lazy, and uneducated. Once again, we see the equation of being educated with the use of “correct” speech.

Such attitudes clearly demonstrate the psychological reality of a standard language in the minds of Americans and that they do not share in the relativist views of Fromkin and Rodman, and Falk. They certainly believe that there is a standard, and furthermore, it is clear that these folk linguists do believe that only one accent can be considered standard in the U.S. as opposed to every region supporting its own standard, as their views of Southern and New York speech suggest. Folk linguists simply believe that dialects are a corruption of “real” or “good” English that reflect basic ignorance of well-known grammar rules (Wolfram, 2000). They are not aware, as Wolfram suggests, that variation in language is natural and that everyone speaks with an accent. One may wonder, though, how such language-based stereotypes are transmitted. Edwards (1982, p. 21) provides three explanations that may reflect language based stereotypes. They are: (1) intrinsic linguistic inferiorities or superiorities, (2) intrinsic aesthetic differences, or (3) social convention and preference. Edwards states that evidence has shown that there is no reason to believe that certain forms of a language (for example, standard languages) receive higher ratings because they are more beautiful, correct, or pleasing than others, which is what Giles et al. (1974a, 1974b) refers to as the inherent value hypothesis. The only way to prove the validity of the inherent value hypothesis would be if people who were completely unfamiliar with a language evaluated it and were able to make consistent social distinctions between its dialects. In fact, when such studies occur, including Giles et al. (1974b), which asked British subjects with no knowledge of Greek to compare a Cretan and an Athenian variety, and Trudgill and Giles (1978) where English-speaking judges (some of whom were not from the

U.K.) were asked to judge various British English varieties, they revealed that people outside of a speech community, when asked to evaluate unfamiliar language varieties (which are sharply differentiated in terms of aesthetic and status qualities within the speech communities), cannot make discriminations on purely linguistic grounds. Edwards therefore concludes that only the third explanation is feasible, that evaluations of language varieties do not reflect intrinsic linguistic or aesthetic qualities so much as the levels of status and prestige with which they are conventionally associated in particular speech communities. This is what Giles et al. (1974a, 1974b) would refer to as the imposed norm hypothesis, which states that when a prestige variety is consistently evaluated as the most pleasing variety of a language, the judgment is based solely on social and cultural norms. This means that a standard dialect or accent has attained its prestige and superiority because it is associated with a powerful group who happens to speak in this manner.

Standard Language Ideology

It is possible to understand such negative attitudes found in Niedzielski & Preston (2000) and Preston (1996a) toward nonstandard dialects in the United States if we realize that such attitudes stem from standard language ideology. Again, this is defined as “a bias toward an abstracted, idealized, homogenous spoken language which is imposed from above...which takes as its model the written language” and which has as its goal the “suppression of variation” (Lippi-Green, 1994, p. 166). But, if standard language ideology exists, what is its source? How is a standard “imposed from above”? Fairclough (1989) claims that it is the work of a dominant group who wishes to keep separate the empowered and the powerless for many reasons, many of which are to gain economic and political power. One way to achieve

this is by gaining a consensus that a dominant language is the standard, and standard language ideology is a major route for establishing consent among the public of one variety as superior over others (Lippi-Green, 1994). Lippi-Green tells us that consent of a dominant language as standard is made possible through a variety of institutions. Such institutions include the educational system, the media, the corporate world, and even the judicial system.

First, it is through the educational system that the majority of Americans have been instilled with “a rocklike conviction that certain linguistic forms are correct, while others are wrong” (Burling, 1973, p. 130). Many textbooks instill notions such as a direct link between “nonstandard” language and a lack of logic and clarity (Ragno et. al, 1987 in Lippi-Green) as well as the idea that there is one correct way to speak and write English in terms of grammar (Strickland, 1983 in Lippi-Green). Other ideas include the belief that there is one correct way to pronounce words, which is instilled through overt authoritarianism of pronunciation instruction with such ideas as one should avoid pronouncing words or phrases such as “what do you” as “whathca” (John et. al, 1975, pp. 28-29 in Lippi-Green, 1994, p. 168). The standard language ideology in textbooks and language arts instruction at school also undergirds language policies of school administrations. One example was a proposed policy in 1987 called “Standard English and Oral Communication” which would have outlawed Hawaiian Creole English in the public schools of Hawaii. In light of such overt prescriptive language instruction and administrative policies, it is not difficult to see the constant association of “nonstandard” dialects and accents as sounding uneducated or low-class by folk linguists. The education system is our first exposure to standard language ideology, but Lippi-Green acknowledges that it does not stop there.

As Lippi-Green (1994) points out, the media (which usually means national broadcasting institutions) is another institution by which the consent of a dominant variety as standard is made possible. One way the media does this is by offering language-conscious reporting that is at times overtly discriminatory through the presentation of stories whose topics include:

Ungrammatical street talk by black professional athletes, and other professions such as the music industry, has come to be accepted...The dilemma is that it doesn't make much difference for the black professional athletes, etc., who talk this way-they're wealthy men who are going to live well off their bodily skills whether or not they can talk at all, much less correctly (Bob Greene's sports column, *Chicago Tribune*, December 3, 1979 in Lippi-Green, 1994)

Gov. Clinton, you attended Oxford University in England and Yale Law School in the Ivy League, two of the finest institutions of learning in the world. So how come you still talk like a hillbilly? (Mike Royko's syndicated "Opinion" column, *Ann Arbor News*, October 11, 1992 in Lippi-Green, 1994).

Of course while the media claims simply to report news rather than to be an agent of social change, the very topics like those mentioned above as well as many other examples of such reports (in Lippi-Green, 1994) make the media complicit in discrimination as well as an agent used for perpetuating standard language ideology. It appears that the media has been successful in its propagation of the superiority of the abstract notion of a standard language because often folk linguists' negative opinions of "nonstandard" dialects and accents are due to the fact that they do not sound like what they hear on the news (Niedzielski & Preston, 2000; Preston, 1996a).

Finally, the corporate sector is an institution by which standard language ideology is perpetuated, and is supported in doing so through decisions made by the courts. Lippi-Green (1994) notes that Title VII disallows discrimination in the work place on the basis of accent when it correlates to national origin, but it allows employers to discriminate on the

basis of accent with regards to job ability. In theory, this is designed to protect a qualified person from discrimination on the basis of linguistic traits that an employer or his customers find aesthetically objectionable. However, if an employer can claim that “accent” impedes communication, it thereby poses a valid basis for rejection. There are two fundamental flaws with this reasoning. First, is the fact that no fair set of procedures exists to verify the claims that accent X impedes the communication required for job Y. It is often the case that an employer will claim that good communication skills are needed for a certain job, without defining what they are, but nevertheless claims that accent X impedes communication. Thus, it is possible that an employer’s negative subjective reaction to an accent could be the reason for discrimination, not the fact that the accent actually impedes communication. This ties into the court’s role in perpetuating standard language ideology because they are often receptive to this argument made by employers. Lippi-Green points out a number of instances when the courts heard cases where an employer claimed that a person’s accent was in fact impeding communication and in turn, job performance. In such trials, however, the courts often made no attempt to measure if the person’s accent was in fact impeding communication skills necessary for the job in question. Decisions would often be made on the basis of anecdotal evidence from the employer that the person’s communication skills were not satisfactory, or the language issue would be sidestepped completely, and a court would make its decision based on some other factor besides language discrimination (e.g. racial discrimination, if it was applicable). Furthermore, Lippi-Green cites a number of cases in which the courts uphold standard language ideology by supporting discrimination in promotion and hiring practices in the broadcast sector when the candidates spoke with a regional accent. The courts allowed for the accent to be associated on a non-factual basis.

with negative social values, and they also allowed the media to set its own standards on the basis of preferences, which included preference for SAE. Title VII itself was not being upheld because discrimination was allowed without proof that an accent was impeding job performance. Thus, the courts blatantly allowed for linguistic discrimination on purely subjective grounds.

The second flaw with Title VII is that because of the subjective nature of hiring practices, it is not difficult for employers to claim that discrimination has not taken place on linguistic grounds and that a person was not hired or promoted for some other reason. When employers attempted to point out that ethnic discrimination (based on linguistic characteristics) was not the only explanation for why a plaintiff was not promoted, they would often note that a business decision is, by its very nature, often subjective. Thus, the decision could instead be due to the fact that the employer simply did not personally like the plaintiff. While it is certainly difficult to distinguish between an admissible business decision based on business necessity or personal preference from an inadmissible consideration based on race or national origin, as Cutler (1985) points out, the courts have failed to recognize that employers are favorably predisposed to potential employees who are "like" them and less disposed toward those who are "unlike" them. Because the courts reject the validity of the personal preference rationale, "Title VII becomes a statute which, at best, coerces job applicants to assimilate and, at worst, keeps them jobless," (Cutler, 1985, p. 1166). This explains the pervasive view of speakers of nonstandard dialects and accents who recognize that they must give up their home dialect or in their professional lives so that their abilities will not be doubted (Alvarez & Kolker, 1987).

Lippi-Geen notes that since standard language ideology is introduced at school, vigorously promoted by the media, and further institutionalized by the corporate sector and upheld by the courts, it is not surprising that folk linguists do not recognize the fact that for spoken language, variation is systematic, structured, and inherent, and that the national standard is an abstraction. In light of the reinforcement of standard language ideology, it is not difficult to understand the negative attitudes of folk linguists when it comes to nonstandard dialects.

Attitudes of Native Speakers Toward Nonstandard U.S. English Accents

There has been an abundance of studies that have dealt with how L1 speakers perceive groups who speak different varieties of English, and in particular, how L1 speakers in the United States perceive different social and regional dialects and accents of U.S. English. Since the 1960s it has been shown that listeners form dialect-based judgments of speakers regarding intellectual ability and personal characteristics (Cross, DeVaney & Jones, 2001). Language attitude studies have been one of the predominant ways of indirectly measuring the views that members of one social group hold of members of another contrasting group. In these studies, a sample of “judges” is asked to listen to a series of taped recordings of speakers reading a passage and to evaluate personality characteristics, using only vocal characteristics or speech style as cues. The technique appears to expose the listeners’ private or stereotyped feelings toward groups whose language, accent, or dialect is distinctive (Tucker & Lambert, 1969). The underlying premise is that hearing the accented voice will arouse stereotypes of the speaker in the mind of the hearer (Markel, Eisler, & Resse, 1967). This seems reasonable since according to Gallois and Callahan (1981), people

have consistently shown their readiness to use language as a cue to classify others into groups. Thus, when people know little about the person they are hearing, they use their speech as a way to attribute to that person characteristics they associate with the group to which they think the person belongs (Alford & Strother, 1990). Thus, language can be considered a large part of social stereotyping.

In America, SAE appears to be the prestige variety, as many language attitude studies have shown that speakers of SAE are consistently rated more favorably than speakers of a social or regional nonstandard dialect or accent. In one study, Hewett (1971) found that after Caucasian prospective teachers in their senior year at the University of Michigan listened to black and white speakers with standard and non-standard styles of pronunciation, they judged (solely on phonological variations), certain personality characteristics, the races, and occupations of the speakers. The white nonstandard accent was Southern, and black Standard simply means black people speaking SAE; it does not refer to a black standard dialect. In order to ensure that phonological variations were the only differences in speech being judged, all of the speakers of both the standard and nonstandard accents were of similar education levels. Results showed that subjects rated those speakers who spoke with a standard accent significantly higher on intelligence, education, upbringing, and speaking ability than speakers of either the black or white non-standard accent. Standard speakers were rated highest on intelligence and personality while nonstandard speakers were ranked highest on honesty and lowest on speaking ability. Thus the stereotypes emerge of the dull but intelligent standard speaker and the honest but inarticulate nonstandard speaker.

Hewett also shows that accent may serve as a cue to racial identification. In addition to language attitudes being shaped by nonstandardness of an accent, it appears that attitude

formation is shaped by race as well. Subjects almost unanimously identified the standard black and white speakers as white, and the black non-standard speakers as black. The fact that standard speakers were rated as white, regardless of their actual race, may indicate that standard speech is seen as “white.” However, the converse is not necessarily true. That is, nonstandard speech in this study was not seen solely as black, as the white southern nonstandard speakers were still identified as white.

Another study which shows that race may also be a factor in language attitudes is Irwin (1977). Using 36 college students from Ohio State University as judges, Irwin found that speakers were correctly identified as to race by 90 percent of the judges, and it was found that the vocal quality, fluency, and confidence of the white speech was rated as significantly better than the black speech.

Purnell, Idsardi, and Baugh (1999) showed that language as an indication of ethnicity and race, may be used as a way to discriminate against those whose dialects or accents are indicative of specific racial and ethnic groups. They revealed the linguistic nature of housing discrimination among minority groups, in particular studying the nature of auditory discrimination of racial speech cues. It was found that speakers of AAVE and Chicano English received fewer appointments when looking for apartments than speakers of SAE when the only cue to the landlord as to the identity of the speaker was the prospective tenants’ voices heard over the phone.

Finally, Taylor found that listener’s preexisting prejudice towards nonstandard accents associated with social groups was another factor in forming attitudes toward speech. Taylor (1983) investigated how two different speech varieties, SAE and Black English, used during an oral reading and recall task, influenced teachers’ evaluations of reading

comprehension and how teachers' attitudes toward Black English related to those evaluations. Teachers rated Black English lower on reading comprehension when they held negative attitudes toward Black English. This seems to indicate that when a listener already has negative feelings toward a group, this will affect their attitudes toward the speech of this group.

Tucker and Lambert (1969) also found that standard speakers received consistently high ratings compared to Southern and AAVE speakers when they investigated white and black listeners' reactions to various American English dialects. Judges were students from a black Southern college, white students from a Southern university, and white students from a New England University. Speakers were from the following dialect groups: Network English; college-educated White Southern; college-educated Negro Southern; college-educated Negroes from Mississippi currently studying in Washington D.C.; southern Negro students, referred to as the Mississippi Peer group, who spoke a dialect similar to those students where the actual study was conducted and alumni from the college where the study was conducted who had lived in New York for several years.

Findings showed the nearly unanimous perception of the Network speakers as having the most favorable profile of traits. This group was rated highest by the black judges and the Southern white judges on all traits and on 12 out of 15 traits by the New England judges. The New England whites and Southern blacks rated the educated Southern blacks next most favorably. Southern blacks rated the educated Southern white group least favorably, and the two groups of white judges, both from New England and the South, rated the Mississippi peer group the least favorably. The unanimous favorable ratings of the Network group once again show the preference for SAE. What is more interesting is that Network (SAE) was

judged more favorably by those who did not speak with that accent. This is what Labov (1966) describes as linguistic insecurity, or the extent to which listeners find their own varieties less prestigious. Preston (1996a) elaborates on the concept of linguistic insecurity by speculating that this insecurity stems from the speakers' awareness of the fact that the local variety will not serve extra-regionally. That is, the regional variety will not convince outside listeners that the intelligence, education, and authority of the speaker or writer are high. However, a major difference between Tucker and Lambert's findings and Preston's (1996a) interpretation of Labov's concept of linguistic insecurity is that speakers of a regional or otherwise nonstandard dialect tend to rate those who speak their dialect higher on traits such as friendliness, trustworthiness, honesty, and the like, than speakers of the standard dialect, whom they rate lower on such traits, but higher on intelligence and ambition. Tucker and Lambert's findings did not support this interpretation. They found that raters who spoke the nonstandard dialect (both black and white southerners) rated the Network speakers higher than members of their own dialect group on *all* traits.

In contrast to SAE speakers' being rated highest on traits such as intelligence and ambition, which may be related to their perceived status, it appears that nonstandard accents are sometimes rated higher than standard accents on affective traits (Hewett, 1971; Tucker & Lambert, 1969). Tucker and Lambert had similar findings to those of Hewett (1971) who, when ranking the traits, found that the standard speakers were rated highest on intelligence and lowest on personality, and the nonstandard speakers were rated highest on honesty and lowest on speaking ability. While Tucker and Lambert's findings were not identical, they did support the stereotype of the friendly and energetic black southerner. The New England white judges rated southern black speakers as being friendlier and possessing more

determination than themselves. They also rated them as having more faith in God than themselves.

Cross, DeVaney, and Jones (2001) used the same methodology and speakers from the same dialect groups as Tucker and Lambert, and obtained similar results. The results showed that white raters gave high ratings to white speakers and low ones to black speakers while black raters gave high ratings to black speakers and low ones to white speakers. However, a speaker from a different region who was white (Network) was still rated as highest in all categories by both black and white southern raters, suggesting the preference for a Network or “broadcast” accent over regional accent for all raters.

Riley (1990) also confirms the pervasive view of SAE speakers as possessing more intelligence than nonstandard speakers. Riley used one female teacher who adopted four guises: 2 were standard English, one was AAVE, and the last was a mixture of AAVE and standard English. The listeners were 61 students from the University of Northern Iowa. The results showed that 71 percent of respondents rated the Network guise as “more intelligent than average,” and only 18 percent were willing to rate the AAVE guise as having above average intelligence.

To summarize, several key findings regarding language attitude studies of American dialects can be stated. The first is that speakers of SAE appear to be favored by all listeners, whether they are speakers of SAE or not. The second is that this preference may be based solely on pronunciation. For example, since all speakers read the same passage and these readings are the stimuli on which they are rated, variables such as lexicon and grammar of the dialects are not as factors that influence ratings. Also, all speakers, whether of a standard or nonstandard accent, are either college educated or are college students. Controlling for

level of education strengthens the point that a nonstandard accent, no matter who speaks it (some nonstandard speakers from Hewett (1971) were college professors), is still held in lower regard than SAE. Third, the fact that these ratings are so consistent indicates that stereotypes of nonstandard speakers are deeply ingrained into the framework of society. A fourth finding from the studies is that there may be some indication that while SAE is deemed prestigious, speakers of a nonstandard accent may be seen as more friendly, honest, and determined than speakers of SAE. Finally, the willingness for people to judge personal attributes of a speaker based solely on accent has been well documented. This suggests social attitudes linked to speech are pervasive.

Nonnative Speakers' Judgments of U.S. English Accents

While there is an abundance of studies that have investigated how L1 speakers (native speakers) perceive groups who speak different varieties of English, relatively little has been done to discover how L2 learners react to various U.S. English speech varieties. Alford and Strother (1990) investigated the reaction of L1 and L2 (nonnative speakers) subjects to speakers, one male and one female, belonging to each of the following regional accent groups: Southern (South Carolina), Midwestern (Illinois), and Northern (New York). Subjects were asked to rate the personality characteristics of each speaker after listening to a speech sample, using a bipolar rating scale of 24 positive and negative traits that were paired together. Native speakers rated the speakers as follows: The Midwestern speakers were ranked highest on 8 out of the 12 characteristics, although the Southern male received the highest overall rating, The traits on which the Midwestern male were rated highest were intelligence, good family training, well-educated, ambitiousness, self confidence,

professionalism, patience, and extrovertedness. The Southern speakers received the highest ratings on trustworthiness, sincerity, gentleness, and friendliness. Once again, this supports the stereotype of the prestigious, intelligent standard speaker, and the friendly, trustworthy nonstandard (in this case, Southern) speaker. These are similar findings to those of Hewett (1971), Tucker and Lambert (1969), and Cross, DeVaney and Jones (2001). Interestingly, the Northern (New York) speakers were ranked below the Midwestern and Southern speakers on all traits. This may imply that not all nonstandard speakers are perceived as being friendly and trustworthy because the nonstandard New York speakers are rated low on all traits. This is an interesting finding because 52 percent of the native speaker raters were from the New York dialect area that was rated the lowest on all traits. It appears then that speakers of this nonstandard dialect may suffer from the same linguistic insecurity as Southern blacks and whites did in Tucker and Lambert's (1969) study.

Although there were differences in the way that nonnative speakers rated the speakers, they also rated the New York speakers lowest on all traits, just as the native speakers did. The differences in the way that the nonnative speakers rated the speakers were apparent in the way that they rated the Southern and Midwestern speakers compared to the way that the native speakers rated them. The Southern and Midwestern males were rated equally overall by the nonnative speakers, and either the Southern or Midwestern male received the highest ratings or tied for it on the individual characteristics, except for one, where the Southern female received the highest rating for friendliness. This is quite different than the way that the native speakers rated the Southerners and Midwesterners, where native speakers were rated highest on 8 of the 12 traits.

Alford and Strother speculated that the L1 speakers' reactions to the various accents were based on their frame of reference, which consists of various cultural and dialectal stereotypes, which would support Edward's (1982) notion that linguistic stereotypes are transmitted through social and cultural norms. However, since according to Alford and Strother, "international students, for the most part, do not have the same cultural framework as native students," (p. 487) it was not assumed L2 speakers were making judgments of the accents based on such a frame of reference. The L2 subjects had only been in the United States for slightly more than 6 months, which is "barely enough time to form surface-level value judgments about the area in which they were living, much less to form complex opinions about the individual characteristics of and the interrelationships among various parts of the country" (p. 487). This issue of how native and nonnative speakers of English form judgments of speakers of various dialects will be the focus of the next section.

Attitude Formation by Nonnative Speakers

Matsuura, Chiba, and Fujieda (1999) focused on the effect of familiarity of different varieties of English and its effect on intelligibility and perceived comprehensibility (PC) of those varieties. To test the relationship between familiarity of a variety of English with PC and intelligibility, 106 Japanese students from three different universities in Japan rated six different speakers of English, three American and three Irish. Familiarity with a variety was defined as the variety that the students' teachers spoke. Thus, a student taught by an American would be assumed to be familiar with American English, and a student taught by an Irish speaker would be assumed to be familiar with Irish English. PC was measured through subjective judgments made in response to statements on a seven-point rating scale.

The listener was asked to give a general impression by rating on a seven-point scale, from “very easy to understand” to “very hard to understand” for eight discrete-point questions related to speech quality, i.e. accent, speech, intonation, clarity, fluency, grammar and vocabulary, vocal intensity, and pause. Intelligibility was measured through dictation tests that students had to complete for each speaker they heard.

The study found that familiarity with a certain variety affected PC, the subjective judgment of comprehensibility. The more familiarity with a certain variety, the higher the PC was. However, familiarity did not lead to higher dictation scores, the measure of intelligibility. The group with less familiarity to Irish English had higher dictation scores, but they had less PC. Conversely, the group with more familiarity with Irish English had lower dictation scores but higher PC. It can be assumed that for subjects with little familiarity with the Irish variety of English, the speech of the Irish variety was intelligible, but was not much preferred, while those subjects with greater familiarity were more willing to listen to it. The authors of this study conclude that in order for students to avoid developing the idea that the American variety is the “standard variety,” they should be exposed to different varieties of English and encouraged to improve their confidence in listening to and speaking other varieties of English. Thus, findings from this study may indicate that nonnative speakers of English may prefer the variety of English with which they are familiar, and as the authors claim, this may be the variety by which they evaluate all other varieties of English. Thus, the variety that the nonnative speakers are used to may essentially serve as a standard variety for them.

Although sociolinguists preferred the imposed norm over the inherent value hypothesis to explain the consistent high rankings by native speakers for the prestige variety,

there may be exceptions when it comes to the way that nonnative speakers form judgments of dialects. Brown, Strong, and Rencher (1975) found that American listeners with no skill in or knowledge of French culture were able to ascribe French Canadian speakers to different social classes. The authors believed that this was evidence in favor of the inherent value hypothesis, that in fact, certain vocal characteristics are inherently associated with social class level and that these characteristics appear to be the same across cultures. However, Trudgill and Giles (1978) reject this as evidence of the inherent value hypothesis on the grounds that the American listeners could have been reacting to class-linked differences in the reading skills of the speakers or to certain paralinguistic features which happen to be linked to social class in varieties of American English. Trudgill and Giles also point out that it is doubtful that the Americans were completely unknowledgeable of French language and culture, claiming that the Americans may have heard the language or be familiar with aspects of French culture on some level, whether conscious or subconscious.

A study by Ladegaard (1998) supports findings by Brown et al. (1975) which found that Danish listeners who were unable to identify accents as being Cockney, Scottish, and Australian were still able to provide a biased evaluation of the speakers from these groups, which in most instances happened to be in accordance with existing stereotypes of these groups held by members within those speech communities. In particular, one example was that without being able to identify an Australian accent, judges were able to produce the accurate stereotype of the laid back Australian. This means that correct identification may not be a prerequisite for making discriminations between varieties. Although this study appears not to support the imposed norm hypothesis and instead to support the inherent value hypothesis, in his discussion, Ladegaard (1998) is resistant to claim that any language variety

is inherently bad or good or possesses qualities that make it sound inferior to the standard variety. Because of the existence of a strong body of evidence which has supported the imposed norm hypothesis, Ladegaard considers other alternatives to explain how listeners who cannot place speakers in a particular national or social context are capable of expressing national stereotypes that correspond to prevailing social patterns and cultural norms.

Preston (1996b) claims that the details of language available to non-linguists depend not on specific linguistic information, but rather on a variety of sociocultural facts including popular culture and the media. Thus, Preston's respondents would be willing to comment on a foreign accent, but unable to produce specific linguistic features characterizing this variety. Moreover, Preston often found subjects' available linguistic information of a variety to be totally inaccurate, and yet at the same time, to fit with the social stereotypes attached to that particular group. Finally, Preston claims in his folk linguistic data that often there is a strong identification between language and social groups, even though the linguistic information available to establish the link is rather limited. Ladegaard (1998) presumes this to mean that stereotypes of social groups are available whether or not the subjects are consciously aware of the social connotations of a dialect.

Milroy and McClenaghan (1977) also discuss the relationship between accent identification and social stereotypes. In this study, it was found that even among native speakers of English in Northern Ireland, there was a clear tendency to misidentify the four voices included in the study (Scottish, S. Irish, RP, and Ulster), but again, consistent biases appeared. The authors claim that consistency of stereotypes despite misidentification of accents may be explained in terms of the nature of how a stereotyped reaction is formed. They argue that it is generally accepted that an accent acts as a cue identifying a speaker's

group membership. The authors' hypothesis is that this identification may take place below the level of conscious awareness. In other words, familiar accents may directly evoke stereotyped responses without the listener first assigning the speaker to a familiar reference group.

Just as listeners in Milroy and McClenaghan's (1977) study were familiar with the accents they were judging, and yet unable to correctly identify the speakers, the Danish judges in Ladegaard's (1998) study were also assumed to be familiar with the various English accents they were judging, but unable to correctly identify them as well. Ladegaard claims that this familiarity was available because these accents were typically in the media. Specifically, many of the judges who misidentified the Australian accent but were able to accurately stereotype it, commented on the Crocodile Dundee figure. Thus, Ladegaard feels that his findings also support the imposed norm hypothesis, as the subjects' familiarity with the accents through media-transmitted information, made available information, which they used to make judgments of the speakers' voices. So, according to Ladegaard, judges who evaluate speakers without the knowledge of specific connotations of the variety (e.g. nonnative speakers), but who are familiar with the accent, are still able to make judgments of these speakers based on stereotyped information that lies below their level of consciousness. However, since this is a hypothesis that can not easily be tested, how would one know if a judge has stored unconscious information which he uses to make a stereotyped judgment? How indeed did Ladegaard know that all of the respondents were aware of the Crocodile Dundee image, and were basing their judgments from this?

CHAPTER 3: METHODS AND MATERIALS

This study used a modification of the matched guise technique to elicit attitudes about accented language. In addition, it also asked subjects to identify the accent group to which they think the speakers belong. Several studies that have investigated language attitudes toward various U.S. accents have asked their raters to identify the races of the speakers they are judging (Hewett, 1971; Tucker & Lambert, 1969). However, race is not the only indication that a speaker belongs to a certain dialect group. Region is also another marker of dialect groups. So, for example, when speakers with a Southern or East coast accent were being rated in earlier studies, but raters were not asked to identify them, it is possible that misidentifications affected judgments. Therefore, conclusions based on rater judgments cannot be established as absolute. Thus, it is hoped that the combination of the listening task with accent identification in the present study will provide greater insight into the attitudes that both native and nonnative speakers have toward various U.S. English accents.

Recording of the Stimuli

The speech samples were recorded by a total of 10 speakers. Approval to use the subjects was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of Iowa State University. The first three speakers were used as examples on the tape in order to help students anticipate that they would be hearing speakers of different U.S. accents as well as to give them an opportunity to practice and get used to listening to and rating the speakers in the accent study. Two of these examples were from speakers who spoke accents that were not the target accents being evaluated in the study; one of these two speech chunks was from speaker with

a Northern accent (Wisconsin), and the other was from a speaker with an East coast accent (New York City). The third speech chunk was from a Southern-accented speaker (Virginia). These speakers were all graduate students; one was male.

The next 7 speakers' voices were recorded to be used in the accent study. Originally, only 6 were recorded, but after a pilot study revealed that one of the Southern speakers (Georgia) was not identified by native speakers as a Southern speaker, another Southern speaker's voice (North Carolina) was used.

The six speakers were all female in order to control for a gender effect in rating as was found by Alford and Strother (1990), and all were graduate students, studying either at the master's or doctoral level. The speakers ranged in age from 23 to 38. The speakers were from three different U.S. English dialect areas. Two were from the Midwest; one was from Kansas, and the other was from Iowa. These two speakers had spent the majority of their lives in the Midwest. The next two speakers were speakers of African American Vernacular English (AAVE). The last two speakers were from the South; one was from North Carolina, and one was from Tennessee. These speakers had spent the majority of their lives in the South, with the exception of leaving their home states to study. The Tennessee speaker had spent a total of 4.5 years of her life outside of the South at the time of recording, and the North Carolina speaker had spent a total of 4 months of her life outside of the South at the time of recording.

The speakers were given two brief passages, one about elephants and the other about the outlook for certain jobs (See appendix A). The content of both passages was fairly neutral, in that it did not include any specific information about the speaker, such as race or level of education. Most studies that involve speaker evaluation use similar, relatively

neutral passages to control for effect of message content on attitude ratings. The speakers were given several minutes to read over the passages silently and to ask the researcher any questions. Some chose to practice reading the passages out loud. Then they read the two passages into the tape recorder. They were allowed to rerecord the passage if they were not pleased with their first reading, but were not obligated to do so. Three of the speakers chose to rerecord their passages. The reason for having the speakers read passages instead of using free speech samples was in order to control for various features of dialect that might further prejudice the listeners. For example, in addition to accent, grammatical as well as lexical features of nonstandard dialects can be further stigmatizing features, so controlling for this by having the speakers read the same passages allows only for the accent to be the feature being judged by the raters. Thus, all speakers were reading SAE with the various accents of their dialects.

Two 10 to 15 second speech chunks were chosen for each speaker, one from the elephant passage and one from the job outlook passage. This made for a total of 12. Passages were chosen based on several criteria. First, passages were chosen that did not have any mistakes such as misread words or unusually long or awkward pauses. Chunks were also chosen that sounded as natural as possible, that is, that were not read noticeably fast or slow. Next, chunks were chosen that I felt would be the most recognizable to the raters as being the particular accent of the speaker. Southern speakers, especially, read their passages with much less of their natural spoken accent, so passages were chosen to contain noticeably Southern vowels. For the AAVE speakers, chunks were chosen that had distinctly AAVE features of pronunciation, including intonation as well as elimination of some final consonant clusters. Once the two chunks were chosen for each speaker, the 12 chunks were arranged in

a way that the same speaker was never placed next to one another and so that speakers with the same accent were not placed next to one another. For example two Southern, AAVE, or Midwestern speakers were never rated next to one another.

Development of Tape for Accent Study

The master tapes that were used for the accent study were developed using the previously recorded speech samples. The tapes consisted of several different items. First, the researcher recorded instructions for the raters that were also printed on the rating sheets. Following the instructions were the three example speech chunks. Each chunk was recorded twice, with a 30 second pause in between each speaker. None of these speech samples were from speakers who were used in the rest of the study. Originally, only 15 seconds were allowed between speakers; however, after a pilot study, it was discovered that 15 seconds was an insufficient amount of time for nonnative speakers to complete their ratings for.

The raters were told that they would hear speech samples from 12 speakers of various dialects of U.S. English, repeated once, with a 30 second pause in between each speaker for them to fill out the rating sheets. The instructions and the three sample speech chunks were the same for each of two tapes that were used. The difference in the two tapes used was in the order that the 12 speech chunks from speakers of the target accents were arranged. The first tape began with the 6 chunks from the elephant passage, while the second tape began with the six chunks from the job outlook passage. The order of each set of chunks was also reversed on both tapes (tape 1 had elephant chunks 1-6, while tape 2 had elephant chunks 4-6 and 1-3). The reason for the two different tapes was to control for an order effect that could have occurred due to the order in which the elephant or job outlook topics were presented. In

addition, since the evaluators were rating for 20 minutes, the order was changed in case later responses were affected by fatigue or boredom. Some raters also may have determined the purpose of the listening task halfway through, so changing the order would help to balance out the responses. Thirty-nine respondents heard the tape with the first order, while 41 respondents heard the second tape.

Raters

There were three different groups of raters. The first group consisted of native speakers of English (NS), the second group consisted of nonnative speakers of English who, at the time of the study, had been in the U.S. for 6 months or less (NNS6mos), and the third group consisted of nonnative speakers of English who had been in the U.S. between 2 and 6 years (NNS2yr).

The native speaker raters were chosen from 8 different first year composition classes. Also, the researcher emailed former first year composition students to ask for participation as well. The main requirement for participation was that they be a native speaker of English. The native speakers were mainly serving as a baseline to which the nonnative speakers' ratings would be compared. A total of 36 raters initially volunteered to participate, although, only 20 actually participated. Of these 20 students, 12 were male and eight were female. All 20 students but one were Caucasian. The one non-Caucasian student was Asian-American.

Nineteen students were undergraduates at the university, and the remaining female was a graduate student in the MBA program. This student became interested in the study and volunteered to participate after learning about it from a friend of hers who was one of the

Table 3.1: Biographical Information for NS Raters (N=20)

Male	Female	Undergraduate	Graduate	Age	Origin
12	8	19	1	Youngest: 18 Oldest: 19	Midwest: 14 North (MN):5 South: 1

nonnative speaker volunteers. The oldest student was 26, and the youngest student was 18. Of the 20 raters, 14 were from the Midwest, 5 were from the North (Minnesota), and 1 was from the South. Only 4 of these 20 students indicated that they had spent significant amounts of time in other regions of the U.S. aside from where they had grown up. Two of the Midwesterners had spent significant amounts of time in the North (Minnesota), and two other Midwesterners had spent significant amounts of time in the South.

The next group of raters consisted of nonnative speakers of English who had been in the U.S. for 6 months or less (NNS6mos). These raters were chosen from 8 different ESL classes for graduate students. Others were chosen from first year composition classes. In addition, the researcher contacted the office which tests international teaching assistants to obtain names of other newly arrived international students. The time limit was being imposed based on Alford and Strother (1990), which used nonnative speakers who had been in the U.S. for an average of six months or less. Alford and Strother claimed that this small amount of time was “barely enough time to form surface-level value judgments about the area in which they were living, much less to form complex opinions about the individual characteristics of and the interrelationships among various parts of the country” (p. 487). A total of 65 raters signed up initially, and 34 of these participated. Of these 34 students, 21 were male and 13 were female. Thirty were graduate students at the university, and the

Table 3.2: Biographical Information for NNS6mos (N=34)

Male	Female	Graduate	Undergraduate	Age (average 25.7)	Language Background
21	13	30	4	Youngest: 19 Oldest: 36	11 countries 41% Chinese

remaining 4 students were undergraduates. These students were from a variety of language backgrounds. They came from 11 countries, with the largest percentage (41%) from China. The oldest was 36 and the youngest was 19; the average age for those raters was 25.7. Out of 34 NNS6mos students, 15 had spent time outside of the Midwest. Of the 15, 8 had visited the South. Two of the eight who had been to the South had spent a month or more there.

The last group of raters consisted of nonnative speakers of English who had been in the U.S. between 2 and 6 years. These raters were also chosen from 8 different ESL classes for graduate students, the first year composition classes, and from personal contacts. The main requirement for participation for this group was that the student be a nonnative speaker of English who has been in the U.S. between 2 and 6 years. This was to test the hypothesis that students who had been in the U.S. for this amount of time would better be able to “form surface-level value judgments about the area in which they were living,” as well as, “to form complex opinions about the individual characteristics of and the interrelationships among various parts of the country” (Alford & Strother, 1990, p. 487). Thus, the purpose for using the group in the current study was to see if time spent in the U.S. is a factor in nonnative speakers’ forming stereotypes of accents similar to native speakers. A total of 31 raters signed up initially, 26 of whom participated. Of these 26 students, 14 were male and 12 were female. Twenty-two were graduate students at the university, and the remaining four

Table 3.3: Biographical Information for NNS2yr Raters (N=26)

Male	Female	Graduate	Undergraduate	Age (average 28)	Language Background
14	12	22	4	Youngest: 20 Oldest: 36	8 countries 34% Chinese

students were undergraduates. These students were from a variety of language backgrounds. They came from eight countries. The largest portion of these students (34%) was Chinese. The oldest was 36 and the youngest was 20; the average age of this group was 28. Of these 26, 12 had been to regions outside of the Midwest, and 4 of those who had been outside of the Midwest had been to the South. Eleven of the 12 who had been outside of the Midwest had not spent significant amounts of time away, with the exception of one student who had spent 4 months in the South.

Procedure

The raters were notified by email of the time, date, and location of their rating sessions. The 80 students participated during one of 32 rating sessions; each session took approximately 30 minutes. The largest group was 7 students, and the smallest group was one student. When the raters arrived at the session, they were first asked to sign a consent form, giving the researcher permission to use any data that was collected. They were also issued a number by which they could be identified. The rating sessions took place in various university classrooms that had been assigned to the researcher by the rooms and scheduling office.

First, the raters filled out a biographical information sheet (See appendix B). Then the raters began the accent study. They were given a packet with enough rating sheets for the

number of speakers they would be rating. I used a Phillips tape player to administer the study tapes. The raters heard the instructions which were also on their rating sheets as well as three example speakers. The raters were asked to circle their responses on 11 different scales that compared the following pairs of adjectives: *unfriendly-friendly, lazy-hard working, unmotivated-ambitious, not very intelligent-intelligent, untrustworthy-trustworthy, dishonest-honest, low social status-high social status, poor-rich, unprofessional-professional, poorly educated-well educated, impatient-patient*. These pairs of adjectives were set positively and negatively on a seven-point Likert scale. Raters could circle any number from 1 to 7, with 1 being the lowest and 7 being the highest that they felt best described the speaker they were listening to. They were told to base their responses on any personal opinions they had about the speakers. The adjectives on the scales were chosen from similar studies investigating attitudes toward U.S. English accents. After completing the rating scale for a speaker, the raters were also asked to try to identify the dialect group to which they thought the speaker they were rating belonged by placing a circle around one of 6 choices. The choices were: Midwestern U.S. English, East coast U.S. English, African American English, Southern U.S. English, Northern U.S. English, and Hispanic English. As mentioned before, the purpose of this portion of the task was to enable the researcher to better reach conclusions about the stereotypes that native and nonnative speakers have about the speakers they are rating. After the three examples, I stopped the tape and asked for any questions that the raters had. Once questions had been answered, I again started the tape, and allowed the raters to evaluate the 12 speech chunks, each repeated once. This segment took approximately 20 minutes. At the conclusion of the study, raters were thanked for their participation. The rating instrument can be found in Appendix C.

Data Analysis

Arithmetic means of responses were calculated for each group (e.g., responses of native speaker raters to AAVE). These mean responses are presented in Chapter 4 in Table 4.1. To ascertain statistical significance, two-tailed t-tests were used. The use of a two-tailed test presupposes that an investigator does not have a strong a priori reason to believe that one mean response will be greater (or smaller) than the other. In this particular case, prior studies indicate that one should expect that native speaker raters will rate standard-accented speakers higher than nonstandard-accented speakers. Other than this one expectation, it was largely unknown which of the other two accents would be rated highest and by whom. Therefore, in the present study, the t-tests were being conducted largely without a priori expectations of how the two NNS groups would rate the accents as well as which of the two nonstandard accents would be rated highest. In addition, a two-tailed test is also more conservative than a one-tailed test. That is, if a null hypothesis is rejected using a two-tailed test, it will surely be rejected using a one-tailed test. In the present study, two-tailed tests reject the null hypotheses that native speaker raters evaluate standard-accented speakers the same as nonstandard-accented speakers at a very small level of significance, and therefore there is no need to retest these hypotheses using a one-tailed test methodology. The appropriateness of using normal distribution-based inference (e.g., t-tests) can be examined by looking at sampling frequency distributions (histograms). The histograms of the data presented in Appendix D indicate that the normal distribution assumption is a reasonable one (the histograms resemble bell-shaped curves). To further check this assumption, nonparametric (Wilcoxon rank sums) tests were performed and were found to be less conservative than the t-tests. The SAS System was used for statistical analysis and to produce the histograms.

Several specific questions were asked to determine the differences in the way that the three groups of raters evaluated the Midwestern, Southern, and AAVE speakers. They are as follows: (1) What are the differences in the way that native speakers and nonnative speakers who have been in the U.S. for 6 months or less and nonnative speakers who have been in the U.S. between 2 and 6 years rate the speakers with the following three accents: Midwestern, Southern and AAVE? (2) What are the differences in the way that the two different groups of nonnative speakers rate the three accents? (3) What are the differences in the evaluations of speakers from the three accents when were identified correctly and incorrectly? The above methodology was used to formulate these questions as testable statistical hypotheses and to determine the criteria for hypothesis rejection. The results and the discussion are presented in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section will answer the following research questions: (1) Do native and nonnative speakers of English rate Midwestern-accented U.S. English higher than they rate nonstandard U.S. English accents? and (2) Do nonnative speakers who have been in the U.S. for a substantial period of time (between 2 and 6 years) rate U.S. English accents more similarly to native U.S. English speakers than nonnative speakers who have been in the U.S. for a relatively short period of time (6 months or less)? These questions will be answered by making the following comparisons: (1) NS vs. NNS6mos (2) NS vs. NNS2yr and (3) NNS6mos vs. NNS2yr. The comparisons will examine how each individual group rated the accents as well as the differences between groups in how they rated the accents. The next section will answer the third research question (3) Do nonnative speakers of English who do not correctly identify the accents they are rating have similar ratings to those nonnative speakers of English who do correctly identify the speakers they are rating? Finally, the third section will be a discussion of the possible interpretations of the results.

Rating of Speech Samples

The first research question asks whether SAE (represented in the present study by Midwestern speech) will receive higher ratings than the nonstandard-accented speakers (Southerners and AAVE). The data reveal that all three groups of raters (NS, NNS6mos, and NNS2yr) did in fact rate Midwestern speech higher than they rated Southern or AAVE on all pairs of

Table 4.1: Subjects' Mean Ratings (From 1 (low) to 7 (high))

Characteristics	Midwestern			Southern			AAVE		
	NS	NNS6mos	NNS2yr	NS	NNS6mos	NNS2yr	NS	NNS6mos	NNS2yr
Friendly	5.8	5.3	5.5	4.6	4.6	4.3	4.7	4.2	4.2
Hardworking	5.6	5.6	5.3	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.7	4.4	4.2
Ambitious	5.6	5.7	5.4	4.3	4.4	4.0	4.6	4.3	4.0
Intelligent	5.6	5.5	5.3	4.0	4.6	4.1	4.4	4.2	4.0
Trustworthy	5.4	5.5	5.3	4.6	4.7	4.4	4.8	4.3	4.4
Honest	5.5	5.5	5.5	4.6	4.8	4.6	5.0	4.5	4.6
Social Status	5.3	5.3	5.2	4.0	4.4	4.2	3.9	3.9	3.8
Rich	5.1	5.1	5.0	4.0	4.4	4.2	4.0	3.9	3.7
Professional	5.4	5.4	5.2	3.7	4.5	4.1	4.1	4.1	3.7
Educated	5.7	5.6	5.5	4.0	4.6	4.4	4.2	4.1	3.9
Patient	4.9	4.7	4.9	4.0	4.3	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.7

characteristics, except for one, where NNS6mos did not rate Midwestern and Southern differently on patience (See Table 4.2). In addition, there were no differences in the means for how NS and NNS rated Midwestern speech, with the exception of one pair of characteristics, where NNS6mos rated Midwestern speech lower than NS did on unfriendly-friendly (Table 4.3 and 4.4). From this, one could perhaps conclude that the Midwestern variety represents the standard variety for all three groups. One would expect this to be the case for NS due to the pervasive stigma of Southern and AAVE as nonstandard accents in the U.S. (as shown in Niedzielski & Preston, 2000; Preston 1996a) as well as native speakers' tendencies to use SAE, represented by the Midwestern accent, as the model against which all other accents are compared (Niedzielski & Preston, 2000; Preston 1996a). It was also thought that the same would be true for NNS2yr, as they have spent a significant amount of time in the U.S. and have had sufficient time to develop the same language stereotypes as NS. However, one would not necessarily expect for NNS6mos to react the same way. Alford and Strother (1990) found that nonnative speaker raters who had been in the U.S. for an average of 6 months did not distinguish SAE as the prestige variety as native speakers did. It was thought that the same would be true in the present study because NNS6mos would not have enough time to develop notions of one accent as standard. The fact that they did so would seem to indicate that either a substantial amount of time in the U.S. is not required to adopt pervasive language stereotypes or that NNS6mos came to the U.S. with notions of what the standard accent was, most likely due to the extensive study of English required to come study in the U.S., which entails study of pronunciation, most likely for which a standard accent is the model.

Table 4.2. Midwestern vs. Southern and Midwestern vs. AAVE for the Rater Groups

Characteristics	NS			NNS6mos			NNS2yr		
	MW	Southern	AAVE	MW	Southern	AAVE	MW	Southern	AAVE
Friendly	5.8	4.6*	4.7*	5.3	4.6*	4.2*	5.5	4.3*	4.2*
Hardworking	5.6	4.3*	4.7*	5.6	4.4*	4.4*	5.3	4.2*	4.2*
Ambitious	5.6	4.3*	4.6*	5.7	4.4*	4.3*	5.4	4.0*	4.0*
Intelligent	5.6	4.0*	4.4*	5.5	4.6*	4.2*	5.3	4.1*	4.0*
Trustworthy	5.4	4.6*	4.8*	5.5	4.7*	4.3*	5.3	4.4*	4.4*
Honest	5.5	4.6*	5.0*	5.5	4.8*	4.5*	5.5	4.6*	4.6*
Social Status	5.3	4.0*	3.9*	5.3	4.4*	3.9*	5.2	4.2*	3.8*
Rich	5.1	4.0*	4.0*	5.1	4.4*	3.9*	5.0	4.2*	3.7*
Professional	5.4	3.7*	4.1*	5.4	4.5*	4.1*	5.2	4.1*	3.7*
Educated	5.7	4.0*	4.2*	5.6	4.6*	4.1*	5.5	4.4*	3.9*
Patient	4.9	4.0*	4.0*	4.7	4.3	3.9*	4.9	3.9*	3.7*

* p < .01

** p < .05

Differences in the way NS and NNS6mos rated the accents begin to appear when looking at the nonstandard accents. First, when looking at Southern speech, NNS6mos rated it higher than NS did on 5 pairs of characteristics (See Table 4.3). For AAVE, NNS6mos rated it lower on 5 pairs of characteristics. (See Table 4.3). From these results, it appears that the only similarity in the way that NS and NNS6mos rate the accents is their agreement that Midwestern-accented English is the prestige variety. Beyond that, although NNS6mos react more negatively to Southern than they do to Midwestern speech, it is still not as stigmatized a variety as it is for NS. On the other hand, AAVE is an even more stigmatized accent for NNS6mos. One could interpret this to mean that NNS6mos react negatively to accents with which they are not familiar (in this case, accents other than Midwestern, since they live in Iowa), but are more sensitive to differences in accents of social dialects (AAVE) than differences in accent of regional dialects (Southern). It would also appear that NNS6mos came to the U.S. with stereotypes of AAVE already in place.

The next comparison to be examined is between NS and NNS2yr. As already stated, both groups had an identical assessment of Midwestern speech in comparison to the Southern and AAVE (See Table 4.4). Now a comparison of how NS and NNS2yr rated the Southern speech and AAVE will be examined. Their assessment of Southern speech was essentially identical, with the exception of one pair of characteristics, which was uneducated-educated, where NNS2yr rated Southern speech higher than NS did (See Table 4.4). For AAVE, however, the similarity in ratings was not preserved. NNS2yr rated AAVE lower than NS did on 7 pairs of characteristics (See Table 4.4). If we compare this to the way that NNS6mos rated the two nonstandard accent groups, we

Table 4.3: Differences between NS and NNS6mos

Characteristics	Midwestern		Southern		AAVE				
	NS	NNS6mos Difference	NS	NNS6mos Difference	NS	NNS 6mos Difference			
Friendly	5.8	5.3	0.5*	4.6	4.6	0.0	4.7	4.2	0.5*
Hardworking	5.6	5.6	0.0	4.3	4.4	-0.1	4.7	4.4	0.3**
Ambitious	5.6	5.7	-0.1	4.3	4.4	-0.1	4.6	4.3	0.3**
Intelligent	5.6	5.5	0.1	4.0	4.6	-0.6*	4.4	4.2	0.2
Trustworthy	5.4	5.5	0.1	4.6	4.7	-0.1	4.8	4.3	0.5*
Honest	5.5	5.5	0.0	4.6	4.8	-0.2	5.0	4.5	0.5*
Social Status	5.3	5.3	0.0	4.0	4.4	-0.4**	3.9	3.9	0.0
Rich	5.1	5.1	0.0	4.0	4.3	-0.3**	4.0	3.9	0.1
Professional	5.4	5.4	0.0	3.7	4.5	-0.7*	4.1	4.1	0.0
Educated	5.7	5.6	0.1	4.0	4.6	-0.6*	4.2	4.1	0.1
Patient	4.9	4.7	0.2	4.0	4.3	-0.3	4.0	3.9	0.1

* p < .01

** p < .05

Table 4.4: Differences between NS and NNS2yr

Characteristics	Midwestern			Southern			AAVE		
	NS	NNS2yr	Difference	NS	NNS2yr	Difference	NS	NNS2yr	Difference
Friendly	5.8	5.5	0.3	4.6	4.3	0.3	4.7	4.2	0.5*
Hardworking	5.6	5.3	0.3	4.3	4.2	0.1	4.7	4.2	0.5**
Ambitious	5.6	5.4	0.2	4.3	4.0	0.3	4.6	4.0	0.6*
Intelligent	5.6	5.3	0.3	4.0	4.1	-0.1	4.4	4.0	0.4**
Trustworthy	5.4	5.3	0.1	4.6	4.4	0.2	4.8	4.4	0.4**
Honest	5.5	5.5	0.0	4.6	4.6	0.0	5.0	4.6	0.4**
Social Status	5.3	5.2	0.1	4.0	4.2	-0.2	3.9	3.8	0.1
Rich	5.1	5.0	0.1	4.0	4.2	-0.2	4.0	3.7	0.3
Professional	5.4	5.2	0.2	3.7	4.1	-0.4	4.1	3.7	0.4**
Educated	5.7	5.5	0.2	4.0	4.4	-0.4**	4.2	3.9	0.3
Patient	4.9	4.9	0.0	4.0	3.9	0.1	4.0	3.7	0.3

* p < .01

** p < .05

could perhaps infer that the sensitivity to regional accents becomes sharpened with increased time in the U.S., as NNS6mos rate Southern speech differently than NS on 5 pairs of characteristics and NNS2yr rate differently than NS on only one pair. From the stigmatized ratings of AAVE by NNS2yr as well as NNS6mos, again, we could perhaps conclude that NNS are more sensitive to accents of social dialects than to regional accents and that NNS may find AAVE a more stigmatized accent than NS do. Another possibility, too, could be explained in terms of a phenomenon in psychology called socially desirable responding (SDR). SDR refers to presenting oneself favorably regarding current social norms and standards (Paulhus, 1984). If applied to the present study, it may be possible that NNS are not more biased toward AAVE than NS, so much as the NS are responding in a way that they want to present themselves favorably to the researchers by appearing to be more politically correct than they may in fact be.

The final comparison to be made is the one between NNS6mos and NNS2yr. There were essentially no differences in the way that the two groups rated Midwestern speech and AAVE (See Table 4.5). The real difference comes in looking at how the two groups rated the Southern accent. NNS2yr rate the Southern accent lower than NNS6mos do on 3 pairs of characteristics (Table 4.5). This confirms the speculation that the dissimilarity in ratings appears to be a result of time spent in the U.S., that is, the more time a nonnative speaker spends in the U.S., the more sensitive the speaker becomes to regional differences in speech. Moreover, the similarity in AAVE ratings would seem to mean that time spent in the U.S. is not a factor in shaping reactions to this social dialect group, an indication that NNS come to the U.S. with these language stereotypes in place.

Table 4.5. Differences between NNS6mos and NNS2yr

Characteristics	Midwestern			Southern			AAVE		
	NNS6mos	NNS2yr	Difference	NNS6mos	NNS2yr	Difference	NNS6mos	NNS2yr	Difference
Friendly	5.3	5.5	-0.2	4.6	4.3	0.3	4.2	4.2	0.0
Hardworking	5.6	5.3	0.3	4.4	4.2	0.2	4.4	4.2	0.2
Ambitious	5.7	5.4	0.3	4.4	4.0	0.4*	4.3	4.0	0.3
Intelligent	5.5	5.3	0.2	4.6	4.1	0.5	4.2	4.0	0.2
Trustworthy	5.5	5.3	0.2	4.7	4.4	0.3**	4.3	4.4	0.1
Honest	5.5	5.5	0.0	4.8	4.6	0.2	4.5	4.6	-0.1
Social Status	5.3	5.2	0.1	4.4	4.2	0.2	3.9	3.8	0.1
Rich	5.1	5.0	0.1	4.3	4.2	0.1	3.9	3.7	0.2
Professional	5.4	5.2	0.2	4.5	4.1	0.4**	4.1	3.7	0.4**
Educated	5.6	5.5	0.1	4.6	4.4	0.2	4.1	3.9	0.2
Patient	4.7	4.9	-0.2	4.3	3.9	0.4	3.9	3.7	0.2

* $p < .01$ ** $p < .05$

Table 4.6: Number of Traits with Significant Differences between Groups of Raters

	Midwesterners	Southerners	AAVE
NS vs. NNS6mos	1	5	5
NS vs. NNS2yr	0	1	7
NNS6mos vs. NNS2yr	0	3	1

The third research question asks whether there is an effect for identification on ratings for the three accents. First, it is necessary to look at how accurately the Midwesterners, Southerners, and AAVE were identified by NS, NNS6mos, and NNS2yr. See Tables 4.7 through 4.9 for a complete list of the percentages for correct identification.

As we can see from the tables, native speakers were most successful in identifying the three accents. Furthermore, the inherent bias of native speakers against nonstandard accents is reflected in the pattern of identification. As the tests of means indicated, for native speakers, the Midwestern accent was the most favored of the three. Even though the Midwestern accent was identified correctly less than the other accents were, NS never identified Midwesterners as being AAVE, and were only identified as Southerners 1.25% of the time. The pattern of identification by NS suggests the higher ratings that Midwestern speakers received were not meant for AAVE or Southerners. This may suggest that while Midwestern speech may not necessarily represent SAE in the minds of everyone, it is clear that AAVE and Southern speech do not. In addition, the fact that Southerners and AAVE speakers were identified correctly by NS such a large percentage of the time would suggest that the lower ratings that they received were in fact intended for these groups of speakers.

Table 4.7: Accent Identification by NS (in percent terms)

Identified as True Accent	Identified as					
	Midwestern	East Coast	AAVE	Southern	Hispanic	Northern
Midwestern	68.75	15	0	1.25	1.25	13.75
Southern	2.5	6.25	1.25	82.5	2.5	5
AAVE	2.5	2.5	81.25	2.5	6.25	5

Therefore, it may be concluded, with more certainty than other language attitudes studies have been able to in the past that NS do in fact regard Midwestern-accented speech higher than Southern and AAVE specifically, because we know in this case who they believed they were rating.

Even more interesting are the identifications made by the NNS. The patterns of the inherent bias of NNS against nonstandard accents are also reflected in the patterns of identification. As with NS, both groups of NNS rated the Midwestern speech samples higher than they rated AAVE or Southern speech. Even though they were able to identify the Midwesterners correctly less than NS were, NNS, just as NS, knew which groups did not speak with their most favored accent. More specifically, both groups of NNS rarely identified Midwestern speech as AAVE, Southern, or Hispanic speech. NNS2yr never identified Midwestern as AAVE, and NNS6mos only identified Midwestern as AAVE 0.8% of the time. In addition, both groups of NNS, just as NS, identified Midwestern as East Coast and Northern speech a much larger percentage of the time. The similarity in patterns between NS and NNS seems to suggest that both groups have an idea of who speaks with their favored accent and very specific ideas of who does not.

Table 4.8: Accent Identification by NNS6mos (in percent terms)

Identified as True Accent	Midwestern	East Coast	AAVE	Southern	Hispanic	Northern
Midwestern	32.5	34.9	0.8	8.7	4.8	17.5
Southern	10.5	29	10.5	25	8.9	13.7
AAVE	9.7	6.5	50.8	8.9	12.9	10.5

Table 4.9: Accent Identification by NNS2yr (in percent terms)

Identified as True Accent	Midwestern	East Coast	AAVE	Southern	Hispanic	Northern
Midwestern	51.5	27.2	0	3.9	4.9	12.6
Southern	13.6	23.3	5.8	25.2	13.6	17.5
AAVE	2.9	6.8	62.1	12.6	12.6	2.9

Neither group of NNS was easily able to identify Southerners correctly a very large percentage of the time. This is interesting, especially since both groups still rated the Southern accent lower than the Midwestern accent. What this suggests is that even without the specific recognition of accent, NNS are still attuned to markers of accent. In other words, they are used to a Midwestern accent because they live in Iowa, and when they hear a Southern accent, they may not know what the region is, but they know it is different, and in turn rate it lower. It is also interesting to note that both groups of NNS were able to identify AAVE much more than they were able to identify Southern speech. This makes sense when comparing it to the patterns of ratings for these two nonstandard accents by the two groups of

NNS. Both groups rated the AAVE accent lower than they rated the Southern accent on quite a few pairs of the characteristics. Thus, the more stigmatized group for them was more easily identifiable. However, even though AAVE was a more identifiable accent than Southern for NNS, they still could not identify AAVE as much as NS did, and yet NNS ratings of AAVE were as negative, and in some cases, more negative than NS ratings were. This is not surprising, given the fact that AAVE is a well-known social dialect, one with which there is a visual cue to group membership, most likely one that NNS are aware of even before coming to the U.S. Again, the harsher bias toward AAVE could be the result of SDR on the part of the NS.

Originally, I had planned on examining the ratings of nonnative speakers based on their identification of the accents to see if there would be an identification effect on ratings, as it is assumed occurs when native speakers rate the accents. Specifically, for native speakers, it is reasonable to assume that they are making accent-based judgments based on a complex frame of reference, involving language stereotypes of both regional and social dialect groups (Alford & Strother, 1990). So, for example, when native speakers rate Southern or AAVE-accented speech negatively and SAE positively it is due to specific accent stereotypes. The same type of connection was hoped to be examined with NNS as well by comparing the ratings of NNS who could correctly identify the accents with those NNS who could not correctly identify the accents in order to see if there would be differences between the two. However, since both groups of NNS rated the nonstandard accents lower than they rated the Midwestern accent without the same accuracy of identification rate as NS, it may be necessary to look at these ratings in a different light. With the lack of correct identification of the regional accent (Southern) on the part of both groups of NNS, it will be

difficult to assume that the judgments were being made of the Southern accent based on the same frame of reference as native speakers. However, the higher rate of identification for AAVE by both groups of NNS would seem to indicate that a connection could be made in terms of identification and ratings, just as would be the case with native speakers.

First, if we compare the ratings of NNS2yr who correctly identified Southern speech with those NNS2yr who did *not* correctly the Southern accent, we see that there were no differences at all in the ratings whether or not they were able to give a correct identification. For NNS6mos, however, there was an effect for correct identification. That is, those NNS6mos who correctly identified the Southern accent rated it lower on 3 traits (See Table 4.10). However, since both groups of NNS were able to identify the Southern accent correctly only about 25% of the time, which is practically a random assignment of speakers to accents, it can not be established with any certainty that the low Southern ratings were the result of a specific negative accent stereotype of Southern speech, as we would assume would be the case for native speakers. That is, we can assume that the nonnative speakers really did not have an idea that the Southerners were in fact Southern, and thus their low ratings of Southern speech were the result of something else. What is interesting about looking at the ratings of NNS is that they still rated the Southern accent significantly lower than Midwestern speech in spite of their inability to identify it. This suggests that a negative reaction to Southern speech for NNS is really a negative reaction to an unfamiliar accent, but one which they do not consider to be the standard accent.

Next, we compare the ratings of NNS2yr who were able to correctly identify AAVE versus those who were not able to correctly identify AAVE. It was found that there were no differences in the way that AAVE was rated, whether or not a correct identification was

given. For NNS6mos, once again there was an effect for identification. Those NNS6mos who correctly identified AAVE, rated them lower on 5 traits (See Table 4.10). It is hard to say why for one group of NNS, ratings would be lower for those who identified AAVE correctly and not for the other group of NNS. Nevertheless, since there was a high rate of identification for AAVE (60% for NNS2yr and 52% for NNS6mos), it could perhaps be assumed that there was a connection between accent identification and ratings. That is, those who correctly identified AAVE were doing so based on accent stereotypes of AAVE. However, the fact is, even those who did not identify AAVE correctly still rated it lower than Midwestern-accented speech, which would seem to suggest that those who are reacting negatively to AAVE in spite of misidentifying it, are doing so based on a negative reaction to that which they consider to be a nonstandard accent, rather than on specific AAVE stereotypes.

Table 4.10 Means and Differences for how NNS6mos rated AAVE and Southern when Identified Correctly and Incorrectly

Characteristic	NoID, Southern	ID, Southern	Difference	NoID, AAVE	ID, AAVE	Difference
Friendly	4.7	4.3	0.4	4.2	4.1	0.1
Hardworking	4.6	3.9	0.6**	4.6	4.2	0.4
Ambitious	4.4	4.1	0.3	4.4	4.0	0.4
Intelligent	4.7	4.4	0.3	4.5	4.0	0.4**
Trustworthy	4.7	4.5	0.3	4.4	4.2	0.2
Honest	4.8	4.6	0.2	4.6	4.4	0.2
Status	4.5	4.2	0.2	4.3	3.4	0.9*
Rich	4.4	4.2	0.1	4.2	3.5	0.7*
Professional	4.7	3.9	0.7*	4.4	3.8	0.6*
Educated	4.8	4.2	0.6**	4.5	3.7	0.8*
Patient	4.4	3.9	0.5	3.7	3.5	0.2

* $p < .01$

** $p < .05$

Discussion

Several hypotheses were proposed for this research. The first was that native speakers and nonnative speakers present in the U.S. for two years or more would rate the Midwestern speakers higher than they rated the groups of nonstandard-accented speakers and that nonnative speakers who had been in the U.S. for six months or less would not necessarily distinguish the Midwestern accent as more favorable than the nonstandard accents. This hypothesis was partially confirmed. First, native speakers and nonnative speakers who had been in the U.S. for 2 years or more did rate the Midwestern accent significantly higher on all traits. The findings are similar for native speakers to Alford and Strother (1990), Cross, DeVaney, and Jones (2001), Hewett (1971), and Tucker and Lambert (1969). However one difference between these studies and the present one is that in those studies, speakers with nonstandard accents were sometimes found to be more honest, friendly, trustworthy, and to possess more determination than standard-accented speakers. In the present study, however, nonstandard-accented speakers were rated lowest on all traits. These consistently high ratings of Midwesterners by native speakers seem to support the imposed norm hypothesis, which is that a prestige variety is consistently evaluated as the most pleasing variety of a language based solely on social and cultural norms. This means that a standard dialect or accent has attained its prestige and superiority simply because it is associated with a powerful group who happens to speak in this manner. Thus, the native speakers judge SAE (represented by Midwestern-accented speech) higher because of stereotypes of this groups as being more powerful, while nonstandard accent are evaluated lower because of negative stereotypes held by native speakers imposed by social and cultural norms. Since there have been no studies which have investigated attitudes toward

nonstandard-accented U.S. English of nonnative speakers who have been in the U.S. for a significant period of time, it was assumed that they would react similarly to native speakers because of the substantial period of time in which they have had to adopt the social and cultural stereotypes about nonstandard accents that native speakers have. This turned out to be the case.

The second part of the hypothesis was that nonnative speakers who had been in the country for six months or less would not be as biased toward the Midwestern accent as the other two groups of raters were. This is because in Alford and Strother (1990), the nonnative speaker judges who had been in the country for six months or less had given the highest ratings to either the Southern or standard-accented speakers, and sometimes the two groups tied for the highest ratings. Alford and Strother claimed that while they believed native speakers in their study were making judgments based on a frame of reference which included various cultural and dialect stereotypes, they did not believe that nonnative speakers were basing their ratings off of the same frame of reference, since as Alford and Strother explained, six months was not enough time to adopt the same cultural and social norms related to accent judgments. In this study, however, the Midwestern-accented speakers consistently received the highest ratings on all traits by this group of raters, the same pattern as the other two groups of raters. One explanation for this is that the NNS6mos had in fact adopted the same language stereotypes as NS in their short time here. However, if we believe that six months is not enough time to adopt the same social and cultural norms as to what is the prestige variety, as Alford and Strother believed, we can perhaps claim that the NNS6mos raters were responding most favorably to the accent with which they were most familiar, that is, the Midwestern accent, since they all live in the Midwest. This is a pattern

of findings similar to Matsuura, Chiba, and Fujieda (1999), where Japanese students in Japan who were more familiar with American English preferred this variety, whereas those Japanese students who were more familiar with Irish English, preferred that variety. One way to confirm such a hypothesis in the U.S. would be to replicate this study in the South. In that case, if a Southern accent were rated highest, it could perhaps be concluded that NNS, at least those who had just arrived in the U.S. preferred the accent with which they were most familiar. A second possibility is that NNS6mos had come to the U.S. with these stereotypes already in place. This is also a reasonable explanation given the fact that most international students spend a considerable amount of time learning English in preparation to come to the U.S. This preparation, no doubt, involves practicing pronunciation by using tapes, most of which has as their model a standard accent. In addition, since education is closely tied to what our notions of “right” and “wrong” language are (Lippi-Green, 1994), it is not unreasonable to assume that NNS come to the U.S. with specific ideas of what constitutes correct and incorrect English.

In addition negative ratings of Southern and AAVE-accented English by both groups of NNS could be the possible result of poor intelligibility of the accents. Einstein and Verdi (1985) found that adult ESL learners even who lived in predominately black neighborhoods in New York City did not find AAVE very intelligible as measured by a cloze test. The NNS in this study did, however, find speakers of standard-accented English to be more intelligible. Einstein and Verdi also had the learners judge the speakers on several attributes, including job status, friendliness, and appearance, and the adult learners rated the AAVE speakers to be lower on these traits than standard-accented speakers. Einstein and Verdi speculated that the lack of intelligibility of AAVE by the learners could have led them to evaluate the speakers

as being less friendly and to rate them lower on job status and appearance. Although, intelligibility of the speakers was not measured in the present study, this could be something for future study. It would be interesting to see if there were a correlation between intelligibility and measure of attributes by NNS. It certainly may have been possible that NNS in the present study were not able to understand Southern and AAVE accents since they may not be used to them or may not have had much exposure to them, which in turn could have affected their ratings.

The second hypothesis was that nonnative speakers who have been in the U.S. for two or more years would have a more similar profile of ratings of the three accents to native speakers of English than nonnative speakers who have been in the U.S. for six months or less. It was thought that this might be the case since NNS who had been in the U.S. for a longer period of time would adopt the same accent stereotypes that NS have, while those who had been in the U.S. for a shorter period of time would not have time to adopt such stereotypes. First, in the way that NNS2yr and NS rated both Midwestern speech and Southern speech, the hypothesis was confirmed. There were no differences in ratings for Midwestern speech between NNS2yr and NS, and NNS2yr rated Southern speech differently than NS did on only one of 11 traits. From the similarity in ratings between the two groups of raters for the two accents, one could conclude that nonnative speakers who have been in the U.S. for two years or more have indeed adopted the same accent stereotypes that NS possess. However, the convergence in ratings did not seem to extend to the way that NNS2yr rated AAVE-accented speech, as they rated it lower than NS did on 7 of 11 traits. This does not necessarily mean that NNS2yr do not possess the same stereotypes of AAVE that NS do; in this case, NNS2yr appear simply to stigmatize this accent more than NS do. Whatever, the

case NNS2yr are clearly biased toward AAVE. It is difficult to speculate as to why this is the case, especially since this group was comprised of students from a variety of countries and worldviews, but one possibility is that notions of African Americans may already exist for these students before they come to the U.S., since it is most likely widely known that they are the largest minority in the U.S. Also, this dialect group is a highly stigmatized group, both in the media and popular culture. No doubt, this is something that nonnative speakers are aware of or that they have been exposed to.

The hypothesis that nonnative speakers who have been in the country for six months or less would have a less similar profile of ratings to native speakers was partially confirmed. Other than the fact that both groups rated Midwestern speech very similarly on all traits and also higher than the other two accents, their ratings for AAVE and Southern speakers differed. This group of NNS rated Southern speech higher than NS did on several traits and rated AAVE lower than NS did on even more traits. It appears that NNS6mos are not as biased as NS toward Southern speech but are even more biased toward AAVE than NS are. This would seem to indicate that six months is in fact not enough time for NNS to adopt language stereotypes for regional accents, but that they come to the U.S. already aware and sensitive to AAVE, a well-known social dialect. Since NNS2yr were also very biased toward AAVE, it would seem that NNS in general are aware of AAVE and have formed stereotypes of this group before ever coming to the U.S. Southern speech, however, is probably not well known to NNS outside of the U.S., and thus, it takes time to become more aware of the accent stereotypes of this group. Alternatively, NS are also no doubt aware of the stigma of African Americans as a minority group, but because of present cultural norms as well as programs like affirmative action and other programs designed to reduce discrimination, NS

are certainly aware of the sensitive nature of admitting their prejudices. Thus because of SDR, they may have felt a desire to impress the researcher by appearing more politically correct in their responses than what their actual beliefs were. Although no instruments were used in the present study to measure the subjects' tendencies to give socially desirable responses, psychological measures do exist to evaluate these tendencies, and could be used in future research as a modification of the present study (Paulhus, 1999).

The third hypothesis was that nonnative speakers who could not correctly identify the accents would not rate them the same as those who could correctly identify the accents. As was mentioned in the results, since both groups of NNS were unable to correctly identify the Southern accent, we can not assume that there is a connection between identification and ratings. However, the fact that without identifying Southern speech correctly, NNS still rated them lower than Midwestern speech warrants an exploration. For AAVE, however, we can assume that there may be a connection in identification and ratings since there was such a high rate of identification on the part of both groups of NNS. Specifically, for NNS2yr, whether or not they could identify AAVE correctly had no effect on their ratings. The same was not true for NNS6mos. When they identified AAVE correctly, this had a negative effect on ratings. However, those NNS6mos who did not identify them correctly still gave them low ratings. While it is difficult to explain why this would be the case for NNS6mos and not for NNS2yr, I think it is more important to explore why both groups of NNS consistently gave low ratings to both Southern and AAVE-accented English with or without correct identification. Several possible explanations could exist for low ratings without identification.

The first, but rather unlikely explanation might be that these results provide support for the inherent value hypothesis. Some might argue that those who still rate accents low without knowing who it is they are rating, do so because the accent just sounds unpleasant or low-class, that there is something inherently bad about the accent. However, this is unlikely in the present study, given the fact that the raters have some knowledge of the accents. That is, these are not accents that they have never heard before, thus it would not be possible to say that they have no ideas about notions of standardness for the language. The only way that it would be possible to provide evidence in favor of the inherent value hypothesis would be to have speakers with no knowledge of the language whatsoever rate various accents of the language. In fact, when Giles (1974b) had his subjects with no knowledge of Greek compare a Cretan and an Athenian variety, the listeners could make no distinctions between the varieties.

The most likely explanation for the low ratings without correct identification will be given in terms of the imposed norm hypothesis. According to the imposed norm hypothesis, the prestige variety, SAE, represented by Midwestern-accented English in this study, receives the highest ratings and nonstandard-accented varieties receive lower ratings because of imposed cultural and social norms which dictate dialect stereotypes. However, how can people who do not know who they are evaluating still provide biased ratings, just as NS do, who have accent stereotypes dictated to them by the social connotations associated with the accents? Specifically, in this study, how is that NNS who were unable to identify the accents they were rating able to provide biased ratings of Southern and AAVE? Milroy and McCleneghan (1977) found similar results. They found that even among native speakers of English in Northern Ireland, there was a clear tendency to misidentify the four voices

included in the study (Scottish, S. Irish, RP, and Ulster); however, the same biases appeared whether or not the voices had been correctly identified. It appears then that even without correct identification, biased ratings are still possible. For NNS who could not identify the accents, it seems that they know that AAVE and Southern are not the prestige variety even without knowing specifically what accent it is. They may not be able to identify the features, for example that make an accent AAVE or Southern, but they are attuned to markers of accent. They know that these nonstandard accents are not the standard, and thus their ratings are very binary in nature. While NS are able to make distinctions among the accents, NNS are simply working from what they know to be standard and nonstandard accents. But one may ask how it is that NNS would know what the standard accent is. One possibility is that the standard accent is what is familiar to them. First as Matsuura, Chiba, and Fujieda (1999) found, NNS had negative reactions to English varieties with which they were not familiar and positive ones to varieties with which they were familiar. So, in the present study, NNS gave accents that are not the Midwestern accent lower ratings because these are accents they are not used to hearing since they live in the Midwest. Another possibility is that for most students who come to study in the U.S., they have had a considerable amount of training in English. Many have probably learned pronunciation from tapes, most of which have a standard accent as the model. Also, since for many of us, education is so closely tied to notions of right and wrong, the NNS in the present study could simply be reacting negatively to accents that are different from what they have learned is correct English. Finally, it was mentioned that intelligibility may have been a factor in negative NNS ratings of the nonstandard accents, and although this study did not measure intelligibility of the accents, it would certainly be worth exploring in a future study.

As in all studies, there are several limitations to this research. The first possible limitation is the makeup of the rater groups. While having uniform rater groups such as the NS group in this study was good for controlling for variables, it may not provide a completely representative picture of the ratings of native speakers of U.S. English. For instance, there are more regions in the U.S. than just the Midwest, and while Caucasian is the racial majority, there are also many other racial and ethnic groups that comprise the group that is native speakers of U.S. English. Therefore, having a native speaker group that was more heterogeneous in terms of age, race, education, and origin in the U.S. would be good, as it would give a more representative picture of attitudes toward the accents.

Also, in the present study, the nonnative speakers were a very heterogeneous group, coming from a wide variety of language backgrounds and cultural experiences. While this is good in the fact that it provides a more representative group of nonnative speakers in general, this also makes it difficult to say what cultural influences affected their ratings, as they are so varied. One possible solution to this would be to include an attitudes survey in the study, which measures language attitudes or to have the participants give a qualitative explanation for their ratings. Also, it may be useful in the future to get nonnative speakers from the same background or to compare two different homogenous groups of nonnative speakers to see if differences in ratings occur. Having NNS from the same background would provide for more uniformity regarding the cultural values that the participants bring with them to the study.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated three research questions: (1) Do native and nonnative speakers of English rate SAE (represented by Midwestern-accented U.S. English) higher than they rate nonstandard-accented U.S. English? (2) Do nonnative speakers who have been in the U.S. for a substantial period of time (between 2 and 6 years) rate U.S. English accents more similarly to native English speakers than nonnative speakers who have been in the U.S. for a relatively short period of time (6 months or less)? (3) Do nonnative speakers of English who do not correctly identify the accents have similar ratings to those nonnative speakers of English who do correctly identify the accents? The research revealed that native as well as nonnative speakers of English rated Midwestern English higher than Southern and AAVE on all pairs of characteristics. Second, all three groups of raters had similar evaluations in that they all rated Midwestern speech higher than the other two accents; however, other than that, only NNS2yr had similar ratings to native speakers for Southern speech. Finally, the relationship between correct identification and its effect on ratings showed mixed results. For NNS2yr, ratings for the two nonstandard accents were the same, whether or not they could identify the speakers' accent, but NNS6mos rated Southern and AAVE lower on certain traits when they identified the speakers' accent correctly.

Applications

This study has a number of applications. The results of the speech sample evaluations showed that both native and nonnative speaker raters consistently gave higher rankings to Midwestern-accented speech on all traits and lower rankings to Southern and

AAVE-accented speech. This information would be useful to public schools, ESL programs both in the U.S. and abroad, as well as to materials developers because it shows that prejudice against speakers with nonstandard accents exists, even for nonnative speakers, whether or not they can identify the speakers' accents and even for nonnative speakers who have been in the U.S. for a short period of time. For native speakers, it seems that curricula should be developed to fight the negative stigmas that our society has associated with nonstandard-accented groups. First, the introduction of dialect awareness programs for students would help them to understand the reasons why this stigma exists in the first place, that there are specific social connotations that are associated with the specific groups of speakers that are evaluated lower than those who speak with a standard accent, and that a standard accent is not judged higher because it is a more legitimate or better accent. In light of such pervasive misunderstandings about dialects as well as the illusion of a homogenous "broadcast" English, Wolfram (2000) points out that it is essential to provide instruction specifically targeting language diversity at the local, regional, and national levels. In such pilot programs (already in existence) intended to promote dialect awareness, students and teachers confront the stereotypes, misconceptions, and prejudices about dialects. This is done by interweaving dialects into all facets of the curricula, including social studies, language arts, history and science. In each of these subject areas, some of the most central issues of social equity are associated with variation in language use. Such programs focus on the "naturalness" of dialect variation as well as on the investigation of the patterns, forms, and structures of dialects. Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (1998) argue the necessity of such programs when he claims that without the introduction of dialect awareness programs, the risk is run that students who speak mainstream varieties will begin to look at their

vernacular-speaking peers as linguistically deficient, just as Lippi-Green (1994) points out is already the case with the administrative force in the educational system. Wolfram and Schilling-Estes also point out that promotion of dialect awareness will also aid vernacular-speaking students to see their dialects as legitimate, as the risk is most certainly present of their viewing their speech as poor in light of current language education, policies, and ideology. Pilot programs have already shown that students of vernacular dialects are beginning to take pride in their dialects. Finally, since this study revealed that even nonnative speakers appear to hold the pervasive negative stereotypes about nonstandard-accented English, this is an issue that should be included in teacher training for TESL/AL programs.

In addition, the findings of this study might be useful information for politicians. They may be interested in knowing how their constituents feel about speakers with AAVE and Southern accents. Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (1998) point out that while public discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, and social class is not publicly acceptable, it appears that discrimination on linguistic grounds is, even though linguistic differences may be associated with ethnicity, religion or class. Lippi-Green (1994) has pointed out that linguistic discrimination indeed does take place as it relates to employment practices, and that this discrimination is even upheld through decisions made by the courts. For example, in one case, the court upheld a decision made by a broadcast company not to hire a man because he spoke with a Hawaiian Creole accent. In this case, the judge credited the testimony of speech experts that standard English should be used by radio broadcasters. In another case, the courts also allowed for the association of nonstandard dialects with negative social values. For example, they credited testimony where an agency claimed that a man's regional

accent lacked authority, friendliness, clarity, and other qualities desired in a broadcast voice. Finally, particularly regarding AAVE, civil rights have been such a major issue in this country, especially in the last 50 years, and since so much has been done in this country to fight discrimination with programs like affirmative action, information found in this study might be useful in making politicians aware that prejudice still exists towards African Americans, in that their speech is not valued. Racial discrimination could be perpetuated under the guise of linguistic discrimination and even upheld by courts which, as Lippi-Green (1994) demonstrated, happens consistently.

Recommendations

Some recommendations for future research include an expansion of the rating instrument. The rating instrument only called for the raters to identify the dialect group to which they thought the speakers they were rating belonged. With nonnative speakers especially, where the rate of correct identification was not very high, it was difficult to know the reasons for their judgments of those whom they could not identify. Although several possible explanations for this occurrence were explored in the discussion chapter, in reality it is difficult to know why nonnative speakers made the judgments they did when they did not correctly identify the speakers. Thus, it might be useful to ask them to give specific reasons as to why they made the judgments they did with a qualitative addition to the study. Although, tabulating these answers would be time consuming, it may give better insight into the reasons for the nonnative speakers' low evaluations of nonstandard-accented speakers. Is it because of negative stereotypes of the groups they are judging or some other reason? For

native speakers, who did correctly identify the dialects most of the time, it would be useful to do this in order to possibly locate the source of their stereotypes.

Another suggestion for future research would be to conduct the study in another region of the country, perhaps the South. This would help provide insight into the hypothesis that nonnative speakers are more tolerant of the dialect with which they are more familiar, as is suggested by Matsuura, Chiba, and Fujieda (1999). As this may have been one possible explanation for some of the nonnative speakers' higher ratings of the Midwestern accent, it would be interesting to see if this occurred in other areas of the United States in which the standard accent is not the prominent accent.

APPENDIX A: READING PASSAGES FOR SPEAKERS**Reading 1**

Elephants are some of the most admired animals in the world, but their future has long been uncertain. Elephants have been under attack for a long time. Ivory hunters killed all the elephants in north Africa 1,200 years ago. By the end of the 19th century, all of the elephants were also gone from south Africa. Today, the price of ivory is at an all-time high. Illegal hunters are a greater threat to the elephants of Africa than they have ever been. But there is an even greater threat: the growing human population of Africa. Elephants have been crowded into parks that are much smaller than the areas they used to occupy. In the old days, elephants could eat as much grass as they pleased and destroy as many trees as they wanted. They could move on to a new area and give the grass and trees time to recover. Now, with only limited land, there is not enough time for the grass and trees to recover. There is a very real possibility that many elephants could starve to death in the African parks. If elephants are to survive in the wild, people must find ways either to provide more food or to decrease the elephant population.

From Elephants Zoobooks published by Wildlife Education Ltd.

Reading 2

Each year, the United States government publishes the Occupational Outlook Handbook. This large book lists over 250 kinds of jobs. It describes job duties, working conditions, education needed, and salary. Most importantly, the Handbook gives the job outlook and tells how many openings there will be for different jobs in the coming years. The job outlook may be excellent, good, or poor.

The job outlook for auto mechanics is good. The number of cars will continue to grow. Because cars are so expensive, people are keeping their cars longer. In the future, their cars will need more repairs. Computer programmers will be in demand, and their job outlook is excellent. There are more than 50 million computers in offices and homes in the United States. Both companies and individuals depend on computers for information, record keeping, and services. The men and women who deliver mail every day face a poor job future. Companies will use computers and fax machines to send information. People will buy their stamps at supermarkets and department stores.

The Occupational Outlook Handbook is in the reference section of the library. It can tell you if the work you are interested in has a future or not.

From Now Hear This! By Barbara H. Foley, published by Heinle & Heinle

**APPENDIX B: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RATERS**

Biographical Information Sheet for Native Speaker Raters

Gender: F M

Age _____

Race _____

Classification: First Year Sophomore Junior Senior Graduate

Major _____

What is the highest level of education that you have completed? _____

Where are you from? _____

Where have you lived most of your life? _____

Besides the place where you have lived most of your life, have you spent a significant amount of time in any other regions of the U.S. If so, what regions, at what age, and for how long? _____

Biographical Information Sheet for Nonnative Speaker Raters

Gender: F M

Age _____

Race _____

Classification: First Year Sophomore Junior Senior Graduate

Major _____

Where are you from? _____

What is your native language? _____

How long have you been in the United States? _____

Have you been in the United States at any other time in your life? If so, when and for how long? _____

Besides the time you have lived in Iowa, have you ever visited or lived in any other parts of the United States? If so, what regions, when, and for how long? _____

APPENDIX C: RATING INSTRUMENT

Instructions

During this appointment, you will be listening to sentences from 12 different speakers of various dialects of U.S. English. You will hear a speech sample from each speaker that will last for about 10 seconds. Each speech sample will be repeated once. After you hear the speech sample two times, there will be a 30 second pause for you to fill out the rating sheet. After the 30 second pause, you will hear the next speaker.

While listening to each speaker, you will rate them on the following personality characteristics: unfriendly-friendly, lazy-hard-working, unmotivated-ambitious, not very intelligent-intelligent, untrustworthy-trustworthy, dishonest-honest, low social status-high social status, poor-rich, unprofessional-professional, poorly educated-well educated, and impatient-patient. While listening to each speaker, for each personality characteristic, circle the number from 1 to 7, with 1 being the lowest and 7 being the highest, that you feel best describes the speaker you are listening to. You should base your ratings on any personal opinions that you may have about the speakers' voices.

After you have finished circling all of the personality characteristics, you will try to identify the dialect group that you think the speaker belongs to. You can choose from the following dialect groups: Midwestern U.S. English, East Coast U.S. English, African American English, Southern U.S. English, Hispanic English, and Northern U.S. English. First, we will practice with 3 examples. Then I will stop the tape and ask for questions. And finally we will begin the dialect study.

Rating Instrument**Speaker 1**

unfriendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	friendly
lazy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	hard-working
unmotivated	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	ambitious
not very intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intelligent
untrustworthy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	trustworthy
dishonest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	honest
low social status	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	high social status
poor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	rich
unprofessional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	professional
poorly educated	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	well educated
impatient	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	patient

Please place a circle around which dialect group you think this speaker belongs to.

Midwestern U.S. English East Coast U.S. English African American English

Southern U.S. English Hispanic English Northern U.S. English

APPENDIX D: SAMPLING FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTIONS OF THE DATA

Figure 1: Histogram for FRIENDLY

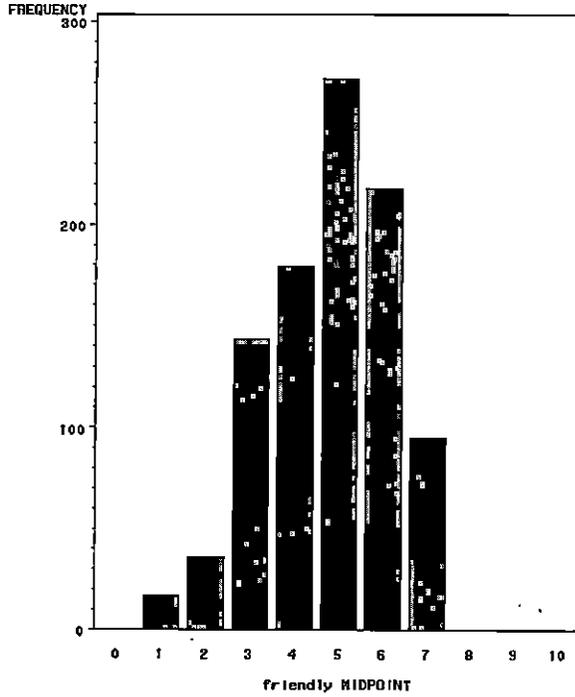


Figure 2: Histogram for HARDWORKING

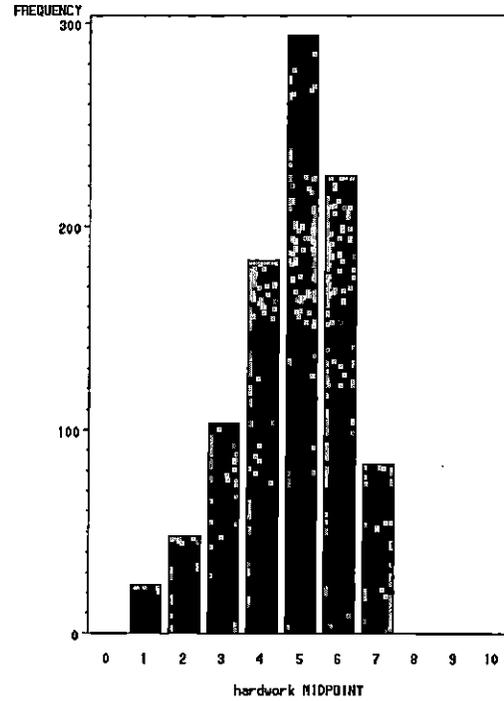


Figure 3: Histogram for AMBITIOUS

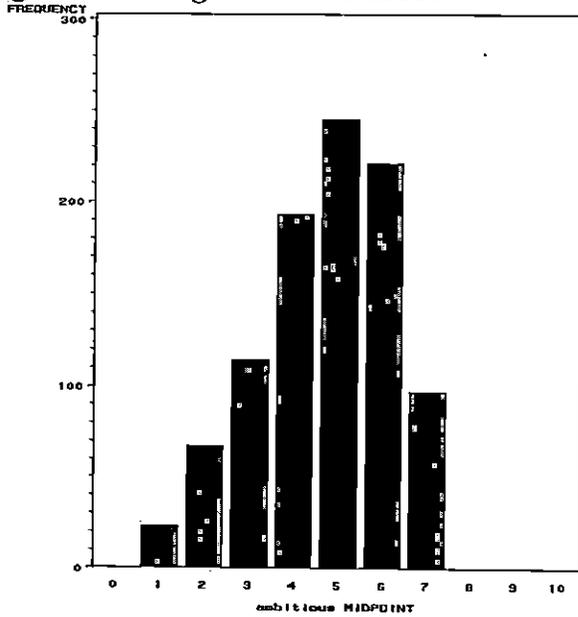


Figure 4: Histogram for INTELLIGENT

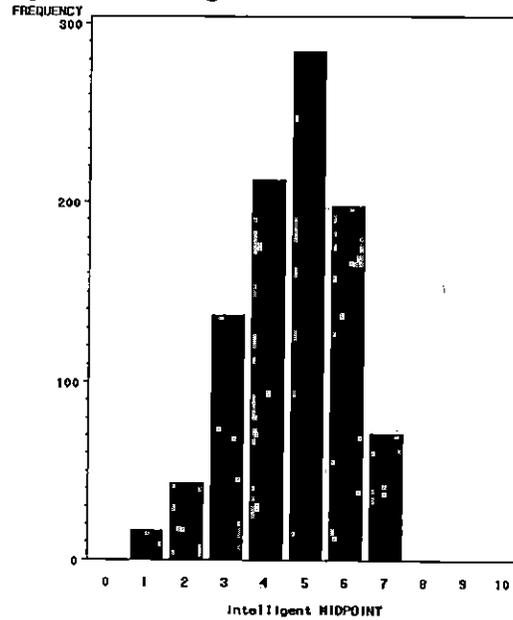


Figure 5: Histogram for TRUSTWORTHY

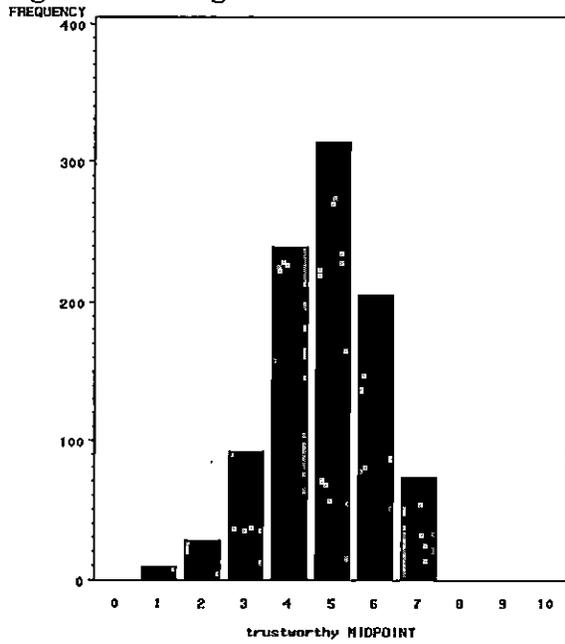


Figure 6: Histogram for HONEST

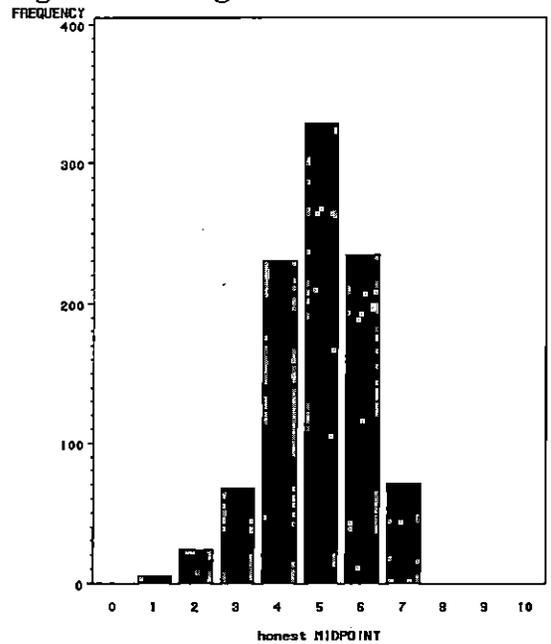


Figure 7: Histogram for SOCIAL STATUS

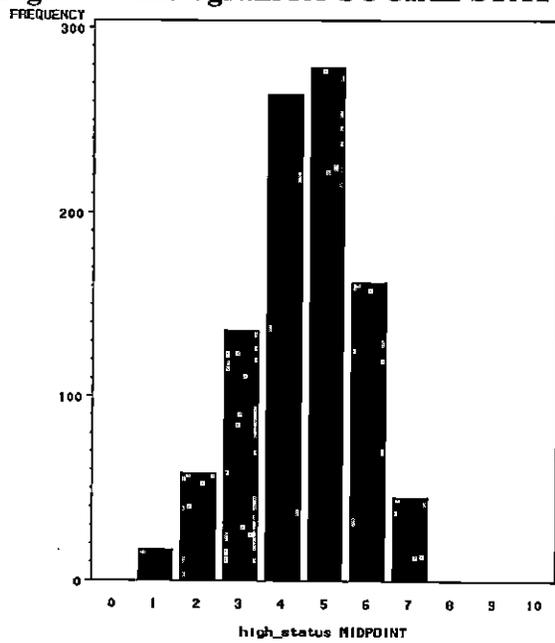


Figure 8: Histogram for RICH

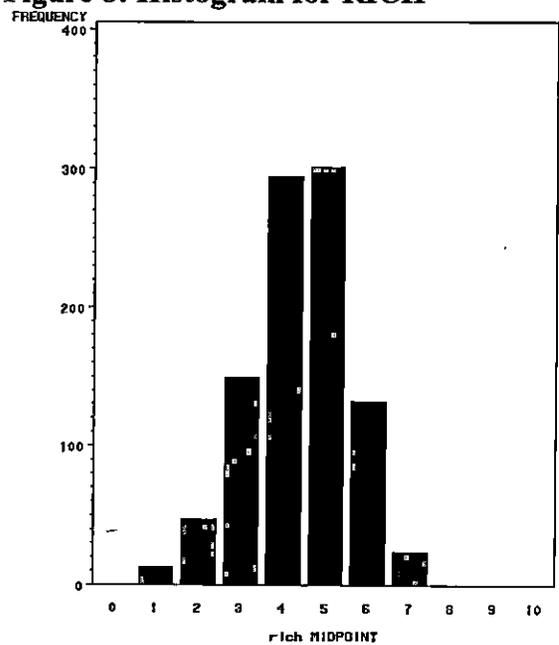


Figure 9: Histogram for PROFESSIONAL

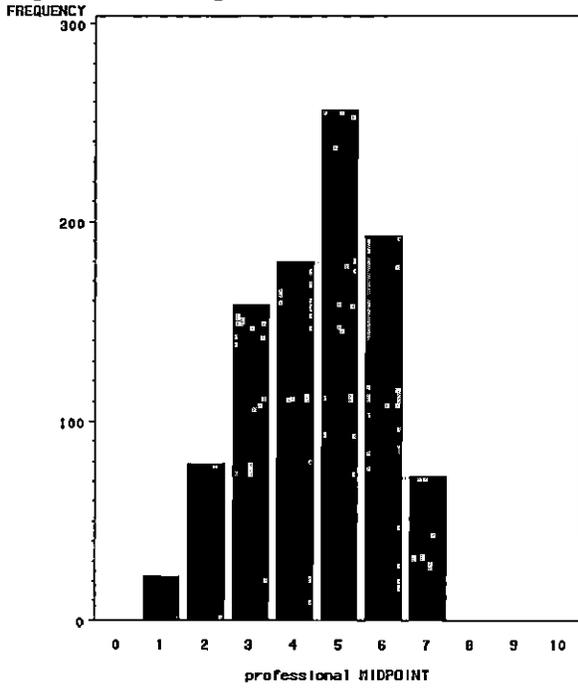


Figure 10: Histogram for EDUCATED

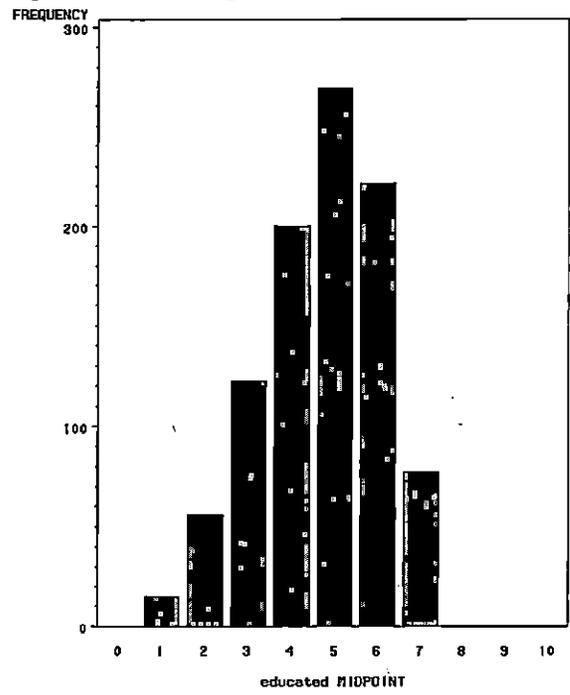
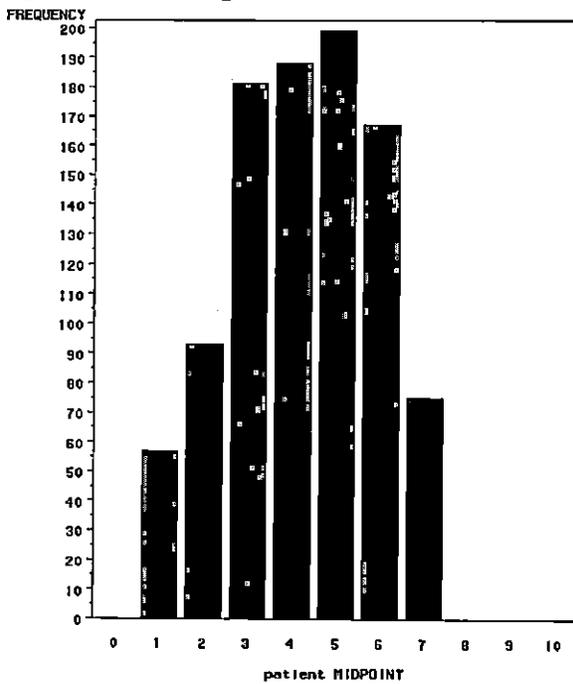


Figure 11: Histogram for PATIENT



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